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## Grantville Library Will Foster Interactive Learning

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Construction is progressing on schedule for the new library facility in the Grantville Municipal Complex.

## Grantville Library will foster interactive learning

Coweta County is among the top 100 fastest-growing counties in the United States and among the top 20 fastest growing counties in Georgia. To meet the needs of its growing population, the Coweta County Board of Commissioners submitted, and citizens approved, a special purpose local options sales tax (SPLOST) in 2001 to fund improvements in county library services. The near completion of the Grantville branch library construction project represents Coweta County's near fruition of its goal to enhance county library services. The SPLOST projects completed to date are the new construction of the Central Library, located on the county's fastest-growing east side, and the expansion and renovation of the A. Mitchell Powell Jr. branch library from 22,000 to 25,000 square feet. The Central Library construction was made possible by the citizens of Coweta County and a Georgia Public Library Service Capital Outlay Grant.

The Grantville branch of the Coweta County Public Library system underscores the flurry of synergetic energy surrounding enhancements in community library services throughout the state of Georgia.

The new construction of a 5,000-square-foot, state-of-the-art library facility in Coweta County's southwestern region is made possible through the financial collaboration among state, county and municipal government entities: \$665,000 funded through a Georgia Public Library Service Capital Outlay Grant, \$500,000

and \$200,000 funded by SPLOST from Coweta County and the city of Grantville respectively.

The new 5,000-square-foot freestanding facility replaces the 1,200-square-foot library housed in two classrooms of the former Glanton Elementary School built in 1937, renamed the Grantville Municipal Complex, which now houses the Grantville City Hall, police department and other municipal services.

Residents of the city of Grantville and surrounding communities will enjoy enhancements in collection size, public access to technology and library programming. The collection capacity will increase to 25,000 plus from its current 8,589-volume capacity; desktop computer access will increase from eight to 18 and will be enhanced with a Wi-Fi network. A meeting room, not available at the present location, will be an additional feature for library programs and community events.



Barbara Osborne-Harris outside the Grantville library.

Architectural design services are rendered by Atlanta-based Gardner Spencer Smith Tench and Jarbeau, the firm responsible for the Central Library new construction and the A. Mitchell Powell Jr. Branch Library renovation and expansion project. The Grantville Branch's square-shaped design with wrapped porch sits surrounded by trees and is in walking distance to a newly constructed ball field complex and community park. Interior spaces provide separate areas for

children, teen and adult services. A soft seating area overlooking the woodland and outdoor porch seating areas will convey the intention of the library to be a welcoming destination. The building design and finishes invoke the warmth and functionality created at the Coweta Public Library's Central Library. Interior finishes of earth tones complement the exterior natural woodland surroundings.

The library entrance is the entry point for the library meeting room and public restrooms. The library's interior entrance is designed to draw the library customer to a centrally positioned circular customer service desk. Specific features include a retail merchandised area of recently released titles, popular magazines, a self-checkout machine, print release stations, chairs at tables and soft seating with side tables. These elements will

continue Coweta Public Library system's goal of customer engagement. The vision for the Grantville branch library follows the overarching goal for Coweta Public Library system services: We envision a space filled with people, some relaxing in chairs, reading or working at desktops or laptops, others browsing the shelves of books on display, others talking with library staff, engaged in discussions about their favorite book or current community topic.

"The vision has always been to create a library that facilitates, in many ways, vibrant, energetic and interactive learning," said Barbara Osborne-Harris, Coweta County Library director. "Our philosophy is that the customer should be engaged, and focusing on that engagement is one of the most important things we can do to ensure we offer quality library services." ►►

## Cherokee Regional Library system enters building mode

The LaFayette-Walker County Public Library is number two on the list of state capital outlay building projects pending approval this year — yea! So with nerves of steel and many a cup of coffee, Director Lecia Eubanks and the staff at the Cherokee Regional Library system will move forward with our predesign planning for this regional headquarters library.

The communities served by this library have responded robustly to an online survey. This survey allows respondents an opportunity to communicate library and information service needs to the building team. The response to the survey has reinforced many of the needs staff members listed in meetings with consultant architects Jack Killian and David Cameron of Killian Clark Partnership. The information gathered also has shown a large gap in programming and services for the young adult and teen population. And survey respondents overwhelmingly have supported the inclusion of a coffee

shop area within the newly planned library space.

Library staff members, along with the consultants, visited the Cartersville Main Street Library and the Catoosa County Public Library on a "library design ideas" field trip. With notepads and cameras in hand, we toured these well-designed spaces to see what ideas we might want to incorporate into our future building plan. Library Directors Carmen Sims and Bridgid Broderick gave us informative and honest information about what works and does not work so well in their libraries. We left these libraries with many ideas, photographs and good, solid advice.

The general goals of the LaFayette-Walker County Public Library building program are to augment the programming areas within the library structure, better design the shelving and public reading areas (which are tight, even after a vigorous weeding program) and design better work/task spaces. Meetings held in our meeting rooms are very intimate

gatherings, virtually nose to nose and knee to knee. The teen and children's spaces in our library need to be updated, expanded and better designed to meet the needs of young children, teens, parents and caregivers using this section of the library.

The LaFayette-Walker County Public Library renovation and addition will add much-needed square footage to allow technology upgrades and provide a larger space to support the ever-increasing programming and information demands of the community.

The ideas for the newly updated library structure are many and the budget limited. However, this library system is gearing up to provide services from spaces that are environmentally smart and technologically efficient with room to grow — while being aesthetically inviting to our patrons.

In next year's *GLQ* construction issue, I hope to have photos of work in progress and beautiful architectural renderings to share with readers. ►►

— Darla Chambliss

