

Sunday, March 15, 2020

Hello Stillwater Public Library readers,

Today, we received report of the first positive case of COVID-19 in Payne County. This evening, Mayor Joyce signed an emergency declaration that mandates certain actions to try to slow the progression of COVID-19 (also known as coronavirus).

One of those actions is closing the Stillwater Public Library to the public until April 5, when the situation will be reassessed.

We fully support the Mayor. *Each week*, the library receives nearly 5,000 visits, lends more than 5,000 physical items, and provides 500 one hour plus computer sessions and 1000 wireless sessions. With those kinds of numbers, we cannot do our part to help slow the progression of COVID-19 if we remain open for public use.

The Mayor, City of Stillwater, and library have the same goal---to slow down how quickly the illness progresses. If we can slow it down, then we reduce the chance that healthcare facilities will become overwhelmed and increase the chance that our healthcare facilities can continue giving the community members who are most vulnerable to this illness the care they need.

While our library building may be closed, our online and telephone presence will remain robust, as we do everything we can to safely provide our community with the resources they need, including:

1. Reference and Information services

The librarians will be taking information requests via phone (405-372-3633 x8106), email (askalibrarian@stillwater.org), and Facebook messaging (<https://www.facebook.com/stillwaterpubliclibrary>).

We will increase the number of staff answering calls and online questions, so that those who need answers can be quickly served.

2. Reading material and audiobooks

The Oklahoma Virtual Library (OKVL) has more than 60,000 e-books, downloadable audios, and e-magazines.

Early this week, I will speak with the Oklahoma Department of Libraries to expedite the spending of a \$50,000 grant we recently received, so that we can quickly add additional material to the service.

Overdrive, the company that provides our e-book service is working with publishers to negotiate simultaneous use of e-book copies. We will update our webpage as more information becomes available.

If you do not have a library card, we are working on creating an OKVL and database only card that will be available by phone or email. We will post more information as that option is developed.

3. Children's programming

Miss Elizabeth, the children's librarian, and her staff will be working on posting storytimes on the library's YouTube channel. Links will be posted on our webpage as the content becomes available.

4. Meetings

We urge community members to use online meeting option, such as:

- Google Hangouts - Hangouts is free, and Google recently announced that in response to COVID-19 they are rolling out Hangout premium features to all GSuite and GSuite Education customers.
- Zoom Meeting - Offers free accounts with some restrictions.
- Microsoft Teams - Offering six months of access in response to COVID-19. Learn more.

5. Material currently checked out

At this time, we are working on an auto-renewal process for library materials, but that solution is not yet available. We are working on this task as a top priority.

In the meantime:

- If you have material currently checked out, you may still return it in the outdoor bookdrop
- The renewal option in the catalog allows you to renew material on your own up to two times
- You may contact the library by phone, email, or Facebook messaging to request additional renewals

We will update our webpage as soon as we have more information about automatically extending due dates for you.

This is a weird and strange time. We hear different information from different news sources and circumstances are changing quickly. It's natural to feel stress and confusion. When I feel that way, I turn to information and data that 25 years of being a librarian tell me I can trust. Some of the resources that I turn to are listed on the library's COVID-19 Information & Response page at http://library.stillwater.org/covid-19_information.php. You can also get to that page from the prominent links on the library's website (<http://library.stillwater.org/>).

Although we won't be seeing you in person, we are here to help you however we can. The library supervisors and I are continuing to search for the best ways to provide library services during this confusing time.

As I keep telling our library staff, take care of yourself and each other, and always turn to the most credible resources for the facts to inform the decisions you are about to make. We love you Stillwater!

Your librarian,

Stacy

Stacy DeLano

Library Director



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