As our COVID marathon enters another season, I’m sure we are all struggling to stay positive! I would like to thank the Glen Ellyn community for sharing some wonderful stories about how the library has helped them over the last several months.

You may have read that we enhanced our parking lot Wi-Fi signal. With many members working and learning from home, families continue to push the limits of their household Wi-Fi. We heard one story about a family who routinely walked or drove to the library to use our Wi-Fi when their home internet couldn’t handle the load.

Our online concierge service allows groups that can’t meet in person to gather safely in Virtual Meeting Rooms provided through Zoom. One user commented, “It was a huge success. The concierge service was so helpful in terms of testing technology, admitting guests, and guiding us. Many, many thanks!”

When the library building re-opened for Grab ‘n Go service in July, during which visitors could enter the building to select and check out materials using the self-checkout machines, many stopped by the Library Services desk to tell us how much they missed the library and how happy they were to be able to visit in person again.

As part of our live Zoom storytimes, visitors could pick up storytime kits that contained items to facilitate safe and active participation. One grownup commented, “We love the storytime box we got at the library. It had a yellow shaker egg in it, and we’ve carried it everywhere. Thank you!!”

We have also been able to continue other programs online through Zoom. One grownup commented, “I just wanted to let you know that the magic show today by Scott Green was AWESOME! That was the best Zoom meeting that we have ever been to!! Thank you for making us laugh so much on a rainy day!”

Hearing members’ stories helps me remain confident that even in the face of a pandemic, the library can still contribute to our community in many meaningful ways.

And remember, reading can take us to other worlds, even if we have to stay put! The Glen Ellyn Public Library has thousands of materials available in both print and electronic formats. It’s comfort and variety at its finest!

Please reach out to me with questions at director@gepl.org or 630-790-6760.

—Dawn Bussey, Executive Director

Grab ‘n Go Library Services
A limited number of visitors can enter the building to select and check out materials using the self-checkout machines. Visitors may also use the computers, printers, copier, and scanner. Please call 630-469-0879 or visit gepl.org for current hours.

The Cafe and Cafe Curbside Service
Call 630-790-6772 to place your order and pay ahead. The Cafe and Cafe Curbside Service will close 30 minutes prior to library closing Monday through Saturday. The Cafe is closed on Sunday.
Find all programs and events at gepl.librarycalendar.com

KANOPY WATCH-ALONG: HUNT FOR THE WILDERPEOPLE
Thursday, January 28 • 7-9 pm • Virtual Program
Ready...set...press play! Join us on Kanopy and Twitter for a live watch party and virtual discussion of the hit New Zealand comedy, Hunt for the Wilderpeople. Register for your Kanopy account on gepl.org and use the hashtag #GEPLWatchParty on Twitter to join the live conversation, voice your opinion, and see what others think of the movie! This charming, odd-couple adventure is the well-acted story of a down-and-out Maori kid and his grouchy foster parent, brought to you by critically-acclaimed writer Taika Waititi.

YOGA NIDRA: GUIDED RELAXATION MEDITATION
Tuesday, February 23 • 7-8 pm • Virtual Program
Registration Required
Calm your mind and body through an evening of deep relaxation and restoration with JoAnn Concialdi, certified Yoga Instructor. Attendees will practice simple, gentle movements to relieve tension and stress, and then, while lying down comfortably (blankets and pillows encouraged!), JoAnn will lead the “Yogic Sleep” guided relaxation meditation. No prior experience necessary. All levels welcome.

Hygge: A Mood of Comfort and Coziness
FIND YOUR FAMILY’S HYGGE: AN EASY-TO-MASTER APPROACH FOR FINDING COMFORT IN THESE CHAOTIC TIMES
Wednesday, December 16 • 7-8 pm • Virtual Program
Registration Required
Learn how to support your children using positive coping strategies and the concept of hygge with Kymberly Larson of Marvelous Minds.

GLEN ELLYN DEI PROJECT
DIVERSITY • EQUITY • INCLUSION

In January, the 2021 Glen Ellyn Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Project will provide a format for the residents of Glen Ellyn to learn more about the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion activities taking place in the community. Residents will then be able to participate in open, facilitated conversations to provide their thoughts and ideas about Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Glen Ellyn.

Participants will include the Village of Glen Ellyn, Glen Ellyn Public Library, College of DuPage, Glen Ellyn Park District, Glen Ellyn School District 41, Glenbard Township High School District 87, and Community Consolidated District 89.

It is our hope that this effort will help the community devise a collective strategy so that we can enhance DEI in the Village of Glen Ellyn in ways that are integrative, holistic, sustainable and enduring.

The Glen Ellyn Public Library will host the meetings virtually on Zoom.

Visit gepl.librarycalendar.com for details.

- Moderated Panel of Village Leaders
  January 23, 2021 • 10 am-Noon
- Moderated Panel of Community Organization Leaders • January 23, 2021 • 1-3 pm
- DEI Community Listening Session
  January 26, 2021 • 10-11 am
- DEI Community Listening Session
  January 26, 2021 • 7-8 pm
- A Series of Seven Affinity Group Meetings
  January 26, 2021 • 9-4 pm
- Daylong Community Listening Session
  January 30, 2021 • 9 am-1 pm
Nonfiction Titles for Self-Care and Creativity
By Brenna Murphy, Readers’ Advisory Librarian

This winter, we’re all about what the Danish call hygge—coziness and comfort. Winter is the perfect time of year to practice self-care and maybe learn something new! Here are some suggestions for nonfiction titles with a focus on mindfulness and creativity.

**Mindful Embroidery: Stitch Your Way to Relaxation with Charming European Street Scenes** by Charles Henry and Elin Petronella
Learn a new craft and satisfy your wanderlust with this creative guide. Mindful Embroidery has patterns for beautiful European scenes, such as a cafe in Provence, Big Ben in London, and historical neighborhoods in Copenhagen. For beginner embroiderers or those with more experience, the concise instructions and playful designs make this a must-have guide for artsy individuals.

Have you ever experienced a sense of calm after spending time in the woods? From Japanese forest bathing to nature camps for kids with ADHD, Florence Williams travels the world to discover the scientific research about nature’s effect on the body. For example, going on a hike lowers cortisol levels and high blood pressure. This is a fascinating read for those with an interest in the intersection of health and the natural world.

**Digital Minimalism: Choosing a Focused Life in a Noisy World** by Cal Newport
If you feel tethered to your phone, laptop, tablet, etc., you are not alone! We all need a break every once in a while, and in this book, Newport proposes strategies to use technology in a more productive way. By scheduling digital detoxes and cutting down on apps, it’s possible to make healthy technology choices so that you can better enjoy your “unplugged” time.

**Every Body Yoga: Let Go of Fear, Get on the Mat, Love Your Body** by Jessamyn Stanley
If you’ve ever felt intimidated by a yoga class or worried that certain poses aren’t accessible to you, don’t miss Jessamyn Stanley’s guide to yoga for all bodies. The author introduces 50 basic yoga poses while promoting body positivity and personal fulfillment. Stanley also shares her own inspirational story of self-acceptance in this delightful read.

**Computers & Technology**

**OFFICE 365 BUSINESS TOOLS**
Thursdays • 7-8 pm • Virtual Program
December 17, February 18
Registration Required
Office 365 includes more than just Outlook for email! Discover some of the many business tools available, such as Teams, OneNote, and SharePoint with technology tutor Bill Dallman.

**PHOTO ORGANIZING**
Tuesday, January 5 • 6:30-7:30 pm • Virtual Program
Start the New Year off right by organizing and archiving all your holiday and family photo heirlooms with Adam Pratt from Chaos to Memories.

**LINKEDIN FOR JOB SEARCHING**
Wednesday, January 13 • 10-11 am • Virtual Program
Learn how to leverage the social networking site LinkedIn to enhance your job search and get results! A facilitator from the People’s Resource Center will answer the following questions; What is LinkedIn? Who uses LinkedIn? Why use LinkedIn for job searching?
THURSDAY EVENING BOOK CLUB
Thursdays • 7-8 pm • Virtual Program
December 10, January 14, February 11
Registration Required
Copies of book discussion titles are available on the 2nd floor near the study rooms, or you can request a copy for pick up at the drive-up window by calling the library or emailing reference@gepl.org.

Next Chapter Book Club
Meets Biweekly on Wednesdays • 6:30-7:30 pm • Virtual Program
Registration Required: Contact Tanya King, Outreach Librarian, at 630-790-6745 or tking@gepl.org
Next Chapter Book Club is a community-based book club for individuals with cognitive and developmental disabilities. Members read together, hang out, make friends, and have fun!

Byob Book Chat
Tuesday, January 19 • 7-8 pm • Virtual Program
Grab your favorite beverage and join us for a book chat! Learn what library staff are reading and share what you’re reading.

We Love Our Book Clubs
Wednesday, February 10 • 7-8:30 pm • Virtual Program
Registration Required
Join us for the third annual We Love Our Book Clubs event! Brenna Murphy, Readers’ Advisory Librarian, and Rebecca Vnuk, Executive Director at Library Reads, will tell you about their favorite book club picks of 2020 and answer your questions. Attendees will be entered in a raffle to win a grand prize!

Virtual Meeting Rooms
GEPL cardholders who need to gather a group that can’t meet in person are invited to use the library’s Virtual Meeting Rooms. Virtual Meeting Rooms are provided through Zoom and allow groups of up to 100 people to see and hear each other on a computer or mobile device.

Virtual meetings include a GEPL Concierge who will start and sit in on the meeting, provide technical assistance, facilitate screen sharing, monitor for Zoom-bombing, mute and unmute participants, and end the meeting. More at gepl.org/meetingroom.

Find all programs and events at gepl.librarycalendar.com
We’re looking at screens all the time, so it’s normal to feel the need to get outside, even in winter. No matter the season, there are plenty of opportunities to explore nature and contribute to research that will help scientists preserve your local ecosystem.

Citizen scientists are everyday people who help experts observe a subject of interest and then record their findings. Anyone can become a citizen scientist, and you can track essentially anything that the eye can see. From frog songs to stardust, there is a year-round need for citizen scientists. The Glen Ellyn Park District and Forest Preserve District of DuPage County sometimes recruit volunteers to help on the local scale. You can find larger-scale recruiting online with the following organizations that maintain expansive databases of local, national, and even worldwide opportunities to help scientists document and study everything around us. You can also help by digitizing old scientific research for programs like Notes from Nature!

- SciStarter | scistarter.org
- GLOBE Observer | observer.globe.gov
- Zooniverse | zooniverse.org
- Citizen Science | citizenscience.gov
- Notes from Nature | notesfromnature.org

The following organizations and their websites offer additional activities this winter.

**Birds**
- Cornell Lab (bird.org)
- Christmas Bird Count (audubon.org)

**Squirrels**
- Project Squirrel (projectsquirrel.org)

**Trees**
- Open Tree Map (opentreemap.org)
- TreeSnap (mobile app)

**Climate Change**
- Ice Watch USA (natureabounds.org)

Search Science in Context in GEPL’s Digital Library for “citizen scientist” and you will find dozens of stories about organizations benefitting from the work of volunteer scientists around the world, including an article about citizen scientists helping researchers design new drugs to combat COVID-19!

No matter what you choose, there’s a cause and a scientist that will thank you for your efforts. Once you’ve found your nature niche, let us know by emailing reference@gepl.org! We’d love to hear about your adventures and recommend books based on your specific interests to keep the learning going.
For Young Adults

HIGH SCHOOL VOLUNTEERING: REVIEW BOOKS, MOVIES, AND GLEN ELLYN PLACES
December 1-February 28
Review books, TV series, movies, comics, your favorite businesses and other locations around Glen Ellyn and earn a raffle entry for prizes, including gift cards. Each submitted review is equal to five volunteer hours. Email your reviews to joshea@gepl.org. Reviews will be edited by GEPL staff and posted to the High School blog on gepl.org using only first name and first initial of last name. For more information, visit gepl.org/high-school/volunteer.

PREPARACIÓN UNIVERSITARIA: 10 CONSEJOS PARA TENER ÉXITO EN LA UNIVERSIDAD QUE PUEDES COMENZAR EN LA ESCUELA SECUNDARIA
COLLEGE PREP: 10 TIPS FOR COLLEGE SUCCESS YOU CAN START NOW IN HIGH SCHOOL
Lunes 7 de diciembre • 7-8 pm • Programa virtual
Monday, December 7 • 7-8 pm • Virtual Program
10 consejos para tener éxito en la universidad que puedes comenzar ya mismo:
Los estudiantes de secundaria y las familias aprenderán a explorar diferentes colegios/universidades virtualmente mientras hablamos sobre los hábitos clave que ayudarán a los estudiantes a tener éxito a largo plazo. Estos pasos prácticos aliviarán parte del estrés común y parte del estrés causado por la pandemia en torno a la planificación universitaria.

High School students and families will learn to explore different colleges/universities virtually as we talk through key habits to help students have long-term success. These practical steps will alleviate some of the common stress due to the pandemic and college planning. Presentation will be in Spanish by Dulce Torres of CREO DuPage.

GLENBARD PARENT SERIES: EDUCATED
Tuesday, February 23 • 7-8:30 pm • Virtual Program
GPS guest speaker Tara Westover will discuss her New York Times bestselling book, Educated, a universal coming-of-age story that grasps at the heart of what it means to be “educated” and the opportunities education offers: the perspective to see one’s life through new eyes. Conversation will be facilitated by GPS Coordinator Gilda Ross. Join the live Watch Party on GEPL’s Facebook page! See glenbargps.org/event/community-read-educated-a-memoir for details.

SUPER SMASH: PLAY FOR AN ESPORTS CAREER
Thursday, January 21 • 6:30-8 pm
Virtual Program
Explore the growing eSports industry, learn how to get the education and experience needed for success in the field, join a community of gamers, and receive a prize code, all while having fun in an online game of Super Smash Bros! Players need a Nintendo Switch console, Joycon, internet connection, listening/speaking tech (like a headset), and the Discord app to join gameplay at discord.gg/uw3Tk4M. Anyone, including curious parents, can watch the game or chat live with Kevin Fair on the I Play Games Facebook page at facebook.com/IPGames/live_videos.

VITALANT BLOOD DRIVE
Mondays • December 7, February 1
Donating blood is essential to fighting COVID-19. Schedule your donation appointment at vitalant.org or call 877-25-VITAL. Walk-ins are welcome, but appointments are recommended.

Find all programs and events at gepl.librarycalendar.com
MISS JAMIE’S WINTER SING-ALONG
Saturday, January 16 • 10:30-11 am • Virtual Program
Join Miss Jamie of Miss Jamie’s Farm and her farmyard friends for a winter sing-along! Sing and dance to familiar and new songs, and celebrate the winter season…farm-style! For ages 2-8.

EXPLORER SERIES
10:30-10:45 am • Virtual Program
Activity Kit Available*

SPACE EXPLORERS
Tuesday, December 8 • Ages 2-4
Wednesday, December 9 • Grades k-2
Thursday, December 10 • Grades 3-5

OCEAN EXPLORERS
Tuesday, December 15 • Ages 2-4
Wednesday, December 16 • Grades k-2
Thursday, December 17 • Grades 3-5

ARCTIC EXPLORERS
Tuesday, December 22 • Ages 2-4
Wednesday, December 23 • Grades K-2, Grades 3-5

RAINFOREST EXPLORERS
Tuesday, December 29 • Ages 2-4
Wednesday, December 30 • Grades k-2
Thursday, December, December 31 • Grades 3-5

For Parents and Educators

DIVERSIFY YOUR BOOKSHELF
Thursday, January 21 • 7-8 pm • Virtual Program
Registration Required
Incorporate social justice, diversity, and equity for every reader into your bookshelf with library staff recommendations. One free CPDU credit will be awarded upon request.

FIREFLY FAMILY THEATER: “A TINY SPARK”
Saturday, January 30 • 10:30-11:05 am • Virtual Program
Registration Required
Spark is the tiniest firefly in Firefly Grove, and she just can’t figure out how to light up. Determined to find her light, Spark sets out on a journey through the forest. When Spark stands up and protects her friend, she learns that her light shines as bright as ever. For ages 2-7.

ADAPTIVE “NOON” YEARS EVE
Thursday, December 31 • 11:45 am-Noon • Virtual Program
Registration Required • Activity Kit Available*
Create a wishing wand and celebrate virtually on New Years Eve! The celebration will include a dance party and a countdown to the new year. For grades 1-3.

KINDNESS CLUB: BIRD FEEDER
Monday, January 18 1-1:15 pm • Virtual Program
Registration Required • Activity Kit Available*
Be kind to the feathered friends in your yard and keep them fed all winter long. For families of all ages.

GET COZY WITH KINDNESS KIDS YOGA
Thursdays • 4-4:30 pm • Virtual Program
January 21, 28, February 4, 11
Registration Required
Kids will discover the comfort they can gain by moving their bodies, exploring their breath, and relaxing their minds. For ages 5 and up.

FAMILY BINGO
Monday, February 15 • 1:00-1:45 pm • Virtual Program
Registration Required
Play BINGO live on Zoom! For ages 3 and up.

*Activity kits are available for pick-up in the Youth Department or at the drive-up window one week prior to program date, while supplies last.
For Middle Schoolers

THE MIDDLE SQUAD
Tuesdays • 4-4:15 pm • Virtual Program
December 8, January 12, February 9
Middle School Librarian Tom Malinowski recommends books, audiobooks, and graphic novels and offers fun challenges 6th-8th graders can do at home.

NEW YEAR, NEW JOURNAL
Thursday, January 7 • 4-4:30 pm • Virtual Program
Registration Required
Make 2021 memorable by journaling! Get tips on how to be creative with your words, document your goals, and have fun writing. For grades 6-8.

“CHOPPED!” CHALLENGE
Tuesday, February 23 • 7-7:30 pm • Virtual Program
Experiment with different recipes to celebrate your creativity and find out which one tastes the best! Visit gepl.librarycalendar.com for list of supplies needed. For grades 6-8. Adult supervision recommended.

ESCAPE FROM “THE DARK TOWER”
Wednesday, December 30 • 2-3 pm • Virtual Program
Registration Required
Make a magical “escape” from a digital realm with Fantasy Escape Games! For grades 4-8.

VERSE IS DIVERSE
By Tom Malinowski, Middle School Librarian
Books in verse have rhythm, rhyme, beats. They hum and drum like other books, but strike a different chord among the heartstrings. Although quicker to read, they reach and curl into your brain distinctively. Some with no words inspire and invoke creativity from the reader. No matter your mood, books in verse challenge and change perceptions of what a book should be. Any book is for all.

eLEARNING RESOURCES
HelpNow from Brainfuse provides one-on-one tutoring from 2-11 pm every day for grades K-12, plus a 24-hour writing lab, opportunities to submit your homework questions, and support for Spanish speakers. The best part of all? It’s completely free with your library card! Start studying at gepl.org/helpnow.

TumbleMath is filled with online picture books and lesson plans for families and teachers to help at-home learners with their math assignments this school year! It’s also aligned with current grade-level math standards. Try it out at gepl.org/tumblemath!
Mindfulness Meditation for Kids and Their Grownups

By Heather McCammond-Watts
Youth Department Director

Sit in a cozy spot. Ask the kids to grab their favorite blanket or lovie, dim the lights, and take a moment to just breathe. Mindfulness is a skill that we can teach to our children early, and it equips them with ways to self-soothe, manage stress, and increase their self-esteem. If you practice 10 minutes of mindfulness each day, children will start to build a habit of listening to their own needs and finding ways to regulate their emotions. In its simplest form, mindfulness is the act of paying attention to the present moment. Focus on your breathing, listen to the sounds in the room, and notice the scents and textures around you. This type of grounding is very beneficial to kids, and if you do it together, it helps to build bonding and trust. You can listen to music or just enjoy the silence. There is not a right or wrong way, provided you take a minute to relax and slow down enough to soak in the precious moment surrounding you.

Wish Meditation:

1. To start, find a comfy position in a chair, on the floor, or lying down.
2. Place a hand on your heart, close your eyes, and just breathe. Imagine your breath as a special color, or as a cloud made of your child's favorite food. Be imaginative.
3. Listen to your breaths, count in 5-4-3-2-1, and count out 5-4-3-2-1. Do this as many times as you wish. Breathe slower each time. If you model the breathing, your kids will automatically start to mimic your pace. If counting doesn't work, try singing a song (“Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star” works well) and just breathing to the rhythm.
4. Bring to mind someone your child really respects and admires. Share your stories about this person.
5. Notice how your body feels when you think about this person. Happy? Content? Loved?
6. Make a very kind wish for this person and send it their way by blowing kisses. What would make them happy?
7. Later, you can think of someone else, perhaps someone you don't know very well yet, and send them wishes on the wind too. Imagine them receiving your wish and how they might react. How does it make you feel to send wishes to a potential new friend?
8. Check in with your mind and body to see how this makes you feel. We all feel better when we help others, and this is a wonderful way to practice gratitude and generosity together.

There are hundreds of ways to pause, take a breath, and re-center ourselves in a mindful way. To find inspiration, I’ve included some wonderful books to share with your child as you practice compassion, love, and mindfulness together.
STORIES WITH SANTA AND FRIENDS  
Saturday, December 12 • 1-1:30 pm • Virtual Program  
Registration Required  
Santa and his Winter Solstice friends, The Winter Queen and Ollie, will read stories and respond to special wishes. For kids of all ages.

CREATE YOUR FAMILY CREST: EXPRESSIVE THERAPIES AND HOW THEY WORK  
Tuesday, January 26, 6:30-7:30 pm • Virtual Program  
Registration Required • Activity Kit Available*  
Are you looking for a fun and thought-provoking activity to enjoy as a family this winter? Join Marvelous Minds’ Art Therapist, Samantha Walsh, and Neuropsychologist, Dr. Kym Larson, as they guide your family through this therapeutic art project. Choose important elements to add to your crest that depict your family’s values, interests, and culture! During the activity, Dr. Larson will discuss how expressive therapies like making a family crest provide insight into your family dynamics and are a fun and safe way to practice interpersonal communication with those you love most! For families of all ages.

WINTER STORYTIME  
Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays • 10:30-10:45 am  
January 5-February 11 • Virtual Program  
Registration Required  
The Glen Ellyn Public Library offers a variety of storytimes for children starting at birth. During librarian-led programs that incorporate stories, songs, movement, rhymes, and other activities, your child will learn to love reading and the library. Details and the complete winter schedule at gepl.org/storytime.

DIVERSE VOICES STORYTIME  
Friday, February 5 • 10:30-11 am • Virtual Program  
Registration Required  
Celebrate #blackboyjoy and #blackgirlmagic during this interactive storytime. For ages 3 and up.

RAIN OR SHINE STORYTIME  
Mondays • 10:30-10:45 am • Virtual Program  
Listen to a story with your toddler or preschooler and learn about the real and sometimes messy parts of raising a child.  
February 15  
A Youth librarian will read a story and challenge you to daily affirmations.  
February 22  
A Youth librarian will read a story about dealing with sadness and provide tips for grownups on how to help kids comfort themselves when they are feeling blue.

STORIES WITH STUFFIES  
Thursday, February 25 • 10:30-11 am • Virtual Program  
Registration Required • Activity Kit Available*  
Grab your favorite stuffed animal and join us for stories, music, and crafts! For pre-kindergarten to k.

*Activity kits are available for pick-up in the Youth Department or at the drive-up window one week prior to program date, while supplies last.

Find all programs and events at gepl.librarycalendar.com

Exploring New Ways to Connect  
GEPL continues to offer fun socially-distanced opportunities for the community.  
• Events like Jurassic and Halloween drive-thrus and Drive-In BINGO encourage safe interaction and holiday celebration  
• Our drive-up window has provided access to library materials for more than 11,000 people since May 2020  
• Program activity kits enhance virtual experiences  
• Meditation and yoga programs help calm minds and bodies and relieve tension and stress in people of all ages  
• Sing, read, play, bake, and watch-alongs create a sense of community
Glen Ellyn Library Foundation

On Giving Tuesday, December 1, please consider donating to the Glen Ellyn Library Foundation in support of GEPL’s Compassion Fund. The Compassion Fund provides meal vouchers, redeemable at The Cafe, through Walk-In Ministry to community members in need of a meal. The first $1,000 in donations made through December 1 will be matched by generous gifts from Glen Ellyn Bank & Trust and an anonymous donor. And one donor who contributes by December 1 will receive a $200 Glen Ellyn Chamber of Commerce gift certificate via random drawing. Learn more about the Glen Ellyn Library Foundation and make your donation at gepl.org/foundation.

Staff Spotlight: Rob Benes

Cafe Supervisor Rob Benes joined the GEPL team in July and has been spicing things up in the kitchen ever since! Get to know Rob as he shares what he loves most about his career, the library, and life in Glen Ellyn.

What is your professional background? How did you get started in the food and beverage industry?
I have a Bachelor of Arts in journalism from the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater and an Associate in Applied Science in culinary arts from the College of DuPage (COD). I had always worked in the publishing industry. It wasn't until I started writing for food magazines and, later, Pampered Chef, that my wife said, “You like cooking so much—why don’t you take some classes at COD?” Before I knew it, I was halfway through the program. I just decided to go for the degree.

What led you to The Cafe at the Glen Ellyn Public Library?
I had been self-employed and writing for various culinary magazines before The Cafe position appeared. I love that there’s a lot of opportunity to experiment with new recipes and specials here. I’ve been coming to the library since my kids were babies, so since I already knew some staff, it was a comfortable environment to walk into.

What is your favorite aspect of your career?
I’m really stretching my culinary skills and thinking outside of the box. At The Cafe, we make everything from scratch, and we’re constantly reinventing. Plus, the food industry is fun. It’s exciting to see people enjoy what we’re doing.

Tell us about your family and life in Glen Ellyn.
We’ve lived in Glen Ellyn for 16 years. My wife, Cathy, who also works in the food industry, and I have three kids: Ava (15), Ellen (13), and Charlie (10). I’ve enjoyed volunteering around town, coaching each of my kids’ soccer teams through the Glen Ellyn Park District, being a cookie manager for Girl Scouts, and delivering food from grocery stores to the Glen Ellyn Food Pantry.

What do you enjoy doing in your free time?
My family loves being outdoors and camping in our pop-up camper. We do a lot of fishing and hiking, too. During the summer, I maintain a garden at the Village plots. This past year, I grew 250 ears of peaches-and-cream hybrid sweet corn. I also grow tomatoes, herbs, and cut flowers. The kids and I like to cook together, especially around the holidays.

Do you have a favorite restaurant?
It depends! If I want ribs, I go to Twin Anchors in Lincoln Park. There’s also a pub called Duke of Perth in Lakeview East on Clark Street. They have really good fish ’n chips and shepherd’s pie. We also like going out for sushi as a family. And I love Jersey Mike’s Subs.