



Executive Director's Report December 2024

Employees enjoyed a resource fair in November. This fair not only highlighted benefits available to staff but also had community organizations that gave advice on healthy eating and personal financial management, and we got fun perks like 5-minute chair massages and a free month of membership at the YMCA.

At our quarterly PIC training, we discussed two of the major incidents we had last month and had a good discussion on how to handle them moving forward. We were also able to serve our member with the suspension.

Management Team and the Communications Department received training on how to handle crisis communications. In addition to the training, the expert we hired is helping us beef up our crisis communication plan.

The Technology Department and Workshop Department are moving forward with the separation. We have hired four Workshop assistants who are getting excellent on-the-job training during the busy holiday gift-making season. We have begun interviewing for the Workshop Manager role.



Branches

We are moving forward with plans to create a Branches department. Lupe Colin, the manager for that department, will be reporting on the area branch study included in your packet. The Branches are getting their own Library of Things items and can now put holds on items in the LOT collection at Main. The recommendation from the policy committee in your packet to loan rules will allow Reciprocal Borrowers to place holds for pickup at our locations. This will give better customer service for all of our visitors and will be especially helpful at the two Branches since they are closer to our District boundaries.

Calendar

- Rotary Service Project 11/12
- Friends Presidents 11/14
- Foundation 11/14
- LIRA Webinar 11/15
- CCS Board 11/20
- Rotary 11/26, 12/3, 12/10
- Crisis Communication training 12/3
- S+C Electric 12/5
- HR Source Benchmarking 12/5

Policy 9: Human Resources

Last month we talked about what we heard from staff to make this a better workplace. You will see some of these suggestions take shape in the changes to Policy 9. This policy is 41 pages long, and the policy committee and staff have spent a while reviewing and revising it. I would like to highlight some of the changes that we hope will have a big impact on staff and help us meet the strategic plan goal 1 of supporting staff. As always, you will see changes throughout that eliminate extraneous language and simplify language for clarity.

- 9-2.1 clarified that restroom breaks can be taken at any time, 15-minute breaks are paid, and eliminated a time limit for expressing breast milk.
- 9-2.8 increased the type and amount of gifts allowed to match the gift ban act.
- 9-3.7 added milestone anniversaries to the policy and increase amounts.
- 9-6.1 gave holiday pay to all part-time staff except subs.
- 9-6.4 gave all full-time staff 4 weeks of vacation regardless of exemption status and shortened the amount of time it takes for part-time staff to earn more vacation.
- 9-7.3 increased allowable bereavement leave and added language for a person of significance who might not be an official family member.
- 9-7.5 increase paid parental leave to 8 weeks.
- 9-9.6 increase volunteer time off so all staff may participate.
- 9-10.1 clarified a reasonable amount of time for responses to complaints.
- 9-10.5 changed the vaccination policy to allow for any type of vaccine. Total time off is still the same.

Please let me know if you have any questions or grammar changes before the meeting. We know that there are still some areas that will need changes. The tuition reimbursement policy is one area we are researching for next year.

Employee Milestones



Melissa Gardner celebrated 10 years.
Andrea Dinterman celebrated 5 years.

Promotions



Steven Byrne was promoted to Collection Services Associate I.
Justyna Chlopecka was promoted to Workshop Assistant.



Staff You Should Know

Brian Herner announced his retirement after 16 years with the Library. Over the years, Brian has been involved in many exciting changes to the Adult Services Department. He will be missed.

Branch Report

Guadalupe Colin

This report explores branch libraries in the Chicagoland area to learn about how other libraries operate, their programming offerings, their spaces, and their staff structure. The recommendations suggested are based on the findings as well as experience working at Rand Road Branch.

Branches Featured

Fox River Valley Public Library - Randall Oaks Library

Mount Prospect Public Library - South Branch

Gail Borden Public Library District - Rakow Branch

Schaumburg Township District Library - Hoffman Estates Branch

Indian Trails Public Library District - Indian Trails Branch

Evanston Public Library - Robert Crown Branch Library

Fox River Valley Public Library

Randall Oaks Library



Address: 500 N. Randall Rd. West Dundee, IL 60118

Size: 5,000 sq ft

Location: Park District Building

Program rooms: The library uses their own space for their programming, but they have the option to rent a room from the Park District.

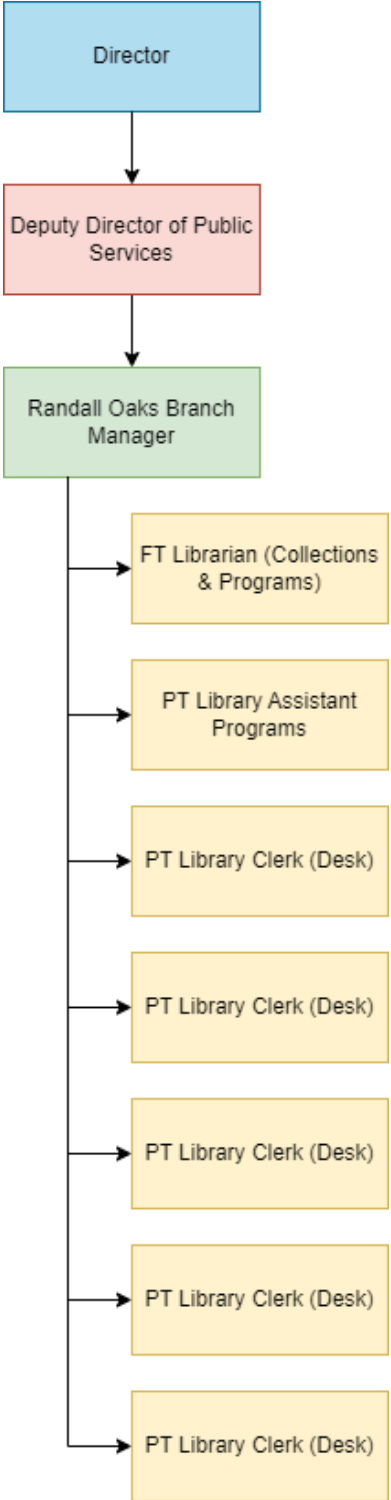
Programs per month: 11 (3 more than RRB)

Collections: A full-time librarian and Branch Manager

Programs: Two part-time library assistants, and one librarian plan and perform all the programs, none of the clerks perform any programming

Outreach: None, the Marketing and Communications department does all their outreach (3 staff members)

Fox River Valley Public Library Organizational Chart



Mount Prospect Public Library

South Branch



Address: 1711 W Algonquin Rd, Mt Prospect, IL 60056

Size: 1,000 sq ft

Location: Strip mall

Program room: Regular access to a room that is shared with one more partner

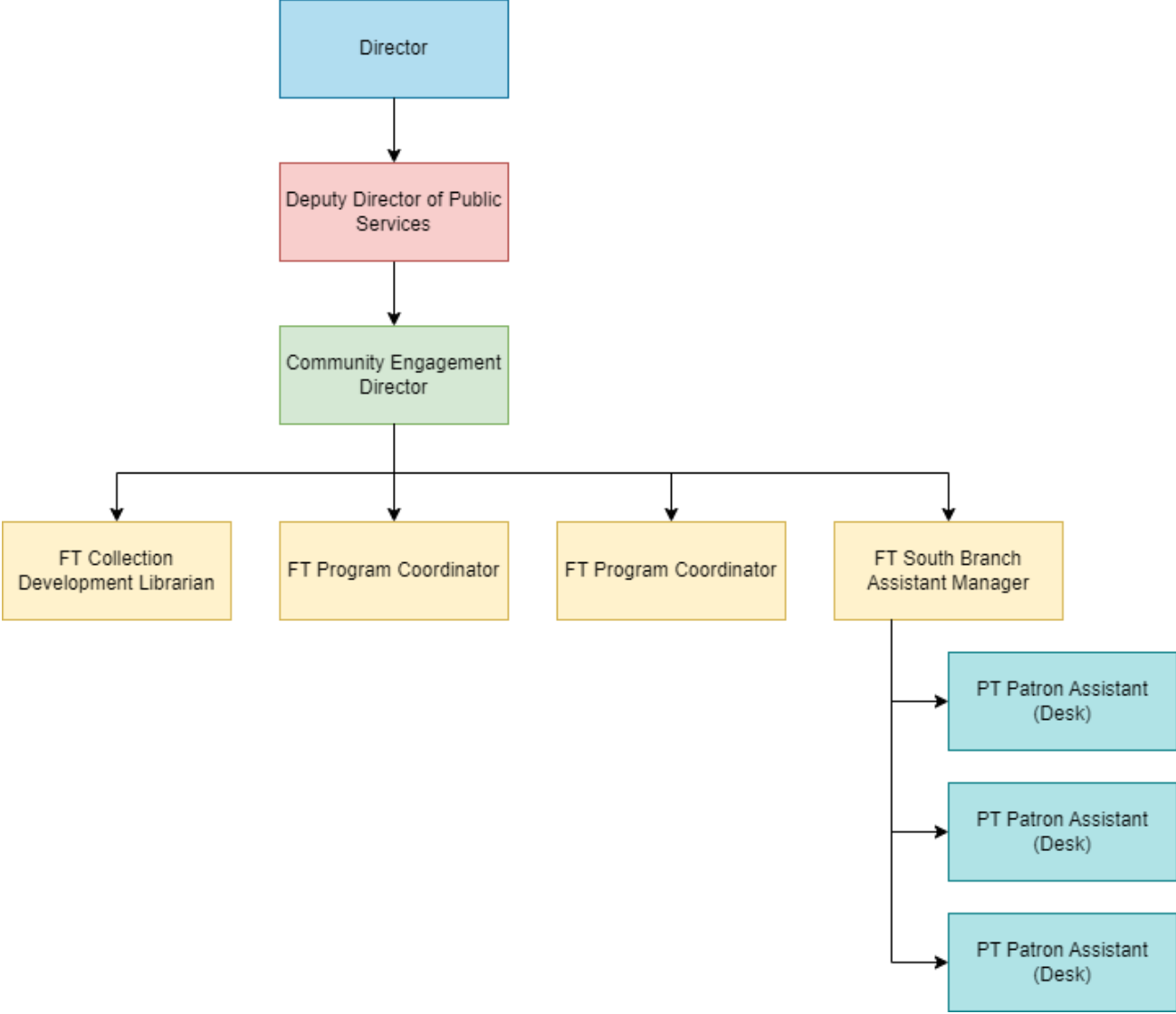
Programs per month: 12 (4 more than RRB)

Collections: A full-time Librarian

Programs: One full-time program coordinator with help of one patron assistant

Outreach: Part-time outreach assistant

Mount Prospect Public Library Organizational Chart



Gail Borden Public Library District

Rakow Branch & South Elgin Branch



Address: 127 South McLean Blvd South Elgin, IL & 2751 West Bowes Road Elgin, IL

Size: 10,500 & 12,000 sq ft

Location: Stand Alone Branches

Program room: Rakow branch has no program room, South Elgin is doing construction to include a programming room and meeting room

Programs per month: 26 (18 more than RRB)

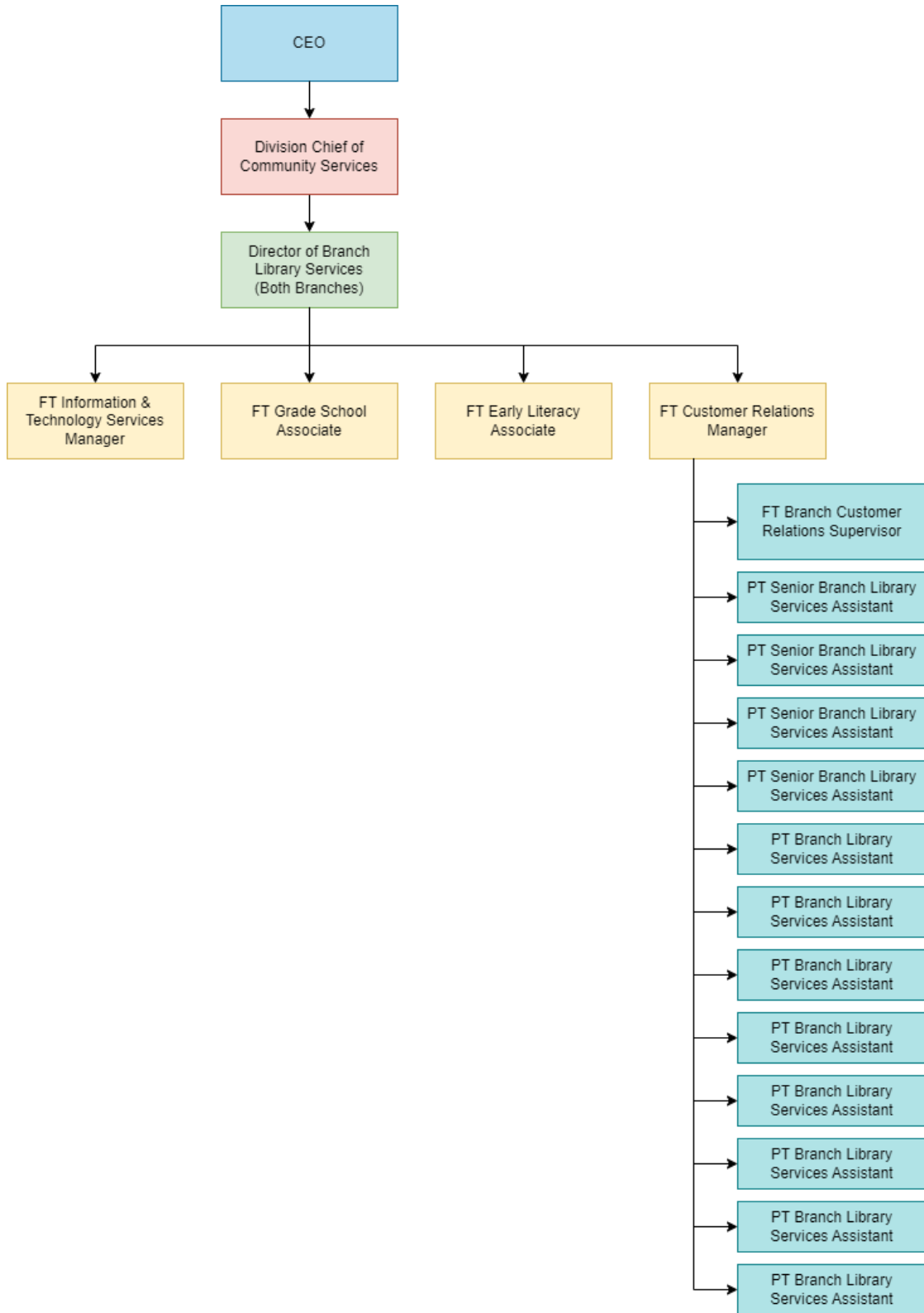
Collections: The Collections Team at Main does the purchasing, but the branches do their own weeding

Programs: All programs are planned and hosted by staff at both branches

Outreach: Outreach is done by a separate department at Main

Staff: All staff work at both branches

Gail Borden Public Library District Organizational Chart



Schaumburg Township District Library

Hoffman Estates Branch



Address: 1550 Hassell Road Hoffman Estates, IL

Size: 9,700 sq ft

Location: Stand Alone Branch

Program room: One programming room

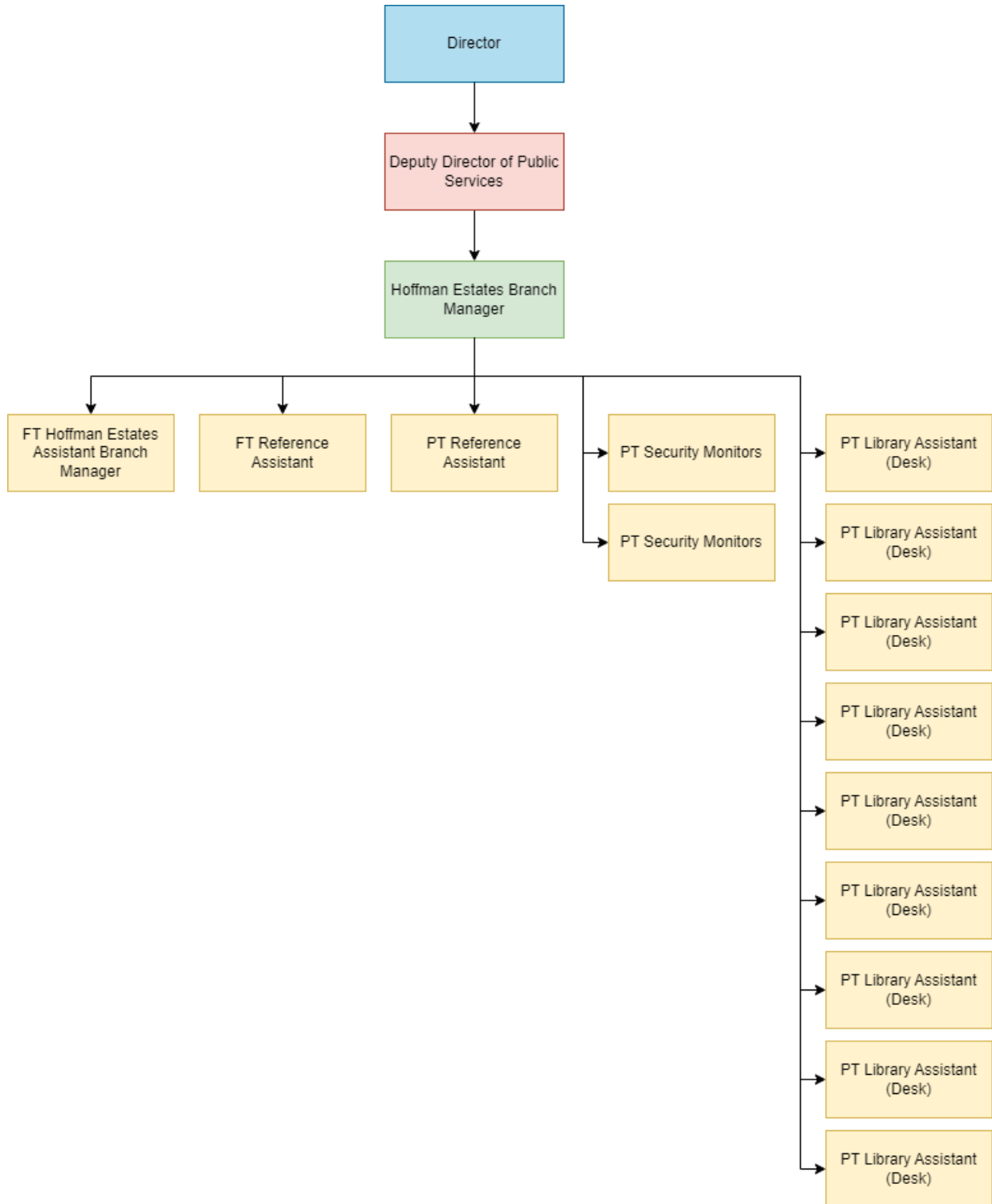
Programs per month: 30 (22 more than RRB)

Collections: Branch Manager and Assistant Manager

Programs: Main does core programming and branch staff do supplemental programs

Outreach: Branch staff

Schaumburg Township District Library Organizational Chart



Indian Trails Public Library District

Indian Trails Branch



Address: 99 E Palatine Rd, Prospect Heights, IL 60070

Size: 1,100 sq ft

Location: Stand Alone

Program room: No programming room

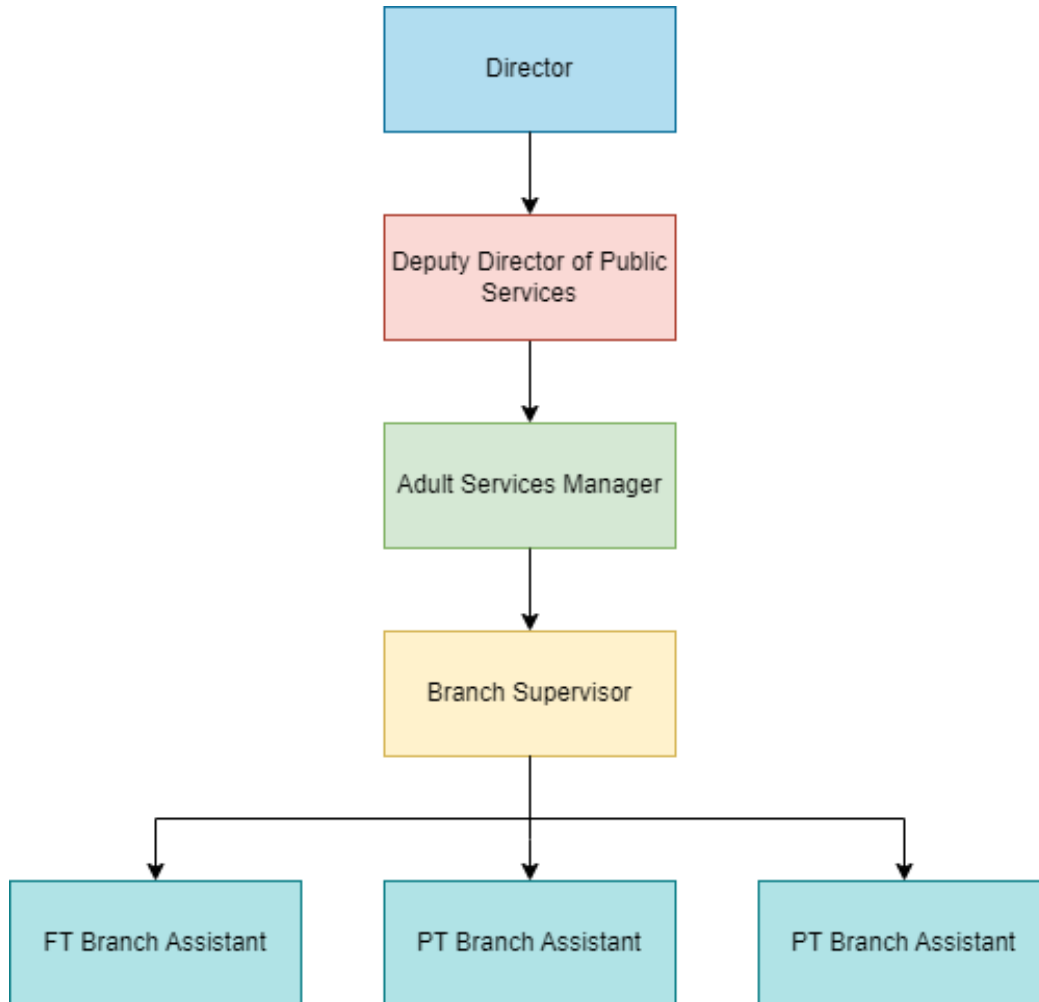
Programs per month: 4 (4 less than RRB)

Collections: Branch manager with the support of Main librarians

Programs: FT Branch Assistant and Branch Supervisor

Outreach: Outreach department at Main

Indian Trails Public Library District Organizational Chart



Evanston Public Library

Robert Crown Branch Library



Address: 1801 Main St, Evanston, IL

Size: 6,000 sq ft

Location: Community Center

Program room: One program room and access to community center rooms

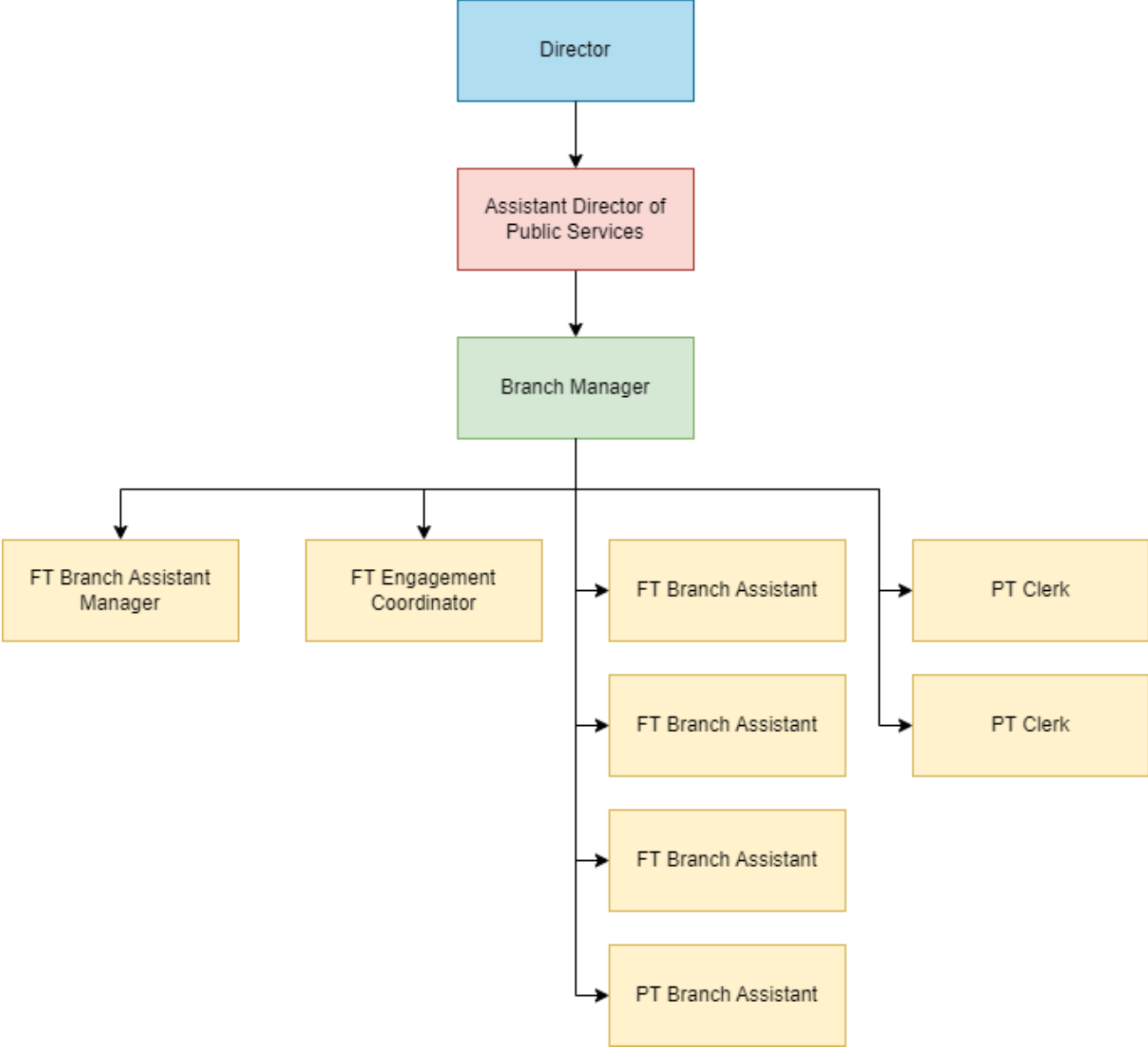
Programs per month: 22 (14 more than RRB)

Collections: Assistant Branch Manager

Programs: Community Engagement Coordinator and Branch Assistants

Outreach: All Branch Staff

Evanston Public Library Organizational Chart



Highlights from the 2023 Strategic Plan Research Report

- There is a strong desire for Spanish language programming from Rand Branch users.
- Members value Rand Staff and the ability to have children close while they look at the collection. There is a desire for more places to sit and read at Rand branch.
- Patrons of the Rand Road Branch are statistically most likely to find Events and Classes Extremely Important.
- RRB Members: Nearly 2/3 are from households include both Adults and Children – significantly more than any other branch.
- Members are very interested in programs that teach skills for all age levels.
- Members also desire to have programs and services during non-working hours.

Short Term Suggestions for Rand Road Branch

Programming and Outreach

Having RRB oversee all programs will lessen the load on the Youth Services Department and the Adult Services Department. Hiring two full-time staff members will allow us to take over existing programming and expand our offerings.

- 1 FT Librarian (Collections, Programming and Outreach)
- 1 FT Associate (Programming and Outreach)

The rest of RRB staff will support programs and outreach. They are currently on desk during their entire shift, and with additional staff, we can:

- Support new and current programming initiatives
- Support other outreach requests coming from Main (school outreach, for example)
- Fulfill outreach requests coming from CRC organizations

Space Needs

To provide more programming, more access to programming spaces is needed. At this point, the library is struggling to secure space at the CRC for regular programming. The Rand Road Branch is an alternative space to provide smaller programs.

There is also a need for spaces for people to sit, lounge and work. There is currently only one small table that one or two members can use.

To meet the needs of the community, the library could:

- Shift collections to walls to have less bulky furniture in the middle of the room so staff can easily move things to host programs
- Provide more spaces for members to sit and stay in the library for a longer period
- Have enough tables and chairs to host small programs (about 22 members), CRC supplements some chairs and tables

Long Term Suggestions

The Palatine community is getting more diverse, not just with Spanish speakers, but there has been an influx of new immigrant communities (Ukrainian, Russian, etc.). To continue fulfilling the needs of the diverse community, there are 3 areas that the library could focus on.

1. Spaces

Expanding the Rand Road Branch as well as the North Hoffman Branch to a bigger space with more access to a programming room would allow staff to expand programming, invite local schools to the branch and even rent out to the room to local organizations. It would also provide room for the need for a diverse collection of materials, including the demand for Library of Things and materials in other languages.

2. Staff

More staff is needed to fulfill the growing needs of the community. Members need continued access to technology and diverse materials. More staff would allow us to visit other community organizations, expand our programming selections to include more tech focused classes like Workshop offerings. There should be continued focus on tech training and hiring staff members that speak primarily Spanish, but also Russian, Ukrainian, Japanese and other growing languages.

3. Outreach Team

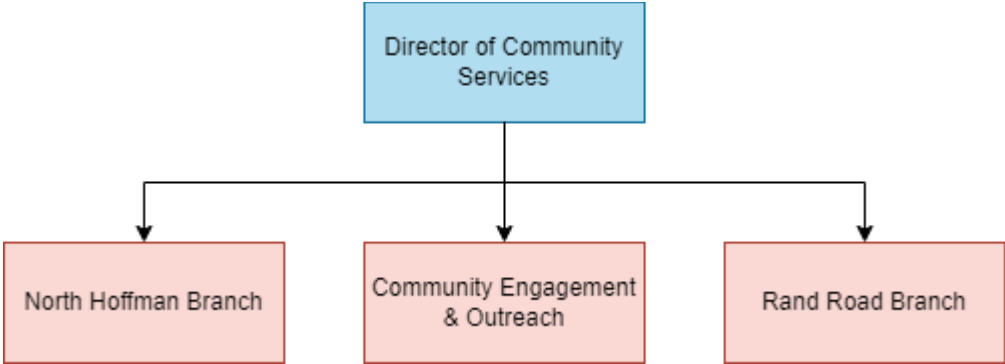
In many nearby branches, even the bigger, standalone ones, outreach was localized to a team of people. This allows staff to focus on their respective library and offerings, and the library would have a dedicated team handling most outreach events.

- The outreach team would attend all tabling events, Spanish must be a language that at least some of the staff speak
- YTS would continue doing school outreach during the regular hours, but all family events would be attended by outreach staff.
- All other staff would be expected to participate in outreach but not to the extent we are asking now.
- Adult services would continue to offer adult specific outreach like nursing home visits and homebound delivery.

Staff Structure Recommendation

Although the branches are like smaller extensions of the Main Branch, they have more specialized needs compared to Main that need to be evaluated along with Outreach services since those initiatives are geared to connecting the community to the library, especially the underrepresented populations. A staff member overseeing branches and community services would oversee growth for both branches and manage outreach initiatives with the goal of connecting members to all branches and library services.

Example Organizational Chart



Data

Library	Community	Location	Square Footage	Hours Open	Total Open Hours	Number of Staff	Full-Time	Part-Time	Average Programs a Month
Fox River Valley Public Library - Randall Oaks Library	East Dundee, West Dundee, Carpentersville, Sleepy Hollow, Gilberts and more.	Park District Building	5,000 sq ft	M - Th 9-8pm, Fri & Sat 9-5pm, Sunday 1-5	64	8	2	6	11
Mount Prospect Public Library - South Branch	Mount Prospect	Strip Mall	1,000 sq ft	M - F 11-7:30p, S 11-3p	46.5	8	4	4	12
Gail Borden Public Library District - Rakow Branch	Elgin, South Elgin and portions of Hoffman Estates, Streamwood and Bartlett	Standalone Buildings	Rakow - 10,598 sq ft. and South Elgin 4,275 sq ft.	M-Th 9-9pm, Fri & Sat 9-6pm, Sunday 12-5pm	71	18	6	12	26
Schaumburg Township District Library - Hoffman Estates Branch	Schaumburg, Hoffman Estates	Standalone Buildings	9,700 sq ft	M - Th 9-9, F & S 9-5	64	15	3	12	30
Indian Trails Public Library District - Indian Trails Branch	Wheeling, Buffalo Grove and Prospect Heights	Strip Mall	1,100 sq ft	M-F 1-8, S 10-3p	33	4	2	2	4
Evanston Public Library - Robert Crown Branch Library	Evanston	Community Center	6,000 sq ft	M - Th 10-8p, F & S 9-6p, Su 12-6p	64	9	6	3	22
Palatine Library District - Rand Road	Palatine, Hoffman Estates	Community Center	1,200 sq ft	M-Th 10-6p, F 9-4p, S 9-1	43	4	0	4	8
Palatine Library District - North Hoffman Branch	Palatine, Hoffman Estates	Park District Building	1,200 sq ft	M-Th 11-7, F 10-6, S 9-1	44	3	1	2	8

Life & Style

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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. E-mail event details to lifestyles1@journal-topics.info.

DES PLAINES

Trinity Lutheran Church
Christmas Luncheon
675 E. Algonquin Rd.
11:30 luncheon, 1:15 p.m. program
Saturday, Dec. 7

Jeannie La Cerba from Lurvey's Home and Garden Center will demonstrate how to create a pot of fresh Christmas green for the holidays, which can be placed outside. There is a ticket fee. Reservations are due Monday, Dec. 2. Bring non-perishable food items for the Self-Help Closet of Des Plaines.

ROSEMONT

Rosemont Elementary School
Dist. 78
Boys Basketball at Giles
J. Giles Elementary School
4251 Oriole Ave., Norridge
4 to 6:30 p.m. Monday, Dec. 16

NILES

Niles-Maine District Library
Cool Yule: A Holiday Jazz Collection—A Concert with the Elaine Dame Duo
6960 W. Oakton St.—Commons Meeting Room A&B
1:30 to 2:30 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 30
Jazz singer Elaine Dame will get everyone in the holiday spirit as she shares her interpretation of vintage vocal gems and modern standards alike. This is an adult program.

MOUNT PROSPECT

St. Mark Lutheran Church
Comfort and Joy Christmas Organ Concert
200 S. Wille St.
3:30 to 4:45 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 8
Music director Timothy Spelbring will present both classical and traditional pieces to bring the joy of the season to all. Spelbring will be joined by flutist Letitia Spelbring and cantor Jeanne Kueter. Refreshments will be served following the concert.

PARK RIDGE

Park Ridge Public Library

The Magic of Raina Telgemeier: Fan Party & Zoom, grades 4-12
20 S. Prospect Ave., Third Floor Meeting Room
6:15 to 8:15 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 10

Meet Raina on Zoom. The library will raffle off a copy of one of her books. Everyone will have a chance to submit a question for her ahead of time that will be shared during the event by the moderator, time permitting. Register.

GLENVIEW

Glenview Public Library
Starlite Singers Sing in the Season
1930 Glenview Rd., Community Room
11 a.m. to noon Thursday, Dec. 5
Enjoy a matinee performance from the Glenview Senior Center Chorus. Festive songs will help you ring in the holidays. Just drop in.

ARLINGTON HEIGHTS

Arlington Heights Memorial Library
Remote Workers Recharge
500 N. Duntun, Cardinal Room
12:30 to 1:30 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 10

Remote workers are invited to take a break and socialize with your fellow remote workers. Drinks and snacks will be provided. Drop-in. No library card required.

ELK GROVE VILLAGE

Elk Grove Village Public Library
Winter Whimsy Family Photo-families with children of all ages
1001 Wellington Ave.
6:30 to 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 12

Families can head over to the library for a fun, seasonal photo. Register in-person at the Youth Services Reference Desk or by calling 847-439-0447, ext. 267. Upon arrival, choose a festive background, and your photos will be e-mailed to you after the session.

PALATINE

Palatine Library District
Wind and Truth Release Party Workshop Lab
700 N. North Court
6:30 to 8 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 5
Celebrate the release of Wind and Truth, book five of the Stormlight Archives by Brandon

Sanderson, with activities related to Sanderson's expansive Cosmere universe: Earn chances to win a copy of the book by attending the party, dressing in your best cosplay, or winning a round of trivia. For adults. Drop in.

WHEELING

Wheeling Park District
Winter Wonderland, ages 5-10
Community Recreation Center
100 Community Blvd.
6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Friday, Dec. 6
Registration deadline Tuesday, Nov. 26

Kids will play games, make crafts and drink hot chocolate. Pizza will be provided. Each child will receive a goody bag to take home. Register today.

PROSPECT HEIGHTS

Prospect Heights Public Library
Concert: John Hersey High School Charles Dickens Carolers
12 Elm St., Main Library near windows
1:15 to 2 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 1
Registration Nov. 20-Dec. 1

Enjoy a special performance of the John Hersey High School Charles Dickens Carolers. Under the direction of Sara Michael, this acapellachoral group will perform a variety of traditional holiday and madrigal music costumed in traditional Charles Dickens period attire.

ROLLING MEADOWS

Rolling Meadows Library
Kid's Book Club, grades 4-8
3110 Martin Ln.
4 to 4:45 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 17
Kids, join the club if you love to read. Everyone reads the same book and then meets to talk about it. If you need help getting the book, stop by or call the Ask Me Desk. Limited ebooks and eAudiobooks.

BUFFALO GROVE

The Wizard of Oz Performance
Community Arts Center
225 McHenry Rd.
7 to 8:30 p.m. Friday, Dec. 13
3 to 4:30 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 14
7 to 8:30 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 14
3 to 4:30 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 15
There is a fee. This new dance production, directed and choreographed by Melissa Goccek, will feature classic roles. The story will be told through jazz, tap, ballet and contemporary dancing.

'A Regular Guy From Des Plaines'

The Bright Lights Don't Seem Too Far Off For Local Native Andre Bellos

By **GEORGE HOWE**
Special to the Journal

As a child growing up, did you ever dream of one day becoming a Hollywood actor? Since the tender age of 5, Andre Bellos has had that cherished aspiration and more than 30 years later he continues to fulfill that ambition.

Growing up in a non-Hollywood household in Des Plaines, Bellos fondly reminisces about his first performances with brother Peter. "We would put on magic shows for our parents and I would make my brother disappear," he said with a laugh. "He would always ruin the act because he never disappeared at the right time. I knew then that I wanted to entertain people."

While attending Maine West High School, Bellos cut his thespian teeth and was very active in the arts as a member of the choir, drama class, and dance and talent shows. One of his former teachers and dance instructor Lisa Jacob recognized something special in Bellos. "He was a good dancer, and singer and came prepared for all of the performances he participated in," she said.

Bellos has ramped up his pursuit and since 2010 has worked as an extra climbing the ladder one rung at a time appearing in such movies as, "Captive State," "The Dilemma," and the Spike Lee directed "Chi-Raq". In 2015, he signed with several talent agencies including Dream Team in Chicago, Atlanta, New York and Los Angeles, and Babes 'n' Beaus modeling agency in Hinsdale.

Bellos' dedication and determination continue to pay off. Last season, he had a speaking role as Lucas on "Chicago Med". In July, on the show, the "Greatest Prison Escapes" that aired on the History Channel, he portrayed a real-life person in Javier Zapata, an inmate who escaped from the Sante Fe, NM, state prison in 2008. He shared that the on-set experiences were special. "It was a great learning experience surrounded by talented actors and production people. I was in my element." Some of his early successes allowed Bellos to earn his Screen Actors Guild card. "I'm proud of the roles that I've played and being a card-carrying actor."

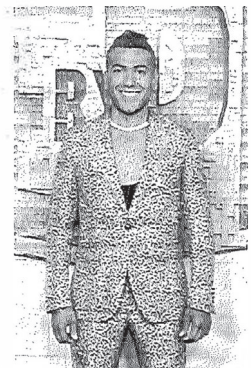
Rejection is a big part of the business and Bellos learned to take it in stride. "When you are young and starting out going to auditions, you can take it personally when not chosen," he explained. "Now that I have some experience, I understand that directors are looking



From Des Plaines to "Chicago": Bellos on the set of "Chicago Med".



Among his many roles, Bellos gets ready for a Ralph Lauren print ad. (Photos submitted)



Bellos attends the film premiere of "Piece by Piece".

for something in particular, not dashing my confidence."

Recently, he got the chance to go to New York for the premiere of the film "Piece by Piece", produced by the toy maker Lego and directed by Morgan Neville. This is a biopic about musician Pharrell
(Continued on page 14)

ST. JAMES SCHOOL

OPEN HOUSE



Register Here

January 26, 2025 | 12:30-2:00pm



Educating PreK-8th Grade



At St. James School, we're proud to foster lifetime friendships while providing a Blue Ribbon Catholic education. Our close-knit community supports students in their faith, academics, and personal growth, helping them build strong relationships and values that last a lifetime.

WINTER READING
Challenge **2024**

All ages!

Sign up online Sunday, December 15 -
Friday, January 31

- When we all read 12,000 books, the Palatine Historical Society gets a grand donation from our sponsors!
- Earn badges, coupons, and prizes along the way.
- Finish your reading requirements and get a mug or winter toy.
- Prizes funded by the Friends of Palatine Library. For Palatine cardholders only.

- **Donation Drive**
- Sunday, December 15 - Friday, January 31
- On behalf of the Palatine Historical Society, donate winter items to the Main Library for Partners for Our Community (POC).



Palatine
LIBRARY
District

847-907-3600

palatinelibrary.org