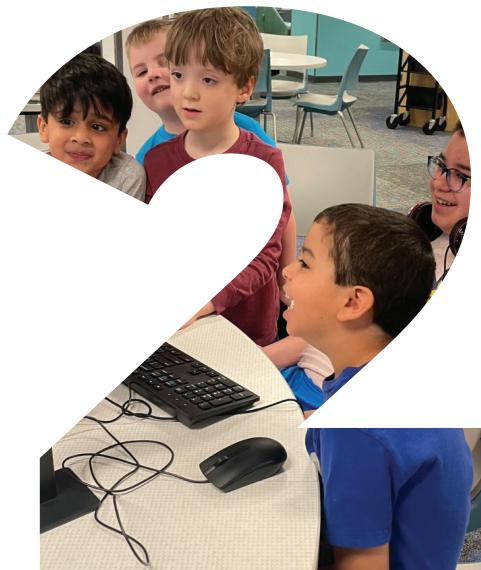




MORTON GROVE  
PUBLIC LIBRARY

FEBRUARY-MARCH 2026



YEAR IN REVIEW

# 2025 IN REVIEW

You sure kept us busy in 2025!  
Let's look back at the stats for  
one great year

## 323,205 Total Checkouts



**243,598**  
physical materials  
checked out



**79,607**  
digital materials  
checked out



**116,140**  
total visitors



**38,948**  
questions answered  
at the public desks



**9,529**  
hours  
study rooms  
were used



**15,577**  
computer  
sessions



**774**  
passport  
appointments



**241**  
license plate  
renewals



**1,135**  
events  
scheduled



**25,864**  
people attended  
our events

## Storytimes and More . . .

### Monday Morning Playgroup

Birth to age 5 with a parent/caregiver

Mondays, 9:30–11 am

Drop in for some open-ended play and meet new friends at our weekly playgroup.

### Bedtime Stories & More

Birth to age 5 with a parent/caregiver

Mondays, February 2 and March 2, 6:30–7 pm

Wednesdays, February 18 and March 18, 6:30–7 pm

Spend time winding down for bed with a few stories and songs.

### Listen Up!

Birth to age 5 with a parent/caregiver

Tuesdays, 10–10:45 am or 11:15 am–12 pm

Listen to stories, sing songs, and more at this all-ages storytime!



### Toddler Time

Ages 18–36 months with a parent/caregiver

Wednesdays, February 4–18 and March 4–18

10–11 am

Get your little one acquainted with the Library at this toddler-riffic storytime. To attend, children must be between 18 and 36 months old at the time of the class.

### Wee Read

Birth to 24 months with a parent/caregiver

Fridays, 9:30–10:15 am or 11–11:45 am

Stories and songs for our littlest listeners. Please bring a tummy time mat or blanket for the baby.

Older siblings welcome.

### Family Storytime

Birth to age 5 with a parent/caregiver

Saturdays, February 7 and March 7, 10–10:45 am

Bring the whole family to this storytime filled with books, songs, and fun.

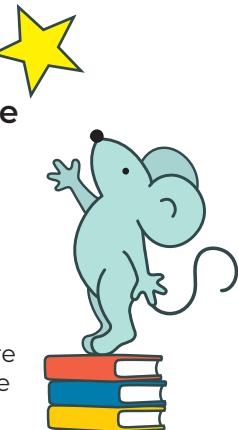
REGISTRATION begins January 15 for February events and February 15 for March events unless otherwise noted.

## Valentine's Day Storytime

Ages 3-5 with a parent/caregiver  
Thursday, February 12, 10-10:45 am  
Join us for stories, songs, and rhymes all about friendship and love. Then make a fizzy heart craft! **R**

## 1000 Books Before Kindergarten Storytime

Birth to age 5 with a parent/caregiver  
Thursday, March 5  
10-10:45 am  
Join us for a picture book celebration including stories, songs, and a craft. 1000 Books participants and newcomers are welcome. Books from storytime can be added to your log!



## Mathematics Circus

Ages 3-5 with a parent/caregiver  
Sundays, February 15 and March 15, 2-3 pm  
Come one, come all to a math-tacular spectacular! We'll leap into mathematics with games, stories, and creative play that add up to a circus full of fun. **R**

## Ready, Set, Alphabet

Ages 2-5 with a parent/caregiver  
Saturday, February 21, 10-10:45 am  
Drop in and build early literacy skills with alphabet activities. Be prepared to get messy!



## Tots Dealing with Big Feelings Storytime

Ages 3-5 with a parent/caregiver  
Thursday, March 19, 10-10:45 am  
We'll talk about managing feelings through stories, songs, and activities and leave this storytime with strategies to handle emotions that can be overwhelming. This session's feeling focus: Happiness. **R**



## Cuddle Bugs Baby Massage

Birth to 24 months with a parent/caregiver  
Saturday, March 28  
10-11 am  
Explore the health benefits and techniques of infant massage, stretching, and aromatherapy with certified infant massage instructor, Loredana Tomasello. This class will also include information on toddler techniques and parental self-care. **R**



## Mini Music Makers

Ages 2-5 with a parent/caregiver  
Thursdays, February 26 and March 26  
10-10:45 am  
Feel the rhythm; hear the rhyme. It's Mini Music Maker time! **R**



**REGISTRATION** begins January 15 for February events and February 15 for March events unless otherwise noted.

## Drop-in Craft: Make Your Own Valentines

**All Ages**

Sunday, February 1 through

Saturday, February 14

Stop in the Library between February 1 and 14 to create as many Valentine's Day cards as you would like!



## Middle School Hangout

**Grades 5–8 (Ages 10–14)**

Tuesdays, February 3 and March 3, 4–5 pm

De-stress and hang out with other middle schoolers!

We'll provide snacks, activities, and games to get you through the school week.

## LEGO Builders

**Grades K–8**

Thursdays, February 5 and March 5, 6:30–7:30 pm

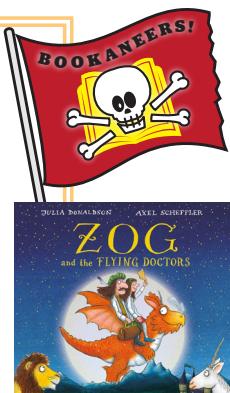
Build something amazing with the Library's massive LEGO collection! Start with one of our monthly challenges then let your imagination guide you in a free build.

## BOOKANEERS!

**Grades K–2**

Wednesday, February 11  
4:30–5:30 pm

Join us for a book adventure! We'll read a book out loud then create props to act out exciting parts of the story together. This month's featured story is *Zog and the Flying Doctors* by Julia Donaldson. **R**



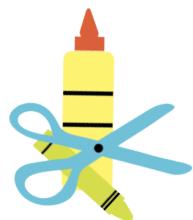
## Crafty Saturday

**All Ages**

Saturdays, February 14 and March 14

9:30 am–4:30 pm

Drop in the Youth Services Department to make a fun seasonal craft while supplies last.



## Dave DiNaso's Traveling World of Reptiles

**Monday, February 16, 2–3 pm**

An up-close, hands-on presentation featuring live reptiles and amphibians from around the world.



## Puzzles & Prose

### Family

Saturdays, February 14 and

March 14, 2–4 pm

Drop in for a relaxing afternoon doing jigsaw puzzles and listening to audiobooks.

February's story is *Flora & Ulysses* by Kate DiCamillo.

April's story is *Wedgie & Gizmo* by Suzanne Selfors.



### Family Crafting

#### All Ages

Monday, February 16, 6:30–7:30 pm: Desserts

Saturday, March 21, 10–11 am: Spring

Drop in with the whole family to make fun crafts.

Projects are intended for ages 3–10, though younger children with a grown-up and older children are welcome to participate.

## Chess Academy

### Grades 1–8

Thursdays, February 19 and March 19

7–8 pm

Learn how to play chess with chess master Chris Christmas. All skill levels welcome.



## Goofball Science Club

### Grades 5–8

Friday, February 20 and Tuesday, March 24

4:30–5:30 pm

Join us for a middle school hangout where we do the fun parts of science experiments. In February, we're building ball runs. In March, we're making push puppets. **R**



## Family Engineering Night

#### All Ages

Thursdays, 7–8 pm

February 26: Bubble Window

March 26: Cranky Birds

Once a month, we turn a STEM idea into an engineering project. Projects are intended for school-aged kids and above, though younger children are welcome to participate with a grown-up. **R**

## LitLoot Middle School

Grades 6–8 (Ages 11–14)

March 1–14

LitLoot is a free literary subscription box filled with a custom selected library book and other goodies. To subscribe to March's box, register between March 1 and 14. We'll contact you when boxes are ready for pickup at the end of the month. Subscriptions are limited, so register early. **R**

**LitLoot**  
Middle School

## Read to a Rainbow Dog

### Grades 1–5

Tuesday, March 10, 6:30–7:30 pm

Trained therapy dogs patiently listen to your child as they read from a book of their choice. Participants should be able to read independently for their full 15-minute session. To register, visit the Youth Services Desk or call 847-965-4220 x2. **R**



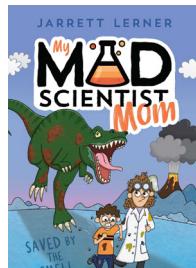
## Family Reads

### Grades 1–3

Wednesday, March 11

6:30–7:15 pm

Read the book of the month, *My Mad Scientist Mom: Saved by the Smell* by Jarrett Lerner aloud at home with your family. Then bring a grown-up with you to discuss and explore the story with a hands-on activity. Registration for book club starts on February 1. After you register, pick up your free copy of the book of the month at the Youth Services Desk. **R**



# KIDS



## Jr. Puzzle Gauntlet

Grades 1–3

Thursday, March 12, 4:30–5:30 pm

## Puzzle Gauntlet

Grades 4–8

Wednesday, March 18, 4:30–5:30 pm



Do you have what it takes to beat the Puzzle Gauntlet? The Puzzle Master devised a series of devious challenges to test your STEAM skills and cunning to the max. Should you triumph, you will unlock the snack-a-licious treasure stash. **R**

## STEMonade Stand

Stop by the STEMonade Stand located at our Lincoln Avenue entrance for project kits to do at home. Each kit is sealed inside a zip-top bag with instructions and STEM connections. For more information and updates on biweekly projects, visit [mgpl.org/stemonade](http://mgpl.org/stemonade). When life gives you lemons, make STEMonade.



# TEENS

**R** = Registration is required

## LitLoot

Grades 9–12

February 1–9

LitLoot is a free literary subscription box filled with a custom selected library book and other free goodies. Subscribe to February's box at [mgpl.org/events](http://mgpl.org/events). We'll contact you when your box is ready for pickup at the end of the month. Subscriptions are limited, so register early. Library card required. **R**



## EARN SERVICE HOURS

### Teen Volunteer Drop-in

Mondays, February 2 and March 2, 6–8 pm

Students grade 9–12 can drop-in and earn community service hours for completing fun and meaningful tasks. No registration is required.

## Scholarships, Grants, and Loans

### (Online)

Thursday, February 5, 5:30–6:30 pm

This workshop will provide insider information on college cost-reduction strategies such as scholarships, grants, and loans to help make your college planning both successful and affordable. **R**



We challenge you to read 100 books before graduating high school and win big along the way! Participants will receive raffle prizes and rewards for various book milestones. To sign up and learn more visit [mgpl.org/100books](http://mgpl.org/100books).

# ADULTS

## Senior Activity Kits

Stay busy and keep your brain active with creative activities and informational materials for seniors. Available on the first of each month at the Info Desk while supplies last.

## Adult ESL Activity Kits

Practice English with monthly ESL Activity Kits for adults. Each kit may contain vocabulary puzzles, idioms, suggested activities, or a short reading exercise, along with the monthly issue of *Easy English News* newspaper. Suitable for all skill levels. Available on the first of each month at the Info Desk while supplies last.

## Social Seniors

Join us for a variety of fun activities. Seating is limited, so register early to guarantee your spot. **R**

### Bingo

Wednesdays, February 4 and March 4, 10–11 am  
Socialize as you play. Small prizes will be awarded to those who Bingo!

### Arts and Crafts

Wednesdays, 10–11:30 am  
February 11: Valentine's Day Coasters  
March 11: Stained Glass Watercolor  
Tap into your inner creativity with a fun and easy craft project.

### Trivia

Wednesdays, 10–11 am  
February 18: Romantic Comedies  
March 18: Oscar Season  
Test your knowledge of iconic moments in history and pop culture.

### Wits Workout

Wednesdays, February 25 and March 25, 10–11 am  
Maintain and enhance your cognitive function and memory with this interactive event.

## Project Management 101 - Part 2 (Online)

Tuesday, February 3, 7–8 pm

Join us for Part 2 of our project management series. PMI-certified instructor Michael Spilg will give a beginner-friendly introduction to using AI tools like ChatGPT to boost project productivity. Learn key concepts—from prompt engineering to bias awareness—plus recommended resources to continue your learning. No prior experience is required. **R**



Fridays, February 6 and March 6, 10–11 am  
Practice your English conversation skills while playing games. **R**

## Intro to Machine Sewing

Saturday, February 7, 2–4:30 pm  
Sewing expert Mike Hall will go over all the basics of setting up and using a sewing machine. Sewing machines and supplies will be provided. **R**

## Evening Craft for Adults and Teens

Tuesdays, 6–7:30 pm  
February 10: Valentine's Day Coasters  
March 10: Stained Glass Watercolor  
Tap into your inner creativity with a fun and easy craft project. **R**

## Medicine Cabinet Essentials

Thursday, February 12, 2–3 pm  
Join Aaron Oliver, PharmD as he discusses over-the-counter medications everyone should have in their medicine cabinet and how to properly store them. **R**



## African Art and Folktales (Online)

Thursday, February 12, 7–8 pm  
This virtual program led by Kenyan educator and storyteller Elizabeth Kahura will celebrate African American Heritage Month by bringing Africa's history to life through stories, cultural artifacts, and interactive activities. **R**



## Healthy Living

### Chair Yoga

Fridays, February 13, February 20, and March 13  
9:30–10:30 am (In Person)  
Led by certified yoga instructor Joan McGee.

Fridays, February 27 and March 27  
9:30–10:30 am (Online)  
Led by certified yoga instructor Susan Wilkens.

Practice seated poses in one of the gentlest forms of yoga, available online or in person. All experience levels welcome. Wear comfortable clothes. Please use a steady chair without arms (if possible). **R**

### Crafting For Charity

Saturdays, February 14 and 28, March 14 and 28  
9:30–11:30 am

Create handmade knitted and crocheted crafts for local organizations. Please bring your needles and/or hooks and some acrylic yarn. Seating is limited, so guarantee your spot by registering ahead of time. We are currently accepting yarn donations. **R**

### The Life of Bessie Coleman

Sunday, February 15, 2–3 pm  
Bessie Coleman, portrayed by her great niece Gigi Coleman, shares her experiences which led her to become the first African American woman to earn a pilot's license. **R**



### Online Night with a Museum: Lake Placid Olympic Museum (Online)

Tuesday, February 17, 7–8 pm  
Learn how the Lake Placid Olympic Museum preserves and celebrates the legacy of the 1980 Winter Games. Join us for an engaging look at the history and impact of this iconic Olympic community. **R**

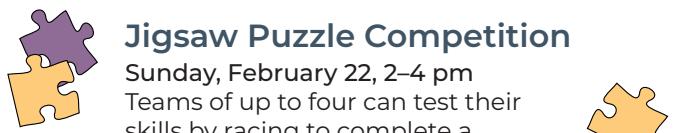
### Echoes of Hiroshima, A Survivor's Story (Online)

Thursday, February 26, 7–8 pm  
Join us for a moving program commemorating the 80th anniversary of the Hiroshima bombing. This event pays tribute to nuclear war while sharing a message of peace. **R**



### Jigsaw Puzzle Swap

Saturday, February 21, 10 am–12 pm  
Refresh your jigsaw puzzle collection by swapping one of your gently used ones for a new-to-you puzzle. Choose one puzzle for each one you bring. Puzzles must be complete, at least 500 pieces, and in the original box. Drop off puzzles at the Info Desk starting on Saturday, February 14.



### Jigsaw Puzzle Competition

Sunday, February 22, 2–4 pm  
Teams of up to four can test their skills by racing to complete a 500-piece puzzle. All puzzles are the same, and no one may see the puzzle until the timer starts. Have one person from your team register. **R**



### Exploring Spices (Online)

#### Spice: Ground Turmeric

Sunday, February 22, 2–3 pm  
(pickup starts February 1)  
Explore spices from around the world in this flavorful and seasonal event. Pick up the spice sample and then explore the taste by making any dish of your choice. At the end of the month, we will meet over Zoom to share results and experiences. **R**



### Still Afraid of the Dark: An Evening with R.L. Stine (Online)

Tuesday, February 24, 7–8 pm  
The record-breaking author of *Goosebumps* and *Fear Street* discusses his illustrious and ever-growing body of work with horror expert Becky Spratford. **R**

This event is made possible by Illinois Libraries Present, a state-wide collaboration between public libraries offering high-quality events.



# MOVIES

## Oscar Prediction Ballots

Friday, February 6  
through  
Friday, March 13

Pick up an Oscar ballot at the Info Desks and guess the winning movies for a chance to win a movie theater gift card.



## MGPL After Dark: *Wicked: For Good*

Friday, March 13, 6:30–9 pm

Watch this critically acclaimed film, enjoy complimentary popcorn, and have a chance to win door prizes. As an angry mob rises against the Wicked Witch, she'll need to reunite with Glinda to transform herself, and all of Oz, for good. (2025, PG, 2 hr 30 min). This event is also the last chance to fill out an Oscar prediction ballot.



## TUESDAY MOVIES @ MGPL

**I Am Big Bird: The Carol Spinney Story**  
Tuesday, February 3  
10–10:30 am

**Race**  
Tuesday, February 10  
10 am–12:15 pm

**Mission Impossible - The Final Reckoning**  
Tuesday, February 17  
10 am–12:45 pm

**Dial M for Murder**  
Tuesday, February 24  
10–11:45 am

**The Naked Gun**  
Tuesday, March 3  
10–11:30 am

**Downton Abbey: The Grand Finale**  
Tuesday, March 10  
10 am–12 pm

**Leap Year**  
Tuesday, March 17  
10–11:45 am

**Freakier Friday**  
Tuesday, March 24  
10 am–12 pm

**Legally Blonde**  
Tuesday, March 31  
10–11:30 am



## INDIE MOVIE NIGHT

**Little Forest**  
Wednesday, February 4  
6–7:45 pm

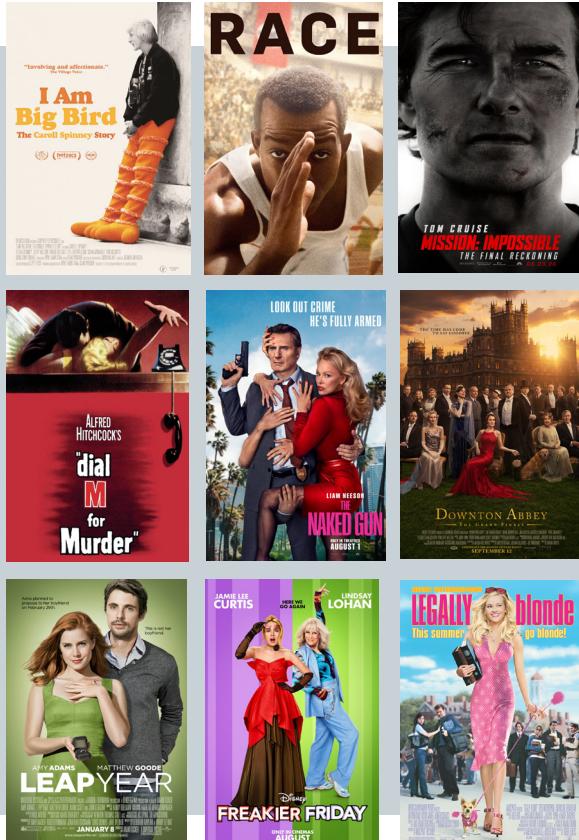
A young woman grows tired of life in the city and returns to her hometown in the countryside. (2018, Korean, PG-13, 1 hr 45 min) **R**



**Hamlet**  
Wednesday, March 4, 6–8 pm

Shakespeare's classic tragedy is reimagined for the modern day as a gripping psychological thriller with Sir Ian McKellen reprising his lead role as Hamlet. (2024, NR, 2 hr) **R**





## AI 101

Thursday, February 26, 2-3 pm

Join author and educator Theresa Benson (The AI Quilter) for a thoughtful, myth-busting introduction to AI. Learn how tools like ChatGPT and image generators function and the ethical and creative concerns that surround their use. **R**



## Because I Matter: Breast Cancer Education

Thursday, March 5, 2-3:30 pm

Community Health Educator and MammaCare® certified BSE instructor Sophia Ottomanelli will provide the latest information on breast cancer and teach the MammaCare® Method, the recognized standard for performing breast self-examination. **R**

## Brush Calligraphy: Basics

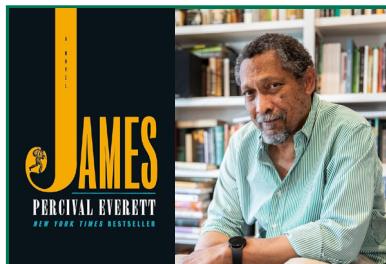
Saturday, March 7, 10-11:30 am

Learn how to write with a brush pen by practicing basic strokes and the lowercase alphabet with Audrey Ra of Audrey Ra Design. Beginners welcome! **R**

## Joyous Japan

Thursday, March 12, 2-3 pm

Using vivid storytelling and original photography, world traveler Brian Michalski retraces his unforgettable five-week journey through Japan, from cherry blossoms and Shinkansen rides to remarkable cuisine, culture, and local encounters. **R**



## Beyond the Page with Percival Everett (Online)

Thursday, March 19, 7-8 pm

Join us for a virtual interview with Percival Everett, the 2025 Pulitzer Prize winner and one of the most inventive, fearless voices in contemporary fiction. Explore his novels, his creative process, and the stories behind his most celebrated books. **R**

This event is made possible by Illinois Libraries Present, a state-wide collaboration between public libraries offering high-quality events.

## Book Discussion Groups

### Readpool: Adult Graphic Novel Discussion Group (Online)

*Feeding Ghosts*  
by Tessa Hulls

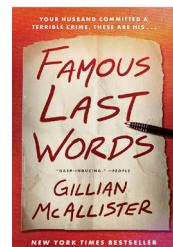
Monday, February 23, 7-8 pm **R**



### Between the Lines

*Famous Last Words*  
by Gillian McAllister

Thursday, February 19, 10-11 am (In Person)  
Tuesday, February 24, 7-8 pm (Online)



*Sandwich*  
by Catherine Newman

Thursday, March 19  
10-11 am (In Person)  
Tuesday, March 24  
7-8 pm (Online)



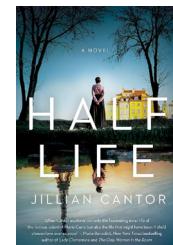
Between the Lines is held on two different days, either in person or on Zoom. New members are always welcome! **R**

## LitLounge

*A Sitting in St. James*  
by Rita Williams-Garcia  
Wednesday, February 11  
7:30-9 pm



*Half Life*  
by Jillian Cantor  
Wednesday, March 11  
7:30-9 pm



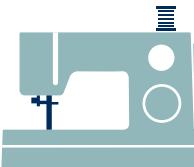
Meets monthly at the Skokie Public Library Cosmos Room.

## Sew a Zippered Pouch

Sunday, March 22, 2-4:30 pm

Sewing expert Mike Hall will teach the basic sewing machine stitches used to construct a zippered pouch. Sewing machines and supplies will be provided.

Prior sewing machine experience is required. **R**



## Concert: Erik Donner's Oldies Show

Sunday, March 29

2-3 pm

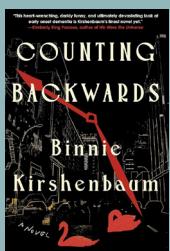
Join us for a rocking set paying tribute to Erik's father, influential 60's musician Ral Donner, as well as legendary artists Elvis, Buddy Holly, Johnny Cash, and more. **R**



## Civic Engagement Book Picks

Visit [mgpl.org/civics](http://mgpl.org/civics) for staff-curated lists of resources related to a variety of topics. Not sure where to begin? We have selected a few titles to help you get started.

### Disability Awareness



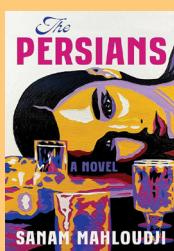
*Counting Backwards*  
by Binnie Kirshenbaum

### Antiracism

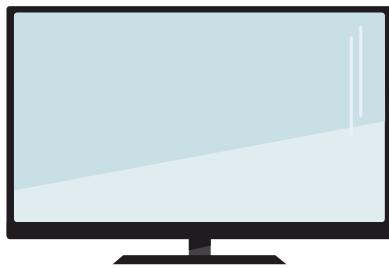


*Original Sins*  
by Eve Ewing

### Immigrants & Refugees



*The Persians*  
by Sanam Mahloudji



## Computers and Technology

### Cut the Cable Cord

Thursday, February 5, 10-11 am

Tired of overpriced cable TV services? Learn about popular video streaming services and devices used to stream content. **R**

### Android Phones for Beginners

Monday, March 9, 2-3:30 pm

Learn how to manage settings, discover hidden features, and more on your Android phone. Bring your Android device and login information. **R**

### iPhones for Beginners

Thursday, March 19, 2-3:30 pm

Learn how to manage settings, discover hidden features, and more on your iPhone. Bring your Apple device and login information. **R**

6140 Lincoln Avenue  
Morton Grove, IL 60053-2989

#### Library Hours

Monday-Thursday, 9:00 am-9:00 pm  
Friday, 9:00 am-6:00 pm  
Saturday, 9:00 am-5:00 pm  
Sunday, 1:00 pm-5:00 pm

#### Online

Website: [mgpl.org](http://mgpl.org)  
Events: [mgpl.org/events](http://mgpl.org/events)  
Catalog: [catalog.mgpl.org](http://catalog.mgpl.org)

#### Phone

Main: 847-965-4220

#### Email

Adult & Teen Services: [info@mgpl.org](mailto:info@mgpl.org)  
Youth Services: [ysinfo@mgpl.org](mailto:ysinfo@mgpl.org)  
Check-Out Desk: [circinfo@mgpl.org](mailto:circinfo@mgpl.org)

#### Social Media



#### PHOTO AND VIDEO POLICY

Attendance at Library programs constitutes consent to be photographed or videotaped for Library purposes. If you or your child do not wish to be photographed or videotaped, please notify staff.

#### SPECIAL ASSISTANCE

Patrons needing special assistance should call 847-965-4220 or email [info@mgpl.org](mailto:info@mgpl.org).

#### CHANGES AND CANCELLATIONS

Events are subject to change and may be cancelled due to unforeseen circumstances. Call the Library at 847-965-4220 to confirm scheduled events.



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## ECRWSS RESIDENTIAL CUSTOMER

### Introducing

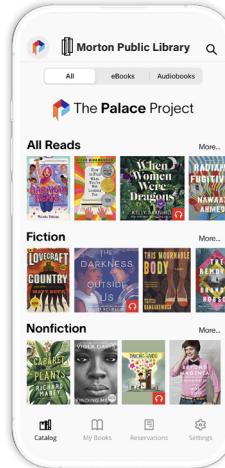


## The Palace Project

We are happy to introduce our newest digital resource for e-books and audiobooks, The Palace Project. In early December 2025, the eRead Illinois collection (previously available through the Boundless app) transitioned to this new app, which offers over 32,000 titles. You are allowed up to 5 checkouts at a time, with a 14-day loan period.

Dive into a vast collection of ebooks and audiobooks, ranging from classic novels to the latest bestsellers. Whether you're into romance, mystery, nonfiction, or science fiction we have something for everyone.

To get started, download The Palace Project app via the Apple App Store or Google Play Store. If you have any questions, please contact the Library at 847-965-4220x1. Happy reading!

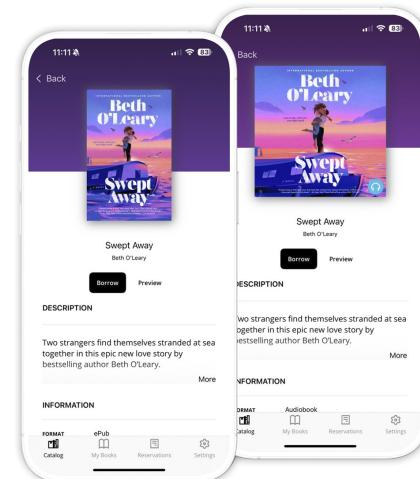


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MGPL Download & Stream



#### Vol. 50, No. 1

MGPL's newsletter is published six times a year.

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**  
Pam Leffler

#### LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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The Board meets on the second Thursday of every month at 7 pm.