

Page 61:

The Newsletter of
Webster Groves Public Library, v. 3 n. 7,
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No Two Are Quite Alike

I was at a meeting the other day with several librarians who all moderate book discussion groups. We got to talking about them, and it was interesting how different most groups are.

One thing was the same: everybody said that their group was almost always the same set of people from one month to the next, and had been for several years. No matter how they might try to attract new members, it seems like once a group is set, it tends to stay that way.

But almost everything else was different. One moderator picked the books and announced them to the group. Another presented a list of about forty titles and asked them to vote. Another let different members select books from month to month.

One moderator said that he always prepared for a discussion by getting the discussion questions from NoveList or other online services. Another said he prepared his own questions, but only used them if the conversation lagged. Another said he never even prepares questions any more. I once talked to a woman who was thinking of coming to my book discussion group, but she was afraid there would be questions.

Some book discussion groups use refreshments to entice members. It's especially popular to present something suggested by the book, like baklava when reading a Greek novel, or sushi for a Japanese novel. Some group moderators have never thought about serving food.

There are many private book discussion groups in people's homes these days, and I wonder, when so many people are interested in discussing books, why more of them don't come to the library's group? But it seems that whenever I ask someone what their discussion group is like, they begin by saying, 'Well, we all drink wine . . .' I don't think we could get away with serving wine at a public library book discussion group, so there's a natural disadvantage. Another thing they often admit is that the conversation sometimes never gets around to the book. I even saw an announcement from one local book discussion group that said, 'Don't feel as if you *have* to read the book.'

One thing that I hope is consistent in all book discussion groups is that people who like to read and enjoy meeting other people who like to read find a place to do just that. I have always enjoyed moderating a book discussion group, and I am always extending the invitation – if you'd like to get together with a group of people who enjoy literature and like to talk about it, drop by our group sometime. Our upcoming selections are always listed on our Web site, or you can get a listing at the library.

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Little Elf, Big Help

Many families these days have multiple library cards: cards for both parents and each child, cards at Webster Groves Public Library or a different MLC library and at St. Louis County Library, maybe even one at St. Louis Public Library. It can be hard to keep track of who has what checked out on which card and when it's all due. A new, free service promises to make this situation much more manageable. Library Elf (www.libraryelf.com) is a Web site where families or individuals can set up one account that will track multiple library cards. You get e-mails telling you when items are going to be due, when items are overdue, and when requested items have arrived. The messages tell you whose card the items are on, so you can keep it all organized. Most of the libraries in the area are signed up to use Library Elf, so you should be able to sign up all your cards. For more information call (314) 961-3784.

March in the Children's Room

- * Tuesday, March 11: Storytime with Miss Phyllis – 10 a.m.
- * Wednesday, March 12: Storytime with Miss Phyllis – 10 a.m.
- * Thursday, March 13: Storytime with Miss Phyllis – 10 a.m.
- * Wednesday, March 19: Storytime with Miss Michelle – 2 p.m.
- * Thursday, March 20: Pajama Storytime with Miss Laurene, 7:30 p.m.
- * Tuesday, March 25: Storytime with Miss Phyllis – 10 a.m.
- * Wednesday, March 26: Storytime with Miss Phyllis – 10 a.m.
- * Thursday, March 27: Storytime with Miss Phyllis – 10 a.m.



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 Sunday, March 23, for Easter.

This Month's Most Requested Books:

1. *The Appeal*, John Grisham
2. *T is for Trespass*, Sue Grafton
3. *7th Heaven*, James Patterson
4. *A New Earth*, Eckhart Tolle
5. *The People of the Book*, Geraldine Brooks
6. *Plum Lucky*, Janet Evanovich
7. *Eat, Pray, Love*, Elizabeth Gilbert
8. *Stranger in Paradise*, Robert B. Parker
9. *Senators Wife*, Sue Miller
10. *The Pillars of the Earth*, Ken Follett
11. *World Without End*, Ken Follett
12. *Lady Killer*, Lisa Scottoline

Next Month's Book Discussion Selection:

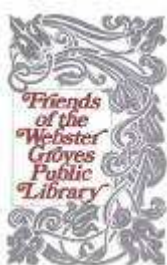
Last Night, by James Salter

A collection of short stories by one of authors most respected by other American authors.

April 1 at 6 p.m. Call 961-3784 for information.

Staff Favorites: February, 2008

1. *Buffalo Gals and Other Animal Presences*, Ursula K. Leguin (Adult Fiction)
2. *Prepared for Rage*, Dana Stabenow (Adult Fiction)
3. *Liberal Fascism: the secret history of the American left*, Jonah Goldberg (Adult Non-fiction)
4. *Jane Boleyn: The true story of the infamous Lady Rochford*, Julia Fox (Adult Biography)
5. *Mind Control*, Stephen Marley (Adult CD)
6. *Geography of Bliss*, Eric Weiner (Adult Non-fiction)
7. *Shadow Music*, Julia Garwood (Adult Fiction)
8. *Flight*, Sherman Alexie (Adult Fiction)
9. *Strangers in Death*, J. D. Robb (Adult Mystery)
10. *Friend of the Devil*, Peter Robinson (Adult Mystery)



Friends News

This is the time of year when the library employees get many questions about the annual Friends' Book Fair. Here are some of those questions and answers.

1. **When do you start collecting donations? We collect donations all year.**
2. **What books do you accept? We accept all books, but encyclopedias and textbooks don't sell well and are heavy and difficult to handle. So we may pass them on to another charity.**
3. **Do you take just books? We also accept CDs, audiotapes, videotapes, and DVDs. There is not much interest in records so we would rather not receive them. It is fine to donate magazines but we put them on the book shelf in the back lobby of the library for anyone to take for free.**
4. **Do you have a receipt that I can use when I do my taxes? A gift receipt is available. Just ask for one at the circulation desk. We do not give a value for the books, although as a general rule at the Book Fair, we sell paperbacks for \$1.00 and hardcover books for \$2.00. Any questions should be referred to your tax advisor.**
5. **When and where is the Book Fair? We hope to have the fair in late April or early May. Right now we are in the process of obtaining a site for the Book Fair. As soon as that is completed, we will be able to finalize the dates.**
6. **Do you need volunteers to help at the Book Fair? We always appreciate having volunteers, both at the Book Fair and at our sorting location. If you would like to help, please call Nancy at 314-962-4846.**

Public Engagement Meeting Scheduled for March 19th

Do you have opinions about what the library should be doing? Ideas for how to improve our services or facilities? Services you've seen or heard about at other libraries and wish we would do? On Wednesday, March 19 at 7 p.m. we will conduct a public engagement meeting at the library, 301 E. Lockwood, hoping to get your input on all these things. Everyone who is interested in the library is invited to attend. There is no need to make an appointment or reservation, but if you have questions please call Tom Cooper at 314 961-3784.



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A Member of the Municipal Library Consortium of St. Louis County