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From the President

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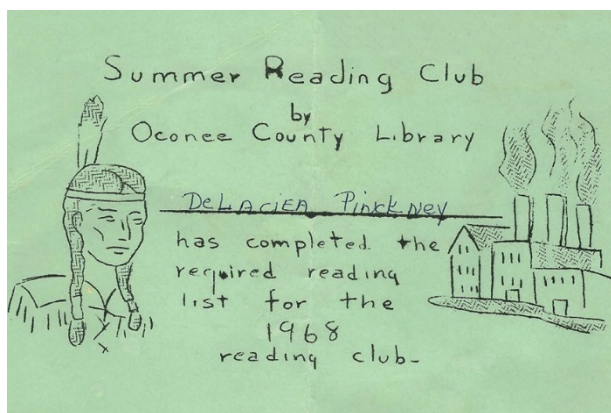
From the PRESIDENT

The saying is, you never forget your first love. Most people never forget their first library either.

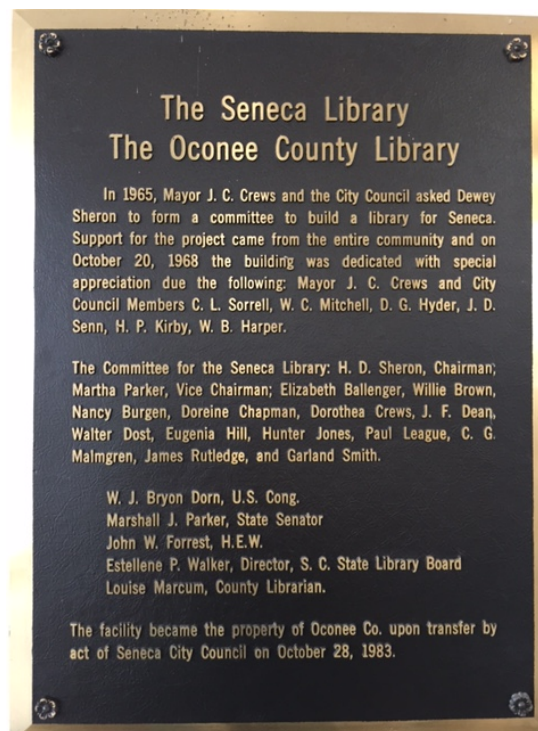
Growing up, you either loved your hometown library or not. The librarian was either the most wonderful person in town or really, really mean. You walked, rode your bike, or got a ride to the library. Maybe you read the most wonderful books and had the best adventures or spent your allowance on overdue fines because you just had to finish that last chapter.

Everyone has a library story.

My first hometown library, was the Seneca Library of the Oconee County Library System in Seneca, South Carolina. The library was within walking distance of my grandparent's house and back then you could walk all over town and not worry about anything bad happening to you. Every week during the summer I would walk to the library and come home with a new pile of books to read.



My Summer Reading certificate from 1968; I was 7 years old, almost 8.



Plaque from the lobby of the Seneca Library. My grandmother (Eugenia Hill) was on the building committee for "my first library." Photo Credit: Emily Whitmire

I come from a family of readers. Everyone loved or loves to read, my grandparents, parents, brother, son, nieces, sister-in-law, aunts, uncles, cousins... so going to the library for us was like going to the grocery store. When you came back someone always wanted to know "what did you get?" One summer I was desperate to find something new to read. I had read all the books in the juvenile section that looked interesting, and the librarian suggested that I look in the adult fiction section instead. I like mysteries and after looking around for a while, I happened to stumble upon *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*.

After about three chapters, I was hooked; I read every Sherlock Holmes title I could get my hands on. Anything they did not have at the library, I looked for in the local book store. By the end of that summer, I had read every Sherlock Holmes story written by Arthur Conan Doyle.

During that summer I became a lifelong Sherlock Holmes fan and found that I really loved doing research, just like Sherlock Holmes.

The library story I always tell, is that I became a reference librarian because I could not become a consulting detective.

At this time of the year, librarians around the country are getting ready for summer reading programs, setting the stage to help create library memories for children all across the nation.

We always hope that it will make a difference in a child's life, help them become lifelong readers, and that they, too, will never forget their first library.

Lace Keaton

President, Georgia Library Association 2015

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