



The Bookplate

A Publication of the River Forest Public Library

Winter 2026

2025: By the Numbers

215,000+ total items borrowed

67,810 digital items borrowed

432 programs offered with **11,500+** attendees
—that's nearly 1,000 people each month!

Over **27,000** visitors enjoyed the Children's Play area



114,000+
Visitors
Welcomed



110,000+ website sessions connected us online

6,800+ public computer sessions

American Girl Doll collection: **38** dolls, **642** borrows

224 seed packets distributed to gardeners old and new

2,400+ guesstimation jar guesses were made

Our first **Local Artisan Fair** featured
13 artisans and drew over **150** attendees

Over **800** residents enjoyed our **Summer**
Reading Kick-Off Party

180 cupcakes were enjoyed at our
120th Birthday Celebration!



Summer Reading 2025

3,368 participants

2,495 kids

793 tweens and teens

80 adults

487 books read

3,888 badges earned

72,549 minutes read

10,483 days logged



River Forest
Public Library

Your journey starts here.

From the Director

As I write this, people are buzzing with excitement for next week's Thanksgiving celebrations. Thanksgiving – while a time for turkey, side dishes (the best part!), and pie – is also a time for reflection and gratitude. Upon reflection, 2025 was an exciting year for the Library.

We hosted our first Artisan Fair, celebrated the Library's 120th birthday, and began the final phase of construction in the Children's Room. At the same time, 2025 was a challenging year for many, a year that stressed the importance of community. This year, I'm grateful for a community that supports those in need, uplifts one another, and finds joy in the season.

I'm especially thankful to the RFPL Foundation and our donors, whose generosity makes it possible to be a great community library. Here's what your support accomplished in 2025:

- Pledged \$300,000 to complete the Community Room, add a bathroom, and remodel the Children's staff office space.
- Provided funds to purchase new flip-top tables for the Barbara Hall Meeting Room.
- Funded a professional facility assessment and ongoing garden maintenance.
- Sponsored our Summer Reading Kick-Off celebration, which welcomed more than 800 participants.



All told, the Foundation granted over \$338,000 to the Library just in 2025. That's a lot to be thankful for.

From all of us at the Library, a sincere thank you to our wonderful River Forest community. Happy New Year and we hope to see you soon at the library!



With gratitude, Emily Compton, Library Director

Get Your Library Card: No Trip Required!

No time to visit the Library? No problem! With our Digital Library Card, you'll enjoy the same full access as a physical card—without leaving home. Apply on our website in minutes and get access with the SWAN Libraries+ App to:

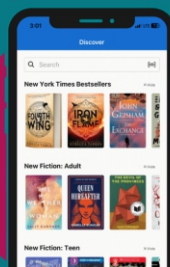
- All digital resources
- Our Library of Things
- The entire physical collection

Sign up now and start exploring!



**DOWNLOAD
THE NEW
SWAN
LIBRARIES +
APP**

**Free to all patrons.
Available for iOS
and Android.**



Enjoy Another Season of Monthly Virtual Events from Illinois Libraries Present

Illinois Libraries Present (ILP) is a statewide collaboration among public libraries offering premier events. Some highlights this season include **Afraid of the Dark: An Evening with R.L. Stine** (February 4) and **Beyond the Page with Percival Everett** (March 19). Visit our website for full details.

Winter Reading for All Ages January 1-February 28

Cozy up with a good book this winter and get rewarded for it! For River Forest card holders. **Visit our website for details.**



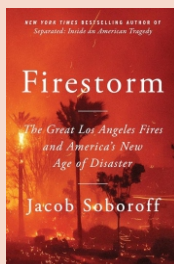
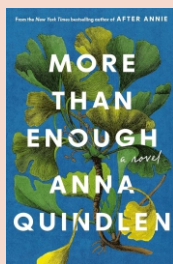
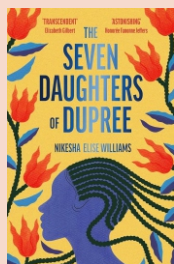
Coming Soon

Fiction:

Woman Down by Colleen Hoover (Jan)
The Seven Daughters of Dupree by Nikesha Elise Williams (Jan)
The Astral Library by Kate Quinn (Feb)
More Than Enough by Anna Quindlen (Feb)
Life: A Love Story by Elizabeth Berg (Mar)
Son of Nobody by Yann Martel (Mar)
Last Night in Brooklyn by Xochitl Gonzalez (Apr)
Go Gentle by Maria Semple (Apr)

Nonfiction:

Firestorm: The Great Los Angeles Fires and America's New Age of Disaster by Jacob Soboroff (Jan)
The Boundless Deep: Young Tennyson, Science, and the Crisis of Belief by Richard Holmes (Feb)
How to Be Okay When Nothing is Okay by Jenny Lawson (Mar)
London Falling by Patrick Radden Keefe (Apr)



Place
Your
Holds
Now!



Our Favorite Reads of 2025

Abby: *Everything is Tuberculosis* by John Green
Anne: *When the World Tips Over* by Jandy Nelson
Amy: *The Last Cuentista* by Donna Barbara Higuera
Ariel: *Booth* by Karen Joy Fowler
Barb: *We Are All Guilty Here* by Karin Slaughter
Brian: *Shadow Ticket* by Thomas Pynchon
Brigit: *Impossible Creatures* by Katherine Rundell
Cathy: *Place of Tides* by James Rebanks
Cay: *Year of Yes* by Shonda Rhimes
DeeDee: *The Wedding People* by Alison Espach
Emily: *Tilt* by Emma Pattee
Fran: *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhon
Jenn: *Funny Story* by Emily Henry
Lisa: *Still Life* by Sarah Winman
Maggie: *Memorial Drive: a daughters memoir* by Natasha Tretheway
Marissa: *King Sorrow* by Joe Hill
Melaina: *The Bewitching* by Silvia Moreno-Garcia
Molly: *The Maidens* by Alex Michaelides
Shannon D.: *Yellowface* by R.F. Kuang
Shannon G.: *Adventures in the Louvre: How to Fall in Love With the World's Greatest Museum* by E. Sciolino
Trinity: *Crown of Ellova Duology* by Sienna Harlow
Victoria: *Quicksilver* by Callie Hart



Join Our Book Buddies Volunteer Program This Summer

Look out for our **new Tween & Teen Volunteer opportunity** this summer, Book Buddies! Volunteers will be paired with young readers entering grades 1–3. You'll help them choose books, listen as they read, and join them in group activities. This volunteer program focuses on building confidence and fostering a love of reading—not formal tutoring.

Applications open April 1, 2025. Check out our website in April for more information and apply to be a Book Buddy!



Our Local Artisan Fair Is Back! Saturday, April 18, 10 AM-2 PM

Our first Local Artisan Fair was such a hit last year that we're bringing it back! Join us at the Library for a day of creativity and community as talented local artists and makers showcase their unique creations. Explore beautiful handmade goods, meet the makers behind them, and enjoy special live demonstrations throughout the event. **Visit our website for more details.**



LOCAL ARTISAN FAIR



Save These Dates

Events subject to change.
Please check our website for most current info.



Adults

Silent Reading Party

Thursday, 1/29, 6:30-8:30 PM

By popular demand, we're bringing back the ultimate introvert's night out! Bring any book (or pick one of ours), grab a drink and snack, and enjoy a cozy evening of quiet reading with fellow book lovers. Optional chatting before and after the reading.

Registration required. Will take place at a special offsite location. Details emailed after sign-up.

The Black Chicago Renaissance

Saturday, 2/21, 2-3:30 PM

Celebrate Black History Month with this presentation by Africana Studies scholar Dr. Amira Millicent Davis. Learn about the development of the cultural renaissance that flourished among Black artists, writers, and musicians in Chicago in the early 20th century.

Joni! An Original Musical About Joni Mitchell

Saturday, 3/7, 2-3 PM

Musical theater artist Jillann Gabrielle performs her latest one-woman show. She's taking on the role of legendary singer-songwriter Joni Mitchell. Hear some of Joni's classic songs along with stories from her life and career.

Adult Trivia Night

Thursday, 4/30, 7-8 PM

Try your hand at a Jeopardy!-style trivia competition for adults. No teams necessary. Please make sure to bring a mobile device, which you'll use as a buzzer. There will be Daily Double wagers and everything, but don't worry — we won't penalize you for not answering in the form of a question! **Registration required.**

In partnership with River Forest Township

Teens

Half Day Craft 'n' Snack

Thursday, 1/29, 11:30 AM-1 PM

Grades 5-8

Join us after your half day of school for a craft and some treats!

Oreo Taste Test

Thursday, 2/19 3:30-4:30 PM

Grades 5-8

There are all kinds of Oreos! Can you identify them on flavor alone? Take the taste test and find out! **Registration required.**

Poetry for Pancakes

Thursday, 4/16, 3:30-4:30 PM

Grades 5-8

Who wants a pancake, sweet and piping hot? Read or recite a poem and receive a pancake with all the fixings.

Half Day Movie 'n' Snack

Thursday, 4/24, 11:30 AM-1:30 PM

Grades 5-8

Join us after your half day of school for a movie and some treats!

All Ages

Sunflower Chamber Orchestra

Sunday, 1/18, 2-3 PM

Brighten up the winter with a concert by the Sunflower Chamber Orchestra, a youth orchestra based in River Forest featuring musicians from 3rd grade through 12th grade. Bring the whole family to hear these talented young local performers!

Puzzle Swap!

Saturday, 4/18, All Day

Exchange your gently used puzzles.

Children

Dinosaur Discoveries with T-Rexplorer

Thursday, 1/29, 11:45 AM-1 PM

Grades K-4

Join T-Rexplorers for a fun, interactive, engaging program with authentic dinosaur fossils, and learn about dinosaurs. Arrive 15 minutes before the start and meet Green Bean, a baby Triceratops! **Registration required.**

BollyGroove Holi Workshop

Friday, 2/27, 10-10:45 AM

Grades PreK-4

Join Ajanta Chakraborty of Bollywood & Culture Groove for unique cultural stories, vivid visuals, engaging facts, and a fun dance centering on Holi! **Registration required.**

Wings of Fire Book Release Party

Friday, 3/3, 3:30-4:30 PM

Grades 2-4

Join us for a special book release party for the newest Wings of Fire book- *The Hybrid Prince*! Enjoy trivia, crafts, and snacks! Participants will also get their own copy of the new book to keep! **Registration required.**

Being Bilingual Rocks Concert

Monday, 4/6, 10-10:45 AM

Families

Join Parents' Choice Gold Award Winners Hamlet & Alina for a fun, interactive, and inclusive concert in English and Spanish! ¡Únete a Hamlet y Alina, ganadores del premio Parents' Choice Gold Award de Being Bilingual Rocks, para un concierto divertido, interactivo e inclusivo en inglés y español!



Upcoming Programs

*Indicates registration required.



Childrens ● Tweens/Teens ● Adults ● Everyone ●

JAN

FEB

MAR

APR

1/11	2-3:30 PM	Local History: Oak Park's 1950s Doomsday Cult	Adult
1/16	10-11 AM	Brookfield Zoo Storytime at the Library!	Families
1/17	10 AM-3 PM	Community Blood Drive	Adult
1/18	2-3 PM	Winter Concert: Sunflower Chamber Orchestra	Everyone
1/19	10 AM-12 PM	Family Movie at the Library (<i>K-Pop Demon Hunters</i>)	Families
1/29	11:45 AM-1 PM	Dinosaur Discoveries with T-Rexplorer	Grades K-4*
1/29	11:30 AM-1 PM	Half Day Craft 'n' Snack	Grades 5-8
1/29	6:30-8:30 PM	Silent Reading Party	Adult*
1/30	11-11:30 AM	Community Storytime at Wonderworks	Families
1/31	2-3 PM	Let's Make: Your Own Washi Car Track	Families
2/1	2-3:30 PM	Love Stories from History	Adult
2/14	10-11 AM	Palentines	Families
2/19	3:30-4:30 PM	Oreo Taste Test	Grades 5-8*
2/21	2-3:30 PM	The Black Chicago Renaissance	Adult
2/27	10-10:45 AM	BollyGroove Holi Workshop	Grades K-4*
3/3	3:30-4:30 PM	Wings of Fire Book Release Party	Grades 2-4*
3/7	2-3 PM	Joni! An Original Musical About Joni Mitchell	Adult
3/11	7-8 PM	Irish Cuisine: Beyond Corned Beef (Cooking Demo & Tasting)	Adult
3/15	2-3 PM	American Girl Taylor Swift Tea Party	Grade K-4*
3/22	2-3:30 PM	Wills, Trusts, and Estate Planning	Adult
4/6	10-10:45 AM	Being Bilingual Rocks Concert (Hamlet & Alina)	Families
4/12	2-3:30 PM	Wild City, Human Ecosystem: An Intro to Ecology	Adult
4/16	3:30-4:30 PM	Poetry for Pancakes	Grades 5-8
4/18	All Day	Puzzle Swap	Everyone
4/18	10 AM-2 PM	Local Artisan Fair	Everyone
4/24	11:30 AM-1:30 PM	Half Day Movie 'n' Snack	Grades 5-8
4/26	2-3 PM	STEM Club Sunday Edition: Egg Drop	Grades K-4*
4/29	3:30-4:15 PM	Let's Make: Friendship Bracelets & Necklaces	Grades K-4*
4/30	7-8 PM	Adult Trivia Night	Adult*

Weekly, Bi-monthly & Monthly Events

Closures:

1/1, 2/6, 4/5

Go to our calendar:



- Coffee Monday | Mondays, 10-11 AM | 1/5, 2/2, 3/2, 4/6
- Evening Book Club | Wednesdays, 7-8 PM | 1/7, 2/4, 3/4, 4/1
- Afternoon Book Club | Wednesdays, 1:30-2:30 PM | 1/14, 2/11, 3/11, 4/8
- Yoga or Meditation with Rhonda Fentry | Saturdays, 2-3 PM | 1/10, 2/7, 3/14, 4/11*
- Film Lover Fridays | Fridays, 1-3:30 PM | 1/16, 2/20, 3/20, 4/17
- Global Film Forum | Sundays, 2-4:30 PM | 1/25, 2/22, 3/29, 4/26
- Great Decisions | Wednesdays, 1-2:30 PM | 2/4, 2/18, 3/4, 3/18, 4/1, 4/15, 5/6, 5/20
- Craft and Chat | Thursdays, 7-8 PM | 2/12, 4/9*
- Teen Take & Makes | Monthly, while supplies last
- Middle School Makers | Tuesdays, 3:15-4:30 PM | 1/6-6/2, except 2/17 & 3/31 | Grades 5-8
- Teen Tasters | Thursdays, 3:30-4:30 PM | 1/8, 2/5, 3/5, 4/9 | Grades 5-8*
- Donuts and Discussion | Thursdays, 3:30-4:30 PM | 1/22, 3/19 | Grades 5-8*
- Baby Storytime | Mondays, 10-10:30 AM | 1/12, 1/26, 2/9, 2/23, 3/9, 3/23, 4/13, 4/27 | Ages 0-1
- STEM Club | Mondays, 3:30-4:30 PM | 1/12, 2/9, 3/9, 4/13 | Grades K-4*
- Crafternoon | Mondays, 3:30-4:30 | 1/26, 2/23, 3/23, 4/27 | Grades K-4*
- Read to a Dog | Tuesdays, 6-7 PM | 1/27, 2/24, 3/24, 4/28 | Grades K-4*
- Pop-in Play & Learn | Wednesdays, 3:30-4:30 PM | 1/28, 2/25, 3/25 | Grades PreK-2
- Community Storytime at Wonder Works | Thursdays, 11-11:30 AM | 2/26, 3/26, 4/30 | Families
- Mini Makers, Fridays, 10-11 AM | 1/30, 3/27 | Ages 0-6
- Nature Art Studio | Thursday, 3:30-4:15 PM | 2/12, 2/26, 3/12, 3/26, 4/16, 4/30 | Grades K-4*
- LEGO Club | Sundays, 2-3 PM | 2/15, 4/19 | Grades K-4
- Storytimes for Kids | Tues., Weds., Thurs., and Fri. | See website for details

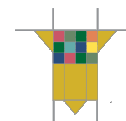
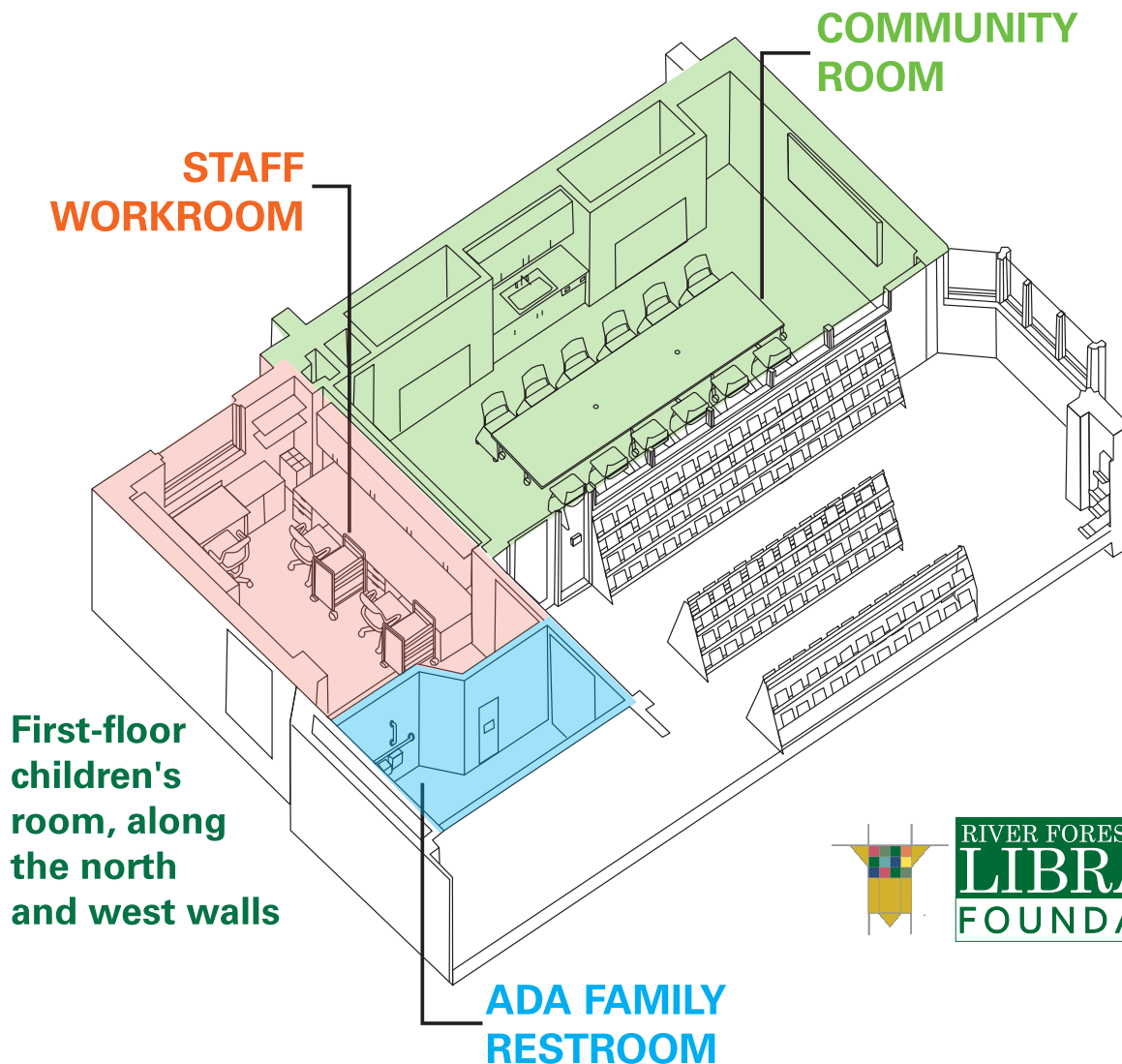
For the complete current list of programs or to register for an event call us at 708-366-5205 or visit our library program calendar at riverforestlibrary.org

SUPPORT OUR NEXT CHAPTER



River Forest Public Library Foundation's fundraising campaign to raise \$150,000* to support three facility improvements:

- A new community room (connection)
- A new ADA family restroom (accessibility)
- A streamlined children's staff workspace (care)



RIVER FOREST PUBLIC
LIBRARY
FOUNDATION

*Should we receive donations beyond our goal, they will be used to support future library improvements and initiatives.

Your Donation Funds Connection. Accessibility. Care.



Why It Matters

Opportunity to repurpose interior space:

After relocating the Library's air handler, the former mechanical space offers a rare chance to expand within the Library's footprint.

Growing demand for work space:

Community demand for meeting space is outpacing supply; this project doubles our meeting rooms and streamlines the children's staff work area.

Increased accessibility: The Library lacks an ADA and/or family restroom — an essential upgrade to serve everyone in our community.



DONATE
NOW

Ways to Give

Checks: Made out to RFPL Foundation

Website: RFPLFoundation.org

SUPPORT OUR NEXT CHAPTER

☐ \$50 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$250 ☐ \$500 ☐ \$1,000 ☐ \$2,500 ☐ Custom _____

Name _____

Address _____

Email _____

My gift is tribute ☐ In honor ☐ In memory of _____

Please acknowledge this tribute gift to (name and address)

Thank you for supporting our Library. Donate by returning this card with check payable to **River Forest Public Library Foundation** to 735 Lathrop Ave., River Forest, IL 60305 or Going to our website at RFPLFoundation.org for other ways to donate.

RFPL Foundation is a 501(c)(3) organization; all donations are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.



Library Staff & Board of Trustees

Library Board of Trustees

President.....	Scott Delano
Vice President.....	Ann Berens
Secretary.....	Eleanor Long
Treasurer.....	Simon Saddleton
Trustee.....	Lindsay McIntyre
Trustee.....	Kathleen O'Neill
Trustee.....	Nathan Root

Library Staff

Director.....	Emily Compton
Operations Manager.....	Shannon Duffy
Children's Services Manager.....	Melaina Maraldi
Materials Services Manager.....	Victoria Muraiti
Adult and Teen Services Manager.....	Shannon Gruber
Adult and Teen Services Librarian.....	Brian Wolowitz
Middle School and Teen Librarian.....	Anne Kowalski
Adult and Teen Services Librarian.....	Ariel Schick
Children's Services Librarian.....	Marissa Walentschik
Marketing and PR Specialist.....	Francisca Arnold



Library Hours:

Monday-Thursday	9:00 AM-9:00 PM
Friday & Saturday	9:00 AM-5:00 PM
Sunday (Sep.-May)	1:00 PM-5:00 PM

Contact Us

Phone: 708.366.5205

Website: www.riverforestlibrary.org



Car-Rt Sort
Residential Customer
River Forest, IL 60305

DESTINATION:

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit #119
Oak Park, Illinois



River Forest Public Library
735 Lathrop Avenue
River Forest, IL 60305-1883

