

on the same page



Mississippi Library Commission

Spring 2021

Libraries: Not Dead or Dying by Hulen E. Bivins, Executive Director

Do you remember when it was standard for men to wear a necktie? When was the last time you saw a gentleman wearing such? Just one year ago, men wearing a necktie were commonly seen at religious services and celebratory functions. The workplace was another location where the necktie was common. Indeed, the custom of wearing a necktie is more than a century old. The prevalence of the modern necktie emerged as an “in vogue” look during the 1920’s although its history dates back to the 17th century. During the Thirty Years’ War in France, King Louis XIII hired mercenary Croatian soldiers who wore a piece of cloth around their neck as part of their uniform.

Alas, the appearance of the men’s necktie is either dead or, most certainly, dying. The COVID-19 pandemic has greatly affected both its appearance and its prevalence. Even necktie production has been affected, as there is less need for the accessory. To survive, some manufacturers decreased cost with limits on new designs while others had to increase their prices to maintain the pre-2020 profit level of their business.

When the virus of last year continued to expand from state to state, some thought many of the normal entities of the educational and entertainment markets would be affected ---- perhaps to the point that they would be dying memories of another time. Among these entities, public libraries were viewed. That view was so very much in error.

It is true that by the end of April 2020, according to a survey completed by the American Library Association, 98% of the public libraries across the country had either closed their facilities or limited their hours of operation. But proving a Gallup poll done in January of 2020 to be true, the value of the public library prevailed among American Citizens. As the poll indicated, the cultural activity that Americans engaged in most often was not going to a movie theatre, musical concert, or a sporting event, but visiting a library. Not surprising, the most frequent users of library services were young people aged 18-29, residents of low-income households and adult women. The public libraries were not going the way of the necktie.

Just a few years ago, when internet search engines became accessible to many, media markets were filled with comments about the lack of need for public libraries, and how they were destined to become ineffectual as they would be an antique idea. Everyone can do their own research and answer their own questions without librarians and the library, was the view of the media. Just as that foolish statement proved to be untrue, so also did any thoughts of the death of the American public libraries in 2020.

Rather, in 2020, library professionals answered the call to serve and again proved to be essential 'first restorers' or 'second responders.'" Creative ways were implemented to serve communities. These efforts included tele-medicine services to register for COVID shots and other medical needs; video conference capabilities to interview for jobs and to help the distance learning programs of schools (K- to university); and to provide for the filing of government forms including tax returns. All of this was done while, in most libraries, traditional library services continued to be offered. The circulation of library materials continued via curbside service and drop boxes. Programming continued for all ages including Summer Reading Programs, and community information/notices were provided in newsletters and other communication venues like podcasts. The theme among the library workers and their libraries was that of continued service during the pandemic. Public libraries were neither dead nor dying.

Recently the U.S. Congress passed legislation entitled the "American Rescue Plan Act." The monies in this legislation provide for federal support to libraries and museums across the country. This commitment of funding shall allow public libraries continue to offer even more services than before the pandemic.

The conclusion is obvious. The public library is not dead nor are public libraries dying. They are trusted places in the community serving the public good daily.



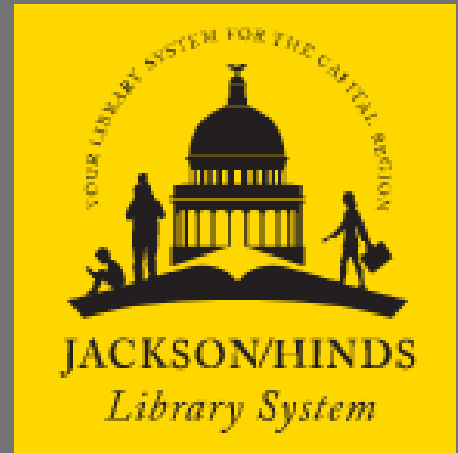
*In response to COVID-19, the Mississippi Library Commission will be open by appointment only beginning on **May 3rd**.*

Staff will still be working to assist patrons and libraries by phone, email and curbside service. Please follow us on social media for updates and news.

Thank you for your support and stay well. Contact MLC at (601) 432-4111 or mslib@mlc.lib.ms.us for more information.

Annie T. Jeffers Library in Bolton assists with 4-H Storywalk

As part of the Mississippi State Extension's AIM for CHangE literacy initiative offered to communities, Hinds county 4 -Her's and Dr. Rocheryl Ware of Clinton, who is a Mississippi State University Extension Agent in Hinds County, set up a story walk at a local public park in the Mount Olive Community. Read the full article at <https://bit.ly/32YSBrB>.



Northeast Regional Library Receives Library of Congress Award

Northeast Regional Library (NERL), headquartered in Corinth, has received a Library of Congress State Literacy Award for their Suggested Family Activities (SFA) program. SFA is a family literacy initiative designed by Northeast Regional Library as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The SFA program offers a variety of activities—arts and crafts, games, outdoor activities, STEM experiments, community engagement, or cooking—to build early literacy skills. The SFA offerings are posted on Northeast Regional's website, but also printed out to distribute to patrons without internet availability.

Lincoln-Lawrence-Franklin Regional Library System Receives USDA Telemedicine & Distance Learning Grant

The Lincoln-Lawrence-Franklin Regional Library System recently received a USDA Telemedicine & Distance Learning Grant for \$127,000. The library system will be able to install computer training labs in all four of their branches, as well as working with other libraries to offer trainings. The library project involves partnerships with Copiah-Lincoln Community College, King's Daughters Medical Center, and the Mississippi Library Commission and is one of only 10 grants awarded in Mississippi.

Pictured is library director, Katrina Castilaw, and MLC library consultant, Shellie Zeigler.



News & Opportunities For Libraries

MLC WEBINARS AND WEBJUNCTION OPPORTUNITIES

There are a wealth of training opportunities available on MLC's YouTube channel! Broken up into categories, these short sessions can help you in the areas of administration and management, summer reading programs, and collection development. Follow us at [MS Library Commission - YouTube](#)

WALMART FOUNDATION COMMUNITY GRANT PROGRAM

Application deadline: December 31, 2021

The Community Grant Program awards grants ranging from \$250 to \$2,500 through every local facility (Walmart Stores, Sam's Clubs, and Logistics Facilities). Applications may be received anytime from February 1, 2021 until the deadline of Dec. 31. Eligible nonprofit organizations must directly benefit the service area of the facility from which they are requesting funding.

Eligibility

Organizations applying must meet one of the following criteria:

- An organization holding a current tax-exempt status under Section 501(c)(3), (4), (6) or (19) of the Internal Revenue Code.
- A recognized government entity: state, county, or city agency, including law enforcement or fire departments, that are requesting funds exclusively for public purposes;
- A K-12 public or private school, charter school, community/junior college, state/private college or university; or
- A church or other faith-based organization with a proposed project that benefits the community at large.

All grant applications are made subject to review of the organization's reputation and activities and its agreement to comply with applicable terms and conditions. Submission of an application does not guarantee funding. Funding exclusions include: organizations that deny service, membership or other involvement on the basis of race, religion, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, national origin, ancestry, citizenship, veteran, or disability status. <https://walmart.org/how-we-give/local-community-grants>



The America I love still exists at the front desks of our public libraries. – Kurt Vonnegut in *A Man Without A Country*

ALA ANNOUNCES \$125M EMERGENCY FUND FOR LIBRARIES IMPACTED BY COVID-19

Deadline: May 20, 2021

The American Library Association (ALA) announced it will make available \$1.25M in emergency relief grants to libraries that have experienced substantial economic hardship due to the coronavirus pandemic. The ALA COVID Library Relief Fund invites public, school, academic, and tribal libraries across the United States and US Territories to apply for grants of \$30,000 to \$50,000. These funds are intended to bolster library operations and services including broadening technology access, developing collections, providing digital instruction, staffing, and expanding outreach, as well as maintaining and amplifying existing service strategies or adding new ones to extend impact through the end of 2021.

Application: <http://www.ala.org/aboutala/ala-covid-library-relief-fund>

MONEY SMART -- TRAIN THE TRAINER WEBINAR

The Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) is hosting Train the Trainer webinars for people interested in teaching a financial education program using free online resources.

People interested in these trainings will learn how to use the Money Smart financial education curriculum to help people enhance their money skills, create positive banking relationships and take control of their finances. To register, click

<https://www.fdic.gov/consumers/consumer/moneysmart/training-and-events/> .

These webinars will be held:

Tuesday, June 8 (12:00 PM - 1:30 PM CT)

Thursday, Sept. 9 (12:00 PM - 1:30 PM CT)

Thursday, Dec. 2 (12:00 PM - 1:30 PM CT)

For more information about the FDIC Money Smart program, go to [FDIC: Money Smart - A Financial Education Program](#)



That's the thing about books. They let you travel without moving your feet.

– Jhumpa Lahiri

Mississippi Star Libraries

The Mississippi Library Commission (MLC) recently named 12 public library systems as Star Libraries based on their statistics for fiscal year 2019 (October 1, 2018-September 30, 2019). The library systems are separated into four categories by expenditures that they report on the annual Public Library Survey, required by the Institute of Museum and Library Services. MLC then compares libraries' per capita rates in these four areas:

- Mississippi Measures – this is a combination of interlibrary loan use, statewide database use, number of registered users, and items withdrawn
- Circulation per capita
- Total program attendance per capita
- Public Internet terminal uses per capita

Star Library status is decided by recognizing the three highest scoring libraries in each of the four expenditure categories.

Under \$300,000

Noxubee County Public Library System
Covington County Library System
Pine Forest Regional Library System



\$300,000 - \$599,999

Starkville-Oktibbeha County Public Library System
Pearl River County Library System
Sunflower County Library System

\$600,000 - \$999,999

Columbus-Lowndes Public Library System
Northeast Regional Library System
Lincoln-Lawrence-Franklin Regional Library

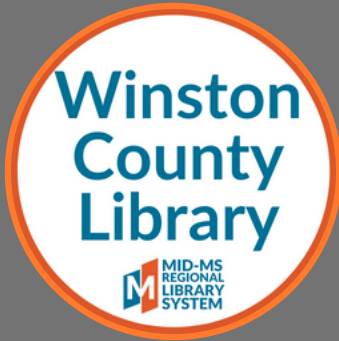
\$1,000,000 and above

First Regional Library System
Mid-Mississippi Regional Library System
Jackson-George Regional Library System

Margaret Murray Grant Recipients

The Margaret Murray Grant is supported by the state Friends of Mississippi Libraries, Inc. The purpose of the grant is to advance library programming and literacy for Mississippi public libraries through activities sponsored by local Friends of Mississippi Libraries chapters. Grant funds are earmarked for programming, collection development, and literacy activities. The grant opens annually in October and closes at the end of February.

Friends of the Winston County Library, Mid-Mississippi Regional Library System



The Louisville Elementary School has a reading proficiency score of 20%, which is below the Mississippi state average of 35%. That means that out of 495 attendees at Louisville Elementary School only 20% scored at or above the proficient levels in Reading/Language Arts as designated by Mississippi state tests. This group hopes to raise the proficiency score with the help of Wonderbooks. The funds from the grant will buy Wonderbooks to support Pre-K to third grade students for early literacy learning. Wonderbooks are easy-reader books with built-in audio that reads the story as the child follows along in the book. Research shows that hearing and seeing words at the same time improves reading success.

Friends of the Iuka Public Library, Northeast Regional Library System



Funds from the grant will provide a variety of books to give away during the 2021 Summer Reading Program. Children will be allowed to select and take home books of their choosing. Research reveals how critical it is for children to have access to reading materials at home to develop reading skills. Too many of children live in poverty without books at home, and parents must provide basic needs rather than "luxuries" like books. The inspiring 2020 MLA Conference session, "Read Every Day," stressed the value of letting children choose books for themselves that they can read simply for pleasure. Research sharpened their focus with astounding revelations about intrinsic vs. extrinsic rewards and helping children becoming readers.

Friends of the Biloxi Public Library, Harrison County Library System



The funding received by the 2021 Margaret Murray Grant will be used to purchase three tablets with protective covers and service warranties. The tablets will be used by teen patrons to complete activities and create projects during library events.

The Youth Service Librarian spoke with current teen patrons to ascertain the types of programs they would enjoy. The purpose of the teen program is to reinvigorate the love for the library as a safe space for local youth. By supporting activities that appeal to youth, the Friends hope to see teens return to the library once Covid-19 restrictions are lifted.

Summer Library Program

In years past, there have been in-person workshops held at MLC and across Mississippi. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic, MLC has not been able to host in-person SLP trainings.

However, we have recorded several webinars on our YouTube page and live virtual meetups for youth services staff to share ideas, ask questions, and get excited for this year's theme, "Tails & Tales."



Make sure to check out our YouTube channel for a complete list of programs!



Tails & Tales

Inside the Commission

News from Talking Book Services

The National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled has updated the certifying authorities that can provide eligibility for patrons who are print disabled, including those with a reading disability like dyslexia. In addition to medical doctors, nurses, psychologists, therapists, and librarians can certify patrons who fit the eligibility requirements. This will allow the Mississippi Talking Book Services **to serve more Mississippians** who have a print disability as well as others who are eligible for the service. Please contact Mary Rodgers Beal at mrbeal@mlc.lib.ms.us if you have any questions.

News from Library Services

Three staff members attended the Patent and Trademark Resource Center Training Seminar, March 22-25, 2021. Patenting an invention and trademarking a product name can be challenging. PTRC library staff are information experts trained on how to use search tools to access patent and trademark information.



They provide the human touch that no webpage or legal book can provide in helping inventors and small businesses find the information they need to protect their intellectual property. However, PTRC representatives are not attorneys and cannot provide legal advice. If you need help with a patent or trademark, please contact Lawrence Smith, Collection Management Director and Patent Librarian, at lsmith@mlc.lib.ms.us or calling **601.432.4120**.

New Staff Member



Meet Russell Hawkins

Russell Hawkins is the Systems Administrator at the Mississippi Library Commission (MLC). Russell began working at MLC last November. He provides ongoing support, monitoring, and maintenance of technology systems and computer equipment, both internally to agency staff and externally to public library staff. He also works on special projects, such as assessing library technology needs and working on library websites.

Inside the Commission

Business Services Director receives the Distinguished Certified Procurement Professional Credentials



Lynn Burris, Business Services Director for MLC, received the Certified Procurement Professional credential from the National Institute of Governmental Purchasing: The Institute for Public Procurement. NIGP Certified Procurement Professional is the only procurement-related professional certification that targets mid- to executive-level procurement leaders in the public sector and Burris is one of only three individuals in Mississippi who have been awarded this designation.



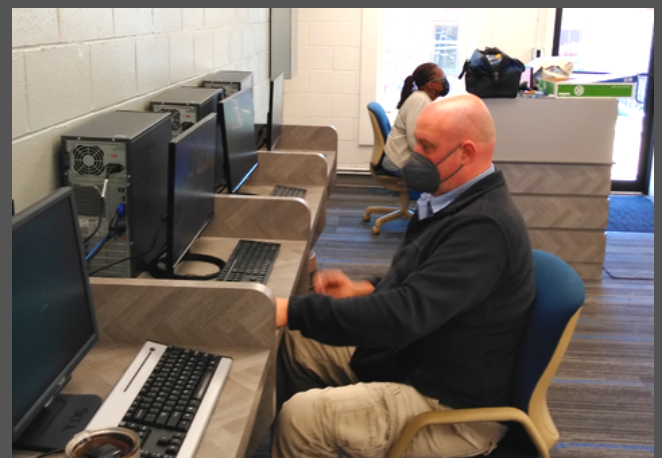
Further, Burris received her Certified Government Financial Manager designation (CGFM). There are currently only 23 CGFM's listed in the state of Mississippi.

News from Technology Services

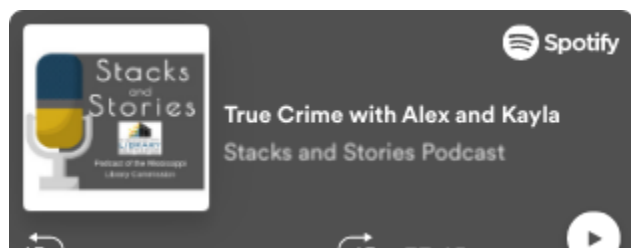


The Columbia-Marion County Library, headquarters for South Mississippi Regional Library had to move into a temporary location last year when a tornado ripped the roof off the library. They are nearing completion of repairs to the library and moving books back in. In this picture (left), Neil Machowski, Computer Systems Analyst, is testing LAN connections. Staff were on hand offering technical advice in preparation for reopening.

Our technical services team also went to the Wesson branch of the Copiah-Jefferson Library System to install staff and patron computers at their newly renovated building. Russell Hawkins is pictured here setting up their computers.



Be sure to tune in to MLC's podcast, Stacks and Stories! Pod Squad members interview authors, talk with librarians, and discuss books. Find it on iTunes, [Spotify](#) and at stacksandstories.libsyn.com



MLC Calendar

May

- 6 Public Library Directors Meeting
- 25 Board of Commissioners Meeting
- 31 Memorial Day (State Holiday) Agency CLOSED

June

July

- 1 LSTA Subgrant Applications Open
ARPA Subgrant Applications Open
- 4/5 Independence Day (State Holiday) Agency CLOSED (observed July 5)
- 27 Board of Commissioners Meeting

About MLC

3881 Eastwood Drive
Jackson, Mississippi 39211
601.432.4111
www.mlc.lib.ms.us

Hulen E. Bivins
Executive Director

Board of Commissioners
Lori Barnes, Ocean Springs
Stephen Cunetto, Starkville
Jolee Hussey, Oxford
Ann Marsh, Brandon
Becky Wright, Banner

Connect with the Mississippi Library Commission



Kristina Kelly

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.

The Mississippi Library Commission is committed --- through leadership, advocacy, and service --- to strengthening and enhancing libraries and library services for all Mississippians.

This publication is made possible in part by the Institute of Museum and Library Services under the provisions of the Grants to States Program as administered by the Mississippi Library Commission.