

# HCLS Lighthouse

Newsletter of the Harrison County Library System



December 2010

## ***Libraries Face Funding Crisis***

*Robert Lipscomb, Director*

As a result of the continuing downturn in the general economy, the Harrison County Library System is having to deal with unprecedented funding cuts. This current fiscal year (i.e., October 1, 2010 to September 30, 2011) has witnessed an approximately \$300,000 cut in operational funding. Because of this we have had to make some very tough choices this year.

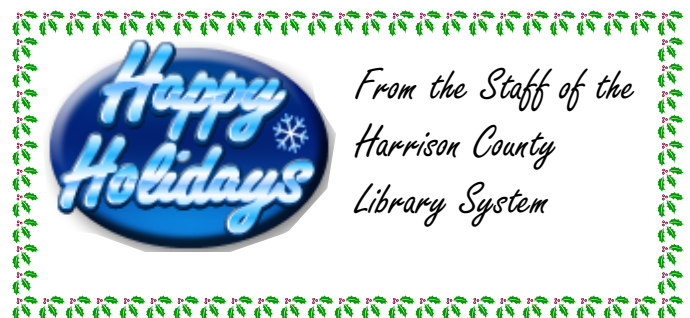
Traditional library budgets include such items as utilities and other fixed costs, about the only place we could make cuts is in our materials and staffing categories. As a result of the cuts, we have had to reduce our FY 2011 materials budget from \$149,750 to \$46,500. Additionally, we have had to institute a furlough program that will see each of our employees (including the library director) give up 12 days of pay during the rest of this fiscal year. Obviously, these were hard choices for the Harrison County Library Board to make but, given the reality of our situation, these actions were both prudent and unavoidable.

Paradoxically, along with the budget cuts we are also witnessing an increase in the use of our libraries. Because all of the facilities in our system provide free internet access, over the past two years hard-hit patrons have been economizing by canceling their broadband internet contracts at home and looking to the public library to fill the gap. At the same time, companies and government agencies are saving money by moving job applications and services online. As a result of this, a continual rush of new visitors is arriving at libraries just as the funding agencies are running out of money.

Throughout the state of Mississippi public libraries have to do more with less. In spite of this, in 2009 Mississippi's libraries helped more than 9.5 million visitors and circulated more than 8.9 million items. Here in Harrison County this past year our libraries witnessed the circulation of more than 481,993 items and the visitation of 405,582 patrons. Additionally, we provided 92,855 individual computer use sessions and issued 7,909

new library cards. Obviously, even though we are still rebuilding after Katrina, we are a much needed and much used community resource. However, we cannot continue to provide this level of service if we don't have adequate funding. The fact is, that since Hurricane Katrina we have been using donations and grants to try and maintain an adequate level of service. Unfortunately this money is running out now and there is very little in reserve. After Katrina we thought that if we could supplement our operating budget with donations and grants for a few years things would gradually come back to the level of support we enjoyed prior to this catastrophic storm. However, because of the recession we are now in, things have not worked out that way and we continue to face very tight economic pressures.

Another major problem we will be facing concerns the staffing of the new libraries we are building as a result of the destruction caused by Hurricane Katrina. The new Pass Christian Library is now open to the public and we are expecting three additional facilities to open in the next year and a half. In order to staff these libraries properly we will undoubtedly need a dramatic increase in local funding. If we do not receive proper funding, we will have no choice but to limit the number of days we are open to the public. Rationing the hours of operation is not something my staff or I want to do, but if we are unable to raise the necessary funding we will have no choice but to consider cutting back our hours of operation.



## Computers Just for Kids

*Charline Longino, Biloxi Libraries*

Libraries in the Harrison County Library System have a new way to reach their younger users thanks to a \$90,000 grant from the Foundation for the Mid South. The public libraries in Biloxi, D'Iberville, Gulfport, and Pass Christian have installed early literacy computers in all but their temporary library locations.

The computers are aimed at pre-school and primary age children and are designed to appeal to little hands and eyes. The computers come with touch-sensitive screens, colorful keyboards, and a cartoon-like, mouse-faced mouse just the right size for young hands. More importantly, these new computers come loaded with award-winning software designed to educate while entertaining. Children play a game and learn to count in *MathBlasters*, find out how the body works in *My Amazing Human Body*, or tackle another of over 50 educational programs. There are even bi-lingual Spanish versions.

The photo is of children using the new computers at the Pass Christian Library. Computers can be found at the West Biloxi Branch, Margaret Sherry Branch, D'Iberville Library and Woolmarket branch; among others. These computers will also be installed in the new libraries which are now under construction in Harrison County.



For more information about the children's educational computers: <http://www.awe-net.com/els.asp>

For more information about the Foundation for the Mid South: <http://www.fndmidsouth.org/about/>

## Saucier Children's Library

*Rita Aalbertsberg, Saucier*



The Saucier Children's Library was built on a firm foundation in September of 2004 by volunteers. That foundation remains strong and is standing the test of time. During the 2010 Summer Reading Program growth was tremendous. The program had to be held outside at Saucier Elementary School's outdoor classroom because of the weekly attendance. Over the seven week program battling the heat and humidity, 621 people attended. Library material circulation more than doubled from the same period 2009. The program was bigger than the staff alone could handle. True to the history of Saucier Children's Library, over 25 registered volunteers stepped up and gave 235 hours in aid for the summer program. After a huge amount of sweat, prayer and even some tears it was certainly a summer program that the children, parents, volunteers and guests won't soon forget.

In the course of these tough economic times the tiny library has become even more valuable to the community. Our public computers are being used for job searches, resume preparation, research, school work, the usual internet social networking and entertainment. Recently nine wooden book cases from the Pass Christian Library's temporary trailer were installed replacing some smaller metal shelving units. The metal shelving was then in turn given to the Saucier Senior Citizen's Center further enriching the community.

Even though the Library looks and feels like a "Twig" rather than a "

Branch" of the Harrison County Library System the size has not diminished the determination for the little Library to thrive. A "Full Size Library" attitude can be noted in both staff and volunteers. With tremendous support and generosity from the entire Harrison County Library System and the community Saucier Children's Library has become the Little Library that could.

## Summer Reading Fun

*Geoff Conwill, Gulfport Temporary*

On July 19<sup>th</sup> the Gulfport Temporary Library wrapped up the end of its summer reading program "Make Splash READ!" with a wild, wet and well-attended Splash Bash, thanks in part to a generous grant from the Friends of the Gulfport Library. The water slide (see photo) was a great attention-getter for new and old patrons of the library alike. The Splash Bash also featured drawing with seashells, face painting, a live sprinkler, splash pond and even a cotton candy and sno-cone machine. Many thanks go out to all who helped out, including Orange Grove children's librarian Angie Williams, her daughter Alaina, and Gulfport Head Librarian Celia Barrett.



Among those pictured (l. to r.) are Preschool Academy preschool teacher Tara Thadison and students from the Divine, Gulfport; volunteer Kelly Dubuisson; Emerson Oseguera; volunteer Christopher Dubuisson

## *Library System Installs New Computer Management System*

The library system was approved for a Community Technology Grant. This grant is administered by LYRASIS with funds provided by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. With monies from this grant, the library system purchased and installed Envisionware as a computer reservation and print management system.

The Reservation system allows patrons to sign on to a public computer internet station at a reservation station or at the public computer. Patrons are allowed 2 sessions of 60 minutes each to use our system. This removes the need for sign in sheets. Notifications are given to the public when their session end is nearing. Staff are available to assist as needed.

The Print Management system moves the printer to a public workstation. This workstation allows patrons to pay and print jobs that have been sent from their use at the public computer.

***Due to budget limitations, HCLS libraries will be closed for staff furloughs on the following days:***

### **Margaret Sherry Local History and Genealogy**

February 5th-7th  
April 9th-11th  
June 11th-13th  
July 30th-Aug. 1st  
September 17th-19th

### **West Biloxi**

January 29th-31st  
April 2nd-4th  
June 4th-6th  
July 23rd-25th  
September 10th-12th

### **Woolmarket Gulfport Temporary**

March 12th-14th  
April 16th-18th  
June 18th-20th  
August 6th-8th  
September 24th-26th

### **Orange Grove**

January 29th-31st  
April 2nd-4th  
June 4th-6th  
July 23rd-25th  
September 10th-12th

### **D'Iberville & Saucier**

January 8th-10th  
March 26th-28th  
May 14th-16th  
June 25th-27th  
August 20th-22nd

### **Biloxi Temporary & Pass Christian**

December 11th-13th (2010)  
March 19th-21st  
May 7th-9th  
July 16th-18th  
August 13th-15th

## **PROGRESS**



The new Pass Christian Library opened its doors the Summer of 2010.



Inside view of new library in Biloxi, Oct 2010  
Opening 2011



Exterior view of the new Downtown Gulfport Library  
Opening 2011

# Harrison County Library System

*Administrative Offices*  
2600 24th Avenue # 6  
Gulfport, MS 39501  
Phone: 228-868-1383  
Fax: 228-863-7433

[www.harrison.lib.ms.us](http://www.harrison.lib.ms.us)

## *Libraries and Their Hours*



**Gulfport Temporary Library**  
47 Maples Drive Trailer # 1  
Gulfport, MS 39507  
(228) 871-7171 FAX 871-7067  
Mon-Wed 9:00 - 6:00  
Thu-Fri 9:00 - 5:00  
Sat 10:00-2:00

**Orange Grove Public Library**  
12031 Mobile Avenue  
Gulfport, MS 39503-3175  
(228) 832-6924 FAX 832-6926  
Mon, Wed, Fri 9:00 - 5:00  
Tue, Thu 9:00 - 8:00  
Sat 9:00 - 5:00

**Jerry Lawrence Memorial  
Public Library**  
10391 Auto Mall Parkway  
D'Iberville, MS 39540-3750  
(228) 392-2279 FAX 396-9573  
Mon & Tue 9:00 - 8:00  
Wed - Sat 9:00 - 5:00

**East Biloxi Temporary Library**  
587 Howard Ave  
Biloxi, MS 39530  
(228) 436-3095 FAX 436-3097  
Mon-Thu 9:00 - 6:00  
Fri 11:00 - 4:00

**Local History & Genealogy**  
135 Main Street Suite 301  
Biloxi, MS 39533  
(228) 435-4613 FAX 435-4618  
Mon-Wed, Fri 9:00 - 4:30  
Thu 9:00 - 12:00

**Margaret S. Sherry Memorial Library**  
2141 Poppas Ferry Road  
Biloxi, MS 39532-4251  
(228) 388-1633 FAX 388-0920  
Mon & Tue 9:00 - 8:00  
Wed - Sat 9:00 - 5:00

**West Biloxi Public Library**  
2047 Pass Road  
Biloxi, MS 39531-3125  
(228) 388-5696 FAX 388-5652  
Mon-Tue 9:00 - 8:00  
Wed - Sat 9:00 - 5:00

**Woolmarket Temporary Library**  
8455 Woolmarket Road  
Biloxi, MS 39532  
(228) 354-9464 FAX 354-9466  
Mon-Thu 9:00 - 6:00  
Fri & Sat 10:00 - 4:00

**Pass Christian Public Library**  
111 Heirn Avenue  
Pass Christian, MS 39571  
(228) 452-4596 FAX 452-1111  
Mon-Fri 8:00 - 5:30  
Fri 8:00 - 5:00  
Sat 9:00 - 2:00

**Saucier Children's Library**  
24006 First Street  
Saucier, MS 39574  
(228) 539-4419  
Mon 1:00 - 6:00  
Tue 1:00 - 5:00  
Thu 11:00 - 5:00

**HCLS Director:** Robert Lipscomb  
**Board of Trustees:** Mr. Brian Quave, Chair; Mrs. Nancy Sneed, Vice Chair; Mrs. Gerry Morgan; Mrs. Ramona Peresich; Mr. Donald Moore  
**Lighthouse Editor:** Melissa Bratton