



A COMMUNITY OF READERS

Westacres Celebrates Anniversary

Learn the history of West Bloomfield Library's Westacres Branch.



Westacres Branch, 1966

Nestled on the banks of Middle Straits Lake, the Westacres community was conceived by U.S. Senator James Couzens, who pooled personal and federal New Deal funds for the project. Landscape architect E. Genevieve Gillette designed each housing plot to allow for thrift gardens and left space for community buildings.

In 1936, the neighborhood of 150 homes for industrial workers was established, founded

on the ideals of self-sufficiency and communal living. Not long after the planned development's founding, the Westacres Reading Club created the library.

Library board member Kari Eickemeyer's grandmother was a member of the Reading Club and helped found the library.

"It's an amazing neighborhood to raise a family, and one of the biggest components of

that is the library," said Eickemeyer. "As a kid, I rode my bike to the library, and my kids rode their bikes to the library. Having a library right there? It's priceless."

Initially, the Westacres Library consisted of donated books held in the old clubhouse on the south edge of the lagoon. By 1940, the community asked the Township to take over the library to ensure consistent management.

"When you get a group of us that grew up here, we all remember the creaking of the stairway to go up to that second level [of the clubhouse], which is where the library was," said Meghan Galbraith, a Westacres Historical Society member and second generation Westacres resident.

The second level struggled under the weight of the growing library. The flooring was reinforced several times before the library was moved up the road to the space it now occupies—a building originally constructed as the Westacres Co-op before it was renovated and reopened as the new library in 1966.

"That location has always been a resource for the community," Galbraith said, "Whether it was the co-op where people brought their vegetables to sell or the library where we go to learn and read and do homework. It's always

continued on page 2

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Giving Tuesday Page 3 | Molina Healthcare Grant Page 4 | Author Events Page 5 | STEAM Kit Grant Page 6

continued from page 1

been a part of our community—very simpatico with what Westacres is all about.”

The Westacres Branch underwent significant expansions in 1984 and again in 2001, enabling the library to host programs, offer technology, and grow collections on the northwest end of town.

“What’s been so great about the West Bloomfield Library—whether it be the Main Library or Westacres Branch—is how it’s evolved with the

times and the resources needed for the community,” Galbraith said. “It’s just such an incredible resource that we have that not every community has.”

All are invited to celebrate 90 years of the Westacres community, 60 years of the dedicated Westacres Library building, and 25 years since its most ambitious expansion—plus the decades of service in between—at the **Westacres Branch’s Anniversary Celebration**. Enjoy games, crafts, activities, history, and more on Friday, September 18 from 6:30-8 PM.

Westacres Library Through the Years



Clubhouse library (50s)



Grand opening (66)



Storytime (60s)



Front desk (86)



Halloween party (87)



Entry (80s)



Friends using technology (87)



Puppet show (87)



Library on the Lawn (90)



Scotch students' replica statue (85)



Information Desk (00s)



Staff with national medal (10)



Pewabic tile fireplace (22)



Youth computers (00s)

24/7 Holds Pickup Lockers

Want to be able to pick up your library holds after the building has closed? Use the 24/7 pickup lockers outside the Westacres Branch. Request your materials for pickup at the lockers, then visit within the next week to unlock your locker and check them out using your library card.



Help Enhance the Westacres Terrace

This Giving Tuesday, the Friends of the Library is asking for \$15,000 to assist with Westacres Branch terrace improvements. Planned upgrades include the addition of outdoor musical instruments and changes to landscaping to increase the usable space of the terrace. Learn more at wblib.org/support.



Board Member Spotlight

Kari Eickemeyer

Current Role: Deputy Secretary/Treasurer

Years of Service: 10 years

Employment Background: Bachelor's in Accounting from Bowling Green State University, followed by a couple years in public accounting, then 40 years in IT Finance at Trinity Health before retiring this summer.

Favorite Genre: Thrillers and literary fiction

Fun Fact: Four generations of my family have lived in walking distance from the Westacres Library.

Reasons for Serving: My family history—my grandmother helped start the Westacres Library. The other reason is to represent the northwest end of West Bloomfield.

Kari Eickemeyer (Left) at the Westacres Branch with her son, Nick, and mom, Jo



Shop Small Maker Mart

Saturday, December 12 from 11 AM – 3 PM

Main Library Meeting Room

Shop local this holiday season with Michigan-made local artisans and businesses. The library will open up its meeting room space to host an event to showcase local artists! Stop in and see what the talented people of the community have to offer for your holiday shopping. *Sponsored by the Friends of the Library.*

To apply as a vendor for the event, complete the form at wblib.org/shop-small by Sunday, November 1.

The Next Chapter



Library Awarded Grant for Dementia Art Therapy Program

Wednesdays at 1 PM

Main Library Community Commons

October 14: Joy Collage

October 21: String Painting

October 28: Heart Map

November 4: Mindful Watercolor

Molina Healthcare has awarded the West Bloomfield Township Public Library \$10,000 to launch a new program designed to support caregivers and their loved ones with dementia through art therapy programs.

The Fine Art of Caregiving begins this fall, with a certified art therapist (ATR-BC) facilitating 4 weeks of workshops. After each workshop, participants leave with a kit of art supplies to continue their creative journey together at home.

Community Engagement Librarian Emily Tobin wrote the grant proposal and is overseeing the project.

"For me, art is a great way to break the ice and have people interact with each other," said Tobin. "This grant opportunity is a way for the library to reach out to those in the community that may feel isolated and give them a place to feel included while having some fun along the way."

Another session with 4 weeks of workshops will be offered in the spring. At the end of both sessions, the library will host an art show, displaying the work of participants for a month. Participating families will be invited back for an opening of the show and gifted an exhibition catalog as a lasting memory aide and keepsake.

Registration is required. Sign up for one session or all four.

Conversion Station

From faded photographs to forgotten VHS tapes, the Main Library can help bring your memories back to life. Digitize and restore family photos, scan slides and film negatives, and convert VHS tapes to digital files or DVDs.

No appointment is needed to use the library's conversion station, but for personalized assistance, West Bloomfield cardholders can book time with a tech tutor by contacting the library. Learn more at wblib.org/technology.

Please note that VHS will convert in real time; if your VHS tape is two hours long, it will take two hours to convert. You must bring sufficient storage or your work will be lost.



Preserving Personal Archives in the Digital Age

Thursday, September 24 at 6 PM

Main Library Meeting Room

This presentation explores practical methods for preserving personal archives, including photographs, documents, audio, and digital files. Attendees will learn simple organizational strategies, long-term storage practices, and methods to build small-scale archives that remain accessible for future generations.

NEW Adult Playaways

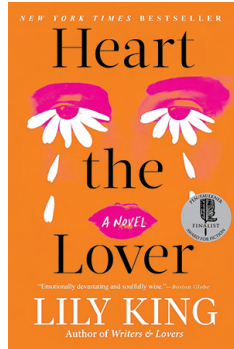
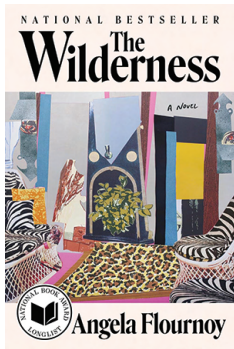
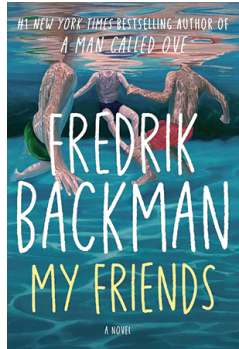
- Easy-to-use audiobook devices
- Small, portable design
- No WiFi or smartphone needed
- Select from over 40 popular titles
- Universal headphone jack



Book News

Book Group Kits

The library has new Book Group Kits available each fall, including recent favorites available in paperback! Each kit includes 10 copies of the title and discussion aides.



Visit the Main Library or wblib.org/book-groups to see a full list of titles.

Changes to Adult Fiction Shelves

All adult fiction genres are now interfiled at the Main Library to improve discoverability. Previously, regular print books were split between general fiction, mystery, and sci-fi/fantasy sections. As authors diversify and more genre titles become mainstream, this configuration is no longer working for library members. Now, all adult fiction books are arranged alphabetically by the author's last name, regardless of genre. Large Print is still shelved separately. **If you only read mystery and/or sci-fi/fantasy, look for the genre label sticker on the spine when browsing.**

Winter Reading Program

Kickoff on Saturday, December 5

Enroll in the library's Winter Reading Program to earn incentives for time spent reading. Library members of all ages can enroll in the Winter



Reading Program to earn incentives for time spent reading. Sign up during the family-friendly kickoff event, or sign up directly on the Beanstack app or website anytime during the program.

Want to order a "Cozy Up with a Good Book" shirt of your own? The Friends have set up an online store on Bonfire! Visit wblib.org/support and click "Shop the Online Friendship."

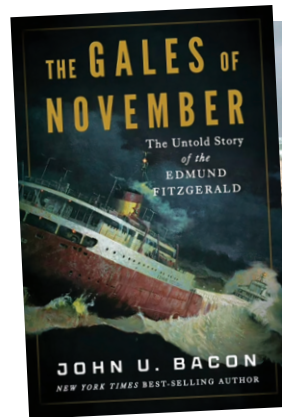
An Evening with Author John U. Bacon

Wednesday, October 21 at 6:30 PM

Main Library Meeting Room

Hear from John U. Bacon, the author of *The Gales of November: The Untold Story of the Edmund Fitzgerald*. Bacon has written 14 books, including eight national bestsellers. He has written for *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Washington Post*, and *Time* magazine, among others, appears often on national TV, and won NPR's prize for the nation's best commentary in 2014. Celebrate National Book Club Month by inviting your book club buddies to attend with you!

Registration is required.



Author John U. Bacon

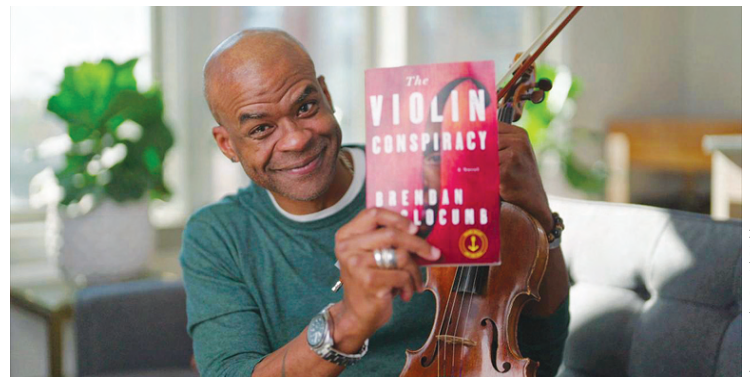
Save the Date: An Evening with Author Brendan Slocumb

Friday, January 22, 2027 at 6:30 PM

Main Library Meeting Room

Brendan Slocumb started playing the violin at the age of nine. In addition to performing in orchestras, he also works as a teacher in music education. *The Violin Conspiracy* is his debut work as a novelist, followed by *Symphony of Secrets* and *The Dark Maestro*.

Registration is required.



Author Brendan Slocumb

See upcoming author event details at wblib.org/author-visits.

Youth News

NEW STEAM Kits Funded by Grant

The library's new STEAM Kit collection makes it easy to explore coding, electronics, engineering, and creative problem-solving with no prior coding experience required.

Each kit includes technology, accessories, and some ideas for projects and activities, making it simple to jump right in. Build interactive inventions with Makey Makey, program a tiny robot with Ozobot, create games and gadgets with the Micro:bit, or snap together electronic circuits with LittleBits.

Designed for ages six and up, these hands-on kits encourage creativity, critical thinking, and confidence while making learning fun. Funding is provided in part by the Institute of Museum and Library Services through the Library of Michigan.



Youth Area Updates

The Main Library Youth Area is starting the school year with new carpeting, three new playscapes, and updated features. Stop by to see the updates! **Don't hesitate to ask at the information desk if you need help locating an item or collection.**



The new lightwall matches the Main Library's colorful light floor tiles that welcome families into the youth area.

Just For Tweens

Bunch of Library Tweens (BLTs)

Wednesday, September 23 from 6-7:30 PM

Wednesday, October 28 from 6-7:30 PM

Monday, November 23 from 6-7:30 PM

Main Library Youth Activity Center

Looking for a place to kick back, chill out, and just be yourself? Bunch of Library Tweens is your space to hang with friends, get creative, and try new things. *For ages 8-12 years. Registration is required.*



Pokémon Club

Tuesday, September 8 at 6:30 PM

Tuesday, October 13 at 6:30 PM

Tuesday, November 10 at 6:30 PM

Main Library Young Adult Room

Monday, September 14 at 6:30 PM

Monday, October 12 at 6:30 PM

Monday, November 16 at 6:30 PM

Westacres Activity Center



Do you love Pokémon? So do your librarians! Join us for a monthly session where we'll chat about all things Pokémon while learning how to play the trading card game. *For grades 3-8.*

Discover more events



Connect with your community! See more events for all ages on the library's calendar at wblib.org, or scan the QR code to read the Fall Events Brochure online.

From Your Friends

Friends BOOKTalks

Main Library Community Commons

Join the Friends of the Library each month for an exciting discussion on popular books. *Generously organized and sponsored by the Friends of the Library.*



The River is Waiting

by Wally Lamb

Wednesday, September 9 at 10 AM

Thursday, September 10 at 7 PM

Facilitator: Diane Henderson



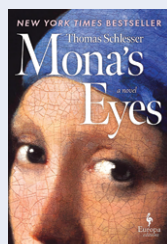
The Afterlife of Malcolm X

by Mark Whitaker

Thursday, October 8 at 7 PM

Friday, October 9 at 10 AM

Facilitator: Ann Finn



Mona's Eyes

by Thomas Schlessler

Wednesday, September 9 at 10 AM

Thursday, September 10 at 7 PM

Facilitator: Naomi Frenkel



Wild Dark Shore

by Charlotte McConaghy

Thursday, December 10 at 7 PM

Friday, December 11 at 10 AM

Facilitator: Diane Henderson

Friends of the Library *Fall Book Sale*

Friday, October 9 from 7-9 PM

Friends Member Preview Sale

Saturday, October 10 from 9 AM-5 PM

Sunday, October 11 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.

Ruth and Max Bloomquist

Sunday, September 27 at 2 PM

Jill Jack

Sunday, October 4 at 2 PM

Peter Madcat Ruth

Sunday, November 8 at 2 PM

Don White

Sunday, December 6 at 2 PM

Talkin' Broadway

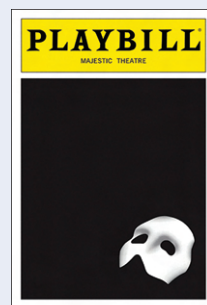
Main Library Meeting Room

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.*



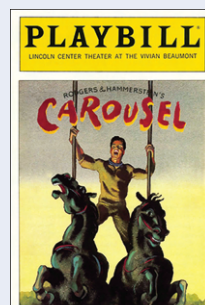
Legally Blonde

**Sunday,
September 20
at 2 PM**



Phantom of the Opera

**Sunday,
October 18
at 2 PM**



Carousel

**Sunday,
November 15
at 2 PM**

Mah Jongg Card Preorder

Pre-order your 2027 mah jongg card from the Friends! Visit wblib.org/support or contact the Friendshop for more information.



4600 Walnut Lake Road
West Bloomfield, MI 48323



*The nation's highest
honor for libraries.*

NON PROFIT Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Dearborn MI
Permit 11



Library to Host *Gales of November* Author

Learn more on Page 5

The Main Library will close early Sept. 18 & all day Sept. 19 for the Township's Household Hazardous Waste Day.



DIRECTOR'S LETTER

After a summer of extreme heat and wildfire smoke, I am looking forward to the cooler temperatures and vibrant colors of fall.

I am especially looking forward to kicking off the season by celebrating some major milestone anniversaries for the Westacres community! Read all about its fascinating history (and the library's role in it) on the front page.

We have a fantastic lineup of author events planned for the coming months. In October, noted author John U. Bacon will visit to discuss the sinking of the Edmund Fitzgerald (and maybe also U-M athletics). We're also excited for *The Violin Conspiracy* author Brendan Slocumb's visit in January. Stayed tuned for the winter newsletter, where we will announce another BIG author visit coming this spring.

The Friends' Used Book Sale from October 9-11 deserves a place on your calendar. They sell high-quality materials for reasonable prices, raising funds to support more library programs and projects.

Have you heard the term "Library of Things?" It's a concept growing in popularity across libraries

everywhere. You might have heard about different kinds of non-traditional items being checked out, from telescopes to blood pressure monitors to DVD players.

West Bloomfield Library has all of these items available for you to check out, intentionally curated as starter packs. These kits will help set you up for success when exploring a new hobby or subject.

Our newest kits are STEAM-focused, exploring technological concepts in a fun and non-stressful way. Funding for these kits was made possible by a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services via the Library of Michigan—one of two grants awarded to the library this year.

Whatever your interest, hobby, passion, or project, library staff are ready to help you get started! Please make time for a visit this fall. You will not be disappointed!

Sincerely,

Cathy Russ

Executive Library Director

MAIN LIBRARY

4600 Walnut Lake Road
(248) 682-2120
Email: wblref@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:

September 5-7
Friday, September 18
Main Library Early Closure at 2 PM
Saturday, September 19
Main Library Closure
Monday, November 9
Wednesday, November 25
Early Closure at 5 PM
Thursday, November 26
December 24-25
December 31-January 1

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

Board of Trustees

Carol A. Kravetz, President
Raman Singh, Vice President
Rhonda Orr, Treasurer
Jennifer Taylor Green, Secretary
Kari Eickemeyer, Deputy Secretary/Treasurer
Cory Nummer, Trustee



From the Director's Shelf

