

Proposed 2013 budget includes \$4.36 million for facilities

On March 27, the Georgia General Assembly submitted its proposed \$19.3 billion budget for fiscal year 2013 to **Gov. Nathan Deal**. The budget includes \$1,325,000 in 20-year capital bond funds to help build a \$1.85 million Royston Public Library in Franklin County and \$780,000 to assist in the construction of a new \$1 million Milner Public Library in Lamar County.

The Royston project, a branch of the Athens Regional Library System, would involve the adaptive reuse of



Artist's rendering of the proposed Royston Public Library

an existing 8,500-square-foot, multi-use facility for relocation of the current library.

"The community has outgrown its 5,200-square-foot library building,

which also lacks the infrastructure necessary to support today's computer technology," said **Nathan Rall**, director of Library Planning and Construction for GPLS.

The new Milner Public Library, projected to be approximately 5,000 square feet in size, would be built in a growing community that does not currently have a public library. It will be part of the Griffin-based Flint River Regional Library System.

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GPLS hosts national meeting to lead new software development

Seventy representatives from 38 states took part in the initial Loblolly Planning Meeting to spur development of open-source software for libraries that serve users with visual or other impairments. Georgia Public Library Service hosted the event, held Feb. 7-9 in Atlanta, using a \$97,843 National Leadership Grant from the Institute

of Museum and Library Services. Georgia first lady **Sandra Deal** opened the conference and thanked the attendees for their work to "make education readily available for all."

The goal of the event was to assemble national leaders with expertise in library accessibility to plan the development of the next generation of software that is needed to circulate recorded books, provide reading machines and expand and maintain the other services provided by the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS), a division of the Library of Congress. The proposed software would require specifications that are not included in ordinary integrated library system (ILS) software, such as provisions for downloadable audio and social networking and for components necessary to facilitate greater collaboration among state library agencies and ease the transfer of patron records as they relocate between states.

"Ultimately, we all want to provide a higher level of customer service for people with print impairments, so functions such as patron reading history, reading preferences, appropriate age-level materials and other

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Staff



Sandra Deal (left) and Robert Helfer were among the speakers at the first Loblolly Planning Meeting.

WebJunction Georgia update provides streamlined interface

Following a March 25 streamlining of the site, WebJunction Georgia members should find it easier to access content, manage learning and engage with others in the library community. "The updated site contains multiple improvements to the end-user interface," said **Jay Turner**, director of Continuing Education for GPLS.

He explained that the site looks fresher and behaves differently in a number of ways.

- It is more conducive to allowing individuals to create and manage a learning plan. Courses can be added with one click and removed with two. Gone is the multipage checkout process.

- Learners can directly access reports on their activities and learning history.

- Learners will notice improved course search functions and faster browsing.

"One consistent complaint with the previous site was that course registration was labyrinthine," Turner said. "Our partners at WebJunction have made significant strides in this area."

WebJunction members can enroll in unlimited courses without charge, choosing from more than 300 self-paced online classes that have been selected to meet a wide range of learning needs. Library employees, library science students

and trustees across the state receive completion certificates and earn continuing education credits upon successful completion of the courses.

Since Georgia joined WebJunction in August 2008, more than 2,100 library staff members have created accounts and signed up for courses. More than 350 Georgians have also attended a WebJunction-hosted webinar in the past eight months.

Without WebJunction, these individual online classes and webinars could cost from \$20 to \$400 or more per person.

Although anyone can visit the WebJunction Georgia site at www.ga.webjunction.org, some areas are available only for qualified members who request Georgia affiliation.

Those eligible to sign up include any employee of a public, academic or school library in the state; employees of GALILEO; trustees of any Georgia library or library system; and library science students currently enrolled at Valdosta State University. New members should follow the site's "Request Course Access" link and then select Georgia as their affiliation.

The premier online community helping libraries meet technology and training needs, WebJunction is supported in part by grants to OCLC, the Online Computer Library Center, from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and from the U.S. Institute for Museum and Library Services (IMLS). WebJunction Georgia is made possible by a grant from IMLS to GPLS under the provisions of the Library Services and Technology Act. ■



Staff

Fishing for knowledge

Jeremy Wixson, manager of the Go Fish Education Center in Perry, provides a guided tour of the facility for local library staff and the first official users of the center's new Library Family Pass on Feb. 10. From left are Wixson; Karen Odom, director of the Houston County Library System; Nyisha Ferguson, Perry branch manager; 12-year-old Will Drew with his grandmother Ilona Cantrell; Jeanette Drew with 9-year-old daughter Lauren; Lucas Franklin, Nola Brantley Library branch manager; Jennifer Lautzenheiser, circulation assistant at the Perry branch; Jane Matthews, cataloging and collection management coordinator for Peach Public Libraries (PPL) in Fort Valley; Billy Tripp, assistant director for PPL; Gilda Stanbery, director of PPL; and Whitney Rice, PPL's coordinator of youth services.

Budget

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Also included in the General Assembly's proposed budget for the coming year is \$2,255,000 in five-year capital bond funds for Major Repair and Renovation (MRR) grants for public libraries. If approved by the governor, these grants will pay up to 50 percent of approved costs associated with needed structural repairs; roofing projects; heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) repairs; and required life safety, accessibility and code compliance projects. More than 70 public library facilities across the state would benefit from the grants, with all projects requiring matching local funds to qualify.

As part of the planned MRR distribution, six library systems would share \$400,306 for the completion of \$1,350,612 worth of major

structural repairs to seven libraries in six counties. These include the Northwest Georgia Regional Library System's Calhoun-Gordon County Library; the Worth County Library's Margaret Jones Public Library in Sylvester; the Three Rivers Regional Library System's Hog Hammock Library on Sapelo Island; the Coweta County Library's A. Mitchell Powell Branch in Newnan; the main branch of the Thomas County Library in Thomasville; and the Central and Southside branches of the Dougherty County Public Library in Albany.

The state would also contribute \$790,925 toward a total of \$2,089,051 for the library roofing projects needed by 15 facilities in 10 counties; \$621,248 toward a total of \$1,248,673 for HVAC projects needed at 20 libraries in 14 counties;

and \$442,469 toward a total of \$884,939 for required life safety, accessibility and code compliance projects at 29 facilities in 20 counties.

"MRR grants provide matching funds for the essential repair and renovation of public libraries throughout the state," Rall explained. "The grants leverage both local and state funds for projects that will extend the life of a facility by a minimum of 10 years. Approved MRR funds are provided to library systems on a reimbursement basis and are based on actual remediation and repair costs."

All library-associated funds were added to the governor's 2013 budget recommendations by the House and Senate. Gov. Deal has 40 days to approve or veto the funds. ■

Loblolly

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personal identifiers must be part of any software package," explained Georgia State Librarian **Dr. Lamar Veatch**.

Over the course of five general sessions and 10 breakout sessions, Loblolly attendees worked to produce a set of core functional requirements to guide the development of this software. According to **Emily Almond**, director of Information Technology for GPLS, one immediate benefit of the meeting is the creation of an online information clearinghouse for attendees and other interested parties at www.loblolly-ils.org. The site includes meeting and presentation videos, along with notes from the breakout sessions and follow-up discussions.



Almond

"This conference was a unique opportunity to bring together leaders from across the country and to give everyone a chance to have meaningful conversations about how technology is going to shape the future of libraries serving this population," Almond said. "Through the group discussions, breakout sessions and

presentations, we were able to cover a broad range of topics, with the added bonus of having the time to take a deeper dive on the issues that emerged as priorities, one of which was the aging of America.

"In thinking about long-term strategies for helping Talking Book libraries stay current in the provision of services, this topic surfaced several times," Almond said. "According to U.S. Census Bureau projections, the elderly population will more than double — to 80 million — between now and 2050. By that time, as many as one in five Americans could be elderly. And because we expect this population to continue being a significant portion of our users, the sense of urgency around meeting their technological needs is reaching paramount importance."

Robert Helfer, a West Virginia-based consultant who was formerly with the Texas State Library and Archives Commission, has been contracted to prepare a white paper about the project's accomplishments and its findings as they relate to the operational, performance and service specifications for the proposed Loblolly software. Once the report is completed, GPLS will present it and the committee's recommendations to NLS, to the Chief Officers of State Library Agencies and at upcoming national conferences. ■

Summer Reading encourages children to 'dream big'

Nighttime will be the right time for the hundreds of thousands of young Georgians who will participate in the 2012 Summer Reading Program (SRP) at their local public libraries. The theme for this year's children's program is "Dream Big — Read," while the teen program's slogan is "Own the Night."

Each year, libraries use the SRP to promote family literacy and demonstrate to kids that reading is fun. More than 1.56 million people attended a children's program at one of Georgia's public libraries in 2011, and circulation of children's materials exceeded 17.5 million items for the third consecutive year.

According to **Elaine Black**, director of Youth Services for GPLS, studies have shown that school-age children who continue to read throughout their vacation from school maintain or improve writing, vocabulary and reading skills, while

children who do not read are more likely to see skills decrease. "Reading as few as five books during the summer months can help children maintain their reading levels so that when school begins, they are not behind in reading skills but are ready to move forward," she said.

In keeping with this year's theme, **Brian Lies** (pronounced Lees), the artist for this year's children's program, is best known as creator of the nocturnal world of The New York Times best-selling bat series for children, *Bats at the Beach*, *Bats at the Library* and *Bats at the Ballgame*. The teen program artist this year is **Christian Fuenfhausen**, the celebrated designer of cover art for books that include the iconic vampire art for Heather Brewer's *The Chronicle of Vladimir Tod* series.

Public libraries across Georgia will support this year's SRP effort by offering reading logs, bookmarks

and stickers — and by hosting activities such as storytimes, puppet shows and other special events such as arts-and-crafts programs and magic shows. As with Georgia's previous programs, children receive rewards for achieving reading goals. Kids can sign up and get their reading materials at public libraries across the state, beginning in May.

This is Georgia's fifth year as a member of the nationwide Collaborative Summer Library Program (CSLP), a consortium of all 50 states, the District of Columbia and multiple U.S. territories working together to provide high-quality summer reading program materials for children at the lowest cost possible for their public libraries. "These coordinated programs are great for families that travel to visit relatives during their summer vacations," Black said. "They can be part of the same program across the entire country."

Black said the consortium has delivered an extremely unified and high-quality program every year since its inception. "The themes and slogans are voted on each year by the membership," she explained. "State library staff members make suggestions, and their master list is whittled down to a top five. Representatives from each member state then vote for their choice from that list."

Georgia public libraries' SRP is made possible by a grant from the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services to Georgia Public Library Service under the provisions of the Library Services and Technology Act. Visit www.georgialibraries.org for additional information about "Dream Big — Read," "Own the Night" and numerous other family literacy activities. ■

GPLS, Path2College 529 Plan partner for 'Think Big! Save for College!' Sweepstakes

This year, another lucky Summer Reading Program participant will win more than \$5,000 to apply toward their future education, as the Path2College 529 Plan once again partners with public libraries across the state to offer the "Think Big! Save for College!" Sweepstakes.

The sweepstakes, administered by the Path2College 529 Plan — Georgia's official 529 plan — will also award \$1,529 each to the winner's home library, to the Georgia library with the greatest number of sweepstakes entries and to the Georgia library system with the greatest percentage of registered users entering the sweepstakes.

The Path2College 529 Plan, managed by TIAA-CREF Tuition Financing Inc., will sponsor the sweepstakes. In April, each of Georgia's 61 public library systems will receive a sweepstakes information kit from the Path2College 529 Plan. The kit will contain official sweepstakes rules, along with promotional materials that will include bookmarks, table tents, posters and buttons.

The program will launch May 1 and run through July 31. Legal residents of the state of Georgia who are at least 21 years of age and are a parent, grandparent or legal guardian

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Sweepstakes

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of any child born in 1996 or after may enter online at www.path2college529.com. Employees, directors, officers, trustees and agents and their respective immediate household and family members (spouses and children, parents and siblings and their spouses) of the Path2College 529 Plan and employees, directors, officers, trustees and agents, and their respective immediate household and family members

(spouses and children, parents and siblings and their spouses) of any Georgia public library or the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia are not eligible.

The Path2College 529 Plan will conduct a random drawing among all sweepstakes entries for the \$5,529 Path2College 529 Plan

account winner in early August. The winner, along with the winning libraries and winning library system, will be recognized at a press event in early September. The three \$1,529 awards will be used for the winners' children's and teen's materials and programming.

"The Path2College 529 Plan is pleased to once again partner with the GPLS to offer this annual summer reading program sweepstakes," said Path2College Deputy Treasurer **Mitch Seabaugh**. "We hope this year's sweepstakes brings more children to their local libraries, where they can learn more about their current interests and explore new ones while also sharpening their reading skills. We also hope it helps parents and grandparents better understand that planning for their loved one's future today increases their chances for higher education tomorrow."

"We hope that by raising awareness through programs like this, even more families will read with their children throughout the year to help them improve their literacy skills and better prepare them for their future," said **Elaine Black**, director of Youth Services for GPLS. ■

Atlanta Hawks sponsor eighth Check-It-Out Reading program

The Atlanta Hawks will again join Georgia's public libraries this summer by challenging young readers to earn basketball-related rewards through reading. Designed to enhance this year's "Dream Big — Read" Summer Reading Program, the Hawks' 2012 Check-It-Out Reading Challenge (CIORC) will welcome young readers entering classes from pre-K to grade 12 for the 2012-13 school year.

Hawks mascots Harry the Hawk and SkyHawk will make appearances at numerous libraries in metro Atlanta to promote the program. Souvenir bookmarks promoting CIORC will be available at participating library branches beginning in late May. Registration begins June 11 and will be conducted online through Aug. 20.

Any child enrolled in grades pre-K through 12 in the state of Georgia may participate by having a parent or guardian log on to www.checkitoutreading.com, either on a home computer or a public-access computer at the library. Parents and guardians may register each child in their household for the program. As many as six participating children may attend a Hawks game together when accompanied by at least one adult who has purchased a ticket.

"Professional sports inspire us in so many different ways and we're proud that the Atlanta Hawks can motivate students in all areas of education," said **Tracy White**, Hawks chief sales officer and senior vice president of sales and marketing. "We look forward to kids across the state of Georgia taking the reading challenge and earning the opportunity to join us next season at Philips Arena."

As part of their partnership with GPLS, the Hawks will sponsor three "Georgia Public Libraries Nights" during the 2012-13 regular season, with discounted admission for employees of the state's public libraries and their friends and families. "It's great to have this support for summer reading from our partners, especially in times of economic challenge," said **Elaine Black**, director of Youth Services for GPLS. "From the beginning of our relationship — which has introduced many new families to summer reading — public libraries have benefited greatly from our connection to the Hawks."

For additional information on CIORC and other Hawks-sponsored educational programs such as Fast Break for Reading, visit www.hawks.com. ■



NEWS IN BRIEF

Roni Tewksbury has been named director at the West Georgia Regional Library system in Carrollton. She previously was the system's assistant director, and she has served as its interim director since Jan. 1. She has worked for the system since 1983.

Keith Schuermann has been named director of the Troup-Harris Regional Library system in LaGrange. He most recently served as an assistant branch manager for the Gwinnett County Public Library system.



Schuermann

Mashell Fashion has been appointed interim director for the Augusta-based East Central Georgia Regional Library System by the system's board of trustees. She most recently served as the region's assistant director.



Fogarty

Northwest Georgia Regional Library System Deputy Director **Nick Fogarty** retired April 1 after almost 40 years of service in Georgia's public libraries.



Thomas

Shun Thomas has joined GPLS as assistant manager of Georgia Libraries for Accessible Statewide Services Distribution Center in

Morrow. She most recently worked as a clerical manager for the Georgia State Patrol.

Following an internship with the agency, **Daniel Zeiger** has joined the GPLS Information Technology department as IT/PINES system administrator.



Zeiger

The American Library Association (ALA) has named **Lyn Hopper** as the winner of its 2012 Elizabeth Futas Catalyst for Change Award. The bi-annual award recognizes and honors a librarian who invests time and talent to make positive changes in the profession of librarianship. Hopper served as assistant state librarian for library development from 2007-2010.



Hopper

Angela Glowcheski, information specialist at the Chestatee Regional Library's Lumpkin County Library in Dahlonega, has been named one of 16 recipients of an Information Technology Rural Librarian Master's Scholarship Program grant at the School of Information Sciences at the University of Tennessee. The grant will support Glowcheski's expenses to attend the ALA annual conference



Glowcheski

in Anaheim, Calif., in June and to present a workshop at the Association for Rural & Small Libraries Conference in Raleigh, N.C., in September.

The Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA), a division of ALA, has selected **Angela Spitzer**, children's and young adult librarian at the Satilla Regional Library's Douglas-Coffee County Public Library, as one of 20 nationwide winners of its Summer Reading Program Grants. Spitzer's library will receive \$1,000 to help fund its summer reading programs for teens. The YALSA grants are funded by the Dollar General Literacy Foundation.

Friends of Georgia Libraries (FOGL) will sponsor its annual spring workshop, "Where Do We Go From Here?," April 27 at the Forsyth County Library in Cumming. Details and registration information are available at www.georgia-friends.org. FOGL has also named the Friends of the Nancy Guinn Library, part of the Conyers-Rockdale Library System, and the Friends of the Winder Library, part of the Piedmont Regional Library System, as joint recipients of the inaugural FOGL Author Appearance Grant. ■

Staff



A peach of an employee

Bill Gresham (left), chairman of the board of the Fort Valley-based Peach Public Libraries, presents **Nancy Rairdon** with a certificate of appreciation for her 18 years of service. Rairdon, the system's coordinator of youth services, retired Jan. 31.

Commissioner, Friends make huge impact in Towns County

Towns County Commissioner **Bill Kendall** presented the second annual Commissioners Challenge Grant to support Towns County's libraries on March 26.

Two years ago, Commissioner Kendall became concerned about the declining state funds available for purchasing necessary materials, equipment and supplies, explained **Donna Howell**, director of the Mountain Regional Library System. He offered to have the county match, dollar for dollar, up to \$5,000 in any contributions raised by the Friends of the Libraries of Towns County, and for the second year in a row, the Friends have met the challenge.

Howell said the positive impact made by the local Friends organizations on the system's four branches is

Alissa Richards



Celebrating the second annual Commissioners Challenge Grant to the Towns County Public Library are (back row, from left): Steve Howell Friends of the Library of Towns County (FOLTC) member; Marilyn Pierce and Barbara Hale, FOLTC co-presidents; Debbie Phillips, branch manager; Janice Cochran, FOLTC publicity chair; LeeAnn Wildman, FOLTC member; Susan Sinram and John Kay, board members; and Jim Hale, FOLTC member. Also (front row, from left) joining are Jim Reynolds, FOLTC treasurer; Commissioner Bill Kendall; and Donna Howell, director.

impressive. "In FY2012 so far," she said, "our Friends group has provided more than 85 percent of all the materials added to the libraries in Towns County — Mountain Regional Library headquarters in Young Harris and Towns County Public Library in Hiawassee. Without these contributions, Towns County's libraries would have had virtually no new materials in the past two years."

Even though Towns is Georgia's second smallest county, it has one of the highest library use rates in the state. More than 67 percent of the county's residents have an active PINES library card.

The \$10,000 combined boost from the Friends and the Commissioners Challenge Grant represents nearly \$1 per capita for the county. ■

Rockmart celebrates grand opening of new, 17,000-square-foot library

The Rockmart Library, part of the Sara Hightower Regional Library, held an open house March 30 to celebrate the newly completed facility. It was a jovial occasion with satisfied smiles across the faces of everyone in attendance. Patrons, staff members and local

and state representatives attended and expressed pleasure with the facility.

Ann Wheeler, branch manager, acknowledged those involved in turning an unused vocational building at the old Rockmart High School into a state-of-the-art library that provides a warm, inviting environment with a myriad of new features. Included in the new facility are a room for genealogical and historical research and a much larger children's department decorated in a bicycle motif to reflect the Silver Comet Trail that winds through town. A common exclamation from attendees was, "It's so much bigger." The library's previous 5,900-square-foot home — about one-third the size of the new 17,000-square-foot building — will be turned into a new Rockmart Senior Center.

Twila Williamson, a patron from Taylorsville, gave a rave review of the new library. "It's worth the drive," she said. "I absolutely love this place, and it has the nicest staff." ■

Staff



Staff from the Rockmart Library and the Sara Hightower Regional Library welcomed Polk County residents and elected officials to the recent open house. From left are Sharon Cleveland, Christy Williams, Dave Daniels, Rena Maulding, Jennifer Hall, Branch Manager Ann Wheeler, Robbin Burrow, Jennifer Harmison and interim Director Delana Hickman.

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Information presented in this newsletter will be provided in alternative formats on request. For more information about Georgia's libraries and literary events, or to post an event, visit our online calendar at www.georgialibraries.org

Staff



Educational bridging of Madison County

The Athens Regional Library System's Madison County Library in Danielsville unveiled its new look at a ribbon-cutting ceremony on March 31. The yearlong renovation project resulted in an expanded children's area, a larger public meeting room, a new computer lab, a new genealogy research room and more space for the library's collection. Judy C. Dyer (right) of the State Board for the Certification of Librarians, welcomes patrons, Friends, staff and board members to the day's festivities. Joining her behind the ribbon are (from left) Anthony Dove, chairman, Madison County Board of Commissioners; Rev. Calvin Ward, Danielsville United Methodist Church, who gave the invocation; Commissioners Pete Bond and Stanley Thomas; and Michael Moak, chair, Madison County Library Board.



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