

OUTREACH SERVICES

bringing the library to you



serving seniors and homebound

On the first Wednesday of every month, Dorothy Knoles anxiously awaits a special care package from the Tulsa City-County Library, delivered right to her room at the Forest Hills Assisted Living Center, where she has lived for nearly 10 years. The package is a bag of books for her to read and enjoy over the next month.

Knoles is one of hundreds of senior citizens in Tulsa County who receive monthly book delivery through the library's Outreach Services department.

"I love to read," said Knoles, who celebrated her 90th birthday on Oct. 31. "I think the book delivery is such a wonderful service. I don't have to go anywhere. I just sit here in my room and someone from the library brings me books each month and picks up the ones I read last month."

Knoles likes reading mysteries, especially romantic suspense novels. James Patterson, Mary Higgins Clark, Carol Higgins Clark, Amanda Quick and Harlan Coben are some of her favorite authors.

"The library has the newest books that I couldn't afford to buy," said Knoles. "Right now I have two of James Patterson's latest books that the library brought to me – you can't ask for anything better than that!"

Brad Thomas, Outreach Services manager, said the library offers a full range of library services for people who are

physically, geographically or economically unable to come to the library. Currently, the department visits more than 70 nursing homes, retirement villages and assisted living centers in Tulsa County on a monthly basis. At each of these sites, a library staff member will visit residents in their own rooms on a specified day of the month.

"You can either request specific books for us to bring or we can select books for you based on your reading interests," said Thomas. "We have an extensive collection of large-print books too, as well as books on CD and movies."

Outreach Services also offers homebound services for people who are in their own home and are physically unable to visit a library location. Homebound services include Books by Mail, or staff will send the books to the nearest library branch for a family member or volunteer to pick up and deliver to the homebound person.

Ruthie Percy said the homebound service is a blessing. The library arranges for volunteers to bring Percy, who is disabled, about 25 to 30 books on tape every two to three weeks.

"I love books on tape so dearly," said Ruthie. "I don't watch television anymore because every time I turned on the TV someone was getting hurt, robbed or killed. I got tired of seeing all that bad news, so now I just listen to books on tape. They are so soothing. I can imagine I am in the place where they are."



Outreach Services staff member Chrystal McCullough (left) delivers books to more than 70 nursing homes, retirement villages and assisted living centers on a monthly basis. Dorothy Knoles is one of the many seniors and disabled citizens who receive the free service.



Homebound customer Ruthie Percy (right) was nearly out of books on tape when Emily Gardner showed up with a delivery from the library.



"My favorite books are 'Thomas,' 'Stuart Little' and 'Cars,'" said 5-year-old Alexander Lopez, who proudly displays the library card he got the last time the Bookmobile came to his apartment complex. "The Bookmobile is cool because we can get books and movies. One day I'm going to read every book the Bookmobile brings!"



bringing joy of reading

Passing on a joy of literacy to her children is why Stefani makes regular visits to the Bookmobile when it comes to the Brightwater Apartments where her family lives.

"Reading with my children is a special time we share every day. I want my boys to remember the family experiences we shared together through reading books," said Stefani. "Alexander was so proud to get his own library card. His little brother, Javian, could see how much it meant and can't wait until he gets to be like his big brother with his own library card."

The Bookmobile contains a wide variety of books and magazines, emphasizing love of reading and personal life skills. It makes weekly or biweekly stops at more than 20 apartment complexes in the Tulsa area.

signing up for service

If you are homebound or live in a nursing home, retirement village or assisted living center, call Outreach Services at 918-549-7480 to sign up for the free book delivery service.

To see if the bookmobile stops at your apartment complex or for other information about the Outreach Services department, visit www.tulsalibrary.org/outreach.