

A YEAR OF POSITIVE RETURNS

HALL COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM ANNUAL REPORT 2022





DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

The past few years have been challenging for our community. Here at the Hall County Library, we have experienced our share of good and bad along with everyone else. Figuring out new ways to provide library services during a pandemic was a challenge, but we were able to implement curbside services, increase digital collections, and offer virtual programming within days of the statewide shutdown. Now our challenge is to return to normal services and remind our community of all the library has to offer - at no cost to our patrons.

Our library has always offered a wide range of popular materials in a variety of formats. However, many people do not realize how many new services are offered by your library.

I hope you will visit a library branch soon to explore some of our many offerings - or invite us out to visit your club or organization. We love to take our Reading Roadshow out into the community!

Some of these exciting services include:

- E-books and other downloadable products including audiobooks, music, movies, and magazines
- Exciting programs for adults including art classes and discussion groups
- A new coffee shop at the Spout Springs Library - Diletto Bakery and Cafe!
- Non-traditional items available for checkout including jigsaw puzzles, adaptive toys, and adventure passes
- Mobile computer labs that can be brought to your location
- Meeting rooms and study rooms available for public use
- Passport application services at our Blackshear Place Library
- One on one technology training
- Programs for those with special needs including our Sensitive Santa visit and Sensitive Storytime.

LISA MACKINNEY

Library Director

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BY THE NUMBERS

HCLS continued to see increased use as services returned to normal operations, which were disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

- 504,198 items were checked out.
- 220,192 individuals visited library branches along with another 220,379 web visitors.
- 20,171 hours were spent on public computers.
- 22,650 people attended 1111 library programs.
- Hall County Library cardholders downloaded 72,971 digital items and used databases 41,879 times.
- If library materials checked out this year were purchased by users, the cost would exceed \$7,500,000.

EXCITING NEWS!

The City of Gainesville and Hall County Board of Commissioners opened their newest parking deck across the street from the Gainesville Library on July 15. The parking deck provides over 400 parking spots for the downtown Gainesville area; designated library parking are also available at the deck.

This SPLOST project is a supplement to the Gainesville Library renovation, which was completed in 2020.



Library staff dressed up in period attire to celebrate the release of the 1950 census.

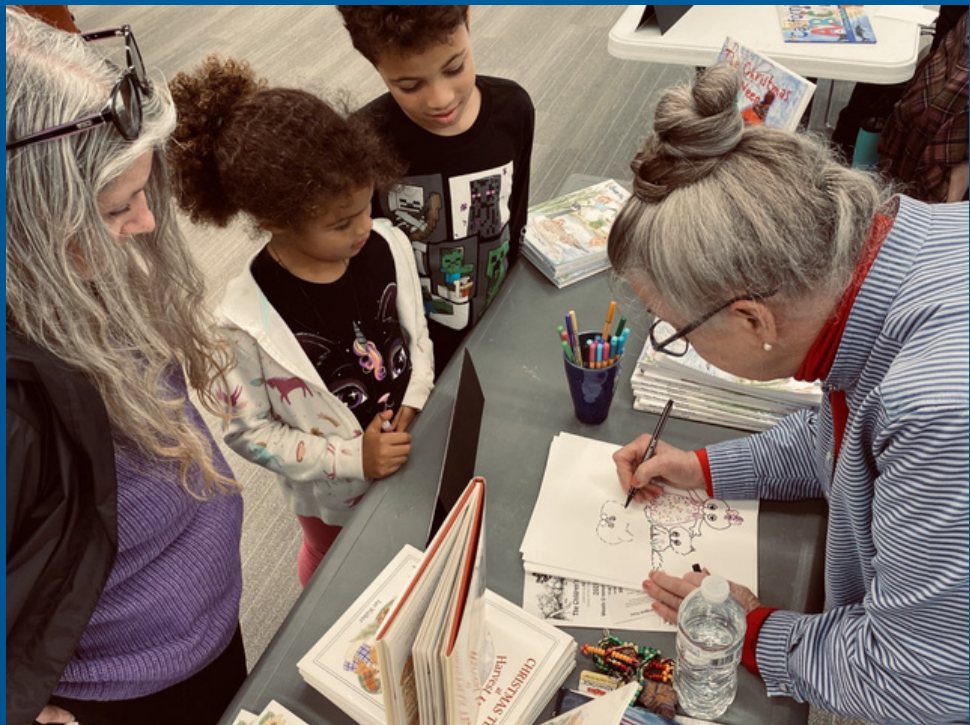




HIGHLIGHTS



- For the first time, the PINES statewide lending system began to allow audiovisual items such as DVDs and audiobooks to be shared between library systems and sent through state courier service.
- Diletto Bakery opened a new South Hall location inside the Spout Springs Library (photo below, left).
- HCLS received a large donation from the Rural Technology Fund to buy STEM products, which will be used to support science and technology programs for youth.
- The 1950 census was released in April 2022.
- HCLS began a new local author collection. The collection's debut was celebrated with a local author fair, which was held at the Gainesville Library (photo below, right).
- HCLS staff members participated in LEAD, a yearlong training program. The program goal was to train the next generation of local library leadership. Topics included public speaking, human resources management, and budgeting. Participants were required to complete a group project, which was then shared with their co-workers during staff training.
- Alliance Theater passes were added to the statewide adventure pass program.
- Jigsaw puzzles began checking out at all branches.



STATEMENTS OF IMPACT FROM OUR COMMUNITY

Just found out about the downloadable library materials this year and used it for a book club reading – It was great!

Everyone who works here is very helpful, super friendly, accommodating. In case you can't tell, I love my library!!

Love Hall Co. Libraries, staff is wonderful. Georgia Pines is great and I use it frequently.



It has been a while, but today I once again used your genealogy collection. It was the first time I had seen your new updates to the building! The separate room was amazing! I have been researching family history of over 40 years and I have visited a lot of libraries. I wanted to let you know that your collection is excellent. I know how expensive those types of books can be! Since I will be visiting the S.C. Archives in a few weeks, I wanted to locate some specific topics in order to use my time effectively while there. In your collection, I found some great leads to pursue.

My little girl loves your books. She reads them so fast so she can come back to the library three times a week.

I do not have internet access at home or nearby, so Hall County Library System has helped me tremendously. I've applied for numerous job opportunities, and am still applying. Thank you HCLS for your help in my own personal job search.

The study rooms serve a good purpose when you need to work individually with a student on skills.



Thank you so much for all your effort in providing the most wonderful {Sensitive} Santa experience! My son has wanted to meet Santa so bad, but due to his inability to regulate and other sensory issues I did not think we would have a successful experience! This was EVERYTHING I could have ever hoped for...

While out in the lobby, a friendly woman gave us useful information that made us more confident in filling out our passport application. Our agent was amazing and extremely accurate and efficient.

Staff story: One day I had to really help a gentleman fill out his application for a job. He needed quite a bit of help understanding the various sections of his application. He finished, thanked me and left. A few days later he came in again and thanked me with a big smile and said he had gotten the job. I was so proud that he stuck to it and that he got the job!

The library is very important to me. Spout Springs Branch has plenty of quiet reading space and lots of newly published novels that I enjoy. In general, libraries are one of the best things humans have going: access to all the world's knowledge, free of charge. The library doesn't care about your social status, class, race, religion, or background. Just promise to bring the book back and you can access any book you want. It's great.

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The Hall County Library connects you to the tools that empower you to explore the world and enrich your life.



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