

It's An Anniversary For Elk Grove Library, Too - Elk Grove Journal (IL) - July 16, 2016

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Although the Elk Grove Village Public Library was first established in 1959, it was not until 1965 that a proper library building was constructed and the facility became part of the North Suburban Library System.

After voters approved a property tax referendum for a free public library for residents, Texas-based Centex Corporation, which initially planned and built Elk Grove Village, offered one of those homes at 38 Forest Ln. to the local Junior Women's Club. This would serve as the village's first library, according to a history provided by the library. The library board would later purchase that home from Centex for \$18,000.

The women's club fundraising campaign "A Book And A Buck" began with going door-to-door in the village. After that, members held a fundraising dance and collected \$1,500 for books and \$400 to further establish the library's collection.

The library opened in the house on Forest Lane, Aug. 18, 1959 with a collection of 1,064 books including 600 donated by the Illinois State Library. By 1966, that collection, including books and vocational files, grew to 14,809 items on the shelves.

In 1961, Centex offered a first right of refusal on a 2.58-acre property near Biesterfield Road and Salt Creek. At the completion of construction in 1966, it served as the library's second home until 1990.

That second 7,200 sq. ft. library opened at what is now John F. Kennedy Boulevard and Brantwood Avenue in May 1966.

Along the way, that location continued to grow. In 1971, a 6,000 sq. ft. addition was added. In November 1977, a second story was added, bringing the library to 8,400 sq. ft. on each floor.

In those early days, long standing traditions including a Christmas open house with Santa, Halloween parties and the library's annual creative writing contest were established.

In 1975, Lee Maternowski was hired by the library. Making his way up the ranks, Maternowski was named interim director in 1996 and director in 1997. He retired in 2014. Debrah Nelson is the current library director.

The library history provided to the Journal & Topics said that in 1978, "Space aged technology in the form of computers arrived at the library." On July 30, 1979, the library began using computers for all of its circulation functions.

Also in 1979, the library reached a milestone, adding its 100,000th volume to the collection.

In 1990, the library built its current home on Wellington Avenue off Biesterfield Road, near village hall and the Elk Grove Park District Pavilion.

For a time, some Elk Grove Village residents had access to two public libraries and were taxed by both.

Elk Grove Village's library served all residents living in the village. Schaumburg Township's library also serves Elk Grove Village residents living west of Route 53.

In the early 1980s, both the Elk Grove Village and Schaumburg Township libraries were taxing Elk Grove Village residents living in Schaumburg Township, according to former Library Director Maternowski.

A referendum vote was held in 1983 that Maternowski said only drew a few hundred voters. They chose to be taxed only by Schaumburg.

In 1985, an agreement was reached. A payment from the Schaumburg library would be made to the Elk Grove library based on equalized assessed home valuations of west side Elk Grove Village homes, allowing Elk Grove Village residents in Schaumburg Township to use the Elk Grove Library without the extra tax. Maternowski said that payment amounted to about \$200,000 a year.

Several years ago, with tightening economic conditions, Schaumburg library trustees opted to end that subsidy agreement. On May 1, 2012, residents living in Elk Grove Village and Schaumburg Township were no longer eligible for **Elk Grove Village library** cards unless they paid a fee of several hundred dollars. Some reciprocal agreements remain in place, giving those residents limited access to the **Elk Grove Village library**.

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