



Executive Director's Report August 2025

Summer is coming to an end. Deputy Director Susan Conner kept all of our big projects moving while I was out on vacation.

Style Guide: The communications department has expanded and updated our internal style guide. This past month, they presented it to the management team, and will be at this board meeting to share it with the board.

Elevator: Work is wrapping up on the elevator. Both lobbies got new carpet. We have a Scout coming in to paint the vestibules as their Eagle project. The main delay on the elevators is waiting for a final inspection.

Parking Garage: The parking garage was closed for a week while we repaired the ramp drain, which had developed cracks in the concrete. The repair was successful, and the parking garage has reopened.

RFID: In our RFID project, we are still working with the architect to design the sorter that will go into the member services workroom. As we do that, our staff has developed a plan that will convert our collection from barcodes to RFID tags. This process will take over three months, and we will be utilizing staff from all departments as well as volunteers. These changes will modernize and automate our check-in and out processes.

IPLAR: The IPLAR has been completed in your packets. There are some new questions in the IPLAR this year concerning facilities and construction needs. In the past, they would gather similar data differently. Some statistical definitions have changed. This will affect some of our stats moving forward. Part of the Strategic Plan is a stats team. They will be reviewing the IPLAR requirements and will make suggestions on how we can better track and report statistics.

1st Floor Renovation: Our internal team, along with the Friends of the Library, has met with the architect several times to refine the design concepts. The updated design will be submitted for another round of cost estimates, which the Facilities Committee and the board will review next month. We are excited that the plans are coming together and that the architect is finding ways to deliver on all of our requests. I am looking forward to sharing it with all of you.



Staff You Should Know

Hanna is a Branch Associate who uses her language skills in Ukrainian and Russian to make new immigrants feel more at home at the Rand Road Branch. She promotes the library and draws in many first-time library users. But you don't have to take my word; see what the members and her colleagues have to say about her.

"Thank you so much for letting me know of local Ukrainian community groups! That definitely helped share the word about our future RRB Ukrainian storytime!"



"I would also like to give a big thanks to Hanna for always helping out our community with translating and help; the new families in this country with resources the library offers. What an amazing team!"

"Hanna helped me learn about new programs. Open and polite since my English is weak, she explained everything in Russian. I am grateful to her."



New Employees

- Acacia is a new Youth and Teen Services Sub.
- Dana is a boomerang hire; she is coming back to the library as a Library Associate III in Youth and Teen Services.
- Lindsey and Star have been hired as Workshop Subs.

Calendar

- IMRF Webinar 7/9
- Cyber Incident report 7/9
- Paylocity 7/10
- Engberg Anderson (Reno) 7/10, 8/7, 8/8
- POC Marketing 7/11
- Directors Chat 7/11
- Rotary 8/5, 8/12
- Local Cohort Directors 8/5
- National Night Out 8/6
- Bibliotheca (RFID) 8/6, 8/12

UPCOMING EVENTS

EMAIL EVENT DETAILS TO LIFESTYLES1@JOURNAL-TOPICS.INFO
OR USE THE "SUBMIT YOUR NEWS" FORM AT JOURNAL-TOPICS.COM

The following family-friendly events are hosted by park districts, libraries, and history centers in the Journal & Topics coverage area. Register when requested. Email event details to lifestyles1@journal-topics.info.

Des Plaines

Des Plaines Park District
Live at the Lake - Johnny Rusler & the Beach Bum Band
Memorial Pavilion
2200 Lee St.
6 to 8:30 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 14
Young crafters can enjoy a project in the Art in the Park tent.

Rosemont

Parkway Bank Park
Rockin' in the Park - Brooklyn Charmers
5501 Park Place
7 to 10 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 21
Admission is free. Outside food and coolers are not allowed. Parking is available in the parking garage and is free with validation from any of the park's venues. Fireworks after the show.

Niles

Niles-Maine District Library
Story Time From Space - ages 3-7 with caregiver
6960 W. Oakton St.
10 to 10:30 a.m. Monday, Aug. 18
Listen to a story from a real astronaut in outer space.

Mount Prospect

Mount Prospect Public Library
Kindergarten Kickoff
10 S. Emerson St., Youth Program Room
10 to 11 a.m. Saturday, Aug. 16
Children entering kindergarten in the fall are invited to a party that recognizes their big step forward. Register.

Park Ridge

Park Ridge Public Library
In-person and virtual: Making the Most of your Social Security
20 S. Prospect Ave., First Floor Meeting Room
7 to 8 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 21
Discover strategies to boost your monthly lifetime benefits beyond standard filing options.

Glenview

Glenview Public Library
Back to School Family Magic Show with Scott Green - all ages
1930 Glenview Rd., Community Room
1 to 4:45 p.m. Friday, Aug. 15
Enjoy magic and humor at this program. Free tickets will be handed out 20 minutes before the show. Tickets are required for entry. Preference given to GPL cardholders.

Arlington Heights

Arlington Heights Park District
Virtual - Flentie Park Community Input Meeting
5:30 - 7 p.m. Wednesday, Aug. 27
Arlington Heights Park District is developing a master plan for Flentie Park. A link to the virtual meeting will be provided closer to the meeting date. An in-person meeting will be held at Flentie Park, 2040 E. Mulberry Ln., from 5:30 to 7 p.m. Sept. 11.

Elk Grove Village

Elk Grove Historical Museum
Pioneer Day
399 Biesterfeld Rd.
Noon to 3 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 13
Travel back in time to Elk Grove's early days. Enjoy the music, reenactors, crafts, and games.

Palatine

Palatine Public Library District
Level Up - Reading Reboot - ages 4-6
700 N. North Ct., Story Room AB
2 to 4 p.m. Monday, Aug. 11
Drop in to learn new skills and review old skills before the new school year begins. Enjoy games, puzzles, and activities.

Wheeling

Wheeling Park District
Kids Night Out - Camp Out
Community Recreation Center
100 Community Blvd.
6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Friday, Sept. 12
Enjoy camping-themed games, nature-inspired crafts, and s'mores. Pizza will also be provided, and kids get a goody bag.

Prospect Heights

Prospect Heights Public Library District
Parks in Montana and the Dakotas: Where the Buffalo Roam
12 Elm St., Meeting Room A&B
1 to 2:15 p.m. Tuesday, Aug. 12
Nancy McCully will discuss the Dakotas and Montana. Register for the program.

Rolling Meadows

Rolling Meadows Library
Writing Workshop: Writing Our Own Stories - Teens 13+ and Adults
3110 Martin Lane
10 to 11:30 a.m. Saturday, Aug. 16
Learn tips, resources, and helpful prompts to begin your personal writing experience.

Buffalo Grove

Buffalo Grove Park District
Huck Finn Fishing Derby - 2-14 years old
Reiner Park
1101 N. Green Knolls Dr.
5 to 7 p.m. Friday, Sept. 19

An Old Guy's Guide For Incoming College Freshmen



Anything & Everything

By Jon Cohen

It is hearing that time of year (summer please slow down!) for many of our Journal & Topics area kids to be headed off to college. For some, it will be their first venture officially away from home, while for others, a return trip for a new year.

Clearly, things over the past five decades have changed dramatically, thus stating the ridiculously obvious, so far be it for a crusty old veteran writer like myself to even dare to make any suggestions to today's incoming college kids regarding modern day collegiate life.

But I will.

Listed below is my official "old guy's" guide to incoming college freshmen. Note, much of the items below can apply to all college kids, but the emphasis here is on those just starting their new journey.

1) Warning: The first two weeks can be tough! I don't care how confident, how popular you were in high school, how solid your family life has been -- when you get dropped off that first time? When your parents get you situated, and then exit stage left, and you are left on your own in a strange place, possibly with no one that you know? It takes some getting used to.

Homesickness can definitely hit in the early going. The adjustment is often a bit harder than you think. But have faith -- it will get better! Every freshman, to some degree, goes through this and you will come out fine on the other end, so hang in there in the beginning!

2) Choose your friends wisely. At first, it will most likely be the ones in your dormitory. This is natural, and it is good to get to know as many in your dorm as possible. But as the year wears on, start to find the friends to hang around with that you connect with better. The ones that hopefully are good influences and bring out the best in you.

The friends you make, and the people you hang around with will be a big part of your own personal growth and the college experience as a whole -- so choose wisely (and don't be afraid to slowly but gently move away from those that might not be the best of influences).

3) Get involved in outside activities. Whether it is a job, a club, intramural sports, music, theatre or any number of the many activities offered outside the classroom, get yourself involved in as many as you can. Just like high school, surveys consistently show that the kids who say they had the best college experiences are the ones who were involved in extra-curricular activities.

4) Food. Five decades ago, the number one collegiate eating advice was to stay away from the Friday "surprise meat" offering, as it was usually whatever was left over in the cafeteria from the first four days of the week. But today? College cafeterias are more like one of our suburban mall food courts. An amazing amount of quality selections, and all free! (Well sort of -- please see the fine print on the college contract). Enjoy, try and eat healthy, and beware of the "freshman 15."

5) Exercise. Many have regular workout routines from their high school days, but when heading to college, sometimes exercise can take a back seat to classes, new friends, activities, "distractions," etc. It shouldn't. Find a way to get regular workouts (whatever your choice might be). Besides staying in shape, you will be mentally sharper in class and in your studies, and it can't hurt your social life either.

6) Sex, drugs and alcohol. My number one "old guys advice" in this area is...to take it easy. Go slow. You go too hard in the party scene too early? Then there is only one way to go the next four years and that is down. Understand that all of the above may be part of the college experience, and yes, it is tempting without parents around to really let loose -- but my advice, again, is to just slow yourself down in this area in the beginning.

7) Friends from home at your same school? Fine, but be careful not to hang with them too much in the beginning. Is it easier and more comfortable? Sure, but it also might hinder your transition into making new friend groups at your new school.

I could go on, but I probably already went well over my "advice from the old guy" quota limit for this column.

Closing thought? Please note that I stayed away from any specific classroom or academic recommendations. This was done intentionally, primarily based on my own less than stellar grade point average in my college days. I figured the less said in this area, probably the better!



Letters to the Editor

Library offers safe, welcoming environment

Posted July 20, 2025 4:00 am

I am a decades-long user of the Palatine Public Library. I write to share my appreciation of the work that it does to make the library a safe and welcoming space for all.

From the programs celebrating diversity, to the Maker Space, to the wonderful collections of books and other resources, the library allows everyone who visits to feel that they can access public accommodations and receive assistance without judgment, resistance or refusal. The Pride Flag, in particular, acts as a beacon to let individuals and families know that they can find comfort and safety within the library and on the library grounds. It is an important symbol, and its visibility means a great deal to people in the community.

The library services are complicated by certain political realities that could make it vulnerable to dissension and bad behavior. But in my experience, everyone who walks in the doors is treated appropriately and professionally.

I want to acknowledge and thank all of the people, in all positions and locations, who are working in the Palatine library. Because of you, we can all feel comfortable and supported.

Audrey Natcone

Palatine



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Local

Free craft kits for teens at Des Plaines Public Library this month

Daily Herald report

Posted July 11, 2025 1:49 pm

You have read 2 of 3 free articles.

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Teens can stop by the Des Plaines Public Library this month to pick up free kits for making pastel bead key chains.

The kits will be available during operating hours on the third floor of the library, 1501 Ellinwood St. They're part of the library's Teen Take & Make program.

The activity is open to seventh through 12th graders. Only teens can pick up the kits.

For more information and details on other teen programs and activities, visit dppl.org.