Children build with their imaginations

Library event in honor of architect Burnham

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The Simmons Library was one of many projects that architect Daniel Burnham designed during his career that changed the look of the Chicago area.

The children that have participated in the Kenosha Public Library's programs to honor Burnham may not achieve that kind of artistic influence, but their egg carton spaceships and foam castles served as an outlet for their own creativity.

The Kenosha Public Library hosted its third and fourth sessions of “Build It with Burnham” at the Southwest and Northside branches on Wednesday. Two previous sessions were hosted at Simmons and Upown libraries last month.

The events are in honor of the 100th anniversary of the Burnham Plan, the architect's strategy to bring regional highways, lakefront improvements and civic and culture-based buildings to Chicago and the surrounding area. Burnham had previously been responsible for construction related to the World's Fair in Chicago in 1893. In between the fair and his larger plan, he helped design the Simmons Library in Kenosha, which opened in 1900.

Wednesday's morning session drew about 20 children to the Southwest Library to create their own innovative designs using materials the library had on hand and those that participants brought with them.

Children in attendance were able to create their own grand plans, though with a different focus than Burnham's plans.

Jill Walker, right, and her twin daughters Katelyn, left, and Kylee, 3, construct a princess castle during the “Build It with Burnham” event at the Southwest Library on Wednesday. The event, remembering the 100th anniversary of Daniel Burnham's design plan for Chicago, provided area children with materials to make their own creations. Burnham designed the Simmons Library in Kenosha.

Jack Lunt, 7, makes sound effects as he flies his version of Darth Vader's TIE Fighter.

Kenosha, were intent on perfecting their own torches on a castle fit for a princess. The sturdy structure featured foam cup towers, a moat made of bright blue paper and marshmallows standing in for stones.

Jill Walker, the twins' mother, said they typically make Wednesday trips to Southwest Library with her daughters and this Wednesday presented an additional opportunity.

“I think it’s a neat thing for children to have this experience and explore their own things,” Walker said.

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Edie Dudek

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