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Georgia Library Spotlight - Middle Georgia Regional Library System

Sylvia O'Bear

Middle Georgia Regional Library, obears@bibblib.org

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GLA SPOTLIGHT

Middle Georgia Regional Library System

The mission of the Middle Georgia Regional Library System (MGRLS) is to connect all people to the information necessary to improve their lives through excellent services and materials. The strength of the system rests on the commitment to meet the needs of Middle Georgians. This responsibility has grown since COVID-19 and has allowed staff to recommit themselves to the mission. In a time of uncertainty, the MGRLS has become more community-based by offering patrons access to high-quality modern libraries in innovative and creative ways during the pandemic.

On November 15, 2020, Middle Georgia Regional revealed a new book bike to expand the Library Without Walls (Library WoW). Library WoW serves a wide variety of Macon-Bibb County residents through outreach and collaboration with a heavy focus on populations who may have difficulty accessing traditional library services. These patrons mostly include senior citizens, the homeless, those who have been incarcerated, and those who might not be comfortable accessing physical library spaces. The tricycle was custom-made by Pedal Positive to support the efforts to become closer to the community by bringing the branch to patrons. The bike is eye-catching, fresh, the only one in

Bibb County, and a statement piece for the system. It also joins the Library WoW bookmobile that was made possible by the Griffith Foundation and revealed in July 2020.

To keep public interest and remain a progressive place to learn, the Middle Georgia Regional Library System programs have been designed to enrich the lives of residents from young to old. The regional headquarters at Washington Memorial Library (WML) partnered



with local astronomer Philip Groce to host a planetary exploration event, Month of Mars. Patrons observed the Moon, Jupiter, Saturn, and Mars through astronomical telescopes. This was the brightest Mars would be and the closest to Earth for viewing until the year 2035. Because the program was such a success, WML and

Groce collaborated again on December 21, 2020 to present Winter Solstice: The Great Conjunction, an event to observe Saturn and Jupiter and prove that the library can take you anywhere.

The Middle Georgia Regional Library System is always moving across its 13 branches in 6 counties: Bibb, Crawford, Jones, Macon, Twiggs, and Wilkinson. Programs range from Shurling Library's Adulthood 101 Series, in which patrons discuss the reality of growing up, to showing patrons the importance of media literacy at the Charles A. Lanford, M.D. Library. MGRLS has

opened a new branch, the Bloomfield Library, which is the first recreation center in Bibb County to host a STEM lab, computer coding classes, and an internet bar. MGRLS is setting the bar as one of the larger systems in Georgia,

and they believe their role is to set the standard for excellent library service in the state.

Photo credit: Mike Young