

Mr. Creeping Hands, Gum-Popping Granny and Crabby Newspaper Guy: Welcome To Your Local Library

by Roz Warren

At the library where I work, we have an incredibly challenging patron whose imperious demands, unpleasant attitude and relentless sense of entitlement annoy and depress us all so much that we've nicknamed her "Sunshine."

(Never to her face of course. Only when we're commiserating about our encounters with her behind her back.)

Giving difficult patrons funny nicknames is a "library thing." Why? Library work can be stressful, and humor is a coping mechanism. Our job requires that we be gracious and helpful, no matter how unpleasant you are to us. But after you leave? That's another story.

When I asked my fellow library workers to share some of the names they've given their most annoying and/or notable "customers" over the years, they came up with the following:

Captain Underpants (who doesn't wear any...)

Gun Totin' Granny (We're an open carry state.)

Racist Mr. Magoo

Sir Wanksalot a.k.a. Mr. Happypants (because of his antics at our public internet computers.)

Crabby Newspaper Guy (he throws a fit if the daily paper isn't waiting for him when he arrives)

The Cowboy (hat, vest and no shirt)

Chair Guy (He always carries around a folding chair)

Mr. Creeping Hands

Sleeping Beauty (He comes to the library to snooze.)(And snore.)

Diaper Man (Don't ask...)

Pajamas man. (Self explanatory.)(No underwear, either.)

Angry Sam Waterston

Sad-faced Ron Weasley

Shouting Speakerphone Lady

The Weatherman (He phones each day to ask us to read him the weather forecast.)

Gum-popping Granny

The Wicked Bitch of the West (We've never seen her smile.)

Madame Pineapple (because she's crazier than a fruit basket)

Prince Valium

Trump Wench

Mr. Dawdles (Always has to be the last patron out the door, usually several minutes after closing time.)

Has your local librarian has given you a snarky nickname? It could be worse. The baddest apples usually get called by their full names, because we've had to write them up repeatedly. The fact that you have a nickname means that your antics may be challenging, but they aren't (yet) illegal.

If you're a tough library customer, perhaps your New Year's Resolution can be to turn over a new leaf, so that when you come to the library in 2018, your librarian will actually be happy to see you instead of wanting to hide under her desk.

And if not? We've got a name for you.

(Roz Warren www.rosalindwarren.com is the author of Our Bodies, Our Shelves: Library Humor and Just Another Day At Your Local Public Library, both of which you should buy immediately.)

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