

# on the same page

with the Mississippi Library Commission



June 2025



## Summer Library Programs

Public libraries across Mississippi have been hosting many summer reading activities for Mississippians of all ages as part of their Color Our World Summer Library Program. This series of events and activities are held in the summer and are designed to encourage reading, continued learning, and social skills.

While many of the activities do focus on children, there are programs and activities for all ages, including teens, adults, and senior citizens. This summer's theme is Color our World, which encourages library patrons to explore art in all its mediums and get creative by trying something new.

In the photos above and below, library patrons are seen participating in learning activities from pottery, history, science experiments, painting, and music.

MLC sends a heartfelt thank you to the libraries across the state for making magic in our local communities during this year's summer library program.



# Around the State with MS Libraries



## 2025 SRESA “Making Connections” Conference

In June, MAGNOLIA and Talking Book Services (TBS) attended the 2025 Southern Regional Education Service Agencies' conference (SRESA). The event aimed to connect educators and support agencies, offering resources to teachers and administrators.

During the two-day conference, MLC engaged with about 1,000 participants, highlighting MAGNOLIA and TBS's classroom benefits. Conference educators valued MAGNOLIA's reliable databases like Explora and Britannica. Special education teachers saw TBS as a crucial tool for enhancing Individual Education Plans (IEPs) for students with reading disabilities. The conference set the stage for enduring partnerships between MLC and educational institutions.

To learn more about MAGNOLIA and the databases available to Mississippians, visit [www.MAGNOLIA.lib.ms.us](http://www.MAGNOLIA.lib.ms.us). To schedule a training about MAGNOLIA, contact MAGNOLIA Outreach Coordinator Billy Loper at [bloper@mlc.lib.ms.us](mailto:bloper@mlc.lib.ms.us).

To schedule a training about Talking Book Services, contact Outreach Librarian Megan Fleming at [mfleming@mlc.lib.ms.us](mailto:mfleming@mlc.lib.ms.us). Additional information can be found on the MLC website at [www.mlc.lib.ms.us](http://www.mlc.lib.ms.us).



## Pike-Amite-Walthall Library System celebrates 100 years

In May, a celebration was held at the McComb Library honoring the Pike- Amite-Walthall Library System's (PAWLS) 100th anniversary. MLC Executive Director Hulen Bivins and MLC Library Consultant Shellie Zeigler attended the event where a re-dedication of the library was held with patrons, local government officials, library board members, and many citizens from the three county service area. Pictured to the left is Library Director Darlene Morgan with Hulen Bivins and Shellie Ziegler. For more information about PAWLS, visit <https://www.pawls.org/>.





The [Institute of Museum and Library Services](#) announced that MLC has received the distinguished John G. Lorenz Award, acknowledging exceptional efforts in completing the FY 2024 State Library Administrative Agencies (SLAA) survey both promptly and accurately. The SLAA survey is the only federal survey that collects vital information about the operations and services of State Library Administrative Agencies across the United States. Congratulations to Executive Director Hulen Bivins and Deputy Executive Director Jennifer Lena for meeting the qualifications for this award!



MLC is thrilled to announce an exciting opportunity for libraries to enhance their capacity to address community needs through a year of training provided by the [Homeless Training Institute](#).

Led by Ryan Dowd, these sessions will equip library staff with essential skills to effectively manage challenging behaviors exhibited by individuals facing homelessness, mental illness, trauma, and substance abuse. The curriculum is designed to cover a variety of pertinent topics, including but not limited to responding to delusions and hallucinations, addressing inappropriate comments, and fostering a supportive workplace environment for coworkers.

Recorded trainings will be available through Niche Academy, and detailed instructions for accessing these materials and signing up library staff will be communicated via email. For libraries with more than 20 staff members, a streamlined process will be in place where you can simply provide a spreadsheet for bulk registration.

If you need assistance with the log-in process, please reach out to your MLC library consultant. Access to this program was funded, in part, by a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services.



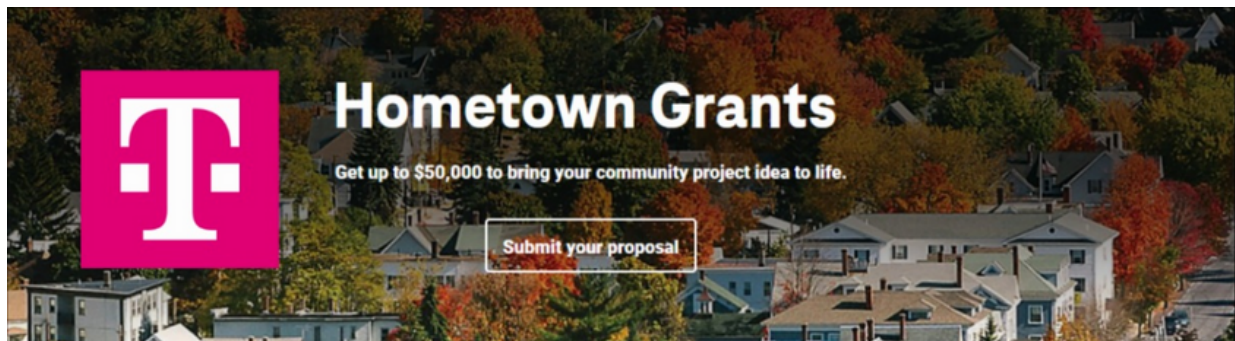
# Little Free Library®

Take a Book. Share a Book.

The Little Free Library's Impact Grant Program is designed to enhance access to books in communities across the United States and Canada. By providing fully assembled book exchanges, this initiative aims to promote literacy and community involvement. Recipients receive a library structure made from recycled materials, a bilingual charter sign, installation kits, and a starter set of books.

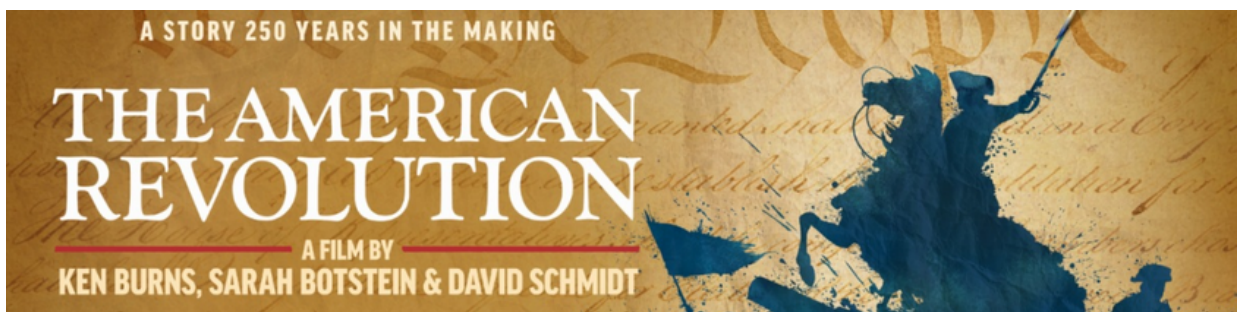
For additional information and to apply, visit

<https://littlefreelibrary.org/programs/impact-library/apply/>



T-Mobile's Hometown Grants program is providing small towns with a population of under 50,000 grants to revitalize their community spaces and foster local connections. The grant will award up to \$50,000 for shovel-ready projects such as upgrading "technology in libraries."

For more information and to apply, go to [www.t-mobile.com/brand/hometown-grants](http://www.t-mobile.com/brand/hometown-grants).



## THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION Library Microgrant

Calling all libraries! Apply for a \$750 micro-grant to host screenings, talks, and civic events around Ken Burns's new PBS series THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION. Spark dialogue, inspire learning, and commemorate 250 years of independence.

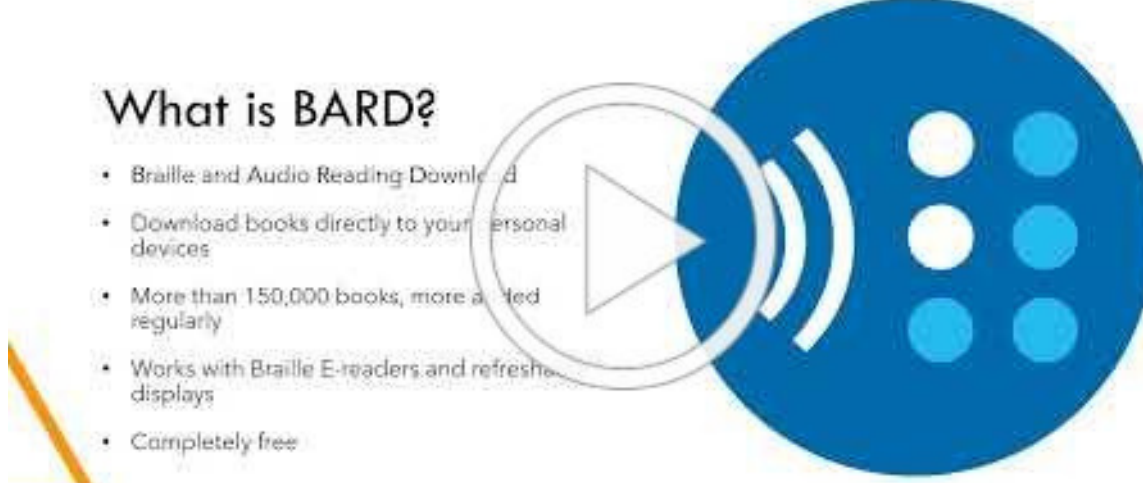
**Deadline:** July 7, 2025

**Apply at** <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/AmRevLibraryRFP>.



HHMI Tangled Bank Studios and STARNet are offering a fantastic grant opportunity that could bring unique and engaging bird-focused programming to your library. It's a great way to connect with your community around science, nature, and conservation. Click the image above to view a pre-application webinar recording. Or view the pre-application webinar recording Here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8wI9I6MO8XE>





## New BARD Express and BARD Mobile Tutorials Available

BARD is the Braille and Audio Reading Download service of Talking Book Services, provided by the National Library Service (NLS) for the Blind and Print Disabled of the Library of Congress. Recently, Talking Book Services staff member, BARD Specialist Evan Theilman, created two new instructional videos for BARD users. BARD Mobile Basics covers primary operating functions for the mobile application, and BARD Express Basics covers the same information for the application on a Windows-based computer.

More information about BARD at <https://www.mlc.lib.ms.us/tbs/bard/>.

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## Upcoming MLC Continuing Education Trainings for Library Staff

### July 2025

July 1 - PRHappy Hour  
July 8 - MAGNOLIA Hour  
July 11 - Youth Services Hour  
July 15 - Policy Workshop  
July 16 - Remote Reference Training  
July 17 - LSTA Grants Workshop  
July 22 - MLC Information Services  
July 23 - Virtual Frontline Training  
July 29 - Weeding Part 1  
July 30 - HR Happy Hour  
July 30 - Virtual Manager Training  
July 31 - Cataloging & Processing

### August 2025

August 5 - PRHappy Hour  
August 8 - Youth Services Hour  
August 11 - Pinterest for Libraries  
August 12 - MAGNOLIA Hour  
August 13 - Storytime 101  
August 14 - Special Collections  
August 19 - ILL  
August 20 - Virtual Frontline Training  
August 21-22 - PLD Meeting  
August 26 - Weeding Part 2  
August 27 - HR Happy Hour  
August 27 - Virtual Manager Training

The continuing education program is an important part of MLC's services to the public library community. Full descriptions and information can be found in our Continuing Education catalog on our website at <https://www.mlc.lib.ms.us/ms-libraries/library-development/>.



# From our Executive Director

## When Living is Easy

by Hulen E. Bivins

The 1935 musical PORGY AND BESS featured music composed by George Gershwin. One of the tunes was the aria “Summertime.” The line in this tune, as written by DuBose Heyward, spoke of a time in the South when the “fish were jumping, and the living was easy.”

Obviously, the summertime season has now arrived in Mississippi’s libraries. It, traditionally, is a time when library staff members and the citizens they serve move a little bit slower in the heat and the number of tasks undertaken, both singularly and collectively, are somewhat reduced. Ways that such might be seen are in the immediate applications to be managed regarding preparation for new budgets and the programs to be undertaken in the new year.

Close to the “fish are jumping” concept are the activities undertaken by libraries to set budget numbers. There has been an up and down affect reflected in library budgets due to the controversial actions taken by the federal government. These activities have pushed toward a zero-funding level and proposals to end any federal funding for libraries. Presently, the verdict of multiple court cases shall designate the future of federal monies for libraries.

And, as to state budget dollars, the story for the season is that libraries should prepare to do more with a little less. The reason for this is due to a massive 6.5 % increase in employee insurance cost and the reduced dollars to be received as a parallel action with the reduction of income tax dollars resulting in a reduced tax payment by the state’s citizens.

So, what can be said about this season “living is easy” message? The answer may be in the concept that libraries actively facilitate so many activities remaining busy in this season. Summer Reading activities and other seasonal events illustrate this message.

Perhaps the best way to note illustrative actions of the season is to pay homage for the positive actions that have been completed in the recent months. These are actions of accomplishment by the MLC Board of Commissioners working with the Public Library Directors of the state. All is being done for the citizens and families of Mississippi.



Mississippi Library Commission | 3881 Eastwood Drive | Jackson, Mississippi 39211 601.432.4111  
**[www.mlc.lib.ms.us](http://www.mlc.lib.ms.us)** 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.

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