

# Library Connections

The MOBILE PUBLIC LIBRARY Newsletter

ISSUE 11  
Fall 2022

## Big Savings With Your Mobile Public Library Card

by Valerie Longa, Public Relations Officer

**S**EPTEMBER is Library Card Sign-up Month (LCSUM), a time when MPL joins the American Library Association and libraries nationwide to remind parents, caregivers and students that signing up for a library card is the first step on the path to

2021 by partnering with local businesses and attractions to offer discounts to MPL cardholders. This year, over 20 local businesses and attractions have committed to partnering with us for LCSUM. Find a full list of partners on our website at [mobilepubliclibrary.org](http://mobilepubliclibrary.org). If you are not a cardholder, sign up on our website or visit one of our 11 library locations to register for a free card. To enjoy the savings, show your library card while visiting any of the participating businesses or attractions. Visit our website and social media for the latest information to take advantage of the special discounts available through Sept. 30.



academic achievement and lifelong learning. For 2022, Tony Award-winning performer, actress, singer-songwriter and philanthropist Idina Menzel and her sister, author and educator Cara Mentzel, have been named honorary chairs of LCSUM. They encourage everyone to explore all the library has to offer, like new children's books, access to technology, educational programming and fun activities for all ages.

MPL is bringing back its campaign from



## Free Meeting Spaces

by Lori Boyer, Webmaster

**O**NE of the primary roles of a library is as a community gathering place and, in some communities, it is the only one available. Most of our library locations have free meeting room space available for use by nonprofits, community groups and organizations during library hours.



You are welcome to come in and look at the facility to determine whether it will work for your group.

Each library manages its own calendar. Check with the library whose room you wish to use to discover when it's available.



# Celebrate the Library's 120-Year Anniversary With These Signature Events

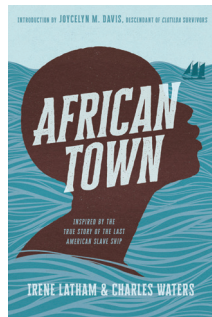
by Marian Ponder, Special Events Coordinator

MPL has been celebrating 120 years of service to the community with signature events featuring authors, musicians and musical groups from our area. August highlighted award-winning talent with local musician Eric Erdman and best-selling author of more than 80 books Carolyn Haines. Erdman played a special concert in the stacks of the Parkway Branch Library, and at Ben May Main Library, Haines regaled the audience with hilarious stories that helped inspire her writing.

Autumn events kick off with award-winning author Frye Gaillard and Pulitzer Prize-winner Cynthia Tucker on Wednesday, Sept. 21, at 6:30 p.m. at the West Regional Library. They will discuss their book, "The Southernization of America: A Story of Democracy in the Balance." The Ben May Main Library will see the return of the Mobile Opera for an "Afternoon of Stars" at 3:00 p.m. on Sunday, Oct. 9. The cast of the upcoming production of "The Elixir of Love" will perform some

of their favorite musical selections.

As adults take to the polls on Nov. 8, Irene Latham and Charles Waters will give a special talk for students on their book, "African Town," at 10:00 a.m. in Bernheim Hall at the Ben May Main Library. The book tells the



story of the last slave ship of Africans brought illegally to America in 1860. It is a powerful

and stunning novel-in-verse for teens and young adults. Fourteen voices, including the ship, tell the story of the journey through the middle passage aboard the Clotilda and the community established by the survivors of the journey at the end of the Civil War. Later that week, on Saturday, Nov. 12, from 10:00 a.m. to noon, Ben May Main Library will hold an outdoor Fall Festival full of free, family-friendly fun including a petting zoo, live DJ, line-dance instructor, professional face-painter

and much more! The City of Mobile Animal Services will also be on-site with some lovable furry friends available for adoption.

The Semmes Regional Library will host our final author event of the year on Dec. 1

at 5:30 p.m. with Paula Webb, who will discuss



"Devilry in the Delta" — the October 2022 sequel to "Mississippi Mojo ... and Murder: Tale of the Blues." We will wrap up our anniversary celebration with a holiday concert from Mobile's Singing Children at 6:30 p.m. on Dec. 8 in Bernheim Hall at the Ben May Main Library.

The staff here at MPL look forward to serving you and your family for many years to come. For additional information, please visit the online events calendar at [mobilepubliclibrary.org/events](http://mobilepubliclibrary.org/events). If you have questions, please email [mponder@mplonline.org](mailto:mponder@mplonline.org) or call 251-494-2298.

## Gamify Your Reading Goals With Beanstack

by Jill Stewart, Adult Services

GET your little ones started out on the right foot with the 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten challenge through the Beanstack app. Beanstack users of all ages also can enjoy fun, monthly themed challenges, such as the

Love Your Library challenge in September, Hall-Read in October and Family Stories in November.

Sign up for a Beanstack account at [mobilepubliclibrary.beanstack.org](http://mobilepubliclibrary.beanstack.org) or through the mobile app, available on

iPhone or Android. Track your reading, earn badges and win prizes!



# It's a Wrap: Summer Library Celebration Now Complete

by Lori Boyer, Webmaster

THE Mobile Public Library made a major splash in June and July with its Summer Library Celebration (SLC). The 2022 theme was Oceans of Possibilities. Special performers entertained over 5,200 library users with music, stories, juggling and live animals. Kids learned about our local waterways from Mobile Baykeeper and were introduced to reptiles

million minutes – that equals 19,000 hours or just under 800 full days of reading! Those who completed our reading challenge were entered to win special prizes. Congratulations to our winners!

Additionally, the community was encouraged to register for SLC with a chance to win a family pass to visit local attractions via a weekly random drawing. We are grateful to the

GulfQuest Maritime Museum and Alabama Aquarium at the Dauphin Island Sea Lab for partnering with us and donating these passes.

Planning for our 2023 Summer Library Celebration, “All Together Now: Kindness/Friendship/Unity,” is already underway. Join us next summer at the library!



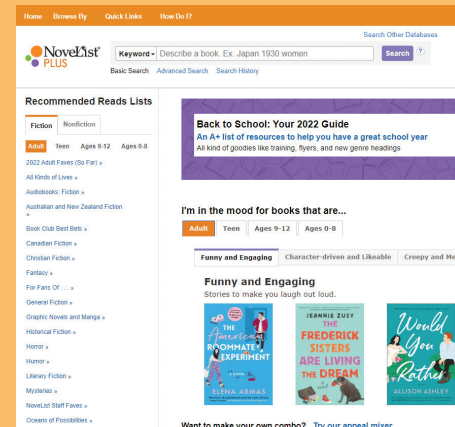
during the Environmental Studies Center's Reptile Show. We enjoyed music from local musicians Gabe Willis and Ryan Balthrop, and Didgeridoo Down Under showed us the Australian Aboriginal instrument: the didgeridoo. Ron Anglin amazed all with his juggling and stories, and Bubble Lady Kit Killingsworth took kids on a bubble-filled ride through the ocean.

Library staff were excited about the level of attendance at our events and participation in the 400-minute reading challenge. Over 850 book lovers took up the challenge and reported reading a total of over 1



# Finding Your Next Books Via NoveList

by Jill Stewart, Adult Services



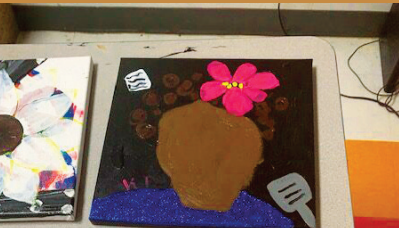
NOVELIST is a book recommendation website carefully curated by librarians to help you find your next favorite book. You can find books similar to something you've read before using “read-alikes.” Use the Appeal Mixer to find books specific to your tastes. Whether you like fast-paced mysteries with quirky characters or intricately plotted and richly detailed historical epics, the Appeal Mixer can provide you with a list of books you might enjoy. If you're looking to branch out into something totally new, NoveList has you covered with genre guides. Pick a genre and NoveList will tell you all the latest and greatest titles to help you get started.



# Community Collaborations

by Marian Ponder,  
Special Events Coordinator

ON Aug. 1, MPL was proud to welcome a wonderful traveling exhibit, featuring jazz-themed paintings from local youth, to the Children's Room at the Ben May Main Library. This fantastic display of artwork was brought to us by Jazz Art Writers South (JAWS), the Boys & Girls Clubs of South Alabama, and the Mobile Arts Council. The collection includes 28 paintings from children who are members at four different Boys & Girls Club campuses in Mobile: Sonny Callahan, Gilliard Elementary, Bernard Malkove and Kiwanis. Local artist Soynika Edwards-Bush shared a selection of jazz classics with the children at each campus and asked them to "close your eyes ... hear, feel, smell and see the sounds and the lyrics to the songs" for inspiration in expressing their own unique interpretations of jazz music on canvas.



# Updates From the Friends of the Mobile Public Library

by Lauren Williams, FOL Board Member

THE Friends of the Mobile Public Library (FOL) are excited to host the annual Maryln Schwartz Creative Writing Contest for high school students this fall.

The theme of the contest is The Bill of Rights, prompting students to write a persuasive essay about which of the first 10 amendments they think is the most integral to American democracy. Students get to express their creativity and critical thinking skills through the writing process and also highlight their knowledge of history, civics and English.

They are accepting entries from all public, private and homeschooled high school students in Mobile County, grades 9 through 12. Each grade level will be awarded a first-, second- and third-place prize.

The contest opened Monday, Aug. 22. All entries must be received by Friday, Oct. 28, at 5 p.m. Winners will be announced the first week of December and presented with their award at the Friends of The Library Annual Meeting on Thursday, Jan. 19, 2023 at the Ben May Main Library.

If you know a high school student, be sure to tell them about the contest! Visit the website

[www.mobilepubliclibrary.org/folcontest](http://www.mobilepubliclibrary.org/folcontest) for contest guidelines and the registration form. For questions or more information, email [FOLMobileWritingContest@gmail.com](mailto:FOLMobileWritingContest@gmail.com).

The FOL is also looking forward to a Meet and Greet Volunteer Drive on Saturday, Sept. 17 at the West Regional Library from 9 to 11 a.m. Come have coffee and doughnuts with us, learn about what we do and see how you can make an impact. We are in need of active members to assist with planning and executing programs, events and fundraising.

Don't worry if you miss our volunteer drive. You can contact us anytime if you are interested in volunteering by emailing [VolunteersMobileFOL@gmail.com](mailto:VolunteersMobileFOL@gmail.com). We need you!



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Our mission is to support literacy and connect our community.

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