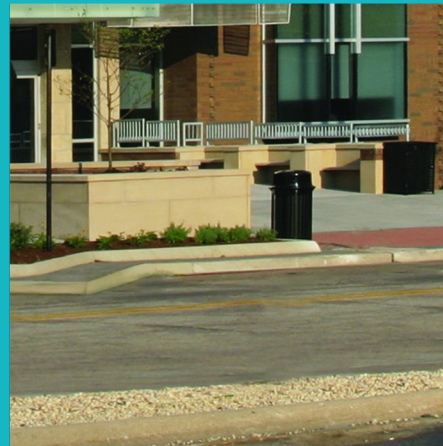
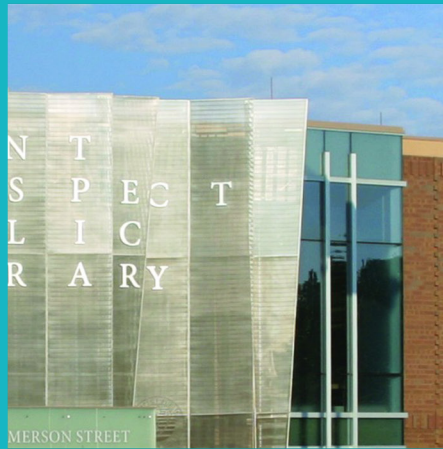


# MPPL

Mount Prospect Public Library

# 2020 ANNUAL REPORT



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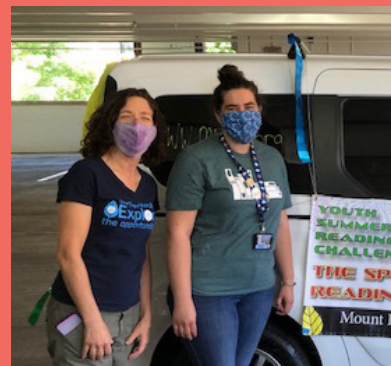
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# THANK YOU

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At the beginning of 2020, the library set off to a great start: we launched our circulating Roku collection, threw a Makar Sankranti celebration, study room usage was through the roof, nearly 700 people enjoyed the second annual FanFest pop culture celebration, and we had 13 local schools participate in an Elementary Art Show that brought more than 800 visitors to the library to celebrate youth art.

Then in March, we — along with the rest of the world — had our lives turned upside down by the global COVID-19 pandemic. We closed the library buildings on March 15, and immediately started figuring out how to provide library services to our community during lockdown. Our goal was to continue to allow the community to use the library, even if it was in different ways than usual.

What hasn't changed is our dedication to provide the Mount Prospect community with excellent library services.

Thank you for your patience, support, and adaptability throughout 2020.

We look to the future with hope and anticipation.

**Su Reynders**

**Sylvia Haas**

## 2020 Board of Trustees



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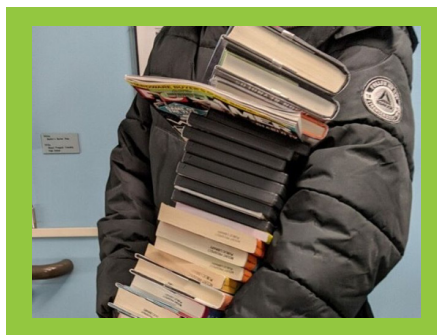
# Embrace the Unexpected

## The Answer Is “Yes.”

This was the year of easing checkout limits, removing barriers, and discovering new ways to reach our patrons. We were here, at different periods of time when you needed us. From patrons coming with wagons in March — “Take all you want, no limits,” we said back then — to removing fines and simply asking the questions, “How do we get this book to this patron? What do we need to make it happen?” Over and over, we thought about our patrons and the community as we fulfilled our library mission.

Allowing patrons to check out what they needed during a temporary closure was the right

thing to do and it began a wave of new changes. 2020 called for us to review policies and procedures. With this “can-do” attitude, we also considered restrictions and fines. In June, the Board of Trustees solidified this new ideal by announcing a Fine Amnesty Day, clearing all MPPL fines from patron accounts. Since then, no fines have accrued, and people returned materials going back years. Patrons can check balances on their library account or on the app or call the library for details.



## Library Card: The Golden Ticket



We had a high demand for online services and library cards this year. While many residents have a Mount Prospect Public Library card and use the MPPL app, not everyone has a library card in Mount Prospect. Cards expire, new residents arrive, or life simply gets busy.

When people realized they could access our popular online services with a library card, we launched online self-registration to help. This program initiates the library card process, and then it's verified by library staff. **By the end of the year, 2,300 people self-registered.**

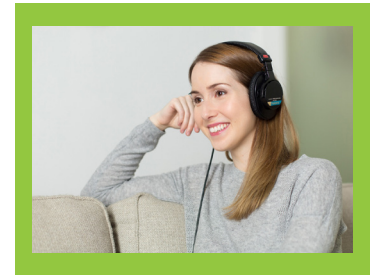
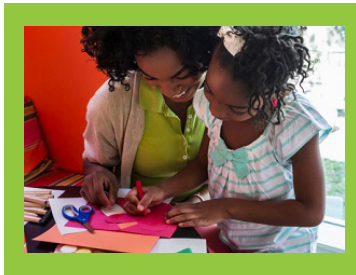
We didn't just rely on self-registration, either. It wasn't long before we realized there were students who needed help during this critical time and remote learning. The library partnered with local teachers and school librarians so students in unincorporated areas had library cards and access to databases and digital collections. This activity was reinforced by recent state legislation called Cards 4 Kids.

“ My daughter has been learning and reading more this year. All thanks to MPPL and the amazing rocking team. ” —online program attendee

## Discovering What's Possible

Within days of lockdown, community members discovered electronic resources and services using their library card from home.

If people hadn't tried it before, they had perfect opportunities to read e-books on tablets; stream music and movies; and discover recipes, crafts, and activities. We offered gardening tips, résumé templates, and e-learning recommendations for kids.



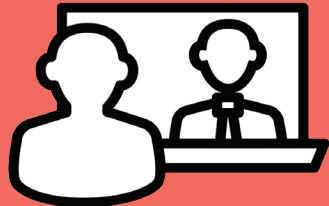
The OverDrive service improved in many ways this year, including adding 3,500 new titles. Additional funding and strategic purchases reduced wait times for materials, with the lowest average wait times coinciding with the peak of spring library closures.

Staff also collaborated with local school districts to expand student access to the library's OverDrive e-book collection by using the Sora app. **By adding 300 titles to this collection, we increased community access to help local students.** We also added several new online subscription services, including BookFlix, Story Cove, PebbleGo, Little Pim, and Scholastic Teachables. These databases all helped to meet the needs of patrons learning from home or possibly homeschooling for the first time.



“ Thank you for everything you're doing to try and make it normal during this abnormal time! I'm so glad the library has figured out ways to continue to provide a valuable service. ”  
—*Parking Lot Pickup patron*

## Here to Help



- One of the first changes we made in March was expanding and increasing our wireless internet signal. This allowed anyone to use Wi-Fi in front of the building or in the parking garage, and it is now available 24/7. More than 20,000 unique users accessed the library's Wi-Fi in 2020.
- We added text messaging to our live chat service, allowing library staff to offer Help Desk service beyond the telephone or in-person. **Staff answered more than 1,800 requests using this service.**
- Librarians offered Reference by Appointment sessions via Zoom in March and throughout the year.
- During periods the buildings were closed, we knew that some patrons needed access to computers. In June, we coordinated hourly computers-by-appointment. This allowed patrons to use a computer, print documents, and use the SimpleScan.
- We added several Roku devices to the collection in early 2020, allowing patrons to view content on popular streaming services: Disney+, HBO Max, Netflix, Hulu, Prime Video, Acorn TV, and ESPN+. The devices also provide access to high-profile titles unavailable on DVD or Blu-ray Disc. Though we anticipated these would be popular items, they were an especially perfect addition during a pandemic year.
- The library already offered hotspots, but late in 2020, we bundled them with Chromebooks. This allowed patrons to check out a computer, pair it with a hotspot, and work or learn from home.

“ Thank you for being so on top of things! This is the best library in the state! ”  
—patron via social media

## At Your Service



We built one of our most successful and defining services in 2020 in a few weeks: Parking Lot Pickup. This brand-new service was created from the ground up at both the Main Library and South Branch. This key service placed library materials into the hands of our patrons, and we received immediate positive feedback from the community. Our staff worked diligently to ensure a safe and easy process for all, and the community embraced the changes. The friendly waves from patrons with an enthusiastic, “Thank you!” captured the spirit of this service.

The library also expanded its Homebound program and introduced a new Home Delivery service. This service is for patrons unable to pick up materials from the library because of pandemic conditions. It offered more frequent deliveries, enhanced communication, and contactless procedures for patrons or families unable to come to the library.



## Good Timing

Just in time to handle deliveries, the new library van arrived in April. This was a planned purchase through a municipal contract that replaced a 20-year-old van. There are opportunities to spot it in Mount Prospect every day, not to mention during celebratory reading parades!



““ My kids were thrilled to get their library books today! Thank you for offering this service! I love being able to pick up material safely, thank you.””  
—*Parking Lot Pickup patron*

## We Love Our Volunteers

Hands down, our volunteers are the best. No matter the project, they deliver. The library hosted a face mask collection project, inviting community members and staff to donate new, homemade face masks to share with library patrons and other community members who needed face coverings. **We collected and distributed more than 300 face coverings using the outside book returns.** Later, these face coverings were available to patrons who needed them at the Main Library and South Branch, plus some residents who needed them early in the pandemic.

The two non-profit library organizations held a reduced number of fundraisers prior to the building closure; the Friends of the Library ran a successful

winter book sale and the Library Foundation hosted their annual Mini Golf event. Even with their limited revenue, the hard-working volunteer groups stayed committed to funding library initiatives and programming throughout the year.



## Book Bundles



The library moved quickly to a grab-and-go model by creating book bundles. We started with storytime bundles, and then added board book and leveled reading bundles. In short order, the storytime bundles were very popular and checked out more than 250 times — that's more than 1,430 picture books enjoyed by children.

## Get Outside and StoryWalk®

To provide a safe in-person programming option, we held a variety of socially distanced outdoor events at the library, Pocket Park, and various park district locations. Registering small groups at a time, we delivered more than 20 programs to more than 600 people.

These outdoor activities expanded to the community using StoryWalk® experiences out on paths and neighborhoods. Special thanks to community members and area park districts for sharing their outdoor spaces with us — we had a wonderful time sharing stories and activities.



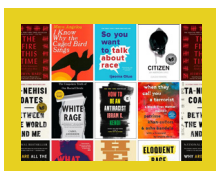
The 40th annual Teddy Bear Walk was held as a month-long celebration with activities, such as watching a video, writing a letter to Santa, a teddy bear scavenger hunt for signs around town, and special crafts-to-go to enjoy at home.



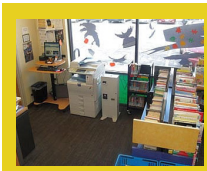


## Roll. Camera. Action. Zoom!

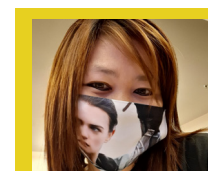
The library launched YouTube storytimes, book recommendations, and tutorials in 2020, plus we presented hundreds of Zoom programs for thousands of attendees. We even offered a “How To Use Zoom” program to help our patrons embrace the new way to communicate. A few highlights:



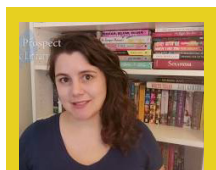
Library staff created video booktalks to highlight timely titles, notably spotlights on “Own Voices” and “Black Stories Matter.”



South Branch had many popular programs, including Zumba, Lotería (a Mexican bingo-like game), seasonal bingo, and follow-along crafts.



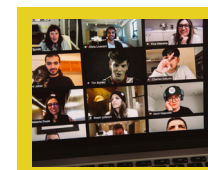
We maintained regular contact with our ongoing teen programs, Teen Think Tank and Teen Book Café, with a highly engaged audience.



Book groups moved to using Zoom, with offerings for readers of all ages. One of the most successful included the bimonthly Let’s Talk Books bookshare session.



A sign of the times, one of the most popular technology sessions was Cutting the Cord: Getting the Most Out of Streaming Services.



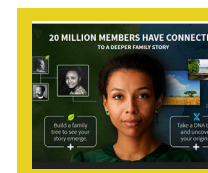
Night Off? Game On! embraced the possibilities of a virtual environment for this monthly meetup group.



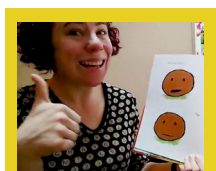
Staff offered a variety of dynamic programming options via Zoom and YouTube for children, including storytimes, songs, and movement videos.



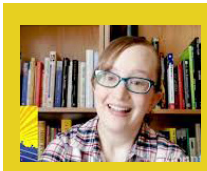
We brought back many programs by request, including concerts, entertainment programs, and Home Modification Solutions for All Ages, in partnership with the Village’s Human Services Department.



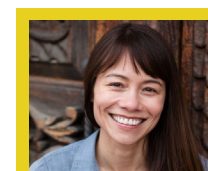
Genealogy continues to be popular. One of many programs included Cyber Sleuthing Your Family Tree.



Bilingual Play & Learn, a collaborative session between the library and the Community Connections Center, presented a weekly storytime in Spanish and English, featuring stories, music and movement activities for young children and their caregivers.



Librarians hosted dozens of virtual field trips for teachers and students, presenting booktalks, author studies, storytimes, interactive activities, and tours of library spaces.



We invited authors to book talks, including a virtual author visit with Liz Fenton and Lisa Steinke and children’s author Christina Soontornvat.

“A wealth of information! Thank you for providing this helpful presentation. Just what the doctor ordered for the times we’re living through. Thank you very much...”

—online educational and entertainment program attendees

## A Pandemic Timeline for Mount Prospect Public Library

<b>March 11 2020</b>	World Health Organization declares COVID-19 a pandemic.
<b>March 15 2020</b>	Library closes all facilities. Electronic materials and resources available. Live phone, chat, text, and email support for patrons.
<b>March 20 2020</b>	Statewide Stay at Home Order announced.
<b>March 25 2020</b>	Library launches storytimes on Facebook and YouTube.
<b>April 30 2020</b>	Virtual programming via Zoom begins.
<b>May 6 2021</b>	Library starts virtual visits and storytimes with schools.
<b>June 1 2020</b>	Parking Lot Pickup begins.
<b>June 22 2020</b>	Library offers computers by appointment.
<b>July 6 2020</b>	Library buildings open with restrictions.
<b>November 16 2020</b>	Library closes buildings due to Stay at Home Advisory. Continues remote services and Parking Lot Pickup.
<b>February 1 2021</b>	Main Library reopens with restrictions.

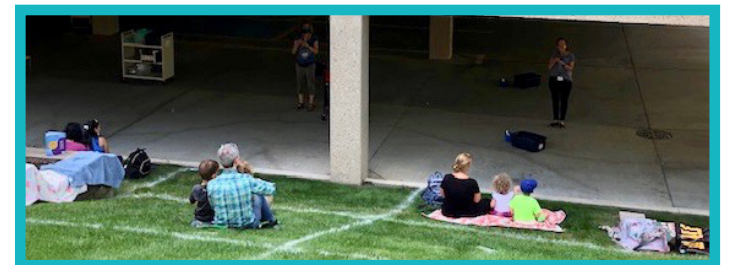
## More Options, More Variety

In response to the pandemic driving patron demand for all things digital, additional efforts were directed toward increasing the digital media content we offer patrons.

**To meet demand, we purchased 3,500 titles total in 2020 (890 titles in 2019). This equates to a 294% increase in the number of titles purchased and cataloged.**

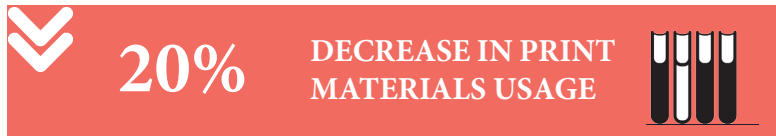
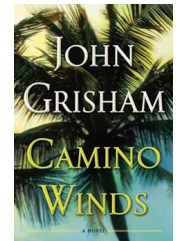
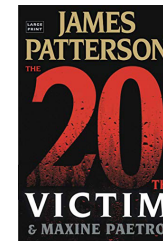
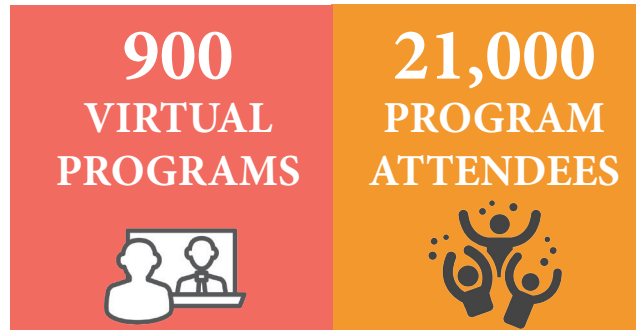
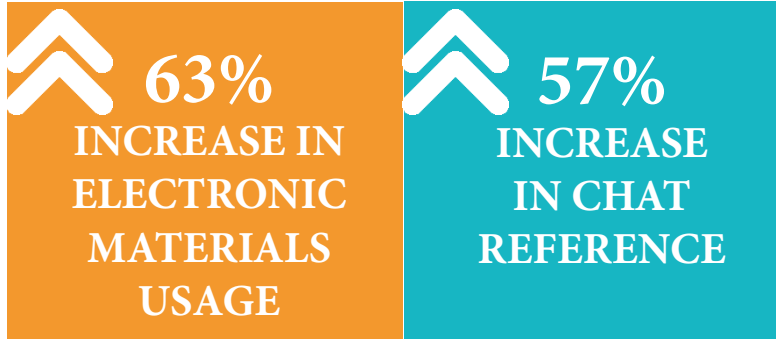
We expanded the library's digital magazine collection from 55 titles to more than 3,000 on OverDrive.

We purchased more copies of high-demand titles to decrease wait times for items from all areas of the library's collection.

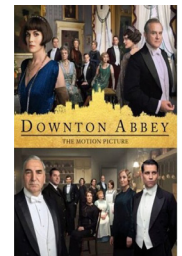
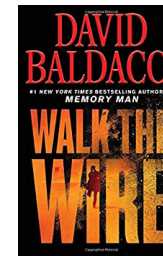


“ The global pandemic turned library services upside down. Our goal was to continue to let you use the library, even if it was in a different way than usual. ”  
—*Library Director Su Reynders*

# By the Numbers



IN 2020, PATRONS CHECKED OUT  
MORE THAN **\$9.3 MILLION**  
WORTH OF BOOKS, MOVIES, MUSIC, AND  
MAGAZINES

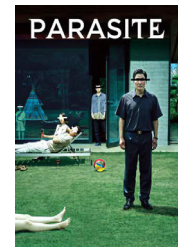


TOP CIRCULATION  
PRINT TITLES:

- ✓ CAMINO WINDS  
By John Grisham
- ✓ WALK THE WIRE  
By David Baldacci
- ✓ THE 20TH VICTIM  
By James Patterson

TOP CIRCULATING  
AV TITLES:

- ✓ PARASITE
- ✓ DOWNTON ABBEY
- ✓ FORD V. FERRARI

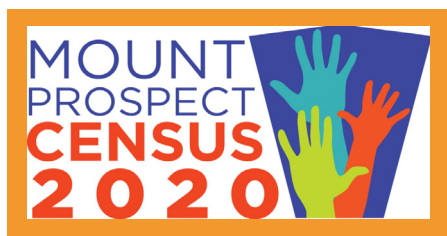


“ Impressive response and caution — again, I appreciate you all so much. ”  
—patron via social media

# Connecting with the Community

## 2020 Census: You Count!

Library staff joined the Village of Mount Prospect's Complete Count Committee to coordinate efforts for the 2020 Census. With a goal to increase the community's response rate, staff collaborated on a publicity campaign including a Mount Prospect video, website, social media, and printed information about census facts to share with the community. **The result was a self-response rate of 80.6% in Mount Prospect, an increase in participation from 2010.**



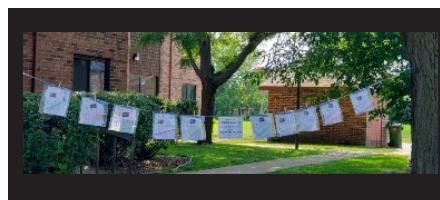
## Housing Services

The annual Unsheltered Point-in-Time Count occurred in Mount Prospect in January. After the count, workers from Northwest Compass, a social service agency located in Mount Prospect, met with people they connected with in the lobby conference room to talk about stable housing and other resources.

## Cards for Seniors

An outreach team worked together to partner with Alden Gardens, an assisted living facility in Des Plaines, to provide our patrons with the opportunity to connect with residents by making cards.

## Outreach Crafts



The library distributed outreach kits to connect with children and families throughout the community, plus offer information about library programs and services. Area schools, including D26 Euclid and Indian Grove Schools, D59 John Jay and Forest View Schools, participated.

## Documenting History

The Mount Prospect Historical Society launched the Pandemic

Moments 2020 project in cooperation with the library, Mount Prospect Community Engagement Committee, the Mount Prospect Park District, and the River Trails Park District. From photos to journal entries to impressions about living through this period, all are welcome as part of the collection to describe this shared experience.

## Empowering Voters

The local nonpartisan League of Women Voters registered voters and offered information during National Voter Registration Day. The League reported registering new citizens and residents, teens turning 18, and first-time voters. They helped visitors check their registration and answered questions about vote-by-mail.

## Trick or Treat



With a tabletop outside of the library, we were happy to take part in the Mount Prospect Downtown Merchants' Association's second annual Trick-or-Treat event in October. More than 350 trick-or-treaters stopped by for Halloween treats.



# South Branch



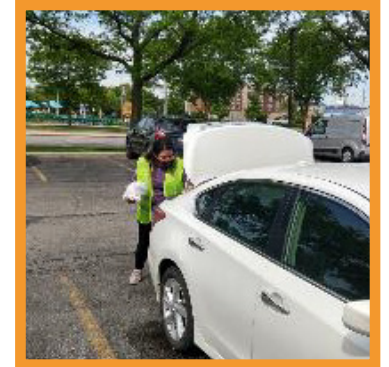
South Branch provided Parking Lot Pickup of library materials, along with printing and copying for patrons. With its location at the Crystal Court Shopping Center and large windows, staff also offered visitors an option to browse materials. Staff used the windows as an opportunity to share ideas and communicate with patrons during closures.

South Branch launched popular outdoor programs this summer by working with the Mount Prospect Park District near South Branch. Several programs were held at Highline Park, just west of South Branch's location. Programs included activities about seed bombs, abstract art, bubble-making, and interactive storytimes.

Staff placed outreach craft kits in various locations around the village for children, including District 59 schools, local parks, and the parkway of the Crystal Court shopping center. The kits were regularly replenished and extremely popular.

South Branch participated in Census 2020 efforts, including distributing printed materials and providing access to complete the census.

At District 59 food distribution sites and other places in the community, we gave away books, handed out craft kits, and promoted the Summer Reading Challenge.

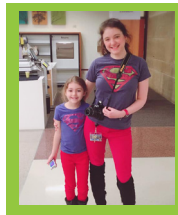


“ I am so thankful to each staff member to have organized so many sessions and helped develop her creative and reading skills. ”  
—patron thank you note

# Signature Events

## FanFest 2020

In February, nearly 700 community members of all ages gathered for FanFest 2020. This one-day signature event included popular photo opportunities with characters, games, plus new additions of face painting, a cosplay runway, and a cartooning workshop.



## Reading Challenges: A New Approach



Staff rose to the challenge to provide a meaningful summer reading adventure by offering a customized experience for patrons using the Beanstack online platform. Paper logs were available by request. **We kicked off the Summer Reading Challenge with a neighborhood car parade in June.**

Most participants navigated the program on their own, by tracking their reading online or

calling in updates. Library staff offered reading logs and giveaway books at end-of-school-year events and meal distribution sites.

Nearly 800 children in grades 5 and younger registered this year; and 36% completed the program by reading for at least 30 days. Participation among adults increased by 8% compared to 2019.

A total of 438 children participated in the Winter Reading Program: Chill Out at the Library. Storytime was the most popular activity for toddlers, while preschoolers and grade schoolers most enjoyed decorating quilt squares for the bulletin board.



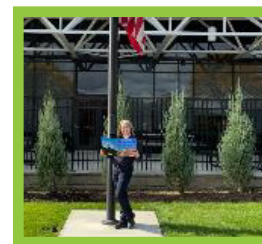
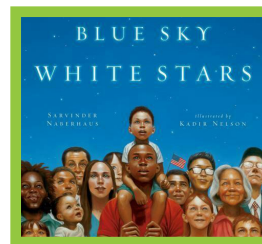
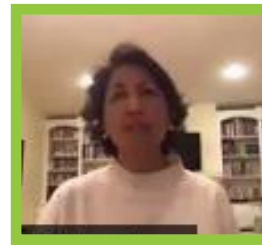
“ My kids had a blast! They didn't want to leave. We are so glad our library is able to do events like this, everyone enjoys the day. ”  
—*FanFest participant*

## Community Read



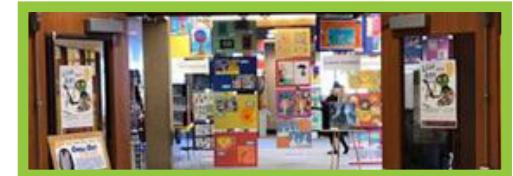
We brought together elementary and preschools, community leaders, and daycares for our first community read in October. **Woven Together: One Town, One Day, One Read** offered area teachers, librarians, and participants a free copy of “Blue Sky, White Stars” by Sarvinder Naberhaus along with curriculum suggestions, and a paper star quilt square to share with students. Students made posters, interviewed their parents about their ethnicity, and held discussions about “What makes America strong?”

The program culminated with a live Zoom author visit with Naberhaus. A total of 160 people attended the event. After the reading, she graciously answered questions from the very active and curious crowd. Since the program, families and community members continue to share how much they enjoyed the author and the community read.



## Community Art Show

All 13 Mount Prospect schools participated in the Elementary Art Show, which brought 815 visitors to the library.



“ I really appreciate all that you are doing to keep us readers happy. It feels way above and beyond the call of duty, in addition to being very creative. It is a true joy and treat to be reading new books by favorite authors. I hope that each of you know and feel how much we value what you are doing for us. — *author talk attendee* ”

# A Team Effort



*The library Board of Trustees and the Executive Director want to commend staff for providing excellent library services throughout this unusual year. The library is fortunate to have professional, forward-thinking, and dedicated staff. It is their efforts, ideas, and actions that enabled the library to provide the many creative solutions to pandemic challenges. They have proven to have the motivation, innovation, and inspiration to make the impossible, possible. Congratulations on a job well done.*

## CONTACT US

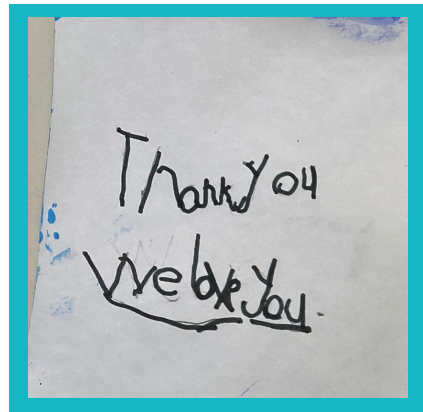
Our public service desk is available by chat, text, and phone.

Chat: [bit.ly/MPPLlivechat](https://bit.ly/MPPLlivechat)  
Text: 847-750-4275  
Phone: 847-253-5675  
[mppl.org/contact-us](https://www.mppl.org/contact-us)

South Branch  
1711 W. Algonquin Road  
Mount Prospect, IL 60056  
847-590-4090

Visit us for updated information:  
[www.mppl.org](https://www.mppl.org)

Main Library  
10 S. Emerson Street  
Mount Prospect, IL 60056



“ Individually, we are one drop. Together, we are an ocean. ”  
—Ryunosuke Satoro