

Executive Director's Report November 2024

Youth Services: A Grand Reopening and Exciting Upgrades

On November 14, Youth Services officially reopened, featuring a transformed space thanks to the incredible efforts of our staff. Alongside the new Imagination Zone, several upgrades have enhanced both patron and staff experiences.

Some IT highlights not yet shared: All patron PCs in Youth Services were rebuilt and outfitted with adjustable PC/monitor arms, accommodating users of different heights and promoting better posture for backs and necks. The patron desks were also rebuilt during the renovation, and staff desk and back office PCs were replaced. Additionally, new height-adjustable tables were installed in the Youth workroom, offering greater flexibility and comfort for staff.

The Program Room now boasts a smart lighting system, controlled via an app, to elevate the patron programming experience. If you attended the Grand Reopening festivities, you had the chance to see it in action! These improvements reflect our ongoing commitment to providing a welcoming, functional, and innovative environment for our community.



New Public Notary Service at RML

Starting December 9, Rolling Meadows Library is excited to offer public notary services, which include verifying signatures and authenticating important documents. This valuable new service, provided by part-time Reference Librarian Nicole B., a certified notary, is open to all patrons. It offers a convenient and trusted resource for the community.

We are thrilled that Nicole is getting this service off the ground while additional reference librarian staff members undergo training to expand availability. This ensures that patrons will have even greater access to notary services when they need it most, reflecting our ongoing commitment to meeting community needs.

Moving Additional Money into Illinois Metropolitan Investment Fund

At the request of Executive Director Jack Bower, City of Rolling Meadows Finance Director Molly Talkington transferred an additional \$1,512,752.16 from the Library Operating fund to the library's investment account with IMET. This decision was made following months of strong interest yields from IMET's Convenience Fund, which currently offers a competitive interest rate of 4.45%.

If interest rates remain steady, this move could generate \$60,000+ annually in interest income, demonstrating the library's commitment to maximizing its financial resources while ensuring prudent stewardship of public funds.

Sugar Skulls Program Continues Successfully

Despite limited space at the library during the Youth Services Renovation, Outreach Manager Laura Garcia successfully presented our annual Sugar Skulls Program this year. Thanks to the generosity of the Park District, two sessions were held in their facility, and an additional session was conducted at the Neighborhood Resource Center.

Though the program required some adaptation, it remained a resounding success, demonstrating our ability to collaborate with community partners and continue delivering beloved traditions to our patrons.



Arts Alive Concert: Music and the Military

The November Arts Alive Concert, Music and the Military, drew an impressive crowd with 87 attendees filling the room. The program's engaging theme resonated strongly with the audience, making it a memorable and well-received event.

Little Golden Book Journal Making: A Creative Hit

On November 20, Robin S. hosted the Little Golden Book Journal Making program, where participants followed step-by-step guidance to craft their own unique journals. By the end of the session, everyone left with a completed project. The program was so well received that we're excited to offer it again in the spring, continuing to inspire creativity in our community.

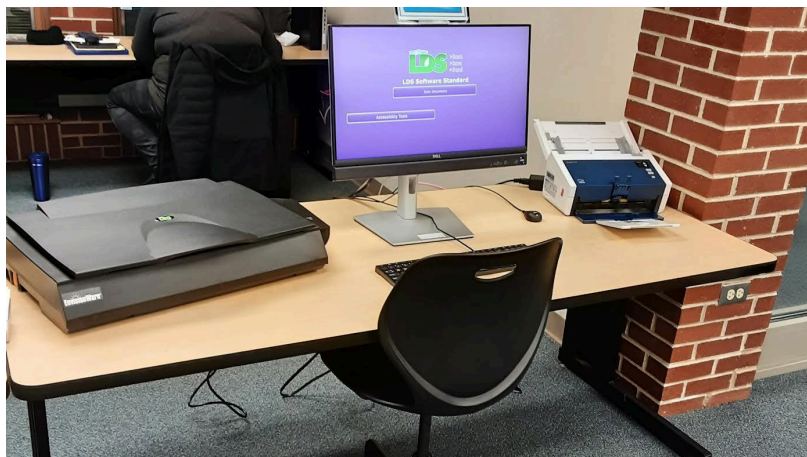


Coloring Club Continues to Thrive

The Coloring Club, hosted by Nana H., remains a standout success, consistently reaching maximum capacity! This popular program fosters relaxation and creativity while connecting participants with the library's extensive collection of art, coloring, and craft books.

Improved Scanning Options for Patrons

We're excited to announce upgraded scanning options for our patrons! A new scanning station has been installed, offering a user-friendly interface and multiple convenient features. Patrons can now scan directly to their smartphone via QR code, USB, Google Drive, or email, with the ability to view scanned items in real-time. This modernized system is much easier to use and enhances the overall patron experience, reflecting our commitment to providing accessible and efficient technology.



New Library Card Designs Arriving In December

Special Services has designed and ordered 5,000 new library cards featuring two attractive and engaging designs debuting in December. The children’s card showcases a playful raccoon amid trees and meadows, while the adult card features a sleek, eye-catching design crafted to appeal to all ages.

These cards are also the first to include a keychain-sized version, offering patrons added convenience for keeping their library card handy alongside their keys. By combining thoughtful design with functionality, these new cards enhance both the practicality and visual appeal of the library experience.

Reserved Parking for Patrons with Limited Mobility

In response to feedback from the strategic planning process and community input over the years, the library installed new signs on December 2 reserving three parking spaces directly across from the entrance for “Persons with Limited Mobility.” While these spaces are not ADA-compliant, they provide a convenient option for patrons who may find navigating longer distances challenging, such as expecting mothers or elderly visitors.

This project, developed in collaboration with the City’s Public Works Department, reflects our commitment to improving accessibility and fostering inclusivity. The City reviewed ADA compliance considerations, ensuring that this initiative aligns with regulatory requirements while addressing the needs of our patrons.



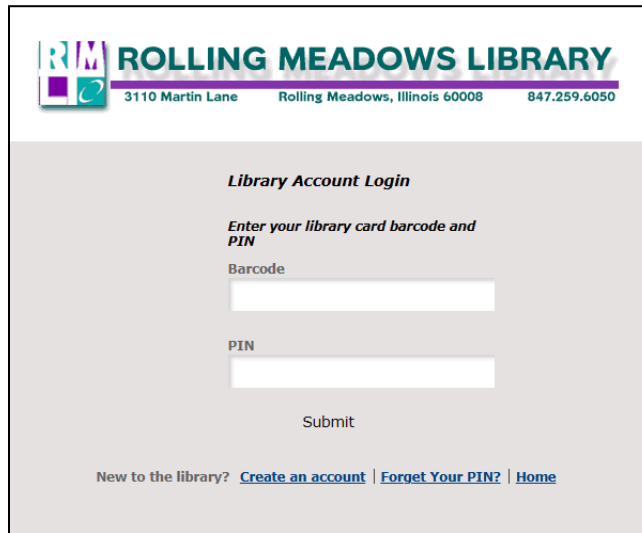
ESS Payroll System Goes Live

As of November 24, Rolling Meadows Library successfully transitioned to the live ESS Payroll System, marking the end of paper timesheets and statements of absence. This milestone comes after a month and a half of extensive testing and training, ensuring a smooth and reliable rollout for staff. The new system streamlines payroll processes, offering real-time time entry, updated pay code tracking, and immediate visibility of paid benefit balances.

A special thanks goes to the administrative team for their leadership and dedication in guiding this project to completion. Their hard work and collaboration have been invaluable in modernizing our payroll operations and simplifying workflows for all staff.

Simplified Login on Vega

The login process for our online catalog, Vega, has been streamlined—no longer requiring patrons to enter their name to access online accounts. Thanks to the efforts of our Technical Services team, logging in is now as simple as providing the library card barcode and PIN. This thoughtful update not only simplifies the user experience but also enhances patron confidentiality, ensuring a seamless and secure way to explore everything our library has to offer through the catalog.



The image shows a screenshot of the Rolling Meadows Library's Vega login page. At the top, there is a header with the library's logo (RM) and name "ROLLING MEADOWS LIBRARY". Below the name, the address "3110 Martin Lane", "Rolling Meadows, Illinois 60008", and phone number "847.259.6050" are listed. The main content area is titled "Library Account Login" and prompts the user to "Enter your library card barcode and PIN". There are two input fields: one for the "Barcode" and one for the "PIN". Below these fields is a "Submit" button. At the bottom of the page, there is a link for "New to the library?" with sub-links for "Create an account", "Forgot Your PIN?", and "Home".

Intergenerational Training

On December 6, Executive Director Jack Bower participated in the ATLAS (Area Training for Librarians and Staff) Annual Multi-Library Day, held in Orland Park. The event featured Dr. Katherine Jeffery, who provided strategies for fostering collaboration and inclusivity within intergenerational teams.

Dr. Jeffery's presentation offered practical tools for balancing workflows, learning styles, and experience levels—insights Jack found particularly valuable for enhancing workplace culture and supporting staff development in the library setting.

In the Community

Legislative Advocacy and Constituent Engagement at the Library

On December 3, State Representative Nicolle Grasse of the 53rd District held her inaugural constituent services office hours at the library. This initiative, scheduled for the first Tuesday of each month, offers Rolling Meadows constituents direct access to their representative and her staff.

On December 4, Secretary Kremer, Trustee Gawlik, and Director Bower attended the annual

Illinois Library Association (ILA) North Suburban and Chicago Library Legislative Breakfast at the Hilton Chicago/Northbrook. They engaged with State Rep. Grasse's chief of staff and listened to the ILA's lobbyist outline the upcoming legislative agenda, which includes efforts to make e-materials more affordable for libraries—a response to publishers' high pricing. Also present was State Representative Nabeela Syed of the 51st House District, representing Palatine and parts of Rolling Meadows. The event highlighted the strong support for libraries among elected officials.

Partnering with Comfort Closet to Support Local Teens

The library collaborated with Comfort Closet, a special project of the charity group People Helping People, to assist students in need at Rolling Meadows High School. Serving as a donation site, the library helped collect essential hygiene and comfort items for teens who may lack access to these necessities at home or whose families face financial challenges. This partnership reflects our commitment to supporting the well-being of our community's youth and ensuring they have the resources they need.

Readers Services: Growing Through Professional Development

November was a month of professional growth for the Readers Services team! Director Mary Constance Back attended two engaging LACONI programs, *Wanna Be a Manager?* on November 8 and *All About Tween and Teen Library Services* on November 15, gaining valuable insights for leadership and youth programming. Readers Services Associate Susan Ciano explored the world of crime fiction at the *Midwest Mystery Conference* on November 9, while Associate Robin Schroeder participated in the all-day webinar *Library Con Live* on November 14, focusing on innovative trends in library services. These educational opportunities highlight the team's dedication to enhancing their expertise and enriching the library's offerings.

Networking and Inspiration: Schaumburg Township District Library

On December 3, Executive Director Jack Bower attended the North Suburban Library Directors Networking Group at the Schaumburg Township District Library. The meeting provided an excellent opportunity to connect with area library directors, compare notes, and discuss emerging trends in library services.

Following the meeting, Schaumburg's director led a tour of the library's newly renovated upper level, a stunning \$11 million project. The renovation is both beautiful and forward-thinking, featuring an expansive makerspace, a vibrant teen area, ample study and workspaces, and a dedicated local history room. The tour was an inspiring showcase of modern library design and innovation.