The William Bradford Huie Library of Hartselle held a Christmas program on December 21st featuring Blinky the Elf, aka Kristin Simpson from Starshine Faces.

New Year Resolutions for Your Library

Happy New Year, Public Librarians! As you plan for the upcoming year and set resolutions, consider making it a goal to review your library policies and disaster plans. Both of these documents are put in place to protect the library and ensure you have backup when needed, but they won’t do you any good if the information is out dated. Whether you simply need to update some emergency contacts in your current disaster plan or create an entirely new section of policy - APLS is here for you. Contact your consultant if you would like assistance getting your policies and disaster plan in shape this coming year.
ChiltonLibrary for Alabama Libraries

Studies show consumers are keeping their cars longer. With older cars on the road, repairs are on the rise. Alabamians interested in saving money now have access to the gold standard in do-it-yourself auto repair - ChiltonLibrary.

ChiltonLibrary provides free access to repair, maintenance, and service information on the most popular cars, trucks, vans, and SUVs on the road today as well as many new vehicles. This continually updated resource provides step-by-step repair procedures, troubleshooting guides, and diagnostic codes, and uses photos, illustrations, diagrams, videos, and animations to simplify even the most complicated tasks. ChiltonLibrary also lets users look up recalls and service bulletins, find estimated labor time allowing users to confidently estimate repair costs, and prepare for ASE mechanic certification with test prep quizzes.

Alabamians can access reliable automotive help online 24/7 from the comfort of home through ChiltonLibrary. Anyone with an Alabama IP address can tap into this resource through their home computers, tablet, or smart phone. This invaluable resource is also available onsite at every Alabama public library.

Librarians are encouraged to direct patrons to this incredible resource. Share your unique link on your library website and social media accounts. Contact APLS' Reference Department with any questions or concerns at 334-213-3949.

BPH Ensuring That All May Read

Staff at the Alabama Public Library Service (APLS) and its Regional Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (BPH) prepared a shipment of books and caught up on a little reading earlier this month. They were saving their voices for the big game on January 8th when one of Alabama's favorite college teams—The University of Alabama—squared off against Georgia for the 2018 National Championship in Atlanta. BPH patrons in Alabama who might be interested in books on football or some of its outstanding players and coaches, can contact the regional library at 800-392-5671 or locally by dialing 334-213-3906.

Homewood Ugly Sweaters

Homewood Public Library hosted an Ugly Sweater Design Party for teens in December. The library provided all the craft supplies, which came from the Dollar Tree, and sweaters, though teens could bring their own sweaters if they preferred. Over 30 teens attended this program, which was suggested by the Teen Advisory Board.
It’s difficult to express how important libraries are to their communities and to accurately capture your value, which is one reason that we constantly urge you to tell your story. There are numerous components to that story: patron feedback, photographs, outcome measures, and even quantitative data – like the statistics you collect on a daily basis.

All public libraries are required to collect statistics to complete the Public Library Survey. Chances are, many libraries collect additional data as well - whether it’s for local reports or their own in-house use. Is your library using this data collection to help advocate for the library? If not, you are missing out on a great opportunity! Since you are required to collect data for the Public Library Survey, why not make those numbers work for your library?

**Accessing your data**

Once the data has been reviewed by the American Institutes for Research, APLS will make it available on Bibliostat Connect. In previous years, this data could only be pulled upon request, but now, using the same login information you use for Bibliostat Collect (the website you use to enter data each year), you can access comparable statistics at [http://collectconnect.baker-taylor.com/](http://collectconnect.baker-taylor.com/). Connect allows you to pull your own data into an Excel spreadsheet, find peer libraries from all over the country for data comparisons, set benchmarks, and produce charts and graphs.

To pull your own data, or compare your library with others in the state, select the Alabama database, choose Alabama as the comparison state, and choose your library from the Comparison Library menu. Click the Next button to continue.
On this page you can choose which libraries’ data you want to view. If you already know what libraries you want to use, click on Select Alphabetically to make your selection of any libraries in the state; there is no limit on how many you can select. If you are unsure what libraries to compare yourself to, the Select By Peer option is helpful.

After clicking Select By Peer, select the criteria you want to use as a comparison. Population of the legal service area is a common element to use when selecting peers, but all the data elements on the Public Library Survey are available to choose from. In this example, I used Abbeville Memorial Library as the comparison library and selected population as the criteria. Type in the range you want Connect to pull from when selecting peers. Since Abbeville’s service area is 7,557, I chose a range of 5,000 to 11,000. Click the Next button to see the list of libraries that fall into that range.
Perhaps you want to include libraries that did not fall into this range or remove libraries that ended up on the list. You can make changes to your list here, or keep the list provided by clicking the Next button.

Now you can select any of the data elements from the Public Library Survey from whatever survey year you are interested in viewing. You can also select multiple years if you are only looking at one data element, which is helpful if you are interested in growth or decline of a particular statistic.
Once you select the data elements you can choose to see it in either a chart or a table. The Format page allows you to customize the results.

Here is what the data shown in the previous sample looks like in a table. You can export any table into an Excel file to further manipulate and review the data. We will continue to look at Connect in the next part of this Toolkit and discuss how to use this information in telling your library story.