

Off the Shelf:

An e-mail newsletter from the Prince William Public Library System
September 1, 2011

Just in time for the change of seasons and routine that Fall brings to us all, the Library is pleased to offer a brand new service. Ebooks are now available for free checkout, using your library card. This is sure to be a boon to those with required reading, as well as those anxious to try out their new e-readers or smartphones.

The Library partners with our vendor, Overdrive, to bring you access to hundreds of titles in formats that can be read on iPads, smartphones, Nook readers, Kobo readers, Sony readers, and more. Kindle users will have to wait a bit, while Amazon negotiates with library service vendors, but we hope to begin offering Kindle-compliant ebooks sometime this Fall.

Check out the Download and Go website, reachable via our website at <http://www.pwcgov.org/library>. The button at the top of the page will take you to the webpage which lists the ebooks, as well as downloadable audiobooks, available for you. To get started with ebooks, you will need to download either a free app (for smartphones, iPods and iPads) or a program to your PC (for e-reading devices). After the initial steps needed to start out, ebook lending then becomes as easy as checking a book out from the library – and best of all, there are no fines as ebooks automatically return themselves.

Dust off that e-reader you received for your birthday or Christmas, make sure your library card is current, and you will find you have a world of free ereading at your fingertips.

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

As a part of our ebook service, the Library has access to downloadable editions of thousands of Project Gutenberg books. These are copyright-free titles, largely classics, and do not count towards a patron's limits for checkout. Our vendor, Overdrive, did a recent survey and found that classics obviously still have an important place in our reading. Among the top 25 most-downloaded titles in the Project Gutenberg collection were these: *The Bible* (no surprise there, since it's the best-selling book year after year); *War and Peace* (a good one for unlimited use, as many of us begin it and few finish it); *Jane Eyre* (can you say "high school reading list"?); *A Tale of Two Cities* (again, a reading list staple); and interestingly enough, *The 2010 CIA World Factbook*. Check out the Project Gutenberg offerings on our website at <http://princewilliam.lib.overdrive.com>

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