



LIBRARY NEWS

Sharing stories of Georgia libraries transforming lives and communities

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Can I check *this* out?

Libraries of things include unique local public library collections like cake pans, musical instruments, sewing machines and more

Georgia Public Library Service builds bonds between public libraries and prison populations



GEORGIA PUBLIC
LIBRARY SERVICE



New children's digital library launches across all Georgia public libraries on Aug. 1

All you need is your public library card to access eRead Kids, which provides free access to nearly 15,000 digital books to encourage early literacy.

Georgia Public Library Service (GPLS) is proud to offer eRead Kids, a new digital library available through all 407 public libraries in the state beginning Aug. 1. The collection of almost 15,000 electronic and audio books is for children from pre-K through fourth grade.

"We know that kids will build confidence and reading skills - and have fun - through eRead Kids," said State Librarian Julie Walker. "eRead Kids will empower libraries to support young readers by offering a format convenient for traveling and entertaining kids, while growing their reading skills."

The collection is a mix of fiction and nonfiction ebook and e-audio book titles that can be downloaded onto computers, tablets and smartphones.

Georgia families now can freely check out electronic books, encouraging the early reading that is so important to educational success.

GPLS has worked with children's librarians to identify the most advantageous offerings and pricing. eRead Kids is made possible by funding proposed by Gov. Brian Kemp and approved by the Georgia General Assembly.

"We strive to create programs that can be shared by all of our libraries, urban and rural, large and small. We can create economies of scale by leveraging our buying power for materials and services for statewide use," said Walker.

Visit georgialibraries.org/eReadKids or your local library to learn more. ■

Access to information and books is critically important in the rehabilitative process for residents of correctional facilities. As inmates prepare for life outside prison walls, one of the resources offered in Georgia is access to collections in public libraries.

Georgia Public Library Service has partnered since 2017 with Georgia Department of Corrections (GDC) to provide residents of all 34 state prisons access to public library collections through an institutional library card. For those in PINES library systems, residents have access to 11+ million materials.

"There is no better place than a library to inspire our offenders to grow," said Emanuel Mitchell, director of library services for the GDC. "Offenders really appreciate access to materials to be able to learn something new or just read for pleasure."

Working with the institution's librarian, inmates can research and request to check out materials that are typically delivered from a local public library within a week.

The program greatly expands access to library materials for inmates. While prison library collections vary, some may

Strengthening bonds between public libraries and prison populations



Deborah Hakes

“As a library, we strive to meet the needs of our entire community, and the Hancock County state prison is a part of this community,” said Stacy Brown, director of the Uncle Remus Regional Library System, pictured here with Georgia Department of Corrections Director of Library Services Emanuel Mitchell.

only have 10 or fewer books per inmate, according to a recent Atlanta Journal-Constitution (AJC) article. Lack of funding over many years contributed to lack of materials available in prison libraries, the AJC found.

The Georgia Public Library Service program helps ensure that public libraries understand the needs of the prison staff and residents in their communities and that prisons become more familiar with public library efforts to promote lifelong learning.

Mitchell believes that access to public library collections has already made an impact. “We can see a spike in English comprehension on GED evaluations, and inmates are checking out everything from easy readers to build literacy skills to classics like ‘Of Mice and Men,’” he said.

Inmates also check out kids books to read during family visitations or books to learn new skills, like how to start a business.

“We have seen the dedication and passion of GDC’s educators for getting this program right,”

said Pat Herndon, assistant state librarian at Georgia Public Library Service. “They are actively working to create opportunities for those who serve their time to return to society better equipped to be full, productive participants in their communities.”

In Hancock County, Ga., the prison population is around 1,200 people. The library inside the correctional facility is well-used, and they also utilize Georgia Libraries for Accessible Statewide Services (GLASS) for inmates with impaired vision or hearing.

“When we put up fliers to raise awareness of the library program in Hancock, the inmates were so pleased for the increased access to books,” said Emanuel Mitchell. “Most had read all the books in the facility’s collection at least twice. The public library card offered a new outlet.”

The Hancock County Library is working on ways to expand their partnership with the local prison, for example to go there for skills training or to bring authors for book discussions.

“As a library, we strive to meet the needs of our entire community, and the Hancock County state prison is a part of this community,” said Stacy Brown, director of the Uncle Remus Regional Library System, to which Hancock County Library belongs.

“We love that there is an interest in reading and learning, and we want to cultivate that and further educational efforts already taking place at the prison. If our program positively impacts just one life, we consider that a great accomplishment. The benefits of reading on mental health and personal growth are immeasurable, and we are proud to serve this unseen, and often overlooked, segment of our service population.” ■

Can I check *this* out?



Erin Honeycutt

As the role of libraries in our communities evolves, many are investing in items for checkout that meet a local need - surveying patrons and gauging interest beyond books or DVDs.

These **libraries of things** include unique local collections such as cake pans, musical instruments and sewing machines.

“Our libraries are fulfilling local needs, enabling library card holders to try things out without a financial commitment. Libraries change based on the needs of those we serve,” said State Librarian Julie Walker.

When Makayla Sauls, 15, moved to a new school last fall, she struggled with how to fit in and make new friends. She found unexpected help through her local library, where she was able to check out a ukulele and instructional material.

“I love how happy the ukulele is; you can’t frown while playing it! The sound matches the tone of the songs I write,” said Makayla. “I like the songs even better when played with ukulele.”

Playing the ukulele has given her confidence, as she made new friends through playing the instrument in her school band and teaching fellow students how to play.

Makayla practices the instrument daily, sometimes for up to four hours. She plays lullabies for her little sisters and in weekend school public performances. She also volunteers at the Moultrie-Colquitt Library and hopes to get involved in

ukulele programming there.

“People are excited about having ukuleles available to try out and attend library activities around them,” said Erin Honeycutt, children’s librarian at the Moultrie-Colquitt Library System. “It feels great to bring this experience to our community.”

Honeycutt began the ukulele programming earlier in 2019 thanks to a grant from the Georgia Music Foundation, which enabled the library to purchase 20 Kala Makala soprano ukuleles, instructional books and DVDs, and tuners to make kits available for checkout.

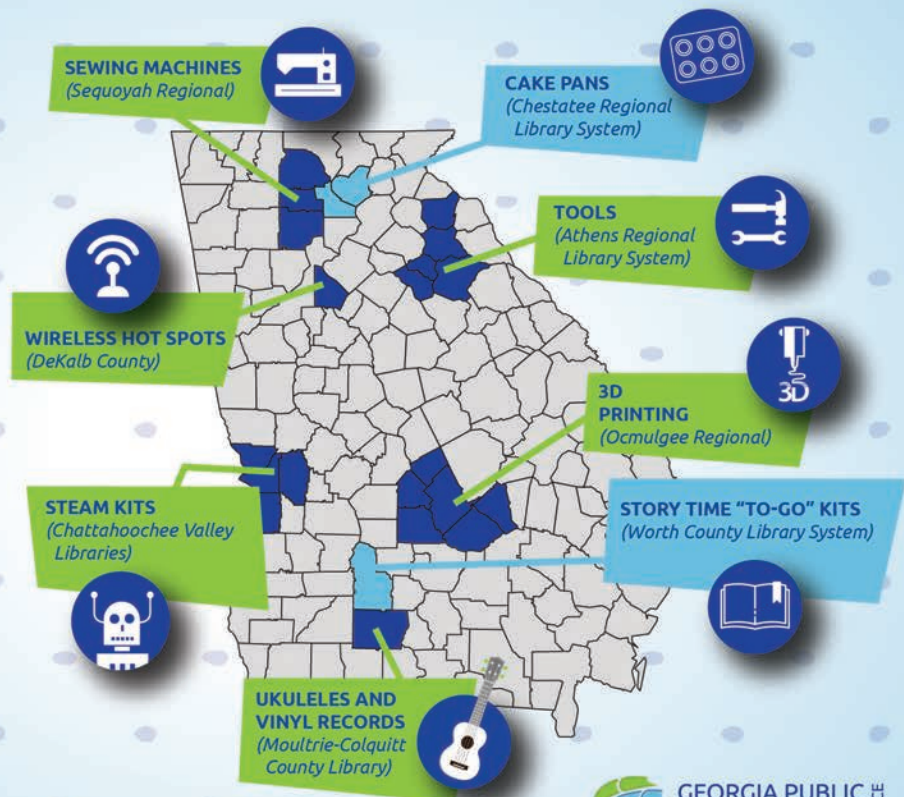
In addition to the kits, the library hosts jam sessions and ukulele workshops for all ages to teach the basics - how to hold the uke, strum, and play basic chords. Honeycutt also conducts group classes in the community at schools and daycare centers. (cont.)

Can I check this out?

From wireless hot spots to sewing machines, here are a few of the *unique items* available for checkout at public libraries across Georgia.

Some items, such as **Discovery Backpacks** and **museum passes**, are available at all Georgia public libraries. Visit georgialibraries.org/partnerships to learn more.

Find your local library at GeorgiaLibraries.org.



“We provide a way to reach those who can’t afford to purchase an instrument on their own, or for people to try one out before buying,” said Honeycutt. “If you can borrow a book from a library to learn a skill, why not a ukulele? We are meeting the needs of the people we serve.”

The Chestatee Regional Library System has found its own local niche by offering cake pans for checkout.

“Patrons love the idea of saving money by using our specialized cake pans,” said Director Leslie Clark. “Maybe one year, a daughter wants a Barbie birthday cake and then the next year, she is into Scooby Doo. We can help!”

The library has a catalog in each branch with pictures of the cake pans, so patrons can browse the selection.

Other “library of things” items offered there include tents, binoculars, telescopes, car diagnostic code readers, Raspberry Pi, Launchpads, Code-a-pillar, Get Outdoors! backpacks with learning activities, flash cards and LeapFrog reading kits.

“Many of our patrons will check out the Georgia State Park Library pass and add a backpack, tent or binoculars - or all of



“If you can borrow a book from a library to learn a skill, why not a ukulele? We are meeting the needs of the people we serve.”

- Erin Honeycutt,
Moultrie-Colquitt Library



Photos above and to right courtesy of Sequoyah Regional Library

them if they are available - for a fun free time in our state parks. It is a win-win for everyone," said Clark.

Sequoyah Regional Library System offers 12 sewing machines for patrons, and on any given day, most are checked out.

Library staff have heard from patrons who have used the machines to tailor clothes for a job interview, tried a machine before investing in purchasing one, or used one as an excuse to spend time with a family member.

"Some people are unable to afford a machine of their own," said Kara Rumble, public services specialist with Sequoyah. "I love that the library can provide an opportunity for patrons that may otherwise not be possible."

The library hosts free sewing workshops that have become a way for people to get to know others and build community, and in April they even hosted a fashion show featuring patrons who designed

clothes using the machines.

"One of the fashion show participants is an aspiring designer who hopes to attend SCAD for fashion design," said Rumble. "While she saves to buy her own sewing machine, she has used ours to bring her designs to life." ■

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- Kara Rumble,
Sequoyah Regional
Library

Below, fashion show participants show off their designs at Sequoyah Regional Library. Participants included an aspiring SCAD fashion designer, an entire family complete with stage names, a costume designer and more.



16th century liturgical codex displayed in Brunswick Library now available through Digital Library of Georgia



Public libraries preserve their community's history through unique local collections. They are a great place for ordinary people as well as researchers to gain insights.

Georgia HomePLACE, the digitization initiative of Georgia Public Library Service, recently made available online a Catholic liturgical codex, or bound manuscript, believed to be Spanish in origin and likely hand-lettered by a monk around 1580.

The codex is a precursor to the modern book. Each page is written in Latin and filled with colorful calligraphy from the Catholic Tridentine mass.

The mass was approved at the Council of Trent in 1570, only 10 years before the book's creation. This "old mass" was in use until the 1960s. The codex includes excerpts from the book of Matthew and musical notation for Gregorian chants and hymns.

The codex made its way across the Atlantic Ocean

following the dissolution of the Catholic Church in England by King Henry VIII and changed hands at auction several times. In the 1970s it was purchased by a private collector with roots in coastal Georgia and later donated to the Brunswick-Glynn County Library.

The library sought to preserve it through digitization but didn't have the resources to do so.

Imaging of the codex was made possible because of a partnership with the Auburn Avenue Research Library, part of the Fulton Public Library System, and Georgia HomePLACE, the digital projects unit of the Georgia Public Library Service.

A library staff member packaged the codex by placing it inside a custom, impact-resistant and shock-proof case and drove it five hours from Brunswick to Atlanta.

The Auburn Avenue Research Library is the only institution in Georgia with a scanner large enough



The codex measures over **four by two-and-a-half-feet** when open.

“People are amazed when they see its size and learn how old it is,” said Ben Bryson, Marshes of Glynn Libraries.

to accommodate the book, which is over 4 feet wide when open. Each page was carefully placed under scanner and imaged at a very high resolution.

The codex was returned to Brunswick in time to be displayed at the reopening of the renovated library in April 2019.

This is a very unique item, one of many interesting, historical pieces in public libraries across Georgia. You can find a list of other treasures in our public libraries by searching “Georgia Treasures” at georgialibraries.org.

Georgia HomePLACE has facilitated the addition of more than 600,000 images to the Digital Library of Georgia, allowing free, online access to primary sources on local history. ■

Ben Bryson, assistant director at Marshes of Glynn Libraries, stands next to the codex on display at Brunsiwck Library.



Photos by Deborah Hakes

Libraries create equity of access for older adults

Seniors may experience barriers to using a library such as transportation or mobility, or in accessing materials due to visual or auditory challenges.

To meet these changing needs, Georgia's public libraries are meeting senior citizens where they are with programming, book-by-mail services, accessible technology and more.

40 senior citizens from Skylark Adult Care in Johns Creek recently visited China one morning, thanks to two outreach librarians from Forsyth County Public Library.

"It is core to Forsyth Library's mission to reach underserved populations such as these great folks at Skylark," said Sarah Reynolds. "Most would be physically unable to come to our library, but through outreach we can bring the library's services to them."

Reynolds and fellow librarian Lorraine Lane took turns reading short stories about China; describing and passing around artifacts like a silk scarf, parasol, painted bottle, kite and chopsticks; and then engaging attendees to read aloud facts.

As the kite was passed around, one woman's eyes lit up as she recalled living in China decades ago.



Deborah Hakes

Forsyth librarian Lorraine Lane talks with Skylark Adult Care resident Roddy, 84, about his time traveling in China while in the armed services.



Georgia's public libraries offer a variety of ways to create equity of access for everyone, no matter their circumstances.



Forsyth Library hosts three outreach events every week; they aim to provide services in traditionally underserved areas of their community.

Another attendee, Roddy, 84, spent time looking through one of the books about the Great Wall of China with Lane.

"I love to travel and spent two years living in Mongolia and Korea when I was in the service," he said. "I really enjoy the library's presentations; they help me see and remember places I have been."

Forsyth County Public Library aims to serve their entire community by identifying barriers to using their services and providing those services to traditionally underserved populations. In addition to Tales & Travels with Seniors, they also bring a pop-up library to two food pantry sites, offer programming for adults with disabilities; bring storytimes to schools, preschools, and aftercare programs throughout the county; and facilitate a books-by-mail program for patrons who have difficulty leaving their homes. Reynolds and Lane offer an average of three outreach programs per week.

Other places like Pembroke Public Library in Bryan County, part of Statesboro Regional Public Libraries, also have increased their focus on programming for seniors unable to travel to libraries because of transportation or mobility barriers. The library visits senior centers to do crafts, bingo, and deliver books, and their services also provide an opportunity for people to socialize.

Accessible services are another way to meet the needs of aging adults. Georgia Libraries for Accessible Statewide Services provides materials in large-print, braille and audio to help those with vision or hearing impairments, and GLASS also assists those physically impaired in a way that prevents that person from holding a book and turning the pages.

"People who are print-disabled often are faced with issues related to mobility and finding transportation," said Pat Herndon, assistant state librarian and director of GLASS. "All GLASS materials are delivered by mail, free-of-charge to the patron, or delivered electronically to mobile digital devices such as a phone or tablet."

Additionally, patrons with disabilities that prevent them from physically visiting a library to be able to apply for a library card and can receive materials by mail from many libraries that are part of the PINES system. Having a PINES library card allows access to online resources including downloadable books.

"Vision or hearing impairment, mobility and transportation all pose barriers to traditional walk-in library service," said Herndon. "Add lack of computer skills or internet access and the problem compounds. Georgia's public libraries offer a variety of ways to create equity of access for everyone, no matter their circumstances." ■



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Information presented in this newsletter will be provided in alternative formats on request. For more information about Georgia's libraries, visit georgialibraries.org

Patricia Prudente



New children's digital library launches across all Georgia public libraries! All you need is your library card to access eRead Kids, which provides free access to nearly 15,000 digital books to encourage early literacy.

Visit georgialibraries.org/eReadKids or your local library to learn more.