Florida Library Association Legislative Day

On January 22, 2020, library advocates and supporters from around the state attended Florida Library Legislative Day in Tallahassee, an annual advocacy event at the State Capitol sponsored by the Florida Library Association. Alachua County Library Director Shaney Livingston led the delegation as they met with those who represent Alachua County. Director Livingston and those attending thanked the legislators for their support of the Alachua County Library District and discussed specific legislative requests and district projects.

Spring Book Sale Postponed; Bookhouse Closed

Observing state and national guidelines for COVID-19, we have postponed the Spring Book Sale until further notice.

We have also postponed our volunteers’ receipt of donated items at the Bookhouse. Respecting guidelines for the personal safety of each volunteer, the executive board of Friends of the Library has closed the Bookhouse until the environment is again judged safe for normal personal interaction.

FOL will continue monitoring COVID-19 mitigation efforts and will provide additional information as events unfold. Announcements about the re-opening of the Bookhouse and the scheduling of the next book sale will be made on the FOL website and through social media and other traditional means.

FOL appreciates the community’s support during this uncharted time. Thank you for your patience and loyalty.
Letter from the Director

This spring has brought unprecedented challenges to our community and your library. As the threat of COVID-19, also known as coronavirus, grew in March, I made the difficult decision to close the Alachua County Library District’s doors beginning on March 15th for the health and safety of patrons and staff. But though our buildings are not currently open to the public, we have worked hard to make sure the online library remains open for business 24 hours a day and even expanded access to locals who do not have library cards. In difficult times, these accomplishments make me proud of our team and grateful to our supportive community.

While we are closed, we have extended due dates and card expiration dates to April 30th. We are also keeping holds for patrons so their books and movies will be ready to pick up when we reopen.

Going forward, all our programs are suspended through April 30th. We made this decision in line with state and federal health officials’ recommendations and to help our patrons practice social distancing. In line with these goals, we also canceled all meeting room reservations. We have received many questions about how this decision will impact the tax assistance programs held at our branches. One of our partners, the AARP Foundation, has suspended all Tax-Aide programming until further notice. When we reopen, we plan to continue to partner with United Way of North Central Florida to offer VITA Tax Assistance.*

Though our ability to serve the public in person has dramatically changed, our relationship with our patrons remains the same – to provide the best information and library resources in the country. Our online services remain available seven days at www.aclib.us. That includes dozens of eSources offering everything from genealogy research tools to crafting tutorials. Our educational resources for Alachua County’s students are top-notch, including homework help, quizzes, and test prep materials. Patrons can also access thousands of digital books, audiobooks, and magazines at any time.

We have also opened our digital shelves to those without library cards. Working with OverDrive, our primary vendor for digital books, we’ve enabled Alachua County residents to sign up for digital access with just a cellphone number. This feature allows new patrons to choose from nearly 79,000 books to provide comfort, inspiration, and adventure to readers of all ages.

To sign up, visit www.aclib.us/OverDrive. Then download the Libby or OverDrive app to your smartphone or tablet to start reading. Patrons who use this service can access digital materials through June 30th and will be invited to sign up for a regular library card before that date.

For the latest information from the Library District, I encourage you to visit www.aclib.us/coronavirus and to follow us on social media. You can also use our digital resources anytime at www.aclib.us/mobile. Our mission and commitment to Alachua County remain as strong as ever.

*[Ed. note: Because the tax filing deadline has been extended to July 15th, there are increased chances that ACLD may have reopened and resumed work with their tax assistance partners.]
2020 Annual Katherine’s Tree Award Ceremony

On Sunday, March 8th, the Foundation held its sixth annual ceremony to recognize the previous year’s Katherine’s Tree leaf recipients. Librarian Linda Cue received the 13th annual Guy Hudspeth Award (named for retired librarian and its first recipient in 2007, Guy Hudspeth) for her work with vulnerable populations, including incarcerated patrons. The Award, sponsored by the Kosman Foundation, annually honors an outstanding Library District employee. Among her many other accomplishments, Cue set up the “Read to Me Program” while serving as the jail librarian. This enabled incarcerated fathers to make recordings of story books to share with their children. “I am grateful for this award and the opportunity to serve my community and library patrons for almost twenty years,” Cue said.

Each year, the Friends of the Library honors some of its outstanding volunteers by placing leaves on the tree. One honoree was Linda Boyles, a faithful FOL volunteer who, among other activities, helps select a book to be donated to Head Start students each year. Another was Bill Burk, a twelve-year volunteer who is willing to take on any task and even recruited his daughter to volunteer. This year’s third FOL-donated leaf, in combination with family members, was given in memory of Helen Duschatko, an avid reader and longtime FOL volunteer.

Geraldine Nichols gave a leaf in memory of her mother Mary Louise O’Haire Cleary, a world traveler always ready for adventure and a voracious reader — a passion she passed on to all her children. Masuma Downie donated a leaf in memory of her late husband Richard D. Downie. After his retirement from UF, he was a frequent patron of the Tower Road Branch and also appreciated the Interlibrary Loan books which the librarians always managed to acquire for him.

Marilyn Tubb, on behalf of Roxie Mergenthaler, gave a leaf in honor of her aunt, Katherine Anne Tubb, for whom this tree is named. Roxie shares her late aunt’s love of books and reading. Lita and Peter Fake donated a leaf in appreciation for the superb services provided by the libraries of Alachua County.

These eight leaves represent gifts totaling $16,000 to the Foundation to help advance its support of our outstanding Library.
Message from the President

The big stories, of course, are of the economic and social effects of the coronavirus. ACLD is closed; our Spring sale postponed (and possibly cancelled) for the first time in 67 years. Following guidelines, we have also closed FOL to receiving and processing donations. The health of our volunteers is our first priority.

Deja vu. The Asian flu started in Singapore in 1957, when I was a schoolboy in England. It eventually killed 1.1 million people, including 116,000 in America. I forget what we did, but, perhaps unwisely, we did not close schools.

There is good news. ACLD had 110,000 visits in January and the main library is finally fully staffed. On January 22nd, five of us visited Tallahassee to get backing for library funding. We were cordially received and supported by Senator Keith Perry, Representatives Chuck Clemons, Clovis Watson, and Chuck Brannan’s assistant. Director Livingston scuttled us around the building like whisking eggs, but mollified us all later at an Adams Street restaurant. A useful journey.

New Volunteers

Friends of the Library is pleased to welcome new volunteers to the Bookhouse. Trained by Volunteer Coordinator Doris Harvey, these new members learned FOL procedures and guidelines for sorting items donated for the next book sale. Their enthusiasm and hard work help insure the continued success of Friends of the Library.

In their own words:
Richard Chamberlin is a retired gerontologist and historian and is a book lover. Chris Hooley thinks computer systems. Cecelia McManus is inquisitive, hard-working, a good listener, and loves to read and learn. A retired nurse, Sue Morris is married to computer table coordinator Fred Morris. Alice Saunders, a retired special educator, enjoys performing arts, sewing, big dogs, and (of course) reading. Gary Schultz is a botanist who loves nature and the outdoors. Larry Seitz says that he loves to stay busy. Cathy Splichal is a retired teacher with a love of books and community involvement. Marilyn Smith is retired and a native Minnesotan who loves dogs.
Getting to Know You

Spotlight on Library Staff
Courtney Evans

Position: Library Specialist, Hawthorne Branch Library

Background: Courtney officially joined Alachua County Library District in February 2014 as a library page at Millhopper Branch. Before that, she was a teen volunteer and intern at the Newberry Branch, where she grew up. Since then, she has gone and come back twice from study-abroad trips to Ireland, returning most recently in October 2017. She was a library assistant at the Alachua Branch, a children's specialist at the Millhopper Branch, and is currently a library specialist at the Hawthorne Branch, where she works mostly with teens. Her favorite thing about ACLD is the people that she gets to work with.

She graduated from the University of Florida in 2018 with a Bachelor of Arts in international studies and a minor in family, youth, and community services. She is currently in her second semester of the Master of Information program at Florida State University, thanks to the generosity of the Friends of the Library Educational Assistance program. Her dream job is one that intersects both her degrees and allows her to travel.

Outside of ACLD, Courtney works as a STEM Graduate Research Assistant for Florida State University, where she explores topics in academic libraries. She is also a virtual intern for the Office of American Spaces, an electronic library of the Department of State. When she finds time to read, she is currently very excited about historical and young adult fiction.

Courtney is passionate about literacy and community service and expresses that through the Rotaract Club of Gainesville. She enjoys a good croissant, extra-caffeinated coffee, and exploring places that are new to her, near and far, with her fiancé. However, she has been known for the occasional Netflix binge and highly recommends the film About Time to anyone who will listen.

Spotlight on FOL Volunteer
Anna Langford

Position: Literacy Liaison, Sorter, and Table Coordinator

Background: Born and raised in Tampa, Florida, Anna Langford earned her bachelor and master degrees in biology from the University of South Florida. After graduation, she taught at St. Petersburg Junior College, where she met her husband Gerald. In 1982, the couple moved to Gainesville and onto a lush five acres that contain a big vegetable garden, citrus trees, over one hundred camellia plants, and one cat who is in charge of it all. Before her retirement in 2006, Anna taught Anatomy and Physiology and Nutrition at Santa Fe Community College.

Always active, Anna leads an exercise class for seniors and is a volunteer tutor with the library’s literacy program. As a member of the Gainesville Camellia Society, she produces that group’s newsletter. In her “spare time,” she enjoys reading, working jigsaw puzzles, and playing Mah Jong.

Anna volunteers during the FOL book sales and sorts items donated to the Bookhouse the rest of the year. She serves on the FOL board as Literacy Coordinator, acting as FOL’s liaison with that ACLD program. She has recently joined the volunteers coordinating the Young Adult table.

Anna says, “Everyone I’ve worked with at FOL is dedicated, hard-working, and having fun” … a description everyone will tell you describes Anna herself.
The Library is Open 24/7 Online
from Rachel Cook, ACLD

The Alachua County Library District’s online resources include thousands of digital text and audio books, streaming music, magazines, databases, and learning tools. Most are available through ACLD’s website 24/7 just by entering your library card number. Visit www.aclib.us/mobile to explore.

Books and Magazines: Our collection of digital titles includes nearly 79,000 books via our OverDrive vendor alone. Library cardholders can download the appropriate app on their smartphone or tablet to read or listen anywhere. The app features a list of what books are available instantly, so you can always find something to enjoy. As detailed in our Director’s letter (on page 2), we have expanded access to this service to non-library cardholders through June 30th.

Music: Our Freegal eSource enables patrons to download up to five songs per week. Users can also listen to full albums and download historic speeches by Martin Luther King, Jr., Queen Elizabeth, and others.

Databases: Our databases cover genealogy, business resources, legal forms, poetry, newspapers, stocks, and more. Access the full list at www.aclib.us/esources.

- Budding genealogists can research census records, wills, city directories, and more with Heritage Quest Online.

- Entrepreneurs will love AtoZdatabases and Gale Business: DemographicsNow to research their area. Our Gale Business: Entrepreneurship and Safari Tech and Business Books are sources for books, articles, and classes in project management, business planning, and other topics. We even offer the paperwork for patents and contracts on Gale Legal Forms.

- For market watchers, Value Line and Morningstar provide the latest investment information on stocks, mutual funds, and financial news.

Learning: For primary school students and adult learners, Tutor.com, Learning Express, and our Gale in Context tools provide tutoring, homework help, and test prep resources. Lynda.com is perfect for picking up new job skills, like coding and public speaking. Children and adults can tap Transparent Language to learn a new language.

Library users can expand their artistic side with Creativebug, which offers tutorials in painting, knitting, and much more. There’s even a pattern library!

Reader tools: Looking for your next favorite book? Our NoveList Plus tools can recommend titles based on your mood and interests. There’s also a feature for children and teens.

Special Recognition

At the ACLD Foundation’s annual Katherine’s Tree recognition event on Sunday, March 8, FOL recognized member volunteers Linda Boyles and Virgil (Bill) Burke, who each received a “leaf” on the tree. In the presentations, Foundation Chair Jon Reiskind highlighted their exemplary service to FOL.

Thank you, Linda and Virgil, for your continued commitment to the Friends of the Library.
Snuggle Up & Read—20 Years of Books!

Back in 1999, amid a lot of interest in early childhood literacy, the Friends and the staff of the Alachua County Library District embarked on a new outreach program called Snuggle Up & Read. The goal was to put beautiful, engaging picture books into the hands of young children throughout our community.

When the ACLD staff originally proposed the idea of an annual book giveaway, they noted that:

• Early experiences with books and language are crucial to a child’s future success in school.

• Having books in the home can encourage parents to read with their young children and promote a life-long interest in books and reading.

• Many children in our community do not see books in their homes and many families cannot afford to buy books of their own.

• Identifying the books as a gift from the Library District and its Friends could increase awareness of the book sales as a source of affordable books and promote use of the public library.

Considering the ages of the children (3-5 years), the local Head Start program’s countywide coverage and reputation, and their focus on literacy, we selected Head Start to be our “partner in distribution.” In addition, Head Start serves low-income families where library use can be infrequent and access to books may be limited.

That first year, the book selected was Eric Carle’s classic, The Very Hungry Caterpillar and, in the twenty years since, ACLD staff and Friends volunteers have selected a new book each year and visited all Head Start classes in the County — delivering over 20,000 copies of beloved classics like Esphyr Slobodkina’s Caps For Sale, delightful new publications, such as Eric Litwin’s Pete the Cat, and this year’s charming story, Daniel’s Good Day by Micha Archer.

Twenty years on, thanks to the Friends on-going support, Snuggle Up & Read is still putting wonderful books in the hands of children and spreading the joy of reading!

Happy 20th Birthday, Snuggle Up & Read!
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 ________________________________

Membership Categories

☐ $150 Life Member (65+)

☐ $15 Individual

☐ $50 Patron

☐ $10 Student/Senior (65+)

☐ $25 Family

☐ $ ___ Other

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

Make checks payable to FOL

Mail to: Friends of the Library, Attn: Membership

430-B  N Main Street, Gainesville, FL 32601

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