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Dekalb County News and Notes

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DeKalb County news and notes

Dekalb County Public Library has launched a major building project that will add three new branches to the 22-branch system, replace five other branches and expand or upgrade five more by the end of 2009. Construction is beginning this winter. The nearly \$55-million project was approved by DeKalb County voters in a November 2005 bond referendum. Architects have been chosen for nine of the projects, and public meetings were held to give DeKalb County residents an opportunity to offer input before designs were developed.

Seven of the nine projects will be LEED-certified, meaning the new libraries will meet recognized industry standards as environmentally safe and energy-efficient buildings. In addition, patrons also can expect the new buildings to offer more people spaces, including teen areas and computer labs. Two will have cafes. Three others will likely be part of larger mixed-use projects, which also will include retail stores and other amenities such as housing or community centers. »»

Gwinnett County news and notes

The Gwinnett County Public Library (GCPL) and members of its staff were the recipients of several prestigious awards during the summer of 2007.

In June, the library was presented with an Award of Recognition from the national organization Family Friendly Libraries (FFL). Executive Director Nancy Stanbery-



Varenhorst, Beaudreau and Stanbery-Kellam

Kellam accepted the award on behalf of the library during the June library board of trustees meeting held at the library's Five Forks branch. Gwinnett County District 3 Commissioner Mike Beaudreau presented

the award on behalf of FFL. Denise Varenhorst, president of FFL, said GCPL is one of only two library systems in the nation to receive that distinction in 2007.

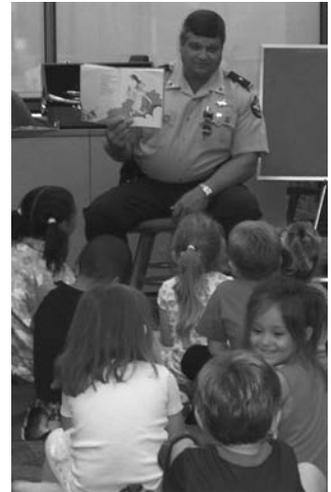
In July, Grayson Branch Library Associate Richard Porter was awarded an American Library Association (ALA) Spectrum Scholarship. Established in 1997, the Spectrum Scholarship represents an effort by the ALA to recruit larger numbers of ethnically diverse individuals into the library profession. In addition to the \$5,000 in scholarship funds, the award affords recipients the opportunity to

attend the Spectrum Leadership Institute. Porter also serves as branch volunteer and adult programming coordinator in Grayson.

GCPL will present the first Gwinnett Reading Festival Oct. 20 at the Gwinnett County Fairgrounds. The event, which will feature approximately 30 local, regional and national authors, is free to the public and will take place from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. »»

Hall County news and notes

The Gainesville Branch of the Hall County Library System was delighted to have a special guest reader for its August pajama storytime. Hall County Sheriff Steve Chronic delighted jammie-clad attendees of all ages by reading wonderful stories from Dr. Seuss and presenting program participants with a special badge. It was a special honor for the library to host Sheriff Chronic at that time, since he had just



Chronic reads aloud at storytime. (Photo by Whitney Dunlap)

received the honor of being named the Georgia Sheriff of the Year. Past guest readers for the pajama storytime program have included Congressman Nathan Deal and Hall County Superintendent Will Schofield. »»

Northwest Georgia news and notes

The Dalton and Whitfield County area is home to a large number of people who speak Spanish as their first language. Adding material well-suited to this group has not been easy, but the Dalton-Whitfield Public Library, headquarters for the Northwest Georgia Regional Library System, has recently received funding from a generous donor to replace the most-damaged copies of current English as a Second Language (ESL) material and to add new materials in an attempt to cut the wait time in half for those needing to check out the library's highly circulated language study items. The library will also add ESL products designed for children and young adults. It will also buy materials and offer preliminary Spanish language training for the library's non-Spanish speaking staff. Language training will allow the library to improve services to the Spanish-speaking community. »»