Open Books Open Doors

Recognizing the need to provide library card assistance to families and individuals with demonstrable economic hardship living in unincorporated areas, the library created the Open Books Open Doors Program to assist low income families or individuals not covered by a library district get a library card.

Those who are eligible live in unincorporated areas of Glen Ellyn or in unincorporated areas of surrounding communities but have children who attend school in a Glen Ellyn School District. Through this fund, which was created and is sustained through private contributions, the library has issued over 100 library cards since its creation in 2002.

Monday–Thursday.....9 am to 9 pm
Friday and Saturday.....9 am to 5 pm
Sunday..................1 pm to 5 pm

400 Duane Street, Glen Ellyn, IL 60137
630-469-0879 | gepl.org

For Contributors
Frequently Asked Questions: Open Books Open Doors

■ Why did you start this program?

The library used to offer a discounted, flat-rate summer card in order to make library services available to families in unincorporated Glen Ellyn who wouldn’t have access to their school libraries during the summer months. In the summer of 2001, Illinois passed legislation stating that non-resident cards had to be at least equal to the cost of resident cards and they needed to be offered for a full 12 month period – no prorated summer cards.

The library was particularly concerned about unincorporated low income families that would not be able to afford a library card. The Glen Ellyn Public Library Board voted to create a program where donations would pay for qualifying members’ library cards for one year. The program has expanded to include low income individuals living in unincorporated Glen Ellyn.

■ What is the cost for a library card?

Library card cost is calculated on a case by case basis using a current rental or lease agreement, indicating clearly the monthly payment OR, for a homeowner, a copy of their most recent property tax bill.

Illinois State Law requires this information as the basis for determining the mandated annual cost we must charge a non-resident household for a library card. The charge must be at least equal to that of tax paying residents.

■ Who can apply?

This program is based on financial need. Families living in unincorporated Glen Ellyn or in surrounding unincorporated areas who have students in Glen Ellyn School District 41, District 89 or High School District 87 (Glenbard South or Glenbard West only) and have a child who participates in the Federal Free and Reduced-Price School Meal Program through their school (verified by a school representative), or have an Illinois LINK card (state issued food assistance) may apply.

Individuals living in unincorporated Glen Ellyn who receive assistance through the Illinois LINK Program may apply.

■ In what order are applications considered?

Applications are considered and approved on a first-come, first-served basis and availability of funds. Once funds are depleted, current applications which meet economic criteria will be held, and, when funds are available, the earliest submissions will be funded first.

■ How can cards be used?

The Glen Ellyn Public Library card is good for one year and can be used just like any other member card.

■ What are your sources of funding?

All funding comes from individual or group donations. No tax dollars are used to fund this program.

■ Who are the partners in this program?

The library relies on our community partners and supporters for financial donations. The library also works with individuals, schools and after-school programs to assist in identifying and encouraging families to apply for an Open Books Open Doors card.

■ Are contributions tax-deductible?

Yes, contributions are tax-deductible.

If you would like to make a donation to the Open Books Open Doors Program, please contact Maria Tachna, Business Manager at the Glen Ellyn Public Library, at 630-790-6761.

If you know of individuals or families who might benefit from this program, please direct them to apply.