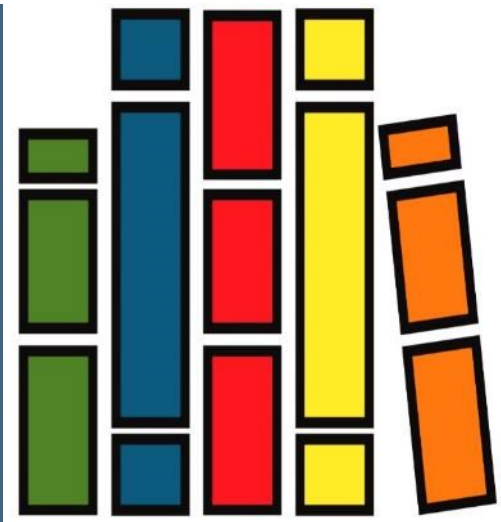


on the same page



news from the mississippi library commission

spring 2016

Power in Numbers

By: Susan Cassagne, Executive Director of MLC


“The health of our civilization, the depth of our awareness about the underpinnings of our culture, and our concern for the future can all be tested by how well we support our libraries.”

~ Carl Sagan, renowned astrophysicist/astrobiologist

There is power in numbers. How often have we heard those words throughout our lives, only to picture something that didn't seem to apply to us as we moved through our normal day? Have you ever had the opportunity to gather with a group of like-minded folks to stand up for something you believe to be important to those you value? It is a powerful feeling.

Throughout time, having something to fight for has been a part of the human condition. It is part of what makes us the complicated, larger-than-life species that runs the planet. Our greatest sense of accomplishment can come from working for a cause and seeing those efforts create positive change for all involved.

Public libraries across Mississippi change lives and build communities. It happens on a daily basis with little fanfare.



They open their doors each day to offer inspiration, education, assistance, and a window to the world outside the Magnolia State. In many of our communities, the public library may be the only place to connect with all of life's possibilities. This certainly sounds like a worthy cause....one we can all believe in and support.

Eighty-one percent of the funds appropriated to the Mississippi Library Commission from the legislature are in turn allocated to the state's 52 public libraries systems. This invaluable funding also comes with support through leadership, advocacy and training. We ask that you keep in mind that your vote elected our lawmakers so they can use their influence to support what benefits your community. It's easy to assume that government supports public libraries, and most do—we just need to make our presence known as a reminder of our value to the 2.9 million residents of Mississippi. It is time. Time to gather together to build a strong group of advocates....to feel the power....the power in numbers.

LIBRARY DAY

at the Mississippi State Capitol

Join the Mississippi Library Commission,
the Mississippi Library Association &
Friends of Mississippi Libraries, Inc. for a day
of library advocacy!

TUESDAY, MARCH 8TH

11:00AM TO 2:00PM

First Floor Rotunda
Mississippi State Capitol

Don't miss the fun activities, meet and greet with
costume characters from your favorite books,
and information about what's going on in libraries
across Mississippi.

For more information, contact 601.432.4056

#MSLibraryDay

MLC Calendar

MARCH

- 2 – Tech Academy Workshop – Pascagoula
- 8 – Library Day at the State Capitol & MLA Legislative Event
- 9 – Public Library Directors Meeting – MLC
- 10 – PL Reimbursement Requests DUE
- 22 – MLC Board of Commissioners Meeting – MLC

APRIL

- 6 – Tech Academy Workshop – MLC
- 10 – PL Reimbursement Requests DUE
- 10-16 – National Library Week
- 25 – State Holiday – MLC Closed

LIBRARY ADVOCACY TIPS

Be informed. Get information on all of the issues facing libraries today.

Find out who your elected officials are at the local, county, and state levels. If you don't know who your legislators are you can use this website to make that determination or ask MLC for help:

<http://www.legislature.ms.gov>.

Put elected officials on your mailing lists and ask to be put on theirs. Mutual awareness of what each other cares about is essential to building a strong relationship.

Share your success stories. Ask elected officials to distribute materials about your programs and activities at their office. Most of the elected officials will have a place in their offices for information about the districts they represent.

Email a photograph to your elected officials if they attend one of your programs. Visual reminders help reinforce their awareness of your library – especially if the picture is of them at one of your events.

Say thank you – a lot! If you don't have time to write, make a call. Never let the elected official forget you are out there.

Create visibility for your elected officials. Explore creative options for them to get positive exposure in their district through your library. Provide them with opportunities at your public events. Invite them to talk to your board, staff and patrons about the importance of your library to the community.

Act regularly and promptly. Don't wait for someone else to take care of the issues. Make a commitment to do what you are able to do, no matter how small it may seem. Start believing that a single voice can make a difference.

Activate advocacy. Find others to join you in delivering your message. A business owner makes a meaningful case about the importance of your library to the community. Make advocacy part of everyone's job description (board, staff, and volunteers), because they all have a role to play in it.

Don't be afraid to ask them for support!
They work for YOU!

Meet MLC

Cindy Nugent

Outreach Coordinator

Cindy Nugent has been with the Mississippi Library Commission for 18 years. Currently, she serves as Outreach Coordinator for Talking Book Services, an important program available through MLC.

Talking Book Services provides a wide range of services to Mississippi residents who are unable to read standard print due to visual, physical or organic reading disability. These include large print titles for adults, teens, and children. There is an online catalog for those registered patrons. Also available are braille books and magazines, descriptive videos, and audio books and magazines on digital cartridge.

Cindy really enjoys her position with MLC. She states, "I love my job. I feel like what I do is really important. It's not just a job---I change lives." Cindy is dyslexic, so she understands the struggle someone faces with reading challenges. She loves to watch people become better readers with audiobooks and for them to develop a love for books.

Her outreach activities include setting up and manning displays at conferences and she speaks to various groups and organizations about Talking Book Services.

Want to find out more about Talking Books and Cindy? Contact MLC at 601-432-4111.



"Whatever the cost of our libraries, the price is cheap compared to that of an ignorant nation."
~ Walter Cronkite

MLC Grant Updates

Grant support is a major element of MLC's goal to support libraries across Mississippi. We invite public libraries to use these grant opportunities to achieve the goals and outcomes they set to support the special needs of their communities.

Each year the Mississippi Library Commission budgets \$600,000 in Library Service and Technology Act (LSTA) funds that are provided by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS).

The Library Commission was able to award 15 competitive project subgrants and 146 non-competitive project subgrants. Two examples of these projects are:

- ❖ A \$14,017.55 competitive subgrant award to the Bolivar County Library System for their *Early Literacy Interactive Commons* project. According to Jennifer Wann, Project Director, the project will incorporate the Every Child Ready to Read (ECRR) principles of developing early literacy skills in children from birth to age 5. The interactives include materials that support the development of pre-reading skills in young children and improve parents' abilities to assist their children with these skills.
- ❖ A \$3,000.00 non-competitive subgrant award to Central Mississippi Regional Library System for their *LEGO Build: Connect, Construct, Contemplate, & Continue* project. With the teaching focus on national core standards for science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM), Program Director Dorothy Vance has created LEGO kits that will be checked out by library branch staff for programming purposes. Regular LEGO blocks and Mega blocks kits will be available, both with laminated building guides and scenarios for active and passive programs included.

In addition to funding these projects, through our Public Librarian Scholarship Program, we are also providing funding to four future Mississippi librarians to attend college and earn their Masters' Degree in Library Science.

For more information on MLC's grants, contact David Collins at dcollins@mlc.lib.ms.us.

ON THE ROAD WITH MLC.....



Courtney Thomas & Adrienne Bradley of Hancock County Library System proudly share information about their Foundation.



Meredith Wickham, Director of Kemper Newton Regional Library System proudly shows a recent donation from Liberty Fuels!



Cody Daniel is the new Branch Manager of the Corinth Public Library. The historical town's library is the home of the Northeast Regional Library System.

WHAT LITERACY FOR ALL REALLY MEANS

Lacy Ellinwood, Senior Library Consultant, MLC

Don't judge a book by its cover. We believe in literacy for all! This is the motto for Big House Books, a non-profit, volunteer organization that sends free books by request to prisoners in Mississippi correctional facilities. Big House Books hopes to promote literacy and be a vehicle of change for prison reform in Mississippi. I had the pleasure of interviewing Vice President, Shelby Parsons about this organization.

What brought you to Big House Books?

I hosted a puppet show put on by a group of folks from Chapel Hill, NC about the prison industrial complex in December of 2014. They also run a prison books project and are overrun with requests from Mississippi prisons, so they asked if any of us would be interested in starting a group to service the state's incarcerated population.

What are the organization's short and long term goals?

We would like to get caught up and send out books for all of the outstanding requests that we have, and we will need to do some fundraising in order to make that goal possible. We hope to have a more hands-on relationship with the Department of Corrections and youth correctional facilities, possibly hosting book clubs or offering tutoring to incarcerated children.

Why is this cause important to you and to Mississippians?

Society as a whole benefits when we all have access to quality opportunities and education. Incarceration in the United States is

not a rehabilitative process, and does not prepare inmates to become productive members of their communities when they are released. Our goal is to provide access to information, self-improvement, and hope to those who have been failed by a culture of mass incarceration.

Are partnerships important? What types of organizations are you looking to partner with?

Absolutely! We would love to partner with groups who would like to volunteer at our packing parties, outreach events or from home, groups who would like to host or help us plan fundraisers, and other groups who are interested in criminal justice, civil rights, prison reform, literacy, education, etc.

What are the biggest hurdles Big House Books has come up against?

When our group started we received hundreds of backlogged book requests from North Carolina's prison books group, and the pressure was on to figure out how to form and manage a nonprofit, raise funds, rent a space, and lay out our processes. We are all relieved to be over the hump and in operation!

How can the average person help?

We need help packing books, raising funds, and spreading the word. Currently we are hosting work nights at our space in the Midtown area of Jackson. Check out our Facebook page or website to sign up. Stop by any scheduled meeting or drop us a line at bighousebooksms@gmail.com

For more information about how you can help or partner with Big House Books:

bighousebooksms.org or [facebook.com/bighousebooks](https://www.facebook.com/bighousebooks)

ART AT MLC

During January and February, MLC was honored to feature the work of Jackson artist Carrie Roebuck. On January 12, the agency hosted a public reception. We appreciate those who attended and wish Carrie continued success!



Dr. Mark Reed

Photographer Dr. Mark Reed, and glass artist Candy Spurzem will be our featured artists in March and April. We are pleased to be able to showcase their work and we encourage everyone to attend a public reception for the artists on Tuesday, April 5 from 5pm to 7pm.



Candy Spurzem

We hope you will make a point to stop in to see the work of these talented Mississippians.

In Memoriam

We recently had to say goodbye to two pioneers for Mississippi libraries.

Jane Smith



Jane Smith started at MLC as a Library Consultant in 1980. She held various positions during her thirty years of employment with the agency. Her dedication and hard work resulted in the creation of MAGNOLIA which is still in use today. Jane will be terribly missed and will always be remembered as an integral part of Mississippi's libraries.

Dr. Howard Russell Burns

Dr. Burns served as trustee of the Lincoln County Public Library for 45 years and as a

commissioner for MLC for 15 years. He also was a delegate to the White House Conference on Libraries and Information Services.

He was a strong supporter of libraries and their mission and worked tirelessly to ensure their continued success.



Congratulations to Murphy Mann!
Happy Retirement!

Murphy Mann served as MLC Senior Systems Administrator for eleven years. Murphy provided exemplary service to MLC staff and libraries. We will miss you, Murphy!....Enjoy your retirement!

FEATURE FROM THE FIELD

Library-Based Autism Resource Center

In 2012, the Columbus-Lowndes Public Library System (CLPL), used funds received from an LSTA Grant to create the very first public library-based Autism Resource Center (ARC) in Mississippi. The ARC contains print resources and therapy tools that parents, caregivers, and educators can take home to try with their child as well as an in-house play area that contains developmentally appropriate toys including a LEGO table, a chalk walk, a magnetic letter board, a tactile wall, a kitchen and grocery store for social skills, and an auditory station. The area also has three AWE After School Edge learning stations as well as two iPads that contain Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) appropriate apps. Due to an increase in requests and a need within the community, the CLPL has expanded their ARC to include not just ASD materials and resources but also materials and resources related to other developmental, neurological, and genetic disorders such as dyslexia, dyspraxia, epilepsy, and Prader-Willi Syndrome. This area continues to see increased interest among parents and caregivers in addition to educators. "The most wonderful thing about this area is the ability to check out and take home therapy tools to use with your child. Many of these tools cost over \$150, so this allows them to test drive therapy tools before spending money on purchasing something that may or may not work for their child," says Erin Busbea, Director. The ARC at the Columbus-Lowndes Public Library is located at 314 North 7th Street in Columbus and is open Monday through Saturday during regular library hours. For more information about the ARC and its resources, please contact Erin Busbea at 662.329.5300 or email her at ebusbea@lowndes.lib.ms.us.



MLC IS PROUD TO INTRODUCE NEW LOGO!

For 10 years the Mississippi Library Commission has served the state in our facility on Eastwood Drive. In celebration of this milestone, not to mention that the agency soon celebrates 90 YEARS serving the citizens of Mississippi, we thought it important to recognize that our location and service are more relevant now than ever before. Happy Birthday MLC...you never looked better!



About MLC

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Susan Cassagne *Executive Director*

Board of Commissioners

Jolee Hussey, Oxford
Ann Marsh, Brandon
Suzanne Poyner, Florence
Pamela Pridgen, Hattiesburg
Glenda Segars, Tupelo

Connect with the Mississippi Library Commission:



Susan Liles Editor ~ *On the Same Page*

The Mississippi Library Commission was established in 1926 to ensure that all Mississippians have access to quality library services in order to achieve their greatest potential, participate in a global society, and enrich their daily lives.

MLC strives to strengthen and enhance library services for all Mississippians, while embracing the technology our users expect.

LIBRARY SERVICES bureau provides direct and indirect services to all of the state's libraries and citizens to improve access to a quality experience for all, including special populations.

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES bureau provides financial management and administrative support for MLC; including fiscal management, budget monitoring and management of agency grant programs.