

Ruth Gilbert, Kirkland Town Library Youth Services Librarian

Happy summer to all the families with children in school! It's been a busy school year, and you've all earned a break and some fun. The Kirkland Town Library hopes to entertain and delight this summer with our annual summer reading program, which starts tomorrow!

To kick off the fun, we're having a picnic with four local food trucks tomorrow night. Come grab some dinner from Brake From the Grind, Taco Cat, OH Crepe & Waffles, or Gypsy Girl Pizza, from 5-7 pm. We'll have seating and activities for kids, too.

While you're here, your kids can sign up for our summer reading program. When they track their reading on our reading log, they'll earn chances to win prizes in our raffle and earn beads for their Read & Bead necklace. And each Friday we'll release a limited edition bead. At the end of the summer, they can show off just how much reading they did by wearing their special necklaces.

Our summer reading theme is "Oceans of Possibilities," so we'll be having lots of ocean-related programs throughout the summer. Families can attend a magic show, puppet show, a pirate party, and a visit from the Utica Zoo Mobile. We'll also have storytimes all summer, including at the Clinton Farmer's Market on Thursdays at 11 am. Check our website at kirklandtownlibrary.org for all the information on all our summer programs.

If you're ready to dive right into the summer fun, get started with some wonderful books related to the ocean.

One of my recent favorites is "Don't Worry, Little Crab" by Chris Haughton. It's time for Little Crab to venture out of his tiny tide pool home into the ocean, so Very Big Crab leads the way. Little Crab is very excited until he actually sees the ocean and the big waves, but Very Big Crab slowly leads him in and reassures him until they make it to the beautiful ocean floor. A sweet story about trying something new despite being afraid.

"Swashby and the Sea" by Beth Ferry and Juana Martinez-Neal, also takes place at the ocean, but above the waves. A salty old captain named Swashby retires by the sea, only to be disturbed by a little girl who moves in next door. He writes messages in the sand, like "No Trespassing" and "Please Go Away," but the sea washes over them and changes them to "Sing" and "Play." The little girl takes these as invitations, and slowly begins to melt Swashby's heart.

"Home Sweet Motel" by Chris Grabstein is a middle grade novel full of jokes, hijinks, and summer fun. Eleven-year-old P. T. Wilkie's family owns the Wonderland Hotel in St. Petersburg, Florida, but not for much longer if they can't attract some customers! P.T. and his best friend Gloria come up with some zany plans to save their beloved motel. Read this fast-paced, hilarious story to find out if they succeed.

"The Line Tender" by Kate Allen is an amazing novel for older elementary and middle school students. Twelve-year-old Lucy Everhart lost her mother, a marine-biologist and shark expert, when she was seven. When a great white shark is caught in her town of Rockport, Massachusetts, Lucy's curiosity connects her to her mother's research and helps her to work through her grief. This book is full of complex, realistic characters and friendships, loss, resilience, and all the emotions. A perfect summer read.

For more reading suggestions and program information, stop in to see us soon!