



SELF-PUB [booklife](#)

JOBZONE

THE MILLIONS Search Publishers Weekly

SUBSCRIBE: PRINT + DIGITAL

LOGIN

SITE LICENSE ACCESS

FREE NEWSLETTERS



NEWS

REVIEWS

BESTSELLERS

CHILDREN'S

AUTHORS

ANNOUNCEMENTS

DIGITAL

INTERNATIONAL

Authors | Book News | Industry News

Home > Children's > Industry News

Sales Manager, Special Markets - The Quarto Group - Beverly, MA.

NEXT JOB ▶

Social Media Mavens: How Teachers and Librarians Are Harnessing Online Platforms

By Patricia J. Murphy | Dec 12, 2022

Like 73

Share

Tweet



Comments



SUBSCRIBE by the Month

They say the internet can be a treasure trove—or a trash heap. The same could be said for social media, with its ability to connect or divide us. Many of today’s teachers and librarians are finding gems in the form of helpful resources, vital connections, and kindred spirits on Facebook, Twitter (well, for now), Instagram, and more. We spoke to four such teachers and librarians about the ways they are using their slice of social media for the greater good.

Mychal became a librarian!

How it started:

How it's going:



618

12 Comments

Mychal Threets recently posted a throwback photo of himself at five years old getting his first library card. Next to this photo, he shared another of him today working at the very same library in Fairfield, Calif. It was love at first sight for Threets when he was able to use his card to pick out books and take them home. And that love for libraries continues today.

Now, as the digital community librarian at Solano County Library, Threets creates, edits, and updates the library's websites and social media. His goal is to help foster a love of libraries, librarians, books, reading, and much more. Threets also uses social media platforms for community outreach opportunities with area schools, volunteer and charitable organizations, and other institutions "so we can support each other," he said.

Threets's tools of choice include Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook, as well as TikTok. He uses them in different ways to spotlight his library's exhaustive list of services, its array of programs from storytimes for babies to job search help for adults, and shiny new titles, e-books, and popular audiobooks. He also regularly alerts patrons to the library's special—and lesser-known—collections. "We create posts to promote not only how patrons can use the library to check out our books, our programming, but also the latest board and video games—and musical instruments, too!"

A recent TikTok video featured another librarian dressed up like musician Weird Al Yankovich, playing the library's accordion, which is available for checkout. "We use TikTok to create goofy videos to connect our staff with our teen patrons," he said.

Threets also posts on Instagram and uses its messaging feature to answer questions and communicate with patrons online. For him, it's all about fostering online communications and conversations that will hopefully lead to real-time, in-person interactions.

"We use social media to meet people where they are, and then get them into the library so they can join in the fun!" Threets said, "Social media reminds people that the library exists—that it is constantly changing, that there is something there for everyone, and it will make your life better!"

Jen Rusin posts often about “Book Birthdays” and their countdowns, and interacts with authors. As a self-proclaimed “book hugger” and second grade teacher at Homestead Elementary School in Aurora, Ill., Rusin can’t say enough about the benefits of using social media because of how it impacts her teaching—and her students’ learning. “I follow a lot of amazing educators, librarians, authors, and publishers,” Rusin said. “It’s such a giving community. Everyone’s sharing things that work with kids in the classroom.”

These things include practical teaching tips and ideas, educational guides to use with books, and book trailers. “When I was introducing different parts of graphic novels to my students, I shared a bunch of graphic novel book trailers that the authors and publishers had created,” Rusin said. “These videos really got them excited about reading the books.”

Equally exciting is Rusin’s ability to soak up new ideas she discovers on Twitter and make them her own by adding a unique twist. Some ideas include #ClassroomBookADay, where Rusin reads at least one picture book a day to her second graders. She ties many of the titles she uses to her curriculum and her students’ social emotional learning needs. “Sharing these books creates such joy. The kids get so much out of them,” Rusin said. “With each picture book, you can pull out many life lessons and discuss them. My kids will often refer to books on our #ClassroomBookADay board when we’re reading and/or talking about other ones.” She finds that students make many text-to-text, text-to-world, and text-to-self connections, too.

Rusin also incorporates the “Book Birthday Countdown” idea she found on Twitter to get her kids amped up about new book releases from their favorite authors. She has a countdown board in her classroom and plans a variety of book birthday related activities before the day of the launch. “Sometimes, we even sing “Happy Birthday” to the book,” Rusin said. She often finds activities online and comes up with others on her including having her students write original stories inspired by the books, and snail mail letters or tweets to the authors. “My kids are thrilled to see when an author tweets back,” Rusin said. “It allows them to connect with authors, to see them as real people—and writing as a career—and to think that they could be writers, too.”

Rusin thinks that her mindful and deliberate interactions with social media allow her to more fully model the power of reading for her students—and fulfill her ultimate teaching goal. “On top of teaching my students how to read, I want to teach them about the fun and excitement of books and authors,” Rusin said. “I want to teach them to love to read!”

Brandi Grant’s recent Instagram post displays her love for author Gordon Korman and elation over receiving an autographed copy of his latest book, *The Fort*, for her Frisco ISD library in Frisco, Tex. When school librarian Grant isn’t reviewing, ordering, or processing books, developing library lessons, or doing reader advisory, you can find her strategically posting on social media to tell her library’s stories—and her stories as a librarian, too. “I want to tell the world how our library is the heartbeat of our school, and at the center of it is my role as a librarian, our books, and so many other things that we can provide,” Grant said. “That’s what I hope I’m reflecting in my social media feed.”

Grant’s posts began with announcing silly holidays like National Donut Day to learn about and to celebrate. Soon after, they expanded to include cultural holidays that reflected the school’s diverse population. “I found that many students noticed and appreciated these posts, and shared with me, ‘You know, I’m from this culture, and this is how we celebrate it,’” Grant said. Her students detailing their cultural backgrounds and subsequent postings led to the school and the community’s greater awareness of the rich cultural heritage in their school.



Brandi Grant.

From these types of posts, Grant started developing others to introduce herself, and to shine a light on what's going on in the library. As a result, she has been able to align her social media goals with her goals as a librarian. "I want to educate, to inspire, and to spark joy!" Grant's posts span a variety of topics, from the library's latest books and book displays, to DIY projects and contests, and library community tie-in events to appeal to all students—not just readers.

"It's my desire for students to come into the library because there's something in here that's special—whether it be me, a program, or a book. Above all, I want them to feel a connection and have a relationship with the library and with me."

As these relationships develop and trust grows, Grant focuses on literacy instruction, information access, and reader advisory to get the right books to her students to expand their minds and worlds. "I want my students to discover that books can be a way to escape, to learn about innovation and creativity, to find comfort, to feel empathy—and to see themselves. These are books I wish that I had as a child growing up!"

It was only natural that children's librarian **Sierra Dertinger** announced the arrival of a new reader—her baby daughter, Sawyer June Dertinger—on Twitter two days after her birth. That's because the teachers, librarians, authors, and others whom Dertinger has met in the Twitterverse have become a literary family of sorts, and a touchstone in her career. "Twitter has literally changed my life—and my education world—through the way it has welcomed me into the literacy world. I just fell in love with the community. Everyone's kind and shares their ideas. And the authors respond to you like it's nothing—and I fangirl," Dertinger said. "It definitely made me want to become a librarian."

But it was a Kate DiCamillo book that she read aloud while student teaching that sealed the deal and her career change. "I became obsessed with *Flora and Ulysses* reading it to fourth graders," Dertinger said. "I couldn't get enough of this middle grade novel. And so I thought about a job where I could talk about books all the time, and decided to become a school librarian."

Now, in her first year at Drummond Elementary School's library in Saint Ann, Mo., Dertinger finds much needed online support and encouragement as she navigates her new and sometimes isolating position. "Twitter has also helped me with professional development and launching out in uncharted literary landscapes. For example, when I need a recommendation for a book for a class, Twitter is there to respond with its many librarians and teachers across the country, and around the world."

It has also allowed Dertinger to return the favor and widen her circle by creating #BookAllies, a national group of librarians and teachers who read, review, and promote books before they are released. "With #BookAllies, I'm able to read, review, and stay on top of the latest titles, and see if they're going to be a fit for my student population."

On top of engaging on Twitter and starting #BookAllies, Dertinger is expanding her literacy world even farther by creating a Facebook page and Instagram account for the library, entitled Drummond Book Dragons. Her goal is to promote her school library in light of what's happening in others including book banning and school librarian jobs disappearing. "I'm advocating for what we're doing here in the library so that families, students, and the community can see that it's not just checking out books," Dertinger said. "I want them to see all of the things we've been working on, how we're aligning the curriculum with library lessons, and all of the excitement that's happening—including introducing new books and new authors." And, new readers... like Sawyer Dertinger.

RELATED STORIES:

- [More in Children's -> Industry News](#)

Request permission to
reprint of this article.

FREE E-NEWSLETTERS

ALSO ON PW



PW's People of the Year: The Defenders



Check Out Our Podcasts! more...

ADVERTISEMENT

FEATURED REVIEWS



DESIGN HAPPY: COLORFUL HOMES FOR THE MODERN FAMILY

Betsy Wentz. Gibbs Smith, \$45 (224p) ISBN 978-1-4236-6154-2

MOST POPULAR

- **PW Best Books 2022**
- **Catapult to Shutter Online Magazine, Writing Classes**
- **The 10 Best Emily Dickinson Poems**
- **Is the Sale of Simon & Schuster Heating Up?**
- **Barnes & Noble Pushes Ahead in 2023**
- **HarperCollins Union Ratifies New Contract**
- **The 10 Best Haruki Murakami Books**
- **PEN America List Highlights Banned Picture Books for Young Readers**
- **Tor Publishing Group Launches Romance Imprint**
- **Finishing Jerry Pinkney's Books**
- **Entangled Publishing Adds Children's Book Imprint**

BESTSELLERS

View by genre:

Children's Frontlist Fiction ▾

more

- 1 Cat Kid Comic Club #4: Collaborations**
Dav Pilkey, Author, Dav Pilkey, Illustrator
- 2 Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Book 17**
Jeff Kinney, Author
- 3 Moon Rising: A Graphic Novel (Wings of Fire Graphic Novel #6)**
Tui T Sutherland, Author, Mike Holmes, Illustrator
- 4 Chain of Thorns**
Cassandra Clare, Author
- 5 As Good as Dead: The Finale to a Good Girl's Guide to Murder**
Holly Jackson, Author

[About Us](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Submission Guidelines](#) | [FAQ](#) | [Subscriber Services](#) | [Advertising Info](#) | [Terms of Use](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [Do Not Sell](#) | [Calls for Info](#) | [Editorial Calendar](#) | [Archives](#) | [Press](#) |

© PWxyz, LLC. All rights reserved.

