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# News

For South  
 Carolina Libraries

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## Making Connections-- Advocacy Is Key to Strong Library Support

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The South Carolina Association of Public Library Administrators (SCAPLA) has taken on the subject of advocacy as a key issue for the coming year. All SC public libraries receive state aid, but the amount has been shrinking steadily over the last few years. In 2001, state aid reached a high of \$2.00 per capita. The current level is \$1.00 per capita. With the possibility of more cuts on the horizon, SCAPLA made the decision that it was time to act, resulting in the formation of a regional communications tree, a legislative action calendar, and a string of regional training sessions intended to educate and motivate library trustees and friends into taking a more active role as advocates with the state legislature.



*SCAPLA President Todd Stephens & SCAPLA Legislative Committee Chair Dwight McInvaill speak on the importance of advocacy to a group of library directors, trustees, and friends.*

The regional communications tree will be an important tool for mobilizing library directors, trustees, and friends when immediate contact is needed on a critical legislative issue. There are 5 branches on the communication tree, representing 5 regions of the state: Midlands, Old English, Upstate, Pee Dee, and Lowcountry. As issues arise, regional leaders will be notified. They will call others in their region, who will then communicate the message to

additional supporters, thereby spreading the word very quickly.

**News for  
 South Carolina Libraries  
 can now be viewed online  
 from the State Library's  
 web site:  
[www.state.sc.us/scsl](http://www.state.sc.us/scsl)**

The South Carolina APLA Legislative Calendar provides suggested events and activities that public library directors can utilize with trustees and friends in an on-going effort to inform the Governor and General Assembly of the vital role libraries play in the educational, economic, and cultural well-being of all South Carolinians.

## FROM THE DIRECTOR.....

James B. Johnson, Jr.



Elsewhere in this issue is an article concerning efforts of the Association of Public Library Administrators (APLA) to improve their legislative effectiveness. Their legislative calendar is part of an overall effort by the State Library to coordinate legislative activities among the various library associations in South Carolina.

I convened a meeting on December 3 for the presidents and legislative chairs of the following associations: APLA, the South Carolina Library Association (SCLA), the South Carolina Association of School Librarians (SCASL), Partnership Among South Carolina Academic Libraries (PASCAL) and the South Carolina Chapter of the Special Libraries Association (SLA). Also invited were representatives of the Friends of South Carolina Libraries (FOSCL) and the School of Library and Information Science at the University of South Carolina.

The purpose of this meeting was to bring these organizations together to discuss their specific legislative initiatives, and to encourage them to work together for the benefit of all libraries in the state. By knowing each other's legislative agendas, librarians should be able to answer queries from legislators about their needs and the needs of other type libraries.

As a result of this meeting, procedures are being put into place to coordinate the legislative activities of South Carolina's library associations. This is a first step in what should be a long-term process to improve library funding in the state.

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### Making Connections--Advocacy (cont'd)

SCAPLA President Todd Stephens (Director of the Spartanburg County Public Libraries) and SCAPLA Legislative Committee Chair Dwight McInvaill (Director of the Georgetown County Library), and Jim Johnson, State Librarian, recently conducted training sessions in each of the regions. These sessions were intended to provide information on the benefits of advocacy, and a refresher in the legislative process. Attendees of the training sessions were provided with a list of resources for staying current on the business of the SC General Assembly, including the South Carolina Legislative Manual and SC Legislature Online [<http://www.scstatehouse.net>], as well as effective communication strategies and talking points.



*Public library directors, trustees, and friends attend legislative action training session in Florence.*

"SCAPLA is committed to keeping advocacy as a focal point in the minds of library directors, trustees, friends, and supporters," said Todd Stephens. "It is important for the libraries and their supporters to present a consistent and positive image to our State and local lawmakers."

For more information on these advocacy efforts, please contact Todd Stephens, SCAPLA President, at (864) 596-3511 [[todds@infodepot.org](mailto:todds@infodepot.org)] or Jim Johnson, State Librarian, at (803) 734-8666 [[jim@leo.scsli.state.sc.us](mailto:jim@leo.scsli.state.sc.us)].



# New Library Buildings Going Up All Over the State

South Carolina is seeing new library construction in every corner of the state. Here are just a few of the new libraries either opened or under construction:



*Lamar Library Opening*

Renowned author Dori Sanders was on hand to speak at the dedication of the new Lamar Library, the newest branch of the Darlington County Library on October 26, 2003. The new 4,200 sq. ft. facility replaces a 500 sq. ft. building. Approximately 150 guests attended the opening, many dressed as their favorite literary characters.

Socastee Branch Library of the Horry County Library opened its doors in July 2003. This large branch library has a high-tech computer lab, study rooms, a large meeting room that can be divided into two smaller rooms, and a fantasy cloud-covered and star-studded ceiling in the children's area.



*Socastee Branch Library reading area*



*Pickens groundbreaking ceremony*

Pickens County Library held a groundbreaking ceremony for its new Easley headquarters on September 20, 2003, at the location for the new facility on Biltmore Drive, just off U. S. Highway 123 in Easley. Members of County Council, the Pickens County Library Board, The Pickens County Library System Foundation, and others participated in the ceremony. One young contributor (seen left) donated his birthday money to the library construction project.

The new Florence County Library headquarters is scheduled for completion in spring of 2004. This new 80,000+ square foot facility will be the cornerstone of the revitalization of downtown Florence.



*Photo courtesy of the Florence County Library*



# DISCUS - (Dollar\$ and) Sen\$e for South Carolina

One of the strongest selling points of DISCUS – South Carolina's Virtual Library is its cost efficient use of public dollars. DISCUS spent *\$1.9 million* for databases in 2003. Had each school, college and public library purchased these databases on its own, the combined expenditure would have been *\$24 million*. Each dollar spent for DISCUS purchases over *twelve dollars* worth of resources for state residents.

Few, if any, of the state's libraries or educational institutions could afford to purchase all of the DISCUS databases on their own. Without DISCUS, the cost of the databases for public library systems would range from \$19,000 to over \$300,000 annually. For school districts that price tag would fall between \$56,000 and over \$1 million. Colleges would need to spend from \$31,000 to over \$350,000 each year to acquire the set of databases that DISCUS provides. DISCUS leverages its collective buying power to achieve tremendous cost avoidance for its institutions.

The largest database offered by DISCUS, InfoTrac OneFile, currently includes over 5,000 periodicals in full-text format. To maintain a comparable collection of print subscriptions for one year, at the 2003 average price of \$74 each, would require an expenditure of \$370,000. Additionally, the single database Biography Resource Center includes the biographical entries from over 700 volumes of over 120 print reference titles. At a conservative estimate of \$100 per print volume, a single library would have expended \$70,000 over time to build such a collection.

A collateral benefit of DISCUS is that it has enabled many libraries to shift funds that would otherwise have been spent on core resources to support acquisitions in other areas of need for their users, including print titles or more specialized subject databases. DISCUS' main benefit, however, continues to be its provision of a common core of high quality information resources to every South Carolinian through their libraries and educational institutions. It has significantly expanded the information resources available through every library across the state.

**DISCUS spent *\$1.9 million* for databases in 2003.  
Had each school, college and public library purchased these databases on its own,  
the combined expenditure would have been *\$24 million*.**



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# Advocacy and Library Services for Persons with Disabilities

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Persons unable to access standard print and electronic resources are generally not the first segment of the population that comes to mind when one hears rumblings about the importance of advocating for "good" public libraries. Essentially, a library user has the same vast array of information needs whether living with a disability or not. People with disabilities want to be productive and participating citizens like everyone else. They want access to whatever information persons without disabilities can readily and freely access.

Every effort that goes toward advocating for more dollars for libraries should always include improvement of library and information services for persons with disabilities. Consider these questions: Are persons with disabilities included in administrative planning for the development of strategies to ensure that more state dollars "trickle down" to the local level? Do we speak to legislators about the importance of making connections to these citizens? Are lottery dollars expended to upgrade assistive computer workstations or to acquire technologies that make resources accessible? When bookmobiles are upgraded and replaced, are information needs of these citizens considered? Do we ask ourselves, "What do libraries really mean to people with disabilities? What are their information needs?"

The Talking Book Services (TBS) program is considered one of the South Carolina State Library's premier resources. During FY 2003, the program was showcased at 58 events, including presentations to community and professional groups, and exhibits at various events across the state. The Talking Book Services program is designated as a high priority statewide initiative, which guarantees qualification for federal dollars. Nevertheless, the State Library

continues to advocate for state dollars to support TBS operating costs. Federal dollars are not enough to sustain adjunct services and resources that have been developed over the years. Marketing local library services for people with disabilities and advocating for continuous improvement is essential to equalize access to information services.

Advocacy is extremely important, and if we really want to do it right, we must not overlook the support of any citizen. Still not convinced that persons with disabilities should be among your top five constituencies when advocating for libraries? Read the testimonials highlighted below. They come from talking book readers, their friends, family members and professionals in the disability field. No doubt there are testimonials, just as impressive, in your communities.

*Thank you for your service to our residents in particular, as well as to South Carolina as a whole...*

*I have told hundreds of people the best use of their tax dollars was to provide for your efforts.*

*...I want to thank you and your staff for returning to my father...the joy of reading...*





# Children and Youth Services.....

## Tell The Children's Services Story

Parents, local officials, and legislators need to know that public libraries make a difference for its younger citizens. Many people think of the public library as a nice place to get books and information, but don't realize all the services the library provides that make a positive difference for children and families. With efforts underway to improve student achievement, it is a perfect time to tell how the public libraries help young children get ready for school and students do high quality work.

There are many library-based programs that are helping children prepare for school all across South Carolina. Here are a few examples of the many libraries that provide outreach programs to children and families.

- In **Horry County**, a Hispanic outreach program was developed with a Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) grant. Manuel Vega, library assistant, takes books and stories to English and Spanish speaking children in child care centers throughout the county.
- In **York County**, an outreach program to child care centers has included training workshops to teach child care teachers how to use books effectively with children. This program was funded with an LSTA and a Viburnum grant.
- In **Dorchester and Georgetown Counties**, First Steps grants have allowed the libraries to hire storytellers to share books and other activities with children throughout their counties.

In addition, many libraries across the state offer workshops for teachers and parents, and almost all libraries have regular story programs for young children. These help children develop a love of reading, enhance vocabulary, but perhaps most importantly, create a desire to learn to read. Research clearly shows that reading to children and regular exposure to books is one of the most significant predictors of reading achievement.

In spite of all that public libraries are doing, there is often little community awareness of what they provide for young children. It is the responsibility of the library staff to be sure that the community and government officials know what the library does in this area. Here are some ways to communicate what the libraries do for early literacy:

- **Get involved** with other organizations in your community that are working to improve school readiness. Be prepared to explain what the library can do for them.
- **Tell your story** through the local press or other media. Try writing a letter to the editor or an editorial column.
- **Talk to groups** such as service clubs.
- **Talk with legislators and county officials** about the library and early literacy.



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# NEWSWORTHY

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**Gerda Belknap Kahn**, Chief of Extension Services at the **Richland County Public Library**, has retired after 33 years with the library. Kahn joined RCPL in 1970 as the Head of Children's Services after earning her master's in Library Science from the University of North Carolina. She moved to her current position in 1974. Since then, RCPL embarked on a major expansion of the library system, which was completed in 1993. Today, Extension Services encompasses nine branch locations, as well as Elderly Outreach and the Bookmobile. Kahn has served as past president of the South Carolina Library Association (SCLA) and as a representative to the Southeastern Library Association (SELA). She has also chaired SCLA's Public Library Section. She currently serves on the National Advisory Council for the University of South Carolina School of Library and Information Science.

The **Friends of the Sumter County Library** will hold their Author Luncheon on Friday, April 30, 2004 at 12:00 Noon at the Sunset Country Club. Joan Medlicott, author of the Ladies of Covington Series, will be featured. For ticket information, please contact the Sumter County Library at 803-773-7273.

**WebJunction** [<http://www.webjunction.org>] is an online community of libraries and other agencies established for the purpose of sharing knowledge in the area of information technology and public access. It is the work of 5 organizations, led by OCLC, and is funded through a grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. WebJunction recently posted materials

from a series presented by the Washington State Library on the **Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA)**. The materials include an overview and history of CIPA, as well as information on technology planning, filtering methods, and a bibliography of online filtering resources. You can access these materials at WebJunction in the Policies and Practices section under "Acceptable Use and Computer Policies."

**ALA Graphics** has just published "Curious? READ!", an emergent and early literacy program on CD, developed by the Association of Library Services to Children (ALSC) and the Public Library Association (PLA) Early Literacy Project. This CD is designed for libraries that want to begin or expand literacy services to families with young children. Houghton Mifflin has generously allowed the use of Curious George, an immediately recognizable children's book character, for publicizing this emergent literacy program. Programming ideas, award certificates, promotional templates and Curious George themed incentives are included on the CD. Houghton Mifflin has made "The Complete Adventures of Curious George" book available as a free gift to any library purchasing the "Curious? READ!" CD. This and other literary program tools are available in the ALA Online Store [<http://www.alastore.ala.org/>]. The retail price of the "Curious? READ!" CD is \$99.00. ALA Member Price is \$89.10 (as of 12/15/03).

## For Your Calendar

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**February 24-28, 2004**

Public Library Association (PLA) Conference, Seattle, WA

**March 24-26, 2004**

South Carolina Association of School Librarians (SCASL), Greenville, SC



# Former President Jimmy Carter Draws Nearly 1,100 to Richland County Public Library

Former President Jimmy Carter made a stop at the Richland County Public Library on November 24, 2003 as part of a tour to promote his latest book, *The Hornet's Nest*, at an event sponsored by the Friends of RCPL. Almost 1,100 people attended this special book signing, Carter's only appearance in South Carolina.

*The Hornet's Nest* is a fictional account of the Revolutionary War, following character Ethan Pratt as he makes his way from Philadelphia to North Carolina and Georgia.

Former President Carter is a bestselling author and works for countless charitable causes, including Habitat for Humanity, but concentrates much of his attention to economic and social problems in developing countries and promoting human rights and democracy. Carter was the recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize in 2002.



Former President Jimmy Carter chats with an RCPL patron as he prepares to sign a copy of one of his books. (Photograph provided by RCPL.)

## South Carolina State Library

**Administration:** James B. Johnson, Jr., Director  
**Deputy Director:** Guynell Williams, Director  
**Library Development Services:** Curtis Rogers, Director  
**Information Services:** Mary Morgan, Director  
**Collection Management Services:** Felicia Yeh, Director  
**Talking Book Services:** Guynell Williams, Director  
(803) 734-4611, Toll Free: 1-800-922-7818

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**State Library:** [www.state.sc.us/scsl](http://www.state.sc.us/scsl)

**Talking Book Services:** [www.state.sc.us/scsl/bph](http://www.state.sc.us/scsl/bph)

**DISCUS:** [www.scdiscus.org](http://www.scdiscus.org)

**Palmetto Book Alliance:** [www.scpalmettobookalliance.org](http://www.scpalmettobookalliance.org)

**SC Reference Room:** [www.state.sc.us/scsl/refdesk.html](http://www.state.sc.us/scsl/refdesk.html)

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