When it comes to buying books by new authors on a limited budget, it’s nice to know more about them before you spend the money. This is doubly true if you’re responsible for buying graphic novels or manga. One of the more useful resources I’ve found is https://www.edelweiss.plus/. I am by no means an expert in all that Edelweiss+ offers, but it appears to function as a way for members to connect with publishers, see what new titles are coming out, and request digital advance copies of books to check out all in one place. As I regularly write reviews for Yakety YAK, Edelweiss+ has served as a very useful resource for me to obtain advanced copies of books for review. It isn’t limited to children’s books - they have advance copies for all ages. Some are immediately available for download, and others you will need to request from the publisher.

So how do you start and how much does it cost? A regular Edelweiss+ account is free, and you list the library you work for when you set up an account. It will also allow a library account, with different employees listed under the same library. There is a paid version with extra features, but since I am not in collection development, I have not found it necessary to upgrade. If you find you like Edelweiss+ and want to check out the extra features, the first month is free, and $15 a month afterwards.

If you just want an account to request advance copies, all you need to do is create an account, fill in your basic information, and go to the Review Copies tab near the top. There are a few different ways to sort through what is available. The way I find most useful is those available for direct download, and by topic/age range. If you’re looking for a specific book, you can search by title or author. There will be an option to either ‘Download’ or ‘Request’ the title, depending on the book. If it is a request, you send them a message saying why you are interested in the book. It may take a couple of days to get approved, and if you are, you will be notified the next time you log into Edelweiss+. Then all you have to do is download it. Your request may be declined, it really just depends on the publisher and the message you sent them.

I will warn you that it isn’t the most user friendly site. That is likely due to the database nature of the website, the number of books, publisher catalogs, reviews, and more. That is why I have not explored it as much as I otherwise might be inclined to. Since my job focus isn’t collection development, I stick to the bare minimum of what I need. That being said, it’s free, and works as a way for you to check out books before you spend money on them, so there really isn’t a reason NOT to make an account.
COOL DATES TO REMEMBER

**JULY IS:**
- National Parks and Recreation Month
- Family Reunion Month
- National Anti-Boredom Month
- National Hot Dog Month
- National Wheelchair Beautification Month
- National Picnic Month

**AUGUST IS:**
- Family Fun Month
- National Peach Month
- National Sandwich Month
- Back-to-School Month

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**THE SUN IN AUGUST IS ESPECIALLY WARM & NOT FORGETTING**

| JULY 1 | JULY 2 | JULY 3 | JULY 4 | JULY 5 | JULY 6 | JULY 7 | JULY 8 | JULY 9 | JULY 10 | JUNE 11 | JULY 12 | JULY 13 | JULY 14 | JULY 15 | JULY 16 | JULY 17 | JULY 18 | JULY 19 | JULY 20 | JULY 21 | JULY 22 | JULY 23 | JULY 24 | JULY 25 | JULY 26 | JULY 27 | JULY 28 | JULY 29 | JULY 30 | JULY 31 |
|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|---------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|

(August)

| AUG. 1 | AUG. 2 | AUG. 3 | AUG. 4 | AUG. 5 | AUG. 6 | AUG. 7 | AUG. 8 | AUG. 9 | AUG. 10 | AUG. 11 | AUG. 12 | AUG. 13 | AUG. 14 | AUG. 15 | AUG. 16 | AUG. 17 | AUG. 18 | AUG. 19 | AUG. 20 | AUG. 21 | AUG. 22 | AUG. 23 | AUG. 24 | AUG. 25 | AUG. 26 | AUG. 27 | AUG. 28 | AUG. 29 | AUG. 30 | AUG. 31 |
|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|---------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|

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**COOL DATES TO REMEMBER**


(August)


(August)
Sorcery of Thorns
written by Margaret Rogerson
Release date: June 4, 2019

Elisabeth Scrivener was raised in one of the Great Libraries. Abandoned as a babe, she grew up in a world filled with magical grimoires both benign and deadly. For that was why the Great Libraries existed - both to preserve the dangerous knowledge contained within the magical books while simultaneously safeguarding the world from the monsters they can become.

Elisabeth promised herself that she would become one of the guardians of the libraries, a Warden, and devoted her life to this task. She wakes up one night to find the entire library sleeping, the Director dead, and the most dangerous grimoire in the library heading to the nearest village to destroy it; she does as she has trained and takes it down. Instead of being lauded for her actions, she ends up imprisoned and on her way to answer to the Collegium for her destruction of one of the rarest grimoires and the attack on the Great Library.

Elisabeth is thrust into the larger world she has been sheltered from her entire life, and finds her beliefs about herself, the morals she was taught, and the world she in which lives turned upside down. She must figure out what the truth is quickly, because the fate of the world rests upon the decisions she makes.

I enjoyed Sorcery of Thorns, though I have to admit I am convinced Margaret Rogerson is a fan of manga. The magic in the world relies upon contracts between humans and demons, with a physical mark left on those who make a bargain, and one of the main characters is a demon butler that is scarily competent at the same time as being professional and unassuming. It's not exact, but anyone familiar with the Black Butler series will definitely see similarities. As for the villain, just check out Full Metal Alchemist. Again, not exact, but there are definite parallels. It's not a bad thing, exactly, but my familiarity with both manga series definitely influenced my feelings and makes it difficult to give an unbiased review.

I liked it. I did. But somehow the book was too many things for me at once, if that makes sense. A homage to the two manga series I mentioned, a strong female character novel, a romance novel, a commentary on how women were treated during the Industrial Revolution, and so on. Add that to the fact that the storyline feels episodic, with multiple build ups and let downs, and I just never felt truly immersed. I listened to instead of read this book, and frequently I thought the end of the book was drawing near, only to hear I had hours left to go. Maybe it would have been better if it was split into at least two novels, with more time devoted towards building the world and characters. Since it is already 464 pages, it probably wouldn't have been hard.

Overall the characters were decent, the world is creative if inspired by other works (it’s fantasy, that isn’t uncommon), and it’s a book about books. But, in the end, I was never sucked into the story. The author has written a good story, but to me it was not a final draft. Perhaps it would be different for someone who’s coming to it fresh (without the manga background) - it does have a high rating on Amazon so far. My final recommendation would be that it might make a good addition to a YA collection, if you’re looking for filler, but it isn’t a must-have.

Recommended for: Fantasy and romance fans.
Things to watch out for: Fantasy violence, mild language, demons, and making out with some touching.
01 Gather Supplies

- White glue
- Warm water
- Cornstarch
- Borax
- Food coloring
- Cups
- Measuring spoons
- Spoons
- Paper towels
- White glue

02 Mix It, Roll It, Bounce It

In a cup, mix one teaspoon of Borax with two tablespoons of warm water. Stir it to completely dissolve the Borax. In a separate cup, mix two tablespoons of white glue with two teaspoons of cornstarch. Add a few drops of food coloring and stir to combine. Next, add one teaspoon of the Borax mixture to the glue/cornstarch mixture and stir. Watch closely. Once it starts to harden, remove it from the cup and quickly knead it with your hands. As it becomes more pliable, roll it with your palms to form a ball. Be sure to add pressure as you roll it to smooth out the surface. It will be messy. Once it shaped, it is ready to bounce. Be sure to wash hands after playing with these.

03 Tips for Success

Add a tiny drop of the Borax mixture to the ball after shaping to smooth out the surface.

Store balls in an airtight baggie or container to keep from drying out.

Best if used and played with for 24 to 48 hours. After that, they will begin to flatten.

STEAMing along

DIY Bouncey Balls
courtesy of babbledabbledo.com

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WATCH VIDEO AT:
https://youtu.be/-Hfl46jVtg
STEAMing along

Chalkboard Slime
courtesy of babbledabbledo.com

01 Gather Supplies
- White glue
- Baking soda
- Contact lens solution w/ boric acid
- Mixing bowls
- Spoons
- Chalkboard paint
- Chalk markers

02 Make Some Slime!
Start by pouring four ounces of glue into a mixing bowl. Next, add two tablespoons of chalkboard paint and mix thoroughly. Add one teaspoon of baking soda to the mixture and stir to combine. Then, add one half teaspoon of contact lens solution and stir. The slime mixture should begin to thicken. (Use a sturdy spoon as the mixture is quite thick, and flimsy plastic spoons will break.) Test the slime for stickyness. If it is still sticky, add a few more drops of contact solution and stir until the slime begins to pull away from the sides of the bowl. Pull the slime out of the bowl and knead it for a minute or two to fully combine all ingredients.

03 Draw and Decorate
Using chalkboard markers, draw on the slime by pressing down to make dots. When you are done with the design, you can distort it by stretching the slime out and watching the pattern elongate. To make a new drawing, knead the slime until the color disappears and start over.

04 Tips for Success
Avoid adding too much contact solution. If you do, your slime will turn into a rubber-like substance. Then again, if you want to try this for the sake of a science, go for it!
Store slime in an airtight baggie. The slime will get more rubbery over time.
Don’t draw on the slime as you would on paper or an actual chalkboard. The marker tip will get stuck in the slime. Dots typically works best.

STEAM factor

What’s happening?
Making slime is a classic chemistry experiment where kids mix different ingredients to form a very stretchy polymer. A polymer is a substance made up of a long chain of molecules. Glue is a polymer and when you add in contact lens solution, which contains boric acid, the glue molecules and borate ions cross-link, forming a viscous, thicker polymer than before.

What about the “A” for Art?
This is the perfect intro to pointillism! Pointillism is an art technique developed in the late 1800s by Georges Seurat and Paul Signac that involves painting with very fine dots of color in lieu of brushstrokes. When you stand back from a pointillist painting, your brain combines the dots your eye is seeing into a fluid picture. If you stand up close you can view the individual dots. It’s a marvelous optical trick.

WATCH VIDEO AT: https://youtu.be/remaX9V2sY8
Ashland: With caves the topic, kids have interactive stations to learn about crystallization, stalactites, stalagmites, and bats. Fourth Grade Teacher Cheryl Coleman shared with the group.

Homewood: Teens participated in a 3-day workshop on making stop-motion animation.

Guntersville: Children had a blast making galaxy slime!

Irondale: Everyone had a blast at the summer reading family night with Dynamic Education Adventures.

Gadsden: Above, teens make Galaxy Slime! Below, teens work in the garden at Gadsden Public Library.

Grant: Kids go outside to experiment with UV active bead bracelets. Children also experimented with shade, sunscreen, and covering it with paper. Afterwards, they discussed their findings.
Southside: The Science Lady has learning fun with the kids

Tupper Lightfoot: Brundidge-area children have fun making galaxy t-shirts

Gadsden: Youth enjoy building the Hogwarts Lego set at Gadsden Public

Glencoe: Children made their own inventions after learning about inventors including an Alabama woman who created the first windshield wipers

Grant: Kate Duncan Smith DAR School Teacher Stephanie Guffey speaks with kids about doing science experiments

Mamie’s Place Children’s Library in Alexander City holds a Home Depot Kid’s Workshop
**July 8**

**Measles, Immunizations, and Finding Accurate Health Information with MedlinePlus**

This webinar provides an overview of MedlinePlus with a focus on locating measles and vaccination information. Presenters will also describe the suite of free consumer health classes offered by the National Network of Libraries of Medicine (NNLM) and the process of earning the Consumer Health Information Specialization (CHIS). (Federal Depository Library Program) [https://www.fdlp.gov/about-the-fdlp/fdlp-events-calendar](https://www.fdlp.gov/about-the-fdlp/fdlp-events-calendar)

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**July 9**

**From Beyond our Borders: Providing Multilingual and Multicultural Health Information**

This one-hour webinar will provide a basic introduction to foreign-born populations. The presentation will start with some background data about immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers. We’ll touch briefly on concepts related to cultural competence and humility and how to integrate them into your work. Finally, we’ll review the CDC’s Refugee Health Profiles and the National Library of Medicine’s MedlinePlus, HealthReach, and Specialized Information Services resources. (National Network of Libraries of Medicine) [https://bit.ly/2RtfKn0](https://bit.ly/2RtfKn0)

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**July 10**

**Fun, Easy, and Inexpensive Teen Nights (aka After Hours)**

Are you having trouble peeking the interest of your teens and tweens? Does it seem like an impossible task to get them involved and excited about the programs? You have come to the right place! Janene Hill, from Jensen Memorial Library in Minden, NE, is going to share her expertise to teach us ideas for a variety of Teen Night Events, including examples of successful events, interaction stations with example activities, and group brainstorming. (Nebraska Library Commission) [http://www.slce.state.ne.us/scripts/calendar/eventlist.asp?Mode=ALL](http://www.slce.state.ne.us/scripts/calendar/eventlist.asp?Mode=ALL)

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**July 11**

**The New Volunteer Manager’s Toolkit**

New to volunteer management? Looking for a quick and easy way to kick off this momentous celebration with two graphic novel-themed webinars! In part one of this two-part series we’ll hear from publishers Boom, Diamond, Image Comics, Simon & Schuster, Macmillan and Scholastic to get the inside scoop on summer and fall releases. You’ll be sure to stock up your stacks with some great new titles so you can share them with your community. (Booklist) [https://www.booklistonline.com/webinars/AspxAutoDetectCookieSupport=1](https://www.booklistonline.com/webinars/AspxAutoDetectCookieSupport=1)

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**July 12**

**Making Difficult Conversations Easy**

Do you shy away from conflict? In organizations across the world conflict is avoided. Expectations go unmet, values are violated, and overall under-performance exists because people do not know how to effectively resolve issues without resorting to the use of power. This one-hour session introduces you to concepts that enable you to begin to “integrate conflict” - to walk into it and effectively handle it - rather than avoid it. (Effectiveness Institute) [https://effectivenessinstitute.com/register-for-events/](https://effectivenessinstitute.com/register-for-events/)

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**July 13**

**Introduction to Finding Grants**

Are you new to the field of grantseeking? Discover what funders are looking for in nonprofits seeking grants and how to find potential funders in this introductory course. (Grantspace) [https://bit.ly/31CP8RD](https://bit.ly/31CP8RD)

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**July 14**

**Translated Books For Youth: Celebrating the Batchelder Award—Past, Present, and Future**

The Mildred L. Batchelder Award is a citation awarded to a United States publisher for a children's book considered to be the most outstanding translated book of the year. This award was conceived in 1966 and honors Mildred L. Batchelder, a former executive director of the Association for Library Service to
WHAT’S UP?  Webinars

July 18
Circulating Board Games

Board gaming is on the rise with all age groups. Sometimes people are unsure of where to start and how to find a board game that is right for them. Just as there is a book for every person, I believe that there is a game for them too! Board games are a great way to get people off of technology and connect face to face. This will help implement that service in their libraries from inception to cataloging to inventorying to helping patrons select games. (North Dakota State Library) http://www.library.nd.gov/webinars.html

July 19
Small Steps and Giant Leaps: How Apollo 11 Shaped Our Understanding of Earth and Beyond

In partnership with the American Geophysical Union (celebrating its 100th anniversary this year), we present a panel discussion on the role of geosciences in the legacy of the Apollo missions and the future of the space program. The panel will include Sean Solomon, director of the Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory, Sonia Tiko, assistant professor at Rutgers University, Steven Hauck, professor of planetary geodynamics at Case Western Reserve University, and Heather Meyer, postdoctoral fellow at the Lunar and Planetary Institute. (U.S. National Archives) https://www.archives.gov/calendar

July 20
Power Packed Primary Sources for the Classroom

Help your students learn from history by examining primary source materials. Join us to learn strategies for the use of historical evidence in the classroom. (Teachers First) https://adobe.ly/2A0zsmq

July 23
Fall YA Announcements New school year, new reading goals, new YA!

Please join us for a special one-hour, free webinar where we'll give you an inside line to the teen books that are sure to fly off the shelves this upcoming school year! (Booklist) https://bit.ly/2xaRt4q

July 24
Check It Out! New Books for Ages 0-18

Join us on the last Thursday of each month for a review of brand new titles published for ages 0-18. You'll hear short booktalks of new titles (and new entries in ongoing series) from major and Indie publishers and get ideas on how to keep up with the endless tide of what's new in kidlit and young adult literature. (State Library of Iowa) https://zoom.us/j/491387731

July 25
From A(ddiction) to Z(its): Supporting Teens with Health Information

This is a one-hour webinar that will provide youth-serving staff with skills and knowledge related to health information and health-focused programming. The one hour class will present an overview of health information needs of teenagers and their information seeking behaviors, review communication skills needed during reference interviews with teenagers, and explore credible health information resources that are designed for teens. (National Network of Libraries of Medicine) https://nnlm.gov/training/classes-by-availability-scheduled

July 29
Developing Financial Literacy in the Next Generation: Resources for Children and Teens

At this webinar, Scott Wells and Mary Sulter from the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis will provide their expert assistance by sharing the wealth of resources available in the Federal Reserve’s collection of financial education materials. From book lists to activities for youth of all ages, the Federal Reserve offers a wide range of helpful resources to support and inspire library financial literacy initiatives. The webinar will also include time for participants to ask these experts their questions. (Reference and User Services Association) http://www.ala.org/rusa/onlinece

July 30
Social Media 102

In our Social Media 101 webinar, we covered the Big 3 (Facebook, Twitter and Linkedln) and walked through social media tools. Now it’s time to learn a few advanced social media tips and tricks, elevate your social media presence through micro strategies and activate your advocates. (Firespring) https://www.firespring.com/resources/webinars/

July 31
How Does Your Library Garden Grow?

Learn how to use nature to nurture the youngest of patrons by identifying letters of the alphabet with nature in an alphabet garden. The presenters will teach the importance of all aspects of nature by transforming the smallest garden into a pollinator garden. (Nebraska Library Commission) http://www.nlcc.state.ne.us/scripts/calendar/eventlist.asp?Mode=ALL

Cool Historical Displays

Molly Saunders of Homewood Public Library, on the advice of her supervisor Laura Tucker, created five stations highlighting important Alabama icons, as well as a map so that patrons can explore the department and go on a virtual tour of Alabama’s past and present. The stations include the USS Alabama for Mobile, the Rosa Parks bus for Montgomery, the Saturn V Dynamic Test Vehicle for Huntsville, a Moundville mound for the Tuscaloosa/Moundville area, and, of course, Vulcan for Birmingham! Each icon features a collage of images reflecting its location or the historical events surrounding it.