

Shelf Talk: New Services for Novel Times

By Beth Roberts, MCLS PR and Customer Service Specialist

During the COVID-19 crisis, so much of the news is focused on what we should not do: no school, no restaurants, no shopping, no groups over 10, no people within six feet. We are told to practice social distancing, disinfect surfaces, carefully monitor our health, wash our hands. We understand why. Staying home helps slow the spread of COVID-19, which means fewer people are sick at the same time, hospitals are not overwhelmed with patients, and the most vulnerable people in our community are better protected.

As a community, we choose to focus on the things we *can* do. We stay home, going out only for necessities. We call friends, relatives, and neighbors instead of visiting. We try to work remotely, even while helping our children adjust to school-from-home. We support local businesses via drive-through and pickup orders. We refocus our attention on the things that matter most.

We are all adjusting to a new normal. While employees, students, and customers stay home, employers, teachers, and businesses work hard to continue to provide services. The Mississippi County Library System (MCLS) is no exception. Even though our buildings remain closed to the public through at least April 19th, your MCLS is committed to doing what we can to connect our communities with reading materials and online resources. Below are just some of the ways we're working to live into our tagline, Enrich Your Life!

Have you heard about Libby? The free app for your phone or tablet gives you access to over 60,000 eBooks, eMagazines, and audiobooks to checkout. The titles are current, popular, and ever-expanding. All you need to access Libby is a current library card! If your card is expired, or if you'd like a temporary card, email cardrenew@mclibrary.net with the subject line "MCLS Library Card." We'll respond with more information as soon as we can. If you need help getting started with Libby, step-by-step videos are available at mclibrary.net/how-to-use-libby. Big thanks to the Armored EAST students for their help in creating the videos!

Do you wish you could borrow a physical book? You're in luck...introducing Curbside Checkout! The Blytheville, Manila, and Osceola branches will be offering book pickup during special hours (listed below). Call and request a book during call-in hours and pick it up later that day during pickup hours. In order to maintain social distancing standards, please follow these guidelines:

- Return books in designated drop-off areas and do not hand them directly to staff. All books will be quarantined for 72 hours and mylar covers will be wiped down with a bleach solution before they are checked in and returned to circulation. Thank you for your patience as we do our best to keep our collection virus-free!
- Call to let us know you've arrived and we'll put your books by the door, or even carry them to your trunk! Please do not request new books or information during pickup. We miss seeing you, too, but hope that maintaining distance now will keep us all healthy!
- **Blytheville Library**, Monday – Friday: Call-in hours 10-12, Pickup hours 1-3. 870-762-2431
- **Manila Library**, Monday, Wednesday: Call-in hours 10:30-12, Pickup hours 12:30-2. Saturday: Call-in hours 11-12, Pickup hours 12:30-1:30. 870-561-3525
- **Osceola Library**, Monday-Friday: Call-in hours 12-1, Pickup hours 2-3. 870-563-2721

Are you looking for ways to learn from home? Do you miss visiting concerts, museums, and parks? We've got you covered. Visit our Boredom Busters page at www.mclibrary.net/boredom-busters for a curated list of activities, story times, and databases that are safe and reputable. Many of these services are subscription-based and are offered to you for free! And don't forget to follow **Mississippi County Library System** on Facebook for upcoming story times, reading groups, crafts, and more.

As always, I'm available for questions and assistance; you can reach me at broberts@mclibrary.net. Stay home and stay healthy, Mississippi County!