

# Georgia Library Quarterly

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Volume 59  
Issue 2 *Spring 2022*

Article 1

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5-1-2022

## Spring 2022

Georgia Library Quarterly  
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### Recommended Citation

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# GLO

GEORGIA LIBRARY QUARTERLY



VOLUME 59 NUMBER 2 SPRING 2022

## *From the* PRESIDENT

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*Karen Manning*

Happy Spring, everyone! It is the season for planting and sowing seeds to cultivate growth. Typically, things do not sprout immediately, and we wait to see productivity.

The work of the Georgia Library Association (GLA) is ongoing, and activities are sprouting and blooming within committees, divisions, and interest groups. The first quarter of my presidency has been filled with understanding, changing, updating, and improving procedures and processes; getting to know people; building relationships with GLA's executive board, chairs, and members; developing ideas and action items; and planning for future endeavors.

The Columbus Area Library Association (CALA) is now an external affiliate of GLA. The concerted effort of the ad hoc group to generate an option that offers another tier of membership opens opportunities to explore other potential members to expand our community.

Administrative Services Liaison Linh Uong manages business and parliamentary matters. Her impressive display of skills and attention to detail wows me and other stakeholders. Together, we are tackling matters that we had no idea existed! Along with Member Services, we are in the process of updating the membership portal. Inquiries concerning gifting or sponsoring a membership and how external affiliates can join or renew led to a review of how we process memberships. Member Services is working to fulfill our requests. In the

meantime, please consider bringing in members to acquaint them with our professional association.

A beautiful hybrid is in the making. The Advocacy Committee and Trustees, Friends, and Advocates Division may be coupling to satisfy a strategic goal and maximize the productivity of the two. Under the leadership of Advocacy Committee Chair Angela Cortellino, the Library Day at the Capitol was a success. First-timers were excited about participating as they navigated the halls. Continue to support Angela's advocacy work that she conducts on behalf of GLA and libraries.

The Awards Committee is seeking nominations for various GLA awards. Take time to recognize someone for their contributions to GLA or the library profession and nominate them for an award. We want to know and acknowledge who they are.

The Conference Committee is diligently working to provide an exciting in-person conference this year. Our theme "You Belong! Because we're better together" has been received positively. In the spirit of the theme, I hope that attendance will be reflected in the efforts put forth to have an engaging and enjoyable conference.

The Constitution & Bylaws and Handbook Committees are led by Laura Burtle and Cathy Jeffrey, respectively. They have their hands in the weeds tending to the details that comprise GLA's governance and structure. These tasks are no rose gardens, but gratefully, we have people with great aptitude in understanding policy. I am trying to keep up, as the committees work diligently to synchronize and create consistencies. I greatly appreciate the work towards these efforts.

I tasked the Nominations and Elections Committee with revising practices to be more inclusive in attracting candidates from various types of libraries to serve as GLA Officers. This resulted in a slate of candidates that represent different backgrounds in the profession. The candidates will run in the 2023 GLA Executive Board election. Kudos to this precedent that broadens our candidate considerations for leadership!

Our Webmaster, Jon Bodnar has identified ways and received recommendations for making changes to the website. The intent is to provide better content organization and incorporate techniques that address accessibility. Remember to send Jon any updates to website content.

The implementation phase of the strategic plan will begin in the second quarter. GLA members are steps ahead with interests and action items that are important to their respective groups and the association. This preludes what may be forthcoming and is a great lift as we move into implementation.

Throughout the first quarter, I was fed with knowledge, personal experiences, and support that nourished my presidential beginnings. I have experienced a great amount of growth in GLA that began with someone sowing a seed and setting me in motion. Seeds take time to grow and need proper nutrients to sustain.

Involving my presidential advisor, Tamika Barnes, in my plans has helped me blossom. Tamika is a ray of sunlight that cultivates my garden of fresh ideas. I endearingly refer to myself as “grasshopper” in training with a well-rounded coach. The advisor role is not taken lightly and adds value to the leadership structure.

It is always the season to develop and grow. We plant seeds in more ways than we may know. Germination can begin in thoughts, spoken words, or even in actions. Continue to plant seeds that will grow and blossom in the rich soil of GLA. Our future can be a direct result of what actions we take today cultivating practices that bring us together. Let’s continue to spread seeds of *inspiration*, fertilize our *motivations*, and blossom together in *collaboration* to produce progressive results for GLA’s present and future growth.

I cannot thank our executive board, officers, chairs, and all members for your continued support of GLA. Your dedication is truly appreciated!

Please reach out to me or any board member with additional ideas, suggestions, or comments.

*Karen Manning is the 2022 president of the Georgia Library Association. She can be reached at [president@georgialibraryassociation.org](mailto:president@georgialibraryassociation.org)*

## Augusta-Richmond County Public Library: What's the FIC?: A Library Podcast

The year 2020 was an apprehensive and uncertain time for many institutions, including the [Augusta-Richmond County Public Library System](#) (ARCPLS). The COVID-19 pandemic put the system's six branches in a situation where their doors were closed to the public. This was a challenge the library system and many others had never faced before. Even with the buildings closed, the branches came together to meet and to continue providing resources and programming for the community as safely as possible.

The pandemic shifted the way ARCPLS executed many tasks in the library. The library moved to curbside pickup services, created virtual programming for social media, and kicked off a new email marketing newsletter to inform patrons about library news.

The system eventually opened its doors to the public again but realized virtual programming would not disappear. It realized this was the future of libraries, and it was time to think outside the box. When formulating concepts to attract a younger audience, library staff Megan Williams and Georgina Lewis came up with starting a podcast. Podcasts have become



another method of communication, entertainment, and education. They've been around for some time now but took off during the pandemic. Megan and Georgina launched the library podcast series [What's the FIC?](#) in August 2021.

The podcast covers many topics, such as literature that influenced media, gaming, education, special guest interviews, and discussion of anime and manga. Hosts Georgina and Megan wanted to give the community a different media outlet and to connect with potential library users in a modern-day format.

Megan and Georgina were able to create a podcast by using the platform Anchor. Anchor is a free, beginner-friendly platform for podcast creation. It contains tools that allow users to record and edit audio, arrange audio into podcast episodes, publish podcasts to listening platforms, and monetize content by collecting listener contributions or adding advertisements into episodes. It also allows users to stream through Apple Podcasts and Spotify to strengthen a show's listenership. Megan and Georgina also use two Blue Snowball iCE USB microphones and Adobe Audition to edit sound quality. *What's the FIC?* is available for podcast fans to listen to worldwide.

Megan and Georgina's most successful show was their anime discussion of the popular manga *Fruits Basket*. They are looking forward to creating more episodes in the future.

According to Georgina:

We hope you will join us on our podcast adventures! We would love to hear from you as we cover our topics like if the book was better than the TV show or movie, share laughs over memorable library moments, how gaming and libraries go together, and all the wonderful things going on here at ARCPLS.

If you would like to tune in and listen to *What's the FIC?*, go to <https://arcpls.org/whats-the-fic-a-library-podcast/>.

To learn more about the Augusta-Richmond County Public Library System (ARCPLS), go to <https://arcpls.org/>.

*Leah Holloway is a public relations assistant at Augusta-Richmond County Public Library System*



## GLA SPOTLIGHT

### Cobb County Public Library's Georgia Room

Serving important roles in both the American Civil War and the Civil Rights Movement, the city of Marietta offers many locations of historical significance and nearly two centuries of history. [The Georgia Room](#), in Cobb County Public Library's flagship Charles D. Switzer Public Library near the Marietta Square, houses materials covering the local history of the city.

The Georgia Room began in 1970 through the generous bequest of Virginia Vanstone Crosby in memory of her father Charles Mayo Crosby. Since opening, many have contributed to the growth and

development of the Georgia Room collection. In 2007, the Georgia Room was greatly expanded through a generous donation from the Library Foundation. The renovation of Switzer Library from 2019 to the summer of 2021 resulted in a larger space for the expanding collection and much more natural lighting.



Throughout its tenure as a trusted archive of local history, the Georgia Room has also been patronized by different groups and organizations like nearby chapters of the National Society for the Daughters of the

American Revolution. In the Georgia Room, researchers and genealogists connect and collaborate. The Cobb County Genealogical Society encourages new members to familiarize themselves with the collection, and the group frequently donates materials beneficial to genealogical and local research. The collection, and therefore

the Switzer Public Library itself, serves as an important stop for travelers as they pass through Cobb County and the Southeastern United States.

Staff members of the Georgia Room, led by research veteran and Head Carolyn Crawford, welcome patrons and visitors from the



renovated main desk located in the foyer and lit by a bay window. Parallel shelves running perpendicular to the windows house most of the collection's books and manuscripts. Microform readers next to the bank of public computers sit ready for research. As more historical information is made available online, a push for digitization in archives and special collections is eagerly met by the Georgia Room through regular digitization with its Bookeye 4 overhead scanner.

For additional information, please visit [the Georgia Room page](#) on [Cobb County Public Library's website](#). There, one can find information on upcoming programs, digitization and research services, and additional resources are available to all users.

*Katie Nelson is a library associate at Cobb County Public Library System*



# GLA SPOTLIGHT

## Homeschool Meetup at the Woodstock Public Library

A new homeschool initiative has begun at the Woodstock Public Library! Library staff are working alongside North Georgia Homeschool to bring a monthly program to the library. Jenny Brooks (Youth Services Specialist), Mary Elliott (Teen Services Specialist), and Kara Rumble (Programming Manager) have been the primary staff involved. The program meets for an early morning session and an afternoon session once a month. The chosen monthly topic is presented

Homeschool Meetup began in August 2021 and quickly became popular with patrons. A few of the topics that have been covered so far at our monthly meetups include: "Robotics and Coding," "Writing the Hero's Journey," "Creepy Crawlies," and "Native American History." The December group tackled "Christmas STEAM." In an effort to keep growing the program, the specialists seek monthly feedback from their homeschooling partner as well as from the



parents that attend. Follow-up emails are sent after each month's event that include a survey and extension activities that the families can continue at home. The retention in this program has been impressive, which can be attributed to intentional planning, communication, and the partnership with North Georgia Homeschool. "The local families are able to come together each month for a fun, educational experience. It is a time of friends, learning, and books!"

to two groups to accommodate differentiated learning needs. Having the program twice in the same day also allows for families to choose the time that best works for them. This is a relatively new initiative that has proven to be well worth the amount of time, collaboration, and effort shown by all parties involved.

says Angela Pilcher, the director of North Georgia Homeschool. Statistics have shown a steady growth across the board for kids and teens alike. Due to the community stir, the Sequoyah Regional Library System (SRLS) expanded the program to its Hickory Flat branch in January 2022. The hope is that through creating a framework and model, the

program will be easy to replicate throughout the system.

The final benefit of the homeschool initiative is that it helps promote programming throughout SRLS. The homeschool families have become repeat attendees at many of our events and the library staff love to see them keep coming back! Maybeline Coppock, one of the North Georgia Homeschool parents, stated:

I am so thankful for our partnership with the Sequoyah librarians, particularly Jenny Brooks and Mary Elliott. I appreciate their desire to get to know our children and teach them on various topics. The skills and experience they bring to our monthly Homeschool Meetup really make the program a success, and many parents in our North Georgia Homeschool Network have been impressed by the quality of the program. Another unique aspect of the Homeschool Meetup is that it truly caters to homeschooling families, providing learning opportunities from preschool to teenagers in one convenient location.

This program started as a tiny thought and has grown into a machine where homeschoolers and librarians join together to navigate a world of learning and fun!

To learn more about the Sequoyah Regional Library System, go to <https://www.sequoyahregionallibrary.org/>.



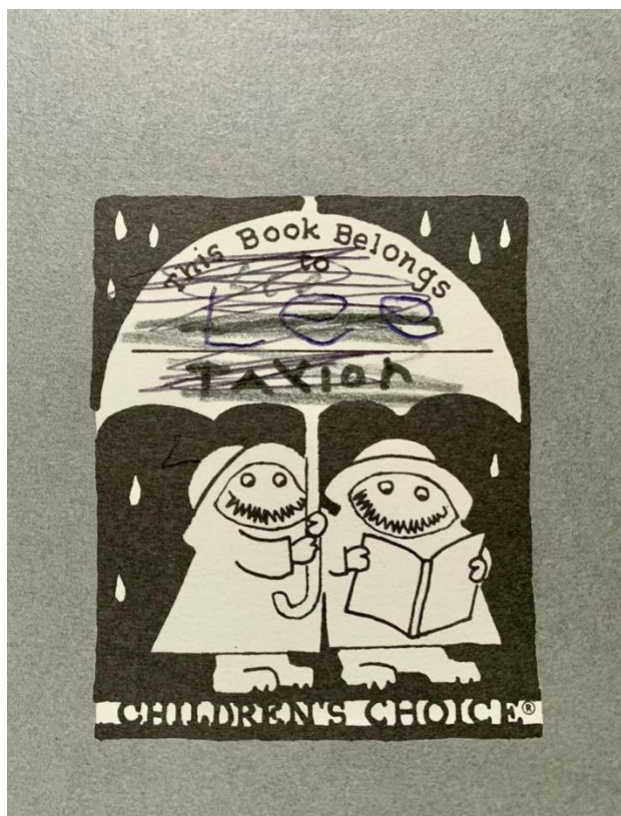
*Jenny Brooks is a youth services specialist at Woodstock Public Library*

*Mary Elliott is a teen services specialist at the Woodstock Public Library*



## My Own PRIVATE LIBRARY

I'd expect that many librarians share my "origin story" when it comes to books and book collecting: it started in a library and has come full circle back to one. My love for books first began at the Richland County Public Library in Columbia, SC. One summer, the library was offering a dragon iron on patch to any child who completed their summer reading requirements. I wanted the iron on patch so bad that I started reading in earnest. That experience established my love of reading and book collecting. In fact, I wanted books so bad, I started fighting with my brothers to claim ownership of mutual favorites. I always have a laugh when I open the ones I still have and see where we had repeatedly crossed out each other's name.



During my school years, I was drawn to history and fantasy books, particularly *The Once and Future King* and *The Lord of the Rings*. It was not

until I took an art history class in college, though, that I started to covet my favorite collectible: art books. Big, expensive, lavishly illustrated art books. While studying art, I became fascinated with photography and was soon obsessed with collecting photography books. I found photography books to be amazing in the sense that, unlike books of paintings, they could reproduce their source material almost identically. I quit my job in a photo lab so I could work at Barnes & Noble and use my employee discount to buy more photography books. My favorites from this time were Scalco's 1993 printing of Robert Frank's *The Americans*, a true classic, and Arena Editions' 1997 *Adam Fuss* monograph, which includes a revelatory essay about Fuss by Eugenia Parry.

Spare money was in short supply while I was in grad school at Savannah College of Art and Design, so I stalked clearance sales for deals. Back in the late 1990s and early 2000s, when print runs were generous and expensive art books often couldn't be returned to publishers, I managed to find incredible books at bargain prices. My best find was a first edition of Richard Prince's *Adult Comedy Action Drama* in excellent condition for only \$2.

After finishing grad school in 2003, I moved to New Orleans with some friends. I was able to transfer to the Metairie Barnes & Noble store, so I continued building my book collection. My soon-to-be fiancée Jill worked for Barnes & Noble too, so we quickly amassed enough books to build our own private library in our uptown carriage house apartment. We snuggled on the couch, surrounded by our books, and read into the night—Jill deep into Harry Potter, and me switching between art books and Phillip Pullman's *His Dark Materials* series (thanks, Jill). I wish I still had a picture of that room, but I

don't. I lost track of a few things around that time.

I blame Katrina.

Needless to say, the storm upended our lives. We evacuated to Baton Rouge with little more than a backpack each full of clothes and toiletries. Over the next few days, we watched in horror as the levees failed and our city flooded. We knew we would not see our home for some time. The National Guard had moved into the city and closed it to everyone except for essential personnel. A month went by. Then another. Jill and I were going stir crazy. We were anxious to return to our home and assess the damage. In a stroke of luck, a coworker's husband had a work pass to get through the National Guard checkpoint and into New Orleans. Taking a risk, I photocopied it and headed to the city, praying that no one would notice my pass was fake. I got in.

Covered in lake silt from the flood, parts of New Orleans looked like a black and white movie. City Park oaks were upended. Boats had been strewn by floodwaters in the middle of city streets. I passed a Coast Guard helicopter that had crashed on the Lafitte Greenway. Humvees full of armed soldiers sped past, rumbling over coils of downed power lines. I kept a low profile and finally made it to the apartment. Want to hear something *really* funny? I left my apartment keys in Baton Rouge.

One kicked-in door later, I rushed to check on our library. Perfectly, improbably dry.

Unlike many others who experienced Katrina, we were extremely lucky. I began taking armloads of books from apartment to car until the trunk and backseat were full. Then I got out of there. I didn't want to be in the city after dark with all of the power out.

Bereft of options to find wedding venues, and facing skyrocketing rents, Jill and I moved from Baton Rouge to Atlanta in November 2005. We never returned to our New Orleans apartment. Our book collection continued to grow over the years, and on November 2nd, 2010, we welcomed a new reader into our home: our son Sam. He's a *huge* Percy Jackson fan but is absolutely *not* interested in Harry Potter. He is almost perfect.







When we moved to Savannah in 2015, we brought an 800-pound collection of books with us. We rented a third-floor apartment while shopping for a house. There were no elevators. Our movers hated us. When we bought a house six months later, I moved every box of books down the stairs myself. We've downsized quite a bit since then. I guess you could say that we started to wonder whether we owned the books, or if it was the other way around. There are still bookcases in every room, and we keep our favorite fiction and fantasy titles within easy

reach in our bedroom bookcase. My art and photography book collection is housed in two large, lovely bookcases in the den, which I look over continually, pulling and leafing through favorites while we watch *My Neighbor Totoro* as a family for the 300th time. When I go to work, I'm surrounded by books. I wouldn't change a thing.

*Lee Bareford is the interim learning commons supervisor at Georgia Southern University Libraries - Armstrong Campus.*

## FEATURED ARTICLE

### What Is... Curiosity? How Libraries Build *Jeopardy!* Champions

By Raymond Goslow

When I found out in October 2021 that I was going to represent Kennesaw State University in the *Jeopardy!* National College Championship, I knew that I had big shoes to fill - after all, librarians had been on a bit of a *Jeopardy!* hot streak in the previous couple years. Emma Boettcher, a user experience librarian at the University of Chicago, took down James Holzhauer in 2019 just one game before he would have likely surpassed Ken Jennings's all-time regular-season winnings records (Jacobs, 2019). Soon after, Veronica Vichit-Vadakan, a reference librarian at Portland Community College, won four games in 2020 before being invited back for 2021's Tournament of

Champions, where she entered as an underdog but made it all the way to the finals (Proctor, 2021). Little did anyone know that Amy Schneider's winning streak, still under wraps to the general public at that time, would eventually be snapped at 40 games by Rhone Talsma, a multimedia librarian at Chicago Ridge Public Library (Zalusky, 2022).

As it turned out, of course, my performance in the tournament would be one to make yesteryear's librarians of *Jeopardy!* Proud—I won my quarterfinal and semifinal games in dominating runaway victories, then made a strong comeback in the finals after falling



Raymond Goslow (right) with *Jeopardy!* host Mayim Bialik. Image Courtesy of *Jeopardy!* Productions, Inc.

behind early to finish in a close second place and walk away with \$100,000. But even though I lived up to the expectations set by librarians who had previously appeared on the show, the expectations themselves deserve a closer look. What exactly are the skills needed to succeed on *Jeopardy!*, and does librarianship actually have anything to do with them?

The core competencies of a *Jeopardy!* champion were pithily summarized by Jaskaran Singh, winner of the *Jeopardy!* National College Championship, as “buzz fast and know things” (*Jeopardy!*, 2022). Anyone with even a passing familiarity with the show’s format would agree with his assessment—a successful contestant needs a strong knowledge base to be able to attempt to buzz in as much as possible and a lightning-quick trigger finger to beat other, equally knowledgeable contestants to the punch. In fact, for many years, fans of the show assumed that buzzer speed was the most important ingredient; the general assumption was that most of the time all three contestants knew the correct response, and it was only split-second differences in reaction time that were determining who got the chance to give it.

In January 2022, however, *Jeopardy!* began publishing daily box scores for each game, which revealed for the first time how often contestants were actually attempting to buzz in. This data proved once and for all that the game is not just a reflex contest with a thin outer coat of trivia. For the 20 games aired during the month of February 2022, the average contestant attempted to buzz in only 58% of the time (*Jeopardy!*, n.d.); given that far more than 58% of clues each night have at least one contestant attempt to respond, this means that real and substantive differences in knowledge play a large role in determining the victor in a game of *Jeopardy!*.

That is good news for any librarians with aspirations to become *Jeopardy!* champions! I cannot say my career in libraries has done much to give me razor-sharp reflexes, but it certainly

has exposed me to a wide variety of information I never would have encountered on my own. That exposure, I think, is the key to what makes the library a crucible for *Jeopardy!* contestants. Just as a worker in a candy shop cannot help but go home carrying a sugary aroma, information will inevitably rub off on a librarian every single day. *Jeopardy!*’s recent librarian champions confirm that dealing with a wide variety of information in the course of their daily work prepared them for *Jeopardy!*. Veronica Vichit-Vadakan explained her work as a reference librarian in an academic library by saying, “You never know what random question people will ask you...[s]tudents are struggling across all different disciplines to find the information they need, and it can be really helpful as a librarian to have a lot of facts at hand to help them out” (Proctor, 2021); Rhone Talsma put it even more succinctly: “[W]orking at a reference desk, you’re always on *Jeopardy!*” (Zalusky, 2022).

My own experience in the library dovetails with theirs. I spent my first two years as a public library staff member working part-time in the children’s department, where one of my many duties was to help kids and their parents with reference questions. My favorite questions were never those that I could answer off the top of my head; instead, I got the most fulfillment when I had to teach myself something new to even know what to look for. I certainly had no pre-existing knowledge about careers in dentistry when I was hired, but I got a crash course in DDSes, DMDs, and everything in between when a young man asked me for help finding such information for a school project. Working in the library pushes a person out of their comfort zone in just the right ways to sharpen them up for *Jeopardy!*.

That well-roundedness that library work cultivates pays dividends on the *Jeopardy!* stage. Even the most knowledgeable specialist in any given field would likely fall flat if they faced a board full of categories unrelated to their area of expertise, since *Jeopardy!* is tailor-

made to reward those whose information toolbox is wide-ranging (I have noticed while watching the show that being too familiar with a category can actually be detrimental, as my first ideas for a response tend to draw on more obscure material than a contestant would be expected to know). One of the best ways to find a Daily Double, which can often be the key to making a come-from-behind victory or cementing a runaway lead, is by bouncing between categories among the high-value clues where the Daily Double is more likely to be found. That strategy can only be used effectively, though, by someone who has the broad-based knowledge needed to switch between topics every few seconds and not miss a beat.

The power of library resources to forge *Jeopardy!* champions has even helped super-champions who were not themselves librarians. James Holzhauer has explained that a major part of his preparation for his record-breaking run involved reading children's nonfiction books from the library to absorb the basics of a topic as quickly as possible (Springen, 2019). One of Amy Schneider's many contestant anecdotes while she was on the show involved her parents' rule for her as a child that she could only check out as many library books as she could physically carry home herself (Freeman, 2021)—a restriction that she likely bumped up against many a time, considering the wide range of knowledge she displayed in her 40 victories.

The ties between librarianship and *Jeopardy!* are based on more than just speculation and personal testimony, though—they have actually been examined academically. The previously mentioned *Jeopardy!*-winning librarian Emma

Boettcher used an information science approach to *Jeopardy!* clues as the basis for her master's thesis, finding that metadata aspects of a clue such as the complexity of its syntax or whether it contains visual media play a significant role in determining how difficult it is to answer (Boettcher, 2016). There is so much to a game of *Jeopardy!* to appeal to the information-minded brain that the existence of J-Archive, an entirely fan-constructed online database containing decades of clues, categories, and contestants, should come as no surprise (D'Addario, 2011).

Ultimately, though, no matter how well they might prepare a person to succeed on *Jeopardy!*, the library's resources cannot provide much help with the hardest part of the *Jeopardy!* journey: getting invited to appear on the show at all. The final piece of the puzzle, as cliché as it sounds, is you. I started as a volunteer in the library at the age of 16, but I did not take my first steps towards *Jeopardy!* that day—I had been preparing one way or another for my entire life just by having a passionate curiosity for the world around me. In my experience, the optimism and joy that come along with being perpetually *interested* eventually come back around to make you *interesting*; specifically, the exact brand of interesting that any casting director would fall over themselves to have on an entertainment show like *Jeopardy!*. And lucky for any librarian reading this, curiosity is an attribute you probably already have in spades—in fact, it might just be the reason you ended up in the library in the first place.

*Raymond Goslow is a library assistant senior at Cobb County Public Library System*



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## PEER REVIEWED

## Librarians' Attitudes Toward Providing Environmental Education Services in Georgia

By Xiaoi Ren

Environmental issues and problems have posed severe threats to the healthy existence of human beings and other species on this planet. It is one of the three dimensions of sustainable development, along with the social and economic dimensions embraced by the United Nations (UN) 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted in 2015. At the heart of the UN 2030 Agenda are the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 targets that balance the three dimensions of sustainable development. The International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) has been actively involved in the development of the UN 2030 Agenda by advocating for the inclusion of access to information, the safeguarding of cultural heritage, universal literacy, and access to information and communication technologies (ICT) in the SDGs as targets. In 2016, IFLA published a booklet to demonstrate the contributions of libraries to the SDGs.

In the global network of at least 2.6 million libraries, these libraries are beacons of the local communities they serve (IFLA, n.d.). The libraries play an important role in providing access to credible environmental information resources, promoting environmental awareness and literacy, and showcasing environmentally sustainable practices. IFLA (2018) described libraries as *Exemplars, Educators, and Enablers* in supporting the sustainable development efforts in their communities. In the United States, the ALA Special Task Force of Sustainability identified the roles and responsibilities of ALA and its member libraries as *Inspiration & Catalyst, Conveners & Connectors, and Contributors* (Aldrich et al., 2018).

The National Environmental Education and Training Foundation (NEETF) released the report *Environmental Literacy in America: What Ten Years of NEETF/Roper Research and Related Studies Say About Environmental Literacy in the U.S.* in 2005. The report showed that most Americans are by and large either uninformed or misinformed when confronted with increasingly challenging environmental choices (Coyle, 2005). The report called for action-oriented environmental learning throughout the K–12 system that allowed people to experience hands-on activities. Stoss (2008) and Fedorowicz-Kruszewska (2020a) both pointed out the importance of providing environmental education services in libraries and other informal settings for adult learners and the public, along with efforts through the formal educational system.

Though IFLA and ALA identified libraries' roles and responsibilities in contributing to the sustainable development efforts in their communities, it is important to find out how individual libraries perceive and approach those roles and responsibilities at the local level. Previous research on libraries' environmentally sustainable practices has been mainly case studies or literature reviews. The number of publications reporting empirical studies is relatively small. There are very few empirical studies reporting librarians' attitudes toward environmental sustainability and their perceptions of the role libraries should play in this matter.

The current study attempted to determine librarians' attitudes toward environmental sustainability through a survey of Georgia Library Association (GLA) members. Findings

from this descriptive and exploratory study added to the empirical research effort on this subject. The results might also shed some light on how to better support libraries' efforts in contributing to environmental sustainability.

### Literature Review

The Green Library Movement that emerged in the 1990s and gained popularity in the library profession around 2003 aimed to reduce the library's carbon footprint by adopting environmentally sustainable practices within libraries (Antonelli, 2008). LIS publications have reported on various environmentally sustainable practices in libraries such as paper use and recycling, energy consumption, green library building, sustainability in collection development, green library programming, environmental education resources, vendor selections, travel and professional conferences, and more (Calloway & Callahan, 2003; Christensen, 2010; Harrington & Beale, 2010; Jankowska & Marcum, 2010; Love et al., 2005; Smith, 2010; Spencer, 2010; Urbanska, 2009; Woodland, 2010). Most publications have been case studies, and there were some articles that analyzed and synthesized LIS literature on green libraries (Antonelli, 2008; Fedorowicz-Kruszewska, 2020a, 2020b; Fisher & Yonz, 2007; Jankowska & Marcum, 2010). These synthesizing articles aimed to identify and sum up the research themes covered in the literature, to extract indicators for assessing and measuring the impact of the various environmentally sustainable activities and practices in libraries, and to conceptualize the research topics and develop an overarching framework.

Though the number of publications reporting empirical studies on libraries' environmentally sustainable practices and services was relatively small, it started to increase in recent years (Beutelspacher & Meschede, 2020; Dias, 2017; Kang, 2018). Dias (2017) surveyed municipal public libraries in Portugal, focusing on their library building construction, library resource

consumption, community partnerships, and respondents' perception of the importance of environmental sustainability. Almost all responding libraries considered environmental sustainability to be an important issue. Kang (2018) studied library directors' attitudes toward environmental sustainability in China and their libraries' environmentally sustainable actions. Findings from Kang's study indicated a contradiction between the library directors' perception of the importance of environmental sustainability and their levels of awareness of the environmental issues and actions taken in libraries. Beutelspacher and Meschede (2020) surveyed public libraries and their branches, located in cities with more than 100,000 inhabitants in Germany, on their environmentally sustainable activities in libraries. They also reported contradictions between participants' expectations of the libraries' environmentally sustainable activity and the actual efforts in the individual libraries. For example, in their study of 141 participants, 56 strongly agreed that public libraries have a mission to inform and raise awareness in the community on the topic of environmental sustainability, but only 13 respondents strongly agreed that their library is fulfilling this mission.

In the United States, Jankowska (2008) also discussed the gap between the idea of sustainable practices in academic libraries versus the libraries' actual practices that are not sustainable and called on libraries to focus on creating more responsible operational models to reduce both their operational costs and environmental impact in the long term. Both Jankowska (2008) and Christensen (2010) referred to the environmental sustainability implication in library collection development by switching from print materials to electronic resources. Focusing on cutting down paper use without realizing there is also an environmental impact from using electronic resources is a typical "see the tree, but not the forest" mindset in adopting environmentally sustainable practices in libraries. Jankowska (2010) further called for green policies in

American academic libraries to include sustainability indicators to measure the libraries' environmentally sustainable efforts and practices.

Most library and information science (LIS) publications have been on green libraries and green practices within libraries. There were limited empirical studies on libraries' environmental education services except for case reports of library environmental education programs and environmental information source lists (Harrington & Beale, 2010). In 2020, Fedorowicz-Kruszewska conducted a study on environmental education in libraries by analyzing literature and multiple case studies of 20 libraries that were finalists of the IFLA Green Library Award between 2016 and 2019. The results identified and categorized library activities that have environmental education potential by the three main components of a library: people, artefacts and processes. The findings contributed to the conceptualization of environmental education in libraries for more precise scientific communication in this area. Furthermore, librarians' perceptions of the importance of environmental sustainability and the role played by libraries is also an important research area. Librarians' perceptions of the importance of environmental sustainability and their identification of the role libraries could play may influence their actual environmentally sustainable practices.

The current study fills the gap in the literature by surveying librarians in Georgia about their attitudes toward environmentally sustainable practices in libraries and their perceptions of the role libraries should play in fostering sustainable communities in the environmental dimension.

### **Method**

The purpose of this study was to investigate librarians' attitudes toward environmental sustainability in Georgia libraries and their perceptions of the role libraries could play in

sustainable community development efforts. The study aimed to answer the following questions:

1. What are librarians' attitudes toward environmentally sustainable practices in libraries and libraries' roles and responsibilities in building sustainable communities in Georgia?
2. What are the environmentally sustainable practices in Georgia libraries?
3. What are the environmental education services provided by Georgia libraries?
4. What role should libraries play in fostering sustainable communities in the environmental dimension from a librarian's perspective?
5. What are the challenges faced by librarians in providing environmental education services?

GLA is the primary membership organization for libraries in Georgia. The researcher is a GLA professional member and subscribes to the member Listserv. A convenience sample of subscribers to the GLA member Listserv was used for this study. Currently, GLA has more than 800 members, including librarians, trustees, paraprofessionals, friends, students, and others (GLA, n.d.). A survey method was chosen as the data collection method for this study. It was the most appropriate method for collecting information from a relatively large sample. It is especially suitable for gathering information on attitudinal questions. The survey method also gave the researcher the flexibility to adopt a variety of survey question types in the questionnaire to collect a variety of responses.

The survey consisted of a list of 22 questions broken down into six categories, including demographic characteristics, background knowledge on the subject, attitudinal questions, green practices in libraries, environmental education service activities provided, and open-ended questions asking respondents about their perceptions of the library's role and challenges (see Appendix for the complete survey). The



questionnaire was developed from reviewing the LIS literature on green practices in libraries (Antonelli, 2008; Beutelspacher & Meschede, 2020; Dias, 2017; Fedorowicz-Kruszewska, 2020a, 2020b; Fisher & Yonz, 2007; Jankowska & Marcum, 2010). The researcher obtained IRB approval for this study from their home institution. The web survey was created using Qualtrics and distributed through the GLA member Listserv on September 13, 2019. A reminder email was sent to the Listserv on September 20, 2019. The survey was closed at the end of 2019.

### Findings

The responses that only answered part of the demographic questions were excluded from further analysis. This left 88 responses for analysis. It is not possible to calculate an accurate response rate since the exact number of subscribers to the GLA member Listserv was unknown when the survey was distributed. The majority of the 88 respondents (80.7%) were librarians. The rest of the respondents (19.3%) were library paraprofessionals or library staff members, some of them holding a Master's of Library Science degree. About 47.7% of the respondents were from academic libraries, followed by public libraries (38.6%) and school libraries (8%). Additional library types included special libraries (1.1%), library consortiums (3.4%), and others (1.1%). In terms of the libraries' service population and annual budget, 40% of the respondents were from libraries that serve a population less than 25,000, 27% serve a population between 25,000 and 100,000, and 25% serve a population of 100,000 or more. In terms of the annual budget, 35.2% of the respondents reported an annual budget of over \$500,000, followed by an annual budget between \$100,000 and \$500,000 (21.6%) and less than \$100,000 (14.8%). The respondents were roughly evenly distributed in terms of the library's service community, with 34% serving just suburban areas, 27.7% serving only rural areas, and 26.1% serving only urban areas. Four respondents (4.5%) specified that their libraries

serve a combination of urban, suburban, and rural areas.

Several questions were asked to find out the respondents' background knowledge on the Green Library Movement and the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification system. The American building community formed the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) and the LEED certification program in 2000. The LEED standards address sustainable building sites, water efficiency, materials, energy conservation, pollution control, and indoor environmental quality. Libraries have embraced LEED certification (Antonelli & McCullough, 2012). Most respondents (67%) did not know about the Green Library Movement, but the majority of respondents (76.1%) were familiar with the LEED certification. Respondents from public libraries had a higher rate of knowing about the movement compared to those from other types of libraries. Respondents from academic libraries had a higher rate of knowing about the LEED certification than their peers from other types of libraries. About 22% of the respondents were aware of both concepts; most were from public libraries. Out of the respondents who were familiar with the LEED system, 43% were aware of actual libraries that are LEED certified.

The next set of questions asked about respondents' attitudes toward environmentally sustainable practices in libraries to reduce their carbon footprint and libraries' participation in building environmentally sustainable communities. Each question was a 5-point Likert item from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." Questions 1–3 focused on library operations. Questions 4–6 focused on the role of libraries in the community. The attitudinal questions were created based on the literature review and libraries' roles and responsibilities identified by the IFLA and ALA. Cronbach's alpha coefficient tests the internal consistency and reliability of the multiple statements. The  $\alpha$  of 0.925 indicates these items are reliable.

**Figure 1** Librarians’ Attitudes Toward Green Practices and Environmental Education Services

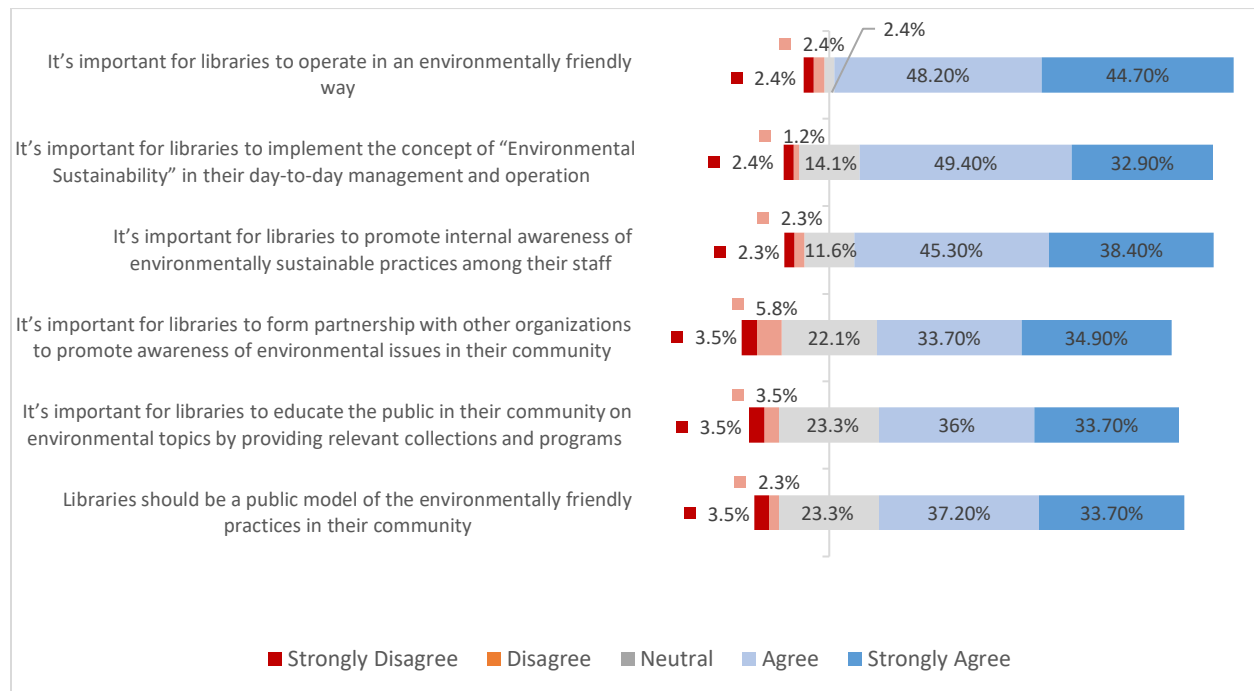


Figure 1 is a 100% diverging stacked bar chart that shows the distribution of the librarians’ level of agreement with the statements. Eighty percent or more respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the first three statements that libraries should operate in an environmentally friendly way in their day-to-day management and operation. Sixty-eight percent to 71% of the respondents agreed with the 4th–6th statements that libraries should be active participants in building environmentally sustainable communities by modeling environmentally sustainable practices, forming a partnership with community organizations, and educating the public on the subject. Overall, the respondents felt a little stronger about adopting environmentally sustainable practices within libraries rather than participating in building sustainable community efforts.

The next two sections of the survey asked respondents to report their actual environmentally sustainable practices and environmental education services. Though only 15.3% reported that their libraries have an environmental policy covering daily operations, about half of the respondents (49.4%) reported that their libraries have adopted environmentally sustainable practices to reduce the environmental impact caused by their operations. These practices were categorized into the 3Rs as shown in Table 1. Those categories were identified based on the recurring themes from the responses. “Recycle” was the most often mentioned practice, followed by “reduce” and then “reuse.” Some responses were included in multiple categories based on the number of themes that were identified in the response. This applies to all the tables that reported the categories of themes from the responses.

**Table 1** Library Practices to Reduce Environmental Impacts

Theme Categories	Counts	Selected Examples
Recycle	35	"Providing recycling receptacles next to trash bins."
		"Recycle paper, cardboard, etc. through county single stream recycling."
		"recycling and reusing, ordering recycled and reusable products when practical."
		"We have recycling bins for paper & aluminum. We follow our campus' recycling policies."
Reduce	19	"Using both recycled and reusable products, as well as recycling ourselves."
		"energy efficient LED lighting."
		"water bottle refill water fountain."
		"motion sensor lighting in offices."
Reuse	17	"Free charging station for electronic cars."
		"using sustainable energy."
		"I try to use recycled products and reuse products. I believe I am alone in my efforts, though."
Composting	1	"recycling and reusing, ordering recycled and reusable products when practical."
		"Using both recycled and reusable products, as well as recycling ourselves."
		"Campus-wide composting."

The list of questions about libraries' environmental education services focused on libraries' environmental education programs, exhibits, information resource guides, and community partnerships. The answers were varied across libraries. About 29.3% of the respondents reported that their libraries created programs related to environmental topics, and most of them were from public libraries. The types of programs organized

within these libraries are categorized as seen in Table 2. Some are workshops on 3Rs and sustainable living that embody action-orientated education, where users learn by doing and applying knowledge. There are also programs focused on the local community's nature, resources, and informational programs. More than half of the respondents (57.3%) reported that their libraries do not offer any programs related to environmental topics.

**Table 2** Library Environmental Educational Programs in Georgia

Theme Categories	Counts	Selected Examples
3Rs	4	"How to make clothes from clothes, art from trash, that kind of thing"
		"reusable and recycled crafts"
		"informational recycling lectures"
		"We push in January: reduce, reuse, recycle"
Sustainable living	4	"Plant-based diets"
		"gardening, 'green' pest control"
Local community activity	4	"nature programs for children & families, include picture book work at local nature area"
		"partnership with local organizations"
		"local hikes and informational sessions about local nature"

Informational programming	3	"Earth Day"
		"information recycling lectures"
		"feature faculty speakers"

When asked whether their libraries organize any kind of book or themed exhibits on environmental issues, 38.6% of the respondents reported positively. The types of exhibits in these libraries are categorized as seen in Table 3. Book displays are the most often mentioned

display, followed by themed displays such as Earth Day exhibits and informational displays of critical information resources, statistics, and infographics. About half of the respondents (49.4%) reported that their libraries do not create any exhibits on environmental topics.

**Table 3** Library Environmental Educational Exhibits in Georgia

Theme Categories	Counts	Selected Examples
Book display	11	"We occasionally have an environmentally-themed book display"
		"book display for earth day"
		"Book displays on environmental themes"
		"Displays of books on various topics"
		"Displays of books related to green/sustainability"
Themed display	8	"We have an Earth Day program with community partnerships"
		"we create displays in January about reduce, reuse, recycle"
		"Science projects display"
		"We put up Earth Day exhibits and recycling displays from time to time"
		"Earth day, sustainable practices, off the grid kinds of displays"
Information display	3	"Eresource info sessions"
		"posting related statistics and infographics from online resources"
		"information posted on bulletin boards"

Only 12.5% of the respondents reported that their libraries have resource guides on environmental education materials and resources. Two thirds of the respondents (66%) answered "no" to this question. The types of resource guides included LibGuides and environmentally-themed pathfinders.

A little more than one-third of the respondents (37.5%) reported that their libraries collaborated with community organizations to promote environmental awareness, most responses of which were from public libraries. Table 4 includes the community organizations that different types of libraries collaborated with on environmental education. Public libraries collaborated with a wide variety of

community organizations. Academic libraries tended to collaborate with groups from their campus. About 46.3% of the respondents answered "no" to this question.

When asked about their library's participation in community disaster planning efforts, 17.5% answered that their library was involved in disaster planning efforts in their community. Most were from academic libraries. Involvement includes participating in community disaster planning discussions, distributing information about organizations such as FEMA, or creating displays. The majority of the survey respondents (79%) reported that their libraries were not involved in any community disaster planning efforts.

**Table 4** Libraries’ Community Organization Partnership on Promoting Environmental Awareness

Theme Categories	Community Organization
Academic libraries	Center for Sustainability/Office of Sustainability/Sustainability Center Facility Services Faculty in Biology Students Environmental Awareness Groups
Public libraries	Community Garden Community partners and local organizations County recycling Environmental Inspector Georgia Environmental Counsel Georgia Extension Office and Master Gardeners Keep America Beautiful affiliate Southern Conservation Trust State parks Tifton Area Greenway Association Water Department Zoos
School libraries	Georgia Power

Respondents were also asked about their perceptions of the role libraries should play in fostering a sustainable community in the environmental dimension. In Table 5, the roles are ranked by the number of respondents who identified with them. Out of the 46 respondents who shared their perceptions of the roles libraries should play in building an environmentally sustainable community, 28 identified with the role of *library service provider*. This was followed by the role of *educator* (13 respondents), *model and exemplar* (eight respondents), and *community partner*

(eight respondents). Respondents were split on whether libraries should take on the *leadership* or *educator* role: a handful of the respondents mentioned that libraries should take on the leadership role in their community, and a roughly equal number of respondents indicated that libraries should not take on the leadership and/or educator role. One respondent said, “Libraries should be leaders in sustainability.” Another respondent said, “I think partnering with a community group already involved is great, but I don’t think libraries need to take the lead...enough on their plates.”

**Table 5** Libraries’ Role in Developing Sustainable Communities on the Environmental Dimension

Theme Categories	Counts	Selected Examples
Library Service Provider Collection/Information Meeting Space	28	“Provide print and digital materials on the topic.” “Provide access to reliable information on environmental topics” “The easiest way would be to offer our meeting rooms to allow groups to meet...” “At a minimum, collecting materials patrons can use to educate themselves and/or do research. They should also be models as much as is reasonable. Ideally, programming and partnering would occur.”



		<p>“we need to provide resources that people are actively seeking and probably need to keep an eye on emerging trends and look for decent resources in those areas</p>
		<p>“Educate and engage”</p>
		<p>“Libraries should take a forward thinking, proactive stance on educating the public on environmental issues”</p>
		<p>“Invite and host speakers, workshops, and events related to sustainability”</p>
Educator	13	<p>“It would be nice to have a library-wide policy for sustainability and a push to educate not only other employees but also students and the general public.”</p> <p>“Libraries are stewards of the community. At the very least, we should model sustainable practices for the environment. At the most, we should inform our population about climate change and how to reduce our carbon footprints.”</p>
Community Partner	8	<p>“In my case, perhaps partnering with some local STEM high schools to discuss environmental issues with future students”</p> <p>“Partner with community organizations to minimize duplication of efforts and maximize reach”</p> <p>“Setting an example with sustainable operations”</p> <p>“Libraries are stewards of the community. At the very least, we should model sustainable practices for the environment. At the most, we should inform our population about climate change and how to reduce our carbon footprints.”</p>
Model and Exemplar	8	<p>“I think libraries could transparently model environmental citizenship”</p> <p>“They should also be models as much as reasonable”</p> <p>“Active participant and key player”</p> <p>“Libraries should be leaders in sustainability”</p> <p>“Libraries are stewards of the community. At the very least, we should model sustainable practices for the environment. At the most, we should inform our population about climate change and how to reduce our carbon footprints.”</p>
Leader or Key Player	4	<p>“There should an intentional and active role in the communication of information”</p> <p>“I think partnering with a community group already involved is great, but I don’t think libraries need to take the lead... enough on their plates.”</p> <p>“The role of libraries is to provide resources and that may include books on environmental education and issues. It’s not their job to create, develop or teach environmental education.”</p>
Not Leader Not Educator	5	

“None. The whole "sustainable community" idea is a bunch of garbage and libraries need to focus elsewhere.”

“Without partnership with outside organizations, the library's role is little. This is something that I believe is outside the realm of what my library would provide and would require a lot of staff time which we just do not have.”

The final question asked respondents about the challenges they faced in providing environmental education services. The most often mentioned challenges of providing environmental education services were lack of staff, funding, time, and community

partnerships. This was followed by patron engagement, competing service priorities in libraries, and buy-in from administration. Table 6 shows the categories that emerged from the recurring themes in the answers.

**Table 6** Challenges in Providing Environmental Education Services in Libraries

Theme Categories	Counts	Examples
Funding, staff, time, and community partnership	15	<p>“A challenge is securing the funding necessary to provide a robust environmental education program”</p> <p>“same as all the rest of the challenges -- is there the money and the time to collect and curate the resources and then market the fact we have them and can help the public find them”</p> <p>“In school libraries, we don't have the same control over our physical environment as public and academic libraries do. Most public-school libraries in GA are severely limited in staff so we are unable to provide the programs and classes we did when we were fully staffed.”</p> <p>“It is sometimes hard to engage collaborators.”</p>
Patron interest	7	<p>“It's difficult to hit the right note in the constituency”</p> <p>“Lack of patron interest in certain communities”</p> <p>“Patrons say they want this type of programming but don't actually attend.”</p> <p>“The general public doesn't often attend programs on environmental issues unless they directly impact them. Otherwise, it seems to be ‘someone else's problem.’ We have materials in various formats available for circulation”</p>
Competing priority	7	<p>“I serve an impoverished rural community. People here are far more concerned about jobs than recycling.”</p> <p>“It detracts from other more important things.”</p> <p>“our community is more concerned with finding and keeping employment”</p>
Administrative support	4	<p>“Lack of patron interest in certain communities, lack of interest from library administration for challenges, an educated public that is interested in creating positive environmental change for positives”</p> <p>“Without buy in from our leadership, this is a difficult concept for my library to grasp.”</p> <p>“Success depends on the interest and support of library administration and dedication of staff wanting to be involved.”</p>

## Discussion

Overall, the majority of the survey respondents (>80%) agreed on the importance of adopting environmentally sustainable practices in libraries. About half of the respondents (49.4%) reported that their library has adopted some environmentally sustainable practices to reduce the environmental impact caused by their operations. Almost 70% of the respondents agreed it is important for libraries to educate the public within their community on environmental issues. About 38.6% of the respondents reported that they create environmentally-themed displays, 29.3% reported actual programs related to environmental topics, and 12.5% reported the availability of resource guides or pathfinders on environmental materials and information. About 68.6% of the respondents agreed it is important for libraries to form partnerships with other community organizations to promote environmental awareness in their community, and 37.5% of the respondents reported such collaborations with other organizations in their community.

This echoes the findings from previous studies that there was a gap between the respondents' perception of the importance of environmental sustainability and the actual practices in individual libraries (Beutelspacher & Meschede, 2020; Dias, 2017; Kang, 2018). For example, in Beutelspacher and Meschede's (2020) study on German public libraries, 39.7% of research participants strongly agreed that public libraries have a mission to inform and raise awareness to the community about the topic of environmental sustainability, but only 9% strongly agreed that their library was fulfilling this mission.

The respondents' perception of the role libraries should play in building sustainable communities in the environmental dimension also reflected the contradiction between the respondents' attitudes and the actual practice. Out of the 46 respondents who shared their

understanding of the roles libraries should play in building an environmentally sustainable community, 28 identified with the role of information and service provider. This was followed by the role of educator, model and exemplar, and community partner. The identification with the roles specified by IFLA and ALA varied greatly among respondents. IFLA and ALA have urged libraries to take on a leadership role and model environmentally sustainable practices in their community, educate the public using their collections and programs on sustainability, become active participants in community efforts, seek out partnerships to identify shared solutions, and more. The respondents' perceptions showed that not all respondents embraced or took these roles. If librarians do not completely accept these roles, it is less likely for them to prioritize the roles and apply them in their day-to-day operations. The fact that only 15.3% of respondents reported that their libraries have a general environmental policy that covers their daily operations reinforces this contradiction. Policies identify organizational priorities and guide libraries' actions and decisions. Without an environmental policy in place, it is hard to envision libraries prioritizing environmental sustainability in their day-to-day operations and decision-making.

The persistent identification of this contradiction between attitudes and actual action could be partially explained by the challenges identified by respondents. The lack of funding, staff, and community partnerships was the most often mentioned challenge in this study. One respondent said, "A challenge is securing the funding necessary to provide a robust environmental education program." Beutelspacher and Meschede (2020) also identified tight budgets and lack of personnel as challenges for libraries to promote sustainability. The current study also identified the challenge of a lack of public interest and participation, followed by competing priorities and a lack of administrative support in libraries. Regarding competing priorities, one respondent

described it like this: “our community is more concerned with finding and keeping employment.”

The convenience sampling method in this study inhibited the researcher’s ability to generalize the findings. The relatively small number of responses also made it impossible to compare the answers statistically across groups with different demographic characteristics such as library type, annual budget, and service population. But, the results provided insights into libraries’ environmentally sustainable practices and environmental education services in Georgia and revealed librarians’ attitudes toward these subjects. Most importantly, the results showed that not all respondents embrace the roles libraries should play in developing an environmentally sustainable community specified by IFLA and ALA. There is still a lot of work to be done to resolve this contradiction.

### **Conclusion**

Environmental issues impact everyone on this planet, and various efforts have been made at the international, national, regional, and local levels. Libraries hold a unique place in the community they serve and are called upon to play an important role in providing information and educating the public on these issues. However, repeated studies found a contradiction between the expectations and the library’s practices on this matter.

Professional organizations such as IFLA and ALA have already taken initiatives to train and motivate library workers to adopt environmentally sustainable practices and provide environmental education services. Examples include the IFLA Green Library Award (IFLA, n.d.) and the ALA Resilient Communities: Libraries Respond to Climate Change Initiative (ALA, n.d.). Both professional organizations also have relevant organizational divisions that create and share resources with member libraries. But, there is more to be done to

resolve these contradictions.

One of the main takeaways from this study is the need for environmental literacy education and training for library employees and administrators, so they can be equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to contribute to sustainable development in the communities they serve. Instruction could be integrated into LIS curricula, such as community outreach, reference, or information literacy courses. Professional organizations such as IFLA, ALA and GLA can also develop continuing education programs or job training to support libraries in this endeavor.

Specific environmental grants or funding from various sources should be made available to libraries to hire environmental sustainability librarians or form an environmental sustainability team to advocate for environmental sustainability in libraries and to provide environmental education services. The inclusion of environmental sustainability in libraries’ strategic plans or policy documents is also important to make sure the idea is recognized by administration, librarians, and staff members. It is also important to identify and extract indicators from previous research and include them in the policy to make sure the impact of environmentally sustainable practices and services are specific and measurable.

There is a network of 2.6 million libraries around the world. This library network is a great way to reach the world population and promote environmental awareness and literacy. This giant network also provides opportunities for libraries to form a community of practice, learn from each other, and brainstorm creative ideas. With a lack of funding and personnel as great challenges, libraries can tap into each other’s strengths and knowledge to push forward.

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## Appendix: Librarians' Attitudes Toward Providing Environmental Education in Georgia

You are invited to participate in a survey research project entitled “**Librarians' Attitudes Toward Providing Environmental Education in Georgia**” which is being conducted by Dr. Xiaoi Ren, a faculty member at the Department of Library and Information Studies at Valdosta State University. The purpose of the study is to understand the current library practices in and the librarians' attitude toward promoting environmental education in Georgia. You will receive no direct benefits from participating in this research study. However, your responses will help the researcher learn more about libraries' current practice and their perception of libraries' role in promoting environmental education in local communities.

There are no foreseeable risks involved in participating in this study other than those encountered in day-to-day life. It should take participants approximately 10 minutes to complete the questionnaire. This research study is anonymous. No one, including the researcher, will be able to associate your responses with your identity. Your participation is voluntary. You may choose not to participate, to stop responding at any time, or to skip questions that you do not want to answer. You must be at least 18 years of age to participate in this study. Your participation serves as your voluntary agreement to participate in this research project and your certification that you are 18 or older.

Questions regarding the purpose or procedures of the research should be directed to Xiaoi Ren at [xren@valdosta.edu](mailto:xren@valdosta.edu). This study has been exempted from Institutional Review Board (IRB) review in accordance with Federal regulations. The IRB, a university committee established by Federal law, is responsible for protecting the rights and welfare of research participants. If you have concerns or questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the IRB Administrator at 229-253-2947 or [irb@valdosta.edu](mailto:irb@valdosta.edu).

### Part I. Demographic Questions

1. Where do you currently work?

- Public library
- Academic library
- School library
- Special library
- Library cooperative/system/network/consortium
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

2. What is your service community?

- Urban

- Suburban
- Rural
- Not Applicable

3. What type of position do you hold?

- Librarian with ALA MLIS/MLS
- Librarian with degree other than ALA MLIS/MLS
- Paraprofessional
- Staff
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

4. What is your libraries' service population?

- More than 200,000
- 100,000-200,000
- 50,000-99,999
- 25,000-49,000
- 5,000-24,999
- Fewer than 5,000
- I am not sure

5. What is your library's annual budget?

- More than \$500,000
- \$400,000-\$499,999
- \$300,000-\$399,999
- \$200,000-\$299,999
- \$100,000-\$199,999
- \$50,000-\$99,999
- Less than \$50,000



I am not sure

**Part II: Background Knowledge**

6. Are you aware of the "Green Library Movement?"

Yes

No

I am not sure

7. Are you familiar with concept of the **Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED)** Green Building Certification system?

Yes

No

I am not sure

8. Are you aware of any examples of the "Green Libraries/LEED Certified Libraries" in your area?

Yes

No

I am not sure

9. Is your library a LEED certified library?

Yes

No

I don't know

**Part III: Attitude**

10. The following statements ask about your attitude toward the importance of providing environmental education in libraries:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly agree
It's important for libraries to operate in an	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

environmentally friendly way.

It's important for libraries to implement the concept of **"Environmental Sustainability"** in their day-to-day management and operation.

It's important for libraries to promote internal awareness of environmentally sustainable practices among their staff.

It's important for libraries to form partnerships with other organizations to promote awareness of environmental issues in their community.

It's important for libraries to educate the public in their community on environmental topics by providing relevant collections and programs.



Libraries should be a public model of the environmentally friendly practices in their community.

It's public libraries' responsibility to educate the public on environmental topics.

**Part IV: Internal Practices**

11. Does your library have an environmental policy that applies to your daily operation of the library?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

12. Does your library incorporate environmentally friendly policies and practices in building construction and/or maintenance?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

13. Does your library take into consideration measures to reduce the environmental impact caused by the library's operation?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

14. What are the measures that your library takes to reduce the environmental footprint?

Using sustainable energy

- Using recycled products
- Using reusable products
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Part V: Community Outreach**

15. Does your library organize outreach campaign/events to promote the discussion of environmental issues in your community?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

15a. Please tell me a little more about the events:

\_\_\_\_\_

16. Does your library organize book exhibits or themed exhibits about environmental issues?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

16a. Please tell me a little more about the exhibits:

\_\_\_\_\_

17. Does your library create programs related to environmental topics?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

17a. Please tell me a little more about the programs:

\_\_\_\_\_

18. Does your library maintain a resource guide on environmental education resources?

- Yes
- No

I don't know

18a. Please tell me a little more about it:

---

19. Does your library collaborate with other organization(s) in your community to promote environmental awareness?

Yes

No

I don't know

19a. Please tell me a little more about the other organization(s):

---

20. Were you involved in any disaster preparation and recovery planning efforts in your community?

Yes

No

I don't know

20a. Please tell me a little more about your participation:

---

**Part VI: Comments**

21. What should be the role played by libraries in the development of a sustainable community on the environmental dimension?

---

22. What are your observations of the successes and/or challenges in providing environmental education in libraries?

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## Digital Library of Georgia (March 2022)

### The Mission Messenger Is Now Available Freely Online

19th- and 20th-century issues from the journal of the largest group of Protestant women in the world are now available freely online. Mercer University Special Collections and Archives have partnered with the Digital Library of Georgia (DLG) to digitize Mercer's run of the [Mission Messenger](#) from 1895–1921, published monthly by the Woman's Baptist Missionary Union of Georgia (WBMU), more commonly known today as simply the [Woman's Missionary Union \(WMU\)](#).

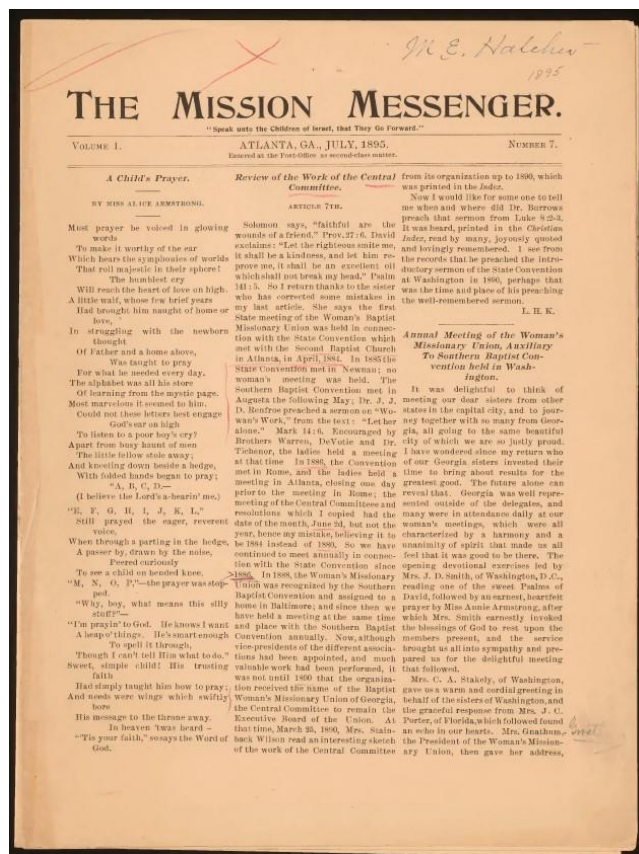


Image courtesy of Mercer University Archives and Special Collections

The Mission Messenger was digitized and described as part of the DLG's [competitive digitization subgrant program](#), broadening partner participation amongst nonprofit cultural heritage institutions across the state. The collection was transferred to Mercer directly by the WMU, making it likely the most complete run of the Mission Messenger for the period.

Starting from a handful of women in 1888 as the WBMU, the organization became the largest Protestant group for women in the world, with a membership of approximately one million. It was also the first—and remains the largest—body of organized laity in the Southern Baptist Convention.

Women's organizations like the WBMU played a significant role in American life during the 19th and early 20th centuries, mobilizing women to raise money for Southern Baptist missions worldwide.

Written contributions to the *Mission Messenger* came from a broad variety of WBMU members across the state. One of its most famous contributors was [Mary Emily Wright Wilbur](#), a notable female leader of fin de siècle Georgia and the first member of WBMU leadership, who served as one of the publication's early editors from 1899–1906.

Although consigned to the private sphere of the home by law and custom, women influenced the public sphere of policy and society through organizations dedicated to causes such as temperance, poverty relief, antislavery, and suffrage, among others.

Reports from local church chapters, adult and children's programming suggestions, letters to



the editor, financial reports, fundraising drives, Bible studies, and reports from Southern Baptist missionaries worldwide were regular features of the magazine and described how Georgia women viewed the world and demonstrated Georgia's influence across the globe.

Issues of the *Mission Messenger* show how Georgians responded to significant historical events, including:

- the Spanish–American War
- World War I
- the flu pandemic of 1918
- the Women's Suffrage Movement

These issues are also a valued resource for scholars interested in:

- 19th and early 20th-century women's history
- Baptist history
- Georgia history
- the history of 19th-century international Baptists missions

Genealogists will also find this collection valuable because of the articles and entries documenting individual members and contributors.

Beth Ann Williams, the current executive director of the WMU, emphasizes the importance of the *Mission Messenger's* digitization:

What began as a small number of missionary societies in Georgia Baptist churches has grown into women's ministries and missions discipleship for all ages for 3,600 churches. A digitized *Mission Messenger* provides widespread and easy access to state and church women's leadership. [They] would be able to read

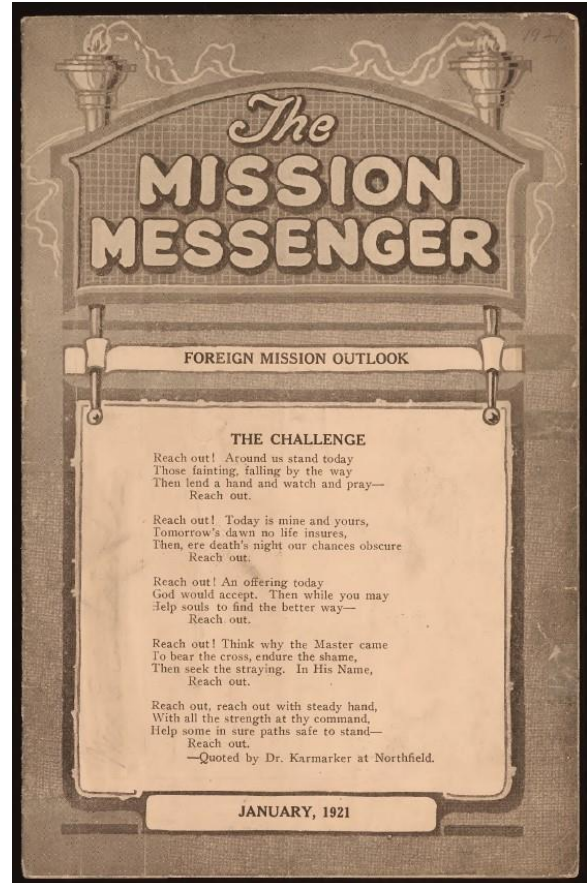


Image courtesy of Mercer University Archives and Special Collections

firsthand about the successes, struggles, challenges, and accomplishments of the WBMU. What a valuable and interesting source to help highlight the early years of missionary giving and serving that was done by and through Georgia Baptist women.

View the full collection online at [https://dlg.usg.edu/collection/mercer\\_col-10898-12395](https://dlg.usg.edu/collection/mercer_col-10898-12395)

*Mandy L. Mastrovita is a digital projects librarian and archivist with the University of Georgia Libraries*

*People, Libraries  
and Agencies* **IN THE NEWS**

## Georgia Library Association Advocacy Committee

Representing all Georgia libraries, the primary charge of the Georgia Library Association (GLA) Advocacy Committee is to maintain and grow the relationship between libraries and statewide legislative efforts. This involves working to understand the needs of legislators and legislative groups, as well as discovering ways to effectively communicate the goals and needs of libraries to these legislative groups and individuals.

Ensuring that various voices across the state and our profession are heard, GLA organizes several advocacy efforts allowing libraries to share with legislators the outcome and impact

of both local and statewide decisions made benefitting libraries and the community they serve. Also, these efforts give libraries the platform to foster important relationships with government agencies. For example, through the advocacy committee, GLA coordinates a Library Day at the capitol where library staff from various types of libraries work together to distribute an art print by Debi Davis to every state legislator. There is always lots of excitement in distributing these prints. Prints from previous years are on display and framed in many of the offices at the Capitol. With the print in hand, legislators and office staff often



*On March 17, 2022, a group of library advocates gathered together before breaking into small groups and delivering prints by Debi Davis to the offices of the legislators. Pictured from left to right. Front row: Carey Huddlestun, Stacy Brown (Georgia Council President), Julie Walker (State Librarian), Karen Manning (GLA President), Ben Carter. Second row: Kara Rumble, Angela Cortellino (GLA Advocacy Chair), Laura Burtle. Third row: Ashley Pearson, Kristin White, Angela Stanley, Evan Bush, Nan Brown, Raymond Goslow. Fourth row: Chaun Campos, Gina Martin.*

greet these advocates with a smile as advocates petition for library needs.

This year, the committee was able to return in person to continue this work at the capitol. With several volunteers working, Georgia legislators received 2022 Library Day prints. The 2022 print depicts the botanical gardens in Athens. The prints are a collaborative advocacy effort between GLA, Georgia Council, and the Georgia Public Library Service (GPLS).

The Advocacy Committee is dedicated to advocating for all libraries in Georgia. As libraries continue to evolve in the services offered, groups served, and in meeting changing demands, government relations must be a primary function of library leadership and professional organizations. As advocates, library workers must shift the conversation from pleading for what they need to demonstrating community outcomes and possible political

intersections. Yes, the committee focuses on gathering funding support from our legislators, but it is essential to also create relationships in order to fully inform legislators, so they are able to make decisions that help libraries and communities grow. The fostering of legislative relationships is not a short term or easy effort. Advocacy efforts require consistency and dedication, a stern will, and belief in what libraries offer. The GLA Advocacy Committee looks forward to continuing its good work with all GLA divisions, interest groups, and committees to sustain these long-term efforts.

Stay up to date with all GLA Advocacy Alerts by clicking [ADVOCACY](#) at the top of the GLA Website.

*Angela Cortellino is the GLA Advocacy Chair.  
She can be reached at  
[advocacy@georgialibraryassociation.org](mailto:advocacy@georgialibraryassociation.org)*

## Georgia Library Association Research and Assessment Interest Group's Spring Conference

The COVID-19 pandemic might be altering nearly all our lives, but the Georgia Library Association's Research and Assessment Interest Group (RAIG) continued with another year of a half day conference showcasing Georgia libraries' efforts towards assessment, the user experience, and data-driven decision making. On March 25, 2022, three organizers, seven presenters, and over 40 attendees came together online to discuss assessment under this year's theme of "Community Building and Engagement." Despite all the difficulties COVID has caused, Georgia libraries have not stopped engaging and building connections to their communities through the continuous assessment and improvement of their resources and services. The conference began with three 20-minute sessions:

- The program started out with "Every Little Bit Helps: Participating in Mass Digitization As A Small Institution" by Derek Otis of Oglethorpe University. Derek discussed the role of Massive Digital Libraries (MDLs) such as HathiTrust and Internet Archive, and how smaller libraries can impact their collection through formal partnerships.
- Next, Wilhelmine Randtke of Georgia Southern University discussed "Locking In the Status Quo For Business: Recent Changes to U.S. Data Privacy Law and Long-Term Impacts on Data Collection." She covered the hot issue of data privacy in libraries and the need for laws protecting the privacy of our users' data such as the Uniform Personal Data Protection Act that has been adopted by some states.

- Lamonica Sanford of Georgia College & State University Library took the reins and lead the group through the power of LibInsight in her presentation "Snapshots of the Library: Using Libinsight to Store, Analyze, and Share Data That Begin to Tell a Library's Story." The Springshare product can be used to create datasets and dashboards to share the library's value with stakeholders and other libraries that use Springshare products.

Following the 20-minute presentations, the program moved into the 10-minute showcases.

- In "Supporting Your Research with Grants," Emily Thornton and Micki Waldrop of Brenau University outlined the steps to find and apply for grants to support the research and assessment in your library. They illustrated using their own examples with a "do" and "don't do" presentation.
- Following, Patrice Williams of the Atlanta University Center Robert W. Woodruff Library showcased her library's use of LibQual during the pandemic in, "LibQual Survey Implementation: Innovative Engagement Through Strategic Partnerships." They included their marketing materials and the strategic campus partnerships to make it a successful assessment initiative.
- Kelli-Anne Gecawich of Georgia Southern University finished the presentation period detailing the use of whiteboards for library assessment in her presentation, "Today I Feel \_\_\_\_: Building Community in an Academic Library Through Whiteboards." The whiteboard

study showcased a wonderful example of community building and a unique way to gather the students' needs and desires.

The end of the conference included three breakout rooms moderated by the conference planning team. The three breakout rooms consisted of: assessment tools, methods, and instruction & programming. Participants could move between rooms and hear from others' experiences with assessment as well as share possible tools and methods that they may not

have been familiar with prior. It was also a fantastic platform to ask questions of fellow library research and assessment enthusiasts. All around, the RAIG 2022 conference was a resounding success for yet another year of library assessment!

*Manda Sexton is an assessment and user experience librarian at Kennesaw State University Library System and the chair of the Research and Assessment Interest Group*



## Georgia State Legislative Update: End of Session 2022

This was an especially busy year for library- and education-related bills in the state legislature. This roundup will let you know what passed and where to read the new laws. This review is meant for informational purposes only, and its contents should not be construed to constitute legal advice. Please note that this information is current as of April 7, 2022, and it does not take into account any actions taken by the governor in the 40 days postsession.

### **SB 226: School Materials Challenges, “Harmful to Minors”**

[SB 226](#) was passed by the legislature on March 30, 2022 and sent to Governor Kemp for his signature. This bill sets a definition of the term “harmful to minors” as it relates to both instructional and library materials within schools. It calls for each local board of education to create a complaint resolution policy by January 1, 2023, that complies with a new state-based standard that:

- Starts with principals receiving written complaints from parent or guardian of enrolled student,
- Requires the principal or their designee reviewing complaint and determining whether the material is harmful to minors within seven business days and relaying this decision to the complainant within 10 business days,
- Establishes an appeal to the local school board that says the appeal must be heard and determined within 30 calendar days, and
- Includes a list of challenged materials on the school board’s website available for public review for at least 12 months as well as the ability for parents or guardians to review challenged physical materials in the media center.

The Georgia Library Association (GLA) and its partner organizations were strongly opposed to this legislation.

### **HB 910: FY22 Amended Budget**

All state employees received a \$5,000 cost of living adjustment that was made retroactive to July 1, 2021. This applies to all current state employees, and it will affect the salaries of library workers inside the University System of Georgia (USG), the Georgia Public Library Service, and other state-employed library workers. This pay increase is expected to become active in most places in April 2022.

### **HB 911: FY23 Budget**

[HB 911](#) is the FY23 (July 2022–June 2023) budget for the state of Georgia. This budget contains good news for Georgia’s public libraries. Within section 41.14, public libraries received a per capita increase in their state provided materials grant (for the purchase of materials) from \$0.40 to \$0.60 per capita, a total funding of \$2,214,123. Cost of living adjustments to make permanent the \$5,000 raise for all state reimbursed positions (including library workers inside USG and state reimbursed public library positions) were also included.

In addition to the state funding, Bonds 17 and 23–29 were appropriated for the construction and renovation of library facilities. This includes:

- Bond 17: \$2,000,000 for major repair and renovation of Georgia’s public libraries
- Bond 23: \$900,000 to renovate and expand the Southside Library of the South Georgia Regional Library System in Valdosta.



- Bond 24: \$950,00 to renovate the Mary Vinson Memorial Library of the Middle Georgia Regional Library System in Milledgeville.
- Bond 25: \$2,000,000 to construct an addition onto the Richmond Hill Library of the Statesboro Regional System in Richmond Hill.
- Bond 26: \$900,000 to renovate the Oconee County Library of the Athens Regional System in Watkinsville.
- Bond 27: \$1,400,000 to renovate and expand the Riverdale branch of the Clayton County Library System in Riverdale.
- Bond 28: \$900,000 to renovate the McDonough Public Library of the Henry County Library System in McDonough.
- Bond 29: \$2,000,000 to construct the East Side Branch Library of the Athens Regional Library System in Athens.

These funds provide much needed support for Georgia's public libraries throughout the state as they endeavor to better the lives of all residents.

### **Related Bills**

Although not directly related to libraries, these other bills related to education also passed the legislature and were sent to the governor for potential enactment:

- [HB 1](#): Public colleges and universities are restricted from creating "free speech zones" on their campuses.

- [HB 1084](#): The so-called "divisive concepts" bill that precludes a defined set of race-based concepts from being taught in K-12 environments to either students or employees.
- [HB 1178](#): The "Parents' Bill of Rights" that allows for parents or guardians to review all records and instructional materials that pertain to their enrolled student.

### **What Happens Now**

Pursuant to Georgia law, the governor has six consecutive days to sign or veto legislature if the legislature is in session. Once the legislative session ends, the governor has 40 days to determine whether to sign or veto legislation (this year, May 14<sup>th</sup>). Any legislation not acted on during the 40-day period automatically becomes law.

All laws in the state of Georgia become enacted on July 1<sup>st</sup> (the start of the fiscal year) unless otherwise specified in the text of the legislation.

If you have any questions about these actions or want to know how they will affect your library, you are encouraged to reach out to your legal counsel.

*John Mack Freeman is head of public services at Georgia Institute of Technology Library and chair of the Intellectual Freedom Interest Group*

*Angela Cortellino is the executive director of Sequoyah Regional Library System and chair of the GLA Advocacy Committee*

*People, Libraries  
and Agencies* **IN THE NEWS**

## Kennesaw State University's Adobe Creative Jam

March 2, 2022, marked the Kickoff Event for Kennesaw State University's second annual Adobe Creative Jam. In partnership with the Norman J. Radow College of Humanities and Social Sciences, the Kennesaw State University Library System hosted more than 330 students, faculty, and staff at both campus libraries and online for the largest Adobe Creative Jam in the nation to date.



Kennesaw State University is Georgia's only Adobe Creative Campus, meaning all students, faculty, and staff have access to all products within the Adobe Creative Cloud. To raise awareness of this offering, Adobe Creative Jams create a friendly yet competitive opportunity for students to learn how to use Adobe software and implement their new skills to create and submit a graphic, video, or image with the Adobe software of the year for a chance to win coveted prizes and recognition for their hard work!

This year, participants learned the ins and outs of Adobe Premiere Rush, a digital storytelling software. During the Kickoff Event on March 2, participants were taught by Adobe experts on best practices and techniques with Adobe Premiere Rush. The Kickoff Event ended with the unveiling of the theme for this year's competition. The participants then had two weeks to use their new digital storytelling skills

to create a video based on this prompt. As an added incentive, participants who submitted a video for judging this year also received a Digital Storytelling Micro-credential, a digital skills badge they can display on their LinkedIn profiles and on their résumés.

The theme for the 2022 Adobe Creative Jam was familiar to Kennesaw State's students, faculty, and staff as it was based on one of the mottos of Kennesaw State: Find Your Wings™. However, for this competition the theme was "Find Your \_\_\_\_." This gave participants the opportunity to express what their motto is for life and their academic journey. Whether it be "Find Your" passion, inspiration, major, or future, participants were inspired by this prompt that correlated with the heart of the university. Students were excited to share their own take on this motto and exhibit their own thought processes and voices.



During the three weeks between the Kickoff Event and the Adobe Creative Jam Finale, students used their new skills to find their strength, their courage, and their way. Adobe experts on site included Sarah Johnson, who is the KSU Adobe Creative Jam coordinator as well as a senior lecturer of communication and a graphic design and digital training coordinator at Kennesaw State University. These experts offered one-on-one drop-in sessions throughout those three weeks to better help participants achieve their digital storytelling goals. Eager students utilized these sessions to strengthen their work and hone their skills. Seventy-five students submitted their Adobe Premiere Rush videos by the due date and were judged using the following criteria: how well the submitted video solved the prompt; how clear the message and point of view were throughout the video; how well the overall idea and concept of the video worked with the use of different digital storytelling elements including visual effects, sound effects, and music; and how well the production of the video matched

the video concept. With these criteria in mind, the Adobe Jam Judges were tasked with a difficult decision.

On March 23<sup>rd</sup>, participants and excited spectators gathered again at the Horace W. Sturgis Library, the Lawrence V. Johnson Library, and online to celebrate the finalists and honorable mentions! Out of the 335 student, faculty, and staff

that registered for the event, there were 50 different majors and specializations present, and nine of Kennesaw State's 11 colleges were represented in this year's Jam. Also, 80% of participants had never used Adobe Premiere Rush before, meaning this was more than 265 participants' first encounter with this software. Students, faculty, and staff participants came away from this experience more aware of Adobe Creative Cloud's offerings and services provided through the university and excited to use Adobe products in their future careers.

The KSU Library System is incredibly proud of the outcome of this record-breaking university event and looks forward to partnering with the Norman J. Radow College of Humanities and Social Sciences again for next year's Adobe Creative Jam!

*Ellie Burell is a student engagement and marketing strategist librarian at Kennesaw State University Library System*



## Roddenbery Memorial Library Book Talk with Author Robert Gwaltney

In today's digital age, libraries are often encouraged to provide more than just books. The Roddenbery Memorial Library offers art classes, music lessons, technology sessions, crafts, a plant exchange, various park passes, and much more. Of course in addition to books, the library has much to circulate like newspapers, magazines, movies, Chromebooks, hotspots, and even ukuleles. But on Saturday, March 5, 2022, the library in the quaint town of Cairo, Georgia, hosted over 60 people to celebrate a book: local author Robert Gwaltney's debut novel *The Cicada Tree*.

The worry of inviting an author to travel four hours from his current residence in Atlanta to his hometown library to have no one show up to the event immediately dissipated. The crowd of fans, friends, and family filled the auditorium to capacity and overflow guests had to watch from the south hall. And Gwaltney was excited to be home. The day before, he was so thrilled to see his name on the sign outside of the library he posted a picture to his Facebook page. And moments before the program began, he uploaded and shared videos of the library's courtyard and display of cicadas advertising the event with his followers.

It was not like most book signings held at the library. Instead of just standing at a podium as the audience merely listened, Circulation Assistant Audrey Anderson facilitated a Q&A interview format with the author after Library Director Janet Boudet's introduction. It was both interactive and funny. At one point while excerpts from *The Cicada Tree* were read, you



*Author Robert Gwaltney*

could hear a pin drop. At the end of the reading, a couple of ooohs and awws were heard from the audience. Perhaps it was the author as well as the forum that had everyone mesmerized. Gwaltney answered questions about growing up with his three younger brothers, who were all present at the book signing. He talked passionately about *The Cicada Tree*—his language as descriptive as the prose in his debut novel. He named authors that had been an influence in his writing, and he engaged with the audience, which was full of people who were proud of him and anxious to say so. Attendee Melanie Duncan said, "It was magic."

*Audrey Anderson is a library assistant at Roddenbery Memorial Library*

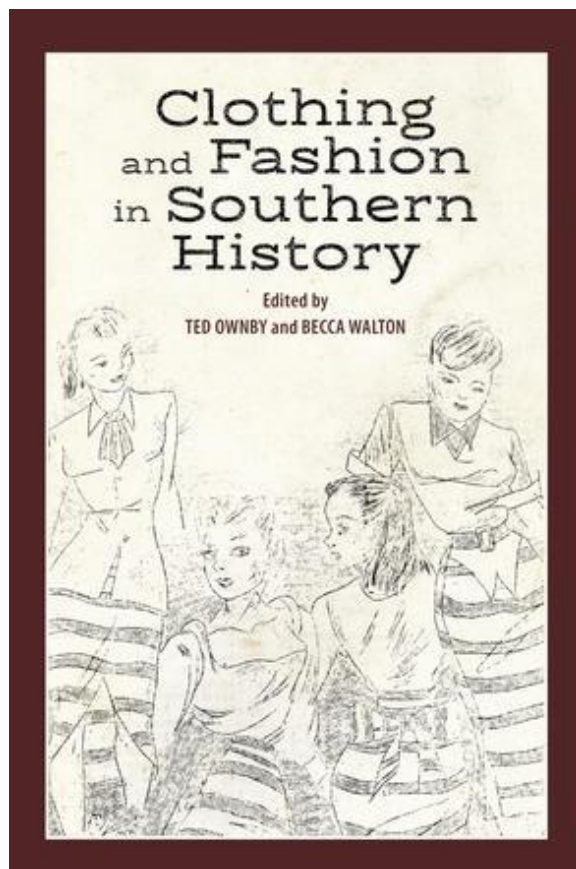
## Off the SHELF

**Clothing and Fashion in Southern History** edited by Ted Ownby and Becca Walton (University Press of Mississippi, 2020: ISBN 9781496829511, paperback, \$30.00; ISBN 9781496829504, hardcover, \$99.00)

The scope of this 150-page work is sweeping, yet much more concentrated than its title, *Clothing and Fashion in Southern History*, implies. Broadly, six essays by various scholars study the history of the South through the lens of clothing—its production, distribution, and usage—though the essays in fact adopt quite a specific focus on the rich and largely unexplored clothing narratives of racial, gender, and sexual minorities, as well as the incarcerated. The book explores how their identities have been created for them and by them through clothing.

Essays are arranged roughly chronologically, beginning in the 1800s Cotton South, where enslaved people’s creative alterations to low-quality Lowell cloth represented a subtle reversal of power between enslaved people and enslavers. The burlap-like cloth was imposed upon enslaved bodies, as it was cheap and also reinforced the image of enslaved people as property, like any other goods stored in sacks. In conspicuously patching and mending such demeaning clothing, enslaved people found a way to restore aspects of their autonomy and identity. In the 1950s and 1960s, prisoners at the Mississippi State Penitentiary at Parchman would feel similarly toward their identical and evocative prison stripes. Prisoners, too, played a large role in the production and customization of their own mandated clothing and understood a culture in which image was a constant and valuable language.

Clothing production was then politicized during the Civil War, the Great Depression, and the Civil Rights Movement, bringing both Black and White women into more direct contact with the government while also confirming their



*Image courtesy of the publisher*

minority status. Confederate sewing societies of upper-class White women received government praise for their patriotic sacrifice, which often involved overseeing Black women who performed the work. Racial discrimination in the Works Progress Administration’s sewing projects also left Black women in the lurch. The Mississippi Poor People’s Corporation, though short-lived, was perhaps the first time in history that economic politics worked to aid Black and middle-class women, providing financial income and opportunity for activism through sewing and creative skills.

Grace Elizabeth Hale closes out the collection in 1970s Athens, Georgia, where thrift store clothing became a primary instrument for bohemian expression, mainly through drag, mismatching and layering, and androgynous dressing in the alternative music scene. In an area of the country still entrenched in convention, members of R.E.M., The B-52s, and Pylon crossing lines of sexuality and gender and creating new personas through dress was rebellious, a little dangerous, and loads of fun.

*Clothing and Fashion in Southern History* is an important initial thread in a new and needed area of regional study. This book is primarily recommended for academic libraries but would also be a strong addition to heritage collections of public libraries across the South.

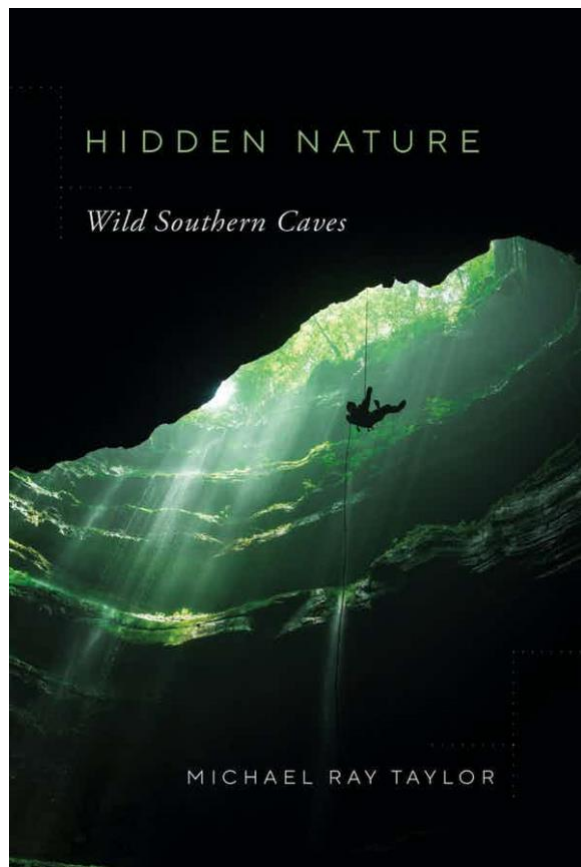
*Lindsay Josey is a collection development librarian at the Athens-Clarke County Library*



Off the **SHELF**

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**Hidden Nature: Wild Southern Caves** by Michael Ray Taylor (Vanderbilt University Press, 2020: ISBN 9780826501028, \$19.95)



*Image courtesy of the publisher*

The TAG region, where the borders of Tennessee, Alabama, and Georgia meet, is well-known for its vast number of caves. Tennessee alone lays claim to more than 10,000 caves. In *Hidden Nature*, author Michael Ray Taylor offers a glimpse into this beautiful and mysterious subterranean world, sharing his tales and adventures of cave exploration over the course of more than 40 years.

Growing up in Florida with its rivers, mangroves, and springs, Taylor had never ventured into a cave until one summer on a family trip, returning from Illinois. His father

decided (after many pleas from the back seat) to stop in Chattanooga and visit Ruby Falls, and Taylor was hooked. At Florida State University, Taylor and his housemates joined the student cave club, which was actually a grotto—or chapter—of the National Speleological Society. There, he learned the difference between cavers and spelunkers—“cavers rescue spelunkers”—received sage advice on gear and safety, and most importantly, was told, “Take nothing but pictures. Leave nothing but footprints. Kill nothing but time.”

Taylor is a natural storyteller, intertwining the biology, geology, conservation, and history of caves and caving into his stories. In the chapter “TAG on Steroids,” he recounts the history of the TAG cavers and Richard Schreiber, who began TAG in the 1960s. In “Bat Season,” he tracks white-nose syndrome (WNS), a fungal disease first observed in 2006 in a bat population in New York. Although biologists and cavers have taken measures to limit the spread of WNS in the caves where bats dwell, it has killed over seven million bats across the eastern United States and Canada. In “Graffiti,” he describes a study at the Mammoth Cave National Park in Kentucky to identify 10,000 plus signatures left by long-forgotten visitors on the cave walls and ceiling. Led by a history professor and assisted by Marion O. Smith, caver extraordinaire (although he would grunt at the title and deny it), and Kristen Bobo, photographer and a well-known caver in her own right, the study found evidence that at least 41 of those signatures belonged to soldiers from the Civil War.

The book reads like a travelogue, memoir, and field journal and is best taken in parts, not to be

read through from beginning to end like a novel. The time periods between chapters are not necessarily sequential, so it may be disconcerting to some readers. However, the book is interspersed with photographs that capture the wonder and timelessness of the caves, pits, and caverns found in TAG and other regions of the country. Also included are “Social Interludes,” Facebook posts from colleagues, and (mis)adventures with one of the author’s best friends and a fellow caver, H. Lee Pearson.

Students with undeclared majors and those with an interest in the natural world may be intrigued into exploring these “wild Southern caves.” Cave enthusiasts and those in the caving community will enjoy reminiscing along with the author. Recommended leisure reading for academic and public libraries.

*Linh Uong is a catalog metadata librarian at the University of North Georgia Libraries*

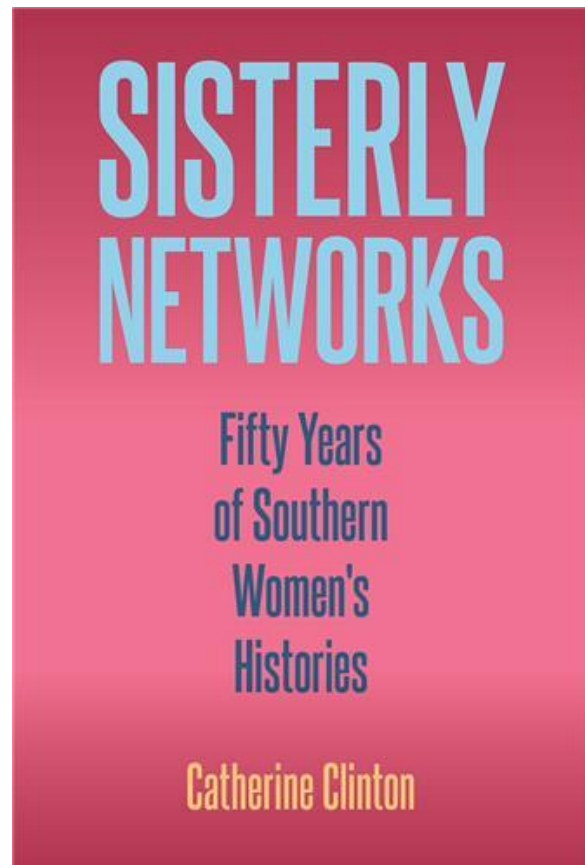
## Off the SHELF

***Sisterly Networks: Fifty Years of Southern Women's Histories*** edited by Catherine Clinton (University Press of Florida, 2020: ISBN 9780813066615, \$40.00)

*Sisterly Networks* is an account of the eclectic Southern woman and the continued triumph over her struggles to be heard at a macro level and to be regarded as a contributing figure in Southern history as well as academia. Scholars and enthusiasts of Southern history and those who espouse a penchant for Southern women's history will find the firsthand essay accounts intriguing, perplexing, heartrending, and overwhelming.

An account of the history of the Southern Association for Women Historians (SAWH) is regaled and provides insight into its meager beginnings in 1970. This important timeline is a treasure trove of the intricate evolution of SAWH. Specifically moving is the realization—despite the obstacles women have overcome to have an active voice in Southern history—of how welcoming and supportive women have been to all interested in remembering and promoting Southern history, regardless of gender or ethnicity.

The volume captures the changing mindset that the role of women should be acknowledged and analyzed as worthy contributors in Southern history and that women offer different perspectives on history and how it was formed. History must be rewritten and reread, adding the female frame of reference. Furthermore, the volume chronicles the women in Southern academia. Countless instances are described in which educated women have not been recognized and credited for their aptitudes and accomplishments, all the while hoping for an “in” from their male counterparts. Exemplifying the charge of Helen Reddy's song “I Am Woman, Hear Me Roar,” *Sisterly Networks* recounts the ways in which women forge



*Image courtesy of the publisher*

alliances via professional organizations and friendships by promoting one another through the “ships”—sponsorship, mentorship, and friendship.

Clinton and the contributing authors provide the reader's mind with a multitude of resource examples extending outside this reading, such as named authors who have paved the path for women's involvement and women's issues in the South and in academia. Additionally, dispersed throughout the reading are a plethora of published essays, databases, and websites that are mentioned to expand the

knowledge base of the reader and explain the ever-changing roles women have played with continued readings on Southern women's history. Specifically, and importantly, the role of African Americans and other minority women who have shaped academia in the South is recognized with insight to the additional struggles and victories gained.

Women are and will always continue to be valuable contributors to any history and

especially Southern history. *Sisterly Networks* is a must-read to refresh one's memory on the meager mentions in history and the "sisters" who have worked tirelessly to help women and others shine and mark contributions to Southern history and academia.

*Dana K. Johnson is a reference and instruction librarian at Georgia Gwinnett College*