



-Staff photo by Traci Chapman

Midwest City Library's Carol Roberts, one of the facility's children's librarians, leads "Mother Goose on the Loose," a regular program aimed at toddlers and preschool children.

Midwest City library has something for everyone

By Traci Chapman
Staff Writer

Randy Wayland has seen a lot of changes in this 34-plus years with the Metropolitan Library System – and, he's worked his fair share of locations throughout that system. But, Midwest City is what he's chosen to call his professional home, he says.

"The community is so extraordinarily supportive of everything we do – our programs and activities, all of the services we offer, everything," Wayland said. "It's even better because of our location – right next to the senior center, the community center and city offices – and it is just such a special place to work."

As committed as the community is to Midwest City Library, so too is the facility – and its 28 staff members – devoted to those who take part in everything it has to offer. That commitment begins with Wayland, a man who worked at Capitol Hill and downtown Oklahoma City libraries, but who returned early last year as MWC manager after stints as regional director and at Southern Oaks.

"I just have always loved working here – I love the community, I love the people, and I have strong ties to all we are here in Midwest City," Wayland said.

Midwest City Library has come a long way since its 1955 opening. Back then, the facility was located at 3210 Belaire and was part of the municipal golf course center's clubhouse. Nearly a year later, Oklahoma County voters in 1964 approved the ad valorem tax that would establish the 19-library Metropolitan Library System.

Midwest City joined that system in 1965.

The library moved to its current Reno Avenue location in 1987, thanks to a bond issue that funded construction of the 36,000-square-foot facility. In 2015, officials completed new carpet installation, as well as other updates and repairs.

Midwest City's physical presence remains strong – at any given time, many of the library's 32 computers – 22 for adults, four in the teen area and six set

apart for children – are busy, while other patrons bring in their own laptops, use quiet study areas and relax in casual sitting areas. Those patrons peruse selections that include not only printed materials, but also audiobooks, music and much more, Wayland said.

Then, there are the activities, organized for all age groups – things like toddler aerobics, preschool story times and Mother Goose on the Loose; family crafts and science-themed programs; holiday programs; and a summer reading program for children, youth and adults alike.

"We like to have a full range of things that interest everyone – for example, something like Children Reading to Dogs, which gives kids the chance to read to therapy dogs," Wayland said. "It's an incredible program that really can break the ice for children in reading out loud."

"But, we're also about a lot more than books," he said. "We have kindles, we have tablets for kids and adults that can be checked out and much more."

That combination of programs and multi-tiered item types and services is essential to the community, but the library has also moved far beyond its physical walls, Wayland said. That's come about through learning databases like Lynda.com and Mango, a language course specialty site; then, there's Hoopla, which offers books, music, graphic novels and movies, as well as Kanopy, which features classic cinema, documentaries and independent films, he said.

"It's incredible how many resources we have available to us that can do so much for people, without them even having to set foot in the library," Wayland said. "All it takes is a library card."

Midwest City Library is located at 8143 E. Reno Ave. and is open from 9 a.m. until 9 p.m. Monday through Thursday; 9 a.m. until 6 p.m. on Friday; from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday; and 1 p.m. until 6 p.m. on Sunday. Contact the library at 405-769-9452; for more information and to see additional available programs and activities, go online to its website, located at <http://www.metrolibrary.org/midwest-city-library>.



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Midwest City Library Manager Randy Wayland looks at some of the facility's adult Launchpad tablets, which offer brain teasers and other similar items for checkout. Midwest City also carries similar devices designed especially for children.



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- Randy Wayland, Midwest City Library Manager