

Social Media Keeps Patrons Engaged

BY TAMARA MURRAY

SPENDING A DAY AT THE LOCAL LIBRARY, perusing the stacks for hidden gems or taking in an informative lecture, is one of the many pleasures available to Westerville residents.

Yet busy schedules and life responsibilities often make it difficult to take advantage of the library's wide range of events and services. Luckily, the Westerville Public Library has an active presence on social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Even the most overloaded patron can partake in the energy and excitement with a simple "like."

Follow the library and enter a world of author visits, book parties, puppet shows and more.

Patrons who no longer have the luxury of long conversations with favorite librarians about their latest reading adventures can hop online during one of the library's quarterly Book Fortunes events. Readers share titles they've recently enjoyed, and librarians "predict" books in their reading future.

Author Visits

If attending a visit from a favorite author is impossible, fans can follow the action through the library's live-tweeting of the event (#wplauthors). This year, the library already has hosted authors Daniel Handler, Susanna Kearsley, Jacqueline Woodson, Piper Kerman and Daniel Silva.

Live-tweeting has revealed spoilers from yet-to-be-published bestsellers, exposed authors' quirky writing habits, shared behind-the-scenes photos and relayed witty responses to audience questions.

Some exchanges from those visits on the library's Twitter page, @westervillelibrary:



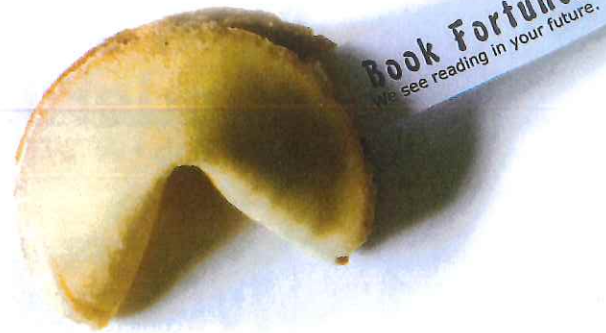
TAMARA MURRAY is the web content librarian at the Westerville Public Library. For more information about library services and programs, go to westervillelibrary.org.



COURTESY OF THE WESTERVILLE PUBLIC LIBRARY (2)

Youth Services librarian Mickie Stiers cuddles up to *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*.

- Favorite book I wrote? I find them all shameful. - @DanielHandler #wplhandler #lemonysnicket
- Books that ask questions are more interesting than books that answer them. - @DanielHandler #wplhandler #lemonysnicket
- One of my ancestors fell off the Mayflower. That's my family, #rebelrousers and clumsy people. - @SusannaKearsley #wplsusanna
- There's no wrong way to write, just like there's no wrong way to read. - @SusannaKearsley #wplsusanna
- Q: When do you stick w/a book or scrap it? A: I need to love the characters in it & I need to get them home. @JackieWoodson #wplwoodson
- The last thing I expected on my first day in prison was kindness from other women... - @Piper Kerman #welcomewagon #wplauthors #OITNB
- Prisoners love books...the only legitimate form of escape. - @Piper Kerman #welcomewagon #OITNB #wplauthors
- @jamiengangel gets @danielsilvabook to describe his VERY important and



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specific writing ensemble including sweats & comfy socks. #wplauthors

Other Status Updates

Even frequent library visitors appreciate open communication channels for timely updates. They can find out about area construction and seasonal updates, as well as suggest titles for the collection and provide feedback to the library. Facebook users, for example, have asked, "Is the drive up open yet?" and "Do you have tax forms out yet this year?"

For anyone who is curious about what's happening in town, the Westerville Public Library's social media profiles present a look inside (and outside) the State Street building.

Recent Instagram posts shared a behind-the-scenes costume fitting for August's *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* visit, an invitation to weather a 4th Fridays storm by listening to stories indoors at Amish Originals, and a challenge to slither, climb, leap and "swim" with an outdoor story walk.

Followers are encouraged to be spontaneous and take advantage of last-minute opportunities to visit the library for pop-up events such as a celebration of Star Wars and everyday wonders like the lilac bushes in bloom along Starrock Alley.

Last but not least, avid book lovers can browse reading recommendations for science-fiction fans, romance enthusiasts and more via Tumblr and Goodreads.

With all that is offered online, infrequent visitors to the library don't ever have to feel left out of the action.