

**Gail Borden Public Library District
Annual Report Fiscal Year 2014 - 2015**

The future depends on what you do today.

Mahatma Gandhi



Welcome to the Future!



Welcome to the Future!

The new fiscal year began shortly after Gail Borden Public Library celebrated 140 years of serving the community. Looking back on the library's accomplishments throughout the years was a joyous experience shared by Gail Borden Library and friends. But even while celebrating its past, the library always has an eye on the future. The fiscal year that started in July, 2014 found the Library continuously asking questions about how it would serve its people in the future:

- ***What will be the Library's role in the community in five, ten, twenty years?***
- ***How can the Library better serve a more diversified population?***
- ***Reach out to those not familiar with its services?***
- ***Continue collaborating with partners to strengthen education initiatives to strengthen community?***
- ***Keep discovering new ways to enrich the lives of people it serves?***

Although the Library continued to act on the “now” to offer exciting exhibits, programs and materials, planning for the future resonated throughout the fiscal year with:

➤ **The Announcement of a New South Elgin Library Branch to open its doors in 2016.**

The April, 2015 announcement kick-started plans to offer Library materials and programming closer to home for the residents of that town. The 4,200-square-foot South Elgin Branch will feature a programming room, popular books and movies, and a children’s area at 121 S. McLean Blvd., within convenient walking, biking and driving distance for thousands. Most of the project will be funded by The Hoffer Foundation and other donors. “I just hope that there are lots of families and kids and parents who can make a lot of memories here,” Gail Borden Public Library Foundation Board member Jack Shales told *The Daily Herald*.

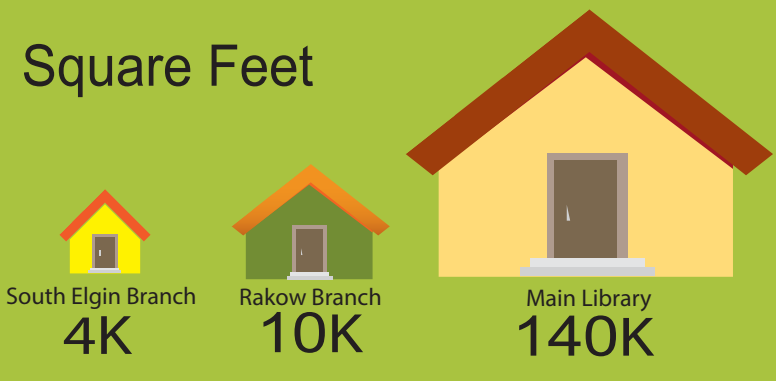


VIEW OF CHILDREN'S AREA



VIEW FROM FRONT OF LIBRARY

Square Feet



Educational Alignment Project Goals for Students:

- Starting Kindergarten prepared to learn
- Reading at grade level
- Graduating with marketable skills

➤ **Joining the Community to Support Schools.**

Several library staff members began working on the Educational Alignment Project, an initiative that is a process for organizations to support the public schools in a coordinated fashion. School District U-46 is leading this effort that will work toward all students: (1) starting kindergarten prepared to learn, (2) reading at grade level by third grade, and (3) graduating from high school with marketable employment skills and/or enrolling in post-secondary education.



➤ **A Place for Teens to Create a Digital Future.**

Planning and implementing those plans for a new Digital Media Lab, located adjacent to the Studio 270 teen center, were continuing into the fiscal year with construction and equipment installation. Made possible by a generous gift by the Meadows Family, the lab is a place for teens to experience music recording, video filming and editing, and other digital work. With its grand opening in October, the lab gives high school students the opportunity to learn about and produce digital media projects—a “must” skill for high school students as well as future college students and future job seekers.



➤ **The Design of a Strategic Plan to Guide the Library's Next Five Years.**

The Library spent much of the fiscal year working on a new strategic plan, identifying district-wide issues using demographic data and a customer-focused approach with the assistance of Marc Futterman and his company, Civic Technologies. Most importantly, the Library reached out to customers and key community stakeholders to get their input on what the Library does now and suggestions for new ways in which to serve the community. Implementation of the new plan will begin during the next fiscal year.



➤ **Preparing a New Market Place for Easier Access to Movies, Music and Books.**

Plans were in the works during the fiscal year to transform the first floor of the Main Library into a Market Place in late 2015 to make it easier for customers to find the most popular books, movies and music. The Library will open up 1,200 square feet of new space for more services to the public. Other changes will include replacing worn carpeting and making popular collections more convenient for people with disabilities. Market Place will be paid for out of the Library's special reserve fund.

While mapping the future, Gail Borden Public Library continued its exciting and innovative work in the community and beyond:

Learning

Summer Reading

5,086
Finishers

32
Partnering
organizations



➤ **The 2014 Paws to Read Summer Reading Challenge** celebrated 5,086 finishers, a 7% increase over the previous fiscal year. The Gold Star Partner program, enlisting 32 off-site organizations to engage children in summer reading, worked to help 2,300 children finish the reading challenge.

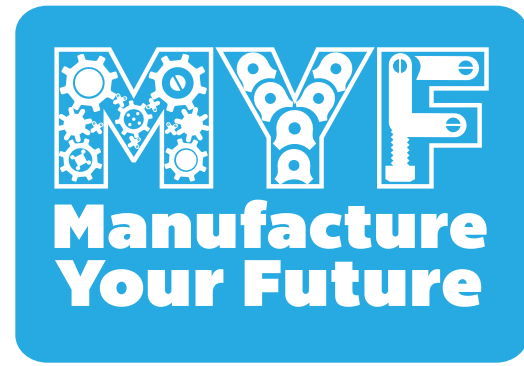
➤ **The Adventures with Clifford The Big Red Dog Exhibit** helped encourage summer reading. Thousands flocked to the 1,500-square-foot interactive exhibit from the Minnesota Children's Museum that offered a nine-foot-tall Clifford, Birdwell Island Ferry, post office, and more.

➤ **The Welcome Baby! Program** was born with the partnership of Advocate Sherman Hospital. The Library delivered 390 library cards to newborns along with information for parents on how to prepare their children for reading.



Learning

➤ **At Manufacture Your Future 2014**, more than 200 high school students learned about products made by local manufacturers and job opportunities. The Library hosted the fall event, working closely with the Chamber of Commerce, the Elgin Development Group and School Districts U-46 and 301.



➤ **The Library's Readership** program brought 238 storytimes to 6,133 preschoolers.

➤ **A new Education Librarian** reached 12,293 students, parents and teachers through literacy programs, remote library card sign-ups and material check-out beyond the walls of the Library while the Library's Middle School Services reached 2,399 students, teachers and parents.



1,000
Teens readied
for college

➤ **The Library helped** more than 1,000 teens with database demos, book talks and college preparation programs.

➤ **Library programs** numbered 272 with 14,096 people enjoying a variety of cultural arts such as concerts, Elgin Symphony Orchestra programs, local author appearances and writing support groups.



➤ **Gail Borden librarians**, sometimes bringing in community organizations, continued to provide information on resume writing, the Affordable Care Act, Medicare, device advice for seniors, and job opportunities for people with disabilities to help local residents enrich their lives.

Learning

The Library found more innovative ways to keep learning fun:

➤ **LEGO® Certified Professional Adam Reed Tucker** used more than one million LEGOs® to build landmarks like Fallingwater, the John Hancock Center and the Empire State Building and bring them to the library for the Art + Science = Architecture exhibit. Tucker also built a 17-plus-foot replica of the Burj Khalifa and a replica of Walt Disney World's Cinderella Castle.



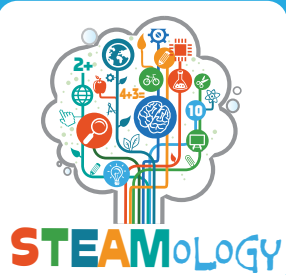
COMIC BOOK MANIA 900

➤ **The fifth annual Comic Book Mania Convention** brought more than 900 people to the Library in July, 2014.



➤ **The Maurice Sendak: 50 Years; 50 Works; 50 Reasons Exhibit**

showcased 50 original artworks by the late author and artist. The display featured several designs of Max and his friends to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the publication of *Where the Wild Things Are*.



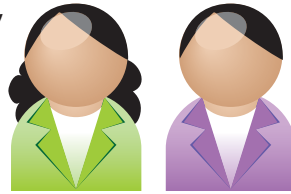
➤ **The Rakow Branch** continued to bring outdoor play and nature to local children with STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art and math) programming that featured robotics, a pond-scooping event, frog calling, a live owl demo, butterfly camp and STEAM camp.



➤ **Audiences were electrified** when veteran actor Terry Lynch as Ben Franklin visited the Library to celebrate Constitution Day and discuss his accomplishments including establishing the first library in the United States.

Serving a Diverse Community

➤ **The 5th annual Hispanic Heritage Month Celebration** celebrated Latino culture with the theme Sueños & Stories, or Dreams & Stories, which brought a new twist to storytelling: Books That Live. The October 12 event also presented six successful area residents featured on film, talking about their stories and dreams. More than 2,350 people visited the celebration.



2,350
Attendees



➤ **The 10th Annual Black History Family Festival** at the Library February 7 featured presidential proclamations, live music and dance performances, and an exhibit on display, From Our Neighborhoods: Four Chicago Authors Who Changed America. The exhibit, from the American Writers Museum and on display at the Library throughout February, tells the stories of Lorraine Hansberry, Gwendolyn Brooks, Studs Terkel and Richard Wright, who inspired social change through their published works.



➤ **The story of Elgin's African American heritage** from the 1860s to the Civil Rights Era of the 1960s came to the library in May in the form of a documentary and exhibit. Project 2-3-1: 2 Box Cars, 3 Blocks, 1 City: A Story of Elgin's African American Heritage was produced by Elgin African American leader and historian Ernie Broadnax along with the Elgin Area Historical Society and Grindstone Productions.

➤ **Bringing Library materials** and services to those who cannot get to the Library increased significantly during the fiscal year. Home Services increased material deliveries to homes and nursing homes by more than 50% while a life enrichment liaison position was created to provide outreach services to seniors.



➤ **The creation of a new service, Tales & Travels**, is bringing much needed programs to memory loss patients.

➤ **The first Asian-Pacific American Heritage Month Celebration** at the Library in May brought Asian-Pacific culture with music and dance, fashion, crafts and food.



Partnerships

➤ **The Library teamed up with Hagg Press and the City of Elgin** to encourage residents to use local businesses by showing their Gail Borden Library card to receive a discount. A 12-page insert featuring 62 businesses appeared in the Library's November/December newsletter.

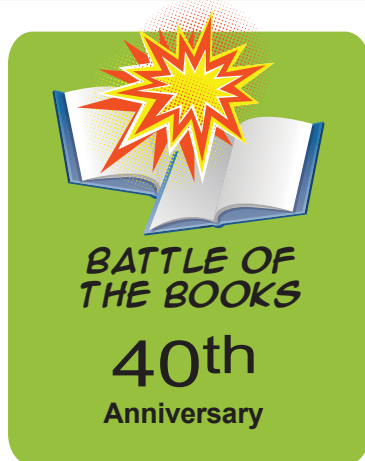


➤ **About 700 future scientists** enjoyed science fun via demos and hands-on activities at the Kickoff for the Discovery 2015 STEM Exposition in November. The kickoff was hosted by the Library in partnership with School District U-46 and held in anticipation of February's science expo, a free, nonjudged science event open to students of all ages.



REFLECTIONS: 20's 30's 40's 50's 60's 70's Flowing Through Time

➤ **The Library participated** in the community-driven project Reflections, which featured programming about Elgin history from the 1920s to the 1970s.



➤ **The Library celebrated the 40th anniversary of Battle of the Books**, a program coordinated with schools and other libraries to encourage elementary school students to read.

➤ **The Next Chapter Book Club**, in partnership with UPS for DownS, was established to serve adults with developmental disabilities.



➤ **More than 30 decorated trees** and wreaths were on display at the Library for the Festival of Trees prior to being auctioned off to benefit the Ecker Center for Mental Health, which provides services for more than 3,700 people with mental illnesses.



➤ **The Library partnered with the City of Elgin** to coordinate VolunteerPalooza, which connected more than 50 local organizations to more than 200 community members to get involved.

Partnerships

soon to be famous™

Illinois Author Project 2015



➤ **The Library spear-headed a joint effort among Illinois libraries**, the Illinois Library Association and the Reaching Across Illinois Libraries System to create The Soon to be Famous Illinois Author Project, an initiative to show how libraries influence literary trends. Members of the Soon to be Famous committee inform libraries across the state and country about how to start their own author award project via the project's website and personal appearances at library conferences and literary festivals.

Other ways the library worked with the community:

- Participating in Elgin's annual International Festival.
- Working with other Activate Elgin partners to coordinate the month-long March into Health initiative.
- Hosting the Elgin Home for the Holidays Kickoff with the Elgin Young Professionals Network.
- Continuing to support the efforts of The Literacy Connection.



Geographic Referendum 2014

An advertisement for the Complimentary Library Card from Gail Borden Public Library. It features the GBPLD logo, a photo of a family reading together, and text explaining the benefits of the card. The text includes: 'Have You Used Your Complimentary Library Card From Gail Borden Public Library?', 'Summer is almost here - How will you get the books your family wants to read?', 'It's easy—go to the Main Library or Rakow Branch With Your Complimentary Card and two pieces of identification. Then check out books for kids, teens and adults to get a start on summer reading, whether you're going on a vacation or a staycation!', 'You can also use your CompCard online today to borrow eBooks, download magazines, music, movies and more!', 'Go to www.gailborden.info/compcard. Your complimentary card is already activated for you and your family to use online!'.

➤ **The Library worked on a geographic referendum** that would have annexed unserved areas within the Library district. The referendum effort focused on academic success, as the Library discovered that, in some classrooms, students did not have equal access to a public library. Held in November, the referendum did not pass although the Library was fortunate to gain knowledge of residents in these unserved areas. Hopefully, the Library will be able to serve these people in the future.

Technology

➤ **The Library provided technology classes**, including ones on Email and Internet basics, Microsoft Word and PowerPoint, to 1,942 people, bringing attendance up 17% over the previous fiscal year. The heavily used Training Room was equipped with 16 new computers while 44 computers were replaced with new ones in the Computer Center.

➤ **Additional Kindles** as well as Roku streaming devices and Early Literacy Kits were technology related materials made available to Library customers.

➤ **A new 24/7 eLibrary link** was added to the Library's website for customers to easily find electronic resources and eBooks.



1,942

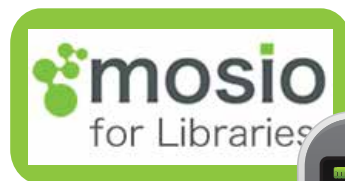
People trained

17%

Increased attendance

60

New computers



➤ **The Library's mobile app** was updated and customers can now use their library cards saved on their mobile devices to check out materials.

➤ **Through the program Mosio**, Library customers were able to begin texting their questions to librarians, who answer via text.

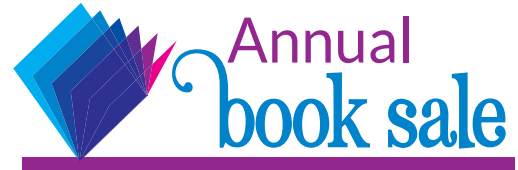


➤ **Capabilities and speed** of the Library's public Wi-Fi system were enhanced.

Foundation



GAIL BORDEN PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT
FOUNDATION



➤ **Getting the word out** on the Gail Borden Public Library Foundation Book Sale started early with Foundation members appearing in Elgin's 2014 Fourth of July Parade. Held in September, the sale raised approximately \$16,943. Proceeds from the sale help fund exhibits such as Adventures with Clifford The Big Red Dog.



➤ **The Foundation's first holiday reception** combined holiday festivities with LEGOs when LEGO® Certified Professional Adam Reed Tucker provided a guided tour of the Art + Science = Architecture exhibit and signed his new book, *LEGO® Architecture: The Visual Guide*. Almost \$6,000 was generated.



➤ **The Foundation supported a new program** at the Library, 1000 Books Before Kindergarten. Parents with infants and children up to five years can join to help children earn incentives to read.



➤ **The Karen Maki Fund** for Memory Care Programs was established with \$24,500 in grants and donations.

Recognition

➤ **The Library received an Elgin Image Award** for its ten-year Food for Fines project, which waives overdue fines for every donation item. The donations are brought to local food pantries to help the community. The program has gained momentum since inception, with 13,472 items collected and distributed to six area food pantries in 2014.



13,472
Items collected
for Food for Fines
in 2014



1,556
Clients helped
with tax
preparation

➤ **The Library received the George Bickford Award** from The Center for Economic Progress for its commitment to provide space for tax preparation for low-income individuals. The Library provided a dedicated wireless network for the center's equipment for more effectiveness and security for 1,556 clients served during the fiscal year.

➤ **Gail Borden Library celebrated its 140th anniversary** throughout 2014 with a timeline project that highlighted library accomplishments, historic events, pop culture and books from the 1870's to the present. In April, the library received a Mayor's Award for Preservation for the historic timeline.



➤ **The Soon to be Famous Illinois Author Project**, established by the Library with other partners, won an American Library Association John Cotton Dana award, "The Most Prestigious Award of the American Library Association."