Library Day in Tallahassee

On February 19, 2019, a delegation led by ACLD Director Shaney Livingston traveled to Tallahassee to participate in Florida Library Day. Coordinated by the Florida Library Association, the day provides the state’s library systems an opportunity to meet with their legislators. The ACLD group offered thanks for past assistance to the local area’s policymakers: Senator Keith Perry and Representatives Chuck Brannan, Chuck Clemons, and Clovis Watson, Jr. They also discussed pending legislative matters and requested the lawmakers’ continued support.

Topics discussed included state aid to public libraries, the public library construction grants program, multi-type library cooperatives, and libraries organized as special districts.

Those attending with Director Livingston were Chris Culp, ACLD Public Services Division Director; Joyce West, ACLD Public Services Administrator–Branches; Linda Jackson, Board of Trustees; Kim Worley, Board of Trustees; Bill Burger, President, ACLD Foundation; and Ellen Smith, Vice President, Friends of the Library.
Letter from the Director

The Alachua County Library District burst into 2019 with a rush of activity as we prepared our long-range plan and geared up for Summer at the Library. As we ready to mark Library Appreciation Week April 7-13, we reflect on the resources, programs, and collections the Library District provides, tools for the education and empowerment of the entire community.

The Alachua County Library District Governing Board and Board of Trustees members unanimously approved the 2019-2020 long-range plan, including a districtwide update to branch hours, at a joint meeting Thursday, Feb. 28th. New hours are effective Saturday, June 1st, and will increase the total number of branch hours by 17 hours per week, adding approximately 884 hours annually throughout the District.

At Headquarters Branch, we started spring with a celebrity guest – kids’ music star Laurie Berkner. Children and parents danced, marched, and sang with Berkner for two shows March 19th. Following each performance, Berkner signed books and visited with dozens of children, from babies to teenagers. Thank you so much to Friends of the Library for enriching the lives of local families by enabling us to welcome guests like Berkner.

Looking forward to summer, our Adult Services and Youth Services departments are planning Summer at the Library, including programs for all ages. The fun kicks off with Summer ReaderPalooza, 2-4 PM Sunday, May 19th, at Depot Park. The event will feature vendors and community partners, while encouraging attendees to sign up for summer programs.

Kids, teens, and adults can track their progress online or in a fantasy-inspired coloring book for a chance to win a private library MAKERspace experience or art class. Thanks to support from Friends of the Library, a colorful assortment of performers and educational presenters will offer more than 65 programs throughout the District during Summer at the Library.

New this year, our Summer at the Library Book Share program will engage adult readers with a geocaching-inspired activity. Participants can pick up a specially labelled book from local hot spots around town, log their selection at aclib.us/bookshare, and then pass it on.

Coming up this month, the Library District will host the OverDrive Digital Bookmobile noon-6 PM Wednesday, April 17th, at the Millhopper Branch and noon-6 PM Thursday, April 18th, at the Tower Road Branch. This visit will promote our vast digital collection and encourage patrons to access these resources.

In April, the Library District joins dozens of community partners and hundreds of organizations across the country for Money Smart Week. Local programs will cover topics that include home ownership, retirement planning, credit score basics, and financial planning at all stages of life.

For the fourth year, we are uniting with Partnership for Strong Families and other community partners for the Re-Entry Partnership Conference April 15-18 at Library Partnership Branch and the Community Job and Resource Fair April 30th at Headquarters Branch. These programs provide training and resources for individuals with criminal backgrounds or others struggling to re-enter the workforce. The conference and fair will connect participants with trained experts for assistance on creating resumes, job searching, interviewing, and starting small businesses.

From the youngest children to job seeker, the Library District offers services and support to every member of this community. We look forward to continuing to encourage each person to participate, connect, and discover, a mission bolstered by Friends of the Library.
2019 Annual Katherine’s Tree Award Ceremony

On Sunday, March 10th, the Foundation held its fifth annual ceremony to recognize the previous year’s Katherine’s Tree leaf recipients. Ann Clare LeZotte, Library Specialist at the Tower Road Branch Library, was the 2018 recipient of the annual Guy Hudspeth Award, joining the eleven previous award winners: Guy Hudspeth (2007) (for whom the award is named), Memree Stuart (2008), Martha Roberts (2009), Phillis Filer (2010), Ike Welch (2011), Darba Owens-Simmons (2012), Bruce Stewart (2013), Anita Jenkins-McCarter (2014), Kathi Harris (2015), Melanie Langsdale Aultman (2016), and Erin Phemester (2017).

Three other leaves honored the exceptional volunteer work over many years of John Ritter (a past FOL President), Ellen Smith (current Vice-President), and John C. Tucker (Newsletter Editor since 2007) for their dedication to the Friends of the Library.

Others who received leaves on Katherine’s Tree included Cecilia Anderson Caton (given by her husband Donald to recognize her birthday) and Charles “Ted” Gendreau, an avid reader (given in his memory by his son and daughter-in-law Brian and Linda Gendreau.)

Each leaf on the tree represents a gift of $2,000 to the Alachua County Library District Foundation to help advance its support of the Library.

all photos courtesy ACLD
Our community is lucky to be a part of the Alachua County Library District. This observation developed from my recent visits to Waikiki and Tasmania. While their librarians were as helpful and expert as ours, they don't have what we do. ACLD has twelve vibrant libraries, each offering “outside the book” options tailored to their local customers. Rodney King once pleaded “why can’t we all just get along?” In our libraries, we can.

The Alachua County Library District is supported by FOL (providing funds from two annual sales), the ACLD Foundation (providing financial resources for long-term planning), a Trustees board, and a Board of Governors, all assisting ACLD’s operation and keeping its excellent Director and her assistants on their toes. I attend each of their meetings. While I originally thought this might be overkill – and too much organizational oversight, I now am convinced that each group provides essential assistance to the Library District. Consequently, ACLD has a $2.4 million materials budget, which supports its annual 1.3 million library visits, 4 million checkouts, and over 9,000 programs. Significantly for me, it also runs a Bookmobile system for those who can’t get to the branch libraries easily. Neither Waikiki nor Tasmania apparently had Bookmobiles.

Along with library staff, volunteers make the whole ACLD work well. President Kennedy once stated, “Ask not what your country can do for you – ask what you can do for your country.” Our volunteers obviously follow his mantra. Thank you all.

Friends of the Library Establishes Life Membership Categories

The Board of Directors of Friends of the Library has established two Life Membership categories.

Those Friends of the Library members who have celebrated their 90th birthday and have volunteered at the Bookhouse for at least ten years will be awarded a life membership in FOL. Individuals receiving this recognition in January-March, 2019 are Albert Caracausa, Ruby Cox, and Knol Salhanick.

A second category of Life Membership is also available to those FOL members who are at least 65 years of age and make a one-time donation of $150.
Getting to Know You

Spotlight on Library Staff

Rachel Cook

Position: Public Relations and Marketing Manager

Background: As a kid, I briefly aspired to become a librarian, stapling faux checkout cards crafted from Post-It Notes inside book covers. Those career aspirations shifted, but now at the ACLD, adolescent hopes evolved into a grownup dream come true.

I grew up in Idaho Falls, Idaho – yes, plenty of potatoes; no, not the Midwest – and loved reading, writing, and the vistas of nearby Yellowstone and Jackson Hole. I studied print journalism and international development at the University of Montana. Then I was a communications consultant for LWF Cambodia – a rural development nonprofit headquartered in Phnom Penh – thanks to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Returning home, I wrote and edited at newspapers – first, my hometown paper and next, the Bakersfield Californian at the bottom of the San Joaquin Valley. A desire for new adventures and nearness to family brought me and my husband - a Jacksonville native and UF grad - to Charleston, SC, in 2015. I was honored to work at the South's oldest newspaper, most recently in a dual role as emerging media sales manager for The Post and Courier newspaper and the director of Content That Works, a content agency serving media companies across the US. The aforementioned husband, Philip Guiry, corralled minor league baseball fans and mascots for a decade before starting a new career at a performing arts center.

Recently, Florida called us and our chubby Yorkshire terrier, Ulysses, home. Joining the Library District, I’m humbled by the transformative work my colleagues undertake daily. The District is truly the heart of the community because of the remarkable people who work here. I’m thrilled to be part of our story and to share it with this warm, beautiful city and county. And I promise not to MacGyver my own checkout cards.

Spotlight on FOL Volunteers

Monique and Pierce Heathcock

Position: Sorters

Background: When Monique and Pierce Heathcock were searching online for local volunteer opportunities for Pierce’s Bright Futures prerequisites, they came across Friends of the Library. Monique had heard of FOL Book Sales but had never attended one. After some additional research, they decided that FOL was their best option because they could volunteer on a weekly basis – and do it together.

Monique grew up in Wyomissing Hills, PA, a small suburb outside of Reading. She describes herself as a bookworm starting in elementary school. She nearly always had books within arm’s reach and has fond memories of the small local library. A Penn State graduate with a Civil Engineering degree, Monique moved to Gainesville, fell in love with the climate, and says she will never move back towards colder weather. She met her husband Jim at her first Gainesville job, they married in 2003, and Pierce arrived in 2004. Monique has been an engineer with CHW Professional Consultants for over 15 years and designs roadways, sites, and utilities for public clients.

A freshman at Buchholz High School, Pierce inherited from his dad a knack and interest for all things mechanical. He has built a go-kart almost entirely on his own, starting with a frame and a little help from Dad. He loves to tinker with (and drive) the go-kart or pretty much anything that has an engine in it. Pierce also enjoys RV camping trips around the southeastern states.

Monique and Pierce have both been amazed by the number of books that come into the Bookhouse. Monique especially enjoys discovering books for her reading list and working with the Bookhouse volunteers. Pierce enjoys helping people and is always looking for new ways to help – he even enjoys breaking down boxes and moving piles of books!
Get Smart: Thousands of Items Checked Out with Student Library Cards

Since last fall, local students have explored new worlds in books, accessed computers, and enjoyed library resources thanks to the Student Library Card initiative. More than 27,000 Alachua County students have received special Student Library Cards, which allow them to check out up to three books at a time and to download electronic magazines and music. Students can also access any of the Library District’s eSources, including Tutor.com, Lynda.com, and Learning Express for test prep help, homework assistance, and tutoring.

The effort is a pilot project between Alachua County Library District and the Alachua County Public Schools. From October through February, students checked out 3,500 items using the new cards. The Library District logged 853 computer sessions by Student Library Card holders in January through February alone. The Library District is currently preparing for the program’s second year. Learn more at [www.aclib.us/studentcards](http://www.aclib.us/studentcards).

Spring Sale: Books ... and Vinyl ... and Art ... Oh My!!

Friends of the Library’s Spring Book Sale is so much more than books. From Saturday, April 27th, through Wednesday, May 1st, FOL offers the community thousands of books, puzzles, games, art works, CDs, DVDs, records, and more in categories ranging from architecture to zoology. Most items cost between 25 cents and a few dollars. On Tuesday, April 30th, all items are half-priced, and on Wednesday, May 1st, each item costs just 10 cents!

Be sure to visit the Collector’s Corner – stocked with books and other items of local, historical, and special interest. Items featured in the Collector’s Corner can be found at folacld.org/n_sale_colcor.html.

You will find bargains on every table and in the outdoor tents. For more information about the Spring Sale, visit folacld.org/n_sale_about.html.

FOL welcomes volunteers to work during the Book Sale. To learn more and sign up for a three-hour shift, write to FOL at folacld@bellsouth.net or call 352-375-1676.
Seed Libraries Take Root

Seed libraries are blooming across the Alachua County Library District this spring. “Kids are proudly starting their own gardens, with parents reporting back on successful radish harvests. People love telling us they’re having a salad with the lettuce they’ve grown from our seeds,” said Micanopy Branch Senior Library Specialist Naomi Baxter.

Seven branches - Alachua, Archer, Hawthorne, High Springs, Millhopper, Micanopy, and Tower Road – offer seeds as part of their collections. These fruitful, or flowering, resources are donated by local stores, organizations, and individuals. The small bundles of potential are free to anyone, library card holder or not.

Working at Micanopy and Cone Park branches, Baxter witnesses the effects of food insecurity first hand and hopes the seed libraries are a small step towards better nutrition.

“When a child comes in to pick out their Accelerated Reader books and sees the cup at the desk with our extra kale packets they figure why not try it out and see what happens. The adult who goes, ‘what the heck, it’s free,’ throws some squash seeds in their yard, and has food right there in a few months,” Baxter said. “It’s a learning experience for kids to see things grow and for adults to see where their food comes from.”

To learn more about how many seeds can be borrowed or how to donate seeds, contact your local branch or visit www.aclib.us.

The Gift of New Volunteers

Recently Friends of the Library welcomed a number of new volunteers. Each group of new sorters met with Volunteer Coordinator Doris Harvey to learn about the Bookhouse, sorting guidelines, and FOL procedures. All are now preparing the community’s many donations for sale at the Spring Book Sale this month.

December Class

An enthusiastic class of three new volunteers was trained on December 3rd. Louise Marshall and her husband own a tree farm and have five children, 13 grandchildren, and 16 great-grandchildren. Lisa Williams is retired from the Florida Dept. of Agriculture and loves gardening, sewing, and baking. Nancy Williamson is retired after thirty years as a dental hygienist.

January Class

The new January volunteers include a mix of ages and interests. Lynn Chen is a UF student and lover of music and cats. Gaylynnè Der-Houssikian is an avid walker, hiker, traveler, and animal lover. Sharlene Magnarella is delighted to be back in Gainesville after being away for twelve years. Midori Takayama loves reading books in either English or Japanese.

February Class

In February, FOL greeted six new volunteers. Jean Westin Lagotic, a retired collaborative attorney and animal lover, does family law mediation. Nathaniel Lee is an avid runner, reader, bird watcher, and stargazer. Ralph Rice is retired from the UF College of Medicine. Donna Shoudy loves gardening and watching butterflies and birds. Patrick Snyder, a reader, lover of books, and amateur film critic, is retiring soon. Sydney Somers, a UF sophomore, loves to read and go on fun adventures.

Seated: Cynthia Karle, Sina Etemadi, Midore Takayama
Standing: Gaylynnè Der-Houssikian, Lynn Chen, Sharlene Magnarella

Seated: Jean Westin Lagotic, Sydney Somers, Donna Shoudy
Standing: Nathaniel Lee, Patrick Snyder, Ralph Rice
Remember - the benefits of your membership include:

- 4 newsletters per year,
- invitations to the annual meeting and special seminars,
- volunteer opportunities with the twice-yearly book sales.
- But the biggest benefit of all is that wonderful feeling you get from doing something great for your family, neighbors, and community.

Invite your friends to join FRIENDS!

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

New [ ] Renewal [ ] - FOL member since ______

Name: _______________________________________
(as you wish your membership name to appear)

Address: _____________________________________

City: ____________________ State: ___ Zip: ___________

Telephone: Home ____________ Work ________________

E-Mail Address ________________________________

Make checks payable to FOL

Mail to: Friends of the Library, Attn: Membership
430-B  N Main Street, Gainesville, FL 32601

Volunteer Opportunities

- Book Sales
- Book Sorting (year round)
- Other talents, please call me
- I can’t volunteer, but am happy to support FOL with my membership