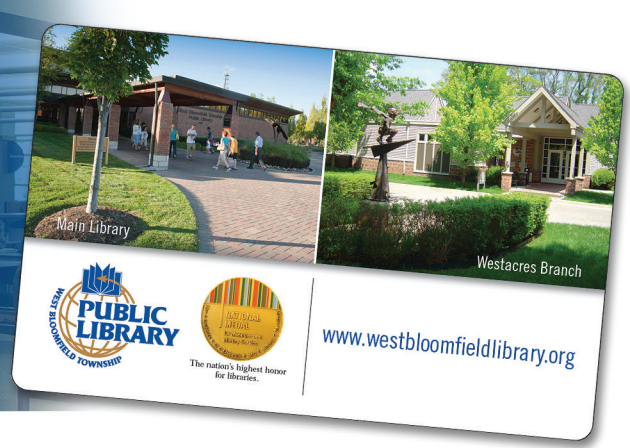


A COMMUNITY OF READERS



Library Unveils New Website

The new mobile-friendly website offers an enhanced digital user experience.

The West Bloomfield Library is delighted to launch its new website, which has replaced its former website built over 15 years ago, in 2007.

The library has been working to update its digital infrastructure over the last couple years to meet the evolving needs and expectations of community members. The new website boasts a user-friendly design, improved accessibility, greater reliability, faster load times, and mobile-adaptable interfaces.

“This project has been a long time coming,” said Library Director Cathy Russ. “Library users have been asking for an accessible, modern, mobile-friendly website. We’re happy to deliver on that request with our usual standards of excellence.”

The development process involved multiple rounds of user input through surveys and testing. This allowed the website team to gather invaluable feedback from residents to inform the site’s navigation and appearance.

Alongside the new website, the library has also rolled out a new catalog and event calendar.

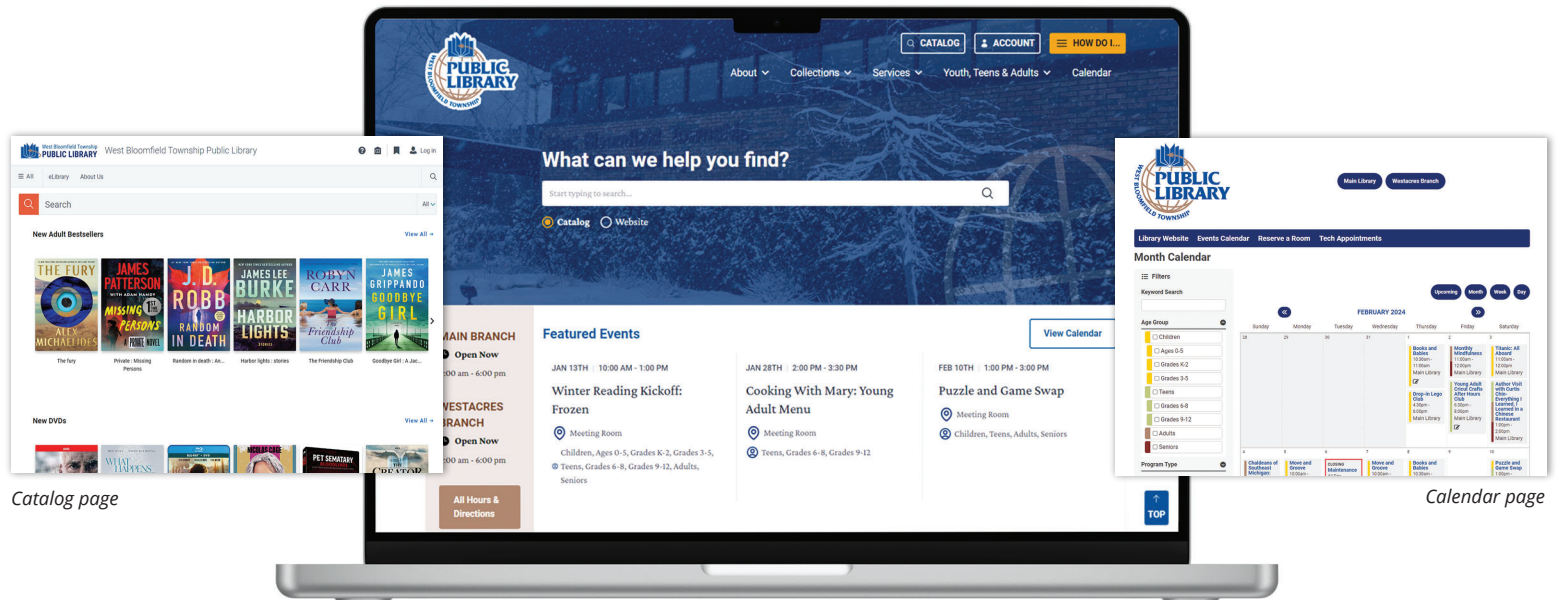
Long gone are the days of the card catalog. The new library catalog offers enhanced discoverability, such as custom reading lists, library-curated carousels, and easy navigation between available title formats.

The new event calendar also offers an improved user interface, with expanded filtering

options, color-coded age groups, mobile adaptability, and printable pages.

“We hope that the new website expands the library’s reach within the community, particularly among younger audiences, without losing the library’s loyal regulars,” said Library Marketing Specialist Victoria Edwards. “Our staff is happy to support anyone who might have difficulties navigating the new website.”

The library has created video tutorials for the new website on its YouTube channel and at wblib.org/services/technology. Technology one-on-one sessions are also available with library staff.



Catalog page

Calendar page

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One-on-One Technology Assistance



Resident Katherine Bassie gets assistance from Digital Services Librarian Carolyn Levarnsen.

Technology one-on-one sessions are available to residential and student library cardholders. Sign up for an appointment to meet with a knowledgeable computer assistant and get answers to basic questions. Request an appointment by talking with library staff or visiting wblib.org/services/technology.

Get help with your iOS, Android, Windows, or Google device; the internet, social media, and common software or websites; Microsoft Office or Google products; cloud storage and file management; scanning, copying, and printing; and library apps and databases, including how to access eBooks and eAudiobooks.



Borrow a Hotspot

Heading out of town? Experiencing slow internet or power outages? Hotspots can help! West Bloomfield Library cardholders can check out a hotspot for three weeks to access the internet almost anywhere in the US using a

wireless cellular network. Ask for a hotspot at an information desk or request one online. Instructions are included and staff are available to assist. A gift from the Friends of the Library.

Staff Member Wins State Award

The library's Marketing Specialist, Victoria Edwards, was recognized with the 2023 Library Support Staff of the Year award by the Michigan Library Association, considered among the state's highest honors within the library community.

Edwards has worked for the West Bloomfield Library since February 2021. She has led projects to update the library's email newsletters, create a visual style guide, facilitate a community needs assessment, and redesign the library's website. In her personal time, she volunteers for several area nonprofits, and she recently graduated with her Masters in Library and Information Science.



Victoria Edwards speaking at the Michigan Library Awards Gala

Longtime Library Board Member Retires

Judith A. Holtz served on the library board for 34 years beginning in 1988. Holtz was re-elected to the Library Board of Trustees for her ninth consecutive term on November 3, 2020, and retired on October 11, 2023. She has committed countless hours to the board and served with distinction in several positions, including as board president and vice president.

Her guidance and support during the 1997 library referendum helped secure a successful outcome, leading to the renovation and expansion of the Main Library and Westacres Branch. Holtz's understanding of the role of public libraries and her interest in maintaining high standards later helped the library reach a level of service recognized by the National Medal, the nation's highest honor for libraries. To recognize Holtz's years of service, the board has placed a plaque at the Main Library and has declared a resolution in her honor.



Judith A. Holtz

The Library Board of Trustees has appointed Rhonda Orr as trustee for the remainder of Holtz's term. Orr is retired from a career in finance and has a history of service to the library, having also volunteered as treasurer of the Friends of the Library.

eBooks & Streaming 101

Au revoir, Audible! Adios, Netflix! So long, Spotify!

What's better than being able to access thousands of digital books, audiobooks, magazines, and more anywhere you go? Being able to do it for free and without ads. Get started with these apps and websites—and have your library card number ready:



- Borrow up to 10 eBooks and eAudiobooks at a time.
- Available titles are specially curated for residents by West Bloomfield librarians.
- The collection includes new bestsellers, book club books, old favorites, and hidden gems.
- Use the Express library for shorter wait times.



- Borrow up to 20 eBooks, eAudiobooks, albums, and movies per month.
- Available titles are selected by staff at hoopla for library patrons around the country.
- The collection includes a wide range of fiction and nonfiction, classics, and graphic novels.
- The hoopla collection includes titles available instantly with no waitlists.



- Subscribe to eMagazines and borrow up to 10 eBooks or eAudiobooks at a time.
- Available titles are curated for residents in the Metro Detroit area by librarians across the Metro Net Library Consortium, including West Bloomfield librarians.
- The collection includes magazines, new bestsellers, book club books, and hidden gems, though wait times may be longer.
- Compatible with Kindle devices.

That's not all! Visit wblib.org/collections/eresources to explore additional digital resources for movies, newspapers, tutoring, classes, and more.

STEPS

1

Sign up on the app with your West Bloomfield library card.
Visit wblib.org/collections/ebooks for links and instructions.

2

Browse lists or search for titles of interest to you.
Search one title and see all available formats on the new library catalog at wblib.org.

3

Borrow a title or join a waitlist through the app.

4

The title is automatically returned on its due date, so it's impossible to incur late fees!

FAQs

Why isn't the title I want available?

If you don't see a title you'd like to read available through the eLibrary, let staff know. Suggest a title to be added to the library's collection at wblib.org/services/suggest-a-title.

Increasingly, distribution platforms like Kindle and Audible are creating original works or productions, not available for purchase in physical copies or through eLibrary platforms. This incentivizes the use of their platforms—often at the cost of user privacy and making those works and ideas less accessible.

Why are there waitlists for digital books?

Waitlists are necessary for most eLibrary platforms due to circulation limits set by publishers to mimic physical books. Platforms like hoopla do not have waitlists because they have a different fee structure; they purchase and control the digital books, charging libraries a small fee per use of a title.

Publishers charge libraries much higher fees for eBooks than for physical books, and they keep raising their prices. While a reader might pay \$3-10 for an eBook, libraries are often charged \$50-70 for the same eBook. Publishers are also beginning to set limits on how long a library can own a digital book before it must purchase another copy.

How do I get library books on my eReader?

Select apps like cloudLibrary and Libby may be available to download directly to eReader tablets like the Kindle Fire. For devices like NOOK and similar eReaders compatible with Adobe Digital Editions, cloudLibrary and Libby titles can be checked out online and transferred to the device.

Kindle Paperwhites are only compatible with titles available through Libby at this time. Amazon does not allow compatibility with cloudLibrary. For assistance borrowing library titles to your eReader device, talk with library staff.

Library Renovations Underway

Reflection Room

One of the Main Library's Quiet Study Rooms has been converted into a reflection room for anyone who wishes to reflect quietly, whether through meditation, prayer, yoga, or other individual, non-disruptive contemplation. The room is an inclusive space where library visitors can enjoy a quiet atmosphere of peace and harmony while reading or taking a break from studying.

Residents have regularly asked for such a space. Visitors have used the cart corral—a space near the library's staff rooms—to conduct religious rituals or sit with their thoughts. However, the space is small and well-traversed. Visitors also often look for spaces to take a break from their studies or calm down from overstimulation.



The Reflection Room includes views of the woods, mats, a privacy screen, and comfortable seating.

The two Quiet Study Rooms have seen a decline in use over the years since more group study rooms and study pods were added. The newly refurbished space has been designed to

encourage contemplation and reflection. Renovations were funded by a generous bequest from the Ruth S. Elbling Trust.

Community Commons

The library's computer lab is being renovated into a multi-purpose community space. Similar to the library's Youth Activity Center and Westacres Activity Center, the room will be open to the public when not in use for programs.

The new space aims to meet the community's interest in expanded technology offerings and opportunities to connect with neighbors at the library. In contrast to the Reflection Room, the forthcoming Community Commons space is a gathering space where conversation is permitted.

The renovated room will boast flexible seating, two TV screens, a large

whiteboard, new creative technology, and an acoustic wall.

Renovations are currently underway and expected to take several months. For updates, subscribe to the library's monthly highlights email at wblib.org, or follow the library on social media.

Renovations are being funded by a generous bequest from the Ruth S. Elbling Trust and from a generous gift by Jane Maximovich and friends in memory of Dr. Alex Maximovich. Elbling was a library board member through the Main Library's move to its current location in the early 1980s. Dr. Maximovich was an avid library patron.



Renderings provided by Daniels & Zermack Architects.



Westacres Activity Center

Residents have called for more all-ages programming at the Westacres Branch. To better meet this request, the library has updated the Westacres Activity Center. The Friends of the Library has purchased new furniture to allow for more flexible seating as needed.

The space remains open to families for open play when not in use for programming. Toys like those found in the play kitchen have been moved to the play house at the back of the Westacres youth area.

Main Library Closures

The Main Library will be closed occasional Tuesdays throughout the winter for planned maintenance work. The Westacres Branch will remain open. For a full list of closure dates, refer to the back cover or visit wblib.org.



United We Walk

Sunday, January 14 from 1 - 3 PM

West Bloomfield Middle School

Join West Bloomfield community partners for a speech and march in recognition of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and his dream.

I Have a Dream Storytime

Monday, January 15 at 10:30 AM

Main Library Youth Activity Center

Listen to stories that celebrate Dr. King's dreams and create related crafts. *For ages 3-6.*

Martin Luther King, Jr. Presentation

Monday, January 15 at 1 PM

Main Library Meeting Room

Join Dr. De Witt Dykes (Retired Professor from Oakland University) for a presentation on the life of Martin Luther King with a talk and remembrance of Dr. King's accomplishments.

Continuing Dr. King's Dream

Monday, January 15 at 2 PM

Main Library Youth Activity Center

Celebrate the life and work of Dr. King with large and small group activities. Participants will work together to create a collage for display at the library. *For grades 2-5.*

New Experience Kits

Check out a new hobby with help from the library! Three new Experience Kit themes have been added to the library's collection. Try your hand at pickleball, knitting, or crocheting without needing to buy equipment. Experience Kits include books, tools, and other resources to get started. (Yarn not provided for knitting and crocheting kits.) Kits are located at the Main Library near the periodicals and fireplace. Select kits are also available at the Westacres Branch or upon request.



Black History Month

DIA Behind the Seen - In Our Own Voice: African American Art

Tuesday, February 6 at 7 PM

Westacres Activity Center

Join us for a presentation by the Detroit Institute of Arts. Enhance your awareness of the creative contributions of African Americans from the 19th century through the present day. This talk provides a lens to examine issues of race, gender, politics, and culture.

Registration is required.

The Inspiring Life of Clementine Hunter

Monday, February 12 at 6 PM

Westacres Activity Center

Learn about the critically acclaimed African American Folk artist Clementine Hunter (1887-1988), who was entirely self-taught and immensely prolific. Hunter labored her entire life on a plantation and began painting only in her 50s, leaving a collection of work behind depicting scenes from everyday life. Learn about her work and style and make your own piece of art inspired by Hunter's work.

Black History 101 Mobile Museum

Friday, February 23 from 2 - 7 PM

Main Library Meeting Room



Join us at the library to experience the Black History 101 Mobile Museum. Established by the visionary educator and scholar Dr. Khalid el-Hakim, this national award winning mobile museum is an innovative and engaging way to explore the rich and complex history of Black Americans and their contributions to our society. The museum features over 10,000 original artifacts that cover topics such as slavery, the Civil Rights Movement, and contemporary issues facing the Black community. The exhibits are interactive and provide an immersive experience that is both educational and inspiring.

For more Black History Month and MLK Day programs or to register, visit wblib.org and select the calendar.

Youth News & Events

Check out these exciting services for youth and families! For a full list of events, visit wblib.org and click on the Calendar.



Winter Reading Program

Saturday, January 13 – Sunday, March 10

Avoid the winter blues by cozying up with a good book! Library cardholders of all ages are encouraged to enroll in the library's Winter Reading Program to earn incentives for time spent reading. Readers under age 18 can earn up to 3 books to keep for time spent reading. Adult readers can earn a campfire mug for reading 25 hours during the program. All participants earn a prize for registering, too! Sign up on the Beanstack app or at westbloomlib.beanstack.org

Kickoff with Frozen

Saturday, January 13 from 10 AM – 1 PM
Main Library Meeting Room

Enjoy character visits, crafts, and a showing of the movie *Frozen*. The movie begins at 11:30 AM.



Finale with Mario

Saturday, March 9 from 10 AM – 1 PM
Main Library Meeting Room

Mario activities, characters, and games for all ages will be available. Show up in a costume from the Mario universe for a photo with a Mario backdrop.



Solar Eclipse

Get ready to watch the total solar eclipse on Monday, April 8! The next opportunity to view a total solar eclipse in the US won't be until 2044. The only safe way to view a solar eclipse is with special purpose solar filters. Pick up a pair from either branch, courtesy of the Friends of the Library, while supplies last.

More Events

Don't miss out on holiday storytimes, spring break activities, a puzzle and game swap, movie matinees, and much more!

The library has so many winter and spring programs planned, they don't fit in one newsletter! Browse and register for events on the new online calendar at wblib.org, or read the event brochure at bit.ly/wblib_guides.



NEW Elementary Kits

Language Learning Kits

A new series of language learning kits is in development. Materials in these kits are bilingual when possible to accommodate the varying language skills of both children and caregivers. The first kit in the series, Fun with Spanish and English, is available now, with Hebrew, Arabic, and Japanese kits coming soon.

Elementary Literacy Kits

The library's collection of Elementary Literacy Kits support students' learning across topics like phonics, vocabulary, and reading comprehension. The latest additions are themed around grammar skills, as well as speech and language development.

Family STEAM Kits

New additions to the library's collection of school-aged STEAM kits support students' learning in Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math. The latest additions are themed around Time-Telling and Early Geometry Concepts.

Programs from Your Friends

BOOK Talks



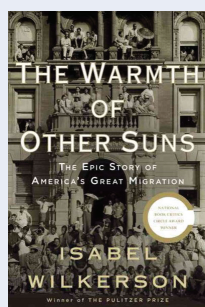
Stone Blind: A Novel

by Natalie Haynes

Thursday, January 11 at 7 PM

Friday, January 12 at 10 AM

Facilitator: Cathy Russ



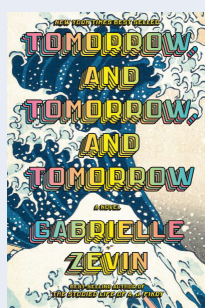
The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of America's Great Migration

by Isabel Wilkerson

Thursday, February 8 at 7 PM

Friday, February 9 at 10 AM

Facilitator: Naomi Frenkel



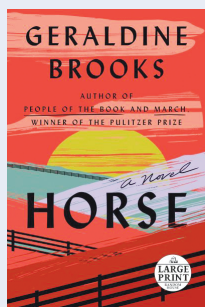
Tomorrow, and Tomorrow, and Tomorrow

by Gabrielle Zevin

Thursday, March 14 at 7 PM

Friday, March 15 at 10 AM

Facilitator: Ann Finn



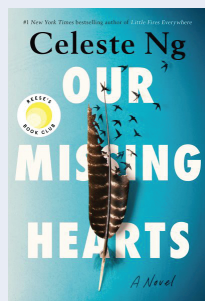
Horse

by Geraldine Brooks

Thursday, April 11 at 7 PM

Friday, April 12 at 10 AM

Facilitator: Jaema Berman



Our Missing Hearts

by Celeste Ng

Thursday, May 9 at 7 PM

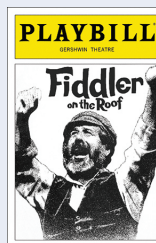
Friday, May 10 at 10 AM

Facilitator: Ann Finn

Talkin' Broadway

NOW MONTHLY on Sundays at 2 PM

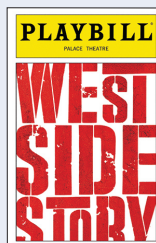
Enjoy an excerpt of a popular play or musical performed by local actors and singers, as well as a discussion with visiting Broadway veterans. Prepare for the evening by reading the script (available at the library) or viewing the movie—or just come to listen! Generously organized and sponsored by the Friends of the West Bloomfield Library and sponsored by Michigan Stage.



January 21



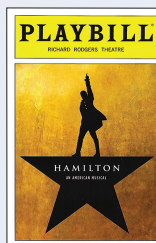
February 18



March 24



April 21



May 19



Friends of the Library Spring Book Sale

Friday, April 26 from 7 - 9 PM

Friends Member Preview Sale

Saturday, April 27 from 9 AM - 5 PM

Sunday, April 28 from Noon - 3 PM

\$5 Bag Day Sale



The nation's highest honor for libraries.

4600 Walnut Lake Road
West Bloomfield, MI 48323

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
Paid
Permit 63
Southfield MI



Library Renovations Underway

Learn more on Page 4.



DIRECTOR'S LETTER

"The only constant in life is change," said the Greek philosopher Heraclitus. As you have been reading throughout this newsletter, there is a lot of change happening right now. A new website, new additions to the collection (hotspots!), new spaces to enjoy, and did I mention the new website?

What's driving all of these changes? You! More specifically, we are making these improvements based on feedback and suggestions we received in the Community Needs Assessment conducted last year. Adaptable and inclusive spaces, enhanced technology offerings, and opportunities for the community to gather via new programs are all being implemented over the next few months.

As the needs of the library's users change, it is vital that the library adapt to meet those needs. Stagnation is not an option!

While we hope everyone enjoys the new offerings, we recognize that change can be tough to navigate. Please let any staff

member know if you have any questions about using the new spaces or need support learning the new website, a new technology, or a new kit.

There have also been changes on the Board of Trustees. The amazing Judith Holtz retired after 34 years of dedicated service; she will be missed. We are pleased to welcome Rhonda Orr and congratulate Michael Dorfman on being elected Vice President.

Finally, I want to thank the Ruth S. Elbling Trust and Mrs. Jane Maximovich and friends for the generous gifts that are making the Reflection Room and Community Commons possible. I also want to thank the Friends of the West Bloomfield Township Public Library for kindly funding the new hotspots, eclipse glasses, and Westacres furniture. One thing that never changes is the support of this marvelous community for its library!

Cathy Russ
Library Director

MAIN LIBRARY

4600 Walnut Lake Road
(248) 682-2120
TDD: (248) 232-2292
Email: wbref@wblib.org
Text: (248) 648-3368

WESTACRES BRANCH

7321 Commerce Road
(248) 363-4022
Email: wacref@wblib.org

HOURS OF SERVICE

Monday – Thursday: 9 AM – 9 PM
Friday & Saturday: 9 AM – 6 PM
Sunday (Main): Noon – 6 PM
Sunday (Westacres): Noon – 5 PM

wblib.org    

The library will be closed:

Tuesday, January 9 – Main Library Only
Wednesday, January 17 until 1 PM
Main Library Only
Tuesday, January 23 until 1 PM
Main Library Only
Tuesday, February 6 – Main Library Only
Tuesday, February 27 – Main Library Only
Tuesday, March 12 – Main Library Only
Sunday, March 31
Tuesday, May 7 – Main Library Only

Cathy Russ, Library Director
Jeff Crocker, Assistant Library Director

Board of Trustees

Carol A. Kravetz, President
Michael Dorfman, Vice President
Ken Macon, Treasurer
Raman Singh, Secretary
Kari Eickemeyer, Deputy Secretary/Treasurer
Rhonda Orr, Trustee



From the Director's Shelf

