

Director's Report

August 2024

Arlington Heights Memorial Library

Spotlight

Library Floats to New Heights During 2024 Fourth of July Parade



The library floated to new heights at this year's annual Fourth of July Parade where we celebrated with over 1,800 balloons that brought a giant spider, butterflies, ladybugs and more to life. The balloon creatures elevated the spirits of parade goers as they made their way down the parade route, all coming together to represent this year's summer

of reading. The parade entry also included the bookmobile and thousands of Summer Reading paper crown giveaways. We're thrilled to share that we won second place in the non-commercial category for creativity.

The giveaways were made possible by the generous support of the Friends of the Arlington Heights Memorial Library. Special thanks to all library officials, staff, volunteers and members of the Arlington Heights community who helped represent the library during the parade and gave giveaways to parade goers. A big thanks also to the Arlington Heights Frontier Days organizers for another incredible parade day in Arlington Heights!

Community members shared their love for this year's parade entry on our Facebook and Instagram pages:

"I LOVED this entry! So imaginative and fun! Based on the comments around me others felt the same."

"It was a super cool parade entry! Surprising in the best ways."



"You all stole the show!!"

"Best float in the parade!!!"

"You did a fantastic job! It was so much fun to see!"

More Than 1,000 Celebrate FanCon at the Library



The Arlington Heights Memorial Library celebrated its eighth FanCon on Sunday, July 14 with more than 1,000 people of all ages stopping by the library to enjoy the popular comic book and pop culture

event, making this the most-attended FanCon in the library's history.

"I'm having a great time at FanCon with my family. The diverse amount of things to do here...there's just so many places to go," said Chris Wolff who attended with his two children.

The Willy Wonka-themed scavenger hunt and Super Smash Bros. Ultimate tournament were just two highlights from the activity-filled day. Throughout FanCon 2024, attendees enjoyed a live performance from the Jesse White Tumblers, meet and greet with real birds of prey, tried out new dance moves during an 8-bit dance party, explored Dungeons & Dragons through various events, created fandom-related arts and crafts including tote bags, fire-breathing dragons and Baby Yoda ears and more.



Artists' Alley in the Hendrickson Room featured more than 15 artists and vendors selling fandom-related artwork and merchandise. New additions to this year's FanCon included a Stamp Collection Hunt, where attendees could meet cosplayers wandering around the library and collect special stamps to earn a prize, and a cosplay repair station led by Makerplace staff.

Congratulations to the FanCon 2024 planning team which included co-leaders Colleen (Communications & Marketing) and Emily M. (Programs & Exhibits), Allison P. and Becky (Youth Services), David (Digital Services), Eunice (Info Services) and Stephanie (Communications & Marketing) for organizing a successful event. Special thanks to the 38 staff members from across the library who worked to make the event a welcoming and fun day for all. Thank you to the Friends of the Library for their support.



GOAL

Strengthen the library's service outside its walls

AHML Continues to Build Upon Partnerships

- Megan, Info Services Supervisor and Lynnanne, Info Services Librarian attended the Synergy Chamber of Commerce Business Builders meeting at 72 Financial in downtown Arlington Heights. The meeting brought together a diverse group of local small businesses and nonprofits from a wide range of industries. Megan and Lynnanne spoke about the library's new database, BlueCareer, featuring training, career exploration, and job matching for the skilled trades and promoted the library's new virtual Community Jobs Board and upcoming Job Fair in November.



- Mary Jo, Senior & Accessible Services (SAS) Manager and Katie, SAS Supervisor joined staff of The Moorings and other community organizations for an expo dedicated to highlighting the many resources for older adults in the Arlington Heights area. The event was attended by over 50 current and potential new residents.

- Tween Librarian Kerry hosted "Mission Factory" campers from First Presbyterian Church. The tween visitors learned about how the library helps the community.



They toured some special collections including the Library of Things and the Tween Space. They used the button maker to make "Libraries are for Everyone" buttons.



- The Programs & Exhibits Department continues to partner with the Arlington Heights Park District to offer summer wellness programs in the park, June through August. July sessions of Yoga in the Park and Kung Fu in the Park, both held at the Museum, engaged adults from their 20s on up, and are always inclusive of all abilities. Attendees are grateful for these opportunities for guided instruction outdoors.

GOAL

- Finance hosted rising Junior Casey Stannis of John Hersey High School as part of the District 214 Career Discovery internship program. With the help of various support departments, the Finance team introduced Casey to a career in business administration. She experienced the entire warrant cycle from purchasing and receiving

items for the library, paying vendors, filing invoices, completing reconciliations and preparing reports for a board meeting. She also shadowed other departments and even helped kick off our annual budgeting process.



- The library partnered with OMNI for a backpack drive last month. During the two-week drive, 34 new backpacks were collected for local youth.

AHML Engages Community in Places Where Customers Are

- Catalina, Community Engagement Liaison, presented in Spanish about library services and resources for English language learners to the Parent Advisory Council (PAC) from the District 214 Prevention Initiative Program via Zoom. Feedback from our community partner included: ***"We appreciate your participation during our PAC meeting. You shared such valuable information with our families about all the services and resources that the Arlington Heights library offers. Families were thrilled when you provided information about the ESL classes! It was a pleasure having you as a guest at our PAC meeting."***

- The library once again participated in the successful Mision San Juan Diego Festival. The Bookmobile, Circulation & Community Services and ESL & Literacy staff shared with Spanish-speaking attendees all the resources and services the library offers. In collaboration with Palatine Public Library, staff issued new library cards for Arlington Heights residents and registered cards for reciprocal borrowers on-site. Staff interacted with over 75 people at the festival.





Grow the use of our services and resources

Youth & Teen Summer Reading a Roaring Success

Over 3,300 babies, kids, tweens and teens participated in the library's annual Summer Reading challenge this summer. As they worked towards the goal of reading for 30 days, participants were encouraged to visit the library every 10 days to play Plinko in Kids' World or Spin the Wheel in the Hub. Visitors to Kids' World watched participation grow on

plant-themed boards decorating the department, where participants added bug stickers when they signed up and as they reached 30 days and 60 days of reading. To encourage

further reading, those who finished the challenge got to

pick out a prize book funded by the Friends of the Library. This year, 30% of participants reached 30 days of reading, up from 25% last year.



Arlington Heights Community Utilizes Library Services

- As of the end of July, Info Librarians and volunteers completed 300 one-on-one appointments thus far in 2024 which is a 45% increase over same time last year. The one-on-one appointments included jobs/careers, resume reviews, genealogy (staff and volunteers), business, general reference, test proctoring and SCORE.
- Despite July being a month when many students were on vacation, the ESL team hosted 40 programs that were attended by 368 people.
- In July, 42 vehicle stickers were issued, a 13.5% increase from the same month last year.
- Info Services Advisors curated 21 Book Me customized reading lists in July. Some customer feedback included: ***"I love all the books you picked for me—I think I added most if not all to my list of books to read next. There was a great variety of books I haven't heard of and some new authors."***



Cutting-Edge Laser Cutter Now Available at the Makerplace



A cutting-edge Epilog Fusion Edge 24 laser cutter is now available for makers to use at the Makerplace thanks to funding from the Friends of the Library. This new equipment is set to significantly enhance the customer experience by offering greater efficiency, reduced maintenance and advanced safety features. The excited Makerplace team received on-site training from Fairway Laser to help ensure a smooth transition for staff to ensure a positive customer experience once it was up and running.

The state-of-the-art laser cutter includes an integrated camera system, an expanded workspace, and faster cutting speeds, all of which

contribute to smoother, more precise project completion. For instance, the advanced camera system simplifies the positioning of intricate designs, making complex tasks easier and quicker. One customer was able to etch a custom design onto a pocketknife—a process that previously would have been time-consuming—demonstrating the new cutter's superior capabilities.

The new laser cutter has quickly become a favorite among customers and staff, streamlining the creation process and expanding the possibilities for projects at the Makerplace.



Tweens Take Over the Makerplace

For the second year in a row, Maker Squad teens presented a summer Tween Makerplace Takeover. Sixteen tweens took over the Makerplace building to learn about sewing and sublimation. With activities led by teen volunteers, the tweens sewed their own emoji pillows and sublimated their own stickers and coasters. This popular takeover was very well received by attendees.





AHML Engages the Community Through Programs & Experiences at the Library



- In July, Art with Alayne students worked on a portrait of instructor Alayne's brother. Many students shared how much they have learned and how proud they felt of their personal development. Some comments from students included: ***"I love being shown new techniques with different media! The easy-to-follow video guarantees success for all artists from beginner to more experienced. I am pleased with the array of programs that AHML offers."***

SVS

- Over 130 Arlington Heights teens in grades 7-12 gave back this summer through the library's Summer Volunteer Squad (SVS) program. SVS was comprised of seven different squads that met weekly to focus on various service projects with staff from Digital Services/Makerplace, Circulation & Community Services and Youth Services leading the squads. In total, the teen volunteers clocked around 1,360 service hours in June and July. They presented 12 library programs and completed other projects to support the library and community.





Enhance the library's role in the everyday lives of the Arlington Heights community

AHML Launches New Partnership with Ravinia Festival



In collaboration with the Circulation & Community Services and Communications & Marketing departments, the library launched a new partnership with the Ravinia Festival to offer free lawn concert tickets. Through a lottery system, 56 concert tickets were successfully distributed to Arlington Heights library cardholders. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with many expressing excitement about having access to these tickets. The library looks forward to continuing this partnership in the years to come.

AHML Hosts Famous Cooking Competition Adaptation in the Makerplace Kitchen

Neil and Nikki from the Programs & Exhibits Department led the first public cooking competition in the Makerplace Kitchen called Chopped Arlington Heights. Each team had to use sourdough bread, ground beef, four fruit jam,



granny smith apples and potatoes in their dishes, and were given free reign of the kitchen to use



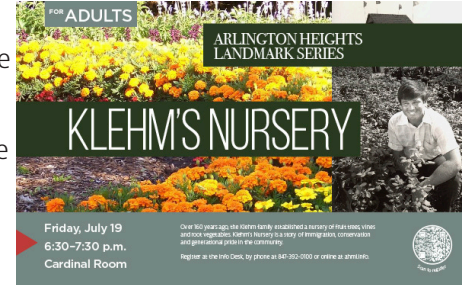
any other ingredients or equipment available. The meals included a mini meatloaf with hashbrowns, a burger with Mediterranean spices and hand-cut fries, a soup with chicken broth and tiny meatballs, and finally a take on mozzarella and tomato salad where the cheese was replaced with apples.

Judges Nikki and Jennifer from Programs & Exhibits and Beth from Digital Services unanimously agreed one team was just a cut above—Smokin' AH, who created a burger with a sourdough bun and Mediterranean spices, perfectly seasoned hand-cut fries and a jam aioli. Smokin' AH took home Makerplace engraved pint glasses and "AH Chopped Champ" engraved cutting boards. The event was a tremendous success, demonstrating creativity and enhancing community engagement.



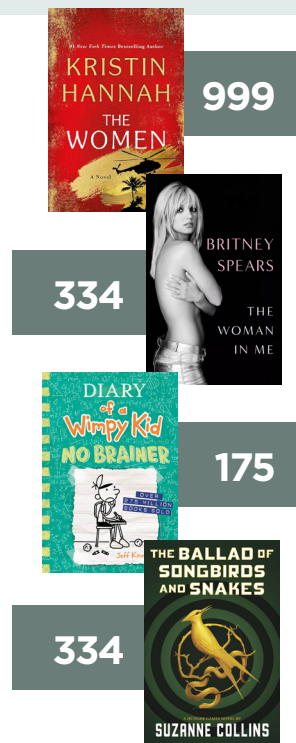
Popular Local History Landmark Series “Fills the House”

Eddie, Genealogy & Local History Librarian, presented another installment of his popular local history landmark series, about Klehm’s Nursery, to a nearly full house on a Friday evening. Highlights included the history of nurseries and arboreta, the story of Balaam Lee (the first Black resident of Arlington Heights and an employee of Klehm’s nursery), the development of the Scarsdale neighborhood and the donation of landscaping to AHML by the Klehm family when the library building was dedicated in 1968. One attendee commented, **“First program I attended and I enjoyed the presentation and atmosphere.”**



AHML Offers Opportunities to Learn About Community Resources

Barb, Info Services Librarian, held two resource hours in July where organizations interacted with over 45 customers. The Illinois State Treasurer’s Office representative from the ICash program hosted a resource hour and found over \$5,000 in unclaimed property for library customers. Two representatives from the Arlington Heights Police Department answered questions about local laws and policing and handed out giveaways.



The Latest on the Library’s Collection

- At midway through the year the top fiction title so far for 2024 is *The Women* by Kristin Hannah with 999 checkouts! The top nonfiction book is *The Woman in Me* by Britney Spears with 334 checkouts. For kids, the top fiction title is *Diary of a Wimpy Kid No Brainer* by Jeff Kinney with 175 checkouts, and for teens it is *The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes* by Suzanne Collins, with 145 checkouts.
- Thanks to the great work of library’s three Collection Services Librarians, 93% of all the materials selected for the collection in the last year were checked out more than once!
- Info Services staff plan and maintain select in-library displays including Featured Books, Read Watch Listen, Staff Picks and Featured DVDs. In July, 818 items circulated from these displays. The Staff Picks display continues to circulate over 200 items a month and Poolside Picks circulated 230 items.



Makerplace Fosters Community Connections & Inspires Creativity Through Experiences

- The first evening session of the Makerplace's Fiber Crafts Meetup was a huge success with 11 enthusiastic participants coming together to knit, crochet and stitch. Many attendees, who couldn't join the daytime meetups due to work and other commitments, were thrilled about the new evening option. One customer shared, ***"I was so glad to see this offered in the evening! I came several times to the afternoon meetups when I was in between jobs, but now that I'm working again, I hadn't been able to attend."***
- Chef Brian had a busy July in the Makerplace Kitchen! He taught Knife Skills and BBQ Essentials, the latter featuring a new format with a PowerPoint presentation and BBQ samples from a local restaurant. He also led the monthly Talk & Taste program which focused on summer squash. Additionally, he hosted a pop-up lemonade-making event for kids with 64 attendees which included great continued cross-departmental collaboration with Youth Services and Communications & Marketing.



- Leading up to the library's FanCon event, Makerplace Specialist Lisa conducted a workshop focused on crafting custom superhero bracers from EVA foam. During this session, attendees explored various techniques and tools essential for working with foam materials. One customer, who couldn't attend the scheduled workshop, was given a personalized one-on-one session with Lisa. This tailored experience allowed the customer to delve deeply into the crafting process, learning all the essential steps to create their own cosplay bracers. Lisa covered everything from prepping and cutting the foam to gluing, painting and finishing the pieces.
- The Programs & Exhibits Department offered five additional classes in the Makerplace Kitchen in July. Thirty-two student chefs learned how to make beautiful seasonal salads with Chef Emily Paster, 30 used fresh berries, peaches, nectarines, and herbs and tea to create their own fresh jams with Chef Grace and 12 community members learn more about ginger beer and how to make many flavored iterations of it with Arlington Heights' own Mark Heffernan on Zingabrew.

What Customers Are Saying

Youth Services Staff Member shared: ***"A parent came up to the Kids' World Desk the week after the Fourth of July Parade and said that the library's entry is always one of their favorites, but this year they thought we out did ourselves and the balloons were FANTASTIC!"***

Youth Services Staff Member shared: ***"At a recent Evening Storytime in the Park program a working mom mentioned that most families in that neighborhood come from a household where both parents work, so they cannot get to morning storytime sessions. She thanked the library for not forgetting about them."***

"I couldn't be more pleased with this service or the results you provided to me. I have encouraged my wife, an avid reader, to submit a request as well." -Book Me Service User

Youth Services Staff Member shared: ***"A mom of a Globetrotters regular attendee shared how on a recent car trip when they saw a flag in front of someone's house, she asked her daughter if it was the Mexican flag. Her daughter said no and described the colors/design of the Mexican flag which she learned about at last month's Globetrotters program."***

"Very informative presentation." -Local History Landmark Series Attendee

"Love the atmosphere and the evening hours! Thanks for accommodating us working folks!"
-Fiber Crafts Meetup Attendee

Arlington Heights Memorial Library

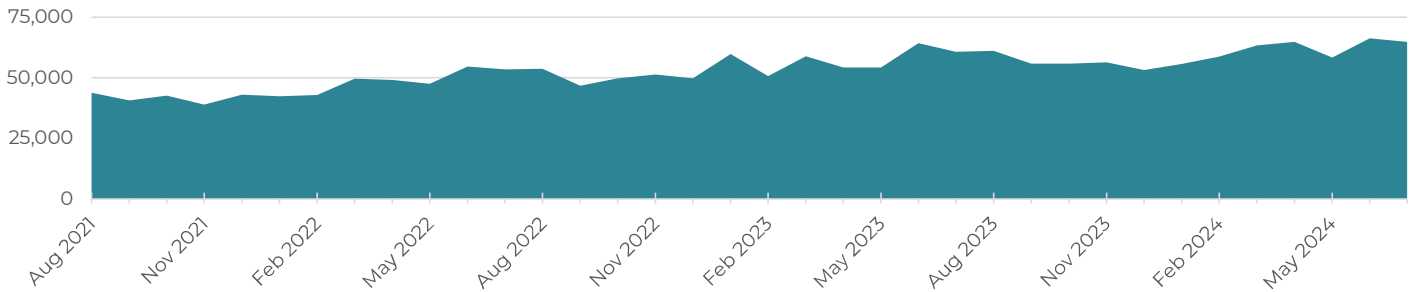
July 2024 Dashboard

Library Visits

81.7% of library customers in July visited the Main Library. Year to date, library visits are up 10.2%.

	July		2024 YTD	2023 YTD	Change
Main Library	52,882	81.7%	348,161	327,693	6.2%
Drive-Up	5,420	8.4%	36,366	35,811	1.5%
Bookmobile	2,544	3.9%	14,013	13,222	6.0%
Makerplace	1,469	2.3%	11,052	7,933	39.3%
Senior Center	1,252	1.9%	8,878	7,237	22.7%
Outreach	1,166	1.8%	13,515	N/A	-
Total	64,733	100%	431,985	391,896	10.2%

Total Visits



Room Use	July	2024 YTD	2023 YTD	Change	Trend
Hendrickson Room	7	75	89	-15.7%	August 2023-July 2024
Conference Rooms	1,242	8,954	8,210	9.1%	
Total	1,249	9,029	8,299	8.8%	

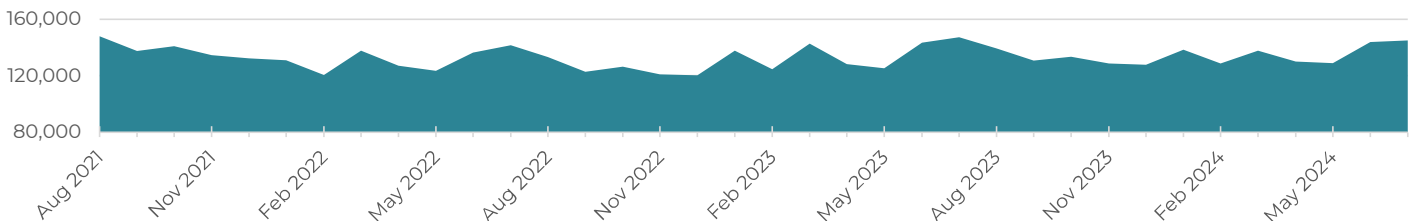
Library Cards ¹	July	2024 YTD	2023 YTD	Change	Trend
Resident	361	2,519	2,932	-14.1%	August 2023-July 2024
Reciprocal	134	796	898	-11.4%	
Total	495	3,320	3,833	-13.4%	

Circulation

16.6% of checkouts in July were Audiovisual items. Year to date, total checkouts are up 0.37%.

	July		2024 YTD	2023 YTD	Change
Print	86,723	59.8%	548,826	549,739	-0.2%
Downloadable	24,287	16.7%	162,687	152,585	6.6%
Audiovisual	24,018	16.6%	172,738	180,948	-4.5%
Other	9,598	6.6%	65,798	63,391	3.8%
ILL	447	0.3%	2,715	2,568	5.7%
Total	145,073	100%	952,764	949,231	0.37%

Total Checkouts



¹ New cards only. Does not include renewals.

Arlington Heights Memorial Library

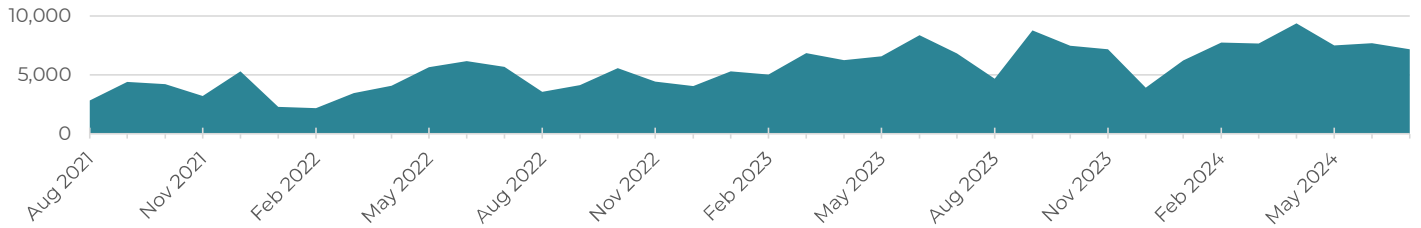
July 2024 Dashboard

Programs

4,359 customers attended Children programs in July, which represents 60.6% of all program attendees. Year to date, program attendance is up 18.1% across all audiences and program sessions are up 9.2%.

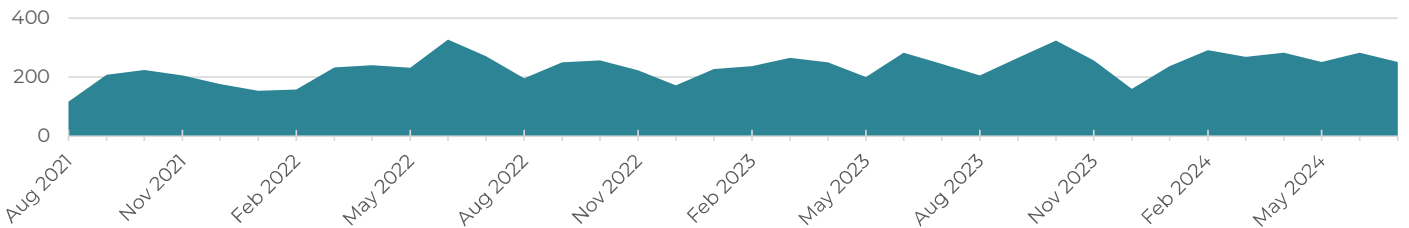
Attendance	July		2024 YTD	2023 YTD	Change
Children	4,359	60.6%	27,644	23,441	17.9%
Adult	2,612	36.3%	23,091	19,205	20.2%
Teen	226	3.1%	2,669	2,583	3.3%
	7,197	100%	53,404	45,229	18.1%

Attendance



Sessions	July		2024 YTD	2023 YTD	Change
Adult	140	55.6%	1,209	1,073	12.7%
Children	85	33.7%	530	518	2.3%
Teen	27	10.7%	130	121	7.4%
	252	100%	1,869	1,712	9.2%

Sessions



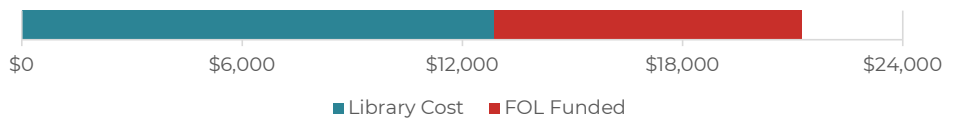
Total Program Cost

\$21,247.21

FOL Funded

\$8,375.00

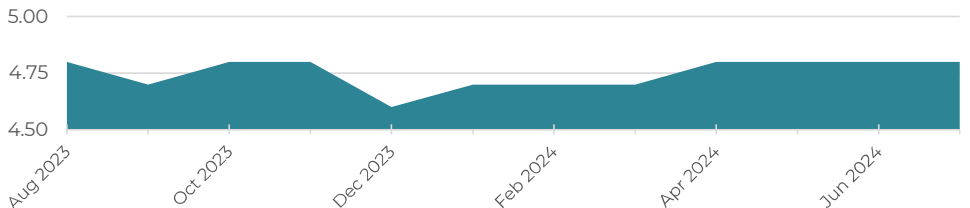
39.4%



Program Satisfaction

4.8 / 5

out of 72 programs



Supplementary Programs and Activities²

	July	Trend	2024 YTD	2023 YTD	Change
Attendance	3,172		25,150	30,861	-18.5%
Sessions	23		148	167	-11.4%

August 2023-July 2024

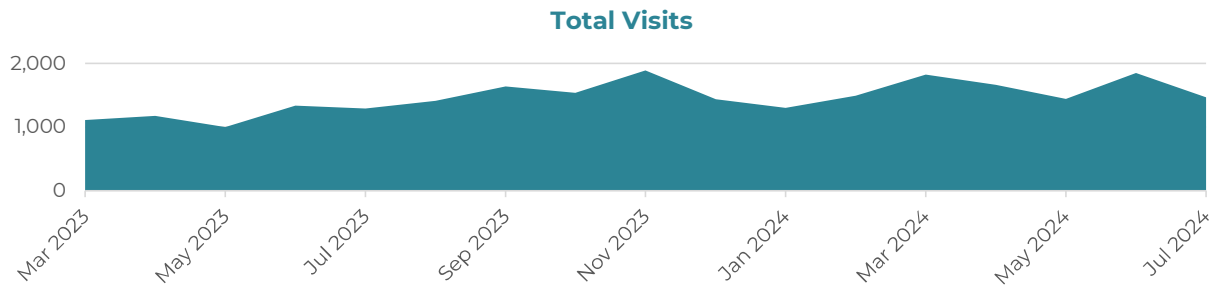
²Supplementary programs and activities are planned events where customers participate on their own, instead of at a designated time with a group. Registration is not required.

Arlington Heights Memorial Library Makerplace

July 2024 Dashboard

	July	% New Users	2024 YTD	2023 YTD	Change
Makerplace Visits	1,469	5.5%	11,052	7,933	39.3%

	July		2024 YTD	2023 YTD	Change
New Users³					
Makerplace	37	45.7%	413	398	3.8%
Kitchen	33	40.7%	180	117	53.8%
Makerplace & Kitchen	11	13.6%	100	79	26.6%
Total	81	100%	693	594	16.7%



	July		2024 YTD	2023 YTD	Change
Equipment Usage⁴					
Fabrication	192	57.0%	1,360	1,053	29.2%
Small Tools	75	22.3%	485	343	41.4%
Sewing	36	10.7%	428	288	48.6%
Technology	30	8.9%	252	224	12.5%
Art	4	1.2%	27	27	0.0%
Total	337	100%	2,552	1,935	31.9%

	July		2024 YTD	2023 YTD	Change
Program Attendance⁵					
Culinary	128	54.9%	926	734	26.2%
Maker	101	43.3%	912	570	60.0%
Tour	4	1.7%	85	116	-26.7%
Other	0	0.0%	310	33	839.4%
Total	233	100%	2,233	1,453	53.7%

	July		2024 YTD	2023 YTD	Change
3D Print Jobs	129		1,105	952	16%

	July		2024 YTD	2023 YTD	Change
eLearning⁶	64		1,305	2,010	-35%

³ Measured by number of waivers signed for maker/fabrication, kitchen, or both

⁴ **Fabrication**: all fabrication room equipment except 3D printers; **Small Tools**: soldering irons, hand tools; **Technology**: design computers

⁵ **Culinary**: kitchen programming; **Maker**: hands on making programs (3D printing, laser cutting, sewing); **Tour**: attendance of facility tours prescheduled or drop-in

⁶ Niche Academy views of Makerplace resources