Matt Womack / Executive Director

Erica Christianson / Assistant Director

Anne Belden / Adult Reference Department Head

Natalie Ziarnik / Children’s Department Head

Lori Sollenberger / Circulation Department Head

John Carranza / Facilities Department Head

Chris Pederson / IT Department Head

Christy Wagner / Outreach Department Head

Christen Wiser / Popular Materials Department Head

Valerie Stern / Public Information Department Head

Michelle Walters / Technical Services Department Head
2018-2019 was a terrific year. It included milestones for our financial position, state and national awards, facilities improvements, and groundwork for big things in 2019-2020.

Our strategic plan organizes our work into four large strategic initiatives: Deliver enriching In-library experiences, Provide world-class virtual services, Engage our community, and Work together as a team. We’ll cover a few highlights here, and then provide more detailed information in the reports that follow.

**Deliver enriching In-library experiences**

One of our top priorities for the year was to provide better service experiences for Spanish speaking patrons. We hired three staff members this year who speak Spanish, and we feel that having them on our team has made a big improvement to the quality of our overall services, and has been especially impactful for Spanish speaking visitors.

We made some noticeable improvements to our facility this year as well. We replaced the lighting system in the parking lot with LED fixtures. We anticipate lower energy costs and longer lasting lights. We also improved the lighting in the 2nd floor quiet study area, and replaced some older seating on the 2nd floor that had served us well since 2002, but was showing its age.

We spent a lot of time this year planning for a major exhibit that will be arriving in late September of 2019. *Dinosaur Discoveries: Ancient Fossils, New Ideas* will be arriving from the American Museum of Natural History in New York. The fruits of this labor will be shared with the community starting in October, but the planning for this exhibit was a considerable part of our work in 2018-2019.

Though there were many terrific programs this year in the library, I would like to highlight one event in particular. Holocaust survivor Estelle Glaser Laughlin shared her family’s story of survival and of persistence, describing how they were taken from a ghetto in Warsaw to a forced labor camp when she was a young child. It was a powerful story and a very memorable experience for those in attendance.

**Provide world-class virtual services**

We’re always looking for ways to improve the capabilities of our online systems, and this year one of those improvements was the launch of a new product called Communico. This software is the backbone of the online calendar that we use to manage event and program registrations. It
took a lot of planning and coordination to have it ready to go at the same time we released the December 2018 issue of *Footnotes*.

This year we also introduced a new video streaming service called Kanopy. This service includes feature films, documentaries, and a terrific collection of college-level instruction from The Great Courses.

One other technology improvement that we made this year was to replace our SMART Boards with newer and easier to use equipment in our conference room, meeting room, and computer labs.

We are also developing a staff position that will be dedicated to creating better website experiences and better overall integration with our digital content. We plan to hire for this position in the first half of the coming fiscal year.

**Engage our community**

A big highlight this year for the community was the final payoff of our library’s bonds. On April 13, 1999 library district voters approved the issuance of a bond in the amount of $13.9 million to help pay for the construction of the current library building. The bond was, in effect, a mortgage on the building.

Over the years, in an effort to take advantage of lower interest rates, the Board refinanced the bonds in 2005, 2009, and 2012. These refinancing efforts saved taxpayers more than $1.3 million over time. We made the final payment in December 2018, and hosted a “Love your debt-free library” celebration in January. It was a fun way to share the joy of being debt free.

Another highlight from this year was our work with the Barrington Area Council on Aging (BACOA) to develop and launch our Memory Café. This monthly program offers crafts, music, and conversation for people with cognitive issues such as Alzheimer’s disease, along with their care partners.

**Work together as a team**

We saw some mid-year retirements from long time managers in Circulation and IT. We hired Lori Sollenberger to manage the Circulation department in January. Around the same time, we reorganized IT and Technical Services into two departments. Michelle Walters is now the Head of Technical Services, and Chris Pedersen is Head of IT. All three of them were internal promotions, so the transitions have been very smooth. Integrating three new managers into the management team has been an important part of our work this year.

We also hired many new people to replace retiring staff members in positions throughout the library. Building alignment along our mission, vision, core values, and standards of service was a significant accomplishment.

We said goodbye to Trustees Susan Malohn and Jenny Stanonik in May, and welcomed new Trustees Crystal Steker and Anne Hurst to the Board.
I do want to take a moment to brag about some awards that our staff won this year.

First, our Public Information Department won a national award from the American Library Association for the graphics they created for 2018’s Ela Summer Bingo. This award is gratifying recognition for their high-quality contributions to our team.

Also this year, our Popular Materials department won the Readers’ Advisory Service Award from the Adult Reading Round Table. Our Popular Materials team has developed terrific initiatives like the Three Books Podcast, Ela Book Buzz, and the Great Read Out in response to a strategic initiative to provide stronger readers’ advisory services. It is inspiring to see our team excel when given a major goal.
Erica Christianson – Assistant Director

Working together as team is a critical pillar of the Library’s strategic plan. Through covering public service desks, participating in programs such as Book Buzz, Escape Room, and Readers’ Tea, joining in the process of interviewing, and facilitating committee work, I have seen first-hand the strength of our Ela Library team. I’m continually impressed with the vision and drive of our staff.

Personnel Changes
In November, after a competitive search, we interviewed and hired a new Head of Circulation and InterLibrary Loan, Lori Sollenberger. Lori brings her many years of experience at the Ela Library and her work as the Assistant Department Head of Circulation to the position. A sound manager who offers a compassionate and dedicated leadership style, Lori moved into her new role in mid-December with the retirement of Patti Paige.

In October, we interviewed and hired a new Security Monitor, Erik Swanson. Erik quickly acclimated to Ela and to his role of helping to make the Library a welcoming place for all.

Provide World Class Virtual Services

Digital Magazines
The Library has been offering two digital magazine reading experiences: RBDigital and Flipster. After careful consideration, we decided to consolidate our digital magazine holdings onto one platform. We evaluated user and circulation statistics, user experience, title availability, and cost. On October 1st, Flipster became our sole digital magazine platform. Flipster provides a more user-friendly experience, a wider range of titles, unique content, and savings on subscriptions and fees.

Work Together As A Team

Goal: Foster Staff Development Opportunities – 2,900 + hours
Opportunities included new staff training, technology refreshers and learning new applications such as Communico and Simply Reports. The Staff Development Team also worked to engage staff in an on-going discussion of our new Standards of Service.

- Staff Development Committee
  - Staff Discovery Day: Dinosaurs! Staff visited a premier paleontology research museum, the Burpee Natural History Museum in Rockford, IL.
  - Staff Discovery Day: Standards of Service. Launched an interactive 6 week review of our new Standards of Service.
  - Fall, Winter, & Spring Staff Meetings focused on staff mental health, readers’ advisory skills, and personal development.
  - Mission Possible: Team Ela Challenge: In the spring, staff participated in a collaborative game, Mission Possible, which consisted of tasks, some easy, some hard but all fun, and aimed at exploring services and materials in each Library Department.
With so many new staff members added in the last year, Mission Possible has been an excellent way to help new staff learn more about the Library.

- **Safety Team/Person In Charge**
  The annual schedule of training was followed and completed. In February, Sgt. Pavlock from the LZPD presented a special “Staying Safe” presentation which focused on active shooter response. Sgt. Pavlock also toured the building and met with various Departments to discuss active shooter related concerns and procedures. Extra sessions of the Safety Review training were offered in the summer. Special training for the year: First Aid, Intro to Self-Defense.

- **Management Training**
  - Ela Managers Book Discussion – Fall, Winter
  - Steps to Delivering Difficult Performance Feedback – Webinar
  - Making the Transition from Staff to Supervisor

- **EDI – Equity, Diversity, Inclusion**
  The cross-departmental EDI team supports the work of provide a welcoming and inclusive environment. The EDI team’s efforts for the year focused on the Mental Health Initiative. The team also worked to support the development of staff Spanish language skills and the launch of the Accessibility Hour event.
    - Unconscious Bias (Webinar - RAILS/Management Association)
    - FUNctional Spanish: Weekly Meet-ups & Dias de las Muertos program
    - Promoting Fairness & Belonging: Insights from Implicit Bias, Racial Anxiety, and Stereotype Threats (Webinar)
    - Supporting Individuals w/Autism Spectrum Disorder in a Library Setting

**Goal: Staff Training Series - Working with Patrons with Mental Illness**
The EDI team worked to present a year-long Ela Mental Health Initiative for staff. In addition to the video series, we also focused on our own mental health developing a library of materials for staff and offering educational sessions on topics such as mediation. The video series included a staff led-discussion session after viewing the video.

  - Session 1: Establishing a Positive Staff Culture Around Mental Health  
    4 sessions total/47 staff
  - Session 2: The Do’s & Don’ts of Interacting with Patrons Affected by Mental Illness  
    4 sessions/38 staff
  - Session 3: How to Establish Positive Relationships with Disruptive Patrons  
    4 sessions total/36 staff
  - Session 4: Compassion Fatigue  
    4 sessions/27 staff
  - Session 5: Successfully Addressing Customer Complaints About Patrons Affected by Mental Illness.  
    4 sessions/29 staff
Adult Reference Services  
Anne Belden

Reference Desk

34,689 questions were answered in-person, by phone, email, and instant messaging at the Reference Desk this year, an increase of 9% over last year’s total. We have continued our Roaming Reference service. We answered 250 questions via roaming this year, and we had many additional patrons who didn’t need help thank us for stopping by to offer assistance. We performed 3,426 notary services this year, remaining steady versus last year’s total.

Goal: Work Together as a Team

Personnel and Training
The Adult Reference department had a stable year and experienced only one personnel change: we added an additional part-time Reference Librarian, Carrie Pollock, in October 2018. Carrie has been a huge help in offering much-needed evening and weekend desk coverage.

The Reference Department spent a total of 373 hours on continuing education this year. We continued to spend time refining our skills with our new Polaris ILS. Anne and Dave taught a Polaris Leap searching class at our winter Staff Discovery Day.

Members of the department also participated in the library’s Mental Health Initiative training, First Aid and CPR training, Spanish learning group, and the Managers’ Book Discussion and Genre Study groups. Scott attended the Illinois Library Association Conference in October 2018.

Goal: Deliver Enriching In-library Experiences

2nd Floor Improvements
This year, we made improvements to the 2nd Floor to maintain a comfortable atmosphere for our patrons. We added additional lighting to the Quiet Reading Room in August and replaced some of our oldest seating in May. In February, we responded to a patron request and added a stand-alone computer monitor to the Quiet Reading Room, allowing patrons to plug their own laptop into the monitor while working in the room.

Study Rooms and Media Labs
The Adult Study Rooms remain a popular service; they were used 9,784 times this year. Staff answered more than 16,000 questions about the rooms! The Digital Media Labs were used 682 times this year. The Digital Media Labs have been open to non-Ela cardholders for over a year now, and it has been a smooth transition, with issues or no loss of access for Ela residents.
Materials and Collections
Our Wi-Fi Hotspots and GoPro Cameras remain popular, especially for vacations. We created a handout to assist patrons in placing and suspending holds in order to get these high-demand items at the right time for their trips.

In the spring, Anne began helping to create a web page for all of our experiential materials. We also ordered a number of new items that will be added to the Reference Desk’s collection soon, including Oculus Go Virtual Reality Headsets, a Flip-Pal handheld photo scanner, and a Wolverine Movie Maker Pro 8mm film to digital converter.

Anne received a grant to attend the Guadalajara International Book Fair at very little cost to the library in November 2018. While she was there, she selected many new books in Spanish for adults and for children and learned a great deal about the Latin American publishing industry.

Programming
Many department members were involved with programming this year. Each month, Carol facilitated the Genealogy Interest Group and Renée facilitated the Great Decisions Group.

Melissa facilitated a variety of business and finance programming. Some of the most popular included Bitcoin & Cryptocurrency, Home Inventory, and Time Matters: A Woman's Retirement Outlook. Her Money Smart week programming, from March 30 to April 6, was popular, especially a visit from a representative of the Illinois State Treasurer’s Office, who helped patrons find out if they have missing money owed to them through the I-Cash program.

Renée facilitated several college- and career-oriented programs; her ACT and SAT practice exams were in high demand and filled up every time they were available. Other well-received topics included Don’t Pay the College Sticker Price and Virtual Reality College Visits.

We used our Virtual Reality equipment for a number of programs this year, including Virtual Reality College Visits in July and a VR drop-in program for children in August. We brought the equipment to an Outreach program at Azpira place in October and to our annual LZHS Bare Voices holiday concert in December.

Reference staff members worked with other departments on some wonderful programs this year, including the Harry Potter Escape Room in July, the adult Book Buzz in January, the children’s Book Buzz in June, and the Great Read Out program in June. It was rewarding for us to be involved in these library-wide initiatives and to see them succeed.

Computer Classes and One-One-One Assistance
Dave, Scott, and our outside computer instructors presented 88 computer classes that were attended by 934 patrons, an increase in attendance of just over 11%.

We continued to offer our senior basics classes and Microsoft Office classes. They remain popular, especially our classes on Microsoft Excel. We also added new classes on several topics, including: Create Your Own Photobook Online, Coding with PHP, and Going Paperless.

We gave a total of 58 One-on-One Technology help appointments this year. The most popular topics were in the Digital Media Labs, where VHS to DVD and editing video with iMovie were
in high demand. Other often-requested topics include the Microsoft Office suite, e-mail, and help with Apple devices.

Scott had an especially rewarding One-on-One Technology Appointment in May. This spring, he taught a “Web Design with Wix” class, and a patron asked for an appointment to learn more. Based solely on Scott’s class, the patron had created a brand new website for her business, and Scott helped her with some refinements. The patron was so grateful for the Library’s support in helping to achieve her goals.

**Goal: Provide World Class Virtual Services**

Our new Communico events and room reservation software went live to the public in November. Anne helped to configure the software for use and created training materials, and all of the Reference department learned to use the software. The public rollout was smooth for our desk.

In March, Anne took over as the interim coordinator of electronic resources. She managed the e-resource budget, coming in slightly under budget for the fiscal year. She also made sure that our existing databases and other e-resources were working properly for our patrons, collected statistics, and evaluated resources. She set up some new e-resources for our patrons, including CreativeBug, a resource with video classes for crafting and creativity, and TeenBook Cloud, a resource that increased our e-book offerings for teens and tweens.

Dave continued to serve as the library’s front-end webmaster, posting information to the website as needed.

**Goal: Engage our Community**

Melissa continued to represent the library on the local Women In Networking group, attending meetings regularly and talking about library services whenever possible.

Members of the Adult Reference department represented the library at the Foglia YMCA Corporate & Community Challenge in September. We participated in the Trivia event and came in first place!

Gus, Anne, and Scott continued to serve on the Social Media committee. In November, Anne and Gus launched a new Virtual Listeners/Viewers/Gamers Advisory initiative. They created webpages about movies, music, and video games. Each page includes a link to new materials, useful websites, and recommendation lists. They also are creating three short videos every month: a “Movie of the Month,” an “Album of the Month,” and a “Video Game of the Month.” Each video is available on our website and Social Media.

**Interesting Reference Question of the Year**

I’m working on my Master’s Degree and I need to research the history of the Frisbee.

This patron was doing a graduate school project that required him to choose a modern cultural item and trace its history. He chose the Frisbee, and he needed several books and articles. We
were able to request books for him via interlibrary loan, and used our databases to find journal and magazine articles.

We found that while disc-throwing sports have existed for hundreds of years, the modern Frisbee was first mass-produced in 1957. The creators of the Frisbee took inspiration from the Frisbie Pie Company in Connecticut. Students from universities near the company would throw empty pie tins to each other while yelling "Frisbie!"
Children’s Services

Natalie Ziarnik

Action Plan Goals:

Deliver Enriching In-Library Experiences

The Children’s Department has developed and presented a wide variety of new programs in the past year. Project Peep (perhaps the most popular event) brought the community much joy and the opportunity to learn about chick development. In addition, the Department offered over forty other STEAM programs, ranging from a celebration of the Northern Lights to the creation of shadow sculptures to a preschool program on wind and air. It has been amazing to be in the midst of so much innovation and experimentation.

We have also dedicated a large portion of our time preparing for the Dinosaur Discoveries exhibit. An interdepartmental committee has been active in providing ideas and knowledge so that we can take full advantage of this special opportunity for the community. The practical aspects—such as finding installers, creating a floorplan, and learning about equipment, tools, and the ways trucks are unloaded and loaded with crates—has brought new challenges, but we are making our way and looking forward to the fall.

Engage Our Community

We offered three intergenerational activities this year—a grandparent/child elephant art project, Music Around the Mediterranean concert, and Cards for Lexington. We also worked with three new community partners: the AEAR Animal Shelter, Lake County Early Intervention, and Officer Wonders (storytime) from the Lake Zurich Police Department.

Work Together as a Team

It has been a year of collaboration on a number of projects. For staff development, the EDI committee organized a helpful and compassionate series of videos and discussions about working with patrons who have mental illnesses at the library. Children’s Department members came back with tips to use in daily life and enjoyed these short gatherings with members of other departments. We also worked with other departments during the adult and children’s Book Buzzes, for the Harry Potter escape room, and for the preparation and planning for Dinosaur Discoveries. With so many new staff members, it has been wonderful to have the opportunity to get to know everyone through these activities.

Staff Changes

In October 2018, Anna Yacullo joined our department as a Children’s Librarian. Her energy, sparkling cheer, and love of working with children and their families comes through in her creative storytimes, art programs, and interactions with the public. We waited several months for just the right person and are so glad we did.
Statistical Summary 2018-2019

School Programs:
- Elementary School Visits: 64
  Attendance: 2628
- Kindergarten Visit Theme: Pizza Parlor
- Preschool Visits: 32
  Attendance: 457

- School Materials Requests: 283
- Items Sent to Schools: 4318

Reading Clubs:
- Summer (*Books, Beach, Best Summer Ever.*) 2018 (July): 2940
- Winter (*Snuggle Up and Read*) 2018-2019: 216 (families rather than individuals)
- Summer (*Backyard Adventures*) 2019 (June): 1309
- 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten: 77 new members; 7 finishers

STEAM Classes:
- Meetings: 43
  Attendance: 1510

Activity Table:
- Projects: 48
  Estimated Use: 14,411

Other Programs:
- Meetings: 379
  Attendance: 15,034

Total Programs: 569
Total Attendance: 38,373

General Reference Questions: 1691
Readers’ Advisory: 7058
Technology Assistance: 1666
Other: 4410
Total Questions: 14,825
Study Room Use: 290
Circulation
*Lori Sollenberger*

**Personnel**

Circulation has had many staff changes this past year. We had two staff members retire. Patti Paige our former Manager of Circulation retired in December after 28 years of service and Anne Marie retired in January after 27 years of service.

With these two retirement losses came opportunities for circulation staff. Lori Sollenberger was promoted from ILL Coordinator to Manager of Circulation. Laurie White was promoted from Circulation Supervisor to ILL Coordinator and Karen Brown was promoted to Circulation Supervisor.

We also hired 8 new staff members throughout the year.

**Provide world class virtual services**

Connection problems with OCLC and Polaris were resolved. ILL Staff trained on how to use Polaris for ILL requests efficiently. Unique and Polaris connections were also resolved and Unique collections began again in December.

**Deliver enriching In-library experiences**

Elvia Venegas was hired in May as a Circulation Assistant. Elvia speaks Spanish fluently and is a great addition to our team.

**Statistical Summary**

Interlibrary Loans

Total number of items requested by Ela: 44,413
- Out of State: 14
- In State: 44,399

Total number of ILL requests received by Ela: 36,293

Total number of Materials loaned via reciprocal borrowing: 88,707

We had 60,917 interactions with patrons
- 46,002 at the Checkout desk
- 14,915 at the Drive-up
Facilities Department

John Carranza

This year we completed many projects to enhance the public’s experience, the safety and security of the library, and prolong the life of our equipment and the building. Some of the important improvements included the installation of the ADA automatic entrance by the staff entrance and the replacement of the domestic water booster pump. The ADA entrance was a feature that we had needed to install for a long time. The water pump replacement made a noticeable improvement right away. The pressure in the water lines improved and plumbing problems decreased about 90%.

Among the routine HVAC maintenance issues included replacing a leaking oil pump in the chiller and two compressor filters. We also repaired a valve in the stand-alone air conditioner unit in the server room, repaired two our humidifiers and cleaned the insides of both of our main boilers. Maintaining these major systems will keep them running longer before we need to replace them.

We had some minor repairs for our John Deere tractor, which is a very important piece of equipment. We also had to do some work on our fire protection systems this year after our annual fire pump inspection.

We also completed some repairs and preventive maintenance in the meeting room’s dividing walls, and inspected the firewalls on the first and second floors.

We signed a maintenance agreement with a new roofing company (E. Ariel Roofing) that gave us a lower price and great service. They helped us fix some leaks above the boiler room and in the Children’s department.

We also signed a new contract with American Landscaping Inc. for routine landscaping and related services like tree and shrub trimming, spring and fall cleanup, and fertilization and weed control.

We had additional work to remove old tree stumps and a big pine tree that fell during a storm.

We have had some staff changes in our department this year. Maria Parra is now our full time Maintenance Technician. She had been working on Sundays for the past 17 years, so she was a terrific candidate for the full-time role when there was an opening. We also signed a new contract with Stratus Building Solutions to provide a porter for about 15 hours per week. They help bolster our day-to-day needs for routine cleaning tasks, meeting room setups, and other projects. This was the most cost-effective way to add additional capacity for cleaning and maintenance services.

I also want to mention the impact this past winter’s weather; it was one for the record books. We had to plow the sidewalks, emergency exits, and smaller snowfalls very frequently. We closed the building more this winter than we have ever done before because the snows were at times so heavy and the weather so cold. We even plowed the entire parking lot with our little John Deere
tractor when a late snowfall caught our snow removal company off guard. They had already decommissioned their equipment for the year when a major snowstorm hit on a Sunday in April. Having to handle winter weather is costly and increases wear and tear on the facility. If we have more winters like this one, we’ll need to adjust some of our long-term planning.

Finally, there have been a lot of library wide projects that we help to coordinate, like the parking lot repair project, the upcoming dinosaur exhibit, and the staff space renovation planning. It’s important that Facilities is part of the planning for these big projects, and we’re happy to do whatever we can to make them successful. We’re looking forward to next year’s projects and doing our part to make the library a great place to visit and to work.
IT Systems Department

Chris Pedersen

It has been a fun year. We have gone through many changes and accomplished a lot. We have completed countless helpdesk tickets, installed new Multi-Function Printers, and many smaller projects.

During the year, the IT department became a separate group from Technical Services after a reorganization. Chris Pedersen became the Head of the IT department, and Nick Chiapetta was hired to fill the IT Operations position. Nick has done a great job adjusting to his new role. Kyle has starting taking on some smaller projects. Most importantly we continue the great tradition of Pizza Wednesday.

Deliver Enriching In-library Experiences

The IT department finished replacing the smartboards. The smartboards did not age well, and were difficult to use. Most of the advanced features (the whole point of a smartboard) were not being used, except for the mobile smartboard for the ESL class.

- 2nd Floor computer lab – Replaced smartboard with 4k display. Utilized the existing AV equipment that was installed with the smartboard. Added support for wireless connections with Barco and Apple TV.
- 2nd Floor conference room – Replaced smartboard with 4k display. There was not existing AV equipment for this room. A sound bar was installed for audio. The same wireless setup from the computer lab was installed.
- Mobile smartboard – This one was tricky. The ESL class used the smartboard to its full potential. Unfortunately, the mobile smartboard started breaking constantly. IT would patch it up and get it working for a short while, but it had seen better days. We wanted to find a solution that would meet everyone’s needs. The Surface Studio was a huge upgrade over the old smartboard and provided more feature.

Provide World Class Virtual Services

Communico

- Communico is an integrated suite of cloud based applications built specifically for libraries.
- We use it to reserve rooms and handle program signups for patrons. This includes the program schedule on our website.
- Warren worked his tail off from start to finish on this project. He had to coordinate with many people and groups to implement Communico. CCS had to permit SIP authentication so that Communico would work with patron library cards. DrupalGeeks had to communicate with the Communico API to create a working calendar widget for our website. In summary, it was a lot of meetings, and a lot of changes.
LastPass

LastPass is a password management system. The IT department had previously been using a software call KeePass for managing the department’s passwords. We originally investigated many different password management solutions last year. We started rolling out LastPass around September.
Outreach Services
Christy Wagner


Deliver Enriching In-Library Experiences:

A personal career stand-out event was Holocaust survivor Estelle Glaser Laughlin’s appearance at our Library in March. To a silent and rapt audience this gracious 89 year-old shared her story of survival and of persistence as she and her family were marched from the Warsaw ghetto to box cars taking them to labor camps. Her message was one of forgiveness and tolerance—a timely reminder that we need to hear and heed this lesson.

Engage Our Community:

Our department launched a major new partnership with the Barrington Area Council on Aging (BACOA) in an effort to develop and launch a new monthly initiative, a Memory Café for those persons who are dealing with a diagnosis of early dementia or cognitive impairment and for their care partners. Following extensive training, preparation, marketing and planning, our department and the Memory Programs Director at BACOA opened the doors to our first in-house Memory Café in May. The overwhelming response by the community has confirmed our belief that this type of programming is a welcome offering to an urgent need for those dealing with Alzheimer’s disease and other forms of dementia. This new partnership has also led to an alliance that is bringing other types of special programming to our community and has proved a successful cooperative venture. We look forward to continued work with BACOA staff.

Provide World Class Virtual Services:

Outreach Services engaged three separate audiences with our virtual reality goggles during the last year. Our senior book discussion group enjoyed “touring” the International Space Station after reading astronaut Scott Kelly’s book; a group of residents at Azpira Place had an opportunity to view South Africa’s national parks and wildlife after studying that country for their monthly cultural theme. Finally, as audience members came in to the meeting rooms to hear the Lake Zurich High School BARE Voices for their holiday concert, we had the VR goggles set with Christmas lights and decorations in London for them to enjoy.

Working Together as a Team:

This year was one of transition for Outreach Services in terms of staffing as one of our team members passed away. This difficult time required focus and dedication and I was impressed with how my staff handled themselves. We are now in the process of evaluating job descriptions and duties in order to align the department for solid coverage and in light of new added responsibilities (i.e. Memory Café).
Scenes from our inaugural Memory Café, May 21, 2019
Popular Materials

Christen Wiser

Information Desk + Readers’ Services + Teen Services + Forge

Passport Services

This fiscal year, the Information Desk processed 3,719 passports, which is a 14% decrease from 20017-2018. This is a good trend! The graph shows the difference between FY 2015-2016 to 2018-2019 to demonstrate the progress that has been made toward reducing the amount of applications we process. The goal of being a processing facility is to provide an important citizen service to our community. This service helps us welcome new citizens to our library. It encourages library card sign-ups, as well as introduces parents and children to our wonderful Youth Services department, our Makerspace, and many other valuable, “traditional” offerings. Board members who have been with us for some time will recall that we that 2015 and 2016 were record breaking years. We processed a whopping 7,493 passport applications, with January numbers alone breaking over 1,000. It was too much for our department to handle, had a negative impact on job satisfaction among our staff, and made it difficult for us to provide other services, such as Readers Advisory. It literally barred patrons from entering our library because the line would flow out the door. So, all this to say, that seeing numbers fall is a good trend. We are still processing an average of 309 passport applications a month and will continue to provide this excellent resource to our community -- along with many other services.

Personnel

It was a busy year for personnel. Lisa Edwards, Janet Neradt, and Martha Paparella retired after over 20 years of service to the library! Kay O’Grady, Julie De Reu, Kelly Ferrera, and Heather Johnson left their positions for other ventures. We wish them all the best. We brought on board Mary Madsen, Monica Perez, Margarita Olmos, Debbie McGuire, Lorraine Cook, and Jen Eberle. A good portion of this year
was spent interviewing and onboarding new staff members and helping them acclimate to our department. We white-knuckled our way through the busiest passport season with brand new passport agents, but I’m pleased to say that our team did an amazing job and have kept their spirits high.

**Action Plan Items**

8. **Hire Spanish speaking staff for public service desks.**
   Complete! Popular Materials hired Margarita Olmos and Monica Perez in the fall of 2018. They have made a wonderful addition to the desk. They help promote the library and make it a more welcoming place. They each work one evening a week and rotate covering every Saturday.

9. **New STEAM programs for kids/teens.**
   - Along with two teen volunteers, Becca and Bri have launched a Girls Who Code club chapter at Ela for teens in 6-12 grade.
   - Makerspace Assistant Bri has created:
     - A “Teens Sew” program and breaks into two groups - upper elementary/middle school and middle school/high school. In this program, teens use the fundamentals of using a sewing machine and design their own project.
     - A floral hairpiece/boutonniere program for people age 12 and up for dances, Cosplay, or everyday wear
   - Makerspace Assistant Chris created:
     - A Cosplay program where patrons can use the tools found in the Forge to design and create costume pieces to use in Cosplay.
     - “Meet the Forge” day for all ages where patrons can come in and see the best of what the Forge has to offer and participate in crafts and activities.
   - Becca did a number of craft programs including:
     - creating an “enamel” pin with a 3D printed base along with colored epoxy
     - Creating a Harry Potter “wand” with chopsticks, hot glue, and layered paint
     - “Puffy” origami stars
   - Makerspace Assistant TJ created:
     - a “Make Your Own Vinyl Logo” program where he led patrons through creating a logo or design for a company that teens created that was then translated into the Silhouette software to make a vinyl sticker to take home - this program will likely evolve into a more general “design your own vinyl sticker” program in the future.
     - A Pokemon Community Day drop-in program for people of all ages. It is Pokemon specific crafts and activities that coincide with Pokemon Community Days (Ela is a “gym” for the Pokemon Go game and they have monthly events that players participate in).

Complete! In December of 2018, the Popular Materials department received excellent readers’ advisory training from Becky Spratford in preparation for our focus on providing book recommendations to our patrons. This year Readers’ Services was able to add several successful programs and increased our advisory service. In January 2019 we launched the first ever Ela Book Buzz program for adults and teens. Every library department contributed to the success of the program in some capacity. It was a real team effort and our patrons loved it. We also extended our Teen Book Match to include adults. Forms are available online and in paper throughout the Fiction collection. This allows patrons to ask for recommendations without spending 30 minutes at the desk. In June 2019, we launched our first ever Reader Recommendation Tea which allowed our staff to spend quality time with our readers off the desk. We served treats and asked detailed questions about their reading preferences. We also hosted a family programmed called The Great Read Out complete with blankets, camp chairs, and tasty shaved ice. It was so much fun to read out on the Library lawn and watch parents read to their kids. Amanda and Gully continued our ever popular Books and Brews discussion group, despite another round of location changes. We now host the discussion at Zin Gastropub. Becca also began the new YA for Adults book discussion group in the summer of 2018 and carried it throughout the year. Christen and Becca entered their second year of Three Books Podcast! Becca even ran into a patron who said, “Are you Becca from the podcast?” at our Reader Recommendation Tea! Woot! For our efforts and training, we have received the 2019 Adult Reading Round Table award for Readers Advisory. We are very excited!

14. Develop Middle School collection.

- Becca and Pam Allen (Children’s) have worked to develop a list to launch the Middle School Collection and found a solution for where it will be located. They worked with Rachel Davis to create spine labels that are ready to go. They will launch this collection in the Fall 2019/Winter 2020 (dependent on the demands of the Dinosaur exhibition).

28. In school programs for teens.

- We expanded our Lunch Book Club to include Middle School North and LZHS this year and continued to improve the club at Middle School South.
- Becca worked with Middle School South to be part of their One Book, One School program. They chose the book *I Will Always Write Back* and hosted one of the authors, Caitlin Alifirenka, at the school. All of the students in the school worked together to create a felted wool mural representing themes from the book that will hang in the MSS Library.
- Becca worked with both middle schools to welcome author Gordon Korman for their writer in residence program. Becca attended the assemblies at both schools and moderated the lunch discussions between students and Korman.
29. **Recruit partners for 2 new experiences in Forge or library programs.**

- We worked with Paper Source in Deer Park to bring in a certified instructor for a Hand Lettering Program. Participants learned lettering basics, proportions, three different fonts, how to mix styles and ways to add embellishments. They worked both in a personal notebook and on a greeting card. Both of which they took home with them.

- Día de Muertos as educator, storyteller and author Rita Arias Jirasek presented hands-on cultural workshop exploring the history, significance and traditions of creating ofrendas. She presented the workshop to both staff and patrons in both English and Spanish.
Public Information
Valerie Stern

Public Information Staff

Valerie Stern, coordinator;
Elizabeth Frozena, public information graphics assistant;
Kourtney Collette, public information assistant;
Jennifer Nickels and Dianne Rose, graphic artists.

2018-19 Highlights

New Staff
New hire Kourtney Collette joined our team as a Public Information Assistant in early 2019. She’s been a welcome addition to the department. She assists with publicity, programming, volunteers and displays.

Displays
This past year we worked closely with the Ela Historical Society to feature historical items in our cases throughout the library. Many displays were seasonal and highlighted some interesting facts about Ela Township. ALL of them looked fantastic.

Graphics Award
Our library graphics were among the 29 winners selected for the 2019 PR Xchange Competition. Congratulations to Jennifer and Dianne! The winning graphic was our Ela Summer Bingo design from 2018.

Illinois Bicentennial Celebration
Last fall we celebrated the Bicentennial with numerous programs in September, October and November. From current Chicago happenings to local history, the programs

Library Card Sign Up Month
My Flavor It Place helped us celebrate this annual event. The food truck was parked in front of the Library from 3-5:30pm on one of the last Fridays of the month. Anyone with a library card received a free shaved ice. If you didn’t have a card, circ staff was on-hand to register new cards.

Green Your Routine (May 2019)
Once again, this community event was a huge success thanks to Opportunity Secure Data Destruction and AVA Recycling. We also offered electronics recycling and the response was terrific. All food donations received were donated to our local food pantry.
Special Event – Holocaust Survivor Estelle Glaser Laughlin
The community response to Estelle’s lecture was a highlight of this past year. The standing-room crowd was amazed by her personal experiences and powerful message.

Outreach and Community Partnerships
While we continue to serve in traditional ways, we continued to strengthen our emphasis on collaboration with businesses, local villages, agencies, community organizations and even other libraries.

**Lake Zurich Area Chamber of Commerce**
We continued to support our Library district by participating in community events throughout the year, including the Chamber’s Business to Business Expo at Lake Zurich High School.

I continue to serve as a director at large for the Lake Zurich Area Chamber of Commerce Board (meetings held monthly). Melissa Keegan also represents the Library at W.I.N. (Women in Networking) meetings.

Once again we had some nice giveaways at our Expo booth. We distributed Culver’s sundaes to anyone who “liked” the Library on Facebook or “followed us” on Twitter. We gave away 300 cups of Culver’s custard throughout the day and gained over 100 new “likes and followers” on our social media sites. Stylus pens were also distributed as a freebie to new followers.

We continue to include Library news in the Chamber’s weekly enews blasts, as needed. The Chamber offers this service to us free, and it’s a great way to reach business owners in our community.

The Chamber has also utilized our meeting room space for frequent educational lunch seminars.

Community Partnerships
Community partnerships with local businesses such as Starbucks, Culver’s of Lake Zurich, District 95 and Learning Express have enabled us to promote and give incentives to our patrons during special events held throughout the year.

**Farmers Market**
Once again, we were excited to add this to our promotional outreach duties this summer. We attended monthly June through September and tried to promote two or three different resources/services during each visit. The booth was interactive with games, prizes and raffles for younger folks and we included more information about resources for older users. Overall, it was great exposure for the Library. A nice venue to talk to our patrons, answer questions and showcase new and popular services.
Lake County Fair
Ela was one of six libraries we partnered with for this annual event in July. Always a fun time, the Fair was a nice spot to showcase the value of public libraries. We hosted the booth during the week (Thursday morning) and greeted many families. We saw lots of Ela patrons this year – which is always nice!

Author Events/Writing Series
Every year we support local and national authors by hosting various book talks, book discussions and author meet and greets. We continue to support the author and writing series Inside Writing and Publishing held every spring in partnership with several north suburban libraries. Workshops included *Types of Editing and When you Need Them and Why These Words Now? An Actor Looks at Dialogue*.

SWALCO
In April, we held our annual Reuse a Shoe program. Our Library collected approximately 250 pairs of athletic shoes for recycling during the month. The shoes were delivered to SWALCO in May.

Food for NO Fines/Mitten and Hat Tree
Both events are held in December and generate many donations. The Library’s Warm Up Lake Zurich group also knits many items for the tree. Food collected is distributed at our local food pantry and the mitten and hat collection is distributed to local agencies in the area.

Back to School Supplies Collection – Joanie’s Closet
We partnered with District 95 and Joanie’s Closet for this back to school supplies drive. The Library was one of three collection spots in the community.

Little Free Library (Foglia YMCA)
For several years we’ve partnered with Rotary Club of Long Grove, Kildeer and Hawthorn Woods to help stock the LFL at the Foglia YMCA.

Community Events
Throughout the year, we participate in community events sponsored by the Village of Hawthorn Woods and Ela Township. From providing a craft to hosting a storytime, we assist at many of their events.

Astronomy Day
For the last two years, we have had the opportunity to sponsor this county-wide event at the Library in May. The Lake County Astronomical Society presented the event with comet-making, solar observing, crafts, lectures and displays.

Ancient Oaks Foundation
Our community partnership with AOF continued to grow this year. They have presented several programs at the library for audiences of all ages. From watershed education to birds, each program has been professionally presented and very informative.
Media Relations/Graphics/Publicity Highlights

- Brochures and website and for Creativebug; updated publicity for Hoopla and Flipster
- Posters/brochures for Standards of Service
- Money Smart Week, Three Books Podcast, Book Buzz, Debt-free Library Celebration
- Inside Writing and Publishing Brochure & Publicity
- Library Card Sign Up Month, Teen Book Boxes, Adult Book Match
- Business cards for various databases/online resources
- Updates to Popular Materials Book Displays, Librarian Favorites, Shelf Talkers and Staff Picks signs
- Library news in their monthly PTO newsletters.
- Continue to work with local newspapers, LZHS Bear Facts newsletter, the Chamber of Commerce and surrounding Villages for press coverage.

Social Media
We continue to increase our usage of social media. Current platforms include Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube and Pinterest. Our social media committee meets frequently to monitor activity, schedule posts and review statistics. We are continually exploring new ways to use these platforms to gain followers and interact with our users.

Volunteers
Our annual volunteer meeting was held Thursday, November 9. Over 25 volunteers and staff attended the lunch and meeting. Our agenda for the lunch included presentations by Matt Womack, Anne B., Becca, Debbie, Natalie and Christy Wagner. Those volunteers recognized with service awards were: Emma Gerosa and Tim Jackson for 20+ years of service; Marcia Hammond, and Bobbie Weber 15 years; 10 years+ Sue Moenning, Penny Gannon, Pat Deemer, Suzanne Sokolowski, Bob Skillings; and 5 years+ Diane Nicoletti, Susan Kirshner, Judi Marino, Susan Modig, Mary Beth Santi, Mike & Emily Skarzynskiand. Barbara Sugden and Ron Vargason presented a travel talk on Southern India.

Displays
Our lobby display cases continue to get use from local organizations. Under new leadership, the Ela Historical Society has used several of our cases to highlight local history. These displays are a welcome addition! They now have a permanent display on the 2nd floor.
We continue to use the cases to promote special programming and/or events such as Warm Up Lake Zurich, Mitten Tree, and the Garden Club plant sales. Local cub scout packs also use the case annually for a Pinewood Derby showcase.

Our outdoor digital sign continues to be an asset. It has been a useful, publicity tool for promoting not only events but services too.

Our LCD TV and screensavers on all PCs continue to be excellent tools for promoting programs and new services. Screens are updated weekly.

**Book-a-Brick**
We continue to install bricks once a year in the fall. Our traditional summer push for selling more Book-a-Bricks was a little slower this year. Eight bricks were purchased and installed last year.
Technical Services
Michelle Walters

**Deliver enriching In-library experiences**

Collections:

The past year in collection development has provided many fun and creative ways for the Technical Services staff to flex their muscles when it came to acquiring, cataloging, and processing new items for patrons. Whether it was finding ways to update or adjust records for the latest versions of items we already have or finding ways to purchase completely new items, we did it all this year.

Our Wi-Fi Hotspots are so popular that it was time to upgrade and replace them with 10 newer versions earlier this year. We were also able to purchase 6 new Rokus to replace the 6 that we currently circulate. The new Rokus are HD, and we added a fourth streaming service to them. Britbox will provide patrons access to a large streaming collection of British TV and movies, which have proved to be a niche interest in our community.

We helped the Children’s department add new video game formats to their collection this year. Xbox One and Nintendo Switch games now have large collections in the Children’s AV area.

Another fun project that we assisted the Children’s department with was the new Curiosity Kits to Go. These kits are all centered on a theme, such as magnets, and contain a variety of items that fit that theme. These books, AV materials, tactile educational toys, etc. are all presented in attractive clear backpacks. We are very excited to create dinosaur themed Curiosity Kits to Go kits this year!

By far, the most interesting items for our department to work on this past year were all of the new experiential materials! Starting in the fall, we learned the best vendors to purchase board games from, how to catalog them (think lots of counting of small pieces so that it could be listed in the record), and how to package them so that they were easy-to-use for patrons. Then in spring, we purchased metal detectors, portable CD players, retro gaming consoles, and more board games. Three of our staff members are on the Experiential Materials committee, so these fun, odd items are somewhat of a passion for us. It gives us a chance to step outside of the box a little in each of our roles, and we are pleased to see that based on circulation statistics, the patrons seem to enjoy the items as much as we enjoy working on them.

**Engage our community**

Even though we are one of the “behind-the-scenes” departments at the library, we still try to find ways to engage our community. One of the biggest ways that we do this is by allowing volunteers to work in our department. In the spring, we added an additional community member to our weekly volunteer roster, bringing the total up to 6. Then in the summer, we had a record-breaking 5 teens doing volunteer work in Technical Services.
We are also incredibly proud of two of our staff members for their involvement in patron programs this past year. Brenda Gornick presented at both the adult Book Buzz event in winter and the Children’s Book Buzz event in the spring. She is also taking over hosting duties for Warm Up Lake Zurich from Laura Cloud, who retired last August. Debbie Miller also assists with Warm Up Lake Zurich and in addition to that, created a companion program called Quilt Talks for patrons that began in the spring.

**Work together as a team**

Tech Staff Tidbits:

It was a year of changes for the Technical Services department. It began in August, when Laura Cloud retired after 30 years of working at the Ela Area Public Library. Laura was an incredibly skilled cataloger, with a specialty in cataloging foreign languages. With her retirement, our staff members prepared to take on her former duties. Our two remaining catalogers, Brian Christensen and Tanvee Mahadik, had the most to take on, but both showed incredible willingness to learn and adapt to whatever was thrown their way.

After many years of Technical Services and IT being managed as a single team, the Library decided to create two departments with dedicated managers. Michelle Walters was promoted to the Head of Technical Services in the end of January, and Chris Pedersen was promoted to the Head of IT. The two departments still work very closely together, but have been thriving with individual management.

With Michelle moving up, there was a vacant spot in acquisitions to fill. Brenda Gornick, who was working part time in both acquisitions and processing for Technical Services, became our newest full time member in April.

The processing section of Technical Services has also had its ups and downs this year. We hired Sue Modig, who has been volunteering with us years, as a Page in May. We also gained and lost Kavitha Chowdam as a Technical Services Assistant in the span of two months, due to personal issues.

**Interdepartmental Teamwork and Beyond:**

Not only do we work incredibly closely with each other, but we also work closely with other departments and libraries. Each of our staff members is on at least one of the library’s committees, which include the Experiential Materials committee, Makerspace committee, Staff Development committee, Cyber Squad, and Safety Team, to name a few. A couple of our staff members have also participated in additional groups, such as Genre Study, the Book Buzz planning committees, and the Dinosaur Exhibit planning committee in the past year.

Debbie Miller and Brenda Gornick attended this year’s Reaching Forward conference in May.

Tanvee Mahadik and Brian Christensen hosted the CAMM meeting for CCS catalogers in February. This quarterly meeting is essential for all catalogers within our consortium to stay current on cataloging practices and to maintain synergy between all member libraries. We were honored to host.
In April, Michelle Walters and Brenda Gornick coordinated training for the library’s materials selectors with our predominate book vendor, Ingram. Fifteen of the librarians that select which books to purchase for the library were able to attend. The training covered updates and changes to the vendor’s website and additional tools for collection development.

Many examples of Technical Services collaborating with other departments was highlighted above in the Collections portion, but we would like to point out one project in particular. In March, Head of Popular Materials Christen Wiser and Michelle Walters worked together to implement a change to the Most Wanted book policy. Formally only circulating for 7 days, the books in the Most Wanted collection now circulate for 14 days, to better line up with the New Book policy. Though it sounds like a small change, it required a significant amount of work and coordination. In the end, both departments feel that it was a beneficial change for the patron.
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