

## Community Connections – Outreach

### Community Partners

#### ***Senior Social: Medicare/Medicaid Open Enrollment Information Session***

**Date:** September 16

**Attendance:** 10

**Partner:** Illinois Department on Aging

**Staff:** Katie Cortesi (Senior Outreach Librarian)

In anticipation of fall open enrollment, the Illinois Department on Aging provided a presentation on Medicare sign-up.

#### ***School Connection – High School Visit***

**Date:** September 16

**Attendance:** 4

**Partner:** Glenbard East High School

**Staff:** Caitlin Atkinson (Teen Librarian)

Students visited the Library to practice job skills and complete library-related tasks.

#### ***School Connection – 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Visit***

**Date:** September 19

**Attendance:** 76

**Partner:** Madison Elementary School

**Staff:** Deidre Winterhalter (Elementary Services Librarian), Chris Sowl (Youth Services Library Associate II), Julia Kindelin (Youth Services Library Associate II) & Alejandra Guzman (Youth Services Library Associate II)

Five fourth grade classes from Madison Elementary School toured the Library and learned about genres as well as choosing and finding books.

#### ***Co-Op Preschool Family Night***

**Date:** September 23

**Attendance:** 34

**Partner:** Co-Op Preschool

**Staff:** Tricia Nelson (Early Literacy Librarian) & Alejandra Guzman (Youth Services Library Associate II)

Co-Op Preschool families enjoyed a special family storytime and a presentation on Library services and programs.

## SEPTEMBER 2025 – LIBRARY ACTIVITY REPORT

### ***Touch-a-Truck***

**Date:** September 23

**Attendance:** 363

**Partner:** Lombard Park District

**Staff:** Cate Hoadley (Youth Services Assistant Manager) & Alejandra Guzman (Youth Services Library Associate II)

The Lombard Park District's Touch-a-Truck event featured big trucks and even bigger fun. Youth Services staff connected with families, promoted Library services, facilitated a popular "favorite truck" voting activity, and offered a creativity break with stamp cars for hands-on fun (see above right image).



Families drive stamp cars to make unique tracks at the *Touch a Truck* outreach event on September 13.

## Program Highlights

### Early Literacy Program Highlights

#### ***Bitty Brain Builders***

**Date:** September 25

**Attendance:** 29

**Staff:** Tricia Nelson (Early Literacy Librarian) & Julia Kindelin (Youth Services Library Associate II)

Preschoolers engaged in early learning activities that support cognitive development. This month's *Bitty Brain Builders* focused on strengthening bilateral coordination, spatial reasoning, gross motor strength, patterning (see right image), and problem-solving.



Preschooler challenged to recreate a pattern during *Bitty Brain Builders* on September 25.

### Elementary Program Highlights

#### ***Mysterious Magnets***

**Date:** September 11

**Attendance:** 13

**Staff:** Deidre Winterhalter (Elementary Services Librarian) & Alejandra Guzman (Youth Services Library Associate II)

Students learned about magnetism through art and science.

## SEPTEMBER 2025 – LIBRARY ACTIVITY REPORT

### ***Sew a Pencil Pouch***

**Date:** September 23

**Attendance:** 13 (two sessions)

**Staff:** Deidre Winterhalter (Elementary Services Librarian), Jeannie Arinyanontakoon (Youth Services Library Associate II) & Alejandra Guzman (Youth Services Library Associate II)

Using felt, embroidery thread, and big needles, participants stitched pencil pouches using a running stitch and a whip stitch. Everyone struggled with threading needles (including staff), but despite small frustrations, each sewer left with a handmade pouch (see above right image).



Three satisfied sewers with brand new pouches from *Sew a Pencil Pouch* on September 23.

## Teen Program Highlights

### ***Sew a Pennant Flag***

**Date:** September 24

**Attendance:** 10

**Staff:** Caitlin Atkinson (Teen Librarian)

Teen participants learned the basics of hand sewing while creating personalized pennant flags.

## Adult Program Highlights

### ***Board Game Friday***

**Date:** September 12

**Sessions:** 2

**Attendance:** 10

**Staff:** Stephanie Howes (Adult Library Services Assistant Manager)

Adult Library Service staff expanded the Board Game Friday monthly program to include a 50+ board game playing session in the afternoon. The 20-40s board game group met in the evening. Participants enjoyed the new session.

### ***Book Clubs***

**Date:** September 2, 14, 17 & 18

**Sessions:** 4

**Attendance:** 36

**Staff:** Erin Bigger-Goldlust (Digital Services & Instruction Librarian), Courtney Rose Welsh (Adult Library Services Programming Librarian), & Stephanie Howes (Adult Library Services Assistant Manager)

## SEPTEMBER 2025 – LIBRARY ACTIVITY REPORT

In addition to the Library's monthly clubs, the new Story Share Book Club launched with eight people joining. In this club, participants share their favorite books and books they have read with others.

### ***Computer Classes***

**Sessions:** 14

**Attendance:** 69

**Staff:** Erin Bigger-Goldlust (Digital Services & Instruction Librarian) & Lance Garrison (Adult Library Services Librarian)

Popular classes in September were related to Google suite. Drop-in tech days are also becoming more popular.

## Senior Program Highlights

### ***Senior Moving Made Simple***

**Date:** September 17

**Attendance:** 26

**Staff:** Katie Cortesi (Senior Outreach Librarian)

Lombard real estate agents Madison Verdun and Emily Kaczmarek presented on downsizing and other transitional housing experiences.

## Presentations and Performances for Adults

### ***Sunday Music Series: Cellist Lilianna Zofia Wosko***

**Date:** September 7

**Attendance:** 40

**Staff:** Courtney Rose Welsh (Adult Library Services Programming Librarian)

Attendees enjoyed an afternoon of music with the musician and composer.

### ***Seasonal One-Pot Meals with Chef Maddox***

**Date:** September 8

**Attendance:** 64

**Staff:** Courtney Rose Welsh (Adult Library Services Programming Librarian)

Chef Maddox demonstrated one-pot meals.

## Studio 411 Program Highlights

### ***Cricut Project: Monarch Butterfly Shadow Box***

**Date:** September 16

**Attendance:** 15

**Staff:** Melisa Martinez (Studio 411 Supervisor) & Afra Siddiqui (Library Associate II)

Patrons assembled a marigold and butterfly-filled shadow box inspired by the migration of monarch butterflies to Mexico (see above right image).



### ***Sewing Project: Small Tote Bag***

**Date:** September 20

**Attendance:** 5

**Staff:** Melisa Martinez (Studio 411 Supervisor) & Afra Siddiqui (Library Associate II)

Participants created a small, boxed tote bag using serape fabric.

### ***Cricut Projects: Fall Wreath***

**Date:** September 23

**Attendance:** 17

**Staff:** Melisa Martinez (Studio 411 Supervisor) & Afra Siddiqui (Library Associate II)

Patrons assembled a fall wreath made from paper and a metal hoop (see right image).



## Collection Management

**Chicago Tribune Access:** The Library launched online access to the Chicago Tribune website as well as the Digital Replica Edition of the print newspaper.

**Find More Illinois:** Northern Illinois University joined Find More Illinois (FMI), providing HPL and other FMI members access to an additional two million interlibrary loan items. Over 80 libraries now participate in FMI with a combined catalog of over 8.5 million items.

**Interlibrary Loans:** Interlibrary loan borrowing and lending requests are trending upward, with 185 items lent to other libraries and 825 items requested by Helen Plum patrons. Amy Burns (Patron Services Assistant) agreed to take on interlibrary loan processing as part of her regular workload and was trained by Mary Hines (Patron Services Assistant) before Mary's retirement at the end of September.

## SEPTEMBER 2025 – LIBRARY ACTIVITY REPORT

**Slim DVD Cases:** Technology & Metadata Services staff completed the repackaging of Adult Library Services' DVD and Blu-ray discs into slim cases to reduce shelf space requirements in the Hub. Repackaging of Youth Services' discs is underway.

### Patron Engagement

### Marketing Engagement

**Top Social Media Post of the Month:** The most-viewed social media post of September was an Instagram video of "[Naming our library plants](#)" with punny literary names, which has 21,000 views and counting. On Facebook, the Library's audience enjoyed the photos from the [Stuffed Animal Sleepover](#) program, which received 134 likes.

**Email Newsletters:** Email newsletters are delivered to patrons every other week. We have a total of **26,909** email subscribers. Individual subscribers may receive more than one targeted email newsletter. For example, a parent may receive Elementary and Middle School Newsletters for their children as well as the Adult Newsletter. Additionally, the NextReads newsletter is a reader's advisory service with a total of **352** subscribers. Adult patrons can sign up on our [website](#) and select from a number of reader's advisory tracks.

Email Newsletters Statistics: July–September 2025					
Targeted Newsletters	Emails Sent	Emails Opened	Open Rate	Links Clicked	Click Rate
Birth through Preschool	3,982	2,253	56.6%	108	2.7%
Elementary School	9,862	5,660	57.4%	207	2.1%
Middle & High School	12,470	6,374	51.1%	135	1.1%
Adult	89,006	48,131	54.1%	1,294	1.5%
Adults 55+	45,113	21,414	47.5%	1,503	3.3%
Studio 411	2,059	1,326	64.4%	231	11.2%
NextReads	7,564	4,809	63.6%	487	6.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>170,056</b>	<b>89,967</b>		<b>3,965</b>	
<b>Average</b>			<b>52.9%</b>		<b>2.3%</b>

Industry standard averages for 2025 (via HubSpot):

**Open rate:** 42.35% | Non-profits: 46.49%

**Click rate:** 2% | Non-profits: 2.66%



### Facilities Updates

**Building Updates:** Phil Lucas (Facility & Security Services Manager) coordinates building maintenance, repair, and ongoing testing.

- All HVAC filters were changed
- Exterior windows were cleaned
- Hub lighting was repaired
- The north (patron) elevator 3D sensor was finally replaced
- Siemens completed their first preventative maintenance on our building automation system

**Library Landscape:** We are frequently asked about the plants surrounding the building. The website now hosts seasonal plant palettes with plants identified: [Visiting the Library | Helen Plum Library](#) (scroll to “Landscaping”).

**Studio 411:** The Glowforge laser engraver and cutter is out of service. As laser cutters are specialized equipment, Studio 411 staff must work directly with the vendor, and that takes more time to diagnose and repair the issue. Studio 411 staff do not have a timeline for repairs but are hoping for a resolution soon.

**Study Rooms:** Study Room usage has increased in Adult Library Services now that schools are back in session. Patrons made 678 room bookings in September, utilizing 1,118 hours of the available 1,500 hours. This translates to about a 75% occupancy rate, up from 55% occupancy in August.

### Staff Updates

Exiting Staff:

- Claire Biegalski, Substitute Shelving Assistant
- Marissa Hegel, Youth Services Library Associate II
- Mary Hines, Patron Services Assistant

Transitioning Staff:

- Jenn Ferguson, Executive Assistant – moved to full-time

A current list of job openings is available on our website: [Employment Opportunities | Helen Plum Library](#).

## Meetings, Training, & Continuing Education

### Staff Training

**Person in Charge Training:** Annual Person in Charge (PIC) training was held over three days in September. The training included PIC expectations, when to complete an incident report, how to utilize the updated report templates, and de-escalation techniques. Eighteen staff members participated in the training, with sessions led by Phil Lucas (Facility & Security Services Manager), Anne Luzeniecki (Executive Director), and Tyler Works (Assistant Director).

Meetings and Professional Development	
September 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attended Premier Showcase, an event that allows children’s performers in the Chicagoland area to demonstrate their act (Julia Kindelin)</li> <li>• Policy &amp; Bylaws Committee Meeting</li> <li>• Audit Committee Meeting</li> </ul>
September 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anne Luzeniecki led a building tour for attendees of a RAILS on-site event</li> </ul>
September 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attended Outreach House ribbon cutting at their new location (Trustee Ginger Kearney, Trustee Julie Kowalski-Schmidt, Michelle Kilty, &amp; Alex Vancina)</li> <li>• ILA Conference 2026 Planning Committee meeting (Alex Vancina)</li> </ul>
September 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jingle Bell Jubilee community partner meeting (Kristie Leslie &amp; Kimberly Sipek)</li> <li>• Board of Trustees Meeting</li> </ul>
September 17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anne Luzeniecki participated in the Annual TIF Meeting hosted by the Village of Lombard</li> <li>• Patron Services Staff Meeting</li> </ul>
September 18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Management Meeting</li> </ul>
September 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community partnership opportunity meeting with Lombard Junior Women’s Club (Kimberly Sipek)</li> </ul>
September 22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ILA Marketing Forum meeting (Emily Bradshaw)</li> </ul>
September 23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All-Staff Meeting</li> </ul>
September 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LACONI Governing Board meeting (Alex Vancina)</li> </ul>



## SEPTEMBER 2025 – LIBRARY ACTIVITY REPORT

September 26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Meeting with the Executive Director of Outreach House for a tour of the new facility, collaboration on community partnership opportunities, and distribute Library resource information materials (Kimberly Sipek)</li><li>• Presented at the PrairieCat Users Group Day conference on IUG and WILIUG resources for libraries using Innovative Interfaces software (Alex Vancina)</li><li>• RAILS Board meeting at the Coal Valley Service Center (Alex Vancina)</li></ul>
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### **Staff Glossary:**

Emily Bradshaw – Content Coordinator

Michelle Kilty – Adult Library Services Manager

Julia Kindelin – Youth Services Library Associate II

Kristie Leslie – Marketing Manager

Anne Luzeniecki – Executive Director

Kimberly Sipek – Community Engagement Coordinator

Alex Vancina – Technology & Metadata Services Manager

Tyler Works – Assistant Director