Accessibility at Your Library: This year’s Coming Together theme is Sharing Experiences of Disability. We strive to make the Library a welcoming place for people of all abilities. The graphic above indicates the many offerings available for residents with disabilities. We hope that you learn something new about the Library from the information presented, and let a family member or friend know about the services, building features, and more.

Newsletter Cover Art Contest: In honor of this year’s Summer Reading theme, submit your artwork to be featured on our Summer 2022 newsletter cover. Download the form on the Library’s website or pick up one in the Vestibule or KidSpace. Last day to submit is Friday, April 1. All ages welcome!

Show Your Love Entries: Thank you to all the patrons who filled out “Show Your Love” postcards for the staff. More than 100 postcards were filled out. Read the entries under Communications in the current board packet available on the Library’s website.
Patron Services by Athena Crouse

CCS Update

The annual fee purge by CCS took place on March 1, 2022. As a consortium, the total for all fees waived that were posted seven or more years ago was $205,450.48. The Niles-Maine District Library waived $432 in collection fees and $336.81 in replacement costs for a total of $768.81.

Passport Service

In February 2022 we processed 160 passports, for which the library received $5,600 in execution fees. We processed at least one passport every day this month and averaged about six passport applications per day. Applicants took advantage of schools being closed on President’s Day and we processed 19 applications that day alone!

- February 2021 = 0 Passports
- February 2020 = 203 passports
- February 2019 = 153 passports
- February 2018 = 148 passports

Activities

The RAILS quarterly “delivery count” took place beginning Friday, February 4 for pickups on February 7 through Friday, February 11. During this week the Patron Service Team Leaders/Supervisor were required to physically hand count all of the items in each of the RAILS delivery containers (blue bins) and completed an online count form for each day. The total number of items transferred to other libraries from Niles-Maine this week was 1,883. This is an increase of 9% over the last quarterly count (10/29/21-11/4/21) where Niles-Maine transferred 1,727 items.

Sunshine Committees

In February the Sunshine Committee’s theme was “Reading is Tweet”. Staff were encouraged to leave a heart in the Break Room with their favorite book, audiobook or movie title.

A special thank you to Trustees Keane, Olson, and Rozanski for partnering with the Sunshine Committee by providing Hot Chocolate and treats for a Hot Cocoa bar!

Digital Services by Suzanne Wulf

Programs

We hosted ChiaNi Hsu who led a workshop for patrons to create Tiger Masks as part of the Lunar New Year celebration. We had a wonderful turn-out and attendees enjoyed both the instructor and the craft.
Carleigh led a metal stamping programming where attendees used the circulating metal stamping kit to create their own designs. One family even left and came back since they had so much fun, and one woman borrowed the metal stamping kit as soon as the program was over. The Knit Wits group learned to make sweaters this month. This ambitious undertaking resulted in a variety of sweaters, see below.

Todd educated patrons on the digital newspaper and magazine offerings at the library in an informative learning session. Lisa taught a String Art Heart program in which attendees used string and pins to create beautiful art. It was a lovely way to tie into the Valentine’s Day holiday. Jabez held a Super Bowl maker lab for attendees to create customized football yard banners by using cardstock, vinyl, and string. These were perfect Super Bowl decorations. Ruth taught a computer boot camp and Josh taught an Android 101 program. Both classes reached folks looking to improve their digital literacy.

Creative Studio

This month there were 130 successful 3D prints and 61 Maker Space appointments. A patron inquired about the Silhouette machine because he is starting a t-shirt business. Staff told him about Silhouette Studio that he could create designs at home and print at the library. They also told him that he could checkout a Silhouette and he was excited to give it a try before purchasing the equipment on his own. Todd worked with a patron who wanted to create custom coasters using the laser cutter. Prior to
coming in she watched the Niche Academy staff created instructional videos to better understand the process. Despite a few technical difficulties she was pleased with the finished product. Lisa had a 1-2-1 appointment to teach a patron the basics of sewing and she is working on becoming more confident with the sewing machine.

Bernadetta helped a group of teens in Creative Studio A enter a podcast into an NPR Student Podcast Challenge. Their podcast was on a subject: Pressure to Be Perfect. They interviewed a swimming teacher and friends, and were working on the first episode to enter a competition.

Jabez interviewed Jin Park, owner of Hello Tokyo, who discussed his journey of being an entrepreneur and the unique Japanese cultural experience the store brings to the village of Niles. Todd was able to edit the audio files and create a dynamic listening experience. He even added an original song to this episode.

Database and Downloadables

In February we had 4,457 OverDrive checkouts and 241 of them were checked out through the Sora app, used in EMSD 63. We had 34 new OverDrive users this month and of the total checkouts 181 were magazines, 1,415 were audiobooks and 2,861 were eBooks.

The top titles checked out in February were:

1) “The Last Thing He Told Me” by Laura Dave– 11
2) “Verity” by Colleen Hoover – 10
3) “It Ends with Us” by Colleen Hoover – 9
4) “The Christie Affair” by Nina de Gramont – 8
5) “Abandoned in Death” by J. D. Robb – 8

Community Engagement

After taking a month off for COVID precautions, we once again hosted Niles Chamber Morning Network at the library. The speaker this month was Marty Jalove, Happiness Instigator with Master Happiness, LLC. He talked about the importance of treating employees well in order to retain them.

Department Activities

Carleigh has taken over adult volunteer coordination from Cyndi. This month she worked with teens who needed to complete service hours as well as adults who assisted with program preparation and program assistance. We are thrilled that Carleigh has brought new volunteers in to assist the departments on tasks that staff don’t typically do.
Patron Comments & Interactions
From Bernadetta’s iPhone Memories class:

“Very good explanations. Helped everyone patiently and friendly.”

“I love to take any class that is available in Niles library.”

“Thanks!”

From Lisa’s Heart String Art class:

“I liked Incorporating what I learned in a previous class with learning something new. That was cool.”

“I liked making something really cool! Learning a new skill. And the class vibe was very calm and relaxing. Loved it!! Had a great time. Thank you!!”

“Thanks! Great Library!!!”

From Todd’s Digital Newspapers and Magazines class:

“Great job! Thank you for sharing this content.”

From Jabez’s Super Bowl Marker Lab class:

“Excellent, thank you!”

From Josh’s Android 101 class:

“Nice and clear presentation. Thank you!”

“Enjoyed the class very much and Josh’s knowledge is commendable. Thank you.”

“Super helpful. Learned a lot. Thanks.”

“The class was full and instructor was very easy to follow. Love it. I enjoy the class very much and learn how to use my phone.”

“The instructor explained things very well, went the right speed for us senior citizens.”

From Ruth’s Computer Beginner Boot Camp – Internet class:

“Wonderful”

“Ruth is the best instructor. Clear, generous, nice. Thank you so much!”

From Carleigh’s Email Basics class:

“Thank you for in-person class.”

Material Services by Victoria Luz

February Quick Stats for Materials Services Department
Items ordered 1,861: Items received 1,378: Items input 1,675
A brief explanation of these numbers. When an order is placed with a vendor, an item record is created with a circulation status in the catalog of on-order. When a box arrives from the vendor and is received by MSD staff the circulation status becomes in-processing. A cataloger adds nationally standardized computer coded language to the record; processing staff add multiple physical identification labels and a barcode; using the check-in function in Polaris the item is input which changes the circulation status from in-processing to Available in the public online catalog.

New assistive technology equipment cataloged for Digital Services was the Reader Pen purchased with the Age Options Grant which reads text out loud with natural speaking voices, stores text, and looks up and explains words in high tier dictionaries.

![Reader Pen](image)

**Staff Training/Development/Activities**

Jamie attended:

LACONI Technical Services Section Vendor Processing Fair

RAILS Technical Services Networking Group

Level Up with Simply Reports (CCS training)

Added new Library of Congress subject headings on over 800 bibliographic records to improve access to materials on racism

Added Homosaurus subject/genre headings on over 130 bibliographic records to improve access to LGBTQ+ materials (ongoing project)

I chaired Art & Exhibit Committee meeting; attended the NMDL Program Meeting; viewed RAILS’ L2’s cataloging training titled, *O, Brother: What to Do with the 024, 028 & 588 Fields for CDs & DVDs?*
The CCS Cataloging and Metadata Management (CAMM) Technical Group meeting covered the Polaris Upgrade to 7.1 including:

- Printing spine labels in Leap
- Ability to view and edit serials holdings records in Leap
- Ability to create fiscal year records, fund records, and supplier records in Leap
- Ordering and invoicing functionality for EDI orders in Leap

Enhanced contents notes in the bibliographic catalog record which allow for more robust and accurate searching in the catalog for staff and patrons. Also discussed was using a time-saving Macro in the Connection software to enhance the contents noted before exporting records into our catalog.

The Acquisitions workflow for cancelled publications was discussed. This is important so that titles that will not arrive from publishers due to cancellation will be removed from the catalog, not only to keep the catalog as current as possible, but to avoid patrons placing hold for items that they will not receive.

Display & Art Committee

Through March 31, 2022 In the Franklin Gallery we have the exhibit titled, **Self-Care is Self-Preservation: Featured Pieces by Black Artists.**

Through April 1, 2022 in the Commons the **Niles West Orchestra's Painted Violins 2022**: a special program to raise funds to support their growing orchestra program through silent auction.

We have one of eleven violins being displayed throughout the community (others include the North Shore Center for the Performing Arts, Village of Niles Municipal Building, and Morton Grove Public Library). Our piece is titled: **Dancing Green and I** by Abena Motaboli.

Coming in April 2022: **PoetryWalk**, in honor of April, National Poetry Month

The Adult Services Librarians were inspired to create a StoryWalk® concept. StoryWalk® is a national initiative in public libraries to promote literacy, reading, exercise, and movement in communities and neighborhoods across the United States. In a StoryWalk, pages of a dismantled book (usually a picture book) are displayed at outdoor stations, sometimes on stakes. We will recreate this concept indoors in the Franklin Gallery.

The pages of poetry and illustrations featured in this PoetryWalk come from book **The Best of Poetry In Motion**. This book is a celebration of 25 years of the Poetry in Motion project, which places poetry in the transit systems of major urban centers in the country, exposing it to millions of riders per day.
Youth and Teen Services by Arianne Carey

Patron Comments
Michelle Vargas: “It was so great to be at an in-person storytime. It’s our 2nd baby’s first time at a storytime and we missed it so much.”

Cathy Wang (parent), after I let her know Page to Screen Book Club will be remaining virtual, she said, “in-person isn’t an option for us right now. Virtual is great since we are still not gathering socially. Thanks for all you do!”

Roxana Ortega, Dual Language CPS Teacher on her first visit to NMDL: “Very nice KidSpace staff, friendly environment”

At Evening Family Storytime: “I really liked the book you read The Last Tiger”

At the Service Desk: “I love the paper chain.” [craft]

KidSpace Happenings

As I assemble this monthly review of the goings-on in KidSpace it strikes me that statistically we aren’t back to pre-COVID numbers but statistics can’t relay the length of time involved in a patron engagement. To share a somewhat typical interaction, Ms. MaryAnn was on the desk by herself. Her patron interaction went as follows: “I need books about things that spin. Why does the Earth rotate? How does the magazine shelf spin? What else really big spins?” The two of them commenced a 15-minute interaction searching together and finding several books that visually explained the scientific concept. The young patron sat and enjoyed the books for 30 minutes and then left with his parents. He did not check out any books. He used the books, the space, and our expertise. Transactions like this and many others throughout the day and throughout the Library, are not represented in quality and quantity on a statistics sheet.

Mikey Orzechowski ran a series of virtual visits with Apollo Elementary students. The students took a virtual tour of KidSpace, Patron Services, and Materials Services. She also promoted Reading Patch Club. She shared some of the kids observations and questions:
How many books does the library have?
Do you live at the library?
What happens if someone checks out a bunch of books but they don’t read them?
Why did you want to be a public librarian instead of a school librarian?
What happens to broken books?
Who orders all the books?

Ms. Mikey also went to a World Language Parent Presentation for the Family Resource Center. Adult Services Mary Kay Stiff and YS Spanish Language Specialist Rosie’s Camargo attended as well. Mary Kay promoted Audio Books both physical and digital and Rosie outlined our services in Spanish. We had 26 new library card sign ups from the Michael Todd Terraces after her visit with Spanish speaking families.
I Spy Tank was adorned in RED to celebrate the Lunar New Year.

Teacher Loans program continues as a service to our youth during the school day. The much requested delivery to the school would increase the effectiveness of this service and increase the usage of the materials purchased for youth.

**KidSpace Displays**

Black History, Olympics, Ashley Brian, Winter Fun, Valentine’s Day, Presidents Day, Super Bowl, Ashley Brian, Shirley Hughes
Teens

The Lincoln Cup was back in-person this year! Teens gather and read 20 titles from the ILA Lincoln Award list and then challenge other teams to see who recalls more from the titles. This is the third link in the chain that begins with Battle of the Books, continues with Reading Challenge and sees the patrons through High School. Most of these patrons have been with the program since they were in Third Grade. We are happy to see them continue enjoying this friendly competition.
Hanging out in the Teen Underground has always been a fun safe place to be. The addition of a Play Station 5 has meant a lot more gaming, but it is not all video games. Chess and Jenga are two very popular ways Teens like to engage.

The Anti-Racism Action Committee facilitated a unified look for the Black History Month displays around the building. Pictured below the display in KidSpace.

Adult and Outreach Services by Mary Kay Stiff

Programs

Adult Winter Reading ended with a bang. Winter Reading totals came out to a whopping 409 logs, with 53 adult patrons participating. As a point of comparison, Summer Reading (usually
our bigger contest) in 2021 drew 253 total books logged, with 41 patrons participating. I believe the uptick came from the whimsical display and ballot box Maryellen decorated; and the use of a super simple online form on our site instead registering for and downloading the Beanstack app (this extra step can create a barrier for our adult readers, especially older adults). Patrons also really enjoyed scribbling their reads down in person, using the ballots. Our grand prize winner, Carol, a Niles resident, received a $50 Joe Donut gift certificate.

Wynn delivered an educational and entertaining program on America's First Ladies: The Best, the Worst, and the Strangely Forgotten, from Leslie Goddard. Sixty-nine patrons showed up to hear historians’ take on the highest, lowest, and in-between ranked First Ladies. Leslie was as polished and engaging as always, and there was an especially long Q&A period after the presentation – the participants didn’t want it to end! Here’s Leslie.

Chat Comments from America’s First Ladies

From Ss to Everyone - So interesting - thanks!
From Georgia to Everyone - Great presentation Leslie. Thank You.
From Carol to Everyone - Thank you so much! Another wonderful, interesting presentation!
From Maggie Dolan to Everyone - Excellent overview!

From JK to Everyone - Great presentation! Thank you!
From joycelenart to Everyone - Great job. So informative.

We offered 30 Hygge Take and Make Kits at our second floor desk, to help patrons get through the winter doldrums. Stacy constructed the kits. Each included an informative article on the Nordic concept of hygge (the feeling of coziness); some cozy tea lights and cocoa; and ingredients for a simple, natural lemon body scrub. We called the kits “DIY Spa and Movie Night” and included lists of cozy books and movies, as well as a movie display nearby furnished with comforting classics.
Krystyna’s in-person Polish language programs were well attended. The Polish language book club had eight participants. She screened the film 25 Lat Niewinnosci. Sprawa Tomka Komendy to an audience of 47. The film was based on the actual events around a wrongly convicted man, as well as his mother’s passionate struggle to get her son’s conviction overturned.

In the Scone Zone with Father Dominic ("the Bread Monk") -- 23 attended virtually in real time, 20 watched the recording.

The Roots of Black Music in America, with Karlus Trapp – 14 attended virtually in real time (was not recorded):

“This was Fantastic! I especially liked all of the history and background of the Black experience and Black artists have had on instruments, music, songs, bands and culture. Thank you!” – Mary Pat C,

Chair Yoga – 36 attended virtually
Filling Our Hearts with Love through Meditation – 14 attended virtually
WITS, an in-person program to exercise the brain had record attendance – 10

**Community Engagement**

With AgeOptions Innovator funds, we will purchase and market Playaway Launchpads filled with games that challenge memory and maintain brain health. These are electronic devices, but the games are pre-loaded, so patrons will not have to connect to the internet to play. Judy,
Cecilia, Karen, and Mary Kay all researched and tested the Launchpads. Cecilia attended the AgeOptions Quarter 2 meeting.

After much planning, Coming Together is here (March-April)! This year’s theme is Disability Awareness. Cecilia has put together an exciting slate of discussion and book-based programs including an author visit. We hope and anticipate that many from our community will join the conversation. Cecilia attended the February meeting.

Mary Kay and Mikey offered two more virtual programs in partnership with East Maine School District 63’s Family Resource Center (FRC): All About Audiobooks and Audiobook Chat. The FRC will post the recordings so that people can watch them from their website, on demand. We gave an overview of the Library’s audiobook resources, including Books on CD and Playaways, as well as Hoopla, Overdrive/Libby, and Tumblebooks offerings and how to access them. We had a lot of fun sharing our favorite picks from the digital resources for both kids and adults.

Judy is helping to grade essays as a member of the Niles Chamber’s Dollars for Scholars Scholarship Committee.

Beginning in April, there will be an Adult component to the quarterly Adaptive Hour, originated by Youth Services and designed for patrons with disabilities and diagnoses. Mary Kay and Cecilia met with MNASR’s head of programming, Nicole Derrig, and Mikey from YS to discuss how best to plan and organize these experiences for an adult audience, and how MNASR might be involved. Nicole generously offered to train AOS staff in communicative techniques with people who have disabilities and diagnoses; MNASR staff will also be on hand at the program to help guide and coach us, at least for the first couple sessions. Mary Kay is busy working on some fun passive activities as well as games to set the stage for enjoyable and educational visits. Cecilia found and ordered some puzzles and a visual timer for the group.

Department Activities

This month we answered a total of 2301 questions at our service desks. This is an average of about 82 questions per day.

We delivered a total of 413 items to 73 homebound and nursing home resident patrons. Karen set up services for six new Outreach patrons in February. Karen and Leslie delivered Valentines Day cards made by kids in KidSpace, to homebound patrons. Karen received a text with lots of hearts from one patron, and the response: “Christmas in February...thank you both so much. It means so much. I also got a beautiful Valentine from an Anastasia...Thanks again, God bless you both.” Another patron wrote: “I loved the hand-made Valentine card...please let them know that I appreciate the greetings very much!”

Aileen processed 354 Interlibrary Loan requests this month, including procuring 20 requests for our patrons.

Maryellen and Mary Kay continued to plan the Poetry Month display for the Franklin Gallery, to celebrate National Poetry Month in April. We met with Sasha and Annette from Marketing on to discuss the gallery display.
We continue to answer many tax-related questions at our desks. The forms are set up in the Café area in Commons. Wynn, Krystyna, and Judy are taking turns restocking the forms. Liz Coy, Chief Deputy Assessor at Maine Township, called to ask us about tax aide locations. Maine Township does not offer assistance and she was looking for locations near us. Judy sent her our flyers and walked her through the AARP Tax-Aide Get Started site.

Maryellen and Judy have been cleaning up our standing order lists for College Board, travel, and other various reference titles, sending updated sheets to Material Services for implementation. Since we do not receive notification when publishers discontinue serial titles, it's up to Librarians to track this info down. We have been diligently following up with publishers for the past several months to update our standing order titles. A more accurate list will inform our nonfiction material budget needs for FY22-23 and beyond.

Programmers were busy this month finishing up booking for June, July, and August. With COVID cases down and the mask mandate lifted the question of which adult programs to offer in the summer, and how to offer them, has taken up much of our brain power and time this month. We have no way of knowing what the public health situation will look like in the summer. Our aim is to bring as many people into the Library as possible. However, we also want to meet demand for the popular virtual programming that people can attend from home. “Hybrid” programs (in person, but also streamed to or recorded for a virtual audience) may be the solution, so we are using our Spring program lineup as a test run for audience response and staff capacity.

Working with Cecilia and Mary Kay, Wynn sent out surveys to past participants from three popular program types. Overall, respondents indicated a preference for virtual programs: 62% voted for virtual chair yoga; 69% voted for virtual trivia (this is a 20s30s group); and 76% voted for virtual historical reenactments, all over in-person on the same topic. Participants indicated that weather, traffic, health conditions, mobility issues, childcare issues, and COVID are all factors that weigh in on the virtual preference.

Displays this month included Black Stories; African-American Health and Wellness; Madeleine Miller readalikes (for her March 3 visit); and the Winter Reading Club display + paper entry box.

Maryellen, Mary Kay, and Cecilia have been very busy planning author events for spring and summer. Recently we booked Janelle Brown, a domestic thriller writer, for May 17; and Kristin Harmel, a popular historical fiction author, for June 16, which will help us kick off Summer Reading for Adults.

Mary Kay is working on FY22-23 Budget which including meeting with staff to identify needs.

Interesting Patron comments and questions
-A patron requested a step-by-step book for how to make YouTube videos
-A patron requested books about movies, with first person accounts
-Spent about 20 minutes with a woman looking for movies for her mom – light, not too deep. Mom had short attention span. Likes classics, musicals, not too many characters, not too fast paced, no tough subjects. I suggested 25. She took about 15.

-I had a great HubSpot reference interview about the Library’s LinkedIn Learning database. I supplied useful information and was friendly enough to get a response of “Best library ever!”

“This is my favorite comment that a patron can give, besides ‘You made that so easy, now I can do it myself!’” Wynn

-2 patrons expressed their delight at the beauty of the second floor interior

-Patron expressed appreciation at being able to find so many older films from the 40s and 50s

**Staff training and development**

Maryellen and Judy took a Novelist crash course on Narrative Nonfiction. Wynn took a course on how to be promotable, from LinkedIn Learning. Aileen took a course on “Unattended Children,” offered through our staff training module in Niche Academy by Ryan Dowd.

AOS Department meeting – All

Poetry Walk meeting with Marketing – Maryellen, Mary Kay

Spring publicity meeting with Marketing -- Cecilia

Assistant Managers Networking Group – Maryellen

World Language Networking Group – Krystyna

SNAAZ (Adult Managers Networking Group) -- Mary Kay

Programming Committee meeting – Cecilia, Maryellen, Mary Kay

Art & Exhibit Committee meeting -- Maryellen

CCS Interlibrary Loan Technical Group meeting – Maryellen