Each October we take a look back at the prior fiscal year, which comes to a close at the end of June. Fiscal 2013-2014 was another busy year, and another year of improvements for Sheppard Memorial Library. The library experienced very strong use of all services at all locations during the year. Circulation of books and other materials totaled 492,143 items borrowed, we had 480,883 visits to the main library and the branches, and 189,481 public computer sessions took place at our libraries. While overall statistics show that library services continue to be in high demand, I would like to point out a few specifics that are particularly exciting and encouraging when looking to the future of our community. Program attendance for children’s and teen programming increased by 5% last year, and we have expanded this programming by 8.5% to meet the growing demand. For our first-ever teen summer reading program, we had sixty teenagers participate in the kickoff event! Not surprisingly, circulation of materials for children and teens also increased last year by almost 3%. The Pew Research Center surveys continue to back up this fact, noting that teenagers, compared with all other age groups, remain the most-likely to read a traditional paper book in a given year. Use of our new e-materials is growing. E-book circulation surged by 35% this past year, and that is wonderful. It is very significant and encouraging though, that while circulation of our growing e-book collection continues to increase by leaps and bounds, traditional paper books are still in high demand as well, especially with our younger readers.

With all of that circulation, we need to have the best and most-efficient technology in use for checking materials in and out. During 2012-2013, we had applied for and won a $100,000 federal LSTA grant to be used in 2013-2014 to bring our radio frequency identification (RFID) technology, which had been in use at the main library only, to all of our branch locations. This enables us to not only provide more- efficient staff checkout, but also intuitive self-checkout as an option at the branches. This option should be very popular with our patrons, since during the last three years, about 15% of the entire library system checkouts have taken place through one self-check unit at the main library! Also, this technology enables us to conduct highly-efficient inventory work using handheld devices, so that we can effectively reconcile the catalog to the collection on an ongoing basis system-wide. The end result of this grant will be a better patron experience and greatly-improved access to the collection of books and other materials. Matching funds for the grant were provided by the wonderful Friends of the Sheppard Memorial Library.

During the course of the last four years, we have replaced all of the public computers at the branch locations using federal grants and matching funds from the Friends. The public computers at the main library still saw remarkably heavy use last year, even given the fact that those machines were eight years old and near the end of their useful lives. I am delighted to report that in the spring of 2014 we also applied for and won a $50,000 LSTA grant, once again with matching funds provided by our Friends, to replace all of the eight-year-old public computers at the main library and set up a computer lab. The lab will be used in partnership with the Literacy Volunteers of Pitt County, who will provide instructors to teach free classes for the public there, including basic computers skills and more. We will also continue our partnership with the Laupus Health Sciences Library, whose outreach librarians provide their Healthier U classes periodically at Sheppard, which will be much nicer on the new computers in the lab. Library staff will also teach classes on a variety of topics.

Several other important innovations were made during the year. We implemented The Square at the main library, which enables patrons to use credit and debit cards for
Notes and observations cont’d . . .

payment. The Square went live at the East Branch Library on October 1, and the remaining branches will soon follow. Other upgrades were made to our facilities as well. We replaced the oldest lighting at the main library with a combination of LED lighting and much more efficient fluorescents, which will result in significant energy savings going forward, and a brighter and more pleasant experience for our patrons. Finally, we also upgraded the library’s HVAC controls, so that the heating and air conditioning at the main library, Carver and East branch locations now operate on programmed schedules for maximum efficiency as well as comfort.

We are determined to provide the best possible traditional library services, the best of cutting edge advances in library service and resources, and the best library experience for our patrons. As we continue to develop our newer offerings like e-books and e-magazines, we are also putting even more emphasis on developing the collection of traditional books and other materials. We remain extremely grateful for the support of our patrons, our Friends, and for the funding and support provided by all of our elected officials and local governments. Thank you all for enabling your library to have the greatest possible positive impact in our community!

Statistical snapshot:

September

38,493 items circulated

682 new borrowers registered
(70,546 total borrowers)

Public computer/ Internet use
(including wi-fi/laptop use)

17,821 sessions

Mark your calendars! Sheppard Memorial Library’s Holiday Book Sale begins November 1 and ends when everything is sold.
STORY HOURS FOR CHILDREN

**Children’s Library**

- **Toddler Story Hour**
  - Ages 18 months−3 years
  - Tuesdays at 10:30 a.m.

- **Preschool Story Hour**
  - Ages 3−5
  - Wednesdays at 11:00 a.m.

- **Bedtime Story Hour**
  - Ages 10 and under
  - One evening a month at 7:00 p.m.

**East Branch Library**

- **Weekly Story Hour**
  - Ages 2−kindergarten
  - Tuesdays at 10:30 a.m.

**Carver Branch Library**

- **Preschool Story Hour**
  - Ages 3−5
  - Thursdays at 10:00 a.m.

**Winterville Public Library**

- **Weekly Story Hour**
  - Ages 2−kindergarten
  - Wednesdays at 10:30 a.m.

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**Children’s Library**

The Children’s Library has special collections of books that children often need. The Battle of the Books titles are displayed on the first bookshelf as you enter the Children’s Library. Also, a bookmark for both the elementary and the middle school Battle of the Books is available. Holiday books, autumn books, and recordings are available for checkout.

On Tuesday, October 28, at 7:00 p.m., children ages six and younger are invited to wear their costumes and bring a treat bag for the annual Spooktacular Stories celebration. The program will consist of not-too-scary stories, songs, and finger plays. “Humbug Witch,” based on the book by Lorna Balian, will make her annual appearance. At the end of the program, children may trick-or-treat in the library.

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**Juvenile Outreach**

During October, the Juvenile Outreach Librarian continued to visit childcare centers with stories about the zoo. In the book *Whose Nose and Toes* by John Butler, the children enjoy guessing the animal on the next page by seeing the animal’s nose and toes. The elephant’s nose is a favorite! We have also been learning about zookeepers jobs in the book *Who Works at the Zoo?* by Alyse Sweeney.

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**Holiday Closing**

Tuesday, November 11
**East Branch Library**
Join us at the East Branch Library for a Charlie Brown’s Thanksgiving movie on Tuesday, November 25, at 10:30 a.m. Popcorn will be served at this event. All ages are welcome to attend.

**Winterville Public Library**
The Winterville Public Library will also show the Charlie Brown’s Thanksgiving movie. Come and join us on Wednesday, November 26, at 10:30 a.m. Popcorn will be served. All ages are welcome to attend this event.

**Carver Library**
There are lots of new books at the Carver Library. We encourage you to stop by and check out some books and catch up on your reading.

**Blount (Bethel) Library**
We invite you to stop by the Bethel Library and check out the new DVDs, and the bestsellers. Bethel is located approximately 15 minutes from downtown Greenville. The library is open Monday–Friday from 1:00 p.m.–5:00 p.m.

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**ARE YOU READY TO GET REALLY CREEPED OUT?**
**COME TO SHEPPARD MEMORIAL LIBRARY FOR**
**TEEN HALLOWEEN PARTY**
**(GRADES 6-8)**
**OCTOBER 25, 6-8 PM**
**DRESS UP AND BE READY FOR AWESOME GAMES,**
**GOOD FOOD, AND FUN!**

Any questions? Email me: ccrane@sheppardlibrary.org
Sheppard Memorial Library

Anime & Manga Club!

Saturday, Nov 1, 2-6 pm
We’ll be watching SUMMER WARS, playing games, & maybe sneaking in a couple of episodes!

Questions? Email Casandria Crane: ccrane@sheppardlibrary.org

Bring a treat to share & we’ll provide the drinks!

GAME ON @ YOUR LIBRARY
SATURDAY NOVEMBER 15, 2014

1-4 pm, Sheppard Memorial Library
All ages are invited!

Questions? Contact Casandria Crane: ccrane@sheppardlibrary.org
Sheppard Memorial Library

YA Book Club Meetings for November:

YA Lunch Book Club:
November 1, 12-1:30
If I Stay
by Gayle Forman
We will have lunch!

Teen Book Lovers:
November 15, 11-12
The School for Good and Evil
by Soman Chainani
There will be treats!

Any questions? Email Casandria Crane: ccrane@sheppardlibrary.org