

Dear Wicomico Library: Why we think you are so top shelf

BY GWENN GARLAND • MAY 28, 2009

DEAR WICOMICO PUBLIC LIBRARY:

We just wanted to drop you a line to say we love you. And by "we," I mean me, my husband and two sons.

You are always there for us -- well, except Sunday mornings and end-of-the-week nights. That's OK, we get that you need some time to yourself. Because most of the time you're giving freely, or very cheaply if we happen to return a book a day or two late.

You have, or can get, any book or DVD we request. You never judge when the little one runs into your private offices and demands a balloon, because that's the only word he can clearly say besides "doggie" and "I got it" (often said after obtaining a balloon). You don't mind when he manhandles books -- you have a whole room set up for him, the Birth to 4 room, that is all manhandle-able. Board books, puzzles, puppets, crazy mirrors in which he can admire himself -- it's perfect.

I just realized my older son has in theory outgrown the Birth to 4 room, since he's now 5. He grew up in that room -- it's like a second home. I sometimes find strange women hailing my son in the grocery store like an old friend, only to find it's a librarian. I know you won't mind if we keep curling up on the big red chairs to read some Kevin Henkes or Rosemary Wells, or something about volcanoes. Or maybe even some Beverly Cleary -- can you believe he's into chapter books already? Oh, you probably knew before I did.

We love you on rainy days especially -- does that make us the opposite of a fair-weather friend? We'd stay even longer if we didn't get too warm from time to time -- your incredible heating system in the winter makes us all want to nap a bit, but we didn't think you'd appreciate that. We'll head there in the summer to see how the air conditioning is -- definitely on those hot days when it's too muggy to run around outside. A refreshing read in the AC is just what July requires sometimes.

We mainly love the mothership in downtown Salisbury, but we noticed you're showing "The Maltese Falcon" on July 10 at 2 p.m. in The Centre at Salisbury branch. Did you know we named our older son after the author of "The Maltese Falcon"? Oh, of course you did. You're the library. You get our literary references.

We checked out your summer schedule and we're even a little more in love with you. Who needs summer camp when you have the free library holding tons of storytimes, and events with mimes, zoo animals, birds, a performance of "Cinderella," crafts and -- are you serious? A Starbucks storytime with coffee, cocoa and pastries? Library, I am married, so please, do not incite too much passion. Fourth Wednesday of every month at 10:30? Cough cough -- I think I'm getting Wednesdayitis. Please excuse my absence from work. I believe the cure is drinking free coffee while someone else reads to my kids.

You did schedule your Summer Reading 2009 kickoff with us in mind. How did you know I had Mondays off? That means I can take the kids to get their reading log on June 1 and grab a schedule of all the good stuff happening this summer. I see from your Web site, www.wicomicolibrary.org, that you not only have a ton of summer reading things for little kids, but also for teens and even adults.

See, that's why I love you, library. You are always thinking of others. But could you get those baristas back on, say, a Monday?