MESSENGER PUBLIC LIBRARY OF NORTH AURORA NEWSLETTER



Gingerbread House Challenge 2026

Drop-off: Nov 21-Dec 4
Voting: Dec 6 • 2-3:30 pm

Put your gingerbread house making skills to the test: design your own gingerbread creation and bring it to the library from November 21-December 4. Enter as a family team or individually! Pick up a copy of the rules and entry form at any library service desk beginning Nov. 1. Public voting and award presentation will be at our Holiday Open House on December 6.

Adult Winter Reading Challenge

December 1-January 31

Adults can participate in Winter Reading in the library or online to win prizes! Check out our website, stop in the library, or call the Help Desk for more information.

Puzzle Races R

Saturday, January 23
For Families • 9:30-10:30 am
For Teens and Adults
11:30 am-12:30 pm

How fast can you and your friends or family assemble a puzzle? Show off your skills at MPL's third annual puzzle competition! Please arrive a few minutes early so we can begin promptly.



Born to Read

For babies up to 6 months old. North Aurora residents who are expecting or have a new baby can receive a bag of materials to support early literacy for their newborn, introduce library resources, and kickstart a lifelong love of libraries. We'll drop it off at your door or you can pick it up from the library. To learn more, visit *messengerpl.org/early-learners*.



MPL Holiday Open House

Sunday, December 6 • 2-4 pm

The Library Board and Staff invite everyone to join us for our annual festive winter gathering. Enjoy the Gingerbread House Contest, crafts, music, and have your photo taken by a professional photographer in front of our decorated fireplace. Check the event calendar to sign up for a photo session.



Kindness Hats

November 1–December 30

Help keep our community warm this winter. Pick up a knitting or crochet kit at the Adult Services Help Desk starting November 1, or use your own materials. Donate hats of any size or color by Dec 30—every hat helps!

YOUTH SERVICES

Registration (R) is required for all programs beginning on November 20, via the online events calendar at messengerpl.org, by phone (630) 801-4340, or in person. For drop-in program reminders, use the ***Remind Me*** or ***Add to My Calendar*** buttons on the calendar.

BABIES-PRESCHOOL

STORYTIMES

Baby Storytime (R)
Tuesdays • 9:30-10 am OR 10:15-10:45 am
January 5-February 9
Ages 0-24 months with a caregiver. Enjoy stories, songs, and movement to help foster early literacy skills.

Toddler Storytime (R)
Thursdays • 10-10:30 am
January 7-February 11
Ages 2-3 with caregiver. Enjoy stories, rhymes, and songs while building pre-literacy skills and learning about the world around us. Siblings welcome.

Preschool Storytime (R)
Thursdays • 10:45-11:15 am
January 7-February 11
Ages 3-5. Enjoy stories and songs to build pre-literacy skills and learn about the world around us. Preschool Storytime is a first "on our own" experience; caregivers must remain in the youth department during the program.

Baby's First Craft (R)
Monday, December 14
10-11 am
Ages 0-12 months. Join us for a quick storytime and time to create your baby's first art piece.





Stuffed Animal Storytime (R)
Friday, December 18
10-10:30 am
Ages 2-5 with caregiver. Lovies and stuffies and teddy bears, oh my! Put your stuffies down for an early nap with a special stuffed animal story time!



Miss Jamie's Winter Sing-Along (R)
Saturday, February 6
10-10:45 am
Aimed at ages 2-8. Join Miss Jamie from the Farm and celebrate the wonders of winter!

Preschool STEAM (R)
10-10:30 am
Thursday, December 3
Friday, January 15
Wednesday, January 27
Thursday, February 18
Ages 3-5 with a caregiver. Join us to explore books and activities based on Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and/or Math.

PLAYTIMES @ THE LIBRARY

Drop by to enjoy playtime with your little ones! See the Events Calendar for more details.

Sensory Playtime	Saturday	Dec 5	10-11 am	*Ages 0-5 with caregiver*
Sensory Playtime	Monday	Jan 11	10-11 am	*Ages 0-5 with caregiver*
Toddler Playdough Party	Monday	Jan 25	10-11 am	*Ages 2-3 with caregiver*
Sensory Playtime	Monday	Feb 8	10-11 am	*Ages 0-5 with caregiver*
Baby Tunnel Time	Monday	Feb 22	10-11 am	*Ages 0-2 with caregiver*

ALL AGES

Winter Book Subscriptions (¡también en español!) R

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



Lego Club

Thursdays • 6-7 pm
Dec 10, Jan 14 & Feb 11

All ages. Visit Youth Services to build a Lego creation to display for all to enjoy.

STEAM Activity Kits

Stop by Youth Services for a new take-home STEAM kit each month. Available while supplies last.

KIDS (AGES 5-12)

Programs with a R require advance registration.

Kid Librarian R

Dec 1, Jan 1, or Feb 1

Ages 7-10. Be a Kid Librarian for a month! Choose a topic and create a book display. See more information and register on the event calendar.





Pokémon Club R

Wednesdays • 4:30-5:15 pm
Dec 9, Jan 6, Feb 3

Ages 7-11. Join fellow trainers to enjoy fun Pokémon crafts and activities. Share your love for all things Pokémon!

Read With Rover R

Sundays, Jan 17, Feb 21
2-3 pm

For readers. Love reading? Or dogs? Practice reading aloud with a licensed therapy dog from the Fox Valley Therapy Dog Club. If siblings are likely to read to the same dog, please register for a single time slot.



Books & Bites R

Saturdays • 10:30-11:15 am
December 19: *The Vanderbeekers of 141st Street* by Karina Yan Glaser
January 16: *The Very, Very Far North* by Dan Bar-el
February 20: *Ways to Make Sunshine* by Renée Watson

Ages 8-12. Let's learn how to make a tasty snack and chow down while listening to a short story or chapter book teaser.

Kidinary Cooking Classes R

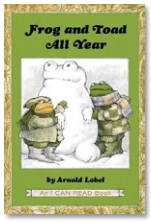
Thursday, January 14
Ages 4-7 • 3:45-4:45 pm
Ages 8-12 • 5:00-6:00 pm
Ages 11-16 • 6:15-7:15 pm

Let your budding chef explore the culinary arts and discover their inner chef! This session's menu is Chinese New Year Potstickers. 100% nut free with dairy and gluten accommodations available.

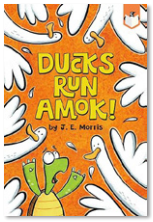
Early Reader Book Club

Saturdays • 10-10:45 am R

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 provided for the first six registrants.



DEC 12
Frog & Toad All Year



JAN 9
Ducks Run Amok!



FEB 13
Happy Valentine's Day, Charlie Brown!

Creativity Lab: Maker Play R

Mondays • 6:30-7:30 pm
January 25: DIY Stamp Art
February 8: 3D Holiday Cards

Ages 8-12. Explore the Maker Lab! We'll make buttons and work on a new project every month. For December, sign up for Pokémon Club on 12/9 to make your own perler bead Pokémon!

TEENS

Registration R is required for all programs beginning on November 20, via the online events calendar at messengerpl.org, by phone (630) 801-4340, or in person. For drop-in program reminders, use the ***Remind Me*** or ***Add to My Calendar*** buttons on the calendar.

Teen Space

December: Yarn Hat Ornament
January: Lego Challenges
February: Victorian Puzzle Purse

Ages 11-18. Come hang out in your Teen Space and complete a fun project with your friends. Each month a new project or craft will drop! Grab a friend and come make with us.

Teen Take Out

December: Crochet & Knit Kits
January: Yarn Wrapped Wire Words
February: Rice Fantasy Maps

Stop by the Teen Space for a fun craft or activity to take home and make on your own time. Grab a kit before they disappear!

Teen Book Box Subscription R

Grades 6-12. Enjoy a new selection of books every month! Pick up your books on the 10th of December, January, and February. See calendar for more information. Messenger Library card required.



TEEN VOLUNTEERS

Students are welcome to volunteer at the library year-round! Visit messengerpl.org/teenvolunteers for age/grade requirements and to apply.



Teen Yum Club: Spain R

Thursday, Dec 17 • 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! Those with food allergies should proceed with caution.

All About Scholarships R

Thursday, Dec 10 • 7-8 pm

Grades 11-12 + adults. 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 Maker Lab: Beaded Tapestry R

Thursday, January 7
7-8 pm

Ages 11-18. Come create! We will create tapestries out of pony beads to decorate your room. Bring your creative juices!

Kidinary Cooking Class R

Thursday, Jan 14 • 6:15-7:15 pm

Ages 11-16. Let your budding chef explore the culinary arts and discover their inner chef! This session's menu is Chinese New Year Potstickers. 100% nut free with dairy and gluten accommodations available.

Puzzle Races R

Saturday, January 23
For Teens and Adults
11:30 am-12:30 pm

How fast can you and your friends or family assemble a puzzle? Show off your skills at MPL's third annual puzzle competition! Please arrive a few minutes early so we can begin promptly.

Brew Your Own Toner R

Thursday, Feb 4 • 6:30-8 pm

Ages 11-18. Get ready to create skincare magic. Learn skin care basics and how to achieve healthy, happy skin. Plus, you'll get to make your very own toner to take home and continue your skincare goals.

Taskmaster Teen Game Show R



Monday, Feb 15 • 2:30-4 pm

Ages 11-18. Inspired by the British game show, let's play a few rounds of Taskmaster. Use your imagination, intellect, creativity, deviousness and more to complete ridiculous tasks as quickly and completely as possible. Earn points that could win you the winner's trophy!

ADULT PROGRAMS

Registration (R) is required for all programs, unless noted, beginning on November 20, via the online events calendar at messengerpl.org, by phone (630) 896-0240, ext. 3, or in person. For drop-in program reminders, use the ***Remind Me*** or ***Add to My Calendar*** buttons on the calendar.



Tech Tuesdays: Drop-In Technology Help

Tuesdays • 3-5 pm
December 1 and 8
January 5 and 12
February 2 and 9

Drop-in program offering 15-30 minute one-on-one tech support sessions.

Make & Mingle at MPL

Thursdays • 6-7 pm
Dec 3, Jan 7, Feb 4

Drop in to create, chat, and use the library's Makerspace! Each month, try a different simple project that uses Makerspace equipment and supplies. No crafting experience necessary—just stop by and make something!

Iroquois Theatre Fire (R)

Thursday, Dec 3 • 7-8 pm

VIRTUAL PROGRAM

Explore the 1903 tragedy that transformed fire safety in theaters and public spaces through storytelling and historic imagery. Presented in partnership with neighboring libraries.



Sourcebooks Book Buzz (R)

Wednesday, December 9
6-7:30 pm

Looking for new books to read this winter? A representative from Sourcebooks gives you the buzz on exciting new and forthcoming titles to add to your list.

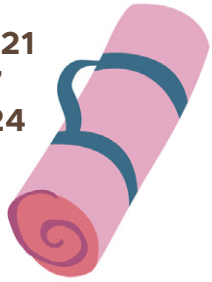
All About Scholarships (R)

Thursday, Dec 10 • 7-8 pm

Grades 11-12 + adults. The Illinois Student Assistance Commission gives an introduction to applying for scholarships, including the basics of a scholarship application with tips from successful applicants and reputable sources of information.

All-Levels Community Yoga (Mat-Based) (R)

Various • 6-7 pm
December 16 and 21
January 13 and 27
February 10 and 24

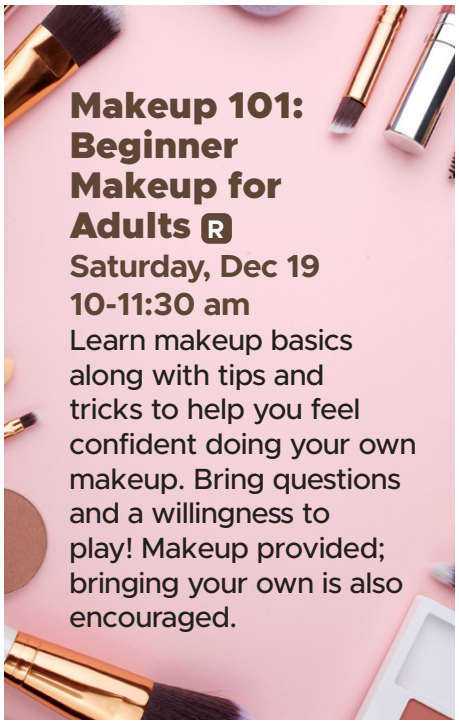


All-levels yoga class designed to help you move, stretch, and unwind.

Drop-In Crochet and Knit Club

Thursdays • 6-8 pm
Dec 17, Jan 14, Feb 11

Relax and connect with fellow fiber arts enthusiasts in this drop-in program for experienced crafters; bring your own materials and projects, and enjoy provided refreshments!



Tai Chi: Moving Relaxation (R)

Fridays • 11 am-Noon
Jan 8 and Feb 5

Put your mind and body in harmony! Learn how the simple flow of Tai Chi can help you find inner peace, improve balance and coordination, and strengthen your body without injury or strain. Beginners are welcome.

Help the Forest: Become a Community Scientist! (R)

Monday, Jan 11 • 6:30-7:30 pm

Learn how you can help the Forest Preserve District of Kane County monitor and protect local forests through community science programs and training opportunities.

The following virtual programs are all made possible by Illinois Libaries Present.

VIRTUAL PROGRAMS

Funny on Purpose with Sasheer Zamata R



Tuesday, January 19 • 7-8 pm

Reset's Sasha-Ann Simons moderates a discussion with Zamata on her creative journey, the evolving landscape of comedy, and how humor can create space for connection and conversation. *Please register to receive a Zoom link.*

Navigating Hallowed Ground with David Grann R



Thursday, February 18 • 7-8 pm

Author and journalist David Grann navigates bizarre, often violent historical episodes, lending both an immediacy that freshens their intrigue while considering them within their historical contexts. *Please register to receive a Zoom link.*

Gentle Yoga for Older Adults R



Friday, January 15
10:30-11:30 am

Gentle, beginner-friendly yoga with Amy Jackson from The Perch. Bring a mat or towel and wear comfortable clothes. No experience necessary!

Mardi Gras Inspired Super Bowl Snacks R

Saturday, January 16
10:30 am-Noon

Join Chef Susan Maddox for fun snack recipes perfect for your Super Bowl or Mardi Gras party!

Quiet Beginnings: Welcoming the New Year Through Meditation R

Thursday, January 21
6:30-7:30 pm

Start 2027 with clarity and intention as instructor Umesh Bhatia introduces the benefits of meditation and guides you through a practice session.



Estate Planning Explained R

Wednesday, Feb 3 • 7-8 pm

Jim Flanagan explains estate planning basics, including wills, trusts, probate, and powers of attorney, to help you protect your loved ones and plan for the future.

Winter Sowing with a Master Gardener R

Saturday, Feb 6 • 2-3:30 pm

Join a Kane County Master Gardener and discover how to start plants outdoors, in winter, for next year's garden. See a demonstration of how to upcycle containers into mini greenhouses, then create your own sample to take home. Coordinated with the Illinois Extension Office and the North Aurora Garden Club.



Meditative Watercolor Painting R

Friday, February 19
10:30 am-Noon

Focus on mindfulness and creative expression while learning gentle watercolor techniques with Amy Jackson from The Perch. All supplies are included.

Beginning Crochet Series: Roses R

Wednesday, Feb 24 • 6-8 pm
AND Thursday, Feb 25 • 6-8 pm

Transform yarn into beautiful roses. This two-part instruction shows foundation and petal construction, step-by-step. For ages 16+ with basic crochet knowledge (single crochet). All supplies are included. Registration for session one covers both sessions.



History of the Hershey Chocolate Company R

Saturday, February 27
10-11 am

Milton S. Hershey worked hard and failed often before his chocolate company was finally successful, then his wife decided to give it all away. Laura Keyes presents an illustrated lecture on the "behind the scenes" story of this beloved American company.

ART CLUB FOR ADULTS

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

Sea Glass Trees (R)

Saturday, December 12 • 10 am-Noon

Bring a wave of coastal charm to your holidays! Create a stunning standing sea glass holiday tree, sparkling with ocean-inspired beauty. *Registration opens November 1.*

Paint a Snowman (R)

Tuesday, December 15 • 6-8 pm

Paint your own whimsical snowman on a rustic bark-edged wood slice. A festive keepsake to take home and display all season! *Registration opens November 1.*

Kinusaiga Art (R)

Saturday, January 9 • 10 am-Noon OR
Tuesday, January 19 • 6:30-8:30 pm

Learn to do Kinusaiga, the Japanese textile art using fabric scraps to create quilt-like pictures without any sewing. All materials are provided, but you may also bring light-weight fabric scraps from home. *Registration opens Dec 1.*

PLEASE NOTE: March Art Club-Project TBA. *Registration starts Feb 1.*

Easy Highland Cow Painting (R)



Saturday, February 13 • 10 am-Noon OR
Tuesday, February 16 • 6:30-8:30 pm

Bring the warmth, character, and rustic charm of the Highlands into your home! Paint an adorable Highland cow by following a beginner-friendly tutorial. *Registration opens January 2.*

ADULT BOOK CLUBS

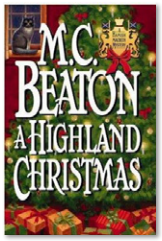
Digital copies of book discussion titles may be available on Hoopla, Libby, or The Palace Project; a limited number of print copies are available for checkout at the User Services Desk. *Please register in advance.*

Morning Book Club (R)

Wednesdays 10:30-11:30 am



DECEMBER 2
***Atmosphere* by Taylor Jenkins Reid**



JANUARY 6
***A Highland Christmas* by M.C.Beaton**



FEBRUARY 3
***The Pirate Queen* by Ariel Lawhon**

All are welcome at our book clubs! We hope to see you there!

MPL Book Club Party (R)

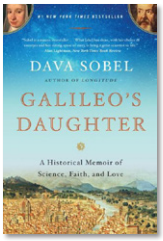
Monday, Dec 7• 6:30-8 pm

Celebrate MPL's adult book clubs with book-themed games, brain teasers, snacks, crafts, and socializing—drop in anytime or stay for the whole party!

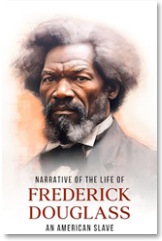


Narrative Nonfiction Book Club (R) Mondays • 7-8 pm

No December Meeting



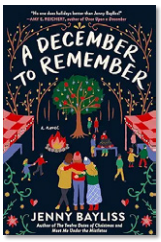
JANUARY 11
***Galileo's Daughter: A Historical Memoir of Science, Faith, and Love* by Dava Sobel**



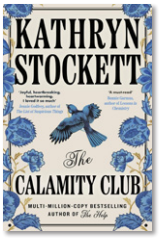
FEBRUARY 8
***Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave* by Frederick Douglass**

Evening Book Club (R)

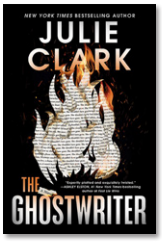
Thursdays • 7-8 pm



DECEMBER 17
***A December to Remember* by Jenny Bayliss**



JANUARY 21
***The Calamity Club* by Kathryn Stockett**



FEBRUARY 18
***The Ghostwriter* by Julia Clark**

MESSENGER PUBLIC LIBRARY OF NORTH AURORA

113 Oak Street
North Aurora, Illinois 60542
(630) 896-0240
messengerpl.org

RESIDENTIAL CUSTOMER

LIBRARY HOURS
Monday-Thursday
9 am–9 pm

Friday-Saturday
9 am–5 pm

Sunday
1–5 pm

BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Mark Saperston, President
Darlene Bailey
Tanya Berley
Katherine Bogle
Peggy Carlson
Elizabeth Cranford
Laura McCoy

LIBRARY BOARD MEETINGS
Thursdays • 7–8 pm
December 10, January 14, February 11

THE LIBRARY WILL BE CLOSED ON THE FOLLOWING DATES:
Thursday, December 24
Friday, December 25
Thursday, December 31
Friday, January 1



DIRECTOR'S CORNER



As the new year begins, we reflect on the past and look ahead. What will 2027 bring to our nation, our community, and our library? In that spirit, I'm sharing a piece of our history and an update on a project shaping MPL's future. The jewel of MPL's local history collection is over 50 handwritten diaries by John Frederick Schneider, son of a North Aurora founder and grandfather of library namesake Emeline Messenger. A local mill owner and operator turned farmer, Schneider recorded daily weather, work, goods exchanged, births, deaths, and local and national events from over 150 years ago.

We are piloting digitization of the Schneider diaries to assess the process from start to finish. Working with four diaries from selected years in the 1800s, we are evaluating vendor partnerships and digitization quality. Each diary generates an average of 180 images, and some images are undergoing restoration for readability.

We aim to make the diaries available through the Illinois Digital Archives, with open public access. The project is funded by our foundation funds held at The Community Foundation of the Fox River Valley and is expected to take three years. Please let me know if you'd like to contribute to preserving North Aurora's past as we prepare for its growing future.

Shannon Halikias
Library Director
shannon@messengerpl.org