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Letters to the Editor Feb. 18, 2015

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Dear Editor,

Writing this letter to let all your readers know that there are amazing young adults throughout our community.

On Sunday, Feb. 1, at about 4:30 p.m. (yes, during the blizzard — don’t ask me why, except to appease an older lady, my mom, who wanted to go out) I was driving with my 90-year-old mother south on Southwest Highway, trying to make a left-hand turn onto 143rd Street in front of Hienie's/McCarthy's, and got stuck in the snow. I attempted to get out by doing all the usual things when someone gets stuck in the snow, but what I really needed was a strong push.

About six to eight vehicles; cars, SUVs and some trucks with blades on them — the majority of them had males in them — not one of them stopped to offer assistance.

Then, out of nowhere, four young adults working at Hienie's, come out to help me — without coats or gloves on — and pushed me out of where I was stuck.

These young adults are a testament to how their parents raised them, and they should be proud of them. Some of what they learned came from their parents, other things from their teachers in school, and other things from working with their bosses, supervisors and colleagues. Many of the things we learn in life come from watching and learning from others.

In the end, though, it is in the character of the individual — to do for others when you can and are able to.
The men that passed me and my mom by and did not stop to offer assistance cannot hold a candle to these four young adults.

Kudos and thank you to these young adults.

Maria Kalantzis

Palos Heights resident

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Library staff cares about child safety

Dear Editor,

As an Orland Park resident, library trustee and avid library user, I respond to recent letters questioning the Orland Park Public Library's commitment to child safety.

Specifically, some writers worry about patrons using the OPPL's computers to access inappropriate material on the Internet. A review of current OPPL policies and procedures at www.orlandparklibrary.org should dispel such concerns. They are stricter than those recommended by local and national library associations, and stricter than those followed by many Chicago-area libraries, including several nearby suburban libraries.

Consider the following.

The OPPL's first-floor collection and the activities held there are for children only. Adults are not allowed here, unless accompanying a child. All Internet access in this area is filtered.

The OPPL's teen collection is in the southwest corner of the second floor. All computers provided for teen use are filtered.

Computers accessible to adults are in the northeast corner of the second floor, with the adult collection. These computers are not filtered, but staff constantly monitors the area. No one under 18 may enter this computer area for any reason, and all users must first surrender to staff a picture ID containing their name, address and proof of age.
Non-residents without an OPPL library card are allowed just one hour of use per day, for which they pay a fee.

The OPPL’s policies in no way promote the viewing of child pornography. Instead, they expressly state that viewing child pornography or any other illegal material is prohibited. Violations may be reported to the police and subject to criminal prosecution. The policies ban even legal material that offends others within viewing distance.

The OPPL meets the needs of all its patrons. Children are kept safe, while adults are able to exercise their constitutional right to access information on the Internet without the interference of filters that block legitimate searches and sites along with those deemed “undesirable.”

The OPPL’s award-winning balancing of these interests makes our library both a family- and a user-friendly place. We can continue to rely on the professionalism and common sense of OPPL employees, as they serve everyone. Judging from the steady increases in visits, circulation and program attendance that the OPPL has enjoyed for many years, it seems that the majority of Orland Park residents agree.

Diane I. Jennings

Trustee, Orland Park Public Library Board

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