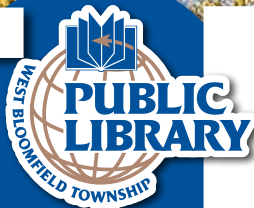


# YOUR STORY starts here



The library's mission is to educate, empower, inspire, and entertain our diverse community.



*Cathleen Russ*  
Cathleen Russ

## Letter from the Director

As we emerged from but continued to cope with the COVID-19 pandemic, the library board, administration, and staff prioritized welcoming the community back to the library, offering new and innovative materials to meet changing needs, and meeting our patrons where they are—which is not necessarily always at the library!

This annual report reflects the West Bloomfield Township Public Library's commitment to providing excellent service in innovative ways. I hope you enjoy reading this report about all of the wonderful things that happened at your library over the last year.

The Library Board of Trustees, administration, and staff care deeply about the community we serve and do our utmost to maximize your tax dollars to provide a high standard of excellence. Please know how very much we appreciate your support and continued patronage of your West Bloomfield Township Public Library.



## Your Story Starts in Welcoming Spaces

The library aims to make everyone in our diverse community feel welcome.

**New features were added to youth spaces to provide more opportunities for young visitors to play, learn, and interact.** Features include new interactive play tables, coloring and activity stations, and portable AWE tablets for in-library use. The Westacres Branch added easy browsing bins to the youth collection and decor to the teen space.

**The Main Library underwent building improvements for greater safety and accessibility.** Changes included replacing the 20-year-old automatic doors, installing new security cameras, shifting furniture in the adult area, replacing faded parking lot signs, eliminating trip hazards, and refreshing the restrooms.

**Furniture was added and rearranged in the Main Library to better meet changing needs.** This included creating a new comfortable seating area by the new adult non-fiction area.



*"My children love the library's bright colors, activities, playscapes, and interaction with other children. I also like interacting with other parents and watching the kids grow, learn, and have fun."*

—Lina Escamilla, West Bloomfield Resident

## Your Story Starts with Innovative Collections

Beyond updating book collections, the library launched several exciting new collections.

**Youth staff added a collection of Tender Topics Kits,** allowing children ages 2-10 years to learn and explore social issues happening in their own lives, such as divorce, mental health, moving, serious illness, picky eaters, and more.

**Adult staff added a collection of Experience Kits,** which aim to empower adults and families to experience new activities, including stargazing, yoga, metal detecting, birding, and more.

**The library launched a series of community journals,** offering patrons a chance to share ideas themed around interests and partnering with the Greater West Bloomfield Historical Society to preserve residents' memories about monthly topics.

**A new adult video game collection was established** with over 80 titles, including popular series like Mass Effect, Witcher, Assassin's Creed, and The Last of Us.

**The library expanded digital resource offerings** by activating OverDrive Advantage+, expanding the amount of titles available through Libby and allowing West Bloomfield patrons to take priority on titles purchased by the library. Circulation of eligible titles increased by 9% following the activation. The library also added Wall Street Journal Online, providing library cardholders access akin to private subscribers.

**The library launched a Korean book collection** prompted by the language's rise in local popularity according to 2020 Census data. All 20 new titles are bestsellers, award-winners, or notable books first published in Korean.

**The library incorporated diversity audits as an ongoing part of collection maintenance,** with different collections targeted each year. As a result of the first completed audit in young adult fiction, 675 titles representing diverse stories were added.

**A total audit of the youth graphic novel collection was completed** to evaluate the collection's circulation and ease of access at both branches. Materials were arranged to improve discoverability. Staff created a new brochure highlighting the benefits of graphic novels.



*"It can be challenging to know how to navigate challenging topics as a parent. The Tender Topic bags were exactly the tool our family needed to discuss these topics. We are thankful for the support and were touched by the thought that went into crafting the bags."*

—Sara Schwartz, West Bloomfield Resident

# Your Story Starts Wherever You Are

The library seeks to engage the community beyond the building through outreach and marketing.

**Staff developed take-home craft kits for kids and adults.** Over 3,200 youth kits were distributed. Adult craft kits have become a monthly program using Creativebug, a craft video tutorial database available to library cardholders.

**Marketing initiatives have been developed to meet community needs and best practices** following an environmental scan and analysis of data from a patron survey and the library's marketing efforts. The library's Style Guide was updated and a new Marketing Plan was developed based on the new priorities.

**Staff created a procedure for captioning digital content** to improve accessibility for virtual programs, which continue alongside in-person programs.

**Youth staff adapted outreach offerings by moving storytime visits outside.** A total of 15 individual visits to preschools and childcare facilities took place with an audience of over 430.

**In-person services to senior residences resumed after a pause during the pandemic.** With safety protocols in place, the library's outreach team has had a quick response to COVID cases in residences.



*"The library is invaluable. I don't think I've encountered a library who reaches out to the community the way you do. [...] It makes [nursing home residents] feel like they're actually getting out and doing something. That's important for their quality of life."*

—Tracy Ostasiewicz, Recreation Therapy Director at West Bloomfield Beaumont Health & Rehabilitation Center

# Your Story Starts with Knowledgeable Staff

The West Bloomfield Library staff continues to improve services by attending staff in-service trainings, webinars, and conferences. Staff members are prepared for emergencies and aware of best practices in library services and related fields.



*"Everyone has been so helpful. It's a delight when people are eager to participate in a position that they hold."* —Myrle Leland, West Bloomfield Resident



## GIFTS FROM THE

# Friends of the Library

The Friends of the West Bloomfield Township Public Library raise money through memberships, operation of the Friendship Used Bookstore, and other activities in order to enhance library services and fund special events. Last Fiscal Year, Friends funding supported:

## Experience Kits

## Creativebug Kits

## Summer on the Go Kits

## Visit from Author Amor Towles

## Summer Reading Prizes

The Friends also continued to organize and fund popular library programs like Music@Main and BOOKTalks.



# A Community of Readers



## Increased Membership

The library's circulation per capita is **20.8**. That's the equivalent of every person in the library's service area checking out 20.8 titles over one year. Library card signup increased by **133%** from the previous fiscal year.



## Availability of Library Collections

The library's collections include **195,235 physical items** and **1,395,174 eLibrary items** (cloudLibrary, OverDrive, Hoopla, Kanopy, Udemy, Creativebug, etc.).



## Popularity of Physical & Digital Resources

**87%** of materials checked out were physical; **13%** were digital, reflecting a swing back toward use of physical materials. Library database use increased by **15%** from the previous fiscal year (Ancestry, AtoZDatabases, BrainHQ, etc.).



## Program Attendance

The library held **585 programs** for a **total attendance of 30,707**.



## Questions Answered

Staff answered **57 inquiries each hour** the library was open.

Cathleen Russ, *Library Director*

## Board of Trustees

Carol A. Kravetz, *President*

Judith A. Holtz, *Vice-President*

Ken Macon, *Treasurer*

Michael Dorfman, *Secretary*

Kari Eickemeyer, *Deputy Secretary/Treasurer*

Raman Singh, *Trustee*



The nation's highest honor for libraries.

## MAIN LIBRARY

4600 Walnut Lake Road

(248) 682-2120

TDD: (248) 232-2292

Email: [wbref@wblib.org](mailto:wbref@wblib.org)  
[wacref@wblib.org](mailto:wacref@wblib.org)

Text: (248) 648-3368

## WESTACRES BRANCH

7321 Commerce Road

(248) 363-4022

[wblib.org](http://wblib.org)

## HOURS OF SERVICE:

Monday – Thursday: 9 AM – 9 PM

Friday & Saturday: 9 AM – 6 PM

Sunday (Main): Noon – 6 PM

Sunday (Main, Summer): Noon – 5 PM

Sunday (Westacres): Noon – 5 PM

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