

Small-Town Connections: Civic Engagement at FPPL



FOREST PARK
PUBLIC LIBRARY

Skye Lavin
Manager of Adult Services, FPPL

WHO ARE WE?

Big City Access,
Small Town Charm

Forest Park village, Illinois

Description	Measure
Population	
Census 2010 Total Population	14,167
2017 Population Estimate (as of July 1, 2017)	N/A
2016 ACS 5-Year Population Estimate	14,137
Median Age	38.8
Number of Companies	1,475
Educational Attainment: Percent high school graduate or higher	94.0%
Count of Governments	N/A
Total housing units	7,824
Median Household Income	51,552
Foreign Born Population	1,990
Individuals below poverty level	11.2%
Race and Hispanic Origin	
White alone	7,572
Black or African American alone	4,476
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	0
Asian alone	1,488
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	0
Some Other Race alone	283
Two or More Races	318
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	1,309
White alone, Not Hispanic or Latino	6,712
Veterans	670



Everyone is Welcome

We All Live Here



AGENDA VS. POINT OF VIEW?

Fact-Checking in the Era of Fake News: Laura
M. Browning of the A.V. Club

Challenge: Maintaining the library's neutrality

“While the library should have a point of view about issues that matter in the community, it should not have an agenda. Convening community conversations around challenging social issues creates opportunities for exploration and group problem solving. Library leaders can bring information and ideas to the table without offering answers or taking positions on public policy issues. Ensuring balanced perspectives among presenters will facilitate a balanced conversation. The library's reputation as an apolitical, nonpartisan, neutral welcoming place strengthens its power and influence in the community. That reputation is an essential asset that must be preserved.”

”Civic Engagement: Stepping up to the Civic Engagement Challenge”, Urban Libraries Council.

USING LIBRARY POWER FOR CIVIC EDUCATION

Communicating with Elected Officials, Part 1:

Staffer for US Congressman Danny Davis,

Staffer for State Senator Kimberly Lightford

FP Commissioner of Public Property

Staffer from Governor Bruce Rauner's office

Moderated by Etta Worthington, local activist, film maker, and writer

"Enlightened and balanced" - patron

Communicating with Elected Officials in Springfield, Part 2:

Jen Walling, Executive Director of the Illinois Environmental Council

READING AWAKE BOOK GROUP

Reading List 2017-2018

- Hillbilly Elegy: A Memoir of A Family and Culture in Crisis (J.D. Vance)
- Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City (Matthew Desmond)
- Homegoing (Yaa Gyasi)
- A People's History of Chicago (Kevin Coval)
- Blasphemy (Sherman Alexie)
- Giovanni's Room (James Baldwin)
- We Were Eight Years in Power (Ta-Nehisi Coates)
- Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Wisdom of Plants (Robin Wall Kimmerer)

Community Agreement.

Be Open-Minded

Listen to Understand, not to respond.

Do not interrupt and respect silence

Apply curiosity

Use "I" statements

Remember to breathe

(borrowed from presentation at PLA
2018: **Push Comes to Shove:
Supporting Patrons of Color in
Your Institution**)

CROWDSOURCING SOCIAL JUSTICE

Little Free Pantries are based on the Little Free Library concept which provides the opportunity for neighbors to help neighbors.



THE FUTURE IS LISTENING

Training key staff to become deputy registrars in order to offer voter registration at the time of library card sign-up.

Volunteering at Housing Forward as a staff/ trustee outing

Offering more solar-themed programming in response to Future Energy Jobs Bill (Illinois Energy Bill of 2017)