Take Note

July 12, 2019
APLS Planned Systemwide Outage

July 18, 2019
APLS Board Meeting

July 25, 2019
Administrators’ Meeting

Summer Programs in Full Swing

Children and adults of all ages gather at the Armstrong Osborne Public Library in Talladega for Dwayne Reynolds’ “Dr. Magical Balloons”
NOTICE

The Alabama Public Library Service will temporarily be without all communications, including phone service, email, and internet access, on Friday, July 12, 2019.

This is a planned outage to perform necessary upgrades to our communications circuit. During the outage, all public libraries and patrons most likely will be unable to reach all APLS staff. The APLS Information Technology Division does not expect any lasting issues outside of the planned four-hour outage.

This planned temporary outage will also affect patrons of the Alabama Regional Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped.

All normal business operations at APLS should resume by noon on July 12.

Chickasaw library explores Alabama’s ‘Universe of Stories’ this summer

Summer is in full swing at Ina Pullen Smallwood Memorial Library in Chickasaw.

The library recently hosted Chickasaw's local civic theatre group who came in costume to read The Wonderful Wizard of Oz for the kids.

Staff decorated the library’s computer station to look like Bellingrath Gardens and the children's area to look like the ocean.

The library also hosted a treasure hunt with Library Director Amber Johnson dressing as a pirate and assisting children reading the map to search for hidden treasures. Johnson also helped the young patrons find out what their pirate names would be.
Have story ideas or suggestions for upcoming issues?

Contact Ryan Godfrey at rgodfrey@apls.state.al.us or 334-213-3909.

Gadsden PL creates STEM kits with LSTA grant

The Gadsden Public Library secured an LSTA grant to create STEM kits that are being loaned to educators across Etowah County. The program aims to give hands-on scientific, technological, engineering and mathematical learning to area students.

It’s the first program of its kind in the state, according to Jillian Reeves, children’s director at the library. Reeves said children need to be prepared to grow up in a STEM-focused world.

“We’re moving toward such a STEM-forward way of life in our careers and even our own personal lives, and our children are no different,” she said.

Reeves said children are probably more STEM-oriented at home than at school because they do not have access to that type of learning in the school setting. The kits are designed to give them the hands-on STEM learning they need.

The library now has 11 kits, each of which is packed with enough components for an entire classroom and includes a curriculum for teachers to follow.

One kit, which consists of small blocks called Cubelets, gives students a chance to build robots using a variety of cubes with individual functions. Some blocks are sensing, others perform actions and others serve as the robot’s battery or brains. Reeves said at least three blocks are required to build a robot, but with each kit containing 86 blocks, students can experiment with cubes that perform a variety of functions.

Other kits teach coding, either by typing code or using drag and drop commands. Some of the kits include “screenless” robots that can teach without the student having to use a computer or even being able to read.

“When you think STEM, you think it’s just got to be science or technology, but they can be used for a lot more,” Reeves said.

There are ways to include the robots or coding kits into other math, science or even literary classes. For example, students can use Cubelets to build a character from a story they’ve read and command the robots to re-enact the character’s actions.

The idea behind the kits was to give all teachers access to the technology. Some local schools have a few options for students to get hands-on experience with computer science and STEM-focused technology, but most of those options are restricted to after-school or gifted programs.

At present, the program is targeted towards elementary schools, and Reeves said the kits can be lent to a school for a six-week period. The library plans to adjust the schedule for the next school year, allowing the kits to be rotated out on an eight-week cycle. With schools having access to the devices for extended periods of time, they will be able to fully incorporate them into their lesson plans.

The STEM kits were funded by a $20,000 grant Reeves wrote with the Library Services & Technology Act and Alabama Public Library Services.

Based on her creative thinking and for partnering with local schools, Craig Scott, Library Director at Gadsden, nominated Reeves for a 2019 Excellence in Education Award sponsored by the Etowah/Gadsden Chamber of Commerce and Gadsden State Community College. As a result, Jill won the Jacksonville State University “Excellence in Community Outreach” Award.

“All of us at Gadsden Public are extremely proud of our fellow team member, Jillian Reeves, and the marvelous job she has done to partner with City and County school teachers along with many Home School groups in the area to improve STEM learning of students. Jill is certainly deserving of JSU’s Excellence in Community Outreach Award for creating GPL’s outstanding STEM Kit Lending Library.”

Some kits include ‘screenless’ robots which teach coding logic without the use of traditional computers

STEM kits are targeted towards elementary schools and can be lent for up to six weeks
Enter Fairhope PL’s ‘Universe’ for fun this summer

Two recent programs highlight a very busy summer for staff at the Fairhope Public Library.

The library hosted a special patriotic pep rally on July 3. The program featured music, a lesson on what the Pledge of Allegiance really means, several games, and a rocket making/flying contest.

Children each made rockets out of 2-liter bottles and challenged each other to see who could fly their rocket the farthest. With a distance of 32.4 feet, the first place winner received a gift certificate to the Warehouse Bakery.

Fairhope Public Library also celebrated 2019 Caldecott Winner Hello Lighthouse with a crafting program where children constructed lighthouses out of red party cups.
Ider Summer Reading a hit

Ider Public Library’s summer reading program was a success. This year, their program explored several local careers with speakers ranging from city employees, teachers, farmers, nurses, civil engineers, a retired veteran, and a grocery store manager. Children each made photos and labeled them with their desired future careers.

Ragland PL channels fun summer magic

Summer has proven to be quite a busy time at Ragland Public Library. From face painting to Mr. Bond the Science Guy, and from Books & Brushes to Dr. Magical Balloons, Ragland seems to have a little bit of everything!
Summer isn’t all child’s play

Southside Public Library held a couple of adult-oriented summer programs, including a jewelry making class, and two beginner’s knitting classes this June.

Satsuma’s amazing summer

Teen volunteers helped decorate the Satsuma Public Library in time for their summer reading kickoff with special guests from the Freedom Ranch. Children learned about animals from around the state and the world.

Other summer programs that followed included Mardi Gras-themed mask face paintings and a special visit from Sunshine the Clown.
DeKalb County Sheriff Nick Welden serves as a mystery reader for a DeKalb County Public Library summer event held at the Fort Payne City Park.

Summer at Dutton Community Library

Summer at the Dutton Community Library included tie-dye shirt making, a sand dig, cupcake wars, a petting zoo, career day, and swamp things from the Tennessee Aquarium.

Talladega’s Armstrong Osborne PL has summer style

The Armstrong Osborne Public Library recently hosted summer programs including Dwanye Reynolds’ “Dr. Magical Balloons” (our front cover photo this month) and Kit Killingsworth’s “Bubbles in Space.”

Congratulations to the Armstrong Osborne Public Library for being the recipient of a grant from the Ezra Jack Keats Foundation.

As you can tell, they are having a busy and productive summer.