

Public Library Site Visits

Libraries Visited:

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[Fox River Grove Public Library District](#)

[Sandwich Public Library District](#)

[Williamsfield Public Library District](#)

Upcoming Visits (Details not currently available):

Bertolet Memorial Library District

Bloomington Public Library

Calumet Park Public Library

DeKalb Public Library

Dunlap Public Library District

East Moline Public Library

Flewellin Memorial Library

Forman Valley Public Library District

Greig Memorial Library

Hamilton Public Library

Harvey Public Library District

Helen M. Plum Memorial Public Library District

Normal Public Library

Oglesby Public Library District

Tiskilwa Public Library

Village of Avon Public Library

York Township Public Library

Visit Details:

Agency: Aurora Public Library, Richard and Gina Santori Branch

Library Type: Public

Address: 101 S River Street, Aurora

County: Kane

Visit Date: August, 2024

About This Library: The Richard and Gina Santori Branch of the Aurora Public Library is a bustling library with great indoor and outdoor space. The library also has a really incredible bookmobile, with the ability to do story times, screen movies, and do mobile circulation (there are even make and takes and periodicals on board!). They also had a beautiful art display in their main atrium and a very fun summer reading display, as well as a history of information art installation and sculpture.

Image URLs:

<https://railslibraries.org/gallery/114175>

<https://railslibraries.org/gallery/114176>

<https://railslibraries.org/gallery/114177>

<https://railslibraries.org/gallery/114178>

Agency: Highwood Public Library

Library Type: Public

Address: 102 Highwood Avenue, Highwood,

County: Lake

Visit Date: August, 2024

About This Library: The words “public library” mean different things to people from different countries—that’s why Highwood Library & Community Center emphasizes its purpose right in its name.

51% of Highwood residents speak Spanish and 30% have recently migrated to the community. A growing need for mental health services became more obvious during the COVID-19 pandemic and after the neighboring Highland Park parade shooting in 2022. After years of virtual socialization, teens lacked spaces in real life where they could be themselves.

Today, all information in the library is available in English and Spanish and 80% of the staff are bilingual. Counselors are on staff and provide sessions in cozy, private rooms. Teens have a dedicated space to create art, play games, and read for fun. Kids play make-believe on stage, complete with costumes available at their fingertips.

The Highwood Library staff work hard each day to create a home away from home for every person in the community.

Image URLs:

<https://railslibraries.org/gallery/114115>

<https://railslibraries.org/gallery/114114>

<https://railslibraries.org/gallery/114113>

<https://railslibraries.org/gallery/114112>

Agency: Waukegan Public Library

Library Type: Public

Address: 800 Baldwin Avenue, Waukegan, IL

County: Lake

Visit Date: August, 2024

About This Library: Waukegan Public Library was in the process of installing a mural by community artists right outside the library. Some interesting features of the library include telehealth booths, a sensory room with light dimmers and various sensory activities, an early learning center, and walkers and wheelchairs available for in-libraries use, as well as an outdoor space. When I visited, they were also setting up for a noontime Friday concert series in the outdoor space. They have a kind and welcoming staff.

Image URLs:

<https://railslibraries.org/gallery/114166>

<https://railslibraries.org/gallery/114167>

<https://railslibraries.org/gallery/114168>

<https://railslibraries.org/gallery/114170>

Agency: Freeport Public Library

Library Type: Public

Address: 100 East Douglas Street, Freeport, IL

County: Stephenson

Visit Date: July, 2024

About This Library: Visit details coming soon!

Image URLs:

<https://railslibraries.org/gallery/113382>

<https://railslibraries.org/gallery/113383>

<https://railslibraries.org/gallery/113384>

<https://railslibraries.org/gallery/113385>

Agency: Hanover Township Library

Library Type: Public

Address: 204 Jefferson Street, Hanover, IL

County: Jo Daviess

Visit Date: July, 2024

About This Library: Hanover Township Library is located in Hanover, IL. Librarian Carolyn Miller is serving as interim director at the library. They have recently redone their children's section of the library and are currently working on reorganizing the library and the library collection. They are excited to implement family programming and more at the library.

Image URLs:

<https://railslibraries.org/gallery/113399>

<https://railslibraries.org/gallery/113400>

<https://railslibraries.org/gallery/113401>

Agency: Lanark Public Library

Library Type: Public

Address: 111 South Broad Street, Lanark

County: Carroll

Visit Date: July, 2024

About This Library: The Lanark Public Library is located in downtown Lanark, IL. This wonderful library is run by librarian Janie Dollinger. They also have many family and geneological and local history materials, that have recently been digitized. They have excellent story times, host visits from local agricultural and wildlife experts, author visits, and free books available to patrons.

Image URLs:

<https://railslibraries.org/gallery/113402>

<https://railslibraries.org/gallery/113403>

<https://railslibraries.org/gallery/113404>

Agency: Stockton Township Public Library

Library Type: Public

Address: 140 West Benton Street, Stockton, IL

County: Jo Daviess

Visit Date: July 2024

About This Library: Stockton Township Library is located in Stockton, IL. The library director Claire Smunt is eager and excited to run the library. This library has very many interesting features, including a snowy owl, and a photo backdrop available for local families to use for photoshoots that changes seasonally. When a flood damaged the ground floor, the library turned part of downstairs into a very nice children's area, complete with a book nook and tree shelf.

Image URLs:

<https://railslibraries.org/gallery/113390>

<https://railslibraries.org/gallery/113391>

<https://railslibraries.org/gallery/113392>

Agency: Warren Township Public Library

Library Type: Public

Address: 210 Burnett Avenue, Warren, IL

County: Jo Daviess

Visit Date: July, 2024

About This Library: The Warren Township Public Library is located in Warren, IL. It is a Carnegie library that was built in 1911. Librarian Valerie Woodley and library staff have hosted author visits, wildlife and agricultural programming, and story time activities for families. The library was remodeled to be two floors and is accessible, with the bottom floor being the children's area, done in an awesome underwater theme.

Image URLs:

<https://railslibraries.org/gallery/113397>

<https://railslibraries.org/gallery/113396>

<https://railslibraries.org/gallery/113395>

Agency: Fox River Grove Public Library District, Fox River Grove Memorial Library

Library Type: Public

Address: 407 Lincoln Avenue, Fox River Grove, IL

County: McHenry

Visit Date: June 2024

About This Library: Fox River Grove Memorial Library serves a district even smaller than their town of 4,000 residents—but that doesn't limit their ability to create a lively space for their community.

The lower-level children's section is decorated from top to bottom for summer reading and cloud covers hang over the ceiling lights, making it even more accessible to patrons who may be sensitive to fluorescents. Log books from NASA will soon be on display, as well as some watches that real astronauts use during their training.

On the main floor, patrons can help themselves to coffee and settle in on vintage furniture by the fireplace. Patrons see their town's history literally painted on the walls, including the ski jumpers that train at the Norge Ski Club five minutes away and the castle replica home that overlooks the town.

The best part about being a small library? Staff are able to get to know every single one of their patrons. The latest thriller or romance will come in and they know just who to call about it.

This is where Fox River Grove reads, learns, and grows.

Image URLs:

<https://railslibraries.org/gallery/113213>

<https://railslibraries.org/gallery/113216>

<https://railslibraries.org/gallery/113212>

<https://railslibraries.org/gallery/113210>

Agency: Sandwich Public Library District, Sandwich Public Library

Library Type: Public

Address: 925 South Main Street, Sandwich, IL

County: DeKalb

Visit Date: June, 2024

About This Library: The Sandwich Public Library in Sandwich, IL is a great library headed by director Barb Posinger. They also have a great collection of local history, and a very neat castle and dragon in the children's section. They had an Explore the World display around the library with information and language about different locales.

Image URLs:

<https://railslibraries.org/gallery/113272>

<https://railslibraries.org/gallery/113273>

<https://railslibraries.org/gallery/113274>

Agency: Williamsfield Public Library District, Williamsfield Public Library

Library Type: Public

Address: 407 Norman Drive, Williamsfield, IL

County: Knox

Visit Date: May 2024

About this Library: The Williamsfield Public Library in Williamsfield, IL serves a town of about 600 people. The director of the library is Kelly Goodin. Along with library staff, this library does some great work!

Image URLs:

<https://railslibraries.org/gallery/113263>

<https://railslibraries.org/gallery/113264>

<https://railslibraries.org/gallery/113265>

<https://railslibraries.org/gallery/113266>