

READING GOES DIGITAL

With the advent of digital e-readers, books have never been so readily accessible. There are literally millions of books available to download at the mere touch of a button - all from the comfort of your favorite chair. E-readers are especially handy if you struggle with mobility issues and can't easily make it to the library or local bookstore.

These handy gadgets also provide a bright, crisp screen display, making words much clearer and easier to see if your eyes usually strain to read small book print. The digital interface of an e-reader makes it possible to customize font, boldness and word size as well, so you have the ability to choose a combination that works best for you. Choosing an e-reader can be a daunting task, as there are many options and models out there. In order to help you decide which one may be right for you, here's a quick rundown of what are generally acknowledged as the best e-readers currently on the market, and what specific features make each one unique:

Amazon Kindle • \$80

The Amazon Kindle is the basic, most budget-friendly e-reader. Utilizing a non-backlit touch screen, reading on an Amazon Kindle is the closest e-reading experience to an actual book. The 6-inch display is designed to simulate crisp text and is perfectly clear even in bright, direct sunlight. However, if you are a fan of reading in bed, you will have to use a light source other than the e-reader itself as it does not light up. Like all other Amazon Kindle models, it includes access to the online Amazon Store, which is acknowledged to contain more titles than any other online book marketplace, and also as being the most price-friendly per title.

Amazon Kindle Paperwhite • \$119

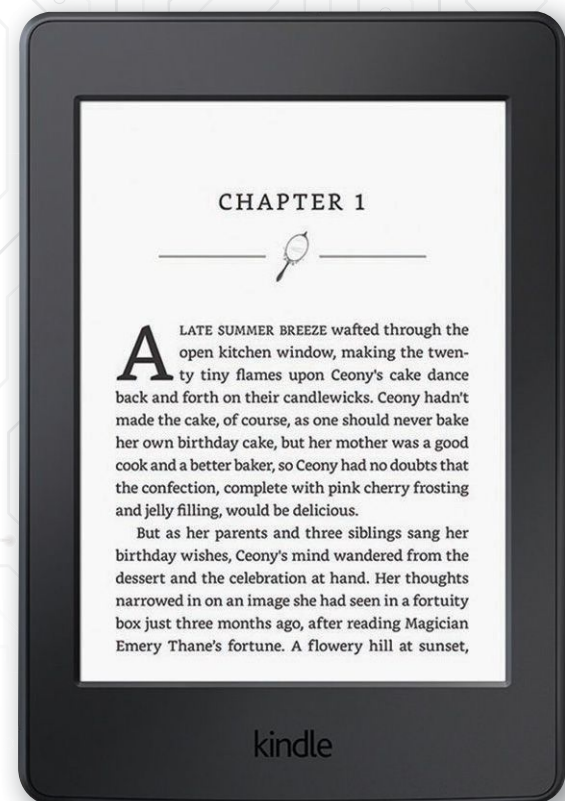
According to www.pcmag.com, the Kindle Paperwhite is the best e-book reader you can buy for the price. Similar to the Amazon Kindle, but with some serious upgrades in display resolution and performance speed, it also includes a backlit display so you can read in the dark. Text is incredibly sharp, even in direct sunlight, and the Paperwhite's rounded corners and small frame make it easy to grip. One common complaint in reviews, however, is the backlight can be uneven, causing the screen to be dimmer in some places.

Barnes & Noble Nook Glowlight 3 • \$119

A main competitor of the Amazon Paperwhite, the Barnes and Noble Nook Glowlight 3 is a good option if you like to be able to access help and guidance in person. With two Barnes and Noble locations in Tulsa, it would be easy to have any of your questions answered in one simple trip (in addition to being able to read any title for free on your device while in the store). The Glowlight 3 has twice the amount of storage as the Paperwhite and does not subject the user to seeing ads as Kindle devices do when on "sleeping mode." Although, you can pay to opt out of these. The Glowlight 3 also has an adjustable "lighting temperature" option - bright and sharp for during the day and warm, soft orange for night. Its rubberized frame and rounded corners also makes it easier to grip if you have trouble holding onto slick electronic devices. Unfortunately, there is no audiobook capability, but it does include a basic web browser for sites like Wikipedia and email.

Amazon Kindle Oasis 2 • \$250

With a much higher price, this e-reader is for the serious tech junky and bookworm. The screen display is bigger than previous Kindle models (7 inches), is very light-weight, has Bluetooth headphone/speaker capabilities, and the 12-LED front lights make for a brighter, crisper, more evenly lit screen that also dims intuitively as the day progresses to night. The Oasis 2 also includes the new font Bookerly, which is specifically designed to reduce eye-strain while also allowing for faster reading. But perhaps the coolest feature of the Oasis 2 is that it is waterproof in up to six feet of water, for up to one hour. If you are a bathtub or an at-the-beach reader, you now no longer have to worry about wet hands and soggy book pages or outright ruining an electronic device.



Kobo Aura H2O Edition 2 • \$179.99

The lesser-known Canadian company Kobo is currently in the running against Amazon and Barnes and Noble for creating well-loved e-readers. The Kobo Aura H2O Edition 2 has very similar qualities to the Amazon Kindle Oasis 2, as it is also waterproof and has a 6.8-inch high-resolution display. Also like the Oasis 2, the screen will dim intuitively as the day progresses, but with the added "comfort light" feature, which filters out harsher blue light in exchange for a mellower, softer orange light that is easier on the eyes in the dark. The Kobo Aura H2O Edition 2, however, can be a bit big for smaller hands to comfortably hold onto, and Kobo's online store doesn't boast quite as many books as Amazon, nor are they priced as low. Kobo's store interface has also received some criticism as being harder to navigate than Amazon. But many users still prefer Kobo because they can borrow and download from many more online formats than Amazon, which locks users primarily into the Amazon Store.

If you aren't quite sold on e-readers or don't want to pay the price for one, the Tulsa City-County Library system does make it possible to access and borrow books from a massive online database. The website walks you through how to download resources like the Libby app on your smartphone or tablet, which creates a direct portal to your local library to borrow books without ever leaving your home. You can also use your desktop or laptop computer to borrow and download books, read magazines, periodicals and newspapers, and even participate in online classes to learn a new skill.

by Tiffany Duncan



Bi-Folkal Kits

One of the most intriguing collections available through TCCL's Outreach Services has people talking – and that's the whole idea. Bi-Folkal Kits are for group activities. Each kit features a single topic and includes a duffel bag filled with prompts such as audio tapes, CDs/DVDs, books, poems, pictures, songs and more. The prompts send the group on a trip down memory lane and soon they are sharing stories and memories. The groups can add their own props, songs and activities to personalize the activity in any way they desire. Popular topics include:

- ▶ Cooking
- ▶ Fashion
- ▶ Automobiles
- ▶ The Home Front (WWII)
- ▶ Summertime
- ▶ The Fifties

Warren said the Bi-Folkals have been very popular with nursing homes, retirement facilities and other programs for older adults. Some facilities are even requesting the same topics each year so they can revisit favorite themes and memories.



LIBRARY DELIVERED: INCREASING SENIORS' ACCESSIBILITY TO BOOKS

T rue book lovers escape into the worlds revealed by the pages of a book and let their imaginations run wild. But, what happens when life's frailties make it hard to access those cherished books? Even though the Tulsa City-County Library (TCCL) system includes 24 branch libraries throughout the county, some members of our community have transportation or health issues that make getting to a library difficult or impossible. Thanks to TCCL's Community and Outreach Services, the thrill of a literary adventure is still a possibility.

BOOKMOBILE

Once a month, area nursing homes, retirement villages and assisted living communities receive visits from the TCCL Bookmobile. The roaming library is fully stocked with books, audio books and DVDs. In addition to the core collection, the unit is restocked daily to match the anticipated needs for that day's visits. Tracy Warren, manager of community outreach and literacy services, says that some facilities have groups of readers with shared tastes like western fiction or large print Christian fiction. Each site is a little different and Warren's team gets to know the residents and their reading tastes, so they can best prepare the unit for a visit.

"Sometimes, the Bookmobile isn't the best choice for a particular facility," Warren says. "Even though the Bookmobile is equipped with a lift and is fully accessible for

walkers and wheelchairs, we may visit a facility where a number of the residents aren't able to come to us on the Bookmobile. In such cases, we may take our van out and visit the residents in their rooms with a selection of materials from books to movies to audiobooks. Our goal is to bring the resources of the library system to people who cannot visit one of our library facilities. We have different tools at our disposal and can adapt to best meet our clients' needs."

Warren says she is always willing to talk to potential new clients. She can visit the facility, sign up residents for library cards and determine how the library can best meet the residents' needs. To arrange a visit and explore options for your facility, call (918) 549-7480.

Here are some quick Bookmobile facts you may not know:

- ▶ Tulsa began operating Oklahoma's first Bookmobile in 1930.
- ▶ The current, eye-catching Bookmobile was purchased in 2016.
 - It is 28-feet long.
 - It is the nation's first Bookmobile to have a self-checkout station.
 - It logs 750 to 1,000 miles per month traveling within Tulsa County.
 - About 900 people visit the Bookmobile each month, and 4,500 items are checked out.
 - There are no fines on the Bookmobile.

HOMEBOUND SERVICES

Anyone who is homebound or cannot easily get into one of the 24 branch libraries can take advantage of the homebound services program. Once the person signs up with their library card, materials such as books (regular and large print), audio books, DVDs and more can be requested and sent to the person by mail. The individual keeps them as long as desired and returns them to the library through the U.S. Postal Service. The service is free.

AUDIO BOOKS

Large print books are popular among many older adults. For those with more significant vision issues, audio books may be preferred. Audio books can be requested through the Bookmobile and the homebound program. TCCL even has unique self-contained MP3 players (aka Playaways) that come pre-loaded with a book. A Playaway is about the size of a deck of cards and doesn't weigh much more. TCCL encourages visually impaired clients to also sign up with the Oklahoma Library for the Blind. The Library for the Blind provides free devices to play audiobooks.

For more information about all the services mentioned in this article, call (918) 549-7480 or email outreach.services@tulsalibrary.org.

by Emily Fox, Associate Editor

SHARE YOUR TIME AND TALENT

To submit a volunteer opportunity, contact Associate Editor Emily Fox at efox@LIFEseniorservices.org or (918) 664-9000.

“Your greatness is not what you have, it's what you give.”

- Alice Hocker

► **LIFE Senior Services' Tax Assistance Program** is looking for people to help others in our community by becoming a volunteer with the Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE) Program at LIFE Senior Services. Volunteer roles range from basic office support to assisting low to moderately low income seniors age 60 and older file their income taxes for free. All volunteers receive training. For more information, call Cindy Loftin at (918) 664-9000.

► **Tulsa City County Library** has ongoing needs for volunteer tutors in the Adult Literacy Program. The program is fairly evenly split between adults who speak English as their first language, but read below a sixth grade level and adults who are learning English as a second language. Both the tutor and the student make a commitment to meet once a week for a year to work on various literacy skills. Interested tutors go through a training program that gives them the skills and tools they need to work with adult students. Meetings take place at any library in Tulsa County. For more information, call (918) 549-7480.

► **Tulsa City County Library** also has ongoing needs for volunteers to work in one of the branch libraries and assist with various library activities, such as shelving books and providing one-on-one afterschool homework assistance. For more information, call (918) 549-7480.

► **Special Ed Classroom Volunteers** are needed at Darnaby Elementary School. Volunteers are needed to work with special education students needing help learning sight and spelling words, practicing reading aloud or listening while someone reads to them. A consistent schedule is helpful. Any school day would be fine. School hours are 7:50 a.m. to 2:35 p.m., and a two hour minimum volunteer time block is requested. Darnaby is located at 7625 E. 87th St. Free parking is available in the school parking lot. For more information, contact Annette at (918) 280-8656 or annette@rsvptulsa.org.

► **Sand Springs Historical Museum** needs volunteer docents serving weekly four-hour shifts. For more information, contact Sherry at (918) 280-8656 or sherry@rsvptulsa.org.

► **Tulsa County Post Adjudication Review Board** volunteers meet once a month at Tulsa County Juvenile Court to review case actions. Post Adjudication Review Boards of Oklahoma ensure the best interests of deprived/delinquent children are being met through citizen review. For more information, contact Sherry at (918) 280-8656 or sherry@rsvptulsa.org.

► **Salvation Army Boys and Girls Club in Sand Springs** needs volunteers to drive the agency van between 1:30 and 3 p.m. on school days to pick up kids from Sand Springs schools and drive them to the Boys and Girls Club for after-school care. The need continues during the summer, but the hours vary. No special licensing is needed, but the volunteer drivers must be very dependable and committed, as well as patient and understanding. For more information, contact Sherry at (918) 280-8656 or sherry@rsvptulsa.org.

► **Basketball League** needs concession stand volunteers during the league season. Games are played primarily on Saturdays, and the volunteers work in four-hour shifts from 8 a.m. until 10 p.m. For more information, contact Sherry at (918) 280-8656 or sherry@rsvptulsa.org.

► **Reading Partners** volunteers provide one-on-one reading instruction with elementary school students reading below grade level. Reading Partners offers an easy-to-follow, proven curriculum and on-site support that allows volunteers to help students learn to read. For more information, contact Annette at (918) 280-8656 or annette@rsvptulsa.org.

► **Pathways Adult Learning Center** hopes to include volunteers in a new mentoring program for adults with developmental disabilities. Mentors will work one hour a week teaching life skills to an adult with developmental disabilities. Volunteer orientation sessions are scheduled on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday evenings at Kirk of the Hills Presbyterian Church, 4102 E. 61st St., Tulsa. A background check is required for all volunteers on this project. For more information, contact Annette at (918) 280-8656 or annette@rsvptulsa.org.

► **Grace Hospice** needs two volunteers to help set up rooms for their virtual dementia tours. These tours are given primarily to caregivers and other medical personnel. For more information, contact Annette at (918) 280-8656 or annette@rsvptulsa.org.

► **Tulsa Air and Space Museum and Planetarium** needs volunteers for varying shifts on the floor and during special events. Training and a TASM shirt will be provided. The museum is planning an extension involving a new hangar that will double the current space and include a restaurant and classrooms. Experience in the aviation field is helpful. For more information, contact Annette at (918) 280-8656 or annette@rsvptulsa.org.