

Library Connections

The MOBILE PUBLIC LIBRARY Newsletter

Library Card Sign-Up Month

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Fall 2019

THIS September, the Mobile Public Library is joining the American Library Association and libraries nationwide for Library Card Sign-Up Month, a time to remind parents, caregivers and students that a library card is the first step toward academic achievement and lifelong learning.

Libraries play an important role in the education and development of children. Studies show that children who are read to at home and who use the library perform better in school and are more likely to continue to use the library as a source of lifelong learning.

Our library programs serve students of all ages. For younger children, we offer early literacy resources to help them learn to read and encourage school readiness. For teens and older students, we provide access to technology and digital tools (such as 3D printers, drones, microscopes and telescopes)

as well as resources for all standardized tests.

Since 1987, Library Card Sign-up Month has been held each September to mark the beginning of the school year. During this time, we join other libraries in a national effort to ensure all children sign up for their own library cards.

We currently serve 196,000 library card



holders, who borrowed over 1.8 million physical and digital items last year. Help us reach even more people in 2019. Residents of Mobile County and the surrounding Alabama counties can visit one of our 10 Mobile Public Library locations or the Bookmobile to sign up for a library card in September and be entered into a drawing for an iPad.

Free Tutoring for Alabama Residents

HOMEWORKALABAMA.ORG, powered by Tutor.com, provides free on-demand tutoring in an online classroom for students, kindergarten through college. One-to-one, real-time assistance with your job search is also available.

Get help in math, science, English, social studies or writing from a live tutor chat session. Visit the SkillsCenter Resource Library to prepare for the SAT, the ACT and Advanced Placement exams. Tutors are available every day from 3-10 p.m. at the click of a button.

Online tutors are also available to help navigate

job sites, complete applications, write/review resumes and

cover letters and even practice for an interview. You can take a career assessment, search job openings and download resume samples and templates in the 24/7 SkillsCenter Resource Library.

To access this service, Alabama residents should visit mobilepubliclibrary.org, look under eResources and select Online Tutoring.



Theodore & Bellingrath Gardens: A Lovely Collaboration

by Gina Willson, Theodore Oaks Branch Manager

I'VE been in love with Bellingrath Gardens and Home since the third grade. On my first visit, I found treasures - a marble and a lizard - and left with a lifelong love of art, history, and green spaces. During May, Bellingrath Gardens and Home collaborated with the Theodore Oaks Branch to honor the 141st anniversary of Mrs. Bessie Bellingrath's birthday. The project was designed to start a conversation among generations and inspire exploration of Mobile County and its history.

More than 6,200 children, adults and families visited Theodore Oaks in May to enjoy the stunning Bellingrath Gardens and Home art exhibit.

Books of local history flew off the shelves. Adults attempted to solve riddles to identify local landmarks, sparking lively conversations. "Wow! I didn't know that the same architect designed both Bellingrath Gardens and the Ben May Main Library downtown," recalled one visitor.

Kids were encouraged to make some noise and get to know the library, buzzing around in a quest to count every single bumblebee hidden throughout the building. Many created flowers and other art. One lucky family won tickets to visit the Gardens.

Libraries strengthen communities. I had attended 12 schools by the sixth

grade. My mom always found the public library in each town. For my family, and for millions of others, libraries provide a sense of community and a place to belong.

Nancy Anlage, the Mobile Public Library's special events coordinator, summed it up nicely, "Theodore is a great community with a small-town feeling. It was a lovely collaboration."



On the Cutting Edge

IN the winter and spring of 2019, we participated in the Edge Assessment from the Urban Libraries Council. Edge is a management tool designed to empower libraries to align their technology to community priorities.

We scored above average in relation to our national and regional peer groups. Benchmarks related to economic opportunity; health; as well as technology planning, polices and availability revealed our greatest strengths. This is made possible through our services and resources that include:

- Ben May Main Library's Connection Center: Business and Careers.

- Classes on job searching, small businesses, resumes and marketing.
- ADA technology and assistance at all locations.
- Financial assistance by teaching retirement planning, estate planning and basic financial literacy and providing access to online courses.
- Health classes and resources.
- Digital literacy services including computer classes and one-on-one technology appointments.
- Feedback opportunities on services and programming.
- A management plan that keeps our technology up to date, secure and available to the public.

New Programs Help First-Time Students

by Emmie Powell, Children and Youth Services Librarian

THIS summer, the West Regional Library offered two new programs designed to help get our young patrons ready for school!

Preschool Prep and Kindergarten Countdown were six-week programs intended to help children practice skills they will need as they start preschool and kindergarten.

Each session began with circle time in which we read a book, sang songs and introduced ourselves. Next, the future students moved on to stations designed to develop art, fine motor and gross motor skills.

At the art station, the children used different tools each week to create beautiful artwork. Corks, beads and brushes encouraged them to use their imagination. In order to develop fine motor skills, we focused on increasing dexterity by cutting, gluing and writing. These activities strengthen little hands to get them ready to write. Kids gave their large muscles a workout at the gross motor skills station by running, jumping and using scooters.

At all the stations, the children also worked on important social skills necessary for school readiness, such as taking turns, sharing and making new friends. The approximately 75 participants had a great time and learned a lot.

If you missed out on the program this summer, don't worry. We plan to offer *Preschool Prep and Kindergarten Countdown* next year. In the meantime, join us in our storytimes for year-round fun and learning!



Evening Fun at West Regional

PATRONS at the West Regional Library have asked for more evening programs for families - and we listened.

Look for monthly Family Fun Night programs this fall. Each program will start at 6 p.m., giving working parents time to leave work, grab the kids and come to the library to join the family fun.

We will also be adding programming on Saturdays to offer more opportunities for families to spend time together at the library. On the first Saturday of each month, we'll have *STEM Saturday* at 2 p.m. On these afternoons, we will explore science, technology, engineering and math in a fun and engaging way.

We hope you and your family will join us.

Books and Audiobooks with cloudLibrary

GET the cloudLibrary app and download up to 10 ebooks and audiobooks at once. All you need is your Mobile Public Library card number.

Discover new content, borrow from all your favorite genres and save future

reads. You can read and listen on the go, at home or in the library. Accessing our digital collection has never been easier, with cloudLibrary available for Apple iOS, Mac OS, Android, Windows and Kindle Fire devices.



Local History & Genealogy's Memory Studio

DON'T let your cherished family memories slip away through today's constantly evolving technologies. The Memory Studio is here to help you convert and preserve your treasures, guarding against the passage of time and the obsolescence of outdated media.

Convert your VHS and VHS-C tapes to DVD and MP4; convert cassettes to CD and MP3; and scan your photos, slides and negatives. Use our new digital camera equipment to create high-resolution reproductions of your important documents.

This service is completely free, and our staff is available to assist you. Call the Local History & Genealogy library today to make an appointment.



Jump into Fall Fun

ACTIVITIES abound this fall at the Mobile Public Library. Whether you like a scare, a craft, or just a good time for the entire family, we have lots to choose from during this festive time of year at all of our locations.

Go to our website for a complete list of what we have planned.

- **Talk Like a Pirate Day** - Compete in a costume contest, make a pirate eye patch and watch a movie. *Thursday, September 19, Moorer/Spring Hill Branch.*
- **Fall Festival** - Uncle Joe's Rolling Farm is visiting! We'll also have sidewalk chalk art, pumpkin bowling and snacks. *Saturday, September 21, Ben May Main Library.*
- **International Observe the Moon Night** - We're hoping for clear skies to view the moon, plus movies, crafts and a planetarium. *Saturday, October 5, 6 p.m., Ben May Main Library.*
- **Halloween Spooktacular** - Come by for the costume contest, crafts, graveyard pudding and trick-or-treating. *Thursday, October 24, 6 p.m., Saraland Public Library.*
- **Haunted House** - Last year's popular haunted house is back!

Friday and Saturday, October 25 and 26, Ben May Main Library.

- **Harry Potter Halloween Party** - Complete with snacks, crafts and wizardly fun! *Saturday, October 26, 2 p.m., West Regional Library.*
- **Truck or Treat** - Join our annual neighborhood gathering. Call (251) 494-4140 to learn how to participate. *Saturday, October 26, 5 p.m., Moorer/Spring Hill Branch.*
- **Special Movie and Costume Contest** - Join our Halloween costume contest and watch a classic spooky movie. *Tuesday, October 29, Moorer/Spring Hill Branch.*



Our Maker Labs Can Help You do Business Better

OUR Maker Labs can help your small business take the next step on the road to success. We offer a variety of services at a minimal cost. Below are some ways our Maker Labs at the Ben May Main Library, Moorer/Spring Hill Branch, and West Regional Library locations can serve your business needs.

- **3D Printers** - create prototypes,

models and parts replacement.

- **T-Shirt Heat Press** - for promotional materials.
- **Vinyl Cutter** - to show off your special logo.
- **Laminator** - to keep your signage professional and clean.
- **Button Maker** - for extra swag.
- **Digital Studio** - for video production, with a green screen.

To schedule an appointment

in the lab, request a 3D print or receive more information, email makerlab@mplonline.org.



Summer Reading Celebration Fun for All

by Sara Hyder McGough, Ben May Main Library Manager

LIBRARIES around Mobile celebrated a Universe of Stories this June and July during our Summer Reading celebration. Magic, stories, juggling, puppets and more entertained 37,627 children, teens and adults during 981 programs.



Kids followed the Gingerbread Man on his adventures with puppeteer David Stephens, drew with children's book illustrator Michael P. White, and were entertained by Storyteller Wanda Johnson. This summer juggler Ron Anglin launched props into space, Bubble Lady Kit Killingsworth took us on a bubble-filled ride through the galaxy, and magician Dr. Gee introduced us to a lovable bug-eyed alien with otherworldly magic of his own.

Nearly 9,000 children signed up for our Summer Reading

Celebration as we challenged them to read as many books as they could to win prizes. Teens were tasked with reading pages over the summer to earn a smartphone ring stand.

Adults were not left out of the celebration. The roughly 2,000 adult participants got chances to win gift bags filled with fun. We also challenged them to read books from eight genres in eight weeks to earn extra chances to win.

The more the kids, teens and adults read this summer, the more entries they earned in our drawings to win an iPad.

This summer we also celebrated the 50th anniversary of the Apollo 11 landing on the moon. At the Ben May Main Library's Apollo-Palooza, we watched a documentary on the Apollo 11 mission and showed off our new mini planetarium. At our end-of-summer celebration, NASA's Gary Willis talked about the anniversary of the landing and discussed the future of NASA as the agency prepare to visit Mars with the Space Launch System, America's next great rocket.

Planning for our 2020 Summer Reading Celebration is already underway. See you next summer at the library!



Lifelong Learning Online with the Library

ARE you going back to school? Making a career change? Interested in learning a new hobby or language? Check out our online resources:

EBSCO LearningExpress[®]
LearningExpress Library[®]

With *LearningExpress Library*, you can prepare for the GED, graduate school admissions, occupational exams and improve your workplace math, reading and grammar skills.



Universal Class has video-based courses for people interested in professional or personal growth. Get feedback from professional instructors and connect with other students. Courses available 24/7 in over 30 subject areas, from personal finance to yoga.



Pronunciator is a fun and free way to learn any of 100 languages with personalized courses that include study guides and audio lessons, video phrases, movies, music and more. Get the app to learn on the go.

The Book Sale is Coming!

EACH spring the Friends of the Mobile Public Library sponsor a used book sale, featuring thousands of volumes and audiovisual materials that are donated by individuals and discarded from the library collections. Last spring, over 4,500 people attended the sale held in the 20,000-square-foot Abba Shrine Center on the corner of Hitt and Schillinger roads.

The next sale is scheduled for March 28 and 29, 2020. It will be here before you know it! Please bring material donations to any Mobile Public Library location and we will add them to our collection or sell them at the next spring sale.



Friends of the Mobile Public Library

THE Friends of the Mobile Public Library is a nonprofit, volunteer organization, formed in 1983, dedicated to supporting the Mobile Public Library system.

For the benefit of the library and the community, our Friends group provides funding for the Summer Reading Celebration, reference databases, special purchases of materials and more. This year, they gave \$5,000 to buy books for the third grade summer reading lists.

Each spring, they sponsor a used book sale, featuring thousands of books and audiovisual materials that are donated by individuals and discarded from the library collections.

Memberships start at \$30 for an individual. Since the Friends is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, memberships are tax deductible. As a



contributor, you will be recognized as a member and receive the following benefits:

- Subscription to the FOL newsletter.
- Advance notice of author visits, book signings, receptions and other special FOL events.
- Opportunity to preview our annual used book sale, including pre-sale privileges.
- Opportunities to explore special interests, meet authors and plan programs.
- For more information on becoming a Friend, call (251) 545-3366.

Mobile Public Library
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Our Mission is to Support Literacy and Connect Our Community

INFORM

ENTERTAIN

INSPIRE