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The Newsletter of  
Webster Groves Public Library, v. 3 n. 4,  
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## What Makes a Reader?

I asked my daughter the other day what she was reading, and she said, 'Nothing.' You can't imagine how this upset me. As a younger child she read passionately and constantly; as an adolescent she seems indifferent. I believe that nothing keeps one's mind healthier, focuses one's thinking, or gives one more interesting things to talk about than books. Sure, there's information on the Internet, but browsing its frenetic, random tidbits will never take the place of reading a well-written full-length work of fiction or non-fiction.

Recent studies tell us that people are reading less and less. Especially among young people the idea of reading for fun is waning. In a study cited this week in the New York Times, employers are starting to complain that recently hired young people do not know how to read and interpret written communications, or how to write their own. Again, the Internet may be good for finding some kinds of information, but it cannot and will not ever replace the reading of books in maintaining a literate society.

The question posed by the New York Times article was What makes a reader? It has always been intangible – some students read an assigned book, set it aside, and don't give it another thought. Others read the same book and find their world changed forever. Is it something in the book, or in the person? Intangible as the love of reading may be, it is only getting harder to stir up in kids with access to e-mail, chat-rooms, video games, iPods and cell phones. Why read when you can walk around all the time plugged in to so much fun . . . stuff? Or as my daughter put it when I asked her, 'I like to read, but there are soooo many other things I'd rather do.'

Still I think it is necessary. I am certain that tomorrow's leaders and tomorrow's success stories will come predominantly from the ranks of readers of books, just as they always have. I'm proud to be working in an American public library, one of the last great bastions of unapologetic literacy, where we never stop working on the next generation of book lovers.  
[tcooper@wgpl.org](mailto:tcooper@wgpl.org)

## My Special Place: Yoga Fun at the Library

On Saturday December 8 the library will hold a program especially designed for children 3-7 years old with Autism, Fragile X, Down Syndrome and other neurological and developmental disorders. The program will be held after hours to give parents and children who might not attend other library programs the opportunity to enjoy the library. The program will be presented by yoga instructor and occupational therapist Jeanne Kloeckner.

Last year Webster Groves Public Library held a series of programs for families of children with neurological and developmental disorders which were very well received by the families who attended. This program is made possible by contributions from the Friends of Webster Groves Public Library.

For more information, or to register to attend, please call the Children's Room at 314 961-7262.

## December in the Children's Room

**December 20<sup>th</sup>: Live Reindeer from Cindy's Zoo will visit the library.**

**No need to register – join us on the library's front lawn to pet a reindeer and make a wish!**



- \* Tuesday, December 11: Storytime with Miss Phyllis – 10 a.m.
- \* Wednesday, December 12: Storytime with Miss Phyllis – 10 a.m.
- \* Thursday, December 13: Storytime with Miss Phyllis – 10 a.m.
- \* Monday, December 17: Storytime with Miss Michelle – 2 p.m.
- \* Wednesday, December 19: Storytime with Miss Michelle – 2 p.m.
- \* Thursday, December 20: Pajama Storytime with Miss Laurene – 7:30 p.m.
- \* Wednesday, December 26: Storytime with Miss Phyllis – 10 a.m.
- \* Thursday, December 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 Monday, December 24<sup>th</sup> and Tuesday, December 25<sup>th</sup> in observance of Christmas; and Monday, December 31 and Tuesday, January 1<sup>st</sup> to celebrate the New Year.

## This Month's Most Requested Books:

1. *Book of the Dead*, Patricia D. Cornwell
2. *T is for Trespass*, Sue Grafton
3. *Bridge of Sighs*, Richard Russo
4. *World Without End*, Ken Follett
5. *Run*, Ann Patchett
6. *Double Cross*, James Patterson
7. *Playing for Pizza*, John Grisham
8. *The Almost Moon*, Alice Sebold
9. *Eat, Pray, Love*, Elizabeth Gilbert
10. *A Thousand Splendid Suns*, Khaled Hosseini
11. *Deceptively Delicious*, Jessica Seinfeld
12. *Pillars of the Earth*, Ken Follett

### Next Month's Book Discussion Selection:

***Out Stealing Horses*, by Per Petterson.**

**January 8 at 6 p.m. Call 961-3784 for information.**

**This is the second of award-winning Norwegian author Petterson's novels to be translated into English, a story of loss and memory set against the starkly beautiful landscapes of Norway.**

Staff Favorites: December, 2007

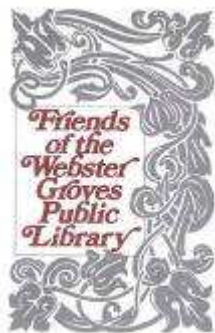
1. *Twilight*, Stephenie Meyer (YA Fiction)
2. *New Moon*, Stephenie Meyer (YA Fiction)
3. *Eclipse*, Stephenie Meyer (YA Fiction)
4. *A Thousand Years of Good Prayers*, Yiyun Li (Adult Fiction)
5. *Water for Elephants*, Sara Gruen (Adult Fiction)
6. *Ordeal of the Union*, Allan Nevins (Adult Non-fiction)
7. *John Adams*, David McCullough (Adult Biography)
8. *Female Brain*, Louann Brizendie (Adult Non-fiction)
9. *Under the Volcano*, Malcolm Lowry (Adult Fiction)
10. *The Crossroads Café*, Deborah Smith (Adult Fiction)

## Community Forums at the Library

For the past year the library staff and Board of Trustees have been working through a strategic planning process. That process is now nearly complete, and the text of the Long Range Plan is available to read either at the library or on our Web site ([www.wgpl.org](http://www.wgpl.org)).

Last month we held two community forums, seeking input from library users and concerned citizens about the future direction of the library, specifically their thoughts on some of the ideas we've been entertaining. The meetings were instructive and informative, but they were not as well attended as we had hoped.

We may take another stab at it, and if we do we hope to be able to spur a little more interest among Webster Groves residents in coming by and letting us know what they think. In the meantime, everyone is invited to read our Long Range Plan and comment on it. If you have any questions, please address them to Library Director Tom Cooper. He can be reached at the library from 8:30 to 4:30 Monday through Friday, or via e-mail at [tcooper@wgpl.org](mailto:tcooper@wgpl.org).



### **Friends of the Library Annual Membership Drive is On!**

**Soon many library patrons will receive a letter from our Friends group, inviting them to become members of one of the most exciting and active service organizations in the area.**

**During the past year the Friends of the Webster Groves Public Library have funded programs, collections and physical improvements at the library. They helped us to purchase all new computers. They helped staff events such as the Great Sidewalk Sale and the Old Webster Jazz Festival. And of course they held their annual Book Fair, one of the premier book sales in the St. Louis area.**

**Membership is available at several different levels, and upper level memberships include certificates for free merchandise at next spring's book fair.**

**If you've never been a member of the Friends, we hope you'll consider joining this fun and vibrant group. And if you are already a member, this is a great time to renew your membership. For more information please call Friends President Debbie Ladd at 314 968-8759.**



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