

Executive Director's Report June 2024

Introducing Autorenewals!

On July 2, we rolled out autorenewals, allowing patrons to have their borrowed materials automatically renewed without needing to manually request it. This patron-friendly service enhances convenience and reduces the likelihood of overdue items. Our Technical Services Director, Wendy Freeman, collaborated with her team and the Circulation department to implement this new feature. They ensured that notification messages are clear and concise, preventing any confusion or unnecessary duplication for our patrons.

Autorenewals are a significant step forward in improving our library services. Many public libraries offer this feature, and we are thrilled to join them in providing this added convenience. Now, if there are no holds on an item, patrons can enjoy their materials for longer periods without any additional effort. This service not only supports our community's needs but also reflects our commitment to making library experiences as user-friendly as possible.

Rolling Out a New Catalog

In the coming weeks, we will be rolling out Vega, an updated catalog system for our patrons.

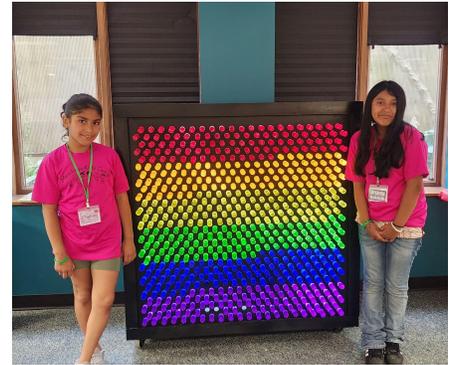
Why Vega?

- **Support and Reliability:** Our current Classic Catalog (Innovative's Webpac) is no longer supported by Innovative, posing risks of unresolved issues and potential outages.
- **Enhanced User Experience:** Vega offers a modern, intuitive interface with superior account features, improving patron ease of use.
- **Seamless Integration:** Vega integrates better with our upcoming new website, providing a cohesive and streamlined experience.
- **Improved Visuals:** The updated visuals of Vega enhance the presentation of collections, especially the Library of Things, making resources more accessible and engaging.
- **Resolved Issues:** Previous concerns, such as the visibility of call numbers, have been addressed in the latest versions of Vega.

To accommodate those who prefer the Classic Catalog, we will maintain a link to it on our website. Our goal is to ensure a smooth transition and we are committed to continuously evaluating and improving Vega based on feedback from staff and patrons.

Highlight: Youth Services Programs

This month, our Youth Services (YS) department has offered over 15 exciting programs for our young patrons. These included STEM programs, Continental Adventures, Duo Language Fiesta, Minecraft Mania, Neon Art Explorations, Paint Our Windows, Shrinky Dinks, and our regular weekly storytimes, scavenger hunts, and crafts. Additionally, we welcomed Park District Campers and Human Services Campers with three visits of 45 kids each. The month concluded with a special celebration: The Eric Carle Party, honoring the beloved author of "The Very Hungry Caterpillar." It has been a vibrant and engaging month for YS!

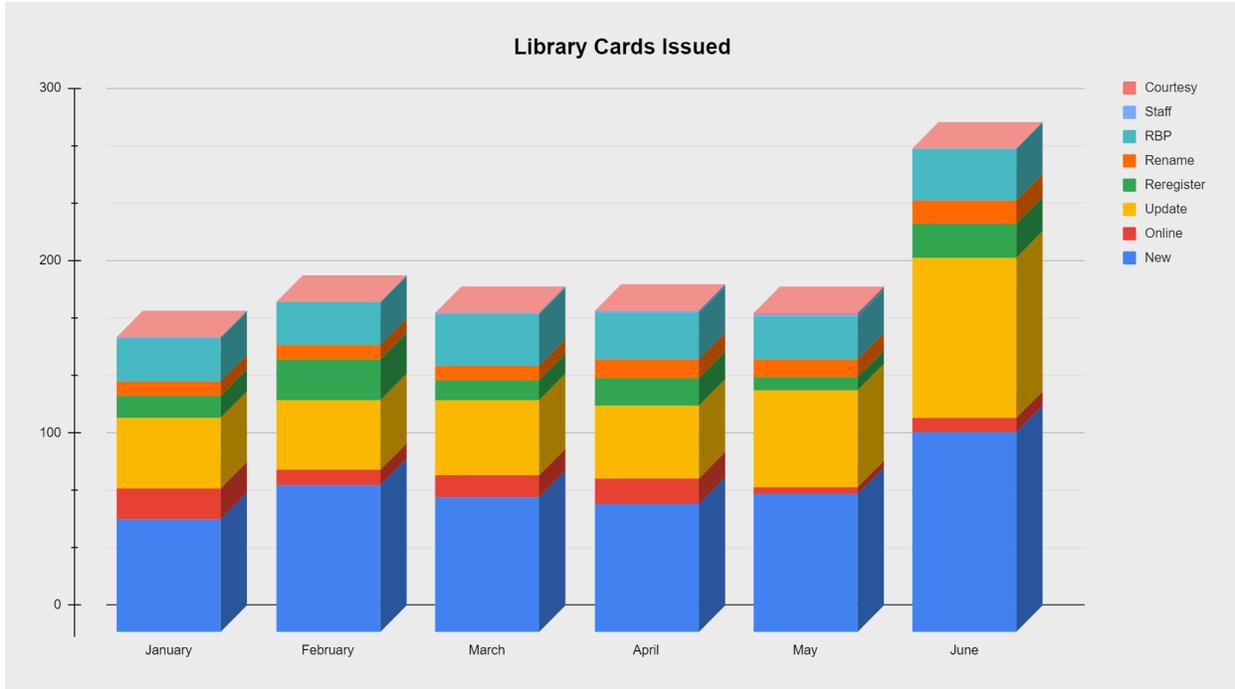


Morningstar Investment Database

We are excited to announce the addition of the Morningstar Investment database to our collection of online resources. This comprehensive financial research tool offers in-depth information and analysis on mutual funds, stocks, ETFs, and more. Patrons can access detailed reports, expert analyst insights, portfolio management tools, extensive research data, and advanced screening tools.

Library Card Activity Surge in June

June saw a significant increase in library card activity. Circulation issued 124 new Rolling Meadows cards, registered 30 reciprocal borrowers, and updated cards for 126 current patrons.



Study Room 4 Opening

In response to the growing demand for study and small meeting room spaces, we have converted an unused admin staff office near the reference area into Small Meeting Room 4. Preparing the room was a collaborative effort between IT, Facilities, and Reference Services. This new space will be available to the public by mid-July, providing patrons with another private area for work and meetings!



New Video Games Collection

The Readers Services department is excited to announce the addition of video games for teens and adults to our collection. Currently, all video games are housed upstairs in the new area, providing a central location for patrons. As the collection grows, we plan to organize the games by age level. Games rated E (Everyone) will move to Youth Services, while games rated T (Teen) and above will stay in Readers Services, similar to how we organize our DVD collections.

This initiative complements the youth video game collection we recently started, ensuring that patrons of all ages have access to engaging and appropriate gaming options. We are dedicated to providing our patrons with a diverse range of materials, aiming to circulate as many different types of items as possible to have something for everyone. We look forward to expanding and refining this exciting new collection.

New Trustee Orientation

On July 3, Board President Jean Threadgill and Director Jack Bower welcomed incoming trustees Melanie Elfers and Liesel Hughes for the 2024-2027 term. During the orientation, important board and library information, including bylaws, policies, organizational structure, and a building tour were covered. This session was designed to prepare them for a productive term as supportive library trustees. We are excited to welcome and work with our new trustees!

Jack's First Staff Meeting Held

On Tuesday, June 18th, we held our first staff meeting in the Community Room, gathering over 30 together before the library opened at 8:00 AM. The session was valuable for sharing updates and addressing questions. We covered a range of topics including board meeting updates, new personnel policies, FOIA guidelines, ongoing projects, and more.

To foster better communication and accommodate different schedules, we plan to hold these meetings regularly, rotating between Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday mornings. We appreciate the strong participation and look forward to continued engagement and input from the staff.

Honoring Milestone Anniversaries

At the staff meeting, we recognized those marking milestone anniversaries. These dedicated individuals were publicly thanked and received a bonus check in recognition of their service. The Staff Appreciation Committee did a fantastic job, celebrating the honorees with a gemstone theme. Congratulations to the staff with milestone anniversaries!



Staff BBQ Dinner

After the library closed on Friday, June 28, the Staff Appreciation Committee organized a fantastic BBQ dinner. Despite the rainy weather forcing us indoors into the Community Room, it was a wonderful experience. The library provided hotdogs and buns, while staff contributed dishes for a potluck-style meal. Yard games from the Library of Things were set up at the landing on the second floor, adding to the fun. Some staff brought their families, making it a great occasion to enjoy good food, socialize, and get to know each other better across different departments!

In the Community

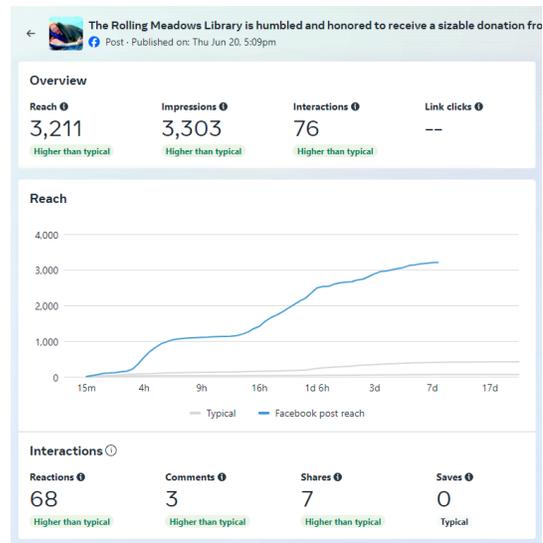
Meeting with Neighboring Library Directors

In June, Jack connected with neighboring library directors to network, share insights, and explore potential future partnerships. He met with Carole Medel, former RML Director and now Gail Borden Director, who offered valuable advice. Additionally, he had a lunch with Mike Driskell, the director of Arlington Heights Memorial Library, where Mr. Driskell shared insights about our neighboring library. Jack also presented about our library at a Palatine Library District Government Efficiency meeting alongside directors from Mount Prospect and Schaumburg. These meetings have strengthened our understanding of neighboring libraries, identifying helpful resources and paving the way for future collaboration.

Acknowledging the Generous Bequest from Joyce A. Mackert

We are pleased to share that our initial press release about the generous bequest from the late Joyce A. Mackert has garnered attention. The release was picked up by the local publication Journal Topics and received positive engagement on our social media platforms, with high impressions indicating strong community interest.

This initial announcement is just the beginning, as we plan to keep our community informed and engaged with further updates on how these funds will be utilized. We are grateful for this substantial contribution and look forward to honoring Joyce A. Mackert's legacy through meaningful projects and enhancements at our library.



Outreach at the Rolling Meadows Block Party

On June 7, the library participated in the Rolling Meadows Block Party, held in front of Rolling Meadows High School. We set up a tent with six library staff members and connected with over 500 residents throughout the evening. We distributed popcorn, suckers, and library flyers containing information about our programs and services. Jack attended, and as the new director, he was thrilled to meet many new residents. This outreach opportunity allowed us to connect with the community and share the library's offerings in a fun and engaging setting.



Department Updates

Youth Services

- The Summer Reading Challenge continues to be a big hit, with rockets streaking across the YS wall to indicate readers' progress. We have over 720 kids participating.
- We bid farewell to two valued YS staff members: Cesar, who is advancing his career in education, and Julie, who retires after an impressive 30-plus-year career in Youth Services, sharing stories and recommending THE best books to families.

Readers Services

- The Readers Services Ready Reference collection has been thoroughly updated. With most information now online, fewer true print resources are created. However, as a public library, maintaining a print reference collection remains valuable. We have updated the collection with more browsable, eye-catching, coffee-table style books to attract patrons to the desk and subtly illustrate the types of questions we can assist them with.
- **High School Summer Reading Promotion:** Rolling Meadows and Fremd High School Summer Reading Books are here! To encourage our high school students to pick up their assigned books, we are running a special summer promotion: "Pop" into the Library. When teens (grades 9-12) check out a title, they will receive a bag of popcorn and a refreshing summertime treat.
- In conjunction with our Summer Reading program, we have set up a "Reading Road Trip Across America" display near the Readers Services Desk. Each book featured in the display is set in a different state, inviting patrons to take a literary road trip across the United States. The display includes book lists and a jigsaw puzzle of the United States, creating a fun and interactive experience for patrons while elevating reading as an adventure.

Reference Services

- **World Map Display:** As part of the Summer Reading program, patrons can place a colored dot on the world map by the Reference Desk to show where their travels or adventures have taken them. Some patrons and staff have traveled quite far from home!
- **Sow, Grow & Learn Kit Program:** Lauren hosted another successful kit pick-up program with 50 kits promoting library materials to help both novice and expert gardeners.
- Nana set up a "Color and Win!" activity by the Reference Desk, tying in with the Summer Reading program. Adults and teens can color on a large poster and receive a raffle ticket each time they color, with a chance to win the finished poster or other prizes. The activity has been well received, with patrons enjoying the progress, and even those who don't participate stopping by to see the artwork. Nana also painted rocks for the Encouragement Rock program in the RS department, which will be featured in a scavenger hunt throughout August. Additionally, Nana hosted the Real To Reel book club, discussing the movie and non-fiction book "Heaven Is For Real."

Special Services

- Special Services completed promotions and materials for July and August programs, including the Friends of the Library Summer Book Sale, and updated the Library of Things template with new cards. They organized and provided designs for upcoming fall programs, created monthly calendar designs, and planned the Fall StoryWalk. The team also handled reprints for youth and adult Summer Reading Challenges and provided decor for farewell parties, Julie's retirement party, and the staff BBQ. A new gallery artist was installed on June 29, and the Arts Alive Concert on June 23 was well attended with 66 attendees. Additionally, they created and printed materials for various programs, including Sow, Grow and Learn, Rhymetime Anytime, Arts Alive Concert, and the Eric Carle Celebration.

Technical Services

- **New Packaging for Youth Board Games:** Clear plastic bags with cheerful colored trim now allow patrons to easily see the contents. The bags can be securely closed with a zip tie to prevent loose pieces in the library.
- **Library of Things Cataloging:** TS has cataloged 89% of the Library of Things collection, with fifty items now packaged and available for checkout at the Circulation desk.
- **Early Learning Backpacks:** Dori delivered eleven early learning backpacks to Youth Services, and one kit has already been checked out!

