# APLSeeds

*Growing public libraries across Alabama*

August 26, 2016

Edited by: Stephanie Taylor

## Calendar

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| APLS Executive Board Meeting | 9/15/16 |
| State Aid Paperwork Due | 10/1/16 |
| Admin Meeting | 10/20/16 |

## Florence Maker Space

On July 16th, Florence-Lauderdale Public Library (FLPL) hosted an open house to reveal *The Collaboratory*, a new library maker space. The event attracted around 500 people of all ages. It included demonstrations and hands on activities including paper making, Lego building, art projects, Cubelets, Raspberry Pis, Arduano demonstrations, a 3D printer, and a 3D pen. Interested teens signed up to help build a BB-8 (an app enabled droid) this fall.

*The Collaboratory* is located in the old computer lab and offers sound recording and editing equipment for podcasting and music recording. It is equipped with a digital piano, a guitar, and Logic Pro software. Another station includes a digital video camera, a green screen, lighting, Photoshop, and Final Cut Pro software for editing. The idea for the lab was born a few years ago, and staff spent some time dreaming and talking about the possibilities.

"Our new motto is *Read Learn Make*. Libraries are in the business of learning and this is a new way we can help people learn," said Nancy Sanford, Library Director.

Funding for *The Collaboratory* was provided by the Library Foundation and included funding for a full time staff member to manage the room. James Mitchell, MLIS joined the FLPL staff in January and spent time planning, researching, and designing the space. The space will allow FLPL to further meet the learning needs of the community. Workshops are being planned for the fall to showcase what's possible with the equipment that they currently have.

# New APLS Consultant

APLS is extremely happy to welcome Gail Sheldon back to Alabama as APLS's new Children's Library Consultant! Many of you may remember Gail when she worked at Oneonta Public Library, starting as a circulation clerk in 2006 and then as director from 2009 to the end of 2014. She left Alabama for Maryland to become Director of Somerset County Library in January 2014. While there, she managed three library branches and oversaw a building project that resulted in a beautiful 12,400 square foot facility in Crisfield.

Additionally, Gail served on the Board of the Association of Rural and Small Libraries (ARSL) Partnerships Committee and worked as a representative for the ARSL Advisory Committee for the Pew Internet and American Life Study. She currently serves on the Advisory Committee for YALSA's College Career Readiness (Future Ready) Project. She received her Master's in Library and Information Studies from the University of Alabama in 2010.

Gail is looking forward to working with the public libraries in the state to help make their children's and youth programs everything they want them to be. She is particularly interested in the Maker Movement and finding fun and exciting ways to make that a part of programming in all libraries – especially small and rural ones. Please help us welcome Gail to APLS. Her knowledge and experience will be greatly beneficial to the state.

# New Homework Alabama Tutoring Hours

With school back in session, students will need Tutor.com more than ever. Luckily, they have extended their hours for live tutoring! The service is now available seven days a week from 3:00 pm to 10:00 pm. They are also offering live job search assistance Sunday through Saturday from 10:00 am to 10:00 pm. Be sure to promote these fantastic services at your library!

# Gadsden News

Gadsden Public Library had a busy August. They offered computer classes, chess club, children's garden club, crochet classes, teen game nights, and much more! The library is also doing an oral history project where the public is invited to share stories about what it was like growing up in Gadsden.

# Talk Like a Pirate

Ay, mateys! Did you know September 19th is International Talk Like A Pirate Day? This is a great programming opportunity for your library. Talk like a pirate to your patrons, have themed programs, display books about pirates – the possibilities ARRRRR endless! Learn more about Talk Like A Pirate Day here: http://www.talklikeapirate.com/piratehome.html

# Rogersville Program

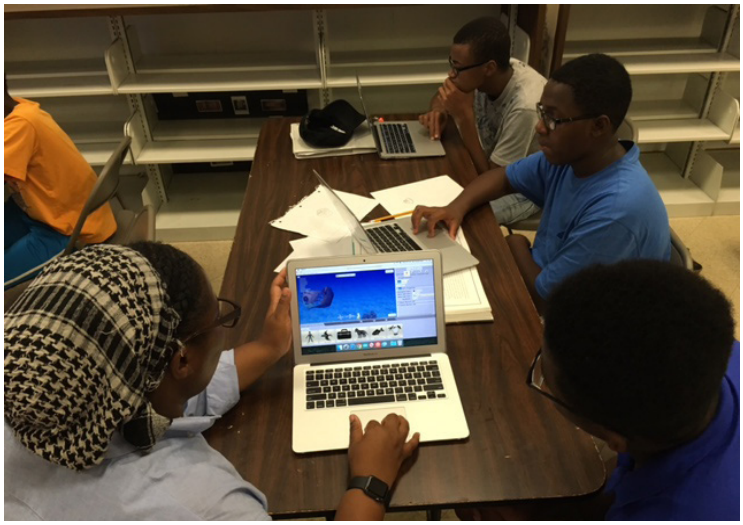
On July 27th, Rogersville Public Library hosted *Jazzin It Up With Trash*, a W.C. Handy Festival event for children. The event starred Microwave Dave, and the children made simple instruments from recyclables and played music along with Dave. This is an annual event at the Library. The W. C. Handy Festival celebrates the Father of the Blues and is held in Florence and the Shoals area each year in July.

# July in Birmingham

Birmingham Public Library's (BPL) Central Library hosted the Steel City Hackers Coding Camp for middle and high school students from July 11th-15th. Generously funded by a UAB Benevolent Fund Local Agency Grant, the coding camp offered local teens a week-long opportunity to learn how to code and create their own movies and video games.

Teens used ALICE, a computer programming environment designed to teach code and offered by Carnegie Mellon University free to the public. In addition to gaining a better understanding of the importance of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, teens learned the importance of algorithms, and the building blocks for learning and applying other computer programming languages.

"This program fit well with our mission to provide 21st century education programs at the library," said Lance Simpson, teen librarian for the Central Library. "Our teens had a blast learning to code in ALICE. They had wonderful instructors in Ms. Keiah Shauku and Ms. Kelly Creel."



Simpson said many of the teens started out with no knowledge of computer programming, and by the end of the week had all created a complex video game or interactive video that demonstrated their newly advanced programming skills.

"We are so grateful to the UAB Benevolent Fund for the support of such an innovative program, and look forward to offering more programs like this in the future," Simpson said.

July 16th marked the return of Birmingham Public Library (BPL)'s Southern History Department's popular Beyond the Basics of Genealogy workshop series called *Let's Talk About: Oral History*. Relatives and family friends are important sources of information. In this introduction to oral history series, attendees learned how to gather information from those who have difficulty remembering or are troubled by the past and reluctant to share it.

BPL hosted a free *Intro to Pokémon Go Workshop* on July 23rd to educate attendees about the popular mobile game sweeping the country and to promote safety while playing. Organized by Jennifer Hancock, a library assistant in the Central Library Youth Department, the workshop started with a basic overview of the app itself. Participants took a Poké-walk in Linn Park, picked up some Poké stops, checked out a Poké-gym, and attmpted to catch some Pokémon in their natural environment. They learned tips and tricks for catching, transferring, training, and evolving Pokémon in a hands-on approach while also learning how to be a safe trainer.

For those unfamiliar, Pokémon was originally a video game released in 1995. Players are human trainers who travel a virtual world capturing Pokémon using capsules called Pokéballs.

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# Foley Donation

On July 16th, retail store Ross Dress for Less opened its doors in Foley to a welcoming crowd. To mark the occasion, the company generously donated $2,500 to the Friends of the Foley Public Library to be used toward projects within the library. At present, the Foley Friends support projects such as the Summer Reading Program, the *Baby Packet* program for newborns that introduces the library and its services to all parents of newborns in the Foley area, and the *READ* (Reading Education Assistance Dog) program, among many others. The Friends also operate a bookstore inside the Foley Library and host Baldwin County's largest annual book sale each year in February.

Foley Public Library Friends President Sheila Morgan (left) and Library Director John Jackson (right) receive the $2,500 donation from Ross Dress for Less.

# Homewood Crafternoon

Homewood Public Library recently let teens get crafty at the *Teen Crafternoon* event. Stuffed animal taxidermy was a big hit among the teens as they destroyed donated stuffed animals to create art.

## 2 Resources, 1 Goal: Helping Alabama Succeed

### LearningExpress Library & HomeworkAlabama

- -Online Tutoring for Grades K-12
- -College Placement Resources
- -Help for all ages and all skill levels
- -Certification Test/GED Preparation
- -Career Resources

**Find both on the APLS Resources and Research Links Page**

# The Librarian's Toolkit

**Doing Library Data Differently: Part 1**, by Sherry Sakovich, Decatur Public Library Director

Nearly all librarians gather data. We keep track of circulation, programs, attendance, door counts, computer use, eBook checkouts, database access, webpage visits, and so on. So why exactly do we gather all this data? Because APLS makes us? To show how busy we are? To prove to local leaders that our services are being used? Maybe some of us have even used it to demonstrate to local officials that we're busier than "X" library and have less funding than they do. Shaming or guilting local leaders usually doesn't give them too many "warm fuzzies", and it doesn't make them want to increase our funding.

Now it's time for some scary questions. Why DO we really spend time gathering all this data? What's the point? Let's use summer reading programs as an example. Okay, so 320 children signed up for the summer reading program. What does that mean exactly? Sure, it means that a lot of kids signed up, but was the program a success? How do we even define "success" in summer reading programs? What are the goals for a summer reading program? To prevent the "summer slide"? Okay. To improve reading skills? Sure. But how do we KNOW that?

Right now there's a culture shift in public libraries to be purposeful in gathering, analyzing, and using data for decision making, strategic planning, and to prove library impact. If you remember anything from this article series, remember these two words: outcome and impact. This shift places the emphasis on the community that libraries serve instead of the library itself.

Outcomes are qualitative. Up until now, most of us who gather all those circulation numbers and door counts have been dealing with outputs. An outcome is a specific benefit that results from a library program or service designed to help patrons change their knowledge, skills, attitudes, behaviors, or condition. Outcomes are generally expressed as changes individuals perceive in themselves. Impact, on the other hand, answers the question: Where did we make a difference? What effect did we have?

So what does all this mean? Determining outcome and impact places meaning behind all those numbers that we gather. Your local officials may see on your statistical report that you had 56 adults sign up for a computer class but that may not have much meaning for them. It's just another number. However, when you determine that the class outcome was that 98% of the attendees learned how to successfully create a resume and 55% were able to find jobs, you've just proven that your library services are a direct re-investment back into the community. In part two of this multipart series on data, we will discuss measuring outcome and impact and the Research Institute for Public Libraries. Stay tuned!