

# Opening Doors

Embracing  
Patron-Focused  
Practices



Presented by

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Indian Prairie  
Public Library  
District

and

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Eisenhower  
Public Library

# Welcome to IPPL!

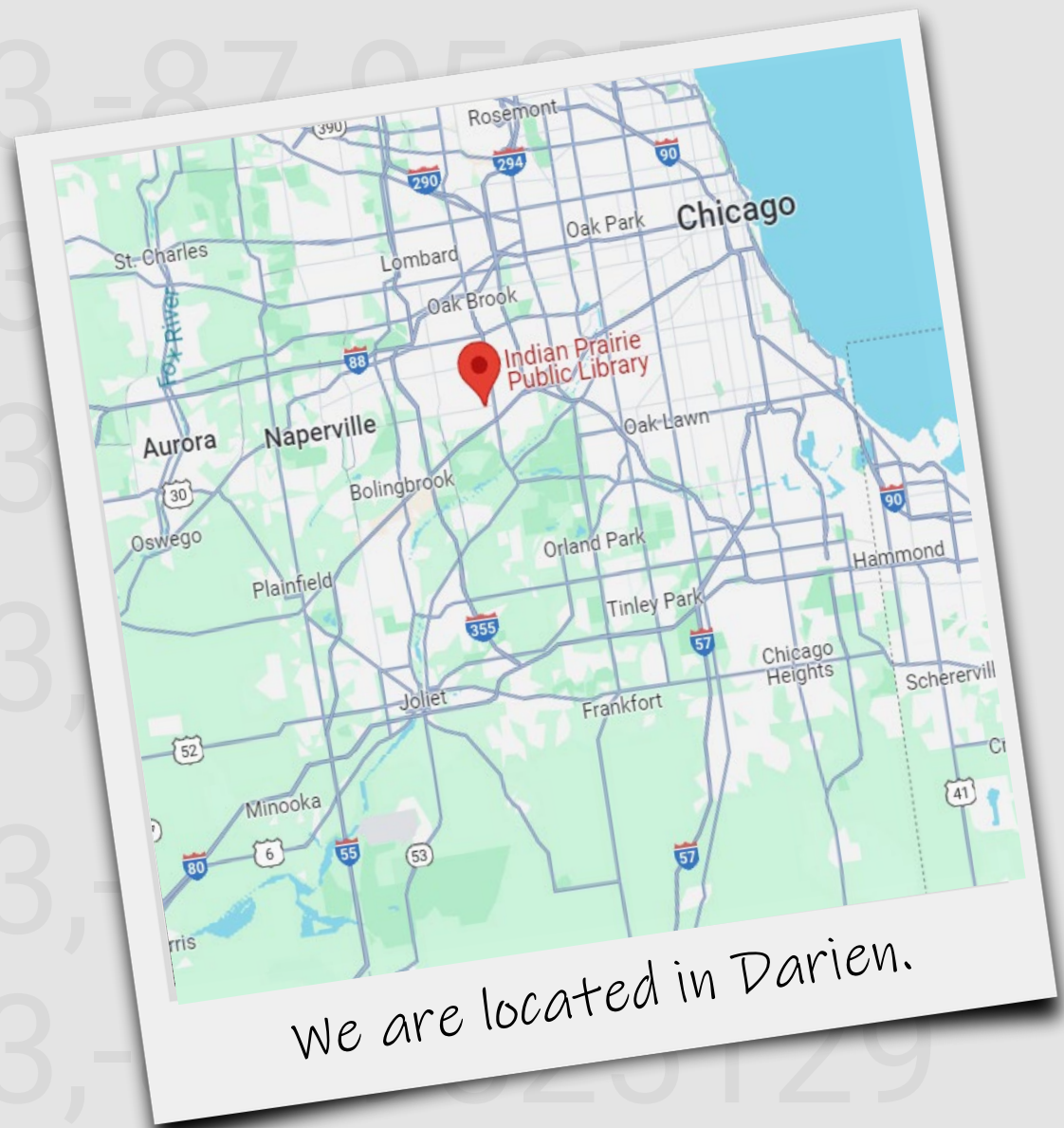


**A beautiful  
space inside and  
outside.**



**District  
population:  
43,892.**

**Indian Prairie  
Public Library  
District serves  
portions of  
Darien,  
Willowbrook,  
Burr Ridge, &  
unincorporated  
areas.**



1,000+

**Visit us daily.**

# Welcome to Eisenhower Public Library!



- We serve Harwood Heights and Norridge (24,316 residents combined)
- “Island in the City” – We are surrounded by Chicago (~30% of circulations are to Chicago residents)
- ~20,000 transactions in July
- Visitors come for several services including public computers, adult and kids programming, reference, social services, makerspace
- “Nonlocal” visitors: we are located near O’Hare Airport and 2 CTA stations
- Online applications: about 100 per year, we hope to see an increase with the introduction of Patron Point

# About IPPL's Service Model



- Provide a one-stop service desk in what is known as Guest Services.
- GS Associates provide one point of service assisting patrons in all ways except in-depth reference questions. No more “pinballing”.
- Librarians handle the questions that go beyond basic reference and technology inquiries.

# About ESS's Service Model



- We are the first people you see when you enter the library and first to pick up the phone when you call us.
- It is imperative that we create a welcoming atmosphere to anyone who enters.
- We are here to help service beyond checking items in and out

# Serving Reciprocal Borrowers

**CHICAGO  
PUBLIC  
LIBRARY**



- At Eisenhower Public Library we are in a unique position of serving a large number of reciprocal borrowers.
- How do we meet the needs of this user base?
- How do we balance the needs of reciprocal borrowers with taxpayers who live within our district?
- At Eisenhower, we fully embrace serving our reciprocal borrowers.
- We have different loan rules for Chicago patrons based on rules set by their home library.

# The Guest Experience at IPPL



- We are problem solvers. We find ways to say “yes”. If we can’t, we offer an option.
- We provide the best solution for guests regardless of time or other tasks.
- We are knowledgeable about our resources and services and share our knowledge.
- We are comfortable asking other staff for help to provide the best service.
- We know when to direct guests to another staff member. And do it graciously.

For questions about IPPL’s Service Model, email Executive Director Laura Birmingham at [laurab@ippl.info](mailto:laurab@ippl.info).

# The Guest Experience: Anything is Possible.



- Anything is possible when a guest needs our help.
- It means going above and beyond expectations and doing what is right for the guest. Not because we have to, but because we want to.
- IPPL empowers staff to make decisions to improve the guest experience.

For questions about IPPL's Service Model, email Executive Director Laura Birmingham at [laurab@ippl.info](mailto:laurab@ippl.info).

# One stop for everything & everyone: Guest Services Desk

- First stop for library questions
- Passport acceptance service
- Postage stamps
- Illinois State license plate stickers
- City of Darien vehicle stickers
- Library card services
- Check out services



# Opening doors: Speaking their language

- A report done by our local high school in 2018 revealed that there are over 45 languages spoken in our area.
- Rather than use Google Translate, we invested in Pocketalk Translators.
- By using Pocketalk, we catch every detail with real-time, two-way translation at the push of a button.



Photo courtesy of PocketTalk.

Learn more: [www.pocketalk.com](http://www.pocketalk.com)

# Talk to a Person... When You Want to

- At Eisenhower Public Library, part of creating a welcoming environment is getting individual help from a person whenever you need it.
- For example, we do not use a phone tree. We will always steer a patron towards a reference librarian or tech help clerk.
- For those who would rather do it themselves, we have self-checkout stations.
- We have been encouraging use of the Swan Libraries+ app.
- There has been a trend towards increased use of online cards and online resources.
- How are we meeting the needs of patrons who rarely, if ever, physically come to the library but rather, use the library online?



# Opening doors: Patron-focused practices

Patron-focused practices prioritize the needs and experiences of all library users. This approach emphasizes making connections, building relationships, providing personalized assistance, and ensuring accessibility for everyone.

A library card is the key to all the wonderful things our library has to offer our community.



# Getting the word out: Get a card

From posters at outreach events to ads in park district books, and our newsletter, we make it easy for people to scan a QR code to apply for an IPPL card.

**We are YOU public li**

**Get an IPPL card!**

**SEPTEMBER IS LIBRARY CARD SIGN UP MONTH!**

**Don't have a card? Get one today!**

What does an IPPL card get you?

- 24/7 access to digital books, audiobooks, movies, newspapers, and magazines.
- A physical collection complete with books, audiobooks, movies, video games, graphic novels, board games, and so much more. We have an amazing selection waiting for you!
- Programs and classes for kids, teens, and adults.
- A Maker Studio—it's a place to learn and create.

Sign up online at [getacardippl.info](http://getacardippl.info) or scan the QR code. For those 18+

**Indian Prairie Public Library**  
Explore, connect, and be inspired.

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**QR code to get and apply online.**

**Library Card**  
Need a card? Visit: [getacard.ippl.info](http://getacard.ippl.info).

**Mission Statement**  
We enrich our community by providing

**Cards for Kids Act**  
Any student, up to grade 12, living in the Indian Prairie Public Library for free and reduced lunch at school is eligible to receive a library card year and is renewable annually. Bring identification with the child's current address and certification from the school that the child is part of the free lunch program.

**You Live in IPPL's District**  
If you're 18 and older, [complete your resident application online](#). If you have your account information, and you can immediately begin using your library card, you can [apply for a physical card](#) at the library in person.

**You Live Out of IPPL's District**  
If this is your first time applying for an out of district library card, you will need to pay a fee to support another library before purchasing a card from IPPL. Your fee will be based on your name and address (driver's license, state ID, piece of first-class mail or rental lease).

Note: The cost is \$246 a year for your household. The rate changes as of July 1.

**You Want to Renew Your Out-of-District Card**  
If you've already purchased a card from us, you can [renew your household](#) card online. The rate changes each July 1.

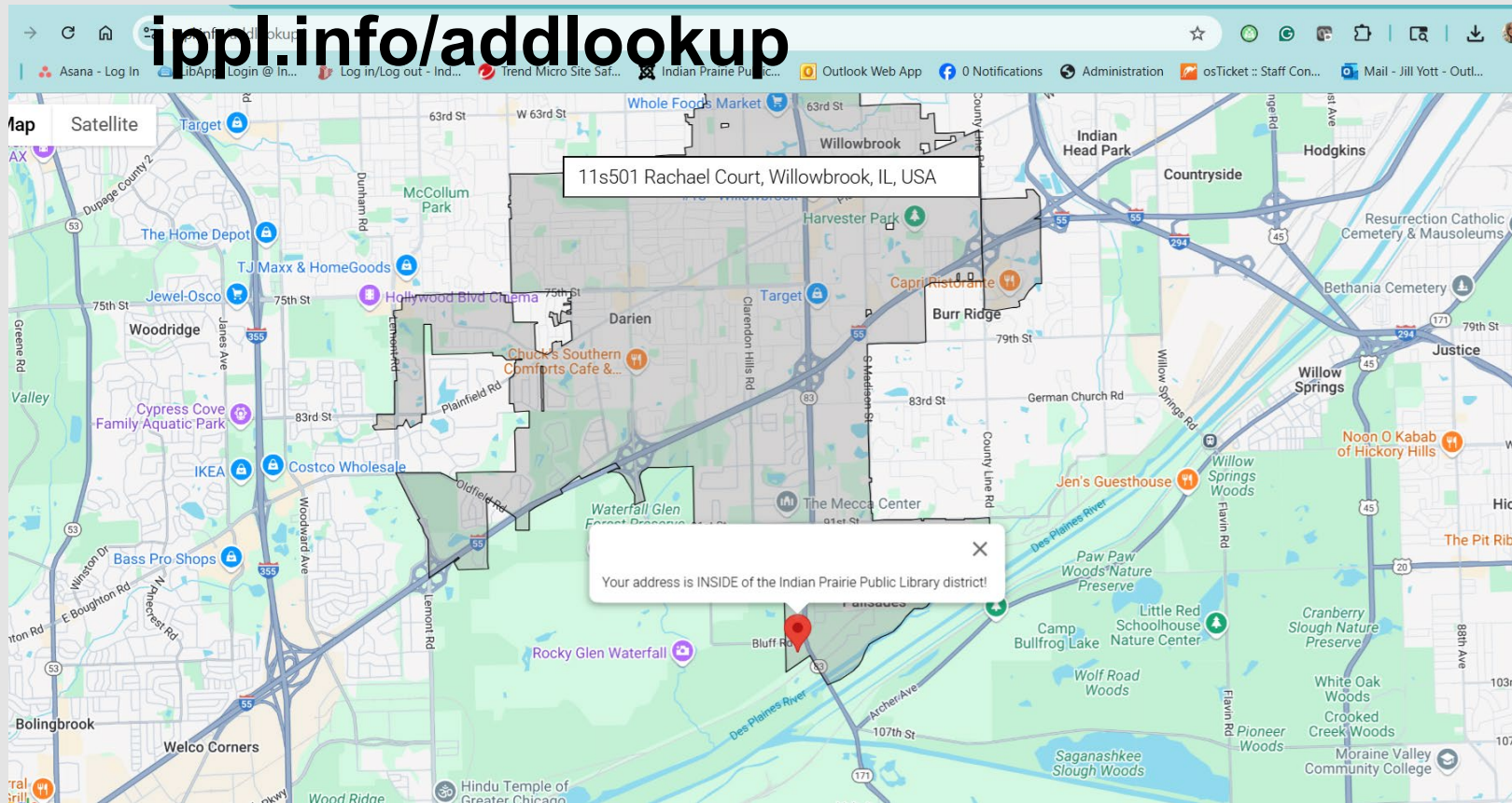
**You Want to Apply for a Business Card**  
Any school, corporation, partnership, church, or sole proprietorship on the boundaries of the Indian Prairie Public Library is eligible for a library card. [Apply for a Business Card online](#).

**You're a Nonresident Veteran**  
Veterans with service-connected disabilities of at least 70% who are an unmarried surviving spouse of a veteran who has previously qualified for a service member killed in the line of duty shall be eligible for a library card. [Apply for a Business Card online](#).

**Cards for Kids Act**  
Any student, up to grade 12, living in the Indian Prairie Public Library for free and reduced lunch at school is eligible to receive a library card year and is renewable annually. Bring identification with the child's current address and certification from the school that the child is part of the free lunch program.

# Applying for an IPPL card

Even before guests apply for a card, they can check if they are in district by typing their address into this map. We worked with an outside consultant to build this feature for our website.



Map was created by outside consultant. For his contact information, email [jilly@ippl.info](mailto:jilly@ippl.info).

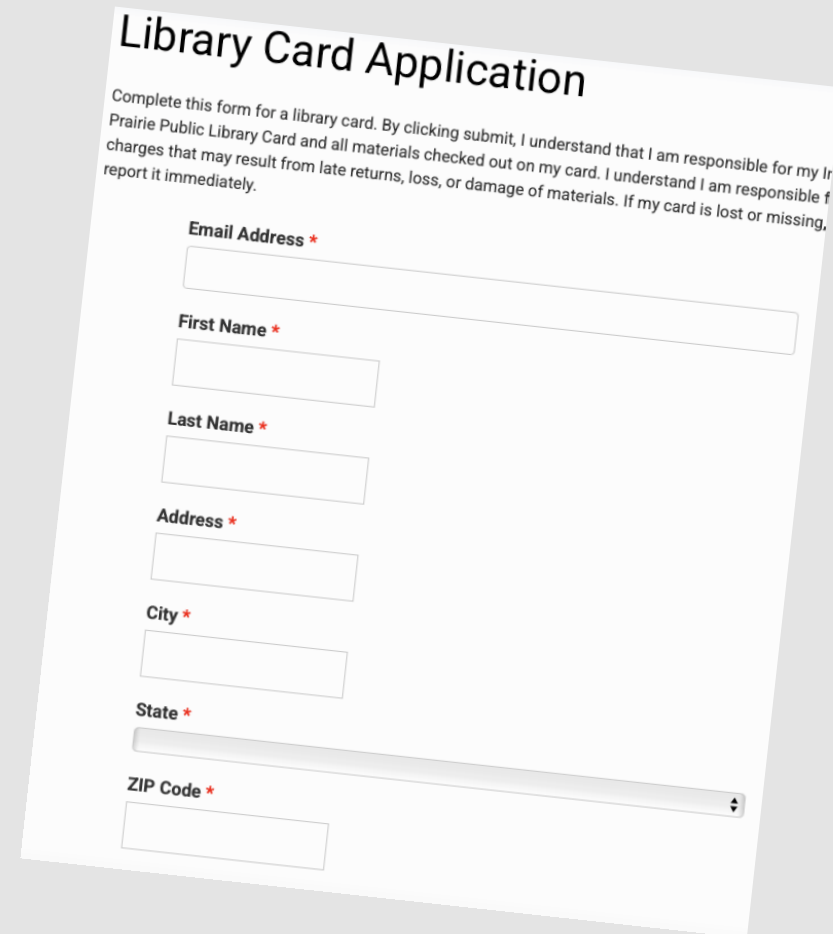
# Get a card: Using Patron Point

## Guests apply online

Through Patron Point's Verify system, guests apply for a library card through a form on our website.

Within minutes, guests either get their new card number or they are notified that they have been rejected either because they don't live in district or because they already have a library card.

Patron Point's system can verify if a guest is eligible for a card instantly.



**Library Card Application**

Complete this form for a library card. By clicking submit, I understand that I am responsible for my library card and all materials checked out on my card. I understand I am responsible for charges that may result from late returns, loss, or damage of materials. If my card is lost or missing, report it immediately.

Email Address \*

First Name \*

Last Name \*

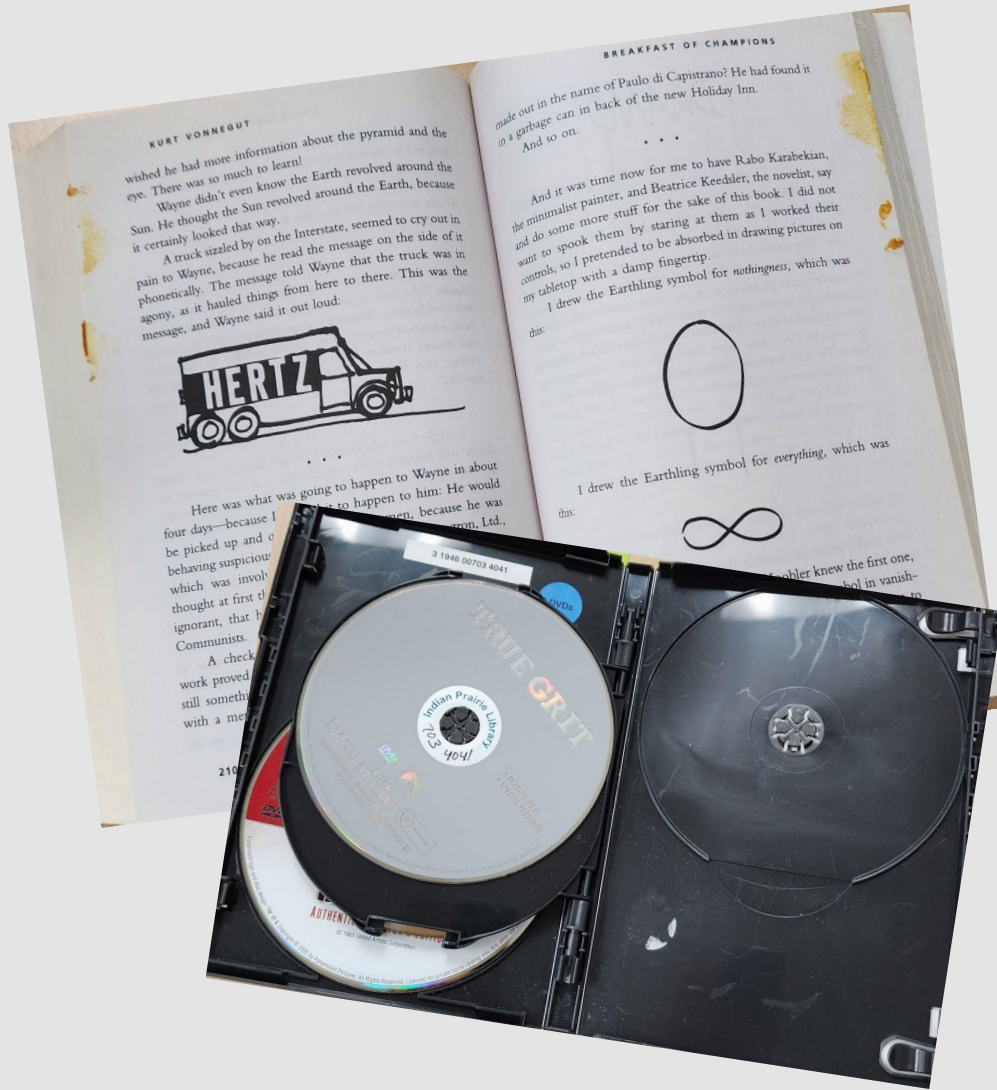
Address \*

City \*

State \*

ZIP Code \*

# Problem item shelf? That's no problem!



When a DVD is missing or an item has some damage, we take a picture of the item, email the guest, and show them what's wrong.

We can bill the item if they would like to go online to pay for the item. And most of the time, it happens right away.

Because we do this, cards remain in good standing.

# Problem item shelf? That's no problem!



- Problem shelf digitization project: making things easier on both ends
- We can more easily locate damaged or billed items
- We try to be lenient and collaborate with selectors before sending a bill to the patron
- A simplified process for both staff and patrons

# Removing barriers: Clean it up!

Went through the patron records of over 26,000 IPPL cards and removed barriers that would've kept people from using their cards.

This ranged from a balance due for a torn book cover on books that we weeded from the system years earlier to a missing video game from a collection we no longer own.



# Making exceptions



Example: An IPPL guest is returning an IPPL Roku, and it has not been checked in yet. The one that they want is on the Hold shelf.

We override the IPPL borrowing limit so the guest can take home the Roku—a better guest experience.

If you are frequently making exceptions, evaluate your circulation loan rules.

# Beyond Library Doors: Bringing the Library to Our Users

- We offer home delivery services to any patron who requests it.
- Patrons may arrange a delivery for their hold items and usually receive them the same day.
- We are able to get items to patrons who may not otherwise be able to physically make it in.
- We have a separate homebound service for senior citizens. Home delivery operates outside of the purview of this service.



# Asking the right questions



- Are we designing for us or for them?
- What barriers still exist for patrons that we've just accepted as normal?
- Have we asked patrons what they want?
- Are we emphasizing inclusive access?

# Everything we do, we keep our guests in mind.





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