

## Executive Director’s Report July 2022

### What’s New @ AHML

#### Senior Center Tech Fair



Digital Services and Senior and Accessible Services (SAS) staff and volunteers hosted the first tech fair held at the Arlington Heights Senior Center. Seventy-nine seniors had a great time sampling many of the library’s technology offerings. Attendees experienced virtual reality, strengthened their muscles with the Nintendo Ring Fit and had their photos taken in “outer space” at the photobooth. They tried robotics and Mario Kart, learned about the Makerplace and tried a wide variety of assistive devices available to borrow from the Library of Things.

## Successful First Lit Stroll



The library's first Lit Stroll took place in downtown Arlington Heights. This literary event brought readers together to meet and mingle with Illinois authors that included Jon Seidel, Mia P. Manansala, Lisa Barr and Elizabeth Berg. The library partnered with four Arlington Heights venues, Peggy Kinnane's, La Tasca Tapas, Hey Nonny and Arlington Ale House to host an author at each site. One hundred and sixteen

people came out to hear about the author's novels and writing process, grab a drink and mingle with other literary lovers as they strolled from location to location. The event culminated in a book signing and dessert reception at Arlington Ale House with books available for sale courtesy of The Book Stall.



## Storytime in the Park

This summer, the popular Storytime in the Park program is now held at a new location Camelot Park (previously held at Frontier Park) and an evening option. Camelot Park has worked out well with easier parking, better access to the bookmobile and a larger shaded grassy area. Attendance has grown over the month with many repeat customers promoting the storytime to neighbors and friends. An evening Storytime in the Park is now offered at Sunset Ridge Park in conjunction with the bookmobile stop every other Thursday through August.



## Friends of the Library Passport to Fun Fundraiser

Friends of the Library held their Passport to Fun Fundraiser, a fun, family adventure exploring the library, Makerplace and surrounding neighborhood. There were activity booths, a children's market book sale and a passport to collect stamps along the way. Makerspace staff set up a quick and easy button maker activity allowing fun seekers to make on the go.



## Languages Other Than English Database Added

The library has added *LOTE: Languages Other Than English*, a new “read-along” database product with stories in multiple languages for all readers.

## Outreach and Engagement

### **Pride Pop-Up at the Farmers Market**

The library's bookmobile and a Pride pop-up booth made an appearance at the Arlington Heights Farmers Market to celebrate Pride Month. One hundred and eighty-six people of all ages stopped by the booth to make buttons, pick up pride themed stickers and learn more about the library's Pride book lists and local LGBTQ resources.



### **Cord Cutting 101 Presented to Wheeling Township**

Digital Services Supervisor Gregory Berger partnered with Wheeling Township to present the library's popular Cord Cutting 101 class to the township's audience. Gregory virtually instructed 30 seniors on the ins and outs of cable cord cutting and signing up for digital subscriptions such as Disney+, HBO Max, Paramount Plus and Amazon Prime Video.

## A Butterfly Paradise – Arlington Heights Memorial Library Butterfly Garden featured in this year’s Garden Walk



The Arlington Heights Garden Club selected Arlington Heights Memorial Library’s butterfly garden to be featured in their annual Garden Walk. Library staff greeted 314 visitors during the Garden Walk. They answered questions and shared stories about how the library’s butterfly garden initiative grew and is maintained by staff who volunteer their time to take care of the space.

Karen Keenan, a volunteer member from the Sierra Club and former library employee, shared her expertise in monarch butterflies, seeds and the Sierra Club’s efforts to preserve butterfly gardens in Illinois. Visitors were provided giveaways such as bookmarks made of wildflower seeds for planting, plants, seeds, as well as a guide to the plants and flowers in the library’s butterfly garden.



### Garden Club’s Unique Boutique

Participating in the Arlington Heights Garden Club’s Unique Boutique on the grounds of the Historical Society, Circulation Assistant Mary Weber staffed the Friends of the Library table, offering a selection of gardening books for purchase. Two hundred and fourteen people visited the library booth and \$135 worth of books were sold. Nearly 100 plants, including spider, jade and pilea, propagated from plants growing at the library’s drive-up, were given away along with 75 wildflower bookmarks.



## Promoting the Accessibility Support Collection

Youth Services Assistant Manager Maria Papanastassiou presented to the Child and Family Connections 6 Local Interagency Council (LIC) at Clearbrook about the library's Accessibility Support Collection as well as other library services. The presentation included a [video tour](#), information about the types of items in the collection and how they support development, how to search the catalog and how to make collection suggestions for purchase. It also included practical information about how library employee Denise Kalka, a speech-language pathologist, utilizes the collection in her practice.



Maria also shared information about library services and the Accessibility Support Collection with over 200 people at Ivy Hill School who were attending community partner C.I.T.Y. of Support's Graduation Celebration, an annual event created to celebrate the accomplishments of all children, especially for those with disabilities and delays.

## Due to Popular Demand!

Upon request, the bookmobile made an appearance at the neighborhood block party at Klehm Park. Interim Bookmobile Supervisor Ron Moravec and Community Engagement Liaison Catalina Shin interacted with 89 members of the Klehm Park neighborhood community and invited customers to attend FanCon in July.



## **Senior Expo**

SAS Advisors Renee Witt and Matt Weston staffed the library table at the Senior Expo event, an annual fundraiser hosted by Arlington Height Senior Center, Inc. (AHSCI). AHSCI is a separate, not-for-profit fundraising organization which raises funds to benefit the Arlington Heights Senior Center. Over 100 visitors stopped by to learn about library services at the Senior Center and in the community.

## **Serving Our Community**

### **Community Blood Drive**

The library partnered with Versiti Blood Center of Illinois in June, with 32 participants donating lifesaving blood. The 33 units of blood collected on June 29 will help a potential 99 patients, and ensure blood is readily available for local hospitals, including hospitals impacted by recent unfortunate events in Highland Park.



### **Summer Reading Challenge**

The 2022 Summer Reading Challenge for youth birth–12<sup>th</sup> grade officially began on June 6. People lined up outside the library doors before 9 a.m. in anticipation of signing up for the program! On launch day, summer reading interns, teen volunteers and Youth Services staff helped 525 young customers register for Summer Reading and challenged them to build the habit of reading all summer long. There is one multi-leveled program for all youth designed so that families with kids in multiple age groups can participate together and all readers can be successful. Participants decide how much to read each day and keep track of the days they read. After 10 and 20 days of reading they can come into the library to play Plinko or spin the wheel to win a prize, many of which are crafts, experiments and activities they can complete at home. After 25 and 50 days of reading, participants can select a free book of their choice. One month into the program, 2,716 youth have registered, which is more than double last year's participants (1,297) and nearing pre-pandemic levels (3,122 in 2019).

## Youth Services Celebrates Pride Month

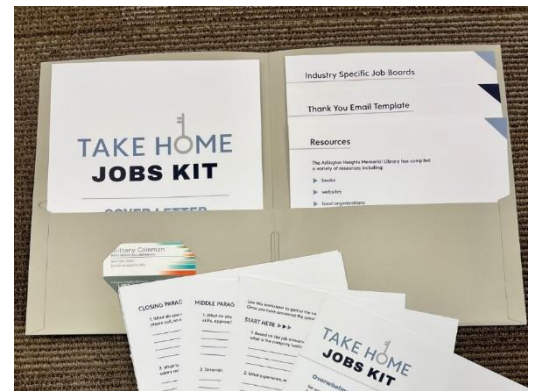


Youth Services staff kicked off Pride Month with reading recommendations for all ages and colorful rainbow bookmarks and crafts at the Kids' World desk. Early Literacy Services Supervisor Rebecca King celebrated the diversity of families with 27 customers at Rainbow Pride Storytime on Saturday, June 4. One young customer came up to Rebecca after the storytime and shared how she has two mommies and loved to hear stories that sounded like her family.

The Hub was also a destination for Pride Month celebrations. In the Hub's DIY area, thirty-one teens were able to Prep for the Pride Parade from June 1-4 by using supplies to create signs, decorate flags to represent their identities and craft colorful wearables to be generally fabulous for the Pinta Pride Parade in Buffalo Grove on June 5. Post-Pride parade, staff kept the crafts available for teens throughout Pride Month. An additional 69 teens created more wearables in June.

## Take Home Jobs Kits

Info Services Librarian Brittany Coleman's *Take Home Jobs Kits* have been popular in June! Over 30 kits have been distributed since its announcement in the summer newsletter. The kits include helpful resources and information, as well as worksheets for customers to develop their resumes and cover letters. Brittany has reached out individually to customers requesting the kits to offer additional guidance and library services.



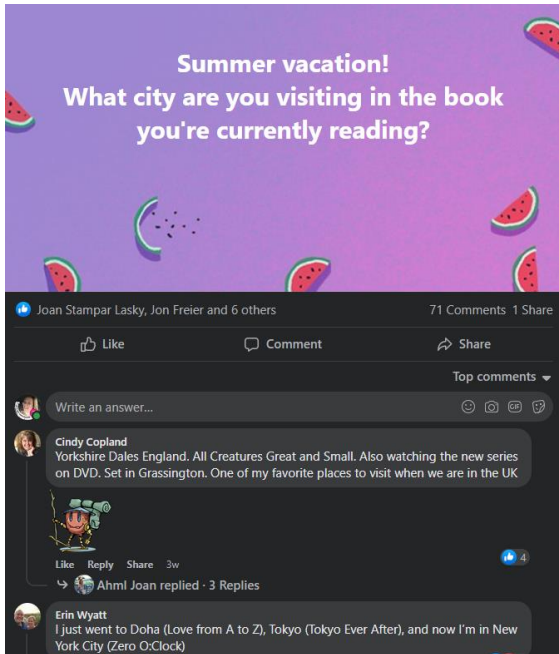
## Sound Opinions: It was 50 Years Ago Today...

Programs and Exhibits Specialist Neal Parker led a partnership event welcoming back music critics Jim DeRogatis and Greg Kot of Sound Opinions. Seventeen libraries partnered for this virtual event and peers from Glenview Public Library and Skokie Public Library hosted along with Neal. The program focused on influential albums released in 1972 (50 years ago!) and attracted a total of 302 live participants. Attendees loved the mix of 'usual suspects' and deep dives into the record bin for diverse picks. The recording is available on the library's [YouTube](#) channel and has received over 200 post-event views to date.

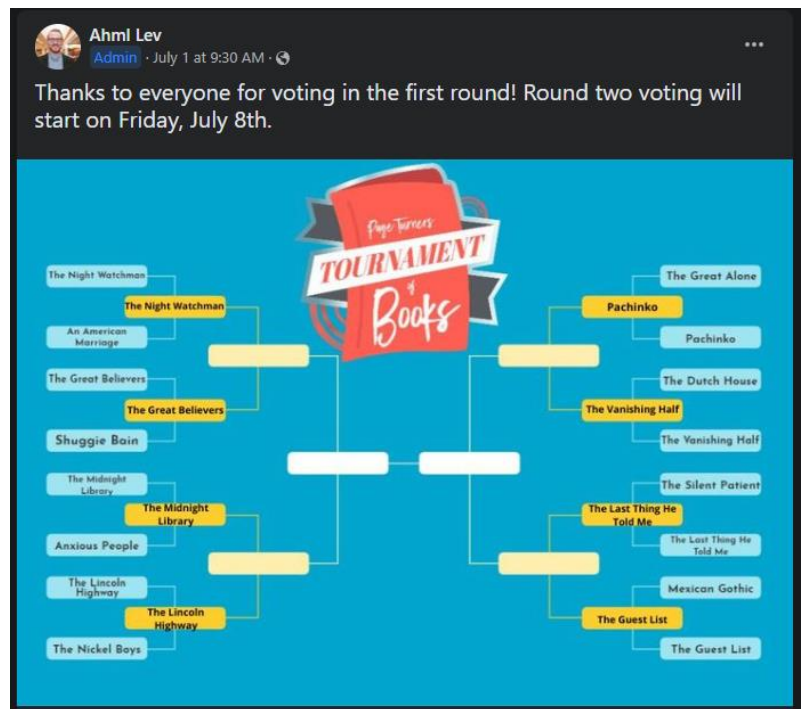


## Page Turners Summer Reading and Facebook Group

The Page Turners Summer Reading Program for adults launched June 1. Since opening registration, 237 adults have signed up for the program. For June, July and August, participants are asked to complete five activities from a staff-curated list to earn a monthly badge, and June saw 72 total badges earned. Activities include reading in a variety of formats, utilizing the library's Readers Services and more.



One of the challenges for the Adult Summer Reading program includes joining the AHML Page Turners Adult Readers Discussion group on Facebook and posting something in the group. This has resulted in an increase in members and in interactions for the month of June.



The second annual Tournament of Books on the Page Turners Facebook page kicked off in June. Rounds will continue until August. The Facebook group had 40 new members in June for a total of 323 members. The Info Services team made 17 posts and received 246 comments, with a total of 1,012 reactions.

## Bend the Binary: Understanding Gender and Pronouns

Programs and Exhibits Specialist Emily Muszynski hosted the return of Bend the Binary: Understanding Gender and Pronouns, presented by retired children's librarian and mother of two transgender kids, Heather McCammond-Watts. Heather presented to an audience of 16 participants, many with gender expansive or transgender family members. She created a safe space for participants to ask questions and discuss how to create an inclusive environment for everyone as well as provided a wealth of resources to attendees.

## Juneteenth and Pride Booklists

In June, Info Services Advisors created timely booklists including [Celebrating Pride Month in Literature](#), [Commemorating Juneteenth](#), and [Juneteenth Films](#). Marketing and Communications promoted the lists in mailings and on the library's website.

## Needle Felting at the Makerplace

Under the guidance of Natasha Lehrer Lewis, 16 customers ranging from school age to senior citizens created adorable wool hedgehogs in the Makerplace art space, complete with a summery flower bouquet. One customer commented felting was “addictive.”



## Summer Galettes with Jen

Programs and Exhibits Specialist Emily Muszynski welcomed Chef Jen, an experienced instructor with District 214 Adult Education, to teach Summer Galettes. Her two classes saw lots of new attendees thanks to the lottery registration system which launched June 2. Jen started each class explaining that her goal was for everyone to have fun and kept her promise. She demonstrated the crust and construction of the two galettes – one sweet and one savory - and had the tables work together to make one of each.

## Intro to Fermentation with Emily Paster

Experienced chef Emily Paster, a recipe developer and cookbook author who blogs as [West of the Loop](#), led two sessions of Introduction to Fermentation in the Makerplace kitchen. Before the hands-on part of the class started, Emily explained how fermentation works and how it differs from pickling and canning and discussed some common mistakes. Attendees worked on cutting cabbage for sauerkraut and prepping vegetables for fermenting. Everyone left with a jar of their self-made sauerkraut and fermented vegetables.

## Makerplace Creations



## Staff Highlights

### **American Library Association Conference, Washington D.C., June 24-27**

Nine AHML staff members and one trustee attended the 2022 American Library Association conference. Trustee Debbie Smart, Executive Director Mike Driskell, and Friends of the Library board member Jenn Borrell presented Friends, Foundation and Finds-Partnerships for Building a Future with contribution from Foundation President, Laaree Harp. This presentation discussed the relationship between the library and the two fundraising organizations. Also, while at the conference, Director of Communication and Marketing, Mary Hastings, and Editorial Supervisor, April Harder, received two PR Xchange awards for the team's work on the 2021 Teen Film Fest video and our newsletter design.