

Director's Report

October 2025

Arlington Heights Memorial Library

Spotlight



One Book, One Gala Celebrates *The Stolen Queen*

On Saturday, September 27, the library welcomed over 200 guests for One Book, One Gala, a special after-hours event inspired by New York City's iconic Met Gala. The celebration was designed to reflect one of the key settings in this year's One Book, One Village selection, *The Stolen Queen* by New York Times bestselling author Fiona Davis. It marked the second gala in the library's history, with the first being the Fairy Tale and Fantasy Gala held in 2016.

Guests were greeted with a red-carpet experience with cameras flashing as attendees posed for photos in a scene reminiscent of the Met Gala itself. Inside, Bitter & Sweet Cocktails offered signature drinks, which guests paired with trendy Dubai chocolate cake truffles, cookies and an assortment of desserts made by Soha's Sweet Treats. For one night only, art was installed at the ends of several bookshelves showcasing well-known works from a variety of periods and styles.

The evening also featured a mini costume institute in the Hub curated by Makerplace Advisor Lisa Hale who made many of the costume pieces on display. Mine Anil of Blue Fern Ceramics gave a live pottery demonstration and guests had a chance to visit the library's Studio for a green screen photo opportunity featuring settings that play key roles in *The Stolen Queen*.

Special thanks to the planning team—Programs & Exhibits' Nikki, Jennifer and Neal, Readers' Advisor Danielle, Makerplace Advisor Lisa and Communications & Marketing Specialist Mareliz—collaborated for months to conceive, plan and implement this event.



Strengthen the library's service outside its walls

Library Continues to Build Upon Partnerships

School District 25

Kids' Librarian Ellie presented to District 25's Council of Parent Teacher Associations (PTA), a group that brings together the PTA presidents and vice presidents of each school in the district. Twenty-one Council members and District 25 administrators learned how library services foster literacy and support learning.

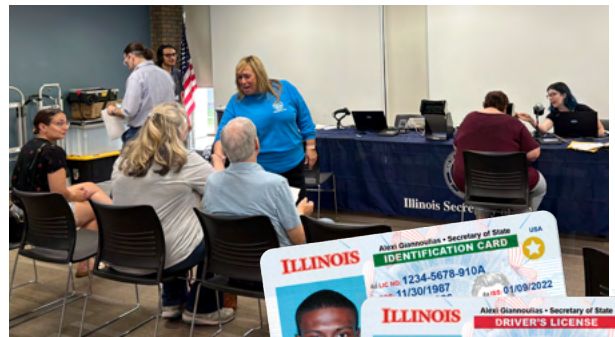


School District 214

Early Learning Librarian Allison and Youth Outreach Specialist Kim visited the Women and Children's Center over three visits where they engaged with 85 children and their caregivers. Teen staff welcomed 50 newcomer students, along with school staff, to the library for a tour and spent time exploring the Hub. Community Engagement Liaison Catalina hosted a group of GED Spanish-speaking students at the library, providing a tour in Spanish and more. Senior & Accessible Services staff hosted a resource table and assistive devices demo at the Vibrant Living Expo at Forest View Educational Center that welcomed 240 attendees to celebrate active aging, enrichment and wellness activities for older adults.

Mobile DMV Event in Partnership with Local Elected Officials

Community Engagement Liaison Catalina collaborated with Programs & Exhibits to host a Mobile DMV event at the library in partnership with local elected officials in Arlington Heights. The library welcomed staff from the Secretary of State's office, who provided Real IDs and a variety of DMV services on-site. This initiative reinforced the library's role as a community hub, bringing essential public services directly to residents.



Library Hosts Successful Virtual & Off-Site Programs During Construction

Virtual

Last month's One Book, One Village programming brought Ancient Egypt vividly to life through a compelling series of virtual programs including *Building the Pyramids* with 88 attendees featuring Dr. Foy Scalf from the University of Chicago, who presented on new archaeological findings at Giza; *Reflections on Egypt: A Shared History and Humanity* with diplomat Andrée Cooligan sharing firsthand exploration from her visits to Egypt; *Teaching (and Curating) Ancient Egypt with Empathy and Care* with 48 attendees featuring Dr. Jen Thum of the Harvard Art Museums; and *Armchair Archaeology* where attendees learned how to explore and research ancient archaeology sites and digs from the comfort of their own home.

Social

This year marked the library's first time partnering with Social, bringing new audiences to the beautiful space. Programs & Exhibits Specialist Neal welcomed two outstanding presenters, Associate Curator of Ancient Egyptian Art at the Art Institute of Chicago Dr. Ashley Arico who presented on how Chicago's major museums have shaped public understanding of Ancient Egypt and celebrated architectural critic and historian Lee Bey joined us to explore the legacy of Egyptian Revival architecture across the city.

Village of Arlington Heights

Business Services Advisor Diane partnered with the Department of Planning & Community Development at the Village of Arlington Heights to host the first off-site Small Business Coffee & Connect with over 60 attendees in the Village Board Room.



Staff Highlights from Outside the Library Walls

- Programs & Exhibits Specialist Neal and Info Services Coordinator Sherri presented the library's 2025 One Book, One Village title, *The Stolen Queen*, to the Village of Arlington Heights Trustees and Mayor at their September Board meeting. This annual opportunity elevates the visibility of the library's community read initiative, the work of the talented library staff and strengthens the library's partnership with the Village.
- Info Services Manager Jolie was accepted into the Public Library Association's Leadership Academy. She is one of 28 nationwide professionals who were selected to participate in this dynamic event that includes four days of interactive education and networking.



Grow the use of our services and resources

Successful Summer Reading Program Concludes



Youth

Over 3,600 babies, toddlers, kids, tweens and teens signed up for Summer Reading at the library. This annual program runs from June-July with additional challenges in August. This year, 42% of readers reached 30 days of reading to complete the program, up from 30% the previous year. Participants who reached 30 days of reading were able to select a prize book, funded by the Friends of the Library. Another 501 readers continued on to reach 60 days of reading.

Adults

To celebrate the community's 792,714 minutes of reading during the Minutes of Summer reading program for adults, the library hosted a party for participants at the History Museum lawn. The purpose of the celebration was to bring together participants that joined this year's program and to provide another opportunity to earn a prize and mingle with fellow readers.



Library Engages the Community Through Programs & Experiences



New Hands-on AI Class

Technology Instruction Coordinator David launched a new hands-on class, How to Use AI, which drew a full house and highlights strong community interest in emerging technologies.

Sunday Musicales in the Community

Due to the second floor refresh project, this fall's Sunday Musicales are on the road! The September performance with jazz pianist and vocalist Meghan Stagl brought the library's music-loving customers to the beautiful Forest View Educational Center. Programs & Exhibits Assistant Jay coordinated the performance – a diverse repertoire of Brazilian and original compositions as well as jazz standards.





Period Party

Tween Librarian Kerry and Youth Advisors Nicole and Janet hosted a Period Party for 40 participants. Guest speakers Registered Nurse Rebecca Brenke-Laurentin and OB/GYN Dr. Jane Sorokin led an engaging talk on menstrual products, premenstrual syndrome (PMS) and menstruation. Participants explored different activity stations including decorating a "period pouch" to hold menstrual products, testing out the absorbency of a variety of menstrual products, choosing menstrual trackers, discussing scenarios with caregivers and making friendship bracelets.

Makerplace Celebrates Fourth Anniversary

The Makerplace celebrated its fourth anniversary with a well-attended event drawing over 500 attendees, more than double the previous year's turnout. Over 100 of the attendees visited for the first time. All Makerplace staff participated, supported by four volunteers. The library's Communication & Marketing team played a key role in boosting attendance with social media posts, email blasts and signage.

The Mini Maker Faire-style event showcased:

- Six community makers presenting projects in pottery, laser cutting, woodworking, crochet and a unique penny-covered resin flooring project
- Interactive stations like the "turn yourself into a sticker" booth, where staff printed around 150 personalized stickers
- 3D printing demos featuring Egypt-themed designs tied to this year's One Book, One Village
- Community Art Project led by Makerspace Specialist Kate resulting in a pixel mosaic of the Makerplace robot mascot, using approximately 500 stickers
- Chef Brian's cooking demo, featuring goat cheese crostini and apple cider donuts, was a crowd favorite
- Senior & Accessible Services Manager Katie showcasing 3D printed assistive tools, generating community interest and sales
- And much more!





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

More Than \$50,000 Found in Unclaimed Property for Customers

The Illinois State Treasurer's Office ICash team helped 15 customers find unclaimed property totaling over \$50,000! Info Services Librarian Barb collaborated with ICash to visit the library as part of the monthly Resource Hour. Due to the success of the program, ICash will visit the library again in December and then quarterly in 2026.

Check Out the Final Influencers Display Through December

After showcasing favorite books and movies from 18 influencers in the Arlington Heights community, the library is proud to present the final group which includes Village of Arlington Heights Trustee Wendy Dunnington, Cristo Rey Institute Executive Director John Dussman, Former Arlington Heights Mayor Tom Hayes, Golden Brunch Owner Argie Karafotias, Little Readers Big Thinkers Owner Amanda Simkin and Laura Lian Creative Partners Founder and Creative Director Laura Lian Williams. To date, the display highlighted 154 titles with 700 items, which generated 2,796 checkouts.



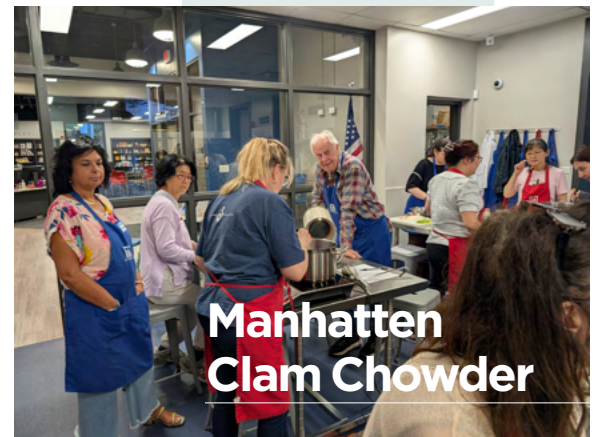
Makerplace Fosters Community Connection & Inspires Creativity Through Experiences




- September was one of the Makerplace's busiest months ever, filled with engaging classes—ranging from popular introductory sessions to exciting new offerings such as, Natural Soap Making, which filled instantly when registration opened and had a waitlist of 100 people by mid-month.



- The Makerplace Crochet-A-Long returned last month with 14 participants, where a new scarf pattern was introduced. Makerspace Specialist Kate also invited everyone on the class waitlist to participate from home by sharing the pattern over email and inviting them to attend the check-in sessions in October. Over the next four weeks, additional pattern parts will be released during check-ins.
- The Makerplace's Chef Brian led several culinary programs including Knife Skills, French Bistro and the popular Manhattan Clam Chowder, which inspired a potential "Soup of the Month" series for early 2026. He also supported English as a Second Language (ESL) programming with two kitchen events and hosted a Talk & Taste drop-in, where attendees explored genetic taste traits through a supertaster test.
- On a Tuesday in September, just 15 minutes before the Makerplace opened, there was a power outage in the neighborhood. ComEd estimated that power would be restored in about two hours. Rather than lock the doors and turn customers away, Makerspace Branch Assistant Manager Chris along with Makerspace Advisors Michael and Esther and Chef Brian set up a button pop-up station outside the Makerplace. They made buttons with customers who had arrived to use the Makerplace. Chris coordinated with the library's call center to reschedule customer appointments while they engaged in button-making activities. This turned a potentially disappointing and frustrating situation into a fun and creative experience.




What Customers Are Saying




"Amidst all the divisiveness in our society, this was truly magical and fun! Thank you to everyone who made this event possible. It lifted my spirits."

-One Book, One Gala Attendee




"I just completed a program in the Shackley Room working on a genealogy problem and would like to express my gratitude to the three gentlemen that helped me enormously! I am so grateful for the time they spent with me. I love this library!"

-Genealogy Services Customer




"This is my home away from home for crafting, creating and designing. Amazing tools and resources!"

- Makerplace Customer



"This was a well-organized tour that highlighted the library's diverse services for new residents. I never knew the library had so much to offer!"

- Luther Village Bus Tour Attendee



"It was a really nice event and definitely had a positive impact on the girls."

-Period Party Attendee

Arlington Heights Memorial Library

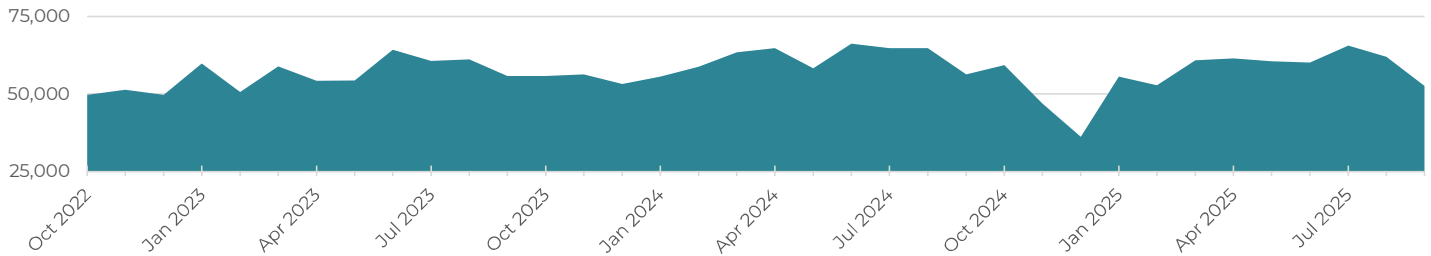
September 2025 Dashboard

Library Visits

75.1% of library customers in September visited the Main Library. Year to date, library visits are down -3.9%.

	September			2025 YTD	2024 YTD	Change
Main Library	39,504	75.1%	<div style="width: 75.1%;"></div>	416,521	441,722	-5.7%
Drive-Up	4,482	8.5%	<div style="width: 8.5%;"></div>	43,132	46,725	-7.7%
Bookmobile	2,526	4.8%	<div style="width: 4.8%;"></div>	20,614	20,030	2.9%
Outreach	2,357	4.5%	<div style="width: 4.5%;"></div>	22,648	19,559	15.8%
Makerplace	1,931	3.7%	<div style="width: 3.7%;"></div>	13,633	13,761	-0.9%
Senior Center	1,799	3.4%	<div style="width: 3.4%;"></div>	15,108	11,238	34.4%
Total	52,599	100%		531,656	553,035	-3.9%

Total Visits



Room Use	September	2025 YTD	2024 YTD	Change	Trend
Hendrickson Room	0	82	91	-9.9%	
Conference Rooms	182	10,598	11,236	-5.7%	
Total	182	10,680	11,327	-5.7%	

October 2024-September 2025

Library Cards ¹	September	2025 YTD	2024 YTD	Change	Trend
Resident	540	3,239	3,270	-0.9%	
Reciprocal	90	1,004	1,033	-2.8%	
Purchased	3	12	7	71.4%	
Total	633	4,255	4,310	-1.3%	

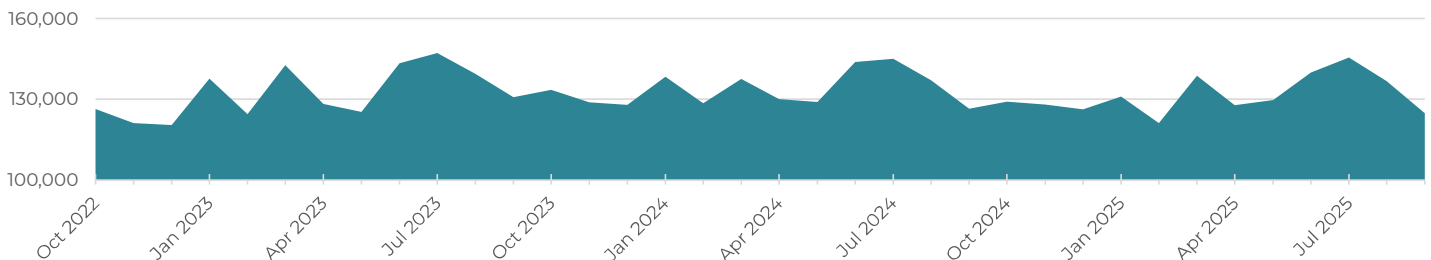
October 2024-September 2025

Circulation

124,853 items were checked out in September. Year to date, total checkouts are down -1.7% compared to 2024.

	September			2025 YTD	2024 YTD	Change
Print	71,200	57.0%	<div style="width: 57.0%;"></div>	676,900	704,615	-3.9%
Downloadable	24,306	19.5%	<div style="width: 19.5%;"></div>	224,951	208,886	7.7%
Audiovisual	20,693	16.6%	<div style="width: 16.6%;"></div>	205,025	215,033	-4.7%
Other	8,654	6.9%	<div style="width: 6.9%;"></div>	88,613	87,808	0.9%
Total	124,853	100%		1,195,489	1,216,342	-1.7%

Total Checkouts



¹ New cards only. Does not include renewals.

Arlington Heights Memorial Library

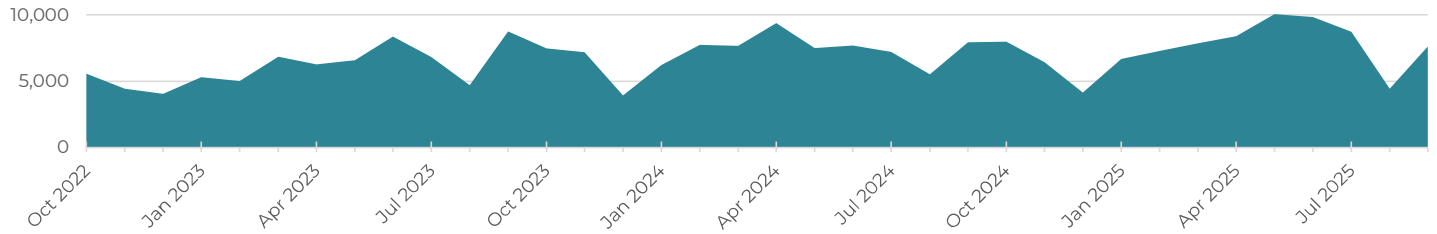
September 2025 Dashboard

Programs

3,603 customers attended Adult programs in September, which represents 47.3% of all program attendees. Year to date, program attendance is up 6% across all audiences and program sessions are up 4.6%.

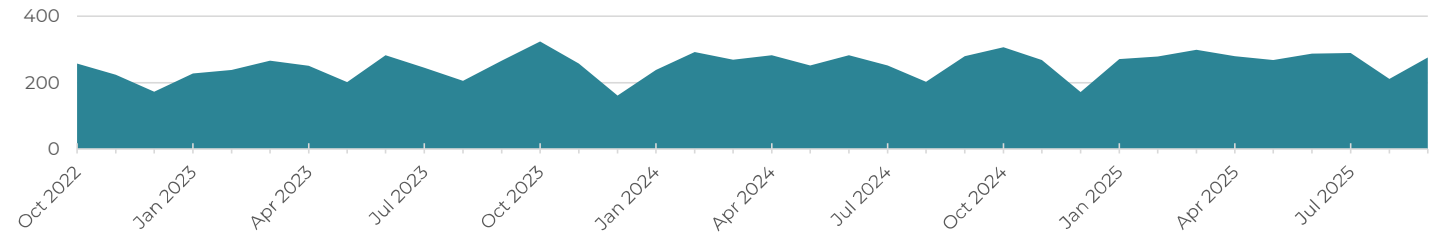
Attendance	September		2025 YTD	2024 YTD	Change
Adult	3,603	47.3%	29,610	30,428	-2.7%
Children	3,210	42.2%	36,720	33,457	9.8%
Teen	799	10.5%	4,502	2,956	52.3%
	7,612	100%	70,832	66,841	6.0%

Attendance



Sessions	September		2025 YTD	2024 YTD	Change
Adult	186	67.4%	1,599	1,556	2.8%
Children	76	27.5%	710	644	10.2%
Teen	14	5.1%	150	151	-0.7%
	276	100%	2,459	2,351	4.6%

Sessions



Supplementary Programs and Activities²

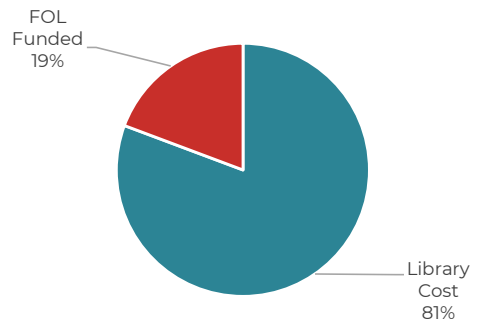
	September	Trend	2025 YTD	2024 YTD	Change
Attendance	1,620		42,011	28,860	45.6%
Sessions	20		188	186	1.1%

October 2024-September 2025

² Supplementary 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.

Program Spending

	September	2025 YTD	Budget	% Spent
Presenters	\$17,132	\$116,368	\$199,918	58.2%
Supplies ³	\$6,973	\$75,035	\$104,183	72.0%
	\$24,105	\$191,403	\$304,101	62.9%
Library Cost	\$17,238	\$154,444	\$256,601	60.2%
FOL Funded	\$6,867	\$36,959	\$47,500	77.8%
	\$24,105	\$191,403	\$304,101	62.9%



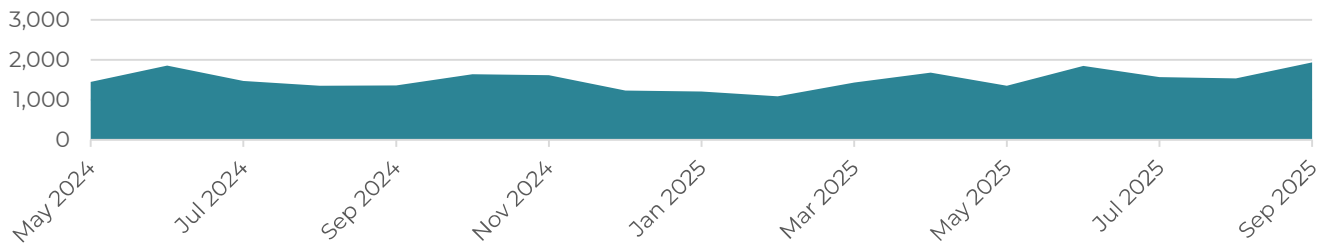
³ Includes supplies for supplementary programs and activities

Arlington Heights Memorial Library Makerplace

September 2025 Dashboard

	September	% New Users	2025 YTD	2024 YTD	Change
Makerplace Visits	1,931	2.9%	13,633	13,761	-0.9%
New Users⁴	September		2025 YTD	2024 YTD	Change
Makerplace	35	62.5%	412	537	-23.3%
Kitchen	10	17.9%	71	180	-60.6%
Makerplace & Kitchen	11	19.6%	44	119	-63.0%
Total	56	100%	527	836	-37.0%

Total Visits



Equipment Usage⁵	September		2025 YTD	2024 YTD	Change
Fabrication	140	44.0%	1,530	1,784	-14.2%
Small Tools	66	20.8%	643	619	3.9%
Sewing	93	29.2%	625	596	4.9%
Technology	16	5.0%	190	334	-43.1%
Art	3	0.9%	71	32	121.9%
Total	318	100%	3,059	3,365	-9.1%

Program Attendance⁶	September		2025 YTD	2024 YTD	Change
Culinary	87	11.5%	700	1,067	-34.4%
Maker	150	19.8%	1,132	1,146	-1.2%
Tour	6	0.8%	72	93	-22.6%
Other	514	67.9%	779	473	64.7%
Total	757	100%	2,683	2,779	-3.5%

	September		2025 YTD	2024 YTD	Change
3D Print Jobs	138		1,515	1,320	15%

	September		2025 YTD	2024 YTD	Change
eLearning⁷	706		5,284	1,943	172%

⁴ Measured by number of waivers signed for maker/fabrication, kitchen, or both

⁵ **Fabrication**: all fabrication room equipment except 3D printers; **Small Tools**: soldering irons, hand tools; **Technology**: design computers

⁶ **Culinary**: kitchen programming; **Maker**: hands on making programs (3D printing, laser cutting, sewing); **Tour**: attendance of facility tours prescheduled or drop-in

⁷ Niche Academy views of Makerplace resources