

LAKE FOREST LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Lake Forest Library, 360 East Deerpath Road, Lake Forest, IL 60045
Kasian Room, Lower Level
Tuesday, September 17, 2024, 6:30 pm
Regular Meeting

The Lake Forest Library provides members of the public present at the meetings with an opportunity to participate in the meeting. No prior registration is necessary. The meeting agenda and materials are available on the Library website. The meeting's minutes are available on the Library website after they are approved by the Library Board of Trustees. Current and past meeting information, including recordings, is available at: [Board Meetings & Minutes | Lake Forest Library](#)

Agenda

1. Welcome and Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. President's Remarks
4. Call for Additions to the Agenda
5. Opportunity for the Public to Address the Board
6. Correspondence Report and Patron Comments
7. Consent Agenda (omnibus vote on matters 7(a) - 7(d)):
 - a. Approve September 17, 2024 Agenda
 - b. Approve August 20, 2024 Regular Meeting Minutes
 - c. Approve August 2024 Financial Report
 - d. Approve September 9, 2024 Long Range Planning Committee Meeting Minutes
8. Long Range Planning Committee – Strategic Plan Update
9. Building Committee - Project Updates
10. Vending Machine at West Train Station – Update
11. Upcoming Medical Benefit Changes at City of Lake Forest
12. Lake Forest Reads One Book/One Community Program
13. Library Operations Report
14. Unfinished Business
15. New Business
16. Adjournment.

Next Meeting:

Regular Board: Tuesday, October 15, 2024, 6.30 pm – Kasian Room

Special meetings may be called at any time with proper notice pursuant to the Library's bylaws. Individuals with disabilities who require certain accommodations in order to allow them to observe and/or participate in this meeting, or who have questions regarding the accessibility of the meetings or the facilities are requested to contact the Library Director at 847.810.4602 promptly to allow the Library to make reasonable accommodations.

PUBLIC COMMENT AT BOARD MEETINGS POLICY

The Illinois Open Meetings Act provides in Section 2.06 that at meetings of public bodies, “any person shall be permitted an opportunity to address public officials under the rules established and recorded by the public body.” 5 ILCS 120/2.06(g).

The Board of Trustees welcomes public participation. This policy provides the following rules and guidelines for public participation at its meetings.

Individuals attending board meetings must conduct themselves with respect and civility toward others. Abusive, profane, threatening, or harassing language and/or personal attacks will not be permitted. The Board President or presiding officer may prohibit further comment at the meeting by a speaker whose remarks violate this rule.

Public comments are permitted during the time designated on the Board of Trustees meeting agenda, unless otherwise directed by the Board President.

The Board President determines the order in which speakers will be recognized.

When recognized by the Board President, the speaker should begin by stating his or her name and address.

Public comments will ordinarily be limited to three (3) minutes per speaker. The Board President shall have discretion to modify this time limit, as well as to limit repetitive comments.

Members of the public will not be allowed to speak a second time until all members of the public who wish to speak have been allowed to do so. The Board President will determine whether second public comments will be permitted, and if so, the appropriate amount of time for public discussion, and will end public comment at his/her discretion.

Board members are not obligated to respond to comments from the public. Issues requiring possible action by the board may be added to a future meeting agenda, and issues that can be addressed by library administration will be noted.

A copy of these guidelines will be placed next to the sign-in sheet made available to members of the public at the entrance to board meetings.

Petitions or written correspondence directed to the board shall be presented to the board by the Board President or Secretary at the next regularly scheduled board meeting.

Minutes are a summary of the board’s discussion and actions. Speaker requests to append written statements or correspondence to the minutes are not favored. Generally, written materials presented to the board will be included in the library’s files rather than in the minutes. The Board President shall have the authority to determine procedural matters regarding public participation not otherwise defined in these guidelines. *(Approved by the Library Board of Trustees January 9, 2018.)*

SELECTED PATRON COMMENTS

AUGUST 2024

- The Goosebumps movie inspired a child to read the books!
- Patron expressed her frustration over the small, crowded play area in Children's and how it felt like everyone was on top of each other.
- A teacher from the Montessori School came in and asked if it was okay to take a couple of plants for the students to learn how to care for them in the classroom and thanked us for the opportunity to take them.
- Regarding the plant exchange: I saw your post on social media and brought in a couple of plants. I think this is just great!
- Regarding the plant exchange: It is wonderful that you're doing this. Is this every year? I look forward to when you are doing them and am readying my stuff for the craft exchange this fall. I let them know this was our first year doing it.
- My daughters loved the 3D printing program! I'm so happy the library is providing these kinds of workshops.
- We just moved to Lake Forest last week and had to leave all of our plants behind, so we were excited to have the chance to take a plant today for our new home. 8/24/24 Leave a Plant, Love a Plant program.
- Regarding the plant exchange: My son wanted a plant for himself and also picked one for his little brother. Thank you!
- A Lake Forest College Student emailed and asked if he and his roommate could come to the swap on Saturday even though they didn't have any plants to give. I emailed and let the patron know they were welcome to attend since we will have more than enough plants. The patron responded: "Wonderful! We will be there on Saturday. Super excited!"
- About Gorton Children's Learning Center Storytimes: Lorie, all of the dates work and the time is perfect. This is going to be a great school year. Let me know if you need anything from me.
- About offsite Storytimes at the School of St. Mary's: Thank you! I am thrilled that we will have this program this year!!
- Patron asked if he could use the library even if he doesn't have a library card, I told him that he was welcome to use the library and the Wi-Fi to work whenever we're open. He was very grateful and said it was so nice to hear that.

- If you don't take credit cards, you should have an ATM in the library.
- Once again Ming saves the day, cheerfully helping a patron with a computer problem.
- Child was looking for Pokemon books When I showed him our non-fiction collection, he said, "I love it here!"
- Instagram post regarding 1000 Books: Love this initiative!
- Patron was very complimentary of all of the services that the LF Library offers. She appreciates getting help over the phone, the many databases that we continue to add and the adult programming. She and her husband are retired and love to access the library from home with all of its resources including the new craft database and the new military records database.
- A patron recommended that we should add the library address to the Lake Forest Library sign on the path up to the library. She said it would make it easier for her Lyft drivers to find the library since she is unable to operate a car on her own.
- I brought my grandchildren into the Children's Library and was amazed at how spectacular the play section is!
- This Tutor.com is going to help my family so much. I had never heard of it, but both of my boys need it as they start the new year, I can't wait to get them started. This is such a gift, thank you so much for having this. I'm so glad you brought these [bookmarks] today.
- Patron: We have a big day planned! Lorie: What are you going to do? Patron: We have all these great Library books and are going to enjoy them all this afternoon!
- My wife saw in the newsletter that you have travel adapter outlets. We're going on a trip soon; can I check one out? I never thought this would be something a library offers! I showed the patron the take out tech wall and he checked out the travel adapter.
- I just wanted to say that this grab and go system [for holds] is great. It's so efficient and you don't have to wait in line to check it out. I really appreciate having that feature in this library.
- We share videos and pictures from this storytime with parents during the day and they love when you come visit their kids at Dearhaven! - paraphrased from teacher at Dearhaven Child Care and Learning Center
- Two women came to the Children's Dept today who were in town for a high school reunion. They both grew up in Lake Forest and have great memories of coming to the library as children. They couldn't believe the transformation of the Children's section and described it as a place "oozing with delight" and "full of joy."

- Instagram Reel Video for 100 Books Before Graduation: This is the closest I've come to wishing I was still in high school - great bag.
- Instagram Video post for 100 Books Before Graduation: Such an awesome program! Kudos to the amazing Youth Services Staff!
- A patron commented that the RFID gates are very loud when they beep; it's kind of intimidating not knowing if they're going beep when you walk through them.
- Patron who attended an iPhone program with John Lacson last month had a compliment for John while calling the library for something else: "[John's] information about how willing the Lake Forest Library is to do one-on-one appointments to help people, especially those like me who have never used laptops, and have some individual instruction--that's awesome. That means a lot to me."
- Two-year-old said: Library Day! when he wakes up.
- Patron: Thanks so much, I really enjoyed the iPhone class taught by John.
- We've been to lots of programs and parties at Lake Forest Library and this one was one of our favorites! (1000 Books Before Kindergarten Party)
- What a fantastic program! You did such a wonderful job! (1000 Books Before Kindergarten Party)
- We loved seeing our kids in the 1000 Books Before Kindergarten pictures posted on your social media. It was such a nice surprise! - paraphrased from patron at the 1000 Books Party
- The Harry Potter Party was so much fun and very organized. We had a blast with all the activities and Ishan loves all things Harry Potter and hasn't stopped talking about it. You did a great job!
- Patron complained that Library address isn't visible and has had problems with Ubers finding it to pick her up.

LAKE FOREST LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

360 East Deerpath Road, Lake Forest, IL 60045

Tuesday, August 20, 2024

Regular Meeting

CALL TO ORDER

President Jim Clifton welcomed all and called the meeting to order on August 20 at 6.32 p.m. in the Kasian Room, Lake Forest Library.

ROLL CALL

Trustees present: Jim Clifton, JoAnn Desmond, John F. Johnson, Robert Shaw, Garth Pearson, Vince Sparrow, Heather Strong, Emily Van Bel. A quorum was present.

Trustee absent: Josh Jackson

Library Staff present: Ishwar Laxminarayan, Executive Director, Assistant Facilities Manager, Bledian Ajroja, Heidi Kruger, Head of Communications, Kate Buckardt, Head of Adult Services, Lorie Rohrer, Head of Youth Services, Joy Schmoll, Head of Communications, Leotrim Hamza, Business Manager, Vannessa Powell, Adult Services, Breen Tivnan, Adult Services, Nick Rosales, Facilities.

PRESIDENT'S REMARKS

President Clifton expressed gratitude to Trustees Desmond and Jackson for filling in for Secretarial duties. He extended thanks to the library staff for the Arty Party and other events. President Clifton also encouraged board members to attend more events and to interact with Library staff more regularly.

CALL FOR ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

None.

OPPORTUNITY FOR THE PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE BOARD

Karey Walker from the Friends of the Library discussed her background as the new Executive Director of the Friends their upcoming book sale next month.

DEPARTMENT UPDATES

Adult Services- Ms. Buckardt announced that the department is now fully staffed and introduced Vannessa Powell and Breen Tivnan who expressed excitement about joining the team.

Facilities- Mr. Ajroja introduced a new facilities employee Nick Rosales, who is happy to be part of the team.

Business Office- Director Laxminarayan introduced the new business manager Leotrim Hamza, who is excited to join the staff.

CORRESPONDENCE REPORT

President Clifton acknowledged the Reed family for their generosity. Director Laxminarayan discussed positive feedback from patrons regarding recent programming. Trustee Shaw inquired about the origin of program ideas, leading to a discussion on the collaborative process involving the library staff.

CONSENT AGENDA

Minor edits were recommended by Trustee Strong and Director Laxminarayan of which Director Laxminarayan agreed to make the necessary revisions. Trustee Shaw made a motion, seconded by Trustee Johnson to approve the Consent Agenda. The vote was approved unanimously by all Trustees in attendance.

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Trustee Sparrow reported on the current investment strategy. Trustee Johnson ensured that funds are allocated for upcoming Building Committee projects. Questions were raised about the security of some investments, with follow-up actions planned from Finance Committee.

BUILDING COMMITTEE

ELEVATOR

Trustee Strong discussed the elevator refurbishment, confirming the project will include necessary modifications while staying within the original scope. American Hoist was recommended as the preferred contractor and a contingency fund was suggested. Trustee Strong made a motion to award the bid to American Hoist for a total cost of \$175,305 and include a contingency of \$30,000 for unforeseen expenses. Trustee Desmond seconded the motion which was passed unanimously by all Trustees in attendance.

COURTYARD

Mr. Ajroja provided an update on the courtyard project. Wiss Janney will present a report in mid-September.

ADDITIONAL ITEMS

Trustee Strong discussed future landscaping considerations and mentioned the shared fence with the development to the north. President Clifton commented on the landscaping at the back of the building and inquired about potential improvements. Director Laxminarayan mentioned an unexpected city project to fix the sidewalks in front of the library which the library managed effectively.

OPERATIONS REPORT

Director Laxminarayan highlighted a busy month with the summer reading program and media lab classes. He mentioned upcoming programs, including a Friends appreciation and Murals Celebration next month. Staff visited other libraries during Lake Forest Day to meet counterparts and evaluate features they liked or disliked. They will present their findings to the Board at next month's meeting.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Trustee Shaw asked about post-COVID visitation statistics. Ms. Kruger reported an increase in visits. Trustee Johnson requested a three-year trend analysis comparing visitation statistics internally and with other institutions.

NEW BUSINESS

Trustee Desmond encouraged trustees to participate or volunteer for The Friends book sale. Trustee Strong mentioned an early preview of the book sale available to Trustees.

Trustee Desmond made a motion, seconded by Trustee Sparrow, to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously by all trustees in attendance. Meeting adjourned at 7.46 p.m.

Emily Van Bel, Secretary

Submitted for approval by the Board on September 17, 2024

Next Meeting September 17, 2024



FY2025 Revenue & Expenditure Statement

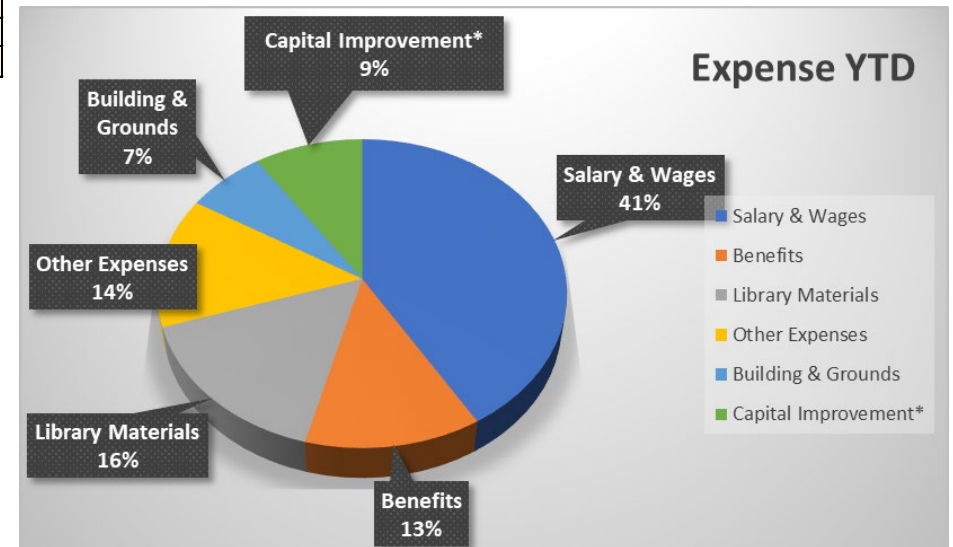
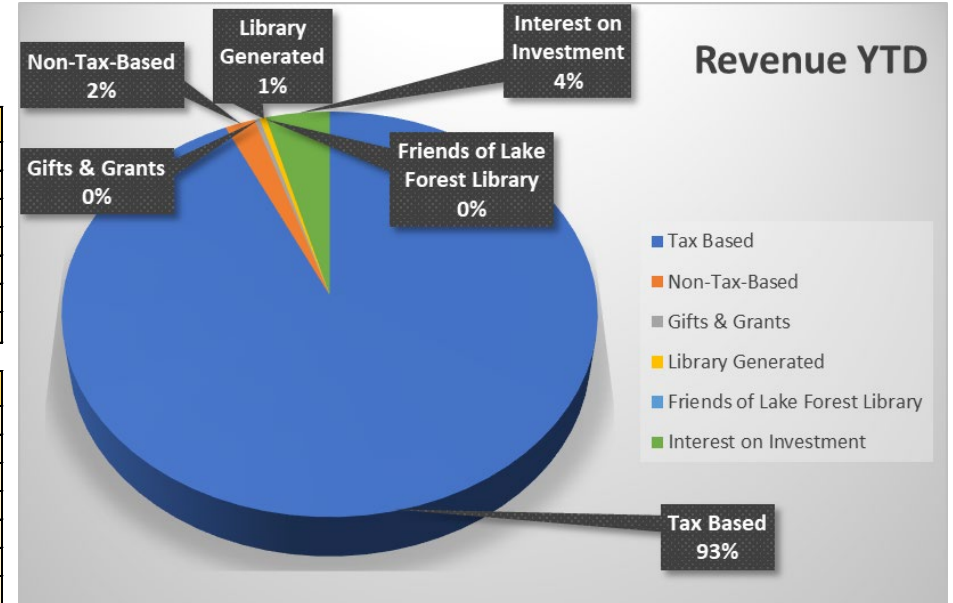
For the YTD August - 2024

Revenues	YTD	Budget	Budget Realized
Tax Based	2,804,093	4,982,581	56%
Non-Tax-Based	60,070	73,000	82%
Gifts & Grants	10,513	10,000	105%
Library Generated	12,765	24,000	53%
Friends of Lake Forest Library	-	79,750	0%
Interest on Investment	126,712	160,000	79%
Total Revenues	3,014,154	5,329,331	57%

Expenses	YTD	Budget	Budget Utilized
Salary & Wages	615,382	2,244,113	27%
Benefits	190,067	888,814	21%
Library Materials	237,150	722,700	33%
Other Expenses	203,739	894,580	23%
Contractual Services Library*	113,375	409,400	28%
Other*	90,364	485,180	19%
Building & Grounds	102,454	393,950	26%
Contractual Services Building*	7,028	25,000	28%
Capital Improvement*	140,023	2,100,000	7%
Total Expenses	1,488,815	7,244,157	21%

Reserves	
Reserve - Capital Improvements	3,050,000
Reserve - Technology Improvements	300,000
Capital Equipment	300,000
Fund Balance - Unassigned	3,953,524
Total Reserve Amount	\$ 7,603,524

*Detail on Last page of the Report





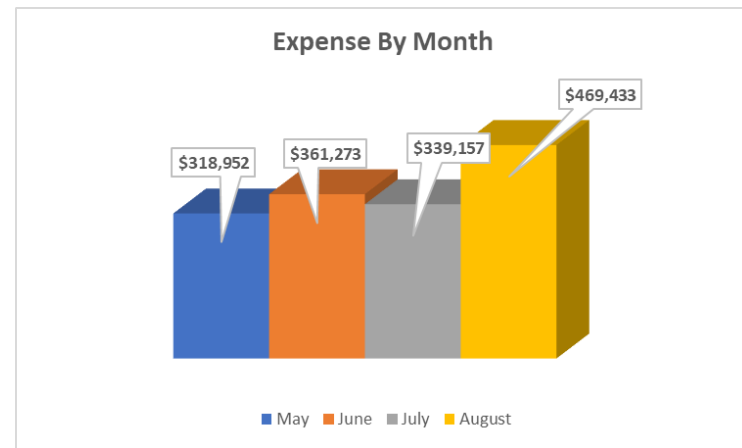
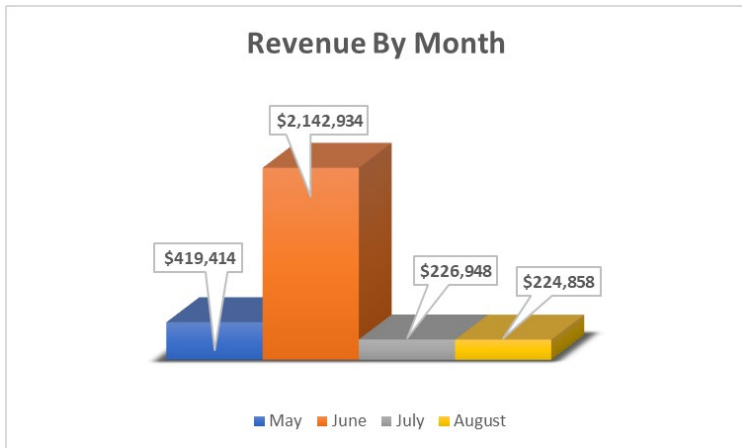
FY2025 Revenue & Expenditure Statement

For the YTD August - 2024

	May	June	July	August	YTD	Budget
Tax Based	362,954	2,141,798	100,275	199,067	2,804,093	4,982,581
Non-Tax-Based	15,187	-	42,349	2,535	60,070	73,000
Gifts & Grants	13	-	-	10,500	10,513	10,000
Library Generated	3,696	1,136	831	7,103	12,765	24,000
Friends of Lake Forest Library	-	-	-	-	-	79,750
Interest on Investment	37,564	-	83,494	5,654	126,712	160,000
	\$419,414	\$2,142,934	\$226,948	\$224,858	\$3,014,154	\$5,329,331

	May	June	July	August	YTD	Budget
Salary & Wages	94,577	144,383	145,995	230,427	615,382	2,244,113
Benefits	43,937	44,379	46,151	55,599	190,067	888,814
Library Materials	34,053	85,593	58,491	59,014	237,150	722,700
Other Expenses	69,335	37,089	62,429	34,885	203,739	894,580
Contractual Services Library	48,098	16,012	34,627	14,638	113,375	409,400
Other	21,238	21,077	27,802	20,247	90,364	485,180
Building & Grounds	55,885	8,449	23,240	14,881	102,454	393,950
Contractual Services Building	2,693	1,379	2,495	461	7,028	25,000
Capital Improvement	21,165	41,380	2,852	74,626	140,023	2,100,000
	\$318,952	\$361,273	\$339,157	\$469,433	1,488,815	7,244,157

	\$100,462	\$1,781,661	(\$112,209)	(\$244,575)	1,525,339	(\$1,914,826)
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Lake Forest Library
Financial Notes and Variance Report
For the Month of August 2024 (Month 03) FY2025

Funds on Hand: \$3,953,524 (unrestricted/unaudited). The budget deficit of \$1,914,826 will be adjusted at the end of the fiscal year from funds on hand

General Operations - Revenues

Property Tax: As of August 31, the Library received \$2,804,093 in property tax distributions which is 56% of annual budget.

Non-Tax-Based: As of August 31, the Library received \$60,070 in property tax distributions which reflects personal property tax \$31,310 and per capita grant \$28,760 payment which is 82% of annual budget.

Gifts: As of August 31, the Library received \$10,513 as gifts and grants which is 5% more than of annual budget.

Library-Generated: As of August 31, the Library received \$12,765 in Library generated income. This income is from copiers, other revenue such as CCS and miscellaneous fees which is 53% of the annual budget.

Interest on Investment: As of August 31, the Library received \$126,712 on interest on investment which is 79% of the annual budget.

General Operations - Expenditures

Salaries, wages, and benefits: As of August 31, \$615,382 for salaries and wages: 27% of FY budget; \$190,067 for benefits: 21% of FY budget. \$110,842 for medical insurance 22% of FY budget; \$46,052 for SSN: 23% of FY budget; \$29,961 for IMRF: 17% of FY budget and \$3,211 for Worker's Compensation: 37% of FY budget.

Materials: Books, AV, and Electronic Services: As of August 31, \$237,150: 33% of FY budget, this includes payments for periodical and database subscriptions.

Other Operating Expenditures: As of August 31, \$203,739: 23% of FY budget. Includes \$113,375 in library contractual services, including third payment of RFID lease of \$24,041 to Bibliotheca and \$90,364 on other expense such as programs, administrative fees, office supplies, membership and miscellaneous expenses.

Building and Grounds: As of August 31, \$102,454 which is 26% of the FY budget. Reflects the building insurance, contracts and service calls for building maintenance, the cleaning service, elevator, repairs for HVAC, and other systems.

Capital Improvement: As of August 31, \$140,023: 7% of FY budget has been spent on the purchase of new servers and art pieces restored - Jackleen Leary sponsored by Friends of Lake Forest. Also includes advance payment \$34,700 to International Library Service for kiosk machine and approved Board of Trustee projects of fire alarm and shifting of pumps.

Reserves

\$3,953,524 - Operating cash reserve (fund balance-unassigned). The Library's restricted reserves are currently \$3,650,000: capital equipment (\$300,000), capital improvements (3,050,000), and technology (\$300,000). An estimated amount of \$774,237 reflecting excess of revenues over expenditures for FY2024 will be reflected in the operating cash reserve in upcoming months after the audit.

Year to Date FY2024: 21% of budget expenses; 57 % budget revenues.

Account Details

Contractual Services Library

Description	May	June	July	August	YTD	Budget
CCS & OCLC (Integrated Library System)	12,248	-	17,505	-	29,753	\$ 92,400
HR Consulting	-	-	-	-	-	\$ 50,000
LAN, WAV, and Support (MSP)	9,548	9,908	9,936	9,959	39,352	\$ 132,000
EZ Proxy & Collection HQ	732	-	1,375	189	2,296	\$ 10,000
Bibliotheca	24,041	-	-	-	24,041	\$ 25,000
Online/Internet (fiber)	-	1,322	1,439	1,205	3,967	\$ 25,000
Other: Web Calendar Subscription	-	3,094	2,685	22	5,801	\$ 40,000
Technology Leased & Warranty Renewals	1,528	1,687	1,687	3,262	8,166	\$ 35,000
Total	\$ 48,098	\$ 16,012	\$ 34,627	\$ 14,638	\$ 113,375	\$ 409,400

Contractual Service Building

Description	May	June	July	August	YTD	Budget
Water Treatment	250	250	250	250	\$ 1,000	
Alarm System	2,340	-	-	104	\$ 2,443	
Inner Security System	104	-	-	-	\$ 104	
Rose Pest	-	97	204	107	\$ 408	
AED (CINTAS)	-	1,032	2,041	-	\$ 3,074	
Total	\$ 2,693	\$ 1,379	\$ 2,495	\$ 461	\$ 7,028	\$ 25,000

Others

Description	May	June	July	August	YTD	Budget
NEW STRATEGIC INITIATIVES	-	-	-		-	\$ 100,000
ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES	2,312	-	4,625	2,312	9,250	\$ 30,385
PERSONNEL RECRUITMENT	-	-	59	176	235	\$ 1,000
TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT	777	1,041	2,475	727	5,021	\$ 23,000
EMPLOYEE TUITION	-	-	-		-	\$ 10,000
MEMBERSHIP DUES	1,410	154	162		1,726	\$ 11,000
MEETINGS & EXPENSE REIMB	-	-	46		46	\$ 2,500
LEGAL	-	2,385	4,380	2,760	9,525	\$ 100,000
AUDITING SERVICES	-	-	-		-	\$ 9,000
PROGRAMS & SERVICES	15,371	8,674	12,917	10,428	47,389	\$ 152,400
ONLINE BANKING FEES	150	187	184	188	709	\$ 1,815
INSURANCE - LIABILITY	-	6,798	-		6,798	\$ 9,680
TELEPHONE	41	738	553	41	1,374	\$ 8,750
OFFICE SUPPLIES	68	229	2,075	2,299	4,670	\$ 15,000
POSTAGE	973	5	18	1,208	2,206	\$ 7,150
VENDING BEVERAGES	135	866	308	107	1,416	\$ 3,500
Total	\$ 21,238	\$ 21,077	\$ 27,802	\$ 20,247	\$ 90,364	\$ 485,180

Capital Improvement

Description	May	June	July	August	YTD	Budget
Capital Equipment	-	676	-	-	\$ 676	\$ 350,000
Technology Upgrade	18,815	6,005	1,782	-	\$ 26,602	\$ 250,000
Capital Improvement	2,350	34,700	1,069	74,626	\$ 112,745	\$ 1,500,000
Total	\$ 21,165	\$ 41,380	\$ 2,852	\$ 74,626	\$ 140,023	\$ 2,100,000

LAKE FOREST LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Long Range Planning Committee Meeting September 9, 2024

Minutes

Attendees: Trustees Robert Shaw (Chair), Trustee Jim Clifton

Absent: Trustee Josh Jackson

Library staff: Ishwar Laxminarayan, Executive Director, Heidi Krueger, Director of Patron Services and Joy Schmoll, Head of Communications

Chair Shaw welcomed the attendees and called the meeting to order at 4.05 pm in the Reed Room. There were no public comments.

Joy Schmoll provided an overview of the summary document highlighting the initiatives in the new Strategic Plan and invited feedback from the attendees. Trustees Shaw and Clifton complimented the Library staff on the format and content of the highlights of the new Strategic Plan covering the years 2024-2027. They reiterated that the Board would like to see this report on a quarterly basis, with a more detailed report at the end of each fiscal year. They noted that this was a living document that would be constantly refined and updated over the next three years based on feedback from staff and trustees.

Staff informed the trustees that the summary would be discussed with the leadership team before every monthly board meeting, and also shared with all staff during their monthly update sessions. Trustees Shaw and Clifton emphasized the need to continually engage staff in these deliberations and looked forward to hearing presentations from the staff, especially their recent visits to local libraries.

Trustee Jackson noted by email that the document should also include any projects or activities that the community had identified that we might consider doing sooner. Staff noted that these were already included in different places of the document and that building enhancements such as the need for additional parking and greater accessibility are an ongoing part of the Building Committee deliberations.

Trustees Shaw and Clifton reported on their discussions with local resident Richard Sugar who shared his vision for coordinating the services of many local organizations in Lake Forest and the leadership role he envisions the Library to play in such an effort. Ishwar will set up a meeting with Mr. Sugar to discuss this further.

Future meetings of the Committee will be scheduled as needed. Trustee Shaw moved to adjourn the meeting at 5.00 pm.



LAKE FOREST
LIBRARY

2024-2027 STRATEGIC PLAN

Progress Update 9/10/2024

This Strategic Plan presents the Strategic Priorities and Mission that will guide Lake Forest Library for the next three years. The Strategic Plan is grounded in the findings of the 2023 City of Lake Forest Community-Wide Survey (details in the Appendix) and several internal discussions involving the Library Board of Trustees and all Library Staff.

GUIDING THE LIBRARY'S NEXT 3 YEARS

Mission Statement

We are the cornerstone of literacy in our community where everyone is respected and free to pursue a lifelong love for reading and learning.

Strategic Priorities

1

**Growing Generations
of Avid Readers**

2

**Preserving and Enhancing
a Beloved Community Asset**

3

**Enhancing
Organizational Excellence**

4

**Inspiring All Residents with
Lifelong Learning Opportunities**

5

**Bringing the Library into the
Story of Each Lake Forester**

This Plan is a living document designed to inspire positive growth and change, leading to Library enhancements and other benefits to the Lake Forest community. We plan to engage extensively with the Lake Forest community during the planning and implementation stages of this Plan and will update Library Trustees and other community stakeholders on progress on a regular basis. Library Trustees and Staff will also continually review and update the Plan in response to community priorities and changing trends in the library and information landscape.

Strategic Priority 1

Growing Generations of Avid Readers

Residents indicated overwhelmingly in the 2023 City Survey that Books and Electronic Collections are the most important services that the Library provides to the Lake Forest community. Balanced, diverse, and current library collections are vital to establishing a foundation for early literacy and an ongoing support for lifelong learning. Collections are key to providing open and free access to information and the welcoming atmosphere our patrons can expect to encounter. Our outstanding staff will draw on their talents and professional expertise to encourage reading for pleasure and enrichment for all residents.

Action Plan

1. Provide the best and most relevant collections of library materials in multiple formats for all residents.
2. Analyze library usage data and monitor reading trends to purchase books, eBooks, and other materials in appropriate quantities to deliver popular titles speedily to residents.
3. Review Library spaces and shelving to improve access to and display of library collections. As needed, right-size collections based on meaningful metrics, relocate popular collections to more accessible locations, and find new and creative ways to display and merchandize collections.
4. Expand access to library collections in the state of Illinois and provide an upgraded kiosk with a greater variety of materials at the West Train Station.
5. Strengthen outreach efforts and partnerships with community organizations, expand or refresh ongoing community-wide reading programs, and raise awareness about home delivery services for elderly or other individuals in need.
6. Digitize local historical resources not available elsewhere.

Strategic Priority 1 Progress: FY2025

Planned ● In Progress ● Ongoing/Completed ●

Action Plan	Q1 May–Jul 2024	Q2 Aug–Oct 2024	Q3 Nov 2024–Jan 2025	Q4 Feb–Apr 2025
1-1	<p>●●●</p> <p>Increase materials budget</p> <p>Weed and replace items as needed</p> <p>Create World Language Collection</p>	<p>●</p> <p>Add AtoZ recipe databases for America and the World</p>	<p>●</p> <p>Enhance World Language Collection based on community demographics data</p>	
1-2		<p>●</p> <p>Leverage data tools to analyze collection usage</p>	<p>●</p> <p>Adjust vending machine collections and workflows as needed based on usage</p>	
1-3	<p>●●</p> <p>Refresh Takeout Tech and Adult Accessibility collections</p> <p>Add display space in Reference Room</p>	<p>●●●●●</p> <p>Group and label the YA Collection by genre</p> <p>Improve and expand Youth face-out displays</p> <p>Shelve chapter books for grades 2–3 together</p> <p>Move Youth graphic novels into Youth Fiction Wing</p> <p>Interfile Youth nonfiction holiday books</p>	<p>●●</p> <p>Consider consolidating Adult A/V collections in one area</p> <p>Move Adult Graphic Novel Collection to end of Mystery shelves</p>	
1-4		<p>●●</p> <p>Join Find More Illinois</p> <p>Install vending machine at West Train Station</p>	<p>●</p> <p>Provide holds pick-up at the vending machine</p>	
1-5	<p>●</p> <p>Launch 100 Books Before Graduation</p>	<p>●</p> <p>Collaborate with area preschools to provide Library storytimes</p>	<p>●</p> <p>Promote Homebound Services as part of Library Card Campaign</p>	
1-6	<p>●</p> <p>Hire Adult Services Librarian specialized in genealogy and local history</p>	<p>●</p> <p>Move SmartSearch database to the cloud</p>	<p>●</p> <p>Work with History Center’s experts to assess storage and digitization needs of books in the Library’s locked cases</p>	

Strategic Priority 2

Preserving and Enhancing a Beloved Community Asset

The Lake Forest Library building is a source of great joy and pride to community residents. In August 2023, we completed the repair and restoration of its dome and interior Rotunda. And in March 2024, we completed the repair, restoration, and cleaning of the Nicolai Remisoff murals that grace the Rotunda, a project funded by a grant from the Friends of Lake Forest Library. We look forward to continuing this positive momentum as we engage with stakeholders to identify additional opportunities to preserve and enhance the building.

Action Plan

1. Collaborate with experts and community stakeholders to develop a Master Plan for the Library to reimagine and repurpose its existing spaces for optimal use in a phased manner, while preserving and enhancing its historical integrity and significance.
2. Improve building operations with reliable, energy-efficient infrastructure and systems that improve use of staff time and enable them to deliver exceptional library services, collections, resources, and programs to all community residents.
3. Enhance Library access by addressing Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) concerns, upgrading the elevator, repairing and restoring the exterior landscaping and courtyards, and also finding creative and cost-effective solutions to parking challenges.
4. Investigate ways to increase flexibility of existing spaces with updated furnishings and movable shelving.
5. Enhance the external appearance and landscaping for a more welcoming approach to the building.
6. Partner with The Lake Forest Library Foundation and the Friends of Lake Forest Library to grow philanthropic support and an endowment for the Library to fund future capital improvements.

Action Plan	Q1 May–Jul 2024	Q2 Aug–Oct 2024	Q3 Nov 2024–Jan 2025	Q4 Feb–Apr 2025
2-1				
2-2	<p>●●</p> <p>Install new boiler pumps</p> <p>Install HVAC building controls automation system</p>	<p>●●●●●●●●</p> <p>Install larger water meter</p> <p>Install new fire alarm control panel</p> <p>Upgrade server and Envisionware systems, update database connections</p> <p>Address perimeter fencing, driveway direction, pedestrian safety</p> <p>Conduct study of the courtyards, footings, Excedra benches</p> <p>Test newly installed boiler pumps</p>	<p>●</p> <p>Replace boiler</p>	<p>●</p> <p>Install public address system</p>
2-3			<p>●</p> <p>Modernize the elevator</p>	<p>●●</p> <p>Explore additional parking opportunities with the City and neighbors</p> <p>Add a catalog-only computer to the Main Level</p>
2-4		<p>●</p> <p>Staff visit area libraries and take note of flexible shelving and furniture</p>	<p>●</p> <p>Consider upgrading Staff break room</p>	<p>●</p> <p>Consider refresh of the Foyer and Friends Reading Room</p>
2-5				<p>●</p> <p>Begin work on courtyards and Excedra benches</p>
2-6				

Action Plan	Q1 May–Jul 2025	Q2 Aug–Oct 2025	Q3 Nov 2025–Jan 2026	Q4 Feb–Apr 2026
2-1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider working with City non-profits and other relevant organizations to address the community’s need for fee-free meeting spaces 			
2-2				
2-3				
2-4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider adding a water bottle filling station 			
2-5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider historic central pathway 			
2-6				

Strategic Priority 3

Enhancing Organizational Excellence

The Lake Forest Library staff is among its most prized assets. We continually receive compliments from residents on the outstanding service they receive from our dedicated and innovative staff. We will empower our employees to deliver the best physical and virtual Library experience for all our patrons through exceptional personalized customer service. Staff will continually monitor trends in the library and retail landscape and evaluate and cautiously adopt industry and technological innovations to deliver top-notch customer service to patrons.

Action Plan

- Develop a staffing structure to effectively match program and service needs. Ensure that staff salaries and benefits are competitive in order to attract and retain excellent employees.
- Provide meaningful staff learning and development opportunities through formal coursework or attendance at local and national conferences.
- Reduce departmental boundaries and empower staff with broad knowledge and skills to work across functional areas.
- Create a work environment where staff are reflective, use data-driven approaches to report on results, and remain accountable to the community and ourselves.
- Foster employee engagement through authentic conversations and recognition. Increase job satisfaction among staff, ultimately resulting in better service to the community.
- Encourage staff to innovate and conduct pilot projects to test new ideas without fear of failure.
- Formalize and implement a succession plan for key roles in the organization.

Action Plan	Q1 May–Jul 2024	Q2 Aug–Oct 2024	Q3 Nov 2024–Jan 2025	Q4 Feb–Apr 2025
3-1	● Hire additional staff in Adult, Youth, and Facilities departments		● Update job descriptions and benchmark salaries	● ● Update Employee Handbook and Emergency Manual Update Library Policies for patrons
3-2	● ● Adult Services tours The History Center and Lake Forest College Library Staff attend ILA Reaching Forward, PLA, and ALA conferences	● All Staff visit area libraries during half day in-service	● ● Staff attend ALA LibLearnX and CORE conferences Complete tuition reimbursement policy	
3-3	● ● Director of Patron Services and Head of Communications continue attending Adult and Youth Services meetings Hire a part-time Librarian to cross-train in Youth and Adult departments Teen Librarian and Media Lab Specialist cohost teen events	● Head of Digital & Innovative Services attends Youth Services Meeting	● ● Write a script for Library tours Give tours to new library cardholders and other stakeholders	
3-4	● Add two sessions of monthly All Staff Meetings	● Refresh the Staff Break Room		
3-5		● Hold round robins at All Staff Meetings		
3-6		● Refresh the Staff Break Room	● ● Consider consolidating Adult A/V collections in one area Pilot providing extended hours during Teen Exam Escape	
3-7				

Strategic Priority 4

Inspiring All Residents with Lifelong Learning Opportunities

Lake Forest Library hosts hundreds of programs and other enrichment opportunities for community residents throughout all ages and phases of their life. These include book discussions, author visits, story times, take-home kits and other self-directed activities. We will reflect on what we have provided in the past and look for ways to enhance it going forward. We will provide enlightening and entertaining learning experiences for residents of all ages and abilities that open doors to a world of learning and discovery.

Action Plan

1. Provide diverse and high-quality Library programming for all residents - from support for new parents, to recent graduates, to re-engaging young adults in the Library, to services for retirees and those Aging in Place.
2. Continue to tap into existing community interests on literary, environmental, and historical topics as well as other subjects desired by residents in the Community Survey. Leverage and complement the offerings of our community partners.
3. Consider ways to provide meaningful and accessible programming for individuals with different needs and abilities (neurodiversity, dementia, etc).
4. Pilot additional family programs in the evenings and on weekends to meet needs of working parents.
5. Provide expanded and reimagined Media Lab learning opportunities.
6. Explore ways to encourage residents to try and experiment with new interests and ideas.

Action Plan	Q1 May–Jul 2024	Q2 Aug–Oct 2024	Q3 Nov 2024–Jan 2025	Q4 Feb–Apr 2025
4-1	● Include henna at Summer Reading party	●● Restructure 1000 Books Before Kindergarten to provide more book prizes Teen Librarian collaborates with High School Librarian on a book club		
4-2	● Support City composting efforts with a sign-up table and book display	●●● Tupperware program in support of History Center exhibit Lake Forest Reads (LFR) book discussion at LF Open Lands and film at Gorton Screen architecture film of local historic interest		●● Partner with Lake Bluff Public Library for Read Between the Ravines (RBR) Re-engage Elawa Farm and Ragdale to support RBR
4-3	● Interfile Adult Accessibility Collection with Takeout Tech to increase awareness and promote usage	●● Support Dickinson Hall Memory Cafés and History Center Reminiscing Roundtables Media Lab partners with Lake Forest College on AI series		● Revisit idea of opening an hour earlier on select days to provide quieter access to those with sensory and other needs
4-4		●● Hold LFR evening book discussion Add storytimes between usual sessions		
4-5	●● Add sublimation printer Add family and teen events in the Media Lab		● Add laser cutter	
4-6		●● Hold calligraphy event Hold 3-part AI series	●● Hold Hero Kids RPG event (like Dungeons & Dragons)	

Strategic Priority 4 Progress: FY2026

Planned ● In Progress ● Ongoing/Completed ●

Action Plan	Q1 May–Jul 2025	Q2 Aug–Oct 2025	Q3 Nov 2025–Jan 2026	Q4 Feb–Apr 2026
4-1				
4-2				
4-3				
4-4	● Participate in City of Lake Forest Meet the Fleet			
4-5				
4-6	● Participate in Meet the Fleet			

Strategic Priority 5

Bringing the Library into the Story of Each Lake Forester

We are excited to adopt a new communications philosophy during the upcoming three years. Based on the StoryBrand approach by Donald Miller, we will reframe communications with the Lake Forest resident as the hero and the Library as the guide in their life story and along their journey to success.

Action Plan

1. Coordinate across Library departments to develop larger, overarching marketing campaigns and themes. Identify and implement other effective ways to connect people with the Library.
2. Use community engagement tools to identify and engage with new residents and unserved/underserved areas of the community.
3. Identify and reduce any barriers to library card access and Library use. Launch a Get a Library Card campaign.
4. Redesign and reorganize the Library website to improve clarity and ease of use.
5. Strengthen partnerships with community organizations by learning about their goals and determining how the Library can be part of their story. Identify and connect with other potential Library ambassadors and advocates.
6. Effectively communicate an inspiring vision and the Library's story of impact.
7. Find innovative ways to help residents become aware of and effectively use library resources to find newer/better opportunities for themselves.

Strategic Priority 5 Progress: FY2025

Planned ● In Progress ● Ongoing/Completed ●

Action Plan	Q1 May–Jul 2024	Q2 Aug–Oct 2024	Q3 Nov 2024–Jan 2025	Q4 Feb–Apr 2025
5-1		● Hold interdepartmental meetings about Library Card Campaign, Freedom to Read		
5-2			● Subscribe to OrangeBoy services to use data to build community engagement and increase marketing impact	
5-3		● ● Review library card sign up procedures Launch a 5-season library card campaign	● Library card campaign 1 of 5: Root	● ● Library card campaign 2 of 5: Log On Analyze OrangeBoy data to identify audiences and areas with lower library card acquisition and usage
5-4		● Enhance local information available on the website		
5-5	● Admin and Department Heads continue participation at Community Coalition, Lake Forest Leaders, and City Council meetings	● ● ● Director of Patron Services participates on the City Employee Benefits Committee Head of Digital and Innovation Services attends Lake County Digital Equity Coalition Meetings Hold Friends Appreciation event		● Identify Library Liaisons for New Library Card Mixer in Fall 2025
5-6	● Continue sharing the Library story in the print and email newsletters			● Use OrangeBoy data to update email campaigns and develop targeted messages
5-7				● Use OrangeBoy data

Strategic Priority 5 Progress: FY2026

Planned ● In Progress ● Ongoing/Completed ●

Action Plan	Q1 May–Jul 2025	Q2 Aug–Oct 2025	Q3 Nov 2025–Jan 2026	Q4 Feb–Apr 2026
5-1				
5-2				
5-3	● Library card campaign 3 of 5: Branch Out	● Library card campaign 4 of 5: Turn Over a New Leaf	●● Library card campaign 5 of 5: Made in the Shade Library card campaign: Wrap-up and grand prize drawings	
5-4		● Redesign website, with consideration of new accessibility standards and the impact of AI	● Redesign website	● Redesign website
5-5				
5-6				
5-7				

Strategic Priority 5 Progress: FY2027

Planned ● In Progress ● Ongoing/Completed ●

Action Plan	Q1 May–Jul 2025	Q2 Aug–Oct 2025	Q3 Nov 2025–Jan 2026	Q4 Feb–Apr 2026
5-1				
5-2				
5-3				
5-4				
5-5				
5-6		● Train Library Staff on StoryBrand	● Train the Board on StoryBrand	
5-7				

Progress Summary 2024–27

Planned ● In Progress ● Ongoing/Completed ●

Action Plan	FY2025				FY2026				FY2027			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
1-1	●●●	●	●									
1-2		●	●									
1-3	●●	●●●●●	●●									
1-4		●●	●									
1-5	●	●	●									
1-6	●	●	●									
2-1					●							
2-2	●●	●●●●●●	●	●								
2-3			●	●●								
2-4		●	●	●	●							
2-5				●	●							
2-6												
3-1	●		●	●●								
3-2	●●	●	●●									
3-3	●●	●	●●									
3-4	●	●										
3-5		●										
3-6		●	●●									
3-7												
4-1	●	●●										
4-2	●	●●●		●●								
4-3	●	●●		●								
4-4		●●			●							
4-5	●●		●									
4-6		●●	●●		●							
5-1		●										
5-2			●									
5-3		●●	●	●●	●	●	●●					
5-4		●				●	●	●				
5-5	●	●●●		●								
5-6	●			●						●	●	
5-7				●								

APPENDIX

Community Profile and Environmental Scan

Community Profile

Founded in 1861, the City of Lake Forest is a closely knit community of 19,436 residents in the North Shore of Chicago. It is one of the most scenic, historical, and architecturally significant suburbs of Chicago where the median value of a home is \$894,000 and the median household income is over \$202,000. It is a predominantly white (83%) community with Asian and Hispanic populations being the next largest ethnic groups. Residents over 65 comprise over 24% of its population while 11% of residents were born outside the United States. The median age of Lake Forest residents is 44.9 and 80% of residents have a bachelor's degree or higher. Nearly 87% of residents speak English only at home, while the number of residents speaking Spanish, Chinese, and other Asian languages have shown a gradual increase over the past 15 years. (Source: 2020 Decennial Census and American Community Survey 2022) Since the COVID-19 pandemic, many new residents have moved into the community from other parts of the Chicagoland area and elsewhere. Some estimates report that nearly 1,600 new households have moved to the Lake Forest community in the past four years.

The community is very fortunate to have extremely active and well supported civic organizations that all work cooperatively in providing substantial enrichment opportunities on topics including historic preservation, arts and humanities, the environment, gardening, and other interests. These include Committee Representing Our Young Adults (CROYA), Dickinson Hall, Elawa Farm Foundation, the Gorton Center, History Center of Lake Forest/Lake Bluff, The Lake Forest Open Lands Association, Lake Forest Preservation Foundation, Lake Forest College, Lake Forest/Lake Bluff Chamber of Commerce and the Lake Forest Schools. Hall Several departments of the City of Lake Forest are also active partners in providing educational, recreational, and enhancement programs for residents. Founded in 1935, the Lake Forest Caucus is a volunteer organization that identifies qualified Lake Forest residents to serve as volunteers on City of Lake Forest boards and commissions. Numerous book clubs, special interest groups, and service clubs present additional opportunities for engagement with the community. The community also features the independent Lake Forest Book Store that has been in operation for nearly 75 years and provides wonderful retail and programming partnership possibilities for Lake Forest Library.

Lake Forest Library

Lake Forest Library occupies a very special place in the hearts of community members. Beginning on the second floor of the City Hall building in 1898, it moved to its current location in 1931 and celebrated its 125th anniversary on July 8, 2023. The present building, designed as a library by architect Edwin H. Clark, was given to the City of Lake Forest by Mrs. Charles H. Schweppe and Mrs. Stanley Keith in memory of Mrs. Keith's first husband, Kersey Coates Reed, and was dedicated on June 7, 1931. It is a contributing building in the Lake Forest Historic District, a predominantly residential district generally consisting of large homes in a park-like setting.

The Library is fortunate to have an active Friends of Lake Forest Library group that has organized very successful book sales and provided nearly \$2.6 million in support to the Library since its inception in 1976. Over the four past decades, the Friends have been very supportive of numerous Library programs for children and adults and also recently funded the repair, restoration, and cleaning of the Nicolai Remisoff murals that grace the Library's Rotunda. In 2020, the Lake Forest Library Foundation was established in preparation for a future capital campaign to build an endowment to preserve and enhance the historic Lake Forest Library. Lake Forest residents have a special love for the Library, its historical elements, and its wonderful collection of art. Several generations of library users have passed through its doors and it is a beloved place to interact with neighbors and friends, some of whom work in the Library. It is also customary for us to see younger generations of library users returning to the Library along with their children to revive nostalgic memories of the building, particularly the Children's Library.

At Lake Forest Library, we notice significant use of our spaces by nearby high school and college students who congregate here after classes for group study and discussion. During the high school's finals week in the spring and winter, every available seat and nook and corner of the Library is occupied by groups of students studying and collaborating. Several tutors use the Library to coach their young wards. Enrichment programs organized by the Youth Services Staff attract large numbers of young children and their parents or caregivers. We see a particularly high usage of our activity room for storytimes, hands-on crafts and activities, and unstructured play time.

Adults continue to use the Library's computers for research and information and the Media Lab in increasing numbers for its digital media conversion and 3D printing capabilities. The Library supports the activities of more than 25 patron-led book discussion groups by providing multiple copies of books and discussion guides. Library Staff deliver books and other materials to Lake Forest Place and homes of residents who are not able to physically come to the Library. Especially popular are programs on the arts, business, travel, local history, genealogy research, and book talks by our talented librarians. Hundreds of residents descended on the front lawn of

the Library to celebrate its 125th anniversary on July 8, 2023. In November 2023, more than 100 residents gathered to celebrate A Night at the Library gala hosted by the Friends.

Public Libraries Today

Public Libraries are feeling their way through a new normal after the devastating effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. While several new, innovative services such as curbside delivery, enhanced investments in digital materials, and virtual programming using Zoom and other platforms expanded during the pandemic, residents have welcomed the opportunity to return to their familiar, physical grounds of the library and use the physical spaces “alone” and “together.” In a recent survey completed by the Urban Libraries Council, ninety-eight member libraries shared data from 2019 and 2022 on in-person visits, program attendance, digital and physical circulation, and computer usage. The survey revealed a 44% decline in library visits from 2019 to 2022, with preliminary 2023 data indicating a gradual upswing from pandemic lows. Program attendance also declined between 2019 and 2022 by 58%, driven in part by a 71% reduction in the number of programs offered during that time. Decreases in computer usage (26%) and wireless sessions (37%) from 2019 to 2022 have some member libraries assessing on-site computer lab and Wi-Fi investments and considering more laptop, mobile device, and hotspot lending. While the data show fewer library visitors coming into library buildings compared to pre-pandemic times, demand for digital content has surged since 2019. Survey respondents reported an average 30% increase in digital books, magazines, and streaming video circulation from 2019 to 2022.

Lake Forest Library Usage Trends

Lake Forest Library is still adjusting collections, programming, outreach, and communications in response to changes in patron demand and expectations after the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic was a huge catalyst for change in libraries, and we are still affected in nearly everything we do. We are sensitive to patron requests and expectations and work to meet them where they are, whether that is in the Library, in their homes, or at community events. We are encouraged by the gradual uptick we have noticed in several key metrics and will work vigorously to continue that trend and adjust our service models as needed. Lake Forest Library has typically enjoyed a significant level of support and use from our patrons, a pattern that we strive to continue into the future. To quote from a recent article in [Library Journal](#):

Libraries are emerging from the pandemic stronger, more resilient, and more indispensable to their communities than ever before. Now, they must continue to demonstrate additional value to patrons. With the right tools and resources, librarians will be well prepared to face both new and ongoing challenges.

As libraries have done countless times over the past hundred years, we will continually evaluate what we do and follow a process of continuous feedback and adaptability to make appropriate

adjustments to library programs and services to serve our residents in the most cost effective and efficient manner.

Input from Lake Forest Residents

Following the completion of the 2020–2023 Strategic Plan and the appointment of new leadership, the Library’s Board of Trustees determined that it was an opportune time to begin the next cycle of strategic planning. As a first step in this process, all Lake Forest residents were invited to respond to a Community Survey that included questions about residents’ perception of and satisfaction with library services. Nearly 1,450 households responded to a Community-Wide Survey distributed by the City of Lake Forest in the summer of 2023. Key findings from the survey follow.

- ***High Satisfaction with Library Services:*** Residents ranked the Library very highly in overall satisfaction, with 91% of respondents responding that they were Very Satisfied (61%) and (30%) Satisfied. When compared with other high-performing communities in the United States with a median income over \$100,000, Lake Forest residents reported a higher level of satisfaction with library services.
- ***Library Services most important to households:*** Books and Other Materials ranked first in importance, followed by E-Books or Downloadable Materials and Library Sponsored Events and Programs.
- ***Unmet Needs for Library Services:*** Based on survey responses, the consulting firm administering the survey determined that Parking/Accessibility, Spaces for Group Study and Community Meetings, and Technology Access and Classes were the top 3 areas where residents’ need were not met.
- ***Top Priorities for Investment in Library Services:*** Residents identified Parking/Accessibility, Books and Other Materials, and Library Sponsored Events and Programs as the highest priorities for investment by the library.
- ***Suggestions for Programs/Services:*** Residents provided several hundred open-ended comments on the quality of collections, programs, and services offered by the Library and offered numerous suggestions for improvement. A sampling of their comments is included later in the Appendix.

Major Challenges and Opportunities

Our hardworking and talented Library Staff are at the frontlines, interacting daily with patrons and recording valuable nuggets of information in internal databases for follow-up and action. Several of them have served the Lake Forest community for many years and have a keen knowledge of current library user trends and behaviors. Following the publication of the Community-Wide Survey results, Library Staff held spirited discussions on its findings and identified the following major challenges and opportunities for the library in the short and long term:

- Growing and sustaining the interest in and love for reading among the community, especially among its youngest residents. Determine the right mix of digital and physical resources to best serve our community.
- Create vibrant, flexible spaces that meet the modern needs of library users while preserving and enhancing the historical integrity and charm of the original building.
- Make outstanding customer service, top notch collections and creative use of state-of-the-art technology the hallmarks of this library. Support staff with upgraded workspaces and first-rate training, technology, and other resources to be successful in their roles.
- Provide high quality enrichment programs for all segments of the population in a manner that is intentional and well thought out and provides the foundation for residents to pursue more in-depth opportunities with other community institutions.
- Enhance awareness by communicating the unique breadth and depth of everything the library does in a community that is served by numerous organizations. Identify unserved and underserved residents of the community and motivate them to become active library users.

2023 City of Lake Forest Community-Wide Survey

Selected Library Comments

Collections

“Please continue or improve availability of most current travel books and new release movies, and TV series.”

“Expand Audiobook selection for downloading.”

“Library should focus on the basics. Books. Do not try to be all things to all people.”

“More current best sellers through Libby.”

Some libraries offer other rental programs (tools etc.). I am curious if those make sense in our community.”

“Expand Audiobook selection for downloading.”

“More Kindle e-books! The offering seems much smaller than neighboring libraries.”

“The library’s collection of computer programming and software texts is very limited as compared to Highland Park.”

Programs and Events

“Adult and family activities, so much is focused on children, and that’s a good thing, once families are empty nesters, the town seems to lose interest...”

“Library programs need to include multi-culture.”

“Drive up check out/pick up, more children’s programming...”

“The kid programming is great – would love to see more weekend and later weekday options. Not all of us are done working at 4 pm.”

“More programs for adults (ages 20-40) without children to get to know others in the community.”

“We love it! The Library is the only place that offers free programs for babies/toddlers. We would love more! There are so many people who would benefit. Thanks for all you do!”

“Book clubs that aren’t in the middle of the day.”

“More nighttime or weekend children’s programming for working parents.”

“More informational talks and programs for adults.”

“Book group for older adults.”

“Deerfield Library offers a lot more programming. I recommend looking to them as a model.”

“Robotic Competition.”

“Programs for Caregivers.”

Building Concerns/Parking/Accessibility

“It could be more physically accessible. A new building/expansion is badly needed.”

“Library could benefit from private study/meeting rooms that can be reserved in advance.”

“More open space in the kids library; more books at kids eye level; less claustrophobic space.”

“Please make the parking more efficient. My elderly father has a hard time parking even using the handicapped parking.”

“The interior of the children’s section is overwhelming. The library as a whole is hard to navigate.”

“Other communities have enhanced their libraries to provide for diversity of meeting spaces.”

“Encourage ADA Accessibility discussions for Central Business District and Lake Forest Library outside and inside buildings.”

“Larger children’s area for open, sensory play.”

“Work space for small business owners and entrepreneurs.”

“Drive up check out/pick up....”

“Newer, technology spaces.”

Operational

“Expanded technology classes with more hours.”

“Longer hours for students during finals weeks.”

“Continue to upgrade media lab, more hours available at nights/weekends.”

“Can you add an experience (Innovation) center like the Glenview Library has?”

“Check out the Northbrook Library events/programs. Free concerts on Sundays. Exclusive technology help.”

“More diverse book clubs, such as sci-fi, women’s etc.”

“Wish they could get a laser cutter...”

“Look at the Lake Zurich Library and let’s try to do some of that! Play areas for kids, toys to borrow. Puzzles for kids to borrow.”

“There should be greater enforcement of quiet/no phone areas.”

“More makerlab initiatives and opportunity to borrow equipment or use on site.”

“Longer hours. Get kids to study there – entice them!”

Marketing and Outreach

“We LOVE the Library. It is a tremendous resource. I do not know as much as I would like about downloadable online resource options and other services available in my home through the library. I would like more information to be able to take full advantage.”

“Better communication about what you do...”

“There are few resources/activities west of 41.”

“New resident orientation/resource event.”

“Need better marketing of events.”

General

“Services are great. The building is not. We need a fully-functional, up-to-date library not an historic shell. The parking situation is dangerous at all times of the year.”

“Amazing library and staff.”

“Library is our greatest asset.”

“Library is amazing! Thank the staff for being so good as well.”



Lake Forest Library is excited to announce that the featured title for our Fall 2024 Lake Forest Reads One Book/One Community Program is *Remarkably Bright Creatures* by Shelby Van Pelt.

Several community organizations have joined Lake Forest Library in presenting Lake Forest Reads, including the Friends of Lake Forest Library, Lake Forest College, Gorton Center, Dickinson Hall, and Lake Forest Book Store. Lake Forest Book Store is the official bookstore of this event and offers a discount to those who mention that they are participating in Lake Forest Reads.

Book-related events begin in October and culminate in author visits on November 1st & 2nd. On Friday, November 1st, Davis Schneiderman, Krebs Provost, and Dean of Faculty of Lake Forest College, leads a conversation with author Shelby Van Pelt at 7:00 pm at Gorton Center. Lake Forest Library hosts the author on Saturday, November 2nd, for a morning chat and presentation at 10:00 am. Each author event is followed by a Q & A and an opportunity to purchase a book and have it signed by the author. To register for these and other Lake Forest Reads events, visit www.lfreads.org.

About the Book:

Shelby Van Pelt's *Remarkably Bright Creatures* was published by Ecco/HarperCollins (US) and Bloomsbury (UK) in Spring 2022. For fans of *A Man Called Ove*, this luminous debut novel about a widow's unlikely friendship with a giant Pacific octopus reluctantly residing at the local aquarium—and the truths she finally uncovers about her son's disappearance 30 years ago.

Charming, compulsively readable, and full of wit, Shelby Van Pelt's debut novel is a beautiful exploration of friendship, reckoning, and hope—a reminder that sometimes taking a hard look at the past can help uncover a future that once felt impossible.

Born and raised in the Pacific Northwest, she is now missing the mountains in the Chicago area with her husband and two children.

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EDITOR'S NOTE



Featured in *Curated Couture*. Megan Mjelke and Mabel Terry wearing Caroline Hu dresses. ikram. Mabel carrying Rosantica Milano Hollie Cindy bag and wearing Chanel ankle boots. Photographed with Katharina Fritsch. *Woman with Dog (Frau mit Hund)*, 2004. Gift of Edlis Neeson Collection. © Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn.

Welcome to the September issue and our fashion-filled pages. In celebration of The Art Institute of Chicago's Modern Wing and the Nichols Bridgeway's 15th anniversary, these gorgeous locations were chosen as the backdrop for our fall fashion shoot. Two decades ago, I attended the Modern Wing's groundbreaking ceremony on a beautiful sunlit morning, and several years later, I joined hundreds of guests celebrating the grand opening at a lavish gala. This issue pays tribute to these Renzo Piano-designed structures that today are among our great city's architectural highlights. A heartfelt thank you to my friend Alexandra Nichols whose generosity knows no bounds when it comes to the Art Institute or Chicagoland. Alexandra joined our shoot, and we had a fantastic time seeing it unfold on her namesake bridge—an iconic Chicago landmark. A round of applause for the Art Institute's public relations team—Megan, Sadie, and Salina—who spent an entire day trekking us through these remarkable spaces. I hope you enjoy this stylish stroll as much as I did!

Swapping modern and contemporary art for a father/daughter design collaboration, our second feature introduces Gilles and Chloé Mendel, the founders of House of Gilles. This dynamic duo creates breathtaking designs for clients who value superior quality with a personal touch. Our third feature shines a light on another legendary designer, Balenciaga, and visits the Cristóbal Balenciaga Museum in his hometown of Getaria, Spain. We round out the features with a tale of Pablo Picasso's multifaceted relationship with Chicago and its collectors.

Trading art and fashion for the art of expression, *Art & Artist* highlights the subversively pink work of Yvette Mayorga. Hoping to feed your soul? *First Class* whisks us off to Cambodia—the home of the Khmer Empire's ancient temples—and *Recipe* presents a fun twist on *moules marinières*.

We close the issue with *Parting Words* from magazine writer and editor Tim Allis, the author of a new biography about luxury fashion pioneer Henri Bendel, who introduced concepts like in-store makeovers and fashion shows and whose signature brown and white striped bag was regularly spotted dangling from the wrists of chic shoppers.

Enjoy the issue!

DUSTIN O'REGAN

Editor-in-Chief
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Follow *Sheridan Road* on Instagram:

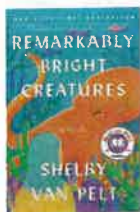
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THIS MONTH I WILL BE

READING

Remarkably Bright Creatures by Shelby Van Pelt as part of Lake Forest Reads, One Book, One Community



Me with Redding at Angkor Wat

CELEBRATING

My daughter's 20th birthday and my 10th anniversary as Editor-in-Chief

The Good Life



FINDERS KEEPERS Who doesn't love a good find—especially when its purchase is benefiting charity? On Sunday, September 8 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. the Lake Forest Chapter of Infant Welfare Society hosts its 56th annual fundraiser—the beloved, must-attend event, Antiques & Treasures. Vendors from all over the Midwest will offer treasures including furniture, clothing, glassware, garden accessories, vintage jewelry, and clothing. New offerings include vintage bicycles, stationery, Turkish linens, and upscale vintage Western items. Also new this year will be specialty drinks, coffee, and food vendors with breakfast and lunch options. Proceeds will benefit the Angel Harvey Family Health Center in Chicago, a Logan Square-based facility providing health care services and education to medically underserved and vulnerable families in the Chicago area. lakeforestiws.org



The Buzz

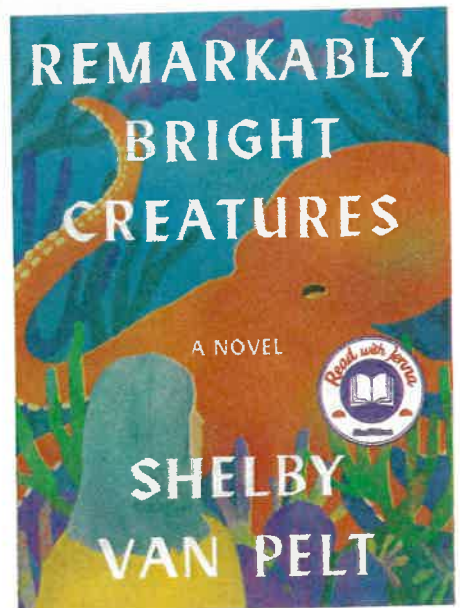


Rutland Men's Shooting Suit in Green Ash

Combrook Coat in Hawthorn

BONFIRE CHIC Smith's Men's Store is teaming up with Alan Paine Clothing on a trunk show to support Lake Forest Open Lands Association (LFOLA). The show is scheduled for Friday, September 27 and Saturday, September 28 to correspond with LFOLA's annual Bagpipes and Bonfire event on Sunday, September 29. During the trunk show, customers will have access to the entire line of Alan Paine merchandise, including its Country Collection. The store will donate a portion of proceeds from Alan Paine sales purchased during the trunk show to Open Lands. smithsmensstore.com

HIT THE BOOKS Actually, just hit one book: *Remarkably Bright Creatures* by Shelby Van Pelt. This year's Lake Forest Reads selection is a beautifully written, life-affirming tale of a world-weary widow and the friendship she forges with a wise, old octopus. After reading this heart-warmer, you'll be anxious to de-brief and will have ample opportunity in October. Join friends and neighbors at one or more of the book-related events hosted by the Lake Forest Library and its community partners next month. lakeforestlibrary.org/lake-forest-reads



Library Operations Report August 2024

Adult Services



Our first annual Plant swap saw over 100 patrons dropping off and collecting over 200 plants. Leave a Plant, Love a Plant was enthusiastically embraced by new families moving to Lake Forest whose children were each able to pick a plant for their new room, Lake Forest College students eager to decorate their dorm room, and more. Staff was impressed by the generosity of the donations and enjoyed the conversations that took place as patrons browsed this "temporary collection".

An in-person presentation on The History of Fort Sheridan hosted by Lake County Forest Preserve was well attended. 46 patrons learned of its history as a fort and its decommissioning and conversion to historic housing in 1993. An Army Reserve base continues to use about 90 acres of the original Post.

Our new librarians Vanessa Powell and Breen Tivnan took a field trip to the History Center of Lake Forest - Lake Bluff. They met with Laurie Stein, Deputy Director and Head of Curation. The library often refers patrons to the History Center, so they now have a better understanding of its collection and the services that they offer. The Library often collaborates with the History Center on Programming and supports each other's missions so it is nice for our librarians to have made that personal connection. Vanessa plans to work with Laurie to access our historic collection and to further develop our digital collection.

Media Lab



In August John Lacson led the well-attended “Increase Your iPhone Expertise” (pictured left) workshop in the Reed Room. Patrons learned how to optimize their iPhone usage with tips for messaging, email, gestures, and other fundamental iOS features.

Families gathered in the Kasian Room in August to learn about 3D printing (pictured right) and create their own designs. Staff were impressed with the way parents and children worked together.

Children's Services



Eleanor, a happy face in the Children's Library (pictured left)

Choose Your Own Balloon Adventures with Smarty Pants a program that features magic, comedy, and giant balloons. The show was inspired by the Choose Your Own Adventure books and allowed the kids to help decide where the story went.



A perfect day to have Storytime at Elawa Farm! Hosted **14 offsite Storytimes** at Dearhaven and Elawa Farm with 303 children and adults in attendance.

1000 Books Before Kindergarten Party is an early literacy program that encourages reading to children. The program includes parties to celebrate milestones along the way. The recently updated program now includes picking out a book to keep for every hundred books read, and optional picture taken with a milestone sign. (Former employee Andrew with his wife and son are pictured below on the left.)



Art Is All Around Us Summer Reading Raffle Prize Winners This raffle prize winner sent us a thank you note! Celia could pick from a Nintendo switch or book of the month from the Lake Forest Bookstore.



Raffle prizes for Juniors through Grade 1. Each child could pick a prize package and enter its number on their raffle ticket!



Young Adult Services

Our 41 Teen Volunteers worked over 1000 hours this summer assisting with programs and handing out Summer Reading prizes! We are so grateful for their help in making our summer children's events such a success.

Outreach took Emmy out of the building to assist Deerpath Middle School's summer school students with their choice reading selections as well as attend back to school events at the DPM and LFHS like iPad Swap and MacBook Pickup which signed 44 patrons up for cards and introduced almost 100 Lake Forest Residents to library databases and services they might need throughout the school year.

Our Teen Maker Studio partnership with the Media Lab taught 5 teens the process of sublimation printing onto a mug or metal bookmark! Students brought their own images, or created their own using the Adobe software available in the Media Lab.

Facilities

On August 07, 2024, Palmer Plumbing along with the City of Lake Forest Water Department were onsite to replace the existing 1" water meter with a new 2" water meter. The upgrade was needed to facilitate larger water volumes into the building and improve the functionality of restrooms in the staff lounge. The cost of the upgrade was \$3,303.00.

Ken Itle from Wiss Janney conducted investigative digging along both the East and West courtyard walls as well as the plaza at the Deerpath sidewalk on August 20, 2024. His findings were that the concrete foundation was solid and extended deep into the ground, providing strong structural integrity for the East and West Courtyards and the plaza in front of the library. The East and West courtyard walls will need substantial rebuilding. During this process, existing material will be repurposed as much as possible to preserve historical value. Additionally, it was found that no waterproofing had been applied to the southwest walls of the courtyard foundation. A complete report is being prepared and will be made available to the Board once it is received.

NIR Roofing performed preventative roof maintenance on August 19, 2024. 2 holes were located in the membrane, and both were successfully patched. The cost of the visit and repair was \$800.00.

American Hoist Elevator completed a detailed site survey on August 23, 2024 in preparation for the elevator modernization.

Circulation/Interlibrary Loan

Find More Illinois is under way, and though there have been some hiccups, we are getting better with each request. We are hearing from other libraries and trying some orders of our own. In August we received 25 requests and submitted 14 requests from our patrons.

Holds in general have kept us busy this summer. April had 1,708 holds, by June we were up to 2,073 with August coming in at 2,338. You may have noticed the overflowing holds shelves! We often had to add an extra book cart to hold them all.

Patrons continue to enjoy the “grab & go” hold set up.



The Circulation department, as usual, sent over staff to sign up and welcome the Lake Forest College students during the freshman move in. This year we signed up over 40 students with many more requesting cards in the following days via the online temporary card sign up. As in previous years, the international students were some of the first to sign up, including students from Nepal, the Netherlands, and Bangladesh.

Upcoming Events:

September 16-20, 2024, 9 am – 9 pm	Community Craft Exchange: Donate Items
Tuesday, September 17, 2024, 7 – 8 pm	Brownie Wise: The Original Tupperware Lady
Thursday, September 19, 2024, 7- 8.30 pm	The Evil Robot Past: From Automata to Algorithms (First in three-part series on Artificial Intelligence with Lake Forest College)
Sunday, September 22, 2024, 2 – 3 pm	Friends Appreciation and Murals Celebration
Tuesday, September 24, 2024, 4 - 5 pm	Finance Committee
Tuesday, September 24, 2024, 7 - 8 pm	The Best Books This Fall
Thursday, October 3, 2024, 7- 8.30 pm	The Evil Robot Present: The AI Revolution is Now (Second in three-part series)
Tuesday, October 8, 2024, 7- 8 pm	Nine Brains Are Better Than One: Octopus Intelligence

TOP TEN CIRCULATING ITEMS IN August 2024

By Format & Audience

e-Books			
Position	Title	Author	Circulation
1	<i>The Women</i>	Hannah, Kristin	31
2	<i>Funny Story</i>	Henry, Emily	23
3	<i>The Wedding People</i>	Espach, Alison	18
4	<i>All the Colors of the Dark</i>	Whitaker, Chris	16
5	<i>First Lie Wins</i>	Elston, Ashley	16
6	<i>Tom Lake</i>	Patchett, Ann	16
7	<i>Swan Song</i>	Hilderbrand, Elin	14
8	<i>A Death in Cornwall</i>	Silva, Daniel	13
9	<i>Slow Dance</i>	Rowell, Rainbow	13
10	<i>The Demon of Unrest*</i>	Larson, Erik	12

* Denotes nonfiction title

e-Audiobooks			
Position	Title	Author	Circulation
1	<i>Funny Story</i>	Henry, Emily	24
2	<i>The Women</i>	Hannah, Kristin	21
3	<i>The Demon of Unrest*</i>	Larson, Erik	16
4	<i>First Lie Wins</i>	Elston, Ashley	15
5	<i>The Anxious Generation*</i>	Haidt, Jonathan	15
6	<i>Hillbilly Elegy*</i>	Vance, J. D.	14
7	<i>The Wedding People</i>	Espach, Alison	14
8	<i>Just for the Summer</i>	Jimenez, Abby	13
9	<i>Listen for the Lie</i>	Tintera, Amy	13
10	<i>Sandwich</i>	Newman, Catherine	13
11	<i>The Midnight Feast</i>	Foley, Lucy	13

* Denotes nonfiction title

Adult

Books			
Position	Title	Author	Circulation
1	<i>The Demon of Unrest*</i>	Larson, Erik	21
2	<i>The Heaven & Earth Grocery Store</i>	McBride, James	15
3	<i>Tom Lake</i>	Patchett, Ann	15
4	<i>An Unfinished Love Story*</i>	Goodwin, Doris Kearns	14
5	<i>Hillbilly Elegy*</i>	Vance, J. D.	12
6	<i>Swan song</i>	Hilderbrand, Elin	12
7	<i>All the Colors of the Dark</i>	Whitaker, Chris	11
8	<i>James</i>	Everett, Percival	10
9	<i>The goddess of Warsaw</i>	Barr, Lisa	9
10	<i>Lessons in Chemistry</i>	Garmus, Bonnie	9

*Denotes Nonfiction

Teen Books

Position	Title	Author	Circulation
1	<i>Beastars</i>	Itagaki, Paru	24
2	<i>Spy x Family</i>	Endō, Tatsuya	11
3	<i>The Summer I Turned Pretty</i>	Han, Jenny	10
4	<i>Yona of the Dawn</i>	Kusanagi, Mizuho	10
5	<i>The Promised Neverland</i>	Shirai, Kaiu	9
6	<i>Tokyo Ghoul</i>	Ishida, Sui	8
7	<i>Scythe</i>	Shusterman, Neal	8
8	<i>Kaiju No. 8</i>	Matsumoto, Naoya	7
9	<i>The Final Gambit</i>	Barnes, Jennifer Lynn	6
10	<i>RWBY: The Official Manga</i>	Kinami, Bunta	6

Children's

Books			
Position	Title	Author	Circulation
1	<i>The Inheritance Games</i>	Barnes, Jennifer Lynn	11
2	<i>The Scarlet Shedder</i>	Pilkey, Dav	11
3	<i>No Brainer</i>	Kinney, Jeff	10
4	<i>There Might be Lobsters</i>	Crimi, Carolyn	9
5	<i>Hard Luck</i>	Kinney, Jeff	9
6	<i>The Long Haul</i>	Kinney, Jeff	9
7	<i>Claudia and the Bad Joke</i>	Nopra, Arley	9
8	<i>5-minute Princess Power Stories</i>	Allen, Elise	8
9	<i>Thomas & Friends Story Time Collection.</i>	Awdry, W.	8
10	<i>Cat on the Run in Cucumber Madness!</i>	Blabey, Aaron	8

Nonbooks

Position	Title	Circ.
1	Mobile Hotspot	42
2	<i>The Fall Guy</i> (DVD)	24
3	Children's Book Bag	23
4	<i>Kung Fu Panda 4</i> (DVD)	11
5	Lake Forest TakeOut Tech : World travel adapter with 4 USB + Type-C : TA-105	10
6	The Ministry of Ungentlemanly Warfare (DVD)	9
7	Lake Forest Take Out Tech : Nintendo Switch console	9
8	Lake Forest TakeOut Tech : Roku Disney+.	9
9	Lake Forest TakeOut Tech : Roku Hulu.	9
10	Lake Forest TakeOut Tech : Roku MAX/HBO.	9

SERVICE STATISTICS FOR AUGUST 2024

	August 2024	August 2023	YTD FY 2025	YTD FY 2024
Library Visits	13,703	13,337	60,161	52,539
Physical Items circulated	22,755	24,625	90,409	89,270
E-Media Circulated	8,647	8,576	34,364	33,883
Database Uses	8,989***	10,596	50,060	42,502
Library Programs & Attendees**	29/2,524	43/2,551	366/28,134	557/25,776
Media Lab, Appts, and Tutorials	63	83	270	217
Reference Questions	2,344	2,514	9,720	10,101
New Library Cards Issued	211	232	595	630
Items added to collection	1,037	1,235	4,593	4,319
Items withdrawn from collection	1,591	1,835	5,517	4,710

*To conform to Illinois Public Library Annual Report (IPLAR) reporting guidelines, starting in FY 2025, Freegal statistics are reported with Database Use and not with E-Media Circulation.

**Includes passive programs and take-home activities

*** New York Times and Newsbank numbers were unavailable from the vendors for August. (Last month, the NY Times alone accounted for 3,647 page views.)