

## Creating a Book Culture

### Updated Mission Statement Reflects Your Love of Reading



The word “book” is pretty amazing in its versatility. Today, when you tell someone you are “reading a book,” it could mean the paper-based volume, a CD spinning in your car CD player, or a digital edition on an e-reader. A book can now engage its readers in many ways: a picture or pop-up book to prepare a young child for literacy; chapter books that offer more complex stories for kids; novels written in e-ink on slim devices for people on the go; or audio versions that engage your brain through listening.

If you love books and reading, you probably also take your interaction to another level. Some of us love to browse the stacks, letting cover art catch our eye and interest. Others want to share the experience of reading with a book discussion group. Finding out about or meeting authors, learning about the countries and cultures featured in our favorite books, and even anticipating the next story in a series are ways that people show their interest in and love of the act of reading.

The Library board has made it clear that they understand your love of books and all they mean to you. They have recently updated the Library’s Mission Statement to add the pledge to “provide and sustain a book culture through literary knowledge and interactive experiences.”



Library staff and experts help explain the newest book technology at the E-reader Test Drive Open House.

### Providing a Book Culture

The development of the e-reader and digital editions has prompted many questions about the state of the “book.” You only need to take a look at our **New Books** shelves to know that the book’s demise has been greatly exaggerated.

“How the future will look is anybody’s guess,” said Library Executive Director Marilyn Genter. “But the key for the Library will be to remain viable and dynamic in responding to residents’ needs, expectations, and demands.”

Print, graphic novel, compact disc, and e-ink consumers can agree on this: the growing number of reading formats has inspired a renewed love for stories and storytellers. We know this because our book discussions are filling up and people are forming their own groups, reserving the next offering from their favorite writers, and asking Library staff for their recommendations. Our mission statement now reflects our commitment to fostering and supporting Mount Prospect’s love of reading.

Perhaps in the coming decades, bound editions will make up less and less of our holdings, however now and in the near future, at the Library, “book” refers to the many different formats that novels and nonfiction take. Be assured that we will continue to offer books in the formats you want and need—and we’ll help you learn and use new technologies.

### Literary Knowledge

In the revised mission statement, the phrase “literary knowledge” refers to the many ways we are all acquainted with the art of storytelling. You

### MISSION STATEMENT

**Mount Prospect Public Library**  
exists to:

- Connect people to information, resources, and opportunities for enrichment and leisure.
- Provide and sustain a book culture through literary knowledge and interactive experiences.
- Promote and support education and lifelong learning.
- Build community.

more than likely have a favorite book, one from which you can recite passages by memory. Or, maybe, a particular author has captured your imagination, and you often feel that you could write his or her biography. Some people have a fascination with movies, and others love the short stories told in songs. Library staff are committed to bringing you tools and resources to help you develop and satisfy your interests.

Our commitment starts with setting young readers on the path to literacy and a lifelong love of books. By making reading a regular part of their world, children from birth to five years develop skills such as knowledge of sounds, narrative, and vocabulary.

“It’s as easy as singing, playing, talking, writing, and, of course, reading with your child on a regular basis,” said Youth Services Head Mary Smith. “You are not only building the skills they need to learn how to read but also making it a pleasurable experience so your child will want to read again and again.”

Staff have organized Youth Services to help parents and caregivers easily find books that lead children through the steps from guided to independent reading. Play and activity areas also develop literacy skills, although kids just think they’re having fun in the kitchen or the puppet theater.

see “Book Culture”  
on page 2

**SPECIAL PULL-OUT  
SECTION**  
Save for Future  
Reference





“We even bring in authors—in person and via Skype—to give kids an inside look at how the books they love are created,” Emerick explains.

The teen years are a crucial turning point, as it’s often when some might stop reading for enjoyment. Our teen librarians are experts at knowing the kinds of books that capture teen imaginations. They also “read” their adolescent patrons and know how to get those books into their hands.

They not only have to keep up with trends and technology but also have to connect the old-fashioned way, by reaching out to schools and other teen-oriented groups.



When those excited children and tuned-in teens turn into lifelong readers, adult programs continue bringing books to life. Portrayals of famous people, cultural programming, and local history all help the words jump from the page—or the screen—into real life.

We know your reaction to changes in technology can range from excitement to suspicion to confusion. That’s why the Library offers classes based on what you have told us you need to know about computers and technology, including how to use current software, e-readers, and other devices. The classes are structured so you can get individual attention and ask all your questions.

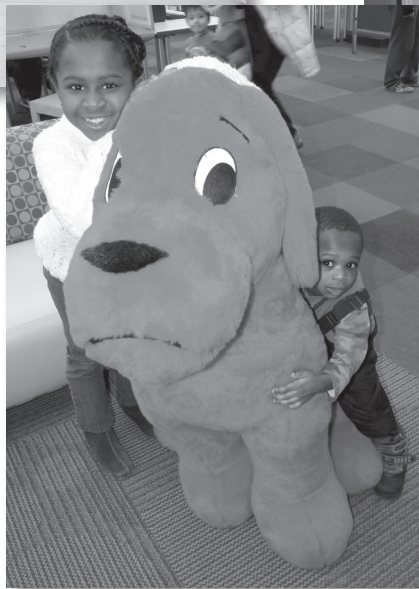
“The goal is to make people comfortable with new technology and give them the confidence to be frequent users,” said Technology Trainer Michelle Vonderhaar.

The Library may have fine-tuned its Mission Statement to better reflect what happens here every day. But you won’t see any difference in the level of service or in our focus on residents and their needs. Whether you visit the Library for personal or professional reasons, with your kids or by yourself, to use a computer or attend a program—or to read a book!—you will find us to be always welcoming, professional, and personal.

## Book Culture

continued from page 1

As beginning readers grow into avid ones, they turn to the Library to help them increase literary knowledge. High school and college students can supplement their studies with online resources such as *Novelist* and *Gale Literature Resource Center*.



Book discussion guides can steer you to the right books and help you lead the conversation. And if you need suggestions for what to read next, our Readers’ Advisors are there for you. Looking for Christian fiction, steampunk, or novels inspired by Jane Austen? These are only some of the lists that the staff have already prepared.

## Interactive Experiences

When you read a great book, you often feel yourself transported into the world the author has created. This is the most basic interactive experience you can have with a book. We want to offer you more chances to step into the stories you read.

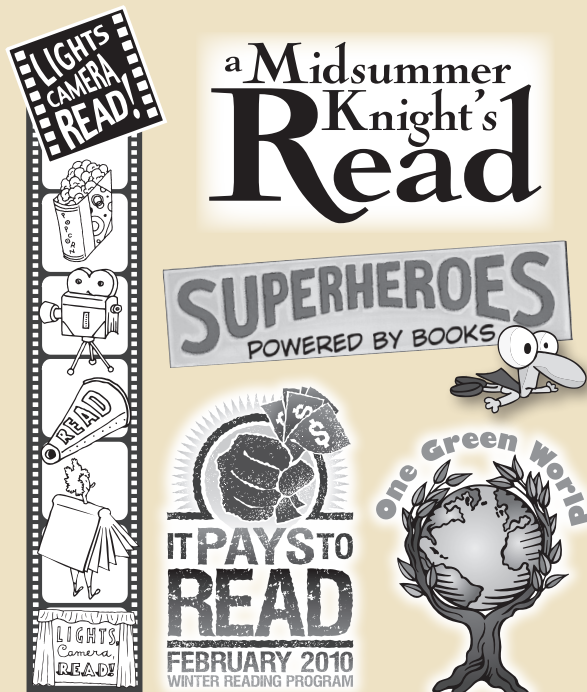
From parent-child storytimes to armchair travelogues to classes that help you become more familiar with emerging technologies, programs help bring books to life for all ages.

“Every single program we hold in Youth is somehow tied to books,” says Programming Coordinator Erin Emerick. “We are always looking for ways to get kids excited about books and to find the right book for each reader—or pre-reader.” Emerick describes how staff use pop-up books and props to tell stories to young readers during storytimes. Older kids make crafts and play games that are related to stories.





## Annual Library Events That Support a Book Culture

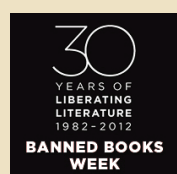


### Summer and Winter Reading

Twice each year the Library puts a special spotlight on the love of reading. In February, Winter Reading helps cold-weary patrons beat the blahs and settle in with a good story. Summer Reading keeps vacation-bound minds active by encouraging reading for the fun of it. Both events feature prizes, so you can challenge yourself twice each year.

### Book Crossing

The librarians of Mount Prospect and its Sister City, Sèvres, France, work cooperatively to create this international, intergenerational reading program. The books selected for discussion, written by French and American authors, seek to spark a dialogue among different age groups including a blog for readers to post their thoughts.



### Banned Books Week

During this annual celebration of the freedom to read and our First Amendment rights, libraries highlight books that have been challenged or removed from library shelves.

### Suburban Mosaic

The vision of Suburban Mosaic is to “reach a deeper understanding of the various cultures that make up the suburbs of Cook and Lake County, Illinois, in order to reduce prejudice, racism, and the systemic marginalization of populations.” Each year this multi-organization book discussion focuses on a theme and selects books for many reading levels.



## Books to Go Fill Reading Niche

Reading is in the bag for countless area book groups who utilize a time and cost-saving means for securing their favorite monthly reads for discussion. Known as *Books to Go*, the convenient tote bags of books are available at the Fiction/AV/Teen Desk. Each *Book to Go* bag contains 10 soft-covered copies of a book deemed ripe for discussion. Selections range from *Cleopatra: A Life* by Stacy Schiff and *Angry Housewives Eating Bon Bons* by Lorna Landvik to *Firefly Lane* by Kristin Hannah.

“We offer a mix of fiction and nonfiction, and we try to be responsive to what groups have expressed an interest in,” says Cathleen Blair, Readers’ Advisory Coordinator at MPPL. “Each bag also includes a binder filled with useful information. The binders contain questions about the book, extra research, and information on the author, which can aid in enhancing a group’s discussion.”

The *Books to Go* service began in 2005 with six titles. Today, reflecting the overall growth in the popularity of book discussion groups, the Library offers 31 titles in this easy, portable format. Blair reports, on average, five to seven book bags are checked out each month by area reading groups. With today’s cost of a paperback ranging from between \$12 and \$14, each bag translates into savings of well over a \$100 for a reading group.

Blair says that, over the years, she has witnessed a shift in dynamics in the way groups select their titles.

“It used to be one person in the group was in charge of coming in and selecting all of the books for a particular group,” Blair says, “But now we are seeing more and more individual members coming in, and they seem to be taking turns selecting books.”

For Blair this means keeping the inventory of book bags fresh in terms of content and genre and varied in length. For a group just getting started, Blair often recommends *The Kitchen Boy* by Robert Alexander.

“It’s a slimmer one, which is a good way to begin.”

Blair says and then quickly adds, “the stories in our book bag selections must be ‘rich for discussion’—that’s what keeps it fun and interesting for groups.”

With this in mind, Blair says 2013 will welcome several new additions to the *Books to Go* collection including *The Thirteenth Tale* by Diane Setterfield and *The Secret Daughter: A Novel* by Shilpi Somaya Gowda; both will be available beginning in January.

“Neither of these books is a recent release or a new book per se,” Blair explains, “but we’ve definitely noticed a spike in interest for both of these titles. We are excited to offer what readers are looking for.”



### Books to Go Provide Happy Ending

When Mount Prospect resident Eileen Klemundt made her way to the Fiction/AV/Teen Desk in early August, she wasn’t exactly sure which book she was looking. All she knew was the Library had “book bags” for reading groups, and she had been assigned the task of selecting the book for her reading group’s get-together in September.

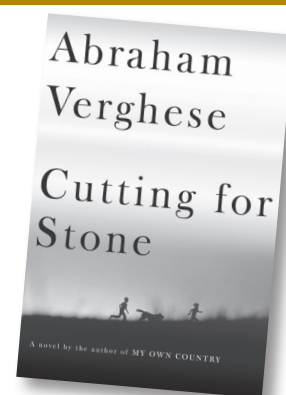
“I was a first-time user of this service,” Klemundt recalls. “It was so easy. They gave me a list of the titles available, each with a brief synopsis. I read them and discussed a few of the options with the woman behind the desk, and, before I knew it, I was on my way with enough copies for my entire book group.”

From *Books to Go*, Klemundt selected *Cutting for Stone* by Abraham Verghese, the powerful story of twin brothers coming of age in an Ethiopia on the brink of revolution, where their love for the same woman drives them apart. Klemundt reports the discussion of the book was a success and that *Cutting for Stone* was given a thumbs-up by the 14 women in her book group, who range in age from 30 to 82 years old.

“It was a fantastic discussion. *Cutting for Stone* is a really good book,” Klemundt says. “We found the binder in the book bag was very helpful. We used the questions and also read the background information on the author. It really added to our discussion.”

In addition to the literary input provided by the service, Klemundt and her group also recognize the value and convenience of *Books to Go*.

“Absolutely, this saves everyone time and money,” Klemundt says. “No one has to scramble to find the book, and there really is a cost savings. I’m not sure I’d be able to do a book group if I had to buy a book all the time.”



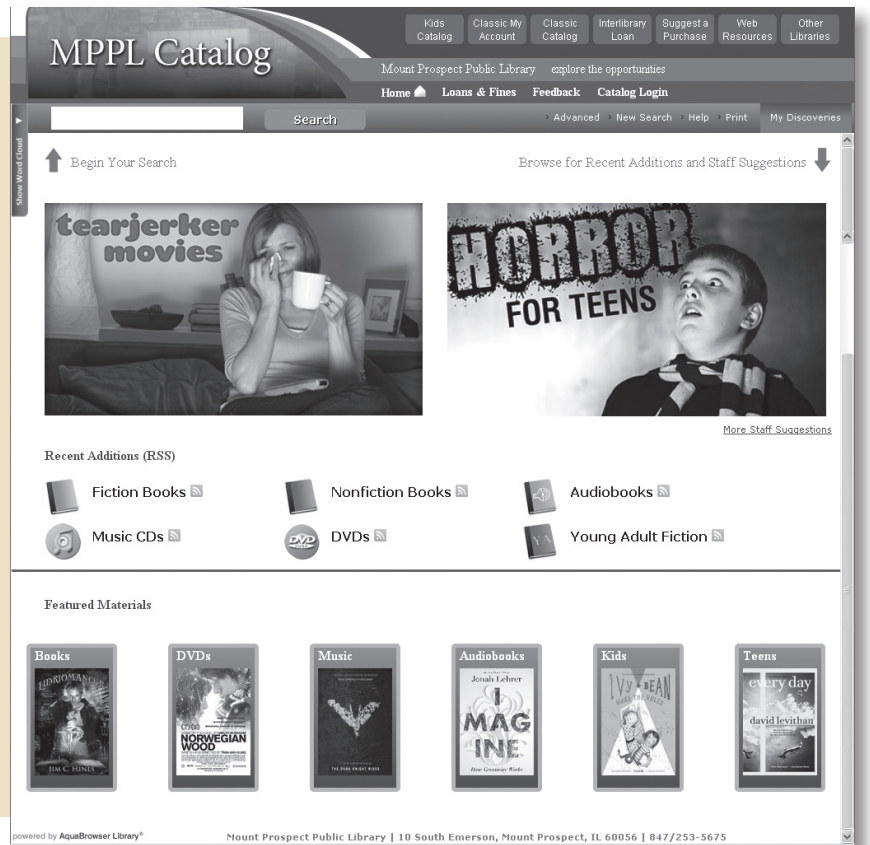


## Catalog Guides You to Great Discoveries

Our catalog page has a whole new look and new features. “This new design better integrates with our new website and offers even more functionality for patrons,” said Chris Amling, the Library’s web designer. “That functionality is aimed at helping you find materials to enjoy.”

- ➔ **Looking for Something Different:** Under the Search box there are two slides that suggest various authors, genres, and media. Click on a slide for a list of materials.
- ➔ **Looking for Something New:** A list of RSS (or Really Simple Syndication) feeds feature recently added new fiction, nonfiction, audiobooks, music, DVDs, and young adult books. Subscribe to any feed and updated information about new materials will be downloaded to an RSS reader such as Google Reader.
- ➔ **Need a Recommendation?** Across the bottom of the page you will see suggestions from Library staff. Click on the cover to see if the book, DVD, or compact disc is on the shelf or to put that item on hold.

We hope the redesign of the catalog home page makes searching and browsing easier. But remember, you can always talk to an expert. If you have a question about the catalog, need a particular book, compact disc, e-book, or DVD, or just want some ideas for what you should read, listen to, or watch next, please call the library at 847/253-5675.



Wrigley

Meet Wrigley, Nugget, Fezzik, Charlie, and Charis—five specially-trained, obedient, purely lovable canines, which are paws-down the reason behind a highly successful reading program known as Tales With Tails.

Make no bones about it, the innovative program is more than fur and fluff. Tales With Tails has an important mission—to foster a love of reading in children in grades two to five, through what could be called a good ol’ case of puppy love. One by one, children have the opportunity to read out loud to one of the friendly dogs. Book in hand, the children snuggle in with their four-footed friends; the owners of the dogs sit quietly to the side. The children read for fifteen minutes each week, and, no matter their skill level, pace, or pronunciation, the dogs listen.

“The goal of the program is to encourage the love of reading in children,” says Julie DiGuiseppe, Elementary School Liaison and one of the coordinators of the program. “With the dogs, we create a low-stress, low-pressure environment.

## Reading Is Doggone Fun

Stop by Mount Prospect Public Library on select Thursday evenings, and you might think the place is going to the dogs—literally.

There is no one piping in to correct the child if he or she says a word incorrectly. The dog is not judging them, which is especially helpful for a reluctant reader. The children really gain confidence.”

The program began in 2005 and is now offered twice a year in five-week sessions. Twenty children participate at a time. They arrive in groups of five and are assigned to a dog. Sometimes they read to the same dog; other weeks they are meeting the pooch for the first time.

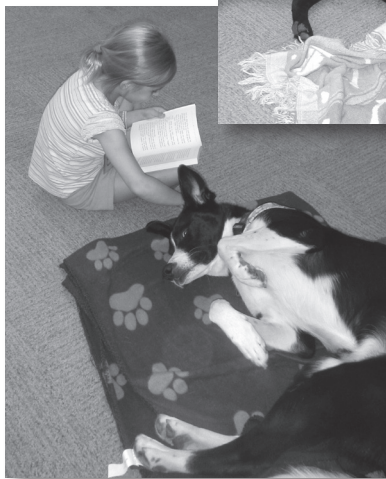
“I think anything that gets a child excited about reading is good for them,” said Diane Koning, a Mount Prospect resident whose daughter Meghan is a newcomer to the program. “She loves dogs, and she loves to read so it is the perfect combination.”

Meghan, a second-grader at Fairview Elementary School, selected *The Wolves Are Back* by Jean Craighead George to read to Nugget, an 18-month old English Springer Spaniel.

“It was so much fun,” Meghan said excitedly, following her one-on-one time with Nugget. “I think he was really listening. He liked my story a lot, especially the part about the wolves.”

Like Nugget, the dogs and their owners are all volunteers with the

*Ella reads to Fezzik and Charlie (below) is “all ears” for the story that Sophia is reading to him.*



*Danielle is reading to Charis while Nugget (below) listens to Peter.*



Chicago-based Rainbow Animal Assisted Therapy Programs. Rainbow believes that children often do things happily for dogs that they are reluctant to do for anyone else. In the case of Tales With Tails, that doing is reading out loud—simply for the fun of it.

“The dogs are truly nonjudgmental. They don’t care if a child gets a word right or wrong” says Barb Balla, a Mount Prospect resident and volunteer coordinator of library programs for Rainbow. “My dog Charlie loves the kids. At times, he shuts his eyes and he may look like he is sleeping. But he always has one ear up, so I know he is listening.”

Tales With Tails returns  
**Thursday, February 21 through Thursday, March 21. Registration begins on Saturday, January 5** and must be done in person at the Youth Desk. Participants must be in grades 2-5 and be residents of Mount Prospect.

Mount Prospect Public Library  
explore the opportunities



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