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The Newsletter of  
Webster Groves Public Library, v. 4 n. 6,  
February, 2009

## LIBERATION FROM THE TV IS AT HAND!

I spent the morning a few weeks ago trying to hook up digital converter boxes to my two older televisions. I should preface this by noting that I am not the world's most tech-savvy guy, but neither am I a Neanderthal. I hooked up the wireless computer network in my house, and I know how to program appliances to keep time, come on at appointed hours, and do, in general, what they are meant to do. But I could not get the digital converter boxes to do *anything*. I sent an e-mail to customer support at the converter box company, and three weeks later I'm still waiting.

What worries me is that there are many millions of people who are not even as accustomed as I am to fiddling with electrical equipment, who are going to be totally in the dark when the switch to digital TV comes. We were watching the news the other night, and they were talking about the switch, and my wife groaned, 'Why do they keep talking about this?' 'Because they're about to lose half of their audience,' I said. And I believe it's true. Maybe not half, but a significant percentage. Many people are going to throw their hands up and just forget about it.

I don't blame them. We've seen technological advances before – phonograph records to compact discs, videocassettes to DVDs – the list goes on. But each one of these has been optional. You could keep your old VCR if you were so inclined, and watch your old tapes of *Caddyshack* and *The Karate Kid*. You could continue to spin your old records on your old turntable. But with this TV thing, you're going to have to change, or be left in the dark.

It does seem unfair, but remember: TV is pretty bad. This is not news. Trite comedies, improbable dramas, carbon-copy talk shows, mind-numbing 'reality' shows – it has been a long time since television was worth watching. So my advice is, don't sweat it.

The library has lots of wonderful books, new and old, lining our shelves waiting for you to read. Many of those books are about pleasurable pastimes like painting, fishing, knitting, sewing, gardening, cooking, woodworking, playing musical instruments, learning a language, learning how to swim or play tennis or golf and so much more. We need to readjust our thinking and realize what an opportunity awaits us once we are cut free from sitting on the sofa clicking the remote, endlessly pitting hope against hope that something worth watching will suddenly come on. Think about it. I'm sure there's something you've been meaning to do, if you ever find the time. This whole transition from analog to digital television just might be the opportunity you've waited for.

The change has been postponed until June, but there's no time like the present to start preparing.

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## FEBRUARY IN THE CHILDREN'S ROOM



Tuesday, February 10: Story Time with Miss Phyllis, 10 a.m.  
Wednesday, February 11: Story Time with Miss Phyllis, 10 a.m.  
Thursday, February 12: Story Time with Miss Phyllis, 10 a.m.



**FEBRUARY 14:**  
**Black History Month**  
**Celebration with**  
**Storyteller Bobby Norfolk**  
2 p.m.



Wednesday, February 18: Pajama Story Time with Miss Laurene, 7 p.m.  
Monday, February 23: Story Time with Miss Michelle, 2 p.m.  
Tuesday, February 24: Story Time with Miss Phyllis, 10 a.m.  
Wednesday, February 25: Story Time with Miss Phyllis, 10 a.m.  
Thursday, February 26: Story Time with Miss Phyllis, 10 a.m.

## Pajama Story Time Packs Them In!

One of the newer and more popular traditions at the library is Pajama Story Time. Held usually one night a month at seven o'clock and featuring stories by Miss Laurene, followed by crafts, pajama story time is a great way for toddlers to unwind with a few simple activities before heading home to bed. Check the Children's Room schedule above for the next Pajama Story Time.



### Library Hours

Monday-Thursday	9 am to 9 pm
Friday and Saturday	9 am to 4:30 pm
Sunday	2 pm to 5 pm

The library will be closed on Monday, February 16<sup>th</sup> in honor of President's Day.

## This Month's Most Requested Books:

1. *The Associate*, John Grisham
2. *The Hour I First Believed*, Wally Lamb
3. *Plum Spooky*, Janet Evanovich
4. *The Shack*, William P. Young
5. *Scarpetta*, Patricia Cornwell
6. *Run for Your Life*, James Patterson
7. *Outliers: the story of success*, Malcolm Gladwell
8. *The Private Patient*, P. D. James
9. *Fire and Ice*, Julie Garwood
10. *Divine Justice*, David Baldacci
11. *A Mercy*, Toni Morrison
12. *Cross Country*, James Patterson

### Next Month's Book Discussion Selection:

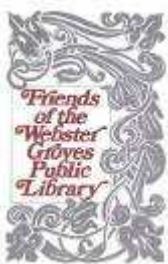
***Boomsday*, by Christopher Buckley**

**March 3<sup>rd</sup> at 6 p.m. Call 961-3784 for information.**

## Suggested Reading, February, 2009

*Someone recently suggested that we run a list of the best books about St. Louis and St. Louis History. I solicited advice from a lot of other St. Louis librarians, and here are our recommendations:*

1. *Lion of the Valley*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, James Neale Primm
2. *In Her Place: a Guide to St. Louis Women's History*, Katharine T. Corbett
3. *Immigrants on the Hill: Italian Immigrants in St. Louis, 1882-1982*, Gary Ross Mormino
4. *Discovering African-American St. Louis: a Guide to Historic Sites*, John A. Wright
5. *Fragmented by Design: Why St. Louis Has So Many Governments*, E. Terrence Jones
6. *Under the Influence: the Unauthorized Story of the Anheuser-Busch Dynasty*, Peter Hernon & Terry Ganey
7. *The St. Louis Irish: an Unmatched Celtic Community*, William Barnaby Faherty
8. *Lemp: the Haunting History*, Stephen P. Walker
9. *King of the Hill*, A. E. Hotchner
10. *Civil War St. Louis*, Louis S. Gerteis



## Friends News

January was a busy month for the Friends. As volunteers and advocates for the library, our primary role this month was to staff the election information table. Several of our members also called registered voters in Webster Groves to inform them of the issues involved in the campaign. This is being written prior to the election but even without the results of the vote, it is affirming to see how many people in Webster Groves show their appreciation of the library by becoming members of the Friends. We have over 200 members so far! The loyalty of our longtime members is impressive. We often receive hand delivered membership checks the day after the applications are mailed. Of course we are always pleased to have new members too. (If you would like to become a member of the Friends, applications are available at the Library's Circulation desk.)

## Chinese New Year Celebration

The Children's Room held a celebration of Chinese New Year on Saturday, January 29. The 'Year of the Ox' celebration featured crafts, games, and treats. Around 60 children and 40 adults attended, and it appears they all had a good time.



*This young lady wore her special Chinese outfit to the event.*



*This group of parents and children enjoys making dragon cards.*

