



A COMMUNITY OF READERS

A Season of Giving

Friends of the West Bloomfield Library Facilitate Seasonal Fundraisers

The Friends of the West Bloomfield Library is an entirely volunteer-run 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization aimed at supporting the West Bloomfield Library through fundraising, advocacy, and volunteer efforts.

Established in 1956, the Friends have been active for over 70 years, but they launched their first Giving Tuesday campaign just three years ago. The campaign continues to grow as a powerful force for literacy and learning in the community.

This year, Giving Tuesday will be celebrated by nonprofits across the country on December 2. It's a day designed to encourage communities to support causes they care about during the holiday season following Thanksgiving. The Friends' campaign focuses on a unique library project each year.

"Everyone has a list of things they want that are not in their budget—a 'wish list,'" said Judy Suter, Friends Membership Officer. "For 2025, the library has a vision to create a more modern, family-friendly environment in our Youth Department by incorporating new, large furniture pieces in this space."

For Giving Tuesday this year, the Friends aim to raise \$15,000 to enhance the Main Library's Youth Room with new interactive furniture, including a food truck, sailboat, and updated car. The pieces were carefully selected by staff to promote fine and gross motor skills, social interaction, and cognitive development.

This interactive sailboat is among 3 youth furniture pieces the Friends are raising funding for this Giving Tuesday.



"As we know, early childhood development is the foundation of learning," said Outreach and Engagement Supervisor Emily Vickers. "The youth services staff is looking to refresh the room to keep up with the moving times and staff and patron suggestions to promote play, which is inherent in early learning and literacy."

Past Giving Tuesday campaigns have been extremely successful. In 2023, the Friends raised over \$11,000 to fund a collection of Playaway Audiobooks for young readers. In 2024, they raised over \$15,000 to expand Virtual Reality headsets and programming to help integrate technology into literacy efforts. The 2025 campaign takes a new direction by focusing on improvements to the library's spaces.



Johnnie Rocquemoire, the Friends' immediate past president, with a collection of Playaways, which was the Friends' first Giving Tuesday campaign.

"We embrace the concept that learning happens in many ways," Suter said. "Giving Tuesday gives us new and innovative ways to partner with the library to bring learning to life."

The Giving Tuesday campaign is just one highlight of the Friends' fall calendar.

From October 10–12, their biannual Used Book Sale will return, offering thousands of affordable books to the public. All proceeds

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collected by the Friends at the sale are used to support the Friends' cultural programs and more library services.

Then, from October 19-25, celebrate National Friends of the Library Week! Shop at Schuler Books and mention the Friends of the West Bloomfield Library or use the promo code WBLIBRARY online to designate 20% of proceeds to benefit the Friends. Flyers with the code are also available at the library.

The Friends also raise funds through an end-of-year Mah Jongg Card pre-sale. Year-round, the Friends raise funds through the sale of memberships and proceeds from the Friendshop, the Main Library's volunteer-run book and gift shop.

This spring, the Friends' fundraising and organizing efforts were recognized with the Community Achievement Award through the Greater Michigan Week Awards Breakfast. The Friends donated approximately \$48,000 last fiscal year alone to support library initiatives, from launching Brilliant Baby Kits to sponsoring the new Fiero Code resource and bringing big-name authors to the community.

Suter encourages community members to participate with the Friends in any way they can.

NEW! Library App

Check the library's catalog, manage your holds, access your library card, and discover more library features with ease using the new library app! Search "West Bloomfield Library" in the Google or Apple App Stores to download the free app to your device.



NEW! BARRON'S World's Premier Investing Publication

Barron's covers U.S. financial companies, market developments, and relevant statistics. Each issue provides a summary of the previous week's market activity as well as news, reports, and an outlook on the week to come.

Access this website alongside other investment favorites like Value Line, Morningstar, and The Wall Street Journal at wblib.org/eLibrary.

"We couldn't have done any of this without the continued support of our Friends and patrons," Suter said. "Every donation and every book purchase truly makes a difference."

Learn more about the Friends and become a member at wblib.org/friends-of-the-library.



Friends volunteers preparing for an upcoming used book sale.



Staff Spotlight

Eric Schoenbaechler, MLIS
Public Services Manager

Responsibilities: Overseeing Public Services, including the Main Library Information Desks, collections, outreach, programming, and digital services. Ensuring the library maintains a strong culture of service inside the building and out in the community.

Education: Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics from Cornell University, Master of Library and Information Science from Wayne State University, study abroad on the Baltic Sea region at University of Turku in Finland.

Favorite Book: *Midnight in Chernobyl* by Adam Higginbotham

Fun Fact: I've been to 65 countries. I'll visit 66 and 67 this summer: Zimbabwe and Ethiopia.

"I love the settings of our buildings and how inviting they are. The other day, a turkey wandered up to the entrance; we often find deer, ducks, and turtles relaxing on the terraces; several years ago, a small snake came in to look at magazines. The library truly is for everyone!"

Book Club Boom

October is National Book Group Month! Join us in celebrating by looking at recent trends in book clubs. Participate in one of the library's book clubs to see why these discussion groups are growing in popularity! Then, sign up for the library's Book Group Reception with visiting author Lisa Unger (more details on page 6).

31%

The number of book club events on Eventbrite increased by 31% in 2024. The number of Silent Book Clubs doubled and the number of romance-fantasy book clubs quadrupled!

(Source: NBC News, 2025)



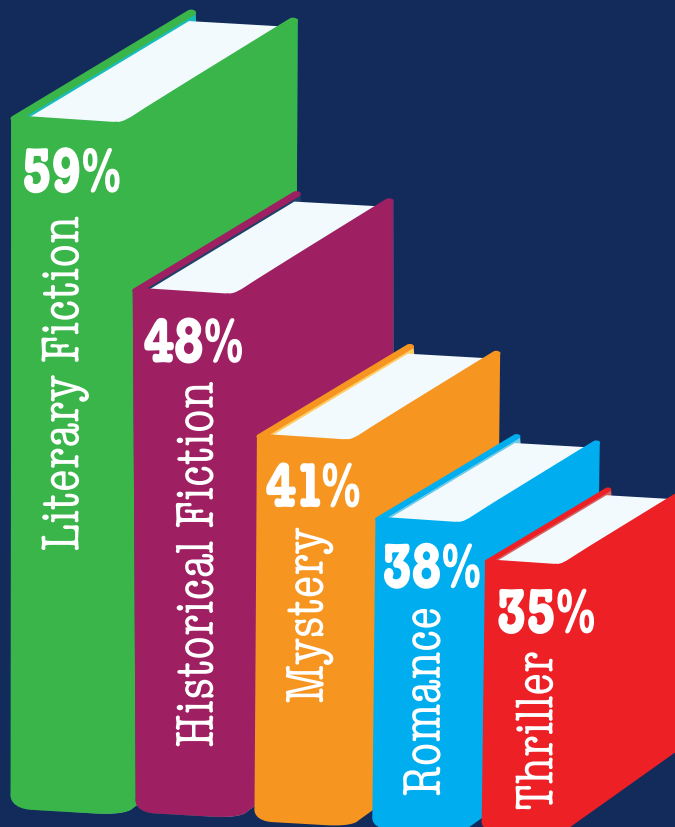
A book's availability was the **top consideration factor** for book clubs selecting what to read, closely followed by genre and topic/themes.

(Source: Penguin Random House, 2024)

70

The library has over 70 **Book Group Kits** for checkout, including some large print kits. Kits include 10 copies of a book and related discussion information. Check them out directly from the Main Library shelves near nonfiction, or talk with staff to reserve a kit.

Top 5 Fiction Genres among Book Clubs:



(Source: Penguin Random House, 2024)

Monthly Library Book Clubs:

Check wblib.org to see when all the library's book discussion groups meet.



BOOKTalk



Judge a Book by its Lover



Books on the Trail



Life Readers Book Club at Connect



Let's Read:
An English Language Book Club

1/3 of the library's conference room reservations

in 2024 were for book groups. Visit wblib.org to check availability and request the room.

Thoughtfully Designed:

Smart Features in the Library's Youth Spaces

Playtime provides a wealth of opportunities for kids of all ages to grow and connect. Parents are a child's first teachers, and the library is their classroom! Learn how to make the most of your family's playtimes at the library with these tips and tricks.

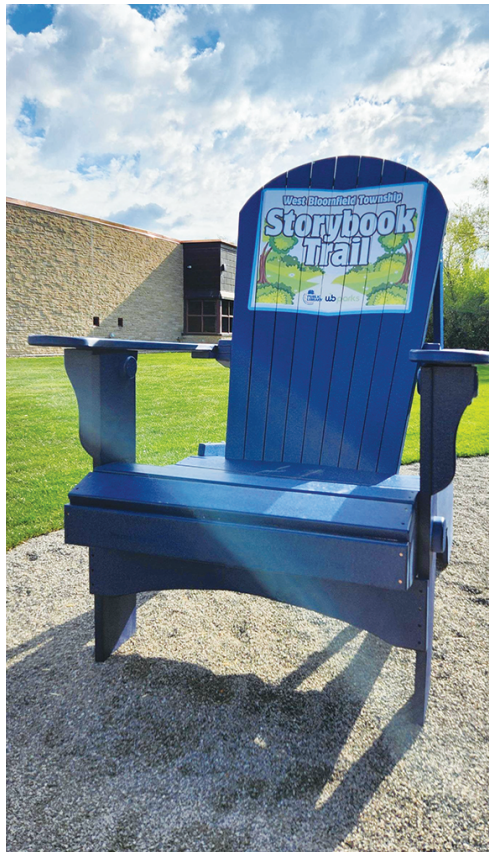
Portal Entry Main Library & Westacres Branch

The entries to the youth area at both branches are designed to transport visitors to a space designed for families. Explore bright colors and book displays together as you enter.



Storybook Trail & Chair Main Library

The West Bloomfield Storybook Trail blends a love of children's books and nature, with pages and prompts from a picture book stationed throughout the half-mile trail. Families are encouraged to walk the trail to engage with nature and literature alike. *A new chair at the trailhead was made possible by a bequest from the estate of James H. Neubacher.*



Puppet Tree Theatre Main Library

The puppet theatre under the seasonal tree sparks imaginative play and storytelling, which are vital for language development, social skills, and emotional expression in young children. Encourage your child to create characters, act out stories from books, or retell real-life events. For infants, try building early listening and bonding skills by using puppets to sing familiar songs. *Sponsored by the Friends of the Library.*



Reading Nooks Main Library & Westacres Branch

Seating around the youth areas encourage families to sit and read together. Reading aloud to your child is one of the best ways to boost school readiness skills. Ask library staff for tips to level up your read-alouds.



NEW! Comfort Room Main Library

The new comfort room provides caregivers a short-term calming area to visit if an overstimulated child needs a quiet place to decompress or if a private lactation location is needed. It is located next to the family restrooms.

TIP: Parents can learn more at the library, too! For playtime tips, take-home resources, circulating kits, and more, talk with staff at the youth desk.

Play House

Main Library & Westacres Branch

The play house is one of the most popular areas in the youth department. With dress-up clothes, toy food, baby dolls, and accessories, the house promotes dramatic and pretend play that encourages language, cognitive, and social-emotional development. The kitchen is a wonderful center of most households, and it's the center of the youth area too. Try practicing life skills or acting out imaginative stories in this space. *Sponsored by the Friends of the Library.*



Toys & Games

Main Library & Westacres Branch

Check out a toy basket or game from the Youth Services Desk for in-library use. Skill-building activities for a wide variety of ages are available to try out together, from farmhouse animals to magnetic tiles and more. Plus, visit the Activity Center for rotating toys!



Nursery Tiles

Main Library & Westacres Branch

Recite Mother Goose rhymes while searching for related tiles. Nursery rhymes help your child develop a vivid imagination and build key skills such as cognitive and language skills. Rhymes and repetition help children hear the same and different sounds that make up words, and they are good for memory, concentration, and speech. How many tiles can you find at each branch?



NEW! Baby Area

Westacres Branch

The new baby area offers a balance bar to promote standing and balancing for pre-walking infants, as well as three sensory boards to promote learning through play and exploration with the senses. Describe what your baby is doing, touching, and looking at to help boost their understanding of their environment as well as build their early literacy skills. While you visit, grab a board book and read with baby, too! *Sponsored by the Friends of the Library.*



NEW! Storytime Terrace Instruments

Main Library

New colorful seating and musical instruments on the terrace provide a wonderful addition to the library's outdoor space. Musical instruments promote rhythm, rhyme, coordination, gross motor skills, and creative expression. Try emulating favorite songs or compose a new song together. *Terrace enhancements made possible by a bequest from the estate of James H. Neubacher.*



Activity Tables

Main Library & Westacres Branch

These tables are popular spaces for children to socialize with others and play collaboratively. Each table offers different opportunities for hands-on learning across 4 themes: Legos, trains, lights, and pre-loaded tablet games. *Sponsored by the Friends of the Library.*



Library Events

Don't miss out! To see a full calendar of upcoming events, visit the library's website at wblib.org.

Book Club Reception with NYT Bestselling Author Lisa Unger

Monday, October 6 at 7 PM

Main Library Meeting Room

October is National Book Group Month! Join Author Lisa Unger in a celebration of books and book groups with members of the library's registered book clubs and the general public. *Generously funded by the Friends of the Library. Dedicated to the memory of Alice Matonic. Registration is required.*

Lisa Unger is the New York Times and internationally bestselling author of 22 novels, including *The New Couple in 5B* and her thriller *Close Your Eyes and Count to 10*. With books published in 33 languages and millions of copies sold worldwide, she is regarded as a master of suspense.



Author Lisa Unger

Storybook Trail: Author Walk

Saturday, September 13 at 1 PM

Main Youth Terrace

Local author Carol Lomasney will be at the library to take us on the trail and read her picture book, *Brave*. This storytime is outdoors and will begin promptly at 1 PM. *For grades K-2. Registration is required.*

Halloween Storybook Stroll

Friday, October 24 at 4:30 PM

Main Library Storybook Trail

Bring the whole family and take a walk on our Storybook Trail! Read this month's book and trick-or-treat on the trail. You can start your walk at the Storytime Terrace anytime from 4:30-5:30 PM, but you must finish by 6 PM to collect all your treats for walking the trail. Costumes welcome! Treats available while supplies last. Children must be present and participating to receive treats. Please register each child who will attend. *For ages 1-10 years. Registration is required.*



Shop Small Maker Mart

Saturday, December 13 from 11 AM - 3 PM

Main Library Meeting Room & Community Commons

Shop local this holiday season with Michigan-made local artisans and businesses. The library will host an event to showcase local artists! Stop in and see what the talented people of the community have to offer and get a head start on your holiday shopping. *This event is sponsored by The Friends of the Library.*

**To apply as a vendor for the Shop Small Maker Mart event, complete the form at wblib.org.*



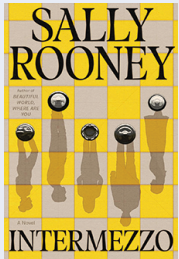
Save the Date: Winter Reading Kickoff ❄ Saturday, December 6 from 10 AM – 12 PM Main Library

From Your Friends

Friends BOOKTalks

Main Library Community Commons

Generously organized and sponsored by the Friends of the Library.



Intermezzo

by Sally Rooney

Thursday, September 11 at 7 PM

Friday, September 12 at 10 AM

Facilitator: Cathy Russ



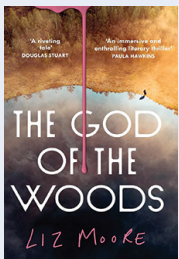
Kingmaker

by Sonia Purnell

Thursday, October 9 at 7 PM

Friday, October 10 at 10 AM

Facilitator: Naomi Frenkel



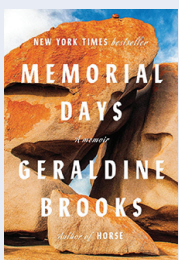
The God of the Woods

by Liz Moore

Wednesday, November 12 at 10 AM

Thursday, November 13 at 7 PM

Facilitator: Jaema Berman



Memorial Days: A Memoir

by Geraldine Brooks

Thursday, December 11 at 7 PM

Friday, December 12 at 10 AM

Facilitator: Diane Henderson

Friends of the Library Fall Book Sale

Friday, October 10 from 7-9 PM

Friends Member Preview Sale

Saturday, October 11 from 9 AM-5 PM

Sunday, October 12 from 12 PM-3 PM

\$5 Bag Day Sale

M@M MUSIC AT MAIN

A SUNDAY MUSIC SERIES SPONSORED BY THE FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY

Main Library Meeting Room

Generously organized and sponsored by the Friends of the Library.

Voxanna

Sunday, September 14 at 2 PM

Elaine Schoendorf

Sunday, October 5 at 2 PM

Mustard's Retreat

Sunday, November 9 at 2 PM

Robert Jones

Sunday, December 7 at 2 PM

What's Cooking?

Main Library Meeting Room

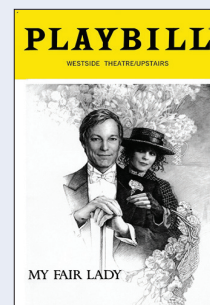
What's Cooking? features local chefs and other food and beverage experts as they give demonstrations with samples. *Generously organized and sponsored by the Friends of the Library.*

Visit wblib.org for details about upcoming programs.

Talkin' Broadway

Main Library Meeting Room

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 or viewing the movie—or just come to listen! *Generously organized and sponsored by the Friends of the Library and Michigan Stage.*



My Fair Lady
Sunday,
September 21
at 2 PM



Little Shop of Horrors
Sunday,
October 19
at 2 PM



Chicago
Sunday,
November 16
at 2 PM



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Library to Host Author Lisa Unger

Learn more on Page 6



DIRECTOR'S LETTER

October is one of my favorite months of the year for many reasons: the beautiful fall colors, the moderate temperatures, college football, and it's also a great month for Friends. Specifically, National Friends of Libraries Week, which is celebrated this year from October 19-25. The Friends' contributions to the library's success are highlighted throughout this newsletter, so please read, enjoy, be amazed, and consider joining! The Friends of Library are a wonderful, fun and inclusive group who will welcome your involvement.

The Friends are making it possible for New York Times bestselling author Lisa Unger to visit for the annual Book Group reception on Monday, October 6. You won't want to miss the opportunity to meet the writer of gripping suspense such as *Close Your Eyes and Count to 10*, *The New Couple in 5B*, and *Secluded Cabin Sleeps Six*.

And now for the Millage Update: The roof replacement at Main Library is finished, hooray!

So now we are turning our attention to the Westacres Branch roof. The Westacres Branch turns 25 next year (and we will be celebrating that milestone)! Like the roof at Main, it's time to be replaced.

We are also implementing holds pickup lockers at Westacres. These lockers were a frequently-requested service in the 2023 Community Needs Assessment survey; they will allow folks who aren't able to come to the library during regular hours to access their materials. We look forward to making your lives easier by providing this service.

There's always so much going on at the library! I hope you will visit frequently and take advantage of all there is to enjoy.

Cathy Russ

Executive Library Director

MAIN LIBRARY

4600 Walnut Lake Road
(248) 682-2120
TDD: (248) 232-2292
Email: wbbref@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:

Friday, November 14
Wednesday, November 26 - Close at 5 PM
Thursday, November 27
Wednesday, December 24
Thursday, December 25
Wednesday, December 31
Thursday, January 1

Cathy Russ, Executive Library Director
Jeff Crocker, Associate Library Director

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From the Director's Shelf

