



Vicki Rakowski and
Jason Pinshower

Check It Out!

*THE BARRINGTON AREA LIBRARY IS A REMARKABLE DESTINATION
AND RESOURCE CENTER IN THE HEART OF BARRINGTON*

BY KAREN MCBRIDE | PHOTOGRAPHY BY LINDA M. BARRETT



Members of the Circle of Friends Quilting Group showcase their beautiful quilt patterns in a large meeting room off the main entrance at Barrington Area Library.

ON ANY GIVEN DAY IN BARRINGTON, you could discover new books and films, have a fun play date with your children (or grandchildren), use a 3D printer and laser etcher, enjoy a live jazz or folk concert, find seeds for your veggie garden, and make an audiovisual presentation to your club or committee. The surprising part? You can do all those things, and much more, in one place: the Barrington Area Library.

Start with a BALibrary card. Apply for a card in person or on the library's website at balibrary.org. Choose between physical or digital cards and manage your account with the free library app. Business owners may also register for a card.

Even if you're a digital native, visit the library in person. The soaring atrium provides a breathtaking welcome through all four seasons. Enjoy serendipitous browsing for books and movies, enhanced by comfortable seating, park-like grounds, and staff who love sharing their expertise and recommendations. Find a table or reserve a study room to hunker down and get some work done. Bring your favorite little readers to explore the Youth Services department.

If it's convenience you're after, browse the library's collections online and place hold requests. Pick up held items at the main library – they can even be delivered right to your car – or at automated lockers in four locations or receive them via postal service. The Barrington Area Library no longer charges overdue fines, and many items are eligible for automatic renewal.

Speaking of convenience: more than 55,000 e-book and audiobook titles are available to download from the library website, along with magazines, newspapers, music, and streaming video. Dozens of online research data-

bases cover a wide range of academic, business, and personal research topics. Take an instructor-led course or watch high quality video tutorials to acquire a new hobby or professional skill.

The Barrington Area Library serves more than 45,000 residents, in 14 different communities, across 72 square miles. The 60,000 square foot building was completely renovated in 2014, but improving the customer's experience remains a constant focus for library leadership. Recent updates include a private room for nursing caregivers, attractive book displays and lighting in the café area, an adult computer area on the second floor, and a Local History research room. The library received a coveted four star ranking from *Library Journal* in 2021, placing it in the top 4% of public libraries across the nation.

Vicki Rakowski joined the Library staff as Head of Operations in January of 2017, and has served as Executive Director since February 13, 2021. She's proud of the Library's stunning architecture and high standards. "The Barrington Area Library is unique in that it excels at providing innovative, state-of-the-art services, with friendly customer assistance, in a welcoming atmosphere. We're able to go that extra mile because of the generous support of our community and the encouraging leadership we receive from our Board of Trustees."

The Library is located at 505 N. Northwest Hwy in Barrington. Read on to learn about some of the library's most popular and innovative services.

Karen McBride has served as the library's Public Information Manager since 2011. Her library career has spanned more than 30 years, including positions at Harper College and the Des Plaines Public Library. She received her Masters in Library and Information Science from Dominican University in 2007.



INSPIRE YOUR CHILD'S CURIOSITY THROUGH CREATIVE PLAY

Youth Services Librarians (from left) Claire Markuson, Specialist Stefanie Molinaro, MaryJo Nitz, and Chris Confer.

Youth Services Department

When you and your family visit the Library's Youth Services department, you'll find thousands of wonderful books for young readers, in an interactive learning environment that feels like a children's museum. Young guests can put on a puppet show, create a masterpiece on a giant Light Bright wall, play in a pretend grocery shop, and climb up into a special playhouse. There are story times, STEM and art workshops, and live music and theater experiences every month. Older children will enjoy using the fully-equipped Studio Kids and the game room. Check out an Activity Kit backpack and bring the fun home!

The Youth Services department is open to all visitors. Some events and programs require advance registration, and priority admission is given to BALibrary cardholders.

The Youth Services Librarians share book recommendations, craft projects, and helpful tips for caregivers in their "Read. Make. Play. Grow." blog, found at balibrary.org/kids.



PLAN YOUR SUMMER GARDEN

Adult Services Librarian Liz Kirchhoff at the Seed Library.

Seed Library

Is there anything more satisfying than growing healthy vegetables or beautiful flowers from seed? The Library has distributed more than 50,000 free seed packets from the Seed Library since 2020. In 2023, the Library will offer more than 100 seed varieties, including native plants and organic, non-GMO produce.

The Seed Library opens for the season on Wednesday, February 1, 2023. Stop by to select seeds and get gardening tips from the Master Gardeners of North Cook County. Can't make the launch event? Stop by during regular Library hours to choose your seeds. You'll find the Seed Library on the first floor, near the Customer Service desk. The Seed Library closes each year when the seeds run out, which typically occurs in July.

In addition to the Seed Library, the Library has a Teaching Garden next to the upper parking lot, and a new Teaching Prairie coming in 2023. Find a list of available seeds, helpful articles, gardening seminars, and hands-on workdays at balibrary.org/garden.



CONNECT WITH A LOVED ONE EXPERIENCING MEMORY LOSS

Adult Services Librarian Corinne Groble

Nostalgia Kits

Searching for a way to rebuild your connection to a loved one who has dementia? Check out the Library's new Nostalgia Kits. Each kit focuses on a particular theme, designed to generate conversation and the sharing of memories. Themes include Gardening, Cooking, Pets, The Toolshed, and At The Beach. The kits contain items like dementia-appropriate puzzles, reusable AquaPaints, simple books, discussion cards, and physical objects to inspire reminiscence.

Look for the Nostalgia Kits shelf on the second floor, near the magazines and newspapers. Kits have a checkout period of two weeks. Use any valid library card for checkout. BALibrary cardholders may place holds on the kits in the online catalog.

The Nostalgia Kits were created as part of the Library's commitment to Bacoa's Dementia Friendly Barrington Area initiative.

Community Services for Area Nonprofit Organizations

Community Engagement Librarian Sam Adams-Lanham can help your non-profit organization find funding, recruit and manage volunteers, promote your activities, communicate with your stakeholders, and much more. Learn from experts and share your invaluable experiences at seminars and roundtable discussions. Spread the word about your mission and events through the Library's online Community Calendar and digital Community Information screens.

Contact Sam at sadams@balibrary.org or by calling 847-382-1300 x 3140.

Sam loves to bring together non-profit leaders of distinct organizations who can learn from each other or who share complementary missions.



BOOST YOUR NON-PROFIT KNOW-HOW

Community Engagement Librarian Sam Adams-Lanham



Technical Services Associate Lisa Dockery

Interlibrary Loan

No single library can contain all of the world's knowledge, but human beings are relentlessly curious. You heard about a fascinating book during a podcast interview, but the book was printed 50 years ago in limited quantities. You want to listen to a rarely performed opera or watch an out of print movie. You may need to expand your reach beyond Barrington. Your BALibrary card may be used at any public library in the state of Illinois. Need more? Items not in the BALibrary collections may be requested via Interlibrary Loan service. Each year, on average, the Library lends 6,000 items and borrows 4,200 items via Interlibrary Loan.

Go to balibrary.org, search the Library Catalog, and select "Interlibrary Loan (WorldCat)." Use your Barrington Area Library card to request items. Need assistance? Ask at the Reference Desk or use online "contact us" options.

There are restrictions on types and quantities of items that may be borrowed via Interlibrary Loan. Complete details at balibrary.org/borrowing.



Head of Adult Services Hayley Schommer visits with Sam Adams-Lanham in a small meeting room.

Meeting and Study Rooms

Need a quiet workspace? Or a comfortable place for your organization to meet? Whether you're a team of one or 192, the Library's free Meeting and Study Rooms are here for you seven days a week. You'll find fast Wi-Fi and a variety of room configurations. Some rooms are equipped with screensharing technology, video projection, and microphones.

Use your BALibrary card to make your reservation. Small rooms may be



Customer Service Coordinator Amy Warnstedt, IT Manager Thomas Nelson, and Facilities Manager Kurt Zemla.

booked up to one week in advance. Larger rooms may be booked up to two months in advance, with at least 24 hours' notice. See the full details and book a room at balibrary.librarycalendar.com/reserve-room.

The Meeting Room and Zimmerman Room may be booked by cardholders aged 18 and older. Rooms may not be used for the sale or advertising of commercial products or services, private parties or gatherings, or fundraising activities.



NEVER RUN OUT OF GOOD READS

Material Services Manager Mike Cristo

Homebound Delivery and Borrow By Mail

There are times when it is difficult to visit the Library in person. Whether you are juggling new parenthood, recovering from surgery, or staying at home during extreme weather, Library materials can be delivered to your home at no charge. Homebound delivery is offered to customers who are permanently or temporarily disabled, or elderly and without transportation. Borrow By Mail is open to all BALibrary cardholders.

Arrange for Homebound delivery by calling 847-382-1300 X 3300 or emailing homebound@balibrary.org. Request items for Borrow By Mail by searching the Library's online catalog, placing a hold, and selecting "Borrow By Mail."

Homebound and Borrow By Mail deliveries utilize the United States Postal Service. Borrow By Mail items may be returned to any Library drop box, available at 11 community locations. Homebound customers receive return postage and packaging for their items.

Book Recommendations and Browsing Bundles

No idea what to read next? Looking for a new author, genre, or series to encourage the young reader in your house, or to rekindle your own love of books? The Library's staff of voracious readers is happy to help! Browse dozens of online lists of suggested books, or request a custom-curated reading list or a Browsing Bundle: a mini collection of books (or movies) hand-selected based on your preferences. Librarians can also help you find thought-provoking titles for your book club.

Start at balibrary.org/books. Browse the age-appropriate suggestions there, or use the online form to ask for a personalized list or Browsing Bundle. Use your BALibrary card when requesting your Browsing Bundle.

Parents are raving about Browsing Bundles as a fun and convenient way to discover great books for their growing readers.



BREAK OUT OF YOUR READING RUT

Customer Service Manager Maggie Wake



Digital Services Manager
Michael Campagna and Digital
Services Specialist Kat Stemple

PRESERVE PRECIOUS FAMILY MEMORIES

Studio 1 and Circulating Equipment

Got old photos, negatives, slides, and VHS tapes? Don't let them gather dust. Digitize them so they may be preserved and enjoyed for generations to come. Photos, documents, slides, negatives, and cassettes may be digitized in the Library's Studio 1. Equipment to digitize VHS cassettes, 8mm reel-to-reel film, photos, and documents may be checked out for in-home use.

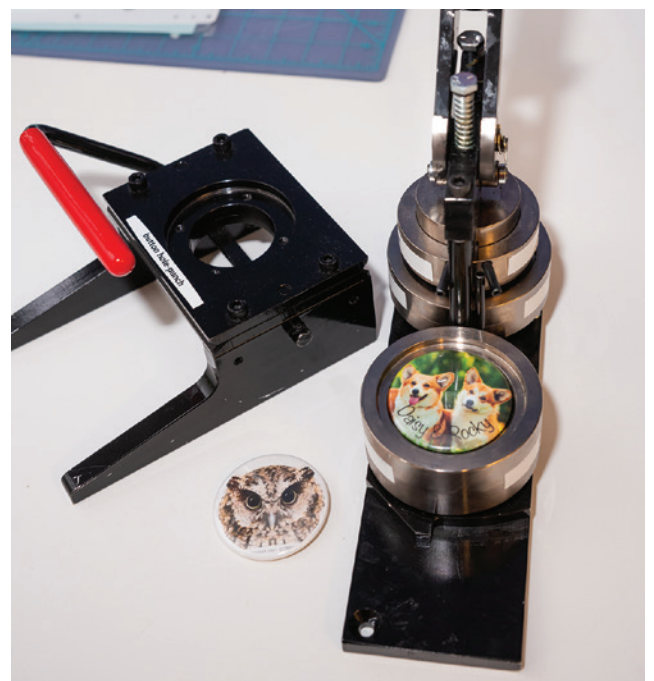
You will need your BALibrary card to use Studio 1 and the circulating equipment. Use the "digital studios" link on the Library website (balibrary.org) to make an appointment with the Digital Services staff or to book time in Studio 1. Check out circulating equipment by inquiring at the Reference Desk in the Business & Technology Center.

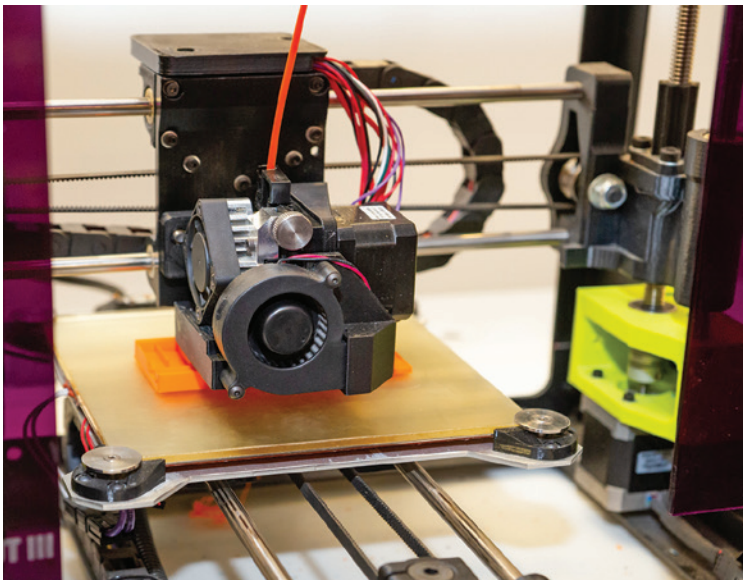
You may also place a hold on circulating equipment from within the Library's online catalog – use your BALibrary card.



GROW YOUR SMALL BUSINESS

One of many types of equipment in the MakerLab.





MakerLab

Need a 3D printed prototype, signage, or personalized giveaway items for your small business? The Library's MakerLab is equipped with 3D printers, a laser cutter, sublimation printer, CNC machine, vinyl cutter, heat press, button maker, and more. The Digital Services team can provide expert assistance, from design to production.

The MakerLab is open to businesspeople, artists, crafters, and anyone who likes to tinker and create! You just need a Barrington Area Library card. Use of the equipment is free but there is a charge for some materials. Appointments for staff assistance can be booked online at balibrary.org/makerlab.

An ever-changing display of sample items can be found in the MakerLab—drop in and get inspired! Please note that the MakerLab is not a substitute for a production facility, so limits on materials and quantity may apply. [U](#)

LIBRARY LEADERSHIP



Barrington Area Library Executive Director Vicki Rakowski has been in the library profession for 14 years, and received a Masters in Library and Information Science from Dominican University in 2010. She began her career in Youth Services, then moved into a series of management positions, joining the Barrington Area Library team as Head of Operations in 2017. She was named Executive Director of the Library in February of 2021.

Head of Operations Jason Pinshower joined the Barrington Area Library staff as Head of Adult Services in 2018, and he was promoted to Head of Operations in 2021. Prior to his arrival in Barrington, he served as Adult and Teen Manager for the Fox River Valley Public Library District in East Dundee, IL. He received his Masters in Library and Information Science from the University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee in 2013.