

## Executive Director's Report

December 2022

### What's New @ AHML

#### **The Arcade Age Exhibit Opening and Dance Party**



Mid-November the first floor of the library was transformed into a retro arcade for the Arcade Age exhibit, on loan from the Cradle of Aviation Museum and Education Center and sponsored by the Friends of the Library. The exhibit tells the story of the history of arcade games from their inception in the 1940s to their general decline in the 1990s.

Along with display pieces, there are 12 arcade games set to free-play for library visitors to enjoy. On Friday, November 18 the exhibit officially opened with an 80s themed dance party. Four hundred and fifty visitors of all ages played arcade games, walked around the library with the Stranger Things scavenger hunt, and danced to 80s tunes in the Hendrickson Room. It has been a joy to see intergenerational groups enjoy the games together.

### Outreach and Community Engagement

#### **ProMedica Library Days Visit**



SAS staff hosted a Library Days outreach visit at ProMedica Skilled Nursing And Rehabilitation for the first time post-pandemic. Twelve residents attended the program, and eight new Library Delivery Services customers plus two new Talking Books participants registered for services. One resident was particularly thrilled to learn about the library services, saying she had not read books by her favorite authors since relocating to the facility. In December, Senior and Accessible Services will resume a dedicated monthly staff delivery visit.

## **The Harper Experience!**

Circulation Assistants Mary Weber and Alexis Michalak and Community Engagement Liaison Catalina Shin were joined by Info Services Librarian Brittany Coleman and Digital Services staff Mini Radhakrishnan and Chris Smith to share resources about ESL (English as a Second Language), Jobs and Careers, Businesses, Tech Learning, and Makerspace, and provide Circulation services with 260 members of the community one morning at Harper Community College.

Having three departments present allowed staff to answer specific questions regarding the many different library services and show off the versatility of resources someone can benefit from at the library. Staff also offered giveaways, digital services activities, a button making craft, job and career kits, as well as ESL group session handouts and flyers marketing upcoming programming.



## **A Pop-Up Response to Senior Center Construction**

Due to flooring replacement, the Senior Center Reading Room was inaccessible for a day. Senior and Accessible Services (SAS) staff held a pop-up library in the Senior Center lobby for customers to pick up holds and check out material. Staff served a number of new customers who discovered us for the first time in the temporary location.





## Serving Our Community

### **Veterans Day Program: Operation Market Garden**

Veterans and their friends and family members appreciated the Veteran's Day history program presented by Arlington Heights battlefield expert and award-winning author, Robert Mueller. Mr. Mueller described the action and heroic efforts involved in the World War II operation known as Market Garden.



### **Arlingtones Performance and Veterans Day Reception**

On Sunday, November 13, 77 attendees joined Arlington Heights own *The Arlingtones* who served up different quartet configurations and performed songs throughout the decades. Programs and Exhibits staff hosted the celebration which began with the performers honoring branches of the service with a medley of tunes. The performance went on to include Beatles and Beach Boys, selections from the modern American songbook and even a sing-along which moved one couple to get up and dance. The event ended with a reception complete with refreshments.



## **The Arcade Age Pop-Ups**

Programs and Exhibits Specialist Emily Muszynski and Youth Services Specialist Ellie Richardson hosted two STEM-tastic pop-up events designed to enhance and celebrate the Arcade Age Exhibit. One hundred people dropped in on November 23 and 59 participated on November 29 to enjoy the activities, including making your own circuits and coding your own pixel picture. Retro activities were also a part of these events, including Spriographs, origami fortune tellers, and 8-bit character coloring sheets. There was also ‘retro’ technology for kids to explore, including chorded phones, early Apple devices, VHS tapes and a cassette player. Many of the children saw their first VHS at these pop-ups, and many adults relived memories of their youth – a theme we have been observing and loving since the exhibit opened.

## **Lego Night For Adults**

On November 3 Programs and Exhibits Specialist Emily Muszynski and Digital Media Specialist Chris Smith brought Lego Night to Arlington Ale House! Twenty-one adults of varying ages spent the night meeting, building, and competing in challenges. The casual and social night was such a good time with great feedback that staff plan to repeat the adult-exclusive program with even more nostalgic games and activities.

*“Super fun way to have a chill event for adults! I know a lot of adults who don't have much to do after work or don't have nights away from their kids, so it's really, really wonderful for the library to facilitate such fun events for adults!”*





## IDES Job Fair

Info Services Librarian Brittany Coleman partnered with the Illinois Department of Employment Security to host an all-industry Job Fair. On November 10, we welcomed job seekers and employers back to the library for this event. The last job fair was in November 2019, pre-pandemic. Job seekers had the opportunity to discuss potential job and/or internship openings with employers from various industries. We had 28 employers table the event and 78 job seekers in attendance. Represented employers ranged widely and included companies like Amazon, Luther Village, PACE, and Zurich North America.

Of those in attendance, 126 resumes were accepted; nine people were interviewed; and we were thrilled to hear that 24 individuals received job offers!

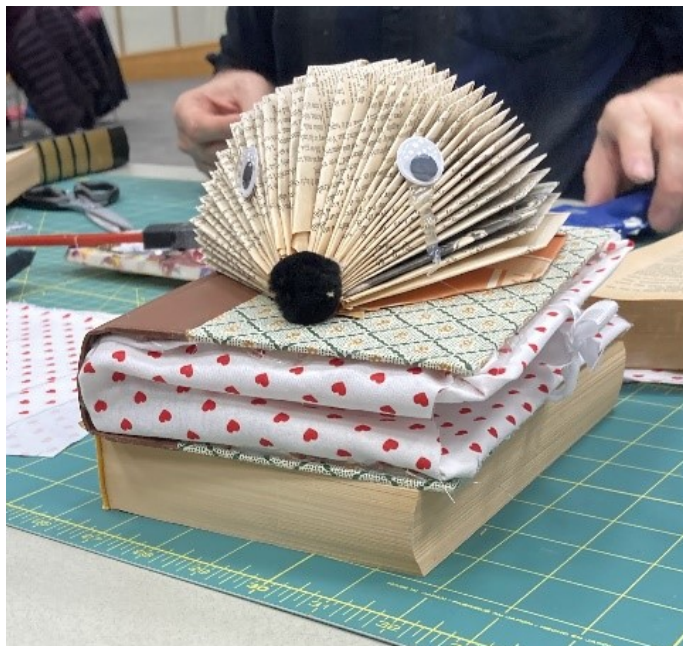


## Wider Lens: Rez Metal

Programs and Exhibits Specialist, Neal Parker, and Gina Roxas, Program Director and Medicinal Garden Project Manager at the Trickster Cultural Center, hosted the documentary Rez Metal for a special Wider Lens celebrating Native American Heritage Month. Attendees watched the film and then participated in a facilitated discussion led by Gina. Gina described the therapeutic role music plays in the lives of Indigenous Americans. She was also able to discuss related programming at Trickster like drum circles.

## Repurposed Book Crafts

Programs and Exhibits Specialist Emily Muszynski led an eager group of 23 crafters in repurposing books into decorations and gifts. She designed this hands-on workshop to encourage reuse and creativity. Using a generous donation of beautiful Reader's Digest books from the Friends of the Library, the crafters attending made book cover clutch purses and book page hedgehogs. Participants loved the creative environment and the chance to meet fellow crafters while making projects to take home.



## Get Help, Connect with Local Government

On November 29, the library hosted the last of a three-part series in 2022 of “Get Help, Connect with Local Government” community program. During this event, 11 customers found important services they were seeking through various interactions with office members from the state and federal government.

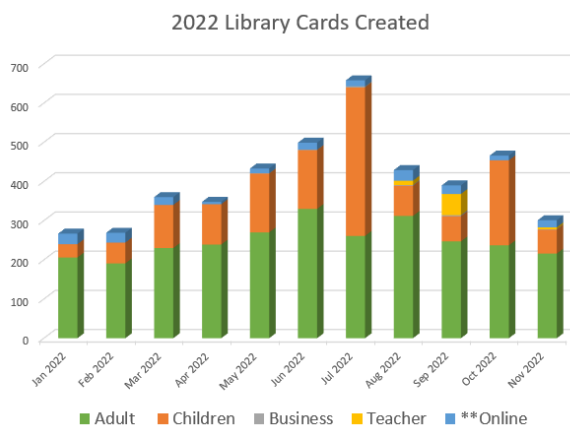
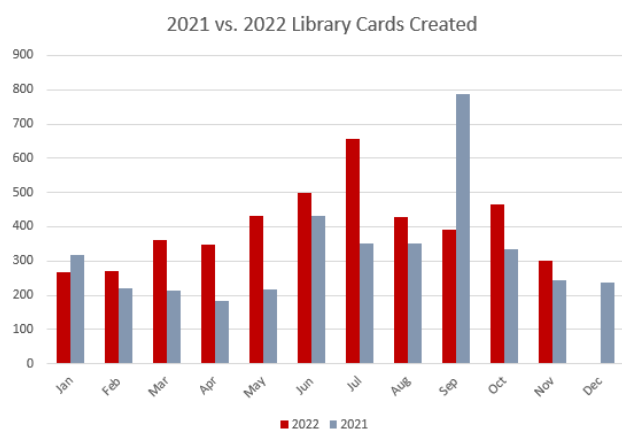


## Sunday Musicale: Ida y Vuelta

On November 20, Ida y Vuelta joined the Sunday Musicale lineup sponsored by Friends of the Library. Programs and Exhibits Assistant Jay Semla coordinated the performance by this skilled trio that's been together for ten years – and it shows! They played to a captive audience of 59, showcasing four instruments, including a beautiful-sounding medium-sized harp (a centerpiece of their sound). They introduced their instruments and gave context around the songs, their purpose, and the traditions they support. They also brought a small, traditional dance “floor” for dancing and gave demonstrations.

## Library Cards

In November, 301 new residents signed up for library cards. This is an increase of 22.86% over November 2021 (245). This increase seems to be due to both the additional outreach efforts of staff, as well as the introduction of the Arcade Age exhibit, which began November 19 and has brought in many customers who shared that they had not visited the library before.



Also, this month, 24 new library cards were issued and 16 renewals to students in District 23 through our partnership with Prospect Heights Public Library District. This annual partnership provides access to services and materials for students to use in the classroom and for personal enjoyment.

## Finance Program Illuminates Popular Database

Info Services Librarian Barb Powers worked with the library's database vendor Morningstar to coordinate an instructional program for our local audience with one of their trainers. The library's financial databases have consistent popularity with customers, many of whom are quite independent in their usage. A total of 22 individuals attended the demonstration program, learning to collect financial information, find reliable portfolio analysis, explore investment options, and get the most up-to-date financial news.



## **Genealogy Services Highlight Immigrant Ethnicities**

This fall has been a great representation of the variety of immigrant ethnicities. Genealogy and Local History Librarian Nikki Camp has been deliberate in planning and offering classes such as:

- Beginning Italian Genealogy (13 attendees)
- An Introduction to Japanese American Genealogy (20 attendees)
- Researching Mexican American Genealogy (7 attendees)
- They Came On This Ship (more general, 43 attendees)

Many customers have shared how valuable the focused programs are and express their gratitude. Nikki also conducted one-on-one appointments to assist customers with their genealogy research, providing resources and instruction so that they can uncover ancestors from backgrounds such as Italian, Irish, and more.

## **Makerplace Veterans Day of Service**

Lee Anne Davis spearheaded the Makerplace's first Day of Service for Veteran's Day 2022 which saw 68 visitors wanting to learn and lend a hand. The Makerplace was transferred into an open house full of making, demonstration, and most importantly opportunities to give back to the veterans in our community. Some of the day's festivities included:

- 3D printers creating and volunteers showcasing 3D printer assistive devices
- Sublimation and laser engraving gifts for veterans
- Sewing hats and scarves to donate to Operation Gratitude.
- Card making both to send to vets and blank cards for vets to send home
- A total of ten hats, 16 scarves, and 45 cards were made



With the success of this inaugural Makerplace program, staff are excited to learn customers are generous and interested in service projects. Staff are evaluating how the library might increase drop-in service days throughout the year.



## Makerplace Statistics

Now that the Makerplace has been open for a year, we can begin to compare statistics. This November's door count (1,235) is 24% higher than November 2021 (996).

The Makerplace Niche Academy page received 400 views in the month of November, the highest yet!

## Making Art

This month's "Inspired By" Art Night featured Van Gogh and still life setups. Makerspace staff led 17 customers in the basics of drawing from life, taking inspiration from Van Gogh's own still life paintings. After customers had finished their art, they were encouraged to use the Makerplace's new lightbox to take photos of their masterpieces!



## Ramp Reconstruction Completed



The Makerplace's exterior accessibility ramp was replaced this month. The freshly paved ramp is a great upgrade to the building and increases accessibility to the space.

## **Family Time at the Makerplace**

A family came in and spent the day learning how to use the Dremel and Epilog lasers to make presents for friends and family. They were able to customize the gifts to include Gujarati, a language from northern India.



## **Birthday Experience**

On a Sunday morning, two best friends came to the Makerplace for a birthday present. They said they've decided to give experiences instead of gifts. One of the ladies has retired and has been to the Makerplace many times (she told stories of making things with the Cricut and the laser cutters), but the other hadn't been before. The birthday experience was getting breakfast in downtown Arlington Heights and then having a painting lesson from one friend to another in the art space of the Makerplace. Both ladies left with a painting and a colored pencil piece.

## **Staff Highlights**

### **Outreach and Marketing for Underserved Populations**

Community Engagement Liaison Catalina Shin completed the ALA (American Library Association) eLearning Advanced Course "Outreach and Marketing for Underserved Populations" One of the biggest takeaways for Catalina during this course, was to look at the library's outreach services and initiatives through the lens of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion while building trust in the community. "Libraries should be able to meet their communities where they are instead of expecting them to find the library on their own." This advanced course explored different marketing strategies and tips for surveying the community. It focused on getting to understand and know our strengths and opportunities as a public service provider while we also recognizing the need of key stakeholders and community partners throughout the process.

## **Bibliotheca Insiders Community Event**

Community Engagement Liaison Catalina Shin attended the Bibliotheca Insiders Community Event in Skokie, Illinois. This event centered around EDI (Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion) and serving the most vulnerable customers. The first presentation focused on the benefits of having a social worker in the library and how, through community conversations, partnerships, and data analysis, Oak Park Public Library tackled different public health issues affecting their community.