

ILLINOIS LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

REPORTER

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The Illinois Library Association Reporter

is a forum for those who are improving and reinventing Illinois libraries, with articles that seek to: explore new ideas and practices from all types of libraries and library systems; examine the challenges facing the profession; and inform the library community and its supporters with news and comment about important issues. The *ILA Reporter* is produced and circulated with the purpose of enhancing and supporting the value of libraries, which provide free and equal access to information. This access is essential for an open democratic society, an informed electorate, and the advancement of knowledge for all people.



ON THE COVER

The Helen M. Plum Memorial Library (Helen Plum Library) was first located in the home of Colonel William Plum who bequeathed his estate to the Village of Lombard in his will, stipulating the house become a free library and the estate converted into a public park in memorial to his wife, Helen. The library moved to a newly constructed two-story building in the early 1960s. In 1976, a referendum was passed to build a 22,300-square-foot addition, bringing the total square footage to 34,300. With a growing population and desire to remain in the downtown area, a space-needs survey was completed in 2001 that showed the need for a 79,000-square-foot-building in the next 20 years. Finally, in 2016 a referendum for a new building and increased operating budget was passed. Helen Plum Library kicked off National Library Week with their open house the weekend of April 22 & 23, 2023.

The Illinois Library Association is collaboratively shaping a new future for libraries in Illinois, providing leadership, advocacy, partnership, and learning for the benefit of Illinois libraries. It is the eighth oldest library association in the world and the third largest state association in the United States, with members in academic, public, school, government, and special libraries. Its 3,000 members are primarily librarians and library staff, but also trustees, publishers, and other supporters.

The Illinois Library Association has six full-time staff members. It is governed by a sixteen-member executive board, made up of elected officers. The association employs the services of Blaida and Associates for legislative advocacy. ILA is a 501(c)(3) charitable and educational organization.

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See ILA calendar for submission deadlines for the *ILA Reporter*. Copy should be submitted by email to ila@ila.org. You are encouraged to include press-ready digital photos (300 p.p.i.) and graphics with your articles, which will be included on a space-available basis.

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Library Buildings

2023

Twenty public libraries are showcased this year. These libraries range from those serving populations under 2,000 all the way up to over 88,000 in communities across the state. Bright childrens' and teen spaces, meeting and activity rooms, and an emphasis on accessibility are the prominent focus of the featured libraries. Two libraries have historic dome renovations. One library is in a completely new building and another has added a new branch in a renovated building. It's evident from the patrons' quotes in the "What people are saying" sections that libraries continue to be important places to meet, learn, work, study, connect, and more for their communities.

Antioch Public Library District



Architect:	Studio GC
Construction Firm:	Henry Bros. Co.
Type of project:	Renovation/Expansion
Total cost:	\$9.7 Million
Service population:	25,814
Library director:	Jennifer Drinka

What people are saying:

"The renovation is incredible! I can tell the director put her whole heart into it. I am so glad that the community voted and I'm proud that I did too – what a gift to our town!"

"I'm so glad the renovation's done! It looks so nice and libraries are so important. You cannot have a community without a library."

"The library is so beautiful! I haven't been in for a while, but it is in my heart. The library has been good to me. It's hard to be a female in the outside world. Here, I feel like a human being."



Arlington Heights Memorial Library



Photo Credit: Stephanie Battista

Architect:	Williams Architects
Construction Firm:	Shales McNutt Construction
Type of project:	Renovation
Total cost:	\$745,000
Service population:	77,676
Library director:	Mike Driskell

About the Project:

This renovation focused on a refresh of Kids' World, including a new Tween Zone and an Everbright wall.

What people are saying:

"There is so much variety and different areas to enjoy. The kids love going from one area or activity to the other, and it really helps build their independence."

"I've been coming to the library with my granddaughter since she was a baby. Now she is a tween and can enjoy her own space, which is just so awesome."

"There are a lot more interactive and hands-on things for kids to do, it's not just books anymore. My kids love the new light-up wall, it's one of their favorite things."



Photo Credit: Kmiecik Imagery



Bellwood Public Library



Photo Credit: Bellwood Public Library

Architect:	product architecture + design
Construction Firm:	Frederick Quinn Corp.
Type of project:	Renovation
Total cost:	\$2.4 Million
Service population:	18,789
Library director:	Amy Crump

What people are saying:

"Wow!" The most common reaction as people enter, stop, and take a look around.

"A big shout-out to the new Bellwood Library! It is so nice, clean and beautiful."

"Library looks great. New downstairs is really nice."





Bradford Public Library District



Architect:	The Farnsworth Group
Construction Firm:	O'Shea Builders
Type of project:	Renovation
Total cost:	\$253,007
Service population:	1,437
Library director:	Sarah Boehm

About the Project:

Focusing on accessibility, this renovation included a lift to access all three levels, stairs widened and reconfigured to be less steep, restroom expansion, and a new entrance ramp.

What people are saying:

"It's beautiful!"

"I can't believe the difference and that now everyone can easily access all areas."

"The library board has saved for years for this project and now it has finally happened with the help of the community through a fundraiser. Small towns are great!"



Byron Public Library District



Architect:	Dewberry
Construction Firm:	Shales McNutt Construction
Type of project:	Renovation
Total cost:	\$1 Million
Service population:	8,000
Library director:	Emily Porter

What people are saying:

"A great asset for the community! There is something there for everyone."

"Our wise, tax dollar investment provides safe, generational learning experiences, and stimulates practical and whimsical talents within the soul. Byron's pride!"

"Thoughtful and great use of space! Will serve the community well."

"The addition is great service to the community. The sewing classes are booked the same day that the signing is opened to the public. It is very tastefully decorated. I showed it to some visitors, and they were very impressed that a small town like Byron has a library like this."

"It is nice to be on the 1st floor and to have a room that is large enough for our needs but not so large as the room upstairs."

"Shortly after I moved to Byron in 2008, the library was opened. At that time, it was a nice library, one of the best in the area. It supported the community in many ways. Since the renovations in 2023 they greatly expanded their ability to support the community and the surrounding area as well. The expansion was well thought out. The extra rooms enhanced the ability to create additional activities for the public. The teen room, knitting club, and bridge club all have a designated room they can meet at. Also, the newly created sewing and craft area was an excellent addition. Additional meeting rooms were included in the renovations. I can now honestly say that because of the new renovation and the library staff that the Byron Library is the best library that I have ever been in. Byron should be proud"



Champaign Public Library



Architect:	Dan Pohrte & Tiffany Nash, product architecture + design
Construction Firm:	F. H. Paschen
Type of project:	Expansion
Total cost:	\$3,216,000
Service population:	88,302
Library director:	Brittany Millington

About the Project:

Named “The Studio” this expansion dedicated 8,000 sq ft. for an innovative makerspace with recording studios, Cricut machines, 3D printers, and much more.

What people are saying:

“This is big, this is how they grow up to be engineers!” – parent observing their kids using the Glowforge laser cutter (with assistance).

“I’m really excited to be able to record myself reading books for my grandson. He’s turning one soon.” – a grandmother after one-on-one training in the new recording studio.

“Look at all this cool stuff down here for us.”
“This place is perfect.” “This place is so awesome.” – teens on the first day open.



Ela Area Public Library



Architect:	product architecture + design
Construction Firm:	Lamp Incorporated
Type of project:	Renovation/Expansion
Total cost:	\$3,506,000
Service population:	36,366
Library director:	Lauren Rosenthal

What people are saying:

"The Children's Department is one of our favorite spots. The colorful new tiles and improved lighting make the area even more inviting."

"Whenever I need a meeting space, I always come here. The aesthetic features and available technology make it the perfect place to meet."

"The conference room is a wonderful upgrade to an already beautiful library. Thank you for making it available to use for free."



Fremont Public Library



Architect:	Kristin Richardson, Engberg Anderson Architects
Construction Firm:	Shales McNutt Construction
Type of project:	Renovation/Expansion
Total cost:	\$1.8 Million
Service population:	38,792
Library director:	Scott Davis (Retired), Becky Ingram (Assistant Director/ Project Manager), Laura Long (Director)

About the Project:

This project included expanding into the previously unfinished “shell space” built in 2001, which allowed for more windows, the creation of a dedicated teen hang out and study space, and several other amenities.

What people are saying:

“I like how you have all the things set up now. Congratulations!”

“I used to be a bitter complainer of the library taxes, but I am a changed man. Now that I’m using the library frequently, I think you guys do a great job with all you do. I’m happy to pay the money.”

“Everything looks great! How do we vote that we love it?!”



Helen Plum Library



Architect:	Engberg Anderson Architects
Construction Firm:	Frederick Quinn Corp.
Type of project:	New Building
Total cost:	\$27,704,004
Service population:	43,856
Library director:	Claudia Krauspe, March 2021–September 2023; Anne Luzeniecki, September 2023–Present

What people are saying:

"The new library building is a treasure of Lombard. The environment is filled with natural light and modern features that the previous building lacked. The book checkout process is smooth and the library staff are friendly and helpful. Patrons may also enjoy nonbook amenities such as study rooms, computer lab, and makerspace."

"The new library is beautiful with tall windows, letting in lots of natural light. Lots of inventory, new technology, and services available! Excited for this updated addition to our neighborhood."

"This library is amazing! The natural light that touches almost every single surface is so refreshing. I love how the place is organized and there are a few computers around the aisles that are like card catalogs so you can find whatever you might be looking for. Tablets for the kids to use, a play area for the kids, reading nooks, a place to lay down and read! Activity rooms for crafts and a whole upstairs for adults! A drive thru book dropoff! Oh my gosh, I am in love with this library!"



Highwood Library & Community Center



Photo Credit: Diana J Guerrero

Architect:	845 Design Group
Construction Firm:	W.B. Olson, Inc.
Type of project:	Renovation
Total cost:	\$4.3 Million
Service population:	5,335
Library director:	Laura Ramirez

What people are saying:

"It feels like I'm in another place – everything is so beautiful, with vibrant colors, and everything has been modernized for the 21st century."

"We love the new seating in the YA area and it feels like a comfortable space for us to just hang out in!"

"It's so wonderful that we have our own dedicated and cozy healing space for therapy."

"Such a great asset to the community!"



Photo Credit: Diana J Guerrero



Photo Credit: Rod Pickett Photography



Photo Credit: Rod Pickett Photography



Photo Credit: Rod Pickett Photography



Photo Credit: Rod Pickett Photography

Homer Township Public Library



Architect:	Engberg Anderson Architects
Construction Firm:	RoMAAS, Inc.
Type of project:	Expansion
Total cost:	\$2.9 Million
Service population:	40,759
Library director:	Sheree Kozel-La Ha

What people are saying:

"Terrific expansion! With tons of windows, inviting colors, and natural light, the library has created a perfect space for my friends to meet together! We socialize with so many other families here!"

"I appreciate both new additions. The sunroom with 3 walls of windows – you feel like you are sitting outdoors, which is very calming and just so beautiful. The Youth expansion is the community meeting place now. Great vision to have diner booths, so we can see out to an Art Garden patio with a gazebo and Veterans Fountain. I love my library – and can always find a perfect space to enjoy a book, study, or meet friends."

"There is a super comfortable new patio and tons of outdoor seating, even a gazebo. Great option with the community park next door and they even connected a sidewalk to the park!"

"I love the Kids Room's exuberant colors and moveable wall made of glass. We can see the programs going on in the story time room and the wall retracts in a super-cool way. The new space is a giant, bright space for families. Very appealing to my kids, too."

"Great use of taxpayer money. My library (and the staff) are AMAZING!"



Julia Hull District Library



Architect:	Emily Christiansen & Erin O’Keefe, Studio GWA
Construction Firm:	Sjostrom & Sons
Type of project:	Renovation
Total cost:	\$332,500
Service population:	8,022
Library director:	Joanna Kluever

What people are saying:

“I have always loved our library but the recent renovations have made the space feel brighter, friendlier, and even more inviting.”

“Taking my 6-year-old grandson to see the newly renovated library, I think he said it best: ‘Wow, Grandma! This is really nice!’ And I have to agree. From the colors and designs for the carpet, to the furniture and the walls: everything just says happy.”

“The remodel adds a modern, welcoming, and fun ambience to an already wonderful library.”



Lake Forest Library



Architect:	Wiss, Janey, Elstner Associates
Construction Firm:	L. Marshall Roofing & Sheet Metal
Type of project:	Historic Dome Restoration
Total cost:	\$1,120,800
Service population:	19,000
Library director:	Ishwar Laxminarayan

About the Project:

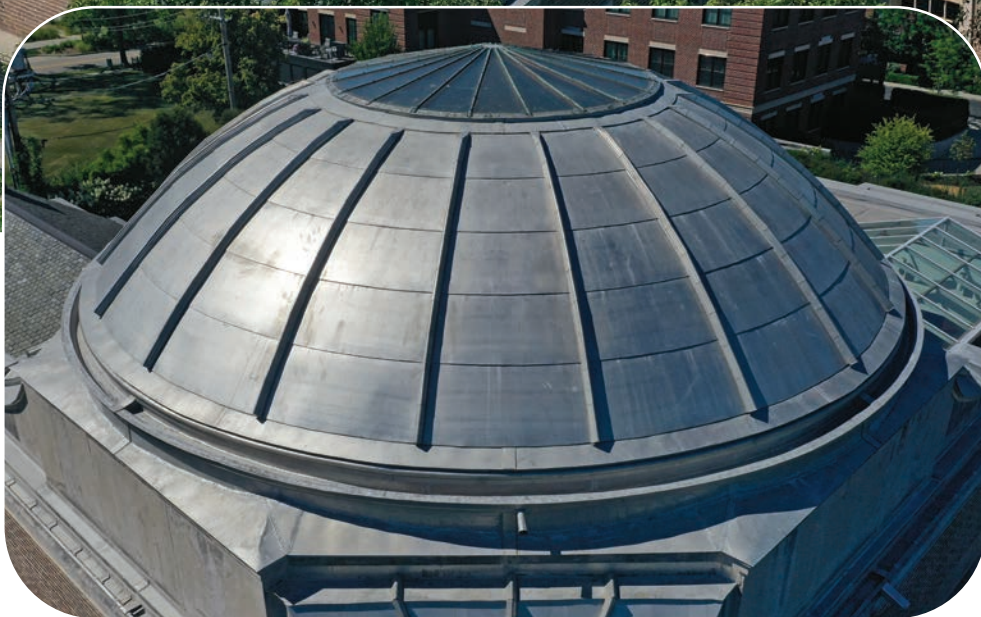
200 panels made of Freedom Gray zinc/tin copper by Revere were installed and all the copper work was custom fabricated. A new inlaid gutter and copper saddles at the corners with downspouts improve the flow of water runoff while the interior has 3" foil insulation to provide an enhanced thermal barrier. Two pieces of damaged glass in the historic skylight were replaced with new.

What people are saying:

"The whole city is delighted the dome is being repaired."

"It is a small jewel box of a building."

"It's a gem of a building. It needed some love and care. You've done some beautiful work."



Lisle Library District



Architect:	Sheehan Nagle Hartray Architects – A Woolpert Company
Construction Firm:	Camosy Construction Inc.
Type of project:	Full Renovation/ New Entrances
Total cost:	\$7.7 Million
Service population:	30,281
Library director:	Tatiana Weinstein

About the Project:

The goal was to provide a more accessible, functional, and convenient Library for patrons. This was done by adding family restrooms, a drive-up service window, additional elevator, two entrances to maximize parking, installing right-sized and well-placed public service desks, and doubling the space in Youth Services.

What people are saying:

“Love the kids’ play area! So many textures and colors. The LiteZilla is amazing!”

“The layout is so much more convenient and efficient. It’s incredible that the Library seemed to increase space while remaining in the same footprint.”



Lyons Public Library



Architect:	Lukasik & Associates
Construction Firm:	Construction Solutions of Illinois
Type of project:	Ceiling Renovation
Total cost:	\$225,718
Service population:	10,552
Library director:	Dan Hilker

What people are saying:

"The building looks more modern and welcoming with the new ceiling and the LED lighting."

"The new ceiling makes it easy to hang attachments throughout the building."

"Someplace where I want to take my children."

"The old tiles looked like they were going to fall out of the air. Glad they are gone."

"The new ceiling & LED lighting made the building look cleaner."

"The children's area appears bigger and the ceiling helps deaden the sound."



Mount Carroll District Library



Architect:	Winter Design, Inc.
Construction Firm:	Winter Construction Inc.
Type of project:	Renovation/Expansion
Total cost:	\$2.6 Million
Service population:	2,582
Library director:	Pam Naples (Director), Laurel Bergren (Trustee & Construction Project Manager)

What people are saying:

"The library is a warm, welcome sanctuary of calm in a crazy world."

"I love the flow between the old and new portions with almost no alteration to the original historic Carnegie building."

"The space, technology, and programming/meeting room are clearly assets to the patrons and the community."

"I can't believe this library is in Mount Carroll, Illinois!"

"Wow!"



New Lenox Public Library District



Architect:	Studio GC
Construction Firm:	Lo Destro Construction Company
Type of project:	Renovation
Total cost:	\$1,208,000
Service population:	40,933
Library director:	Michelle Krooswyk

What people are saying:

"I love that we have a bigger space to be creative together. I'm excited to see all the new classes that are taking place in the Studio! We are so lucky to have this space in New Lenox."

"Wonderful facelift...good job all!"

"The new space is so open and bright. It doesn't even look like the same building! It's great to see this wonderful update to the library."

"The extra meeting space makes it much more convenient for our group to hold meetings."



Rock Island Public Library - Watts-Midtown Branch



Architect:	Studio 483 Architects
Type of project:	Renovation/Expansion
Total cost:	\$9.9 Million (Library 35% of this total.)
Service population:	46,868
Library director:	Angela Campbell

About the Project:

This branch was added to the Rock Island Public Library network in 2023 and is one of only a handful of jointly shared Library/YMCA facilities in the United States.

What people are saying:

"This new facility is such a beautiful asset to the community. I appreciate the later hours and the clean, bright, and focused environment. We deserve to invest in ourselves and this is a great example that I hope inspires."

"Best thing to happen in Rock Island for quite some time!"

"We love sitting out back in the summer to read!"

"I love the convenience of being connected to the Y. I'm reading more physical books instead of E-books now that I can get a workout in and drop off/pick up books in one stop! Great collaboration!"

"Love the friendly and helpful staff. Also the big windows that let in lots of natural light."

"What a dream to have a library AND a Y in walkable distance!"



Streator Public Library



Dome Restoration:	Oosterbaan Painting
Mural Restoration:	Parma Conservation
Type of project:	Historic Dome & Mural Restoration
Total cost:	\$306,819
Service population:	12,500
Library director:	Cynthia Maxwell

About the Project:

This project was funded in part by the Save America's Treasures Grant Restoration Project.

What people are saying:

"Wow!"

"Beautifully done!"

"Great pictures, even more beautiful in person."

"They [the murals] are absolutely beautiful."



University Park Public Library District



Architect:	product architecture + design
Type of project:	Expansion
Total cost:	\$1 Million
Service population:	7,145
Library director:	Tracy Ducksworth

What people are saying:

"The new room is fantastic! My line dancing students love the space, love the floor, and appreciate the ability to stretch out!"

"The new room is fresh, visually stunning, and has an ambiance of muted extravagance."



Congratulations to our client

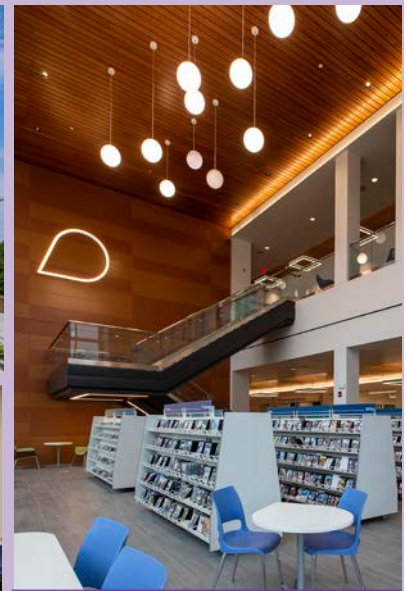


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CALL FOR ANNUAL CONFERENCE PROPOSALS



Illinois Library Association
Annual Conference 2024 | October 8–10 | Peoria, IL

The ILA 2024 Annual Conference Program Committee is seeking program proposals for this year's conference. **The deadline for submissions is April 5, 2024.**

Join us on a journey that will spark imagination and innovation as we celebrate the dynamic role we play in initiating creativity, inspiring new ideas and fostering innovation within our communities.

Our conference this year will be in Peoria, located in the heart of Illinois, where we'll explore how we can enrich relationships that spark:

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NEW: Speakers are eligible for a conference registration discount of **20% off** their appropriate fee.

<https://bit.ly/ILAAC24proposals>



ILA Illinois Library Association

Stephen Jackson: A DiversiTEA Recap

The ILA Diversity Committee asked Stephen Jackson to speak at the 2023 DiversiTEA event at the ILA Annual Conference. Jackson is the Director of Equity and Anti-Racism at Oak Park Public Library (OPPL). Jackson began working at OPPL in 2016 to integrate social services into the public library. In 2019, he spearheaded the formation of their Teen Services Department, creating new programming and services for teen patrons.

Stephen Jackson shared his experiences with the intent to inspire and motivate other libraries to take on similar initiatives. His current position at OPPL, created in 2021, supports the library's Anti-Racism Strategic Plan. The Plan proactively addresses issues of systemic racism within the library. Jackson is not a librarian, but one of the growing numbers of mental health professionals working within public libraries. He has a Master of Science in Clinical Mental Health Counseling and a Bachelor of Arts in Behavioral Sciences from National Louis University.

Jackson emphasized the importance of building connections within our communities and finding ways to meet the needs of marginalized populations. He explained the importance of engaging in restorative practices: proactive actions to reduce or prevent harm, and restorative justice: reactive actions to repair the well-being of those harmed. His primary method of enacting restorative practices is the use of Peace Circles. These practices have their roots in Indigenous American cultures and focus on providing all participants the opportunity to tell their story.

The audience of the DiversiTEA event participated in a Peace Circle as Jackson took us through this process. A Peace Circle provides a consistent structure that ensures restorative practices are being used. This includes checking in with each participant at the beginning and end of the experience, icebreakers, and an understanding of shared values to create a fun and welcoming environment. These experiences involve a specific topic and a talking piece (an object) that is passed around, so everyone gets a chance to share. The result of the Peace Circle is a better understanding of each other and the creation of a plan with action items to complete in moving forward.

Jackson shared lessons about the importance of finding community and common ground, recognizing that "Everyone has something to offer. Everyone is their own expert, and everyone has the chance to change."

Social service programs and a focus of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in libraries are relatively new but gaining popularity. In a follow-up interview with the ILA Diversity Committee, Jackson commented that he felt it was important to have roles like his in libraries where the majority of library workers are white women.

"Diversity when you are talking about gender and race is predominant when we are talking about the library profession. In 2016, when I integrated into the library profession, I felt that presence and I saw exactly what the numbers say and for a lot of people who may not come from that demographic it can be a very uncomfortable position; and, sometimes there is mistreatment that goes along with that. I think it is a profession that needs positions like this, but at a leadership level, and with decision making power."

“Everyone has something to offer.
Everyone is their own expert, and
everyone has the chance to change.”



Photo Credit: Alex Pryber



Photo Credit: Alex Pryber

Oak Park Public Library has been intentionally focusing on anti-racism for over a decade and has been proactively taking steps to further their DEI initiatives. Jackson was part of the Anti-Racism Committee that, in 2020, participated in an equity audit of OPPL. Jackson revealed that “a lot of information came to us about how the people felt about the library. One of the initiatives to come out of that was to become an anti-racist organization.”

Jackson had a hand in helping the Anti-Racism Committee write the job description for the Director of Equity and Anti-Racism but it wasn't until he started sharing the open position with friends and colleagues that it occurred to him to apply. A friend pointed out that the job description was all the things he was already doing. When asked about how he saw his role at OPPL he said, “I look at it as being an internal consultant; you are assessing, looking at things, adding trainings, and helping the organization reach its mission, its vision, and its values.”

Jackson also recounted some of the programs and initiatives that have been a success. He was hired by a social worker at OPPL, who had been hired six months prior to Stephen's hiring, to aid in the goal of increasing access to resources. In 2017, the library went fine free. In 2020, the library adopted an Anti-Racism Strategic Plan. This provided a structure to move forward. Since then, they conducted the equity audit and adopted an Anti-Racism Workplace Policy.

Jackson recognizes that not all libraries are the same and that our communities are all unique. When asked for advice on where others should start Jackson said, “Ask the community, equity audit is foundational to finding out where the gaps are. You may find a group of people who you didn't even know were there.” He also stressed the importance of finding creative ways to bring people together. “You need to provide the opportunity and the safe space, that is where the Peace Circles come in, in creating that atmosphere and dynamic where there is that level of trust.”

He gave advice on how to face obstacles along the way, the most common question being “How does this apply to libraries?” Jackson suggested starting with a pilot program, something that doesn't cost the organization any money but can demonstrate a benefit to the community. He used this model to increase teen services. At the time OPPL didn't have an independent Teen Services Department, but by offering more programs, both the library and the community saw the benefit of having more programming and resources for teens. This gave Jackson the opportunity to suggest the creation of a Teen Services Department instead of the previous “Adult and Teen Services” model. This led to his second role at OPPL as the Head of Teen Services.

“Ask the community, equity audit is foundational to finding out where the gaps are.”

Jackson admits that “We have been blessed to have a board that really represents our community. They are a caring and a loving board that trusts our professional judgment when we put recommendations up.” He also recognizes that this is not always the case. “When you help the least of the people in the community you are actually helping the [larger] community. Some people don’t see the impact of it and the value in that.”

For those who are facing barriers he encourages that “If it is your passion work, if it is in your heart to do these things, you are just going to do them and people will see the value in that work. People come to talk to us about people experiencing homelessness. This is the library and we have resources and connections and will assist people but this is a larger community issue than it is a library issue. Since we are a library for everyone we are going to make sure that they get what they need when they are here.”

Jackson attributes his experience in restorative practices to staying optimistic even while there is a rise in overt racism and bigotry in this country. Restorative practices have their beginnings with the Indigenous cultures in what is now this country and those cultures saw the good in everybody. Jackson encourages us, especially those in public service roles, to strive to see the good in people regardless of how they may show up. “My goal is to create a library that has this lens by which we engage with the public because everyone has a story. Suspend judgment and just assume the best. Creating a space for people’s voices to be heard and share experiences without fear of retaliation is how to create that environment.”

To learn more about Stephen Jackson and the anti-racism work at Oak Park Public Library visit: <https://www.oppl.org/about/anti-racism/> **ILA**



LIBRARY

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Beyond Books: Exploring the Library of Things Movement

When picturing a library's collection, it would be natural to first think of books and electronic resources. Libraries do excel in curating, maintaining, and circulating excellent print and digital book, audiobook, periodical, and database collections. However, as librarians from both the Orland Park Public Library (OPPL) and the Normal Public Library (NPL) highlighted in their presentation "Here's the Thing: Building and Circulating Your Library of Stuff" at the 2023 ILA Annual Conference, many libraries are now expanding their collections to embrace the "Library of Things" movement.

Orland Park Public Library's Adult Services Manager, Katie Allan, views their "Library of Things" as a way to reach a broader base of patrons. Allan states, "By offering this unique lending service we are able to stretch library tax dollars further. We also saw that many of our patrons were having financial difficulties due to the pandemic, and we thought this would be a good way to give back to the community so they could still enjoy some simple pleasures in life without having to spend a lot of money." Currently, OPPL's "Library of Things" collection contains more than 110 unique items, including, in Allan's words, "everything from a coin counter to a clothes steamer!" Most popular are their circulating tables and chairs, which patrons have checked out for a variety of uses, including garage sales, graduation parties, and bridal showers.

Jennifer Williams, Technical Services Manager at NPL, echoes the sentiment that by building these robust collections, libraries can support the unique needs of their patrons. Williams cites verbiage from their mission statement:

"We are a valuable educational and recreational resource for our community," and expands that "by offering items like hotspots, Chromebook kits, board games and sensory bags, we hope to use our Library of Things to live up to our mission."

We wanted to see if other Illinois libraries had "Libraries of Things," so throughout November 2023, we circulated a Google Form survey to members of ILA, RAILS, and IHLS, asking if libraries in the state had special circulating collections for the purposes of being in this article. Representatives of twenty-five libraries responded to the survey, and, happily, each one had a "Library of Things" (although not always by that name) for patron use. Each response revealed a variety of answers that reflect how libraries throughout the state serve the sector of their patron base who are interested in taking home things that one doesn't typically associate with the traditional library image.



LIBRARY OF THINGS
DON'T BUY WHEN YOU CAN BORROW!

Outdoors



LIBRARY OF THINGS
DON'T BUY WHEN YOU CAN BORROW!

Moving On



LIBRARY OF THINGS
DON'T BUY WHEN YOU CAN BORROW!

Party Time



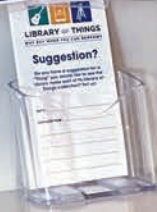
LIBRARY OF THINGS
DON'T BUY WHEN YOU CAN BORROW!

Music



LIBRARY OF THINGS
DON'T BUY WHEN YOU CAN BORROW!

Health



While many of the libraries who responded call their unique circulating collections “Libraries of Things,” this was not the case for each library. For example, the La Grange Public Library named their collection “Circulating Equipment” because, according to Digital Services Manager Chuck Johnson, “it’s the easiest to understand” for library patrons. Additionally, several libraries that mentioned they had “Libraries of Things” opted not to give their collections a specific name, such as the Stinson Memorial Public Library District in the southern Illinois town of Anna, which uses the more general terms “equipment,” “gear,” and “kits.” Besides having “Libraries of Things,” other library representatives stated that their unique circulating collections were accompanied by similar collections, such as the Glencoe Public Library’s Takiff Art Book Collection.

When asked if the items in their “Libraries of Things” were the results of either a staff member, library committee, or patron request, the library representatives’ responses yielded a mix of answers. Many libraries listed one or more of these options, though there were a few outliers. The items entailing the “Library of Things” at the Princeton Public Library are the results of, in the words of Director Julie Wayland, “donations, requests, or a perceived demand” of a certain item. Some potential items in the Stinson Memorial Public Library District’s collection are made via partnership opportunities with local nonprofits as well as prior Project Next Generation (PNG) grant periods. And the Glencoe Public Library’s aforementioned Takiff Art Book Collection is the responsibility of one selector and is funded by a single Glencoe resident.

Most libraries said that the “things” in their unique collections have the ability to be checked out by anyone, but some had a few caveats when it came to who exactly can take something from a “Library of Things” home with them. The Litchfield Public Library’s “Library of Things” is not public and is only available if other libraries request to loan an item from the collection. At the La Grange Public Library, not only do you have to have to be a cardholder of that specific library to check out a specialty item, you also have to be over the age of 12. The Vespasian Warner Public Library District and C.E. Brehm Memorial Public Library, located in the towns of Clinton and Mount Vernon, respectively, take things a step further than the La Grange Public Library when it comes to age limits: you have to be a legal adult to check things out from their “Libraries of Things.”

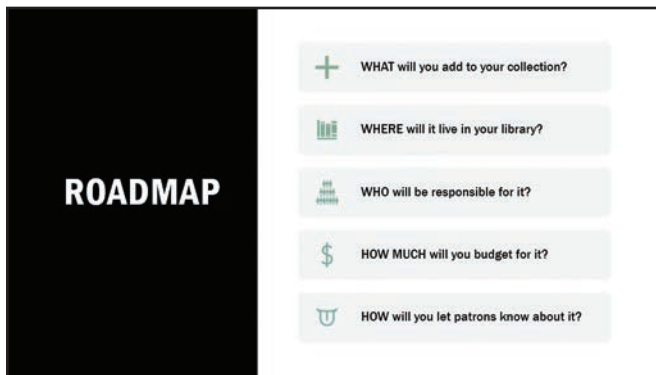
Regarding the loan period for these items, the libraries who responded gave a variety of answers. Typically, loan periods for things other than books lasted no more than three weeks, though Joe Halter, IT Director of the Glen Ellyn Public Library, said that depending on the size of the project the patron intends to use the item for, the item won’t be back in the library until at least a month’s time. On the other end of the spectrum, the “Library of Things” at the Bement Public Library, which serves a town of 1,484 people not far from Champaign off Interstate 72,

has a loan period of only three to five days. At the University of Illinois’ Springfield campus, the loan period for items in their “Library of Things” is one week, but Patron Services Supervisor Charity Ringel added that her library makes an exception for calculators and seasonal affective disorder (SAD) lamps, which can be checked out for an entire semester if necessary.

While these collections contain a myriad of unique items, there are certain items at each library that are exceptionally popular. These most popular items range from high-end technology equipment to baking equipment, depending on the collection. At Normal Public Library, individual mobile hotspots and Chromebook kits, each of which contains a mobile hotspot, can very rarely be found on the shelves, since these items generally have a long list of holds. In fact, over 25% of survey respondents identified mobile hotspots as the most popular item in their “Library of Things.” After mobile hotspots, streaming devices such as Roku were mentioned as the next highest-in-demand items. However, a few libraries reported that items such as cake pans, sewing machines, or specialty toys were most popular with their patrons. At the Elizabeth Titus Memorial Library, whose collection contains items as varied as cake pans, sewing machines, disc golf discs, Memory Care Kits, STEAM Kits, and technology tools such as Spheros, Sphero minis, and Makebots, Director Michelle Nolen has noticed that their circulating American Girl dolls are most popular.

Orland Park Public Library’s Storage





Orland Park Public Library's "Library of Things" Roadmap

With such a range of "things," cataloging and storage of these circulating items offers a unique challenge. The Normal Public Library's "Library of Things," is primarily composed of board games, but extends to technology toys, outdoor game items, crafting kits, a digital image scanner, and more. Not all items are cataloged in the same manner, and [items have] a combination of full records and brief records, depending on the item. Technical Services Manager Jennifer Williams says, "When we process we try to label everything with at least part of the call number or item number, especially for kits and items that contain cords and small parts. We don't label everything in our board games, but we do create a contents list for these that are helpful when checking items in."

For OPPL's most popular items, copy cataloging is often an option, while more esoteric items require original cataloging. For patrons who would prefer to browse rather than search the library catalog, OPPL offers a wall display in their lobby; hanging tags let patrons know which of these items are available for checkout, while no tag indicates that another patron has the items but a hold may be placed. However, due to the size of their "Library of Things" collection, the majority of their items are stored behind the scenes in the Patron Services workroom.

As libraries' "Library of Things" collections continue to grow, survey respondents have identified items they are most excited to add next; everything from fishing equipment to Ghost Hunting Kits are on the horizon. Responses from patrons keep staff motivated to continue providing the best collections possible, such as when an Orland Park Public Library's first-ever borrower sent staff photographs of "treasure" he located using their metal detector. Katie Allan expressed that staff "[loves] hearing the stories of how our Things are being used by our patrons. It makes us proud that we have been able to offer so many unique pieces to patrons who perhaps just need to use it once, try it out before buying, or simply can't afford it at this time. It is another way in which libraries are for everyone and everything!" **ILIA**

DESIGNING A BETTER FUTURE FOR LIBRARIES



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The Library, The Billboard, and The Non-User: Lake Villa District Library's Efforts to Raise Awareness

Lake Villa District Library (LVDL) is located in Lindenhurst, Illinois and serves the communities of Lake Villa Township, a population of 40,000. LVDL's Communications Department is responsible for creating the library's print and digital content. And is very fond of taking bold steps.

During LVDL's strategic planning process, raising awareness was identified as one of three challenges facing the library, right between the pandemic and responding to community needs. So it came as no surprise that each of the plan's three overarching aspirations had an awareness focus to guide engagement and communication efforts. LVDL's Communications Department was tasked with creating marketing pieces directed towards non-user community members.

So the staff of three—department head, graphic artist, and communications associate—began brainstorming ideas. This was tricky. Like all libraries, LVDL is good at talking to their users: those who checkout materials, attend programs, and believe the library is top-notch. But talking to non-users was new.

The definition of awareness—*having knowledge or perception of a situation or fact*—brought an ah-ha moment. While people (aka, non-users) might have “knowledge” of the library (they know it exists), they also might have a “perception” of it (which may or may not be great). This reality brought some much needed clarity to the project—how can the perception of LVDL be changed or elevated?

One thing was certain, an impactful design with a clear call to action was necessary. The goal was to entice non-users, but also to reinforce avid users' positive feelings about LVDL. Enter the positioning statement *Books Are Just The Beginning*.

Yes, books are foundational for public libraries and what most people associate with them, but libraries offer much more. And by “more” we mean things that people actually need—printing, scanning, fast Wi-Fi—but don't associate with their public library.

“having knowledge or perception of a situation or fact”



Think office.



Think notary.

BOOKS ARE JUST THE BEGINNING.

If books are the first thing that come to mind when you think of Lake Villa District Library, think again.



Think out of this world.

This is the point when LVDL's campaign solidified. *Books Are Just The Beginning* would become the anchor for a series of ads featuring familiar items not typically associated with the library: copy machine, notary, Wi-Fi hotspot, telescope. Bold graphic designs would be the key element with each item photographed to indicate motion, not glamour. Messaging would be clear and concise: "If books are the first thing that comes to mind when you think of Lake Villa District Library, think again."

Once the campaign direction and design were approved, production began, which was completely new territory. A photo shoot with a professional photographer, image retouching, paid media scheduling and more were a significant investment of nearly \$13,400.00.

Vendor	Cost
Michael Grimm Photography – 4 hour shoot	\$500.00
Image Retouching – 4 images	\$1,600.00
<i>Daily Herald</i> – 4, 3 col. X 10" ads, each running 3x	\$2,707.20
Clear Channel - Grand Ave Bulletin – 1, 12 week run	\$4,200.00
Postcard Production	\$2,668.00
Postcard Postage	\$1,699.92
Total	\$13,375.12

The print media buy ran from February through May and included a series of four print ads, each running three times over four months in the *Daily Herald* Neighborhood Section. Also included was a 12-week run of a billboard on a busy thoroughfare near the library and a postcard mailed to every household and business in the library district.

Although measuring impact wasn't a requirement in the strategic plan, four key data points were tracked before, during, and after the campaign: Library Visits, Website Visits, Business Center (self-serve printing, copying, faxing, and scanning), and Notary. While the metrics don't reveal much, March and May had the highest number of notary transactions. And during several of those transactions, the notary was told "This is my first time here. I'm so glad the library offers this service."

Month	Library Visits	Website Visits	Business Center	Notary
January	12,533	12,531	9,613	53
February	11,441	11,494	12,558	46
March	14,367	12,174	13,917	57
April	12,468	10,322	13,157	47
May	13,078	10,416	10,292	69
June	15,587	12,103	10,292	43





On many levels, this campaign was a bold step for LVDL. It warranted working with a professional photographer, expanding efforts into paid media, and was the first time messaging veered away from the usual fare of promoting programs, resources, and services. But when attempting to reach non-users, a bold step was necessary.

What libraries know about non-users is glaringly obvious. Haven't we all had an exchange with a person who had no idea the library offered a particular service or resource? And when they find out, they're gobsmacked and say, "You should tell people about this!" But here's the thing, until a person is looking for that particular service, they wouldn't hear the message.

And that's what we're up against. All libraries. LVDL isn't the only one eager to share its beautiful space, friendly staff, and great stuff with as many people as possible. Raising awareness about all the services libraries provide is important for all libraries and the communities they serve. **ILA**



Step Up Your Library's Green Programming

The popularity of sustainability in libraries has increased in recent years, spurred in part by the climate crisis. In 2019, ALA Council adopted sustainability as a core value of librarianship. The 2024 iREAD theme “Read, Renew, Repeat” has also sparked interest in the topic.

I recently interviewed Christine Poreba, the Oak Park Public Library's Environmental Programming Specialist, and Jill Franklin, a Northbrook Public Library reference librarian who organizes green programs. They offered a wealth of advice for library staff who are new to sustainability programming. Responses have been edited for length and clarity.

HOW DO YOU CHOOSE PROGRAM TOPICS?

Christine: This is one of the areas I was nervous about when I started. It happened more organically than I expected. This is a new position for the library, so it's an opportunity to try different things and see how they go. Living in Oak Park and having regular conversations with community members at and outside of work has helped me understand what is top of mind.

When I began my position, we already had one program in the planning stages. A local environmental poet read from her book and the Village of Oak Park's Chief Sustainability Officer spoke about ways to get involved in climate action. The Village's sustainability officer and I then collaborated on several energy programs with the Citizens Utility Board including topics on home energy improvements, solar power, and decarbonization.

A conversation I had with a colleague about an artist whose work had been exhibited at the library earlier this year (2023) led to an upcycled workshop with the artist. Another conversation with

a local environmental leader led me to an amazing programmer at the Evanston Public Library and she very generously shared a bunch of her program contacts. I also selected two programs offered by the Cook County Department of Sustainability on recycling and electric vehicles.

Jill: Many programs begin as a suggestion from one of our community partner organizations. They propose topics or speakers they've heard. Their suggestions give me insight into community interests or trending topics, as does working directly with the community at the public service desk and collaborating with local organizations.

I also take cues from our Village's Climate Action Plan priorities and regularly support their climate education initiatives. When the Village established a demonstration vegetable garden, we supplemented their hands-on workshops with a series of how-to lectures. We also collaborated on a presentation when they promoted rooftop solar.

The library programming listservs are a wonderful source for ideas on all subjects. There's so much creativity among library programmers!

I also find inspiration from my own reading and events I attend. A 2018 article on forest therapy (absorbing the healing properties of trees) led to a two-part series: a lecture on the science and health benefits of forest therapy (also called forest bathing) and an experiential walk with a trained guide. The walk was so popular that we've been holding them in all seasons ever since. I came upon a tofu cooking demonstration at a food education festival in Chicago that evolved into a library program making non-dairy, nut-based cheese. The program became part of a series on sustainability, health, and a plant-based diet and accompanied a traveling exhibit called the Vegetarian Museum.

“Many programs begin as a suggestion from one of our community partner organizations.”

Community Conversations on Climate Ready Oak Park One Year In



HOW DO YOU IDENTIFY PRESENTERS AND OTHER COMMUNITY PARTNERS?

Christine: Identifying community partners has also come about more naturally than I'd anticipated and in tandem with events and colleagues. One of our most active community partnerships started from a colleague mentioning a local umbrella organization of groups working together to spread awareness about the Oak Park Climate Action Plan. At almost half of the events I've organized, either a speaker or a participant has said something or shared a name that has led to another contact and potential event.

Jill: Our community partnerships evolved naturally. Go Green Northbrook, an active grassroots environmental organization, reached out to me when they were just starting out. We've been collaborating ever since. The local garden club is another enthusiastic local organization. Their commitment to sustainable gardening practices, and the passion for gardening in our community, has made them a great programming partner.

We have a strong relationship with our local Village government. The Village Climate Action Plan contains a community education component. The library is a natural fit for hosting presentations and developing programs that will further their sustainability priorities. Local chapters of environmental organizations often have speakers eager to share their expertise, as do groups devoted to special topics such as electric vehicles or bird rescues.

WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR MOST SUCCESSFUL PROGRAM?

Christine: Two of my most successful programs have been Solar Power Hour and a Halloween costume swap. The Solar Power Hour featured a presentation by the Citizens Utility Board to discuss Solar Switch Chicagoland and provide an overview of solar power. Nearly fifty people attended the event, despite a tornado warning.

The Halloween Costume Swap was a collaborative effort with a children's librarian and attracted over 100 participants. Because of the program's success, we decided that we would offer the program this year and extended our drop-off period for costume donations to mid-November.

Jill: Our outdoor bird watching walks and forest bathing sessions always have waiting lists. Nature outings can help develop a sense of care for the planet and lend themselves to learning about related topics like light pollution's effect on birds and wildlife.

One of our more involved and rewarding programs was a food waste fair and film. We screened a documentary on the environmental impact of food production and waste, followed by discussion. Afterward, we had three composting demonstrations (a patron showcased her worm bin!), a food swap group, the local food pantry, stem-and-peel cooking demos, and more. Approximately 120 people walked through the fair and I know many of them had meaningful conversations with the vendors. It was a fun way to learn how food waste contributes to climate change and relatively easy ways to avoid it.

Solar Power Hour



Our Maker Services Department puts on a popular repair event where patrons bring in household items to be fixed by volunteers. People are thrilled when their item has been given new life and we love helping our community reduce waste and slow down the consumption cycle.

HAVE YOU HAD PUSHBACK FROM THE COMMUNITY ABOUT ANY OF YOUR PROGRAMS?

Christine: I have had absolutely none! I feel very lucky for that.

Jill: Not at all! Many events have wide appeal and attract community members who don't identify as environmentalists. Sustainable gardening programs and nature experiences are just two examples but so many topics can be presented with a sustainability lens. Occasionally a participant will remark on the bleak outlook for future Earth after attending a more sobering climate change program but most presentations offer solutions that people can implement in their own lives to mitigate their contribution to climate change.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO OTHER LIBRARIANS WHO WANT TO FOCUS ON SUSTAINABILITY PROGRAMMING?

Christine: As I've had to remind myself many times these last few months, building something new takes time and anything you do is something that didn't exist before. Starting out small might be what's best for your situation and role. Crafting can be a way in. If it's something using paper, try to incorporate scraps or old books or magazines. Look for artists in your area who are using upcycled art. Maybe a conversation with a patron sparks an idea.

I also found that starting with presenters who are free takes some pressure off. University Extension offices, county offices, and local environmental commissions can be great places to start. Book discussions, films, and podcasts can also be conversation starters and good entry points for sustainability topics.

Jill: Sustainability education can be approached from so many angles that are accessible and appealing to a general audience without presenting a bleak outlook. Topics like nature, gardening, plant-based cooking, non-toxic cleaning solutions, and zero waste/consumer habits are just a handful of accessible subjects where individuals can make a difference for the environment by shifting habits without a significant financial investment. These lifestyle programs balance weightier programs on climate science, climate justice, and species decline.



Environmental Hub at OPPL

Documentary films are sometimes a more inviting approach to a difficult topic than a lecture. We've covered some of the heavier topics such as animal agriculture and ocean warming with documentaries. The images are powerful but the documentaries end with a call to action that offers some hope.

Incorporate sustainability into programming you're already doing. If you host cooking programs, schedule plant-based sessions and set up a companion display of vegan cookbooks. Build interest with topics that appeal to a wide audience but have a sustainable aspect. Gardening programs are a natural fit. If you work at a public service desk, tune into the subjects patrons inquire about to develop a sense of what is trending in your community and what they care about.

Tap into your own interests for inspiration and find the sustainability angle. If you're a crafter, consider hosting a craft swap to connect those who need crafting supplies with those ready to give away their supplies. A passion for animals might inspire programs on wildlife to learn about their role in the ecosystem, perils they face, and how humans can help them survive. Give new topics a try and listen for reactions. Not every program will be hit but all will find their audience.

MORE IDEAS TO INSPIRE YOU (FROM SMALL TO LARGE)

- Become a collection site for TerraCycle (TerraCycle.com) or Call2Recycle (batteries) (Call2Recycle.com).
- International Compost Awareness Week is May 5-11, 2024. The Illinois Food Scrap & Composting Coalition (illinoiscomposts.org/ICAW-2024) has put together a guide for libraries, a composting booklist, and will promote your program if you register with them.
- Host an environmental book group. The Oak Park Public Library and the Northbrook Public Library both host monthly discussions. The Black River Falls (WI) Public Library's green book club includes a list of books they've read. A list of past and upcoming books for the Oak Park group is available online.
- The University of Illinois Prairie Research Institute (prairie.illinois.edu) has scientists who give talks to the public on a variety of environmental topics including climate and weather, Illinois archaeology, everyday sustainability at home, the impact of contaminants like PFAS and microplastics, earthquakes, and fossils and dinosaurs. Contact Angie Coy (wisehart@illinois.edu) for more information on locating a speaker for your particular program.
- The Traveling Science Center, an outreach program of the Prairie Research Institute, is a 320 square foot mobile classroom featuring informative, engaging exhibits on sustainability, biodiversity, and natural resources that visits schools and communities across Illinois. Contact tsc@inhs.illinois.edu for information about scheduling.
- The Belleville Public Library installed a solar array at the main library and are working towards the installation of EV charging stations that they hope will be in place by early 2024.
- The Rochester and Sugar Grove Public Libraries host farmers markets.
- The Evanston Public Library created the annual Blueberry Awards, which honors children's literature that strengthens kids' connections with nature and fosters action for the planet.
- Montgomery County Public Libraries (MD) made their summer reading program green by eliminating plastic toy incentives in favor of free books and fundraising for local organizations. The librarians who organized the program spoke about it at LibLearnX 2024.



Unwind as You Upcycle Adult Arts Workshop

- The Madison (WI) Public Library hosts free mending at the library through a partnership with Sewing Machine Project (TheSewingMachineProject.org), a local non-profit that offers sewing tools and education. The Evanston Public Library hosts a monthly repair café. Their volunteers help people diagnose, troubleshoot, and/or fix small appliances, sewing/mending needs, electronics, and jewelry.
- The Sacramento (CA) Public Library organizes an annual prom drive and giveaway to give formal wear new life and make it possible for all teens to afford prom.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Northbrook Public Library Sustainability Events
<https://visit.northbrook.info/events?term=Sustainability>
- Oak Park Public Library Sustainability Events
https://oakpark.librarycalendar.com/events/upcoming?program_types%5B264%5D=26
- Green Libraries Libguide
<https://guides.library.illinois.edu/green-libraries/>
- iFixit Repair Guides
<https://www.ifixit.com/Guide>
- Sustainable libraries blog series on ILA Connector
<https://ilaconnector.home.blog/tag/sustainability/>

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

ILA Candidates for 2024

The ILA Nominating Committee has announced the 2024 candidates for election in the spring of 2024.

PRESIDENT-ELECT CANDIDATES

(three-year term beginning July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2027)

Carolyn Ciesla (Elmhurst University)

Lora Del Rio (Southern Illinois University Edwardsville)

Any ILA member wishing to be added to the ballot by petition shall be added to the slate and placed in the paired candidate group that most clearly matches the affiliations of the petitioner as determined by the Nominating Committee. Petition candidates for vice president/president-elect will be added to the presidential slate as requested.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

(three-year term beginning July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2027)

A candidate from each pairing will be elected in accordance with the ILA bylaws as amended at the 1998 ILA Annual Conference; a total of four directors will be elected to serve three-year terms on the ILA Executive Board.

Nominations by petition for an elective office shall be proposed in writing by at least one hundred (100) personal members of the association and delivered to the Executive Office by March 1. Candidates nominated by petition shall be added to the slate and placed in the candidate group that most clearly matches the affiliation of the petitioner. The determination of placement on the slate is the responsibility of the Nominating Committee.

DIRECTOR AT LARGE:

Rachel Fuller, The Urbana Free Library

Aimee Villet, Glen Carbon Centennial Library

The polls will open electronically April 1, 2024 and close on April 30 at midnight.

Serving on the Nominating Committee are Heather Jagman (chair), Elizabeth Boden, Jennifer Jackson, Kate Kite, Alea Perez, and Geoff Pettys.

DIRECTOR AT LARGE:

Jennie Mills, Shorewood-Troy Public Library District

Monica Dombrowski, Winnetka-Northfield Public Library District

DIRECTOR AT LARGE:

Erin Steinsultz, Crab Orchard Public Library District

Chris Houchens, Charleston Carnegie Public Library

DIRECTOR AT LARGE:

Michelle Glatt, Chiddix Junior High School

Gail Meyer, TF South High School

ALA COUNCILOR:

Patricia Chavez, Rush University Medical Center

Daniel Matthews, Moraine Valley Community College Library



ILA Welcomes New Members

On behalf of the ILA community, Executive Board, and staff we would like to welcome our recent new members. We hope as a member of ILA you contribute, grow, and thrive within the library profession and the ILA community; and support ILA's continuing efforts to create and promote the highest quality library services for all people in Illinois.

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Fast Forward Libraries, Champaign
Holland Construction Services, Inc. Swansea
Wintrust Financial, Rosemont

INSTITUTIONAL MEMBERS

Deerfield High School Library, Deerfield

TRUSTEE MEMBERS


Kristine Fassler, Orland Park Public Library
Theresa Hart, Cary Area Public Library
Charla Morton, O'Fallon Public Library
Christine Westerlund, Chatham Area Public Library District

STUDENT MEMBERS

Victoria Antwi, Champaign
Beth Bozzo, Lansing
Claire Ewers, Palos Heights
Camille Gauthier, Oak Park
Alex Giorgio, LaPorte, IN
Drew Harding, Chicago
Milo Kim, Urbana
Rebekkah LaRue, Chicago
Erica Ohman, Champaign
Yoojin Shin, River Forest
Kay Slater, Chicago
Lisa Smith, Lake Zurich
Becky Sorice, La Grange
Jessica Steffan, McHenry
Kaitlyn Weger, Olney
Elizabeth Workman, Urbana

PERSONAL MEMBERS

Piper Arington, Towanda District Library
Courtney Doninger, Grayslake Area Public Library District
Rhonda Johnisee, Illinois Heartland Library System
Kelly Knight, Bloomingdale Public Library
Abbigail McWilliams, Sterling Public Library
Gail Meyer, TF South High School
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New Illinois Library Luminary



DR. EMILY JOYCE MAGDELYN KNOX

Dr. Emily Joyce Magdelyn Knox is an associate professor in the School of Information Sciences at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Dr. Knox's commitment to intellectual freedom and to shaping the next generation of librarians has touched every library in Illinois.

Her research interests include information access, intellectual freedom and censorship, information ethics and policy, and the intersection of print culture and reading practices. She is a member of many organizations including the American Library Association, the Black Caucus of ALA, the Freedom to Read Foundation, and the Illinois Library Association. She is member of the advisory board for the African Centre of Excellence for Information Ethics and is the chair of the board of the National Coalition Against Censorship.

Her book, *Book Banning in 21st Century America* (Rowman & Littlefield) is the first monograph in the Beta Phi Mu Scholars' Series. Her most recent book *Foundations of Intellectual Freedom* (ALA Neal-Schuman) won the 2023 Eli M. Oboler Prize for best published work in the area of intellectual freedom. Knox's articles have been published in the *Library Quarterly*, *Library and Information Science Research*, and *Open Information Science*.

Knox has received many awards and recognitions, including the 2023 American Library Association/Beta Phi Mu Award of achievement for distinguished service to education for librarianship, 2023 Beta Phi Mu Distinguished Member Award, 2022 iSchool Alumni Association (ISAA) Distinguished Alumnus Award, 2022 Chicagoan of the Year for Books named along with library workers by the *Chicago Tribune*, and 2015 Illinois Library Association Intellectual Freedom Award.

Knox received her PhD from the doctoral program at the Rutgers University School of Communication & Information. Her master's in library and information science is from the iSchool at Illinois. She also holds a BA in Religious Studies from Smith College and an AM in the same field from The University of Chicago Divinity School.



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2023 Library Legislative Meetups by the Numbers

Legislative Breakfast, Metro East, Edwardsville, November 28, 2023

2023	Attendees: 48	Legislators: 7 (5 elected, 2 staff) out of 9 or 77%
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2020	Attendees: 47	Legislators: 8 (8 elected) out of 15 or 53%
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Legislative Lunch, Southern Illinois, Effingham, November 28, 2023

2023	Attendees: 16	Legislators: 7 (2 elected, 5 staff) out of 15 or 46%
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2020	Attendees: 57	Legislators: 6 (4 elected, 2 staff) out of 39 or 15%
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Legislative Breakfast, Central Illinois, Edwardsville, November 29, 2023

2023	Attendees: 36	Legislators: 8 (3 elected, 5 staff) out of 19 or 42%
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2020	Attendees: 39	Legislators: 3 (3 elected) out of 20 or 15%
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Legislative Lunch, Northwestern Illinois, Rochelle, November 29, 2023

2023	Attendees: 26	Legislators: 4 (1 elected, 3 staff) out of 26 or 15%
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2020	Attendees: 31	Legislators: 3 (3 elected) out of 19 or 16%*
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**The 2020 Western Meetup was held in Galesburg.*

Legislative Breakfast, North Suburban & Chicago, Northbrook, December 5, 2023

2023	Attendees: 96	Legislators: 18 (10 elected, 8 staff) out of 47 or 38%
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2020	Attendees: 137	Legislators: 16 (14 elected, 2 staff) out of 41 or 39%
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Legislative Breakfast, South Suburban & Chicago, Alsip, December 6, 2023

2023	Attendees: 44	Legislators: 11 (6 elected, 5 staff) out of 44 or 25%
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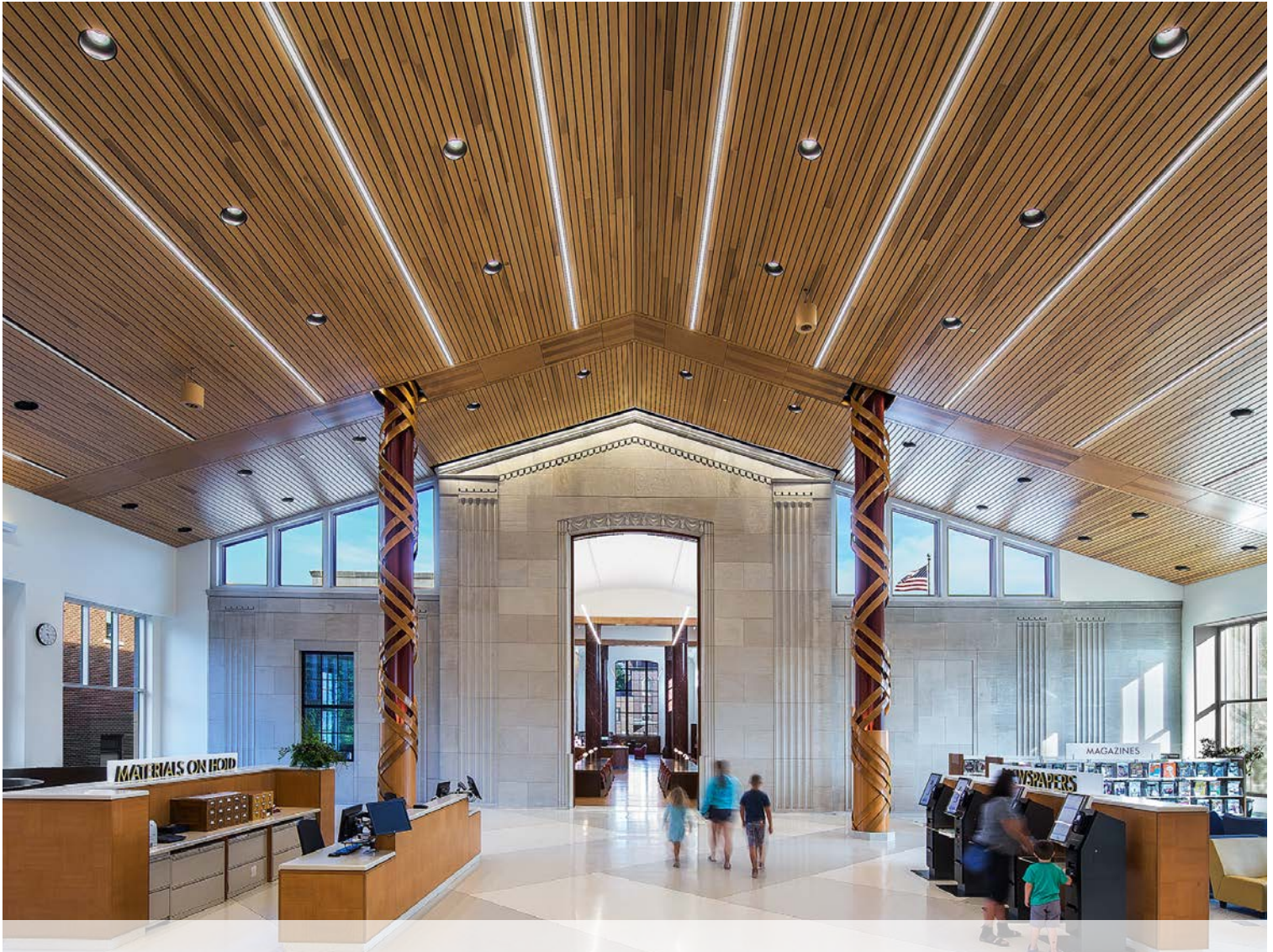
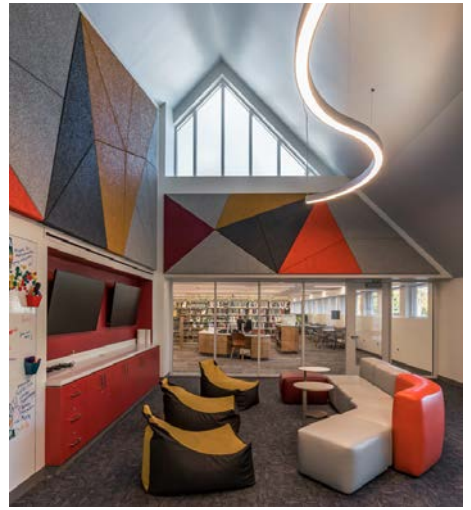
2020	Attendees: 57	Legislators: 6 (4 elected, 2 staff) out of 39 or 15%
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Legislative Lunch, West Suburban & Chicago, Oakbrook, December 6, 2023

2023	Attendees: 88	Legislators: 14 (7 elected, 7 staff) out of 28 or 50%
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2020	Attendees: 113	Legislators: 14 (9 elected, 5 staff) out of 26 or 54%
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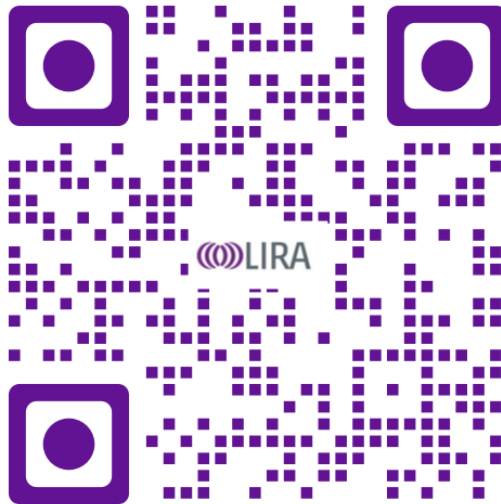
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Friday, May 10, 2024

Stephens Convention Center, Rosemont

Visit ila.org/rf for more information.

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Friday, April 19, 2024

Doubletree Hotel Collinsville/St. Louis in Collinsville, IL.

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