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Spotlight on Construction: SPLOST Funding Makes Chickamauga Expansion a Reality

Darla Chambliss

Cherokee Public Library System, dchambliss@ngri.org

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SPLOST funding makes Chickamauga expansion a reality

by Darla Chambliss

The Chickamauga Public Library, a branch of the Cherokee Regional Library System, has experienced such growth in programming and book collections that an expansion was greatly needed. The dream of expansion and redesign was just that until the city of Chickamauga, upon the recommendation of John Culpepper, city utilities manager, allocated \$100,000 of local SPLOST funds. That money, along with a \$100,000 Department of Community Affairs development grant sponsored by Georgia state Rep. Jay Neal, was made available to fund the addition of a local history and genealogy room

at the Chickamauga Public Library. The allotment of this money made the expansion and redesign dream a reality, as the placement of the local history room within the existing structure was an impossibility.

Bobbie Abernathy, library manager, lobbied long and hard to bring about public awareness of the expansion need and to secure local and state funding. The Friends of the Chickamauga Public Library provided many volunteer hours raising funds

for the library building project. Pink flamingos, silent auctions and ghost walks were just a few of the fundraising activities spearheaded

by the group. In 2006, the General Assembly of

Georgia, with the support of state Sen. Jeff Mullis, appropriated \$600,000 for the expansion and improvement of the Chickamauga Public Library. The Jewell Foundation, a philanthropic support structure for the library, has donated more than \$100,000 to aid the building project and support the library during the move.

Spotlight On CONSTRUCTION

Local architect Jack Killian of Killian Clark Partnership was hired to design the 4,200-square-foot addition and renovation that will bring the total square footage of the library to 9,400 square feet. Killian came to our project with library design experience, having designed the Catoosa County Library in Fort Oglethorpe. Cherokee Regional Library Director Lecia Eubanks, Killian and Chickamauga Public Library staff members put their heads together and went to work planning the new spaces for the expanded library. The planning process moved quickly into the moving process. The



Children's staff members Debbie Goodson, Karen Trusty and Martha Burrows, along with Director Lecia Eubanks, discuss future children's department furnishings.

Chickamauga Public Library collection was re-housed in the Chickamauga Civic Center, located just behind our library building. Most of the collection was moved the first two weeks in June, and the library staff is most happy with the temporary location of the collection.



The demolition of the library begins with a small hole. The children attending storytime were allowed to watch the construction workers making the hole in the library building from a window in our temporary location, just next door in the Chickamauga Civic Center. One small boy said, "This is the best thing I have ever seen at the library!"

Selection of new furnishings, decorative finishes and lighting has been completed, and the patrons are getting very excited about the new library. The walls of the building have been erected, and the visual appeal of the expanded library is calling out to townspeople to slow down and take a look. The proposed completion date of the project was Dec. 24. How's that for a holiday treat? According to Eubanks, "the project is ahead of schedule and right on budget. How often does that happen?"

Eubanks attributes the success of the project to the library staff, the Helton Construction Co., Killian Clark Partnership and, most of all, the support of the local reading community. Our goal is to be moved into the gorgeous new space and operational by mid-to late January 2008. ▶▶



The steel frame construction begins.



The most recent photo of the building project, taken November 19, features the new side entrance and future courtyard area.

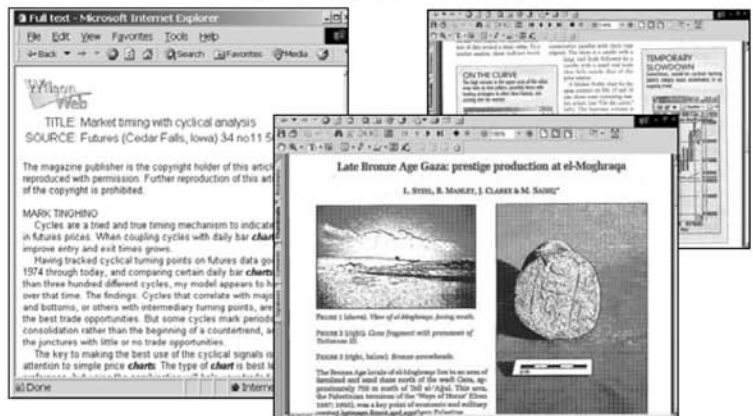
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