



MESSENGER PUBLIC LIBRARY OF NORTH AURORA NEWSLETTER

READING CHALLENGES

Adult Winter Reading Challenge

Dec. 1–Jan. 31, 2024

Adults can participate in Winter Reading in the library, online, and via weekly trivia contests to win prize packages! Check out our website, stop in the library, or call the Help Desk for more information.

Read • Learn • Grow Early Learning Challenge

Join Read, Learn, Grow to encourage a love of reading and learning with your children. Earn prizes for reading books and completing monthly learning activities. Register online at messengerpl.beanstack.org or pick up a folder at the library.



School Year Reading Challenges

500 Books Before Middle School

100 Books Before Graduation

Monarch (K–3), Bluestem (3–5), Caudill (4–8), and Lincoln (9–12) Award Challenges

Ages 5–18. Track your reading during the school year and earn free books along the way! Register online at messengerpl.beanstack.org or pick up a reading tracker at the library.

Holiday Open House

Dec. 3, 2–4 pm

Join us at the library for a festive winter gathering full of fun, crafts, snacks, and socializing! Vote in the Gingerbread House Contest (submit Gingerbread Houses by Dec. 1). Enjoy performances from the Goodwin Elementary Choir followed by the Victorian Carolers. Have your photo taken by a professional photographer in front of our decorated fireplace. Looking for Santa? The Village is hosting **Making Spirits Bright** on Dec. 2 from 5–7 pm.



EXPERIENCE THE MAGIC OF A LIVE CLASSICAL MUSIC CONCERT **FOR FREE**

See a librarian for details



comed
AN EXCELSON COMPANY

Classical Music: Check Out an IPO Pass

Dec. 9, Feb. 24, Mar. 16, Apr. 13, May 18

Experience the beauty of a live classical music concert for free by presenting your MPL library card at the Help Desk to receive a pass to an Illinois Philharmonic Orchestra performance. Each pass is good for two tickets. Visit <https://ipomusic.org/2023-24season> for the season schedule. Passes are limited to one pass per family per concert, and two passes per family per season.



Kindness Hats

Use your love of knitting or crochet to keep our community warm this winter.

Stop by the Help Desk to check out a kit with yarn, needles, and patterns, or use your own materials. The library donates your hats to local charities. Make one or make 100, every single hat is appreciated. We accept hats in any size and color. Bring completed hats to the library by Jan. 31.

YOUTH SERVICES

Registration **R** is required for all youth and teen programs, unless noted, beginning on Monday, November 20, via the online events calendar at messengerpl.org, by phone 630-801-4340, or in person. For drop-in programs, you may register online to receive a reminder email or text.

BABIES-PRESCHOOL

Baby Storytime **R**

Tuesdays • 9:30-10 OR

10:15-10:45 am

Jan. 9–Feb. 13

Ages 0–24 months with

caregiver. Enjoy stories, songs, and movement to help foster early literacy skills.

Family Storytime **R**

Thursdays, Jan. 11–Feb. 15

10-10:30 am

Ages 2–5 with caregiver. Enjoy stories and songs with your family while building pre-literacy skills and learning about the world around us.

Sensory Playtime

Mondays, Dec. 11 and Feb. 12,

Saturday, Jan. 20 • 10–11 am

Ages 0–4 with caregiver. Enjoy sensory play experiences with your little ones. Stations are designed to stimulate your child's mind through sensory, discovery, and gross motor activities. *Register for a reminder email or text.*

Baby Playtime:

Block Play

Monday, Jan. 29 • 10–10:45 am

Ages 0–2 with caregiver. Enjoy playtime with your baby or young toddler as you explore blocks with new friends. *Register for a reminder email or text.*

Toddler Playtime:

Puppet Theater

Saturday, Feb. 17

10–10:45 am

Ages 2–3 with caregiver. Enjoy playtime with your toddler as you explore puppets and create stories. *Register for a reminder email or text.*

Stretch-Out Storytime

and Dance Party **R**

Friday, Feb. 23 • 10–10:45 am

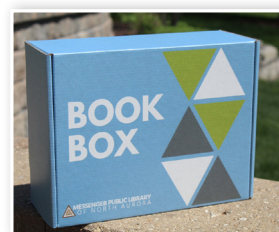
Ages 2–5. Start to melt off those winter blues and join us for a storytime where we will read about being active, sing songs, and stretch out before having a fun movement party.

ALL AGES

Winter Book

Subscriptions **R**

Ages 0–18. Enjoy a new selection of books every month! Pick up your books on the 10th of December, January, and February. *Messenger Library card required.*



STEAM

Activity Kits

December: Snowflake Fun

January: Winter Games

February: Warm and Cozy

Stop by Youth Services every month for a new take-home activity kit. Kits are categorized by age group with different abilities and skills in mind, available while supplies last.



Game Day with the DuPage Children's Museum

Wed., Dec. 27 • 10 am–8 pm

All ages. Winter break blues? Come spend the day playing with some of DuPage Children's Museum traveling exhibits! *Register for a reminder text or email.*

★ NOON ★
★ YEAR'S ★
★ EVE (EVE) ★

Noon Year's Eve (Eve) Storytime **R**

Saturday, Dec. 30

11:30 am–12:15 pm

Ages 3–6 with caregivers. Ring in the new year—without staying up until midnight! Enjoy stories and crafts, countdown to noon, and explore family activity stations.



Juggling Funny Stories with Chris Fascione

Saturday, Jan. 27 • 10:30–11:15 am

For families, ages 3+. You'll be laughing out loud as family entertainer Chris Fascione brings children's stories to life with his high-spirited and innovative performances. Full of energy, humor, and imagination, Chris creates colorful characters through his unique combination of acting, storytelling, comedy, and juggling.

Lego Club

Thursdays, Dec. 14, Jan. 11, Feb. 8 • 6–7 pm

All ages. Visit Youth Services to build a Lego creation to display for all to enjoy. *Register for a reminder email or text.*

National Take Your Child to the Library Day

Saturday, Feb. 3

All ages. Visit the library today! Enjoy special crafts, scavenger hunts, trivia, and drawings. *Register for a reminder email or text.*

Make and Take Valentine Workshop

Saturday, Feb. 10–Sunday, Feb. 11

All ages. Show your loved ones you care by making a special Valentine card or artwork! *Register for a reminder text or email.*



KIDS (AGES 5-12)

Programs with a  require advance registration.

Junior Library Helpers

Training: Monday, Dec. 4
6:30–7 pm

Ages 9–11. Too young to be a Teen Volunteer but still want to help around the library? Junior Library Helpers assist with simple tasks while getting a sneak peek of what teen volunteering is like. Attend training, then help at the library on your own schedule (15–30 minutes, 1–2 times/month).



Family Yum Club

Mondays, Jan. 29 and Feb. 26 • 6:30–7:30 pm

Ages 5–10 with caregiver. Does your family like to travel? Yum Club explores new places through food! Taste snacks and treats from a different country each month plus learn games and crafts or hear a story. Please note that we do not know the ingredients of every snack; if food allergies are a concern, proceed with caution. Space is limited.

Creativity Lab

Mondays • 5–5:45 pm

Dec. 11: Cookie Challenge

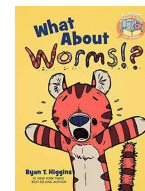
Jan. 8: Clay Creations

Ages 8–12. Art, science, and technology, oh my! Join us for a new hands-on activity each month. See online calendar for more details.

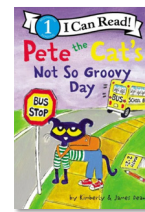
Early Reader Book Club

Saturdays • 10:10:45 am 

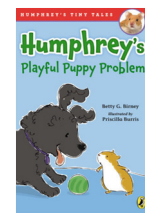
Ages 5–7 with caregiver. Just starting to read or exploring early chapter books? Join us to read together, talk about books, and do crafts. Books and refreshments will be provided.



Dec. 9: *What About Worms!?* by Mo Willems and Ryan T. Higgins



Jan. 6: *Pete the Cat's Not So Groovy Day* by Kimberly and James Dean



Feb. 3: *Humphrey's Playful Puppy Problem* by Betty G. Birney

Read with Rover

Sundays, Dec. 17, Jan. 21,
Feb. 18 • 2–3 pm

For readers. Love reading? Or dogs? Practice reading aloud with a licensed therapy dog from the Fox Valley Therapy Dog Club. Register for a 15-minute time slot and each month separately.



Things that Make You Go Eew!

Wednesday, Dec. 13 • 4:30 pm

Ages 5–8. The sticky feel of spider webs,

RED OAK
NATURE CENTER

the stinky smell of skunks, the slimy trail of a slug...these things might make you go "eew!" Learn just how important being gross is to surviving. Be prepared to use all your senses to get the full experience. Presented by Red Oak Nature Center.

Environmental Escape Room

Monday, Jan. 22

5:30–6:30 pm

Ages 5–10 with caregiver. Learn about different environmental issues to be aware of and ways to better the environment. We will talk about forest fires, pollution, and different types of energy through a fun and engaging "escape room" game. Presented by IMSA's Club Terra.




Mini Monoprints with Water Street Studios

Monday, Feb. 12 • 7–8 pm

Ages 8–12 with caregiver.

Learn to create your own monoprints! A monotype produces a completely unique print with a process that is unpredictable, expressive, and unique. You will leave with several completed and unique monoprints for hanging or gift giving.

TEENS

Registration  is required for all teen programs, unless noted, beginning on Monday, Nov. 20, via the online events calendar at messengerpl.org, by phone 630-801-4340, or in person. For drop-in programs, you may register online to receive a reminder email or text.

All About Scholarships

Thursday, Dec. 14 • 7–8 pm

Gr. 11–12 and parents. An introduction to applying for scholarships, including the basics of a scholarship application with tips from successful applicants and reputable sources of information. Presented by the Illinois Student Assistance Commission.

Teen Paint and Sip

Thursday, Feb. 1 • 6:30–8 pm

Ages 11–18. Come sip some cozy drinks while watching a video tutorial from The Art Sherpa. Beginners welcome.

Terror in the Woods Escape Room

Friday, Jan. 5 • 1:30–2:30 pm OR 3–4 pm

Ages 11–18. You are enjoying a late summer camping trip when you discover that you are not alone in the woods. Someone is hunting you and you can't find your car keys! Using nothing but your wits, solve the puzzles and you and your friends will escape the room and live to camp again.



Taylor Swift Celebration

Thursday, Feb. 15 • 7–8 pm

Ages 11–18. Come celebrate and discuss the great Taylor Swift with an evening filled with friendship bracelets, trivia, and singing. *Register for a reminder text or email.*

ADULT PROGRAMS

Call or check our online events calendar for more details, up-to-date information, and registration. All programs are held in the library unless otherwise noted; please register **R** in advance. Teens over the age of 16 are always welcome to register. Art Club requires a registered adult with any teen.

Wits Workout **R**

Fridays • 10:30–11:30 am

Wits Workout is an engaging, interactive, and educational brain health program designed especially for seniors. Learn about brain health and participate in activities to strengthen your memory and increase your brain power!

**Dec. 8 • Game Day!
(Sensory Memory)**

**Jan. 12 • Women in Herstory
(Long-term Memory)**

**Feb. 9 • Take a Test Drive
(Focus and Attention)**



**WITS
WORKOUT**

Holiday Cookie Decorating with Kristyn Slick **R**

**Monday, Dec. 11
7–8 pm**

***Zoom only**

In this beginner sugar cookie decorating class, make fun holiday-themed cookies that will wow your friends and family! Focus on how to prepare the icing and on step-by-step guidance using that icing to create a delicious art form you can eat. *This is a virtual program, so please register with an email to receive the link to join.*



Love and Marriage: Musical Theater Style **R**

Saturday, Feb. 3 • 2–3 pm

In this heartwarming cabaret, Matt and Cynthia Gruel chronicle the many stages of relationships while performing varied and powerful songs from the Broadway stage. Incorporating touching and humorous anecdotes from their own marriage, the couple explores the highs and lows of dating, separation, marriage, children, and growing older together.

Teen DIY: Waterless Snow Globe **R**

Thursday, Dec. 28 • 7–8 pm

Ages 11–18. Come DIY a waterless snow globe with us! Why go out in the cold when you can make and enjoy your own miniature winter wonderland scene?



Teen Yum Club: Germany **R**

**Thursday, Jan. 18
7–8 pm**

Ages 11–18. Like to try new things? Wish you could travel around the world? Yum Club is a place to explore new places through food! This month, taste snacks and treats from Germany. Space is limited.



Teen Taste Test: Generic vs Name Brand **R**

Thursday, Feb. 29 • 7–8 pm

Ages 11–18. Ever wondered if name brand products are actually better than generic grocery store items? Let's figure it out! We are going to blindly try and compare generic and name brand items to determine the best of the best.

Teen Take Out

Stop by the Teen Space each month to pick up a fun craft or activity you can take home and make on your own time. New kits debut on the first of the month, so grab one before they disappear! *While supplies last.*



DECEMBER
Elf Interactive
Movie Kits



JANUARY
Crochet and
Knit Kits



FEBRUARY
Catapults

Genealogy Drop-in
Fridays, Dec. 15, Jan. 19,
Feb. 16 • 2–4 pm

Thinking about tracing your roots but don't know where to start? MPL's own Adult Services Librarian, Nancy, will show you how to access free genealogical resources through the library, offer search tips, and provide advice.

A Classic Television Christmas

Saturday, Dec. 16 • 2–3 pm

As television grew in popularity, so did the seasonal Christmas special. Many classic television shows portrayed their beloved characters celebrating the holidays and entertaining special guests—including Santa! Join film historian Dr. Annette Bochenek for a presentation about classic television Christmas shows and what made them special. The program includes a multimedia presentation consisting of photos, video clips, and captivating stories.



The Great North American Eclipse

Monday, Jan. 15 • 7–8 pm
Did you see the solar eclipse in 2017? Get ready to do it all over again! The next impressive solar eclipse is coming up in April 2024. Learn what eclipses are, where to see them, when to look, and how to view solar eclipses safely. Michelle Nichols is back to give us the scoop.

Chair Yoga

Friday, Jan. 26
10:30–11:30 am
Join us as we stretch our minds and bodies with Chair Yoga. This series of gentle movements and meditations, done while seated, will relax and invigorate you.



Choosing the Right Software for Genealogy

Thursday, Jan. 25 • 7–8 pm
Ready to take your genealogy to the next level by investing in software? Genealogist Jenny Warner will explain all the genealogical programs available today and discuss the pros and cons of each program.

Knife Skills: Purchasing, Sharpening, Handling

Monday, Feb. 12 • 7–8 pm
Award-winning Chef Susan Maddox presents everything you need to know to improve your knife skills in the kitchen. Learn to clean, slice, and supreme fruit. See different vegetable cutting techniques, including julienne and different dice cut sizes.

Blues Music in American Culture

Saturday, Feb. 24 • 2–3:30 pm
Join us to welcome back award-winning blues musician and storyteller Fruteland Jackson as he lays out the history of blues music from its African beginnings to the Great Migration and the Urban Conversion, highlighting Chicago-style blues. Experience live blues music throughout the program.



NORTH AURORA Community Group MEETINGS

Fox Valley Writers Group
Alternating Tuesdays • 6:45 pm
Contact: foxvalleywriters@gmail.com

North Aurora Garden Club
First Monday of each month • 6:30 pm
Contact: Gail Wilke (630) 618-6467

North Aurora Lions Club
Second Tuesday of each month • 7 pm
Contact: northauroralions@gmail.com

Toastmasters: Timely Talkers
1st, 3rd & 4th Wednesday of each month • 7 - 8:30 pm
4th Wednesday is on Zoom only
Contact: Dan Velasco at danvelasco123@gmail.com

Toastmasters: Advanced Expressives
Fourth Saturday of each month
10:15 am - Noon
Contact: John Jerrard (630) 688-8438

Yum Club

Tuesdays, Jan. 23, Feb. 27
7–8 pm
Do you have an adventurous palate? Do you want to travel the world without leaving the library? Join us for the Yum Club, where foodies come together to taste snacks and treats from a different country each month. Spots are very limited, so please register to attend. Those with food allergies should proceed with caution.

ART CLUB FOR ADULTS

Beginners welcome! Register **R** in advance. For adults and teens over 16 (with registered adult).

Holiday Card Workshop **R**

Saturday, Dec. 9 • 10 am–Noon

OR Tuesday, Dec. 19 • 6:30–8:30 pm

Join us for a holiday card making class featuring a variety of supplies and techniques. *Registration starts Nov. 1.*

Light Up Constellation Hangings **R**

Saturday, Jan. 13 • 10 am–Noon

Brighten your space with a unique wall hanging featuring your zodiac sign or other constellation, complete with glowing stars and an on-off switch. *Registration starts Dec. 1.*

Swinging Lovebird Wall Hanging **R**

Saturday, Feb. 10 • 10 am–Noon

OR Tuesday, Feb. 20 • 6:30–8:30 pm

Make a cute wall hanging featuring handcrafted lovebirds on a swing. *Registration starts Jan. 1.*



Pink Cherry Blossom Tree Painting **R**

Tuesday, Jan. 16 • 6:30–8:30 pm

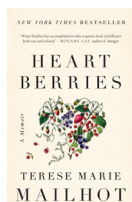
Learn an easy acrylic painting method to make a lovely cherry blossom tree on black canvas.

Registration starts Dec. 1.

ADULT DISCUSSION GROUPS

Digital copies of book discussion titles may be available on Hoopla, Libby, or Boundless (formerly Axis360); print copies are available for checkout at the User Services Desk. Please register in advance.

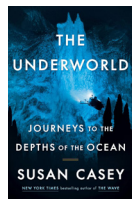
Narrative Nonfiction Book Group **R** | Mondays • 7-8 pm



Dec. 11
Heart Berries
by Terese Marie Mailhot



Jan. 8
Drive Thru Dreams: A Journey Through the Heart of America's Fast-Food Kingdom
by Adam Chandler



Feb. 12
The Underworld: Journey to the Depths of the Ocean
by Susan Casey



THANK YOU

A special thank you for the generous donations made to our library this past season. We received a monetary donation from the North Aurora Garden Club for new bulbs, a set of rare books for our local history collection, a \$1,000 donation made to the Fox Valley Community Foundation to be used for programming, generous plant donations, and a significant amount of legacy tulip bulbs from Holland. A local donor, wishing to remain anonymous, also donated a beautiful bench for our back area. This bench will sit amongst new plantings and tulips, and will be lovingly used at outdoor performances. Hooray!

Morning Book Discussion Group **R** | Wed. • 10:30-11:30 am



Dec. 6
The Woman in the Library
by Sulari Gentill



Jan. 3
Remarkably Bright Creatures
by Shelby Van Pelt



Feb. 7
Klara and the Sun
by Kazuo Ishiguro

Evening Book Discussion Group **R** | Thursdays • 7-8 pm



Dec. 7
Demon Copperhead
by Barbara Kingsolver



Jan. 4
Once Upon a River
by Diane Setterfield



Feb. 1
The Lonely Hearts Book Club
by Lucy Gilmore



MESSENGER PUBLIC LIBRARY OF NORTH AURORA | Winter 2024

LIBRARY HOURS

Monday-Thursday
9 am - 9 pm
Friday-Saturday **Sunday**
9 am - 5 pm 1 - 5 pm

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Mark Saperston, President
Mary Steed
Tanya Berley
Peggy Carlson
Elizabeth Cranford
James R. Hicks
Darlene Bailey

The Library will be closed on the following dates:

Saturday, Dec. 23 through Monday, Dec. 25
Christmas Weekend and Day
Sunday, Dec. 31 and Monday, Jan. 1
New Year's Eve and Day



DIRECTOR'S CORNER

Sometimes I do feel like I'm the luckiest person alive to work in a library, and I'll share a few reasons why. This past season I discovered the joy of an air fryer (wow!) and found many cookbooks to help me. I used a Museum Adventure Pass to go to the Brookfield Zoo and Cantigny for free, and love this program because it is such an asset for the budget-minded person. I found a historical fiction title about female spies during World War II, "The Golden Doves," perfect for my Cook and Book Discussion group. I checked out a mobile hotspot to use on a camping trip and deployed the copier to make umpteen copies of things needed for my college age son. I heard local talent perform at concerts on our back lawn, the notes of unique music played under summer stars.

One of the best patron interactions was chatting to a smiling woman

seated on the new engraved benches, writing in her journal while looking at our flowers while enjoying the sunshine. We chatted for a good long spell, and she said that she used to feel like life was passing her by very quickly and she wanted to slow down to savor simple experiences. Now when something beautiful strikes her fancy, she truly stops, sits, and tries to live deeply in the moment. I was so inspired by this patron that I named these little, small life moments that bring you joy "glimmer moments." I'm sharing some of my "glimmer moments" that happened to me at Messenger and hope you visit and find things that sparkle and shine for you as well.



Shannon Halikias
Library Director
shannon@messengerpl.org