

Executive Director's Report

May 2023

What's New @ AHML



Made at the Makerplace Stamp

Makerspace Branch Assistant Manager, Chris Krueger partnered with the library's creative design team to create a stamp that promotes items crafted at the Makerplace. Whenever customers come to pick up their 3D prints, they will find their paper bags stamped with "Made at the Makerplace".

Outreach and Community Engagement

Luther Village Book Discussion



Twenty Luther Village residents joined a discussion of Melanie Benjamin's book, *The Children's Blizzard*, led by Senior and Accessible Services Advisor Matt Weston. The book was inspired by the devastating storm that struck the Great Plains in 1888, threatening the lives of hundreds of immigrant homesteaders, especially schoolchildren. Several participants recalled family stories they heard about the events in their youth.

District 214 Bake-off

On April 6, the library partnered with District 214 to host a successful 2nd Annual Great District 214 Culinary Competition Bake-Off, sponsored by State Senator Ann Gillespie. Student teams from Buffalo Grove, Elk Grove and Rolling Meadows High Schools showcased their developing baking knowledge and skills for a judging panel composed of professional chefs, which included the Makerplace's Chef Brian Baseggio. The students of the winning teams were awarded \$10,000 in scholarships to Harper College's Culinary Arts Program.

World of Work

Circulation welcomed students from Greenbrier Elementary School on April 21 and Olive-Mary Stitt Elementary School on April 28 for World of Work (WoW). The WoW program gives students the opportunity to visit a local business that interests them and see what goes on behind the scenes. The students visited the circulation workroom, drive-up, and the bookmobile, and got to try their hand at checking in and out materials.



Multicultural Night at Ivy Hill

Arlington Heights Memorial Library staff represented the library at Ivy Hill Elementary School's first Multicultural Night. During this fun, diverse, and vibrant event, library staff interacted with **225** individuals. The library hosted a variety of activities celebrating the many cultures within the Arlington Heights community and provided an opportunity for participants to learn about each other and what the library has to offer. Seven people registered for new library cards at the event.



District 25 at Makerplace

On April 24, District 25 hosted their second annual administrative assistant appreciation outing at the Makerplace. SD25 staff participated in a cookie decorating competition, water bottle decorating and a building tour. Makerspace Specialist Kate Henry taught the basics of designing in Cricut and applying the vinyl cutouts while Culinary Advisor Brian Baseggio assisted in the kitchen.



Serving Our Community

Newborn Baby Cards

Baby cards continue to be a hit with the library's youngest customers and their parents. As seen on the library Instagram from April 24 - 'Happy National Library Week from one of the newest, if not youngest, Arlington Heights cardholders ever--11-day-old Riley Plummer! Riley's mom and dad came to the



library on one of their very first outings as a family of three and stopped by the Checkout Desk to get their new addition library card. They also took home one of the library's new tote bags featuring Dewey, a story time favorite in Kids' World. Welcome, Riley and happy reading!'

Financial Checkup for Retirees at the Senior Center



Senior and Accessible Services staff hosted **45** attendees at an April Senior Center program designed to help seniors review their financial health using a series of checklists. Topics ranged from organizing their information to protecting themselves from scams. Attendees appreciated the extensive knowledge, clear explanations and a lengthy Q & A after the presentation provided by Financial Educator Karen Chan.

Week of the Young Child (WOYC)

Youth Services staff celebrated the Week of the Young Child with a diaper drive, daily drop-in activities, the Bumps & Babies Resource Fair and participating in the District 214 Week of the Young Child Expo. The celebration was kicked off at the WOYC Expo at Forest View Educational Center on Wednesday, April 5. Library staff interacted with **310** attendees who learned about library resources and were able to sign up for library cards. The library hosted a diaper drive for the second year to benefit the families of District 214's Women's and Children's Center (WCC). Throughout the week in Kids' World, families were invited to participate in themed activities encouraging movement and healthy lifestyles. WOYC concluded with the second annual Bumps & Babies Resource Fair on Saturday, April 15. The fair included **17** community organizations and businesses that connected with **76** expectant parents.

Ivy Hill Wax Museum

Over two days, Youth Services staff welcomed five classes of **116** fifth graders from Ivy Hill Elementary School. Students learned how to use the library's catalog and how to locate books in Kids' World. Everyone left with a biography to use for their Wax Museum project in which they dress up as a famous person and give a short, informational speech about that person's life. During their visit, the students also had a chance to learn how to draw a famous person and make paper lanterns, one of the monthly DIY kits that we offer for tweens.



AARP Tax Assistance

The library provided space for the AARP Tax Help Aide volunteers who assisted in preparing tax returns for **462** customers. This was 23% more returns than last year. Eighty-two percent of the customers were age 60 or older. AARP served the lower income senior population in our community.

The top eight communities AARP served at the library were:

- Arlington Heights 251
- Palatine 32
- Buffalo Grove 30
- Des Plaines 22
- Mount Prospect 20
- Wheeling 20
- Rolling Meadows 19
- Schaumburg 14

Tax Forms

The tax table was up from February 1-April 21. During that time, 10,254 federal tax and state tax forms were distributed, including forms in Spanish. The table included a display of books on personal finance, tax preparation, estate planning and circulated **198** items.

The popular self-print station was also available from February 1-April 21 where customers printed approximately **4,200** sheets on paper.

Between January 1-April 21 the Tax Information page on our website received **3,364** views.

Small Business Coffee and Connect Continues to Grow

Small Business Coffee & Connect is becoming a known, reliable networking option for local organizations with its highest-ever attendance at 38. Business Advisor Diane Malik is seeing people reach out to her after hearing about the event via word of mouth, and individuals from the business community now actively refer others to the group. Our new Info Services Librarian Megan Buttera introduced herself to the group and was able to learn about the wide range of businesses and nonprofits in attendance.



Earth Month 2023

On Tuesday, April 11, Programs and Exhibits staff led Bee Hotel workshops where a total of **25** bee lovers learned about native solitary bees and then enjoyed a hands-on activity using recycled materials to make hotels for bees. A nearly zero-waste program, participants used plastic bottles and cans from their own homes and recycled materials from around the library to create a cozy place for bees to nest!



On Wednesday, April 19, Programs and Exhibits Specialist Neal Parker curated a very lively session of Wider Lens with *WASTED! The Story of Food Waste*. Twenty-five attended to learn more about the topic and to join the discussion facilitated by Mary Beth Schaye, a Zero Waste Consultant from Collective Resource Compost. About a third of those in attendance were already composting and the rest were interested in starting.

Illinois Libraries Present

On Wednesday, April 5, actor, author, and now restaurateur Danny Trejo joined more than **2,000** attendees across the state to talk Tacos, Hollywood, and Redemption. He was joined in conversation by Evanston's Rebecca Mendoza and the event was the first Illinois Libraries Present (ILP) event presented with Spanish captioning available. Danny spoke warmly and candidly on many topics including his time as an actor in some of his most famous movies like *Spy Kids*. He wasn't afraid to touch on harder hitting topics like addiction, recovery, mental illness, and toxic masculinity within Hispanic culture. He also talked about his favorite tacos and what made him want to write a cookbook.

On Thursday, April 20, editor of *The New York Times* crossword puzzle, and the world's only academically accredited puzzle master, Will Shortz, shared *The Secrets of a Puzzle Master* with an enthusiastic crowd of more than **2,500**. Shortz showed a PowerPoint while telling the story of how he became an accredited puzzle master. He then answered questions from a huge group of puzzle fans, covering everything from his favorite writing utensil (which, to everyone's surprise was an erasable pen!) and his love of Wordle (he plays every day, and usually gets it right, but on the day of the event he broke his 400-day streak by failing to correctly guess "Joker.") Shortz created a custom crossword puzzle for Illinois library patrons - Literary Land of Lincoln - on the occasion of this event. 107 Arlington Heights customers attended, and the recording will remain available through June 30.

Between these events, Illinois Libraries Present was featured in the Bibliophile column in the Chicago Tribune's Arts + Entertainment section. Columnist John Warner spoke with ILP co-founder and Programs and Exhibits Manager, Jennifer Czajka, for this piece which garnered incredibly wide interest. Some highlights: "[Jennifer] told me that while the programming was meant as a way to connect when folks were spending lots of time at home, the trend of patrons wanting more programming to come to them in their homes was already underway pre-pandemic and has only accelerated as people have become increasingly "comfortable" with the technology. Accessibility is core to the overall library mission, and Czajka and ILP have heard from numerous patrons, who for reasons of desire or disability, prefer to engage from the "warmth of home.""

John Warner's takeaway: "For me, this is a reminder that libraries are not just a place, but an idea, an expression of shared public resources used for public good without cost being a barrier to entry. This spirit permeates the organizing principles of Illinois Libraries Present, as libraries of different sizes provide funding for the program on a sliding scale, based on the library budget."

Roya Naldi Band delights!

Monthly Sunday Musicales performances continue to offer quality entertainment and welcome new faces to the library thanks to the curation of Programs and Exhibits Assistant Jay Semla. On April 16, the extremely talented Roya Naldi Band brought out **125** music enthusiasts to their first library performance ever! This piano, saxophone/clarinet, trumpet, upright bass and vocals ensemble brought an authentic performance of vintage jazz from the 1920s and 1930s to Hendrickson Room. There was a clear buzz of energy in the audience, who was appreciative of the style of songs, gave copious positive feedback and even stayed afterwards to chat with the performers and one another.

Assisting Palatine Library During Laser Cutter Downtime



Susan Conner, Technology Manager at Palatine Library, reached out on a Saturday in April with a dilemma. The Palatine Library Maker Space had a popular laser cutter that was offline due to a broken part. Makerplace staff were happy to extend resources to the Palatine Library customers and will continue to do so until their laser cutter is operational again. This has been a great opportunity to strengthen the library's relationship with a neighbor and to promote the benefits of having a Makerplace in the community.

Intro to Crochet

The Makerplace was delighted to host Lynneanne Pearson, an outside presenter, who taught an introductory crochet class to a room of **16** enthusiastic customers. Crochet is a popular fiber art and Lynneanne taught the basics of crochet, including how to make a chain, single crochet, and double crochet. She also showed participants how to read a pattern and gave tips for working with different types of yarn.

April Inspired By Art Night

Inspired By Art Night for April celebrated Earth Day by creating collagraphs and printing designs on reusable tote bags. The artist inspiration was provided by Lotta Jansdotter, a successful textile artist known for her nature-inspired designs. The class promoted a new printmaking kit developed at the Makerplace and the Inspired By Art Night reading list available on the library's website. The **17** participants expressed interest in returning to try the lino cutter for block printing.



Seed Swap and Garden Swaps

On Earth Day weekend, the Programs and Exhibits team kicked off another season of garden and produce swaps with a spring seed swap. Seventeen gardeners met at the Makerplace to swap vegetable, herb, and flower seeds and gardening tips. New this year- a master gardener from the University of Illinois Extension will be available at every monthly garden and produce swap. During the seed swap, Master Gardener John helped several new gardeners plan out their gardens and choose seeds that best fit their space. Garden and produce swaps continue outside the Makerplace every fourth Sunday of the month through September.

Fresh Focaccia

Baker extraordinaire, instructor Andrea Pracht, delivered another excellent breadmaking class in the Makerplace kitchen. Programs and Exhibits staff welcomed her for back-to-back, hands-on focaccia classes. Over the two classes, **34** attendees stretched, shaped, and seasoned focaccia dough Andrea had pre-made. While those were baking, attendees made their own dough, kneading and letting it rest, then they were then able to take it home to bake later.



Hands-on Opportunity

"I'm an engineer and my friends who are also engineers talk about how we never get to do real hands-on work anymore. We mostly enter information into Excel all day. This place is amazing and has so much to do, I'm so excited to get back to the things I love doing." Customer who was the president of his 3D print club at college but has since not had the opportunity to indulge his creative side.

Personal Touch at a Fraction of the Cost

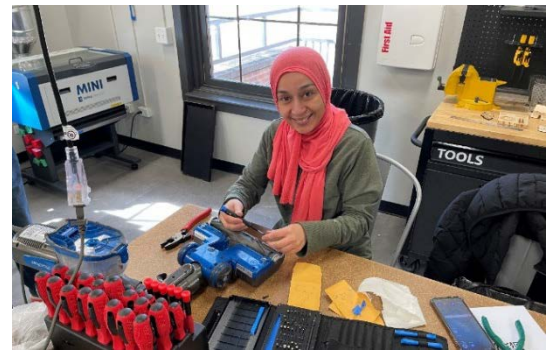
Rich, a local woodworker who uses the Arlington Heights Park District Wood Shop to create handmade pipes, stopped by to use the Makerplace's laser engraver to give his wooden pipes a personal touch! He had been paying a hefty fee to send his pipes out to be engraved with his signature, but with the help of Makerplace staff, he was able to learn how to use the Epilog Mini 24 laser engraver and engrave six pipes in under an hour!



This Customer Really Cleaned Up!

A customer took her broken vacuum apart and worked with Makerplace staff to find diagrams of the vacuum. But that wasn't all! She also got help from a gentleman who was laser engraving a cup and knew a thing or two about vacuums. He managed to get the clog out of the brush and get the vacuum working again!

She left staff with two valuable lessons: never give up and you never know who might be able to help you out!



Staff Highlights

Surprise Visit from a Senior Phone Program and Library Delivery Customer



Longtime Senior Phone Program participant and Library Delivery Services customer Giovanna B. stopped by in April to visit the Senior and Accessible Services staff. Her daughter-in-law Elvira brought her to the library so Giovanna could thank the staff who provide her services each week and “put faces to the names”. She was excited to snap a photo with Senior and Accessible Services Supervisor Katie Myers to post on her fridge. Giovanna shared that “the weekly phone program is a highlight of my week,” and that she is “grateful to have met new people and made new friends.” She is very appreciative of the staff and volunteers who call her weekly for the phone program or help with her

delivery items. Senior and Accessible Services Advisor Janet McDonnell “does a wonderful job of picking stories and leading a discussion that I look forward to every week. Each week is unique, and I always enjoy it!”

Butterfly Wishes

The library’s butterfly garden is taken care of and developed by staff who generously volunteer their time to make it a unique outdoor space for the community. The butterfly garden team worked with Makerplace Advisor Alle Volz to create laser-cut acrylic garden signs so that everyone can easily identify the many beautiful plants growing outside the library.

