

## STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

Georgia Public Library Service partners with a number of state and private organizations to provide an additional layer of support and awareness for the state's public libraries. During the past several years, our partnership programs have educated and entertained thousands of Georgia citizens while saving more than \$4 million in direct expenditures and providing hundreds of hours of free programming for public libraries.

GPLS's partnership with Georgia State Parks & Historic Sites, a division of the Department of Natural Resources, began in June 2008. With the introduction of the ParkPass program, library users are able to check out passes good for free parking and admissions. ParkPass circulations have grown by double-digit percentages in each year, with nearly 13,000 loans recorded in 2011. Building on this relationship with DNR, public libraries began loaning family passes for the Go Fish Education Center in Perry in 2012. The pass and a valid library card provide patrons with free admission for up to four family members.

The Zoo Atlanta Family Pass program began in February 2011 and attracted more than 19,000 circulations in its first year, saving Georgia families hundreds of thousands of dollars and providing many children with opportunities they would not previously have enjoyed to visit the zoo and take part in its many educational programs and special events.

In partnership with the Georgia Environmental Facilities Authority, Georgia's libraries have been able to offer the Kill-a-Watt Loan Program for the past two years. So far, this has saved residents approximately \$40,000 over the purchase price of the meters and thousands of dollars off their annual electric bills.

GPLS's longest-running partnership is the Check-It-Out Reading Challenge, co-sponsored by GPLS, the Atlanta Hawks and, until their relocation to Canada earlier this year, the Atlanta Thrashers. These annual supplemental Summer Reading programs began in June 2005 and have attracted about 60,000 participants so far. Approximately 74,000 tickets have been awarded to young readers who have participated in this summer reading cooperative.

GPLS began a second supplemental Summer Reading Program in May 2010 through a partnership with Georgia's Path2College 529 Plan. In its first two years, parents signed up more than 11,000 youngsters for the annual summer reading sweepstakes, which encourages parents to save for their children's college education.

GPLS also partners with several entities that provide free programming, free materials or both for libraries. These include the Georgia Council for the Arts, the Georgia Center for the Book, the High Museum of Art, Zoo Atlanta and its ZooMobile; and the Georgia Commission on the Holocaust.

September 2011 saw the kickoff of GPLS's relationship with VSA Arts of Georgia — its first partnership aimed specifically to benefit the Georgia Libraries for Accessible Statewide Services network of Talking Book Libraries by exhibiting the works of artists with visual impairments and disabilities. This is enabling patrons to learn more about art through hands-on activities and tactile works, as well as demonstrating how people with different abilities can still express themselves creatively and earn a living through art.

