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“E-Readers”



One might think that Karen Drevo is one of the last people who would use an electronic reader. After all, as the Norfolk Public Library’s Youth Services librarian she’s one of the biggest promoters of books around. That’s exactly why she loves her e-reader.

“I talk to people all the time who are reading more books now that they have an e-reader. Anytime you have people reading more books, I’m all for it,” Drevo said.

The Norfolk Public Library is putting together a plan to offer electronic readers to Norfolk residents sometime this fall. The Omaha and Seward Public libraries are currently checking e-readers out to card owners with other libraries around the state looking into doing the same.

According to Drevo, the plan is to pre load the devices with a variety of books—fiction, non-fiction, best-sellers, and classics. Only adults would be able to check out an e-reader after putting down a deposit, showing a photo identification and paying any outstanding fines at the library.

“Having electronic readers saves space as one e-reader can hold hundreds of books and you can easily carry it in a purse or backpack,” Drevo said.

The e-reader would be checked out for a maximum of 28 days at a time and for now, only to residents of Norfolk.

“The library has always been at the forefront of offering people Internet access and access to computers. E-readers are going to complement what we do nicely. The more you read, the more you want to read,” Drevo said.

Drevo said this doesn’t mean the demise of the traditional paper book. She still reads traditional books besides catching a tome or two digitally.

“There are more and more people with questions about which electronic reader to buy and how to use it. We are here to answer their questions. We field a lot of calls from people who have readers,” Drevo said.

She added that most of the people they have talked to who have the e-readers are between the ages of 50 and 70.

Norfolk library director Michael Caldararo said the library will be purchasing five Sony e-readers this fall. The e-readers will then be loaded with books before they're checked out.

"We're excited to help people learn more about this popular form of reading," Caldararo said.

"Another thing that is neat about digital readers is that you can tap the touch screen on a word and up will pop the definition. You can also touch the screen to get a footnote or highlight different passages and make digital notes," Drevo said.

She added that the reader lays flat on a table so it doesn't take two hands to hold and read it like a book. The font size and type can also be changed to match a person's individual tastes.

"There's nothing that replaces the feel of a book in your hands and the satisfaction of turning the page where you're done but there is also a place for electronic readers and we want to also encourage their use," Drevo said.