

October 2008

## Coweta Public Library Partners with University of West Georgia

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.kennesaw.edu/glq>

 Part of the [Education Commons](#), and the [Library and Information Science Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

(2008) "Coweta Public Library Partners with University of West Georgia," *Georgia Library Quarterly*: Vol. 45 : Iss. 3 , Article 6.  
Available at: <https://digitalcommons.kennesaw.edu/glq/vol45/iss3/6>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by DigitalCommons@Kennesaw State University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Georgia Library Quarterly by an authorized editor of DigitalCommons@Kennesaw State University. For more information, please contact [digitalcommons@kennesaw.edu](mailto:digitalcommons@kennesaw.edu).

## *Libraries In* PARTNERSHIP

---

### Coweta Public Library partners with University of West Georgia

The Coweta Public Library – Central Library has formed a partnership with the Carrollton-based University of West Georgia’s Ingram Library and Newnan Campus to enhance educational services within the community.

The University of West Georgia’s Ingram Library held its annual Faculty and Staff Development Day in August at Coweta County’s new Central Library. Cathy Wright, director of the Newnan Campus; Lorene Flanders, director of University Libraries; Dr. Donna Harkins, director of the Early Childhood Education; and Carol Goodson, head of Access & Instructional Services, had previously visited the library to discuss collaborations between the public library and the university in support of UWG’s Newnan Center. The visit was productive — all parties in attendance agreeing to forge a relationship for the benefit of the community.

#### **The Ingram Library Staff Development Day**

“We were extraordinarily impressed with the new building, but more importantly with the approach to designing a library facility to meet specific community goals. The new Central Library reflects the importance of educating children and

of providing access to materials and programs to people of all ages in support of lifelong learning. Coweta County has recognized that a facility that supports citizens’ interaction around literature, art, culture and issues of concern such as health and well-being builds a strong community that attracts new residents, retains longtime residents and attracts commerce,” said Flanders. The university library is planning a renovation of its facility to better meet the needs of a growing population of 21st century students.

Their visit provided a valuable overview of another library’s approach to planning a facility to meet specific service goals.. The purpose of UWG’s visit was to learn how a library could be functional and have a customer oriented purpose simultaneously. Unlike the Central Library, Ingram Library does not have the resources to build a new building and face a challenge incorporating a customer oriented philosophy; however there was a lot that they could learn and apply to future renovations.

“We came away newly energized for our work with our planning architects,” said Flanders.

One critical aspect highlighted during

their visit was that the library services philosophy came before the architectural design and facilitated the customer-focused orientation. Several questions from the Ingram staff focused on the specifics of placement of the collection, building element design, and use of technology.

#### **Why are the classics in this area?**

We focused on the natural movement of customers. When one walks into a building, it is an autonomic response to turn right. By having the classics in this area, both parents (who may be searching for titles for older children and themselves) and new visitors will be made aware of this part of our collection. In addition, you’ll notice that we have the traditional classic collection such as Jane Austen and Dante Alighieri, as well as newer classics by Robert Heinlein and Muriel Sparks.

#### **What are the Book Bundles?**

The Book Bundles are another aspect of allowing our customers to be independent but provide the library staff an avenue of virtual engagement. The idea originated with one of our library associates, Lesley Williams. Three books that have a similar theme are selected and bound together with a label that

indicates that theme of the bundle. This is virtual reader advisory for the customer short on time.

### Why were these colors chosen?

The overarching service philosophy was to create the “library as destination.” The colors were chosen to evoke an inviting, soothing, warm environment that could engender browsing, reading, learning and discussion. We wanted an environment where people would want to intentionally gravitate to and linger. The intention was to abandon the traditional institutional feel.

### What has been the response to self-checkouts?

Our customers love the independence and are impressed with the technology available to them at their local library. Self-checkouts also lend our customers a degree of anonymity (if no one sees me check it out, I didn't) so customers are more likely to check out potentially embarrassing or sensitive books than before.

They were equally impressed with the staff areas. One of the key areas when designing a customer-oriented

facility is not to forget the internal customers. Internal customers are the heart of good customer service. You'll notice the colors, privacy of cubicles and furniture selection were selected with the needs of the staff in mind.

### University of West Georgia Newnan Center Early Childhood Classes

“I can't think of a better place to hold an early childhood education class on children's literature than in a library, especially in the new county library, which has its own children's room and is so well-equipped with all the old children's classics (Newbery and Caldecott Award winners) and the newest things hot off the press. What a wonderful place for future teachers to become acquainted with the children's books they will need to know and to share with their students!

“In addition, I have to add that these future teachers are very fortunate to have Barbara Osborne-Harris there as director of the library, with an undergraduate degree in early childhood education. It's the perfect setup, a marriage meant to be, “ said Cathy Wright, director, UWG Newnan Center.

Osborne-Harris said “bringing the students to the library was a natural collaboration between the two entities.”

Wright and Osborne-Harris thought it serendipitous. “If you have to read, use and touch the books — not to have the book is a disservice to our learning educators,” Osborne-Harris said.

The idea to hold the college class at the library came about after Wright approached Osborne-Harris following her presentation at a local civic organization's luncheon.



*The children's area includes a variety of seating options.*

Osborne-Harris, who has a degree in early childhood education, began her librarian career in children and youth services. She studied Georgia Department of Education's performance standards to build a diverse and retrospective collection of traditional and contemporary children's titles. She explained she wanted it to be a teaching collection and is encouraged that the college wants to use it for instructional purposes.

"It mirrors what the children are learning in school," she said. The library system will issue guest and student library cards for UWG students attending the children's literature course who aren't Coweta residents.

Osborne-Harris said university officials initially doubted that the Central Library had the resources until after a

summer visit and tour were scheduled. The class was then approved to be held at the Coweta Public Library System's Central Library.

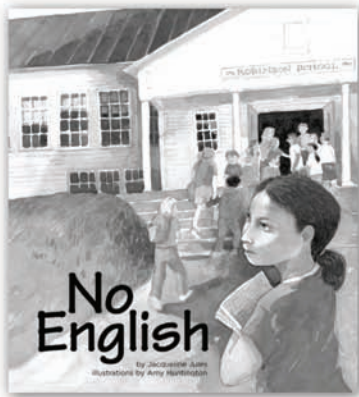
Osborne-Harris added she's currently in talks with university officials about the Newnan Center's nursing degree program.

"We're talking with them about providing bibliographic information exposure and teaching them how to use GALILEO," she said. (GALILEO, or Georgia Library Learning Online, is the state's virtual library system.)

UWG's Newnan Center has doubled its fall semester enrollment this year as a result of developing more degree programs and course offerings. Several renovations and expansions are under way to accommodate the new programs and increased

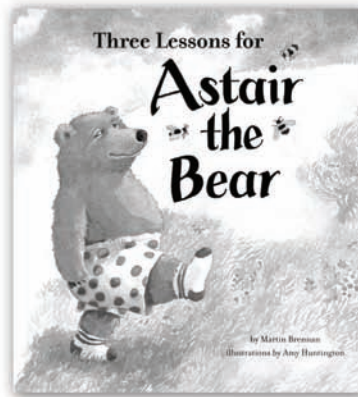
enrollment including the construction of a lecture hall and nursing and biology labs. Earlier this summer, some of the campus's nonuniversity programs were moved off site to free up the classroom space. For the first time, the satellite campus has started offering classes on Fridays. The Newnan Center's fall enrollment is 1,358, up from 700 students in fall 2006.

The Coweta Public Library System (CPLS), located 35 miles southwest of Atlanta, is a network of four library facilities within Coweta County serving a population of 125,000 residents. The library facilities are geographically placed to offer residents a primary service area within seven miles of their homes. CPLS cardholders have access to the total holdings of library system through an interlibrary loan book reserve and exchange system. ▶▶



Just imagine arriving in a classroom and speaking a different language than everyone else around you! The story encourages a new look at differences and finding creative ways to bridge gaps with knowledge and understanding.

978-1-58726-474-0  
\$17.95



Astair the bear is a loveable fellow with many friends, and our bumbling bear learns the value of good grooming habits, discovers the consequences of anger, and finds out that buying too many things can get in the way of your happiness.

978-1-58726-435-1  
\$17.95



This Brothers Grimm tale of a spoiled princess finding her handsome prince by breaking a witch's spell has enchanted readers since it was written in the early 1800s.

978-1-58726-279-1  
\$18.95



[www.mittenpress.com](http://www.mittenpress.com)  
1-877-722-2264