

Birmingham  
Public  
Library

Preserving the Past,  
Exploring the Future

Annual Report 2011

## Birmingham Public Library Annual Report 2011

The past year has been a very difficult one for Birmingham's oldest cultural institution, the Birmingham Public Library (BPL). The most traumatic event occurred on April 29 when a tornado destroyed the Pratt City Branch along with much of the surrounding area. Plans for rebuilding the library are underway, and we look forward to renewed service to that area. Staff is temporarily located at the East Ensley Branch and is providing services to patrons from the Pratt City area and the Ensley area. East Ensley's hours have been extended to provide Saturday service like the Pratt City Branch does. Other library staff responded to the storm's destruction by providing those who suffered losses with accurate and helpful information on our Web page: —"Resources for Tornado Victims and Ways to Help."

The library continues to cope with severe cuts in library materials budget and the loss of staff. The remaining staff has been amazing in their willingness to do more with less and their energy in planning and presenting new programming.

Statistics measuring the use of our collection decreased in 2011. This is a direct result of the cuts in our library materials budget. We are simply not able to provide what readers want with this reduced budget. Attendance and participation in our programs rose, however, which is a testament to their high quality; and BPL was once again named the most visited attraction by the Birmingham Business Journal's Book of Lists.

BPL has a new Strategic Plan for 2011-2016. The library staff and board of trustees, foundation, members of the Friends of the Birmingham Public Library, members of the city's government, and other stakeholders participated in the plan, which outlines six major goals:

- Patron Services and Programs – BPL will provide excellent mission-driven services and programming that have the greatest positive impact on individual patrons and the community.
- External Relations – BPL will be recognized as an active, valuable contributor to the quality of life in the city and region and be a sought after partner in community and economic development initiatives.
- Internal Resources – BPL will have the right people and materials available at the right place and time to meet the needs of patrons.
- Funding – BPL will have in place a comprehensive funding plan including an active and successful fundraising program.
- Marketing – People throughout the city and the region will know what the Birmingham Public Library does, what we stand for, and how we contribute to the community.
- Board Development – The BPL Board will have in place the tools, resources, and skill sets necessary to allow it to operate at its highest and best level in support of the library mission.

BPL commissioned a Space Use and Renovation Plan for the Central Library Complex completed by the firm Robert A. M. Stern Architects. This report outlines how the BPL Central Library can be expanded within its existing footprint and be brought into the 21st century in its services and systems. Planning for this project and raising funds will be the next phase of this project. The Archives Department especially needs more space to hold local and regional historic records, photographs, and manuscripts. Researchers from many states used these resources to produce eighteen books in 2011 as well as numerous articles, exhibitions, theses, lectures, and films.

We look forward to 2012 with certainty that it will bring success and opportunities to the Birmingham Public Library and its staff and board.



## 2012 By The Numbers

### Hours Open to the Public:

43,536

### Number of People Visiting our Libraries:

2,224,352

### Number of Items Checked Out:

1,459,900

### Number of items (resources) used in the library:

1,761,719

### Number of Items in BPL Collection (Archives and Manuscripts not included.):

828,960

### Active BPL Library Card Holders:

162,926

### New Library Cards Issued:

16,926

### Public use of Meeting Rooms:

2,564

### Number of Public Computers:

292

### Number of Uses of the Public PCs:

626,055

### Total Minutes Public PCs used:

21,048,556

### Reference Transactions:

538,148

### Programs and Events for the Public:

2,100

### Number of Program and Event Attendees:

62,262

### Participation in BPL's Summer Reading Programs

Number of Children: 5,342

Number of Teens: 1,289

Number of Adults: 336

Total Participants: 6,967

Number of Programs Offered: 428

Attendance at Programs: 19,707

### New Services and Programs

- e-Reader training for public

### Total Square Footage of BPL Libraries:

367,987

*\*Highlighting in red indicates that this is a number that is higher than the number for last year. Most of our use statistics are down. This is a direct result of the cuts in our acquisitions budget. We are simply not able to provide what readers want in the quantities they want them with this reduced budget. Attendance and participation in our programs is on the rise, however, which is a testament to their high quality.*

### Personnel

#### Full time professional librarian positions

(One part time): 62.5 (down from 70.5)

Full time staff positions (All, including librarians): 170

Part Time Staff positions: 132



## Selected Grants, Awards, and Donations

- Named 2011 number one most visited tourist attraction by Birmingham Business Journal Book of Lists, 2012
- BPL Southern History Department Named top ten public libraries for Genealogy by Family Times Magazine
- Saundra Ross Forrest, North Avondale Branch Manager, I Love My Librarian Award, 2011 (National Award sponsored by the Carnegie Corporation and New York Public Library)
- Avondale Branch named “Best Story Times” by Birmingham Magazine and Alabama Baby and Child - All story times and programs incorporate literacy skills and promote reading as an essential life skill
- iPads (10) from Alabama Power (Used in programs and classes for teens and for staff training in e-readers.)
- \$15,000 from Friends of the Library Book sale
- Other grants from Friends of the Library \$8,500
- Art of Science – Creating Paths to Scientific Careers for At-Risk Children in Birmingham, Kresge Foundation Cultural Alliance of Greater Birmingham (After school programs presented across the library system school year 2011-12)
- “Turning the Page” books to Pratt City by Alabama Humanities Foundation

## Projects Completed

- Branch Managers Manual
- Customer Service Manual
- Five Year Strategic Plan (Clarus)
- Space Use and Renovation Plan for Central Library Complex (Robert A. M. Stern Architects)

## Projects Ongoing

- Map Digitization and Cataloging Project
- Digitization of Clipping Files and other historical materials in the BPL collections



## System Wide and Special Programs and Annual Events

- Martin Luther King, Jr. Scavenger Hunt- January (prize drawing for MLK Books at each location)
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Annual Lecture
- Project Next Step- JCLC Grant funded training- job skills and help seeking employment – Ongoing classes at many BPL locations
- Reading with Ringling Bros- incentive to read for circus tickets
- Poetry Programs for Young People-
  - Participated in ALA's National Library competition – to tweet Haikus-Twainkus in love and appreciation of your Library
  - Word Up! – Countywide student spoken work competition and performance
  - Poetry Slam Workshops (DISCO) and Real Life Poets
- Alabama Bound Presents (Local Authors) – a series of presentations of local authors
- Bards and Brews – 1st Fridays at Central
- African American History Month – 2011, 40 programs throughout the system
- Valentines for Children's Hospital (Annual since 1983, Countywide, headed up by BPL)
- Celebration of baseball with displays at all locations, Birmingham Black Barons – Brown Bag Lunches and Read-it-Forward of Willie May's biography
- Darkness Into Light – Brown Bag series on Holocaust history (four programs in March). Presented in partnership with the Alabama Holocaust Education Committee
- Genealogy Workshops – (Beginning and more advanced or specialized such as African American and presented by Southern History Department staff throughout the year.)
- National Library Week – \$5 fine free campaign
- Displays for Earth Day across system – Books, DVDs, etc. encouraging folks to “Go Green”
- Children's programming with statistics –
  - Cotchery Foundation Summer Program
  - Score Big with the Cotchery Foundation – reading incentive for area children culminating in the annual teen tailgate party and skill and drills football clinic
  - 350 kids attended Tailgate Party and 200 young men attended football Skills and Drills Clinic



- Children’s programming with statistics – continued

Michael P. White, Illustrator – 15 programs with attendance of 832

Lee Bryan, “That Puppet Guy” (Sept 2010)  
12 programs with 998 attendees

2010 Martin Luther King, Jr. Scavenger Hunt – 496 participants

After School Grant Programs, funded by the Community Foundation, a Birmingham Board of Education At-Risk grant, and Alabama Power Company, 91 contractual programs with attendance of 1621

Family Place Libraries 1 2 3 Play With Me at Smithfield, North Birmingham, Avondale, and Springville Road branches. 397 adults and 442 children in attendance. Approximately 88 families. This is a grant-funded five week series for children aged birth through three and their caregivers. It is offered at several locations in the spring and the fall. Each branch that hosts this series is designated a family place library and has inviting tot area with colorful rug and furniture, age appropriate books and toys

- Word Up – 20 1st and 2nd place winners from 11 high schools participated. Total of 95 participants at all schools.
- Licensed to Read, Wild Card, and Between the Lions issued 1,026 new library cards.
- We the People Bookshelf – 2011 “A More Perfect Union,” books from National Endowment for the Humanities annually since 2004 – Displays and programs at all locations.
- Women’s History Month – Displays of information
- “Deciphering the Numbers” – series of workshops on the 2010 Census
- Summer Reading Program for all ages – (Statistics above with general summary.)
  - “Novel Destinations” – adults (online and Facebook) with reading logs, programs, and prizes
  - “One World Many Stories” – Summer reading for children. Many programs at all locations – animals, magic, music, cooking, drama, puppets, Ronald McDonald, etc. Something to please everyone at all locations – Program presentations include Jazz Heritage Band, Dolores Hydock, and of course BPL’s own talented story tellers and youth librarians.
  - “You Are Here”- Teen summer reading club includes programs on cooking, arts, magic and more. All locations participated. Culminated in annual teen YMCA pool party at 3 area YMCAs
- “Census Data and Proposal Writing for Not-for-Profit Organizations”/ 1 day workshop presented in partnership with the US Census Bureau



- “Historical House Research” 1 day workshop hosted by BPL and presented by Linda Nelson, executive secretary of Jefferson County Historical Commission
- Salute to First Responders- Hosted by BPL and presented by Leadership JeffCo and Birmingham Metro NAACP
- August – series featuring information for writers- Brown Bag Lunch programs featuring Jim Reed, how to write about your life. Liz Reed on editing, Lou Andres on the publishing and editing process, and writing for children with Jo Kittinger.
- September – Eat, Drink, Read, Write – series of six programs featuring food, culinary arts, and the literature surrounding them. These programs featured authors, books, films, storytelling, as well as refreshments provided by local restaurants such as Highlands Bar and Grill, Pie Lab, and others.
- September – Book Illustrator Michael P. White (The Library Dragon) This was the 14th Annual author/illustrator series celebrating children’s literature. There were 13 programs across the city.
- Banned Books Week activities across the system
- October – Birmingham Noir – Jim Baggett’s famous walking tour of Birmingham’s most infamous historical places.
- Annual arts and crafts fair at North Birmingham – presented by the North Birmingham Library Crochet Class whose members spend all year making these beautiful crafts.
- Birmingham Bound talks featuring books researched in the BPL Archives
- People & Stories / Gente y Cuentos – Presented at Gateway Rushton School
- Beginning in October – The Art of Science – After school series presented by Elinor and Winfield Burks and funded by the Kresge Arts in Birmingham, a partnership with the Cultural Alliance of Greater Birmingham – This series continues through the 2011-2012 school year.
- Our Spirits Will Not Be Broken: Voices from the April Storm (Poetry program for victims of the April 27 tornado)
- 3rd Annual The Ghoul’s Ball – teens from all over Birmingham enjoyed treats, games, airbrush tattoos, and more than 300 attended
- December – Delores Hydock’s annual reading of Truman Capote’s “Christmas Memory”
- Local Author’s Expo – 1 day event showcasing local authors and their books. Program for the writers “Every Writer Needs an Editor” Liz Reed
- The Pillars Performance and tour of The Birmingham Scene by Marjorie White
- Food For Fines (Food Pantry Support in September)



## Other Programming in Our Libraries:

In addition to the programs listed above, each location presented story times for children, tot times for the youngest children, and other local programs, computer classes and events on a weekly or biweekly schedule. Storytellers based at the regional branches create and present programs at the branches in each region on a regular schedule. The storytellers work together and share ideas and plans. Several times during the year they have a “Story Swap” for this purpose.

## Publications

Staff produces two publications annually. Seasons Readings 2011, a collection of reviews by staff and board members is published in December as a seasonal gift to our patrons. Then in February we presented the African American Reading List 2011 which is a compilation of the best in African American literature purchased by BPL during the previous year.

## Miscellaneous

Tornado Information Produced by Library Staff: We produced an online resource, “Resources for Tornado Victims and Ways to Help” early in the recovery period. We continued to add to it as we received information about helpful Internet sites and resources. The site provided links to sources of help in an organized and easy to use format on the Web. Public Service library staff assisted all comers with finding and completing forms and accessing needed information.

**Alabama Bound Presents** – Appearances by Local Authors

Bill Cobb – *The Last Queen of the Gypsies*

Wade Hall – *An Interview with Abraham Lincoln*

Carolyn McKinstry – *While the World Watched*

Ethel Hall – *My Journey: A memoir of the first African American to preside over the state Board of Education*

Rame Channell – *Sweet Music on Moonlight Ridge*

**BPL@Night** (Funding for this series ran out in August.)

M.A.D. Skillz Dance

Music IN the Stack with Logan (@ Titusville)

Casual Causality (Birmingham Art Music Alliance)

Alabama Symphony at West End Branch

John Scalici and Get Rhythm

Gospel Extravaganza at West End Branch

### **Birmingham Bound**

Peter Rutkoff, *Fly Away*

“Torch” (A documentary film)

Tax forms and income tax help for the public from local groups such as SaveFirst (Impact Alabama), AARP, and others in many of our branches.





## Researched in the BPL Archives and Published in 2011

### Books

Bennett, James R., *Tannehill Ironworks*. Arcadia Press, 2011.

Brimner, Larry Dane, *Black and White: The Confrontation of Rev. Fred L. Shuttlesworth and Eugene "Bull" Connor*. Calkins Creek Books, 2011.

### \*Recipient of the Norman A. Sugarman Biography Award

Burnett, Jason, *Early Bessemer*. Arcadia Press, 2011.

Feldman, Glenn (editor), *Painting Dixie Red: When, Where, Why and How the South Became Republican*. University Press of Florida, 2011.

Glover, Staci S., *Coal Mining in Jefferson County*. Arcadia Press, 2011.

Hubbs, G. Ward, *A Compelling Idea: Birmingham-Southern College*. Birmingham-Southern College, 2011.

Kelly, Mark, *Back to Nature: A History of Birmingham's Ruffner Mountain*. \_\_\_\_, 2011.

Linn, Julius E., Katherine M. Tipton and Marjorie L. White (editors), *The Jemison Magazine and the Selling of Birmingham, 1910-1914*. Birmingham Historical Society, 2011.

Maxwell, Jerry H., *The Perfect Lion: The Life and Death of Confederate Artillerist John Pelham*. University of Alabama Press, 2011.

McKinstry, Carolyn with Denise George, *While the World Watched*. Tyndale House Publishers, 2011.

*Password: English Iere Teacher's Guidebook* (French publication). Editions Didier, 2011.

Prugh, Jeff, *American Whitewash*. Westview, Inc., 2011.

Scharenberg, Albert, *Martin Luther King: Ein biografisches Portrat* (German publication). Herder, 2011.

Schug, Mark and William Wood, *Economic Episodes in American History*. Wohl Publishing, 2011.

Smallwood, Tennant M. Jr., *Gamblin', Politics and Feuds Southern Style*. Seacoast Publishing, 2011.

Smith, Jerry, *Growing Up in the Magic City*. Banner Press, 2011.

Tougas, Shelley *Little Rock Girl 1957: How a Photograph Changed the Fight for Integration*. Capstone Press, 2011

*Who's Who in Black America*. Who's Who Publishing Company, 2011.



## Articles, Conference Presentations and Invited Lectures

Baggett, James L., "Erskine Ramsay's Many Namesakes." *Alabama Heritage*, No. 99 (Winter 2011).

Baggett, James L., *Alabama Libraries in Times of Crisis*. School of Library and Information Studies Alumni Day, University of Alabama (Tuscaloosa, Alabama), October 2011.

Bates, Kelsey Scouten, *Good Timing: The Birmingham Public Library, Kathryn Tucker Windham and the Gee's Bend Interviews*. School of Library and Information Studies Alumni Day, University of Alabama (Tuscaloosa, Alabama), October 2011.

Boettcher, Graham, "The Industrial City Beautiful: Artists of the Birmingham Scene from the Great Depression through World War II." Birmingham Public Library (to accompany the Birmingham Historical Society exhibit *The Birmingham Scene: Seldom-Seen Artwork from the 1930s and 1940s*), November 2011.

Day, James Sanders, "Dealing in Black Diamonds: Joseph Squire and Alabama's Early Coal-Mining Operations." *The Alabama Review*, Vol. 64, No. 1 (January 2011).

Feldman, Glenn T., "You Know What It Means to Have 9,000 Negroes Idle: Rethinking the Great 1908 Alabama Coal Strike." *The Alabama Review*, Vol. 64, No. 3 July 2011).

Glover, Staci Simon, "Coal Mining in Jefferson County, Alabama, 1880-1950: A Multimedia Perspective." Alabama Historical Association Annual Meeting (Spanish Fort, Alabama), April 2011.

Kornegay, Bob, "Memories of Wiregrass Stadium." *Dothan Magazine*, March/April 2011.

Puckett, Dan J., "Reporting the Holocaust: The View from Jim Crow Alabama." *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, Fall 2011.

Rose, Ann, "The Wave that Never Ended." *Birmingham Weekly*, October 2011.

Utz, Karen, "Industrial Voices – Reflections on the Birmingham Scene During the Great Depression." Birmingham Public Library (to accompany the Birmingham Historical Society exhibit *The Birmingham Scene: Seldom-Seen Artwork from the 1930s and 1940s*), November 2011.

## Theses and Dissertations

McKinney, Merritt, "Air Pollution, Politics, and Environmental Reform in Birmingham, Alabama, 1940-1971." Ph.D. Dissertation, Rice University, 2011.



## **Motion Picture Productions**

*Another Voice*. Dambusters Productions, 2011.

*Children's Hospital – 100th Anniversary*. Lunchbox Productions, 2011.

*Freedom Riders: Behind the Scenes*. WGBH (Boston) for Public Broadcasting System (PBS), 2011.

*The Hispanic Interest Coalition of Alabama*. Scott Mauldin Vulcan Media Team, 2011.

*Master Class*. Radical Media (Leroy & Morton Productions, Inc.) for OWN (Oprah Winfrey Network), 2011.

*The Syrian Jewish Community, Episode 3: Life in Bensonhurst, 1920-1939*. Turquoise Films for the Sephardic Heritage Museum (New York), 2011.

*Utah's Freedom Riders*. KUED (PBS) Channel 7 (Salt Lake City, Utah), 2011.

## **Exhibits**

*ASO: 90 Years of Music*. Alabama Symphony Orchestra, Alys Stephens Center (Birmingham, Alabama), April 2011.

*The Birmingham Scene: Seldom-Seen Artwork from the 1930s and 1940s*. Birmingham Historical Society at Birmingham Public Library, November to December 2011.

*Celebrating Our History*. Arab American National Museum (Dearborn, Michigan) for the Southern Federation of Syrian Lebanese American Clubs Annual Convention (New Orleans), 2011.

*Mapping Birmingham*, Vulcan Park and Museum, September 2011 to February 2012.

"Permanent Exhibit," Burleigh Grimes Baseball Room, Clear Lake Museum (Wisconsin), October 2011.

"Permanent Exhibit," Vulcan Park and Museum, January 2011.



## Birmingham Public Library Board of Trustees



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*Secretary, Director of Library*



Angela Fisher Hall  
*Associate Director of Library*

## Partners of BPL (Selected List)

Chinese New Year Festival at Boutwell,  
BPL has been involved since the 1st in 2006

Alabama School of Fine Arts

UAB School of Education and the Young Authors Conference  
(Ashley Bryan Exhibit and programs in April & May)

Birmingham Board of Education

Alabama Holocaust Education Committee

Alabama Health Info Net

St. Vincent's Health Systems (programs on healthy living)

Fox 6 - Good Day Alabama Jeh Jeh Pruitt

Desert Island Supply Company (DISCO)

Jericho Cotchery Foundation

Birmingham Genealogical Society

African American Genealogical Study Group

Federation of Genealogical Societies

Alabama Genealogical Society

Real Life Poets

United Way Success by Six

US Census Bureau

Birmingham Metro NAACP

Legal Services of Alabama

Coosa River Science School and AL 4 H Center

Alabama Symphony

Mayor's Office Division of Youth Services

Alabama Jazz Hall of Fame

The Seasoned Performers

The Encyclopedia of Alabama

Village Creek Society

JeffCo Historical Commission

Leadership Jefferson County

Watercolor Society of Alabama

Foodies Book Club

Slow Food Birmingham

Cultural Alliance of Greater Birmingham

Alabama Public Television  
(PBS Kids-Raising Readers Corner)

Elinor and Winfield Burks

Junior League of Greater Birmingham

Internal Revenue Service (Tax Forms)

Alabama Department of Revenue (Tax Forms)

Community Foundation of Greater Birmingham

Friends of the Birmingham Public Library

Alabama Power Company

Alabama Public Library Service

### **Friends of the Birmingham Public Library**

Pat Rumore, President

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# Birmingham Public Library Locations

Preserving the Past, Exploring the Future

## Avondale Library

509 South 40th St  
Birmingham, AL 35222  
(205) 226-4000

## Inglenook Library

4100 40th Tce N  
Birmingham, AL 35217  
(205) 849-8739

## Titusville Library

#2 6th Ave SW  
Birmingham, AL 35211  
(205) 322-1140

## Central Library

2100 Park Place  
Birmingham, AL 35203  
(205) 226-3600

## North Avondale Library

501 43rd St N  
Birmingham, AL 35222  
(205) 592-2082

## West End Library

1348 Tuscaloosa Ave SW  
Birmingham, AL 35211  
(205) 226-4089

## East Ensley Library

900 14th St, Ensley  
Birmingham, AL 35218  
(205) 787-1928

## North Birmingham Library

2501 31st Ave, N  
Birmingham, AL 35207  
(205) 226-4025

## Woodlawn Library

5709 1st Ave N  
Birmingham, AL 35212  
(205) 595-2001

## East Lake Library

#5 Oporto-Madrid Blvd  
Birmingham, AL 35206  
(205) 836-3341

## Powderly Library

3301 Jefferson Ave SW  
Birmingham, AL 35221  
(205) 925-6178

## Wylam Library

4300 7th Ave, Wylam  
Birmingham, AL 35224  
(205) 785-0349

## Eastwood Library

4500 Montevallo Rd  
Birmingham, AL 35210  
(205) 591-4944

## Smithfield Library

#1 8th Ave W  
Birmingham, AL 35204  
(205) 324-8428

## Ensley Library

1201 25th St, Ensley  
Birmingham, AL 35218  
(205) 785-2625

## Southside Library

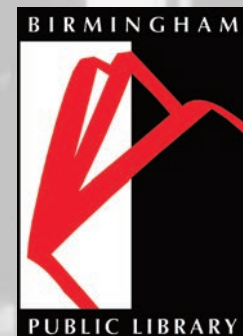
1814 11th Ave S  
Birmingham, AL 35205  
(205) 933-7776

## Five Points West Library

4812 Ave W  
Birmingham, AL 35208  
(205) 226-4013

## Springville Road Library

1224 Old Springville Rd  
Birmingham, AL 35215  
(205) 226-4081



[www.bplonline.org](http://www.bplonline.org)