

ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT

FY2023

CONNECT

INSPIRE

ENRICH



FROM THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR

The Palm Beach County Library System was proud to deepen our community impact during Fiscal Year 2023 (FY23), perpetuating our vision, mission and values. It is safe to say that our libraries are as busy as ever! During FY23 we expanded public service hours of our Okeechobee Blvd and Royal Palm Beach branches to include service on Sundays. The Canyon Branch celebrated its roofing construction milestone in July with a "Topping Party."

Opening for Canyon is anticipated in late 2024. Other milestones commemorated were 50 years of

our Talking Books service and 10 years in the new Belle Glade Branch building. We are also excited to announce another new branch is on the way. Recently, the Board of County Commissioners approved the purchase of a facility in the Town of Hypoluxo for a small Library branch.

On May 19, I became the President of the Florida Library Association with the theme "Florida Libraries – Fundamental to Freedom." Whether it be using public computers to apply for benefits, meeting neighbors at a storytime or registering to vote and participating in this sacred democratic process, libraries remain central to our communities. In his book, "Palaces for the People," Erik Klinenberg states that a founding principle of libraries is, "that all people deserve free, open access to our shared culture and heritage, which they can use to any end they see fit." Florida libraries are fundamental to freedom.

Our Libraries provide free access to resources and services that reflect and engage Palm Beach County's diverse communities and residents. We are thankful to receive support from: the Board of County Commissioners, County Administration, the Library Advisory Board, the Friends of the Palm Beach County Library System, and our dedicated Library staff and community advocates. Through their assistance, we are empowered to be public spaces where everyone is welcome.



Interior of Canyon Branch coming soon!

Our vision is to open minds to a world of unlimited possibilities. We create welcoming spaces, both physically and virtually, designed to spark creativity, stimulate thoughtful conversation and encourage collaboration. Every day we provide a diverse range of activities designed to enrich, stimulate and engage members from early literacy through adulthood.

I invite you to join us and participate in our mission to connect communities, inspire thought and enrich lives.

Douglas Crane

Douglas Crane
Library Director, Palm Beach County Library System



OUR VISION

Opening minds
to a world of
unlimited
possibilities.



OUR MISSION

Connect
communities,
inspire thought
and enrich
lives.



OUR VALUES

Making a
difference.
Empowering
community.
Learning and
growing.

GOALS

CONNECT COMMUNITIES

- 1 We engage our communities and partners by promoting and enhancing the role of the Library and offering services beyond the Library's walls.

INSPIRE THOUGHT

- 2 We provide free access to resources and services that reflect and engage Palm Beach County's diverse communities and residents.
- 3 We inspire thought by offering a diverse range of activities designed to enrich, stimulate and engage members from early literacy through adulthood.

ENRICH LIVES

- 4 We provide a welcoming environment, both physically and virtually, to spark creativity, stimulate thoughtful conversation and encourage collaboration.
- 5 We serve as a bridge for community members to access social services.

LIBRARY ADVISORY BOARD



LIBRARY ADVISORY BOARD LEADERSHIP

Our Library Advisory Board consists of 15 members, appointed by the Board of County Commissioners. Each member serves a three-year term and is required to reside within the Library District. The Board meets on a monthly basis and members serve on a voluntary basis.



Gloria Kelly
Chair



Megan Bob
Vice Chair

LIBRARY ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS



Sherry Albury



Abby Baker



Dale Blanton



Dr. Ron Giddens



Linda Knox



Sam Manuele



Perri
McDowell-Demps



Joseph Mindell



Cathe North



Virginia Savietto



Lisa Seymour

Membership as of December 2023

FRIENDS BOARD



The Friends of the Palm Beach County Library System serves to create an association of people interested in books and libraries. They serve to focus public attention on Library services, facilities and needs. They raise funds for scholarships and special projects and to stimulate donations, gifts, endowments and bequests.

They assist in the development of activities for the extension and improvement of Library services and resources to adequately serve the needs of the community.

They advocate on the Library's behalf in order to inform elected officials, as well as the public, about the services that the Library provides to our community and their continued need for funding.



Marc Bressman
(President & Treasurer)



Mary Ellen Beck
(Vice President)



Sue Sim
(Secretary)



Anne Bressman



Connie Kist



Carolyn Kruger



Joyce Smith



Damon Webb

Not pictured:
Jill Beach
Louise Davis
Arlene Mishanie

BY THE NUMBERS

Overview of the Library



Total
Visitors
2,721,422



Total
Items Borrowed
8,470,158



New
Card Holders
35,112

Physical Library Spaces Utilized



Physical Materials
Borrowed
5,793,418



Meeting Room
Bookings
1,920



CreationStation
Locations
Main, Lantana & Wellington Branches



Study Room
Reservations
61,908

Digital Technology Accessed



Computer
Sessions
386,886



Mobile App
Use
402,785



Website
Visits
6,842,019



E-materials
Borrowed
2,676,740



Online Research
Resources Use
131,044



WiFi
Sessions
118,836

Community Activities Coordinated



Adult Activities
Attended
54,256



Children Activities
Attended
126,284



Teen Activities
Attended
8,485



Adult Literacy
Tutoring Hours
9,397



Summer Reading
Program Participants
9,318



Tech Classes
Attended
3,352

Community Services Provided



Research Questions
Answered
885,968



SNAP Benefits
Appointments Made
3,969



Passports
Issued
1,890



Volunteer Service
Hours Donated
37,895



Summer Meals
Distributed
19,586



ABC Daycare
Kits Loaned
2,107

Social Media Interactions



Facebook
Total Followers
8,134
Impressions
639,333



X (Formerly Twitter)
Total Followers
6,819
Impressions
985,186



Instagram
Total Followers
4,440
Impressions
322,612



LinkedIn
Total Followers
749
Impressions
23,241



YouTube
Total Followers
374
Views
49,233

The Friends of the Palm Beach County Library System Presents

Writers LIVE!

"Connecting readers and authors throughout Palm Beach County"

Writers LIVE!, our flagship author event series, returned for another season of bringing the community together with authors and their books. The 2023 line-up of bestselling, critically acclaimed and award-winning authors discussed their work both in-person and virtually via Zoom.



Diana Abu-Jaber

"Fencing with the King"



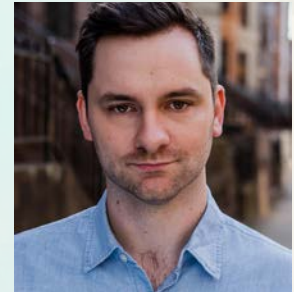
Debbie Babitt

"Saving Grace"



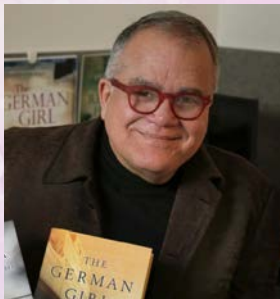
James L. Barry

"Warriors"
Graphic Novels



Andy Campbell

"We Are Proud Boys: How
a Right-Wing Street Gang
Ushered in a New Era of
American Extremism"



**Armando
Lucas Correa**

"The Night Travelers"



Pam Jenoff

"Code Name
Sapphire"



Alka Joshi

"The Perfumist of
Paris"



**Lynda Cohen
Loigman**

"The Matchmaker's
Gift"



**Samantha
Markum**

"You Wouldn't Dare"



**Douglas Preston &
Lincoln Child**

"The Cabinet of Dr. Leng"



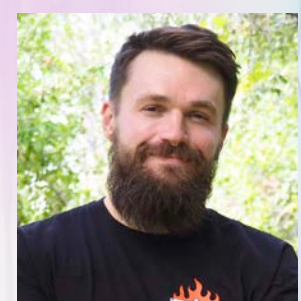
**Deb
Rogers**

"Florida Woman"



**Deborah
Goodrich Royce**

"Reef Road"



Chris Stedman

"IRL: Finding Realness,
Meaning and
Belonging in Our
Digital Lives"

THE NEW WWW.PBCLIBRARY.ORG

Palm Beach County Library System is thrilled to have launched our new website in fall of 2023. It was designed to modernize the way our community accesses information and engages with the Library's resources. This cutting-edge website represents a significant step forward in our commitment to providing a user-friendly and inclusive digital experience for library members.

The newly designed website offers a host of innovative features and enhancements that make exploring, discovering and utilizing our Library resources easier and more enjoyable than ever before.

Some key highlights of the new website include:

- **Online Event Registration & Room Booking:** No need to call or visit a branch to register for your favorite activity or book a room to host your community meeting. Both can now be done instantaneously on our website!
- **Enhanced Search Functionality:** Our advanced search tools enable members to quickly locate books, media and digital content with precision.
- **Personalized User Accounts:** Members can create personalized accounts to manage their checkouts, holds and reading lists, providing a seamless and customized Library experience.
- **Digital Collections:** Explore our extensive digital collections including e-books, audiobooks, streaming media and more, accessible from the comfort of your home.
- **Mobile-Friendly:** Access our resources on the go with our responsive design, optimized for smartphones and tablets.

Our Director, Douglas Crane, expressed his excitement commenting, "This new website has greatly enhanced the Library's online experience for our community members. It's not just a website; it's a gateway to knowledge, discovery and community engagement. Designed with our residents in mind, this website will support our vision of opening minds to a world of unlimited possibilities."

Welcome to
the NEW
Website



Explore new ways to interact
with our extensive collection
of books, DVDs and audiobooks!



Jupiter Branch Seed Library Grand Opening Feb 2023

The grand opening of the Palm Beach County Library System's first seed library was celebrated on Sun, Feb 19, at the Jupiter Branch. Attendees enjoyed a Seed & Plant Swap at the event. The goal is to make gardening accessible for community members to grow healthy food, whether in plots, pots or yards. Partnerships were formed with Mounts Master Gardeners and the Abacoa Community Garden to make the seed Library a reality.

The seed library is open to anyone who visits the Jupiter Branch. Each packet contains enough seeds to grow a few plants; the seeds in our collection are both purchased and donated from seed companies, with hybrid and heritage seeds. A Library card is not required to get seeds. Let's grow together!

AWARDS, GRANTS & SCHOLARSHIPS



National Association of Counties Achievement Award: Adult Literacy Program Reorganization

Our Adult Literacy Project was recognized as a recipient of the esteemed National Association of Counties Achievement Award. This initiative, deeply ingrained in community service, aims to empower native English speakers and English language learners (ELLs) with comprehensive reading, writing and speaking skills. The project is a testament to our commitment to fostering educational advancement and cultural integration. Through a variety of services, including English Exchange workshops that provide a nurturing environment for ELLs to practice English and personalized one-on-one tutoring, the program has significantly impacted lives across Palm Beach County. These initiatives are spearheaded by a dedicated team of Library staff and volunteers. Over the years, they have helped thousands of adult students leverage their new language skills to achieve citizenship, attain educational degrees, secure employment and attain other accomplishments. These significant achievements made were possible by their improved English fluency.



Palm Beach County COVID-19 Response Award: Adam Davis

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, under the leadership of Adam Davis, we demonstrated exceptional adaptability and commitment to the community. With the closure of public spaces in March 2020, Library staff across various departments united with a resolute determination to ensure continued access to essential Library resources. Despite the uncertainties of the pandemic, the team worked tirelessly to reinvent service delivery, evolving collections and community activities to meet the new reality. Their efforts not only maintained, but also enhanced our connection with Palm Beach County government, non-profit sectors and local residents. By June 2020, when our doors reopened, new processes and tools were in place, and staff had been upskilled to navigate the challenges of COVID-19. Their efforts ensured our role as a cornerstone for community support and engagement remained undiminished.



FSU Scholarship: Jessica Waters

Jessica has been employed in various roles within the Library since 2009, working her way up to a Member Services manager. She is involved in various committees within the Library and has received two employee recognition awards from her peers. Her essays respectively focused on how she unexpectedly arrived at librarianship and development of a path that lead to an administrative level.

IN HER OWN WORDS: "Earning this scholarship allows me to continue pursuing my long-term goal of achieving a leadership position within Florida Libraries to create inclusive and supportive work environments that foster professional development."



2023 Golden Palm Award for Passport Services:

Candice Cavaleri, Verelsi Rasura, Marie Fleurimond, Lynlee Lebensart, Karen Nicosia

In February 2021, we embarked on a new venture by partnering with the U.S. Department of State to become an official Passport Acceptance Facility. This initiative, led by a dedicated team including Verelsi Rasura, Marie Fleurimond, Candice Cavaleri, Lynlee Lebensart, and Karen Nicosia, redefined community service by offering passport services beyond conventional hours, accommodating the needs of individuals with standard work schedules. This innovative approach not only facilitated international travel for countless residents, but also generated significant revenue for the Library. This successful integration exemplifies how providing a critical public service can lead to financial sustainability.



2023 Golden Palm Award for English Exchange Kits:

Marianne Heard and Dawn Frascella

The Nora Roberts Foundation grant was awarded to our Adult Literacy Project staff in December 2021 for the inception of the English Exchange kits initiative. Spearheaded by Marianne Heard and Dawn Frascella, this project was designed to enrich the English-language learning experience for residents. The comprehensive effort involved researching and compiling resources into 18 identical kits distributed across each branch location. These kits were integral to structured lesson plans and hands-on workshops aimed at enhancing the instructional capabilities of Library staff and volunteer tutors. This initiative has already demonstrated a tangible increase in student engagement and instructional hours, contributing significantly to the Library's educational impact. Furthermore, the project's success has sparked collaborative discussions with municipal libraries and community organizations, expanding its influence beyond initial expectations.



2023 Golden Palm Award for Productivity & Leadership Seminars:

Russell Gift, Andrea Taylor, Douglas Crane, Brenda Bruton

Our dedication to professional development and organizational excellence is embodied in the Productivity & Leadership Seminars led by Douglas Crane, supported by Andrea Taylor, Russell Gift, and Brenda Bruton. Over the past decade, these seminars have not only bolstered productivity and leadership skills among County staff, but also established the Library System as a source of valuable professional training. The initiative, which began with Douglas Crane offering to conduct in-house training for County HR in 2012, has expanded to provide multiple sessions annually on topics essential for workplace success. This program not only enhances the professional capabilities of County employees, but also contributes to our revenue through payments received for presenting these classes to external organizations.



FLORIDA LIBRARY ASSOCIATION AWARDS: INDIVIDUAL HONORS



Outstanding Paraprofessional: Joseph Dellosa

Joseph's passion for intellectual freedom and free access is well known and demonstrated through the variety of meaningful programming he's presented in his local community. He ensures that all members of the Glades area and beyond are well served with activities such as storytimes at daycare centers for migrant and low-income families, organizing virtual storytimes with the Palm Beach School district. He even hosted several information sessions for potential MLIS students about their academic possibilities. Overall, Joseph Dellosa exemplifies what it means to be an outstanding Library employee.



Library Innovation: Joshua Hulford

Joshua played a pivotal role in creating, marketing and implementing our National Novel Writing Month. The innovative, all-ages program masterfully mixed virtual and in-person resources to break the code of writing for future authors and hobbyist, challenging participants to write 50,000 words of their novel in 30 days. National Novel Writing Month featured writing workshops, public discussions and author talks that reached audiences locally, nationally, and even internationally. Joshua also focused on making the program accessible to all ensuring that there were more Spanish language writing workshops for our Spanish speaking community.



Betty Davis Miller Teen Services Award

We were recognized for our comic-con event, DeweyCon. This event provided a variety of innovative, diverse and inclusive activities, including: cultural creations, board game demos and book presentations from national book award winners.

Excellence in Public Relations and Marketing

Our educational social media campaign "The Library Elves Huey & Holly's Adventure Around Palm Beach County" employed elves Huey and Holly to conduct photoshoots at 19 different county agencies. The goal of each photoshoot was to explain the purpose of the agency in the form of a poem to potential customers, and build cross-agency cooperation and understanding. The successful campaign exceeded clearly defined goals, increasing social media followers. This campaign increased attendance in children, teen and adult activities and built stronger connections within the Palm Beach County government.

\$883,428

STATE AID TO THE PALM BEACH COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM



Library Music Activities

This past year we received monetary donations and donations of musical instruments from a private donor to create opportunities for children and teens to explore music. Unfortunately, the donor passed away unexpectedly. His legacy lives on through the generosity of friends and family who donated to the Friends of the Library in his memory.



Children's Book Grant

In collaboration with the American Federation of Teachers, we acquired over 20 pallets of children's books. Through an initiative called "Reading Opens the World," we received these free books in late August 2023. Palm Beach County Library System branches, the Bookmobile, Library Cooperative locations, and county agencies helped families build their own home libraries by distributing these quality books into the hands of children.



Florida Humanities Summer Reading Program 2023 Grant- \$1500.00

Florida Humanities funded four performances of Orisirisi African Folklore to kick off our 2023 Summer Reading Program. Orisirisi is a husband and wife duo who focus on telling stories with themes about the importance of community and working together. Their interactive performances emphasized the theme of "All Together Now" by allowing participants to play traditional African instruments and engage in call-and-response activities. Orisirisi events drew large crowds to educate and entertain members of our diverse communities.



Ingrid Eckler Scholarships Provided by The Friends of the Library

Jazmin Jimenez
Amber Fairchild
Keisha Phillips-Daley
Tiffany Gresh de Berry
Jessica Waters
Shelsea Estiverne
Sharon Ennist

Melissa Gift
Briana Thomas
Emily Logan
Jennifer Medler
Nafisah Hamed
Jake Moore

ANNIVERSARIES

Celebrating the 50th Anniversary of Talking Books

For 50 years, Talking Books has provided a free home delivery service to any resident who is unable to read or use any printed materials as a result of temporary or permanent visual or physical limitations. Call Talking Books at 561-649-5486 if you are interested in utilizing this free service.

Talking Books provides:

- BARD: Braille and Audio Reading Download for personal mobile devices
- Braille materials
- Digital players
- Digitally recorded books and magazines on cartridges
- English audio descriptive movies
- Virtual activities such as: bingo with braille and large print cards provided, book discussions, book talks, "Crash Course" discussions, escape rooms, power hours and trivia games



Talking Books 50th Anniversary Celebration

On September 27, 2023, a special celebration was held at the South County Civic Center to honor 50 years of our Talking Books service in Palm Beach County. We invited all of our Talking Books members to join us for food and fun.

Commissioner Marci Woodward read a proclamation honoring the service. Nicole Sanders, the Florida Chief for the Bureau of Braille and Talking Book Library, was also on site for the ceremonies.

Thank you to the Talking Books staff for planning the event, to all staff who volunteered to assist and to the Friends of the Library for their generous sponsorship of the event. It truly made it a wonderful event.

Belle Glade Branch - 10th Anniversary

On March 23, 2023 we celebrated 10 years since the Belle Glade Branch moved to its new facility. Our celebration took place in the Civic Center and included karaoke, book giveaways, raffle drawings and cupcakes. Dewey was also in attendance taking photos with attendees using our green screen.

We had two special guests show up to the event. Regina Bohlen, Commissioner Baxter's legislative aide for the Glades Area, and Sara Perez, Pahokee's City Commissioner. Ms. Bohlen won one of our raffles, participated in karaoke fun and took photos with Dewey.



INTRODUCING LIBRARY TO GO

**Robert Weisman Governmental Center
301 North Olive Avenue,
West Palm Beach 33401**

We recognize the importance of evolving to meet the changing needs of our community. The Library To Go cabinet is one of the ways we can reach our members in places where they work and conduct business. By embracing this technology, we've positioned ourselves as forward-thinking. Our members appreciate that we are actively seeking ways to enhance their Library experience.

From our Press Release:

On Tuesday, March 14 at 1:00 pm, the Palm Beach County Library System unveiled their latest resource available for community members to access Library materials – the Library To Go cabinet. Similar to a vending machine, Palm Beach County Library System cardholders can now borrow new and popular books from this device.

Library Director Douglas Crane welcomed guests to the grand unveiling of the Palm Beach County Library System's first-of-its-kind cabinet. "We're very excited today to launch Library To Go. If it goes well at the Governmental Center, we expect to expand the service out to other locations."



In attendance were Mayor Gregg K. Weiss, who ceremoniously checked out the first book, followed by members of the Board of County Commissioners including: Maria G. Marino, Michael A. Barnett, Marci Woodward and Mack Bernard. All were very pleased to see this expansion come to the Governmental Center.

Cory L. McCoy, president of Lyngsoe Systems U.S., the company that produced the Library To Go cabinet (under the brand name, LibCabinet) was also elated. "We wanted to keep it super simple and 100 percent mobile where you can put these machines anywhere to increase the patron experience for the Palm Beach County Library System."

Members are encouraged to visit the machine, located at the Robert Weisman Governmental Center Lobby at 301 North Olive Avenue, West Palm Beach 33401 during regular business hours.

Thank you to everyone who has made the Library To Go launch a great success.



Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioners

Maria Sachs, Mayor
Maria G. Marino, Vice Mayor
Gregg K. Weiss
Michael A. Barnett
Marci Woodward
Sara Baxter
Mack Bernard

Verdenia C. Baker
County Administrator

Todd Bonlarron
Assistant County Administrator

Douglas Crane
Library Director

Leadership Team

Aurora Arthay, Deputy Library Director
Adam Davis, System Services Director
Alicia Garrow, Finance & Facilities Director
James Larson, Intellectual Resources Manager
Craig Lessard, Information Technology Director
Elizabeth Prior, Branch Services Director
Andrea Taylor, Library Personnel Services Coordinator