



Annual Review 2017



Table of Contents

Annual Review 2017

Introduction	3
Renovating Libraries	3
Innovative and Engaging Programming	6
Personal Enrichment	9
Vibrant Collections and Marketing	9
Community Engagement and Partnerships	10
Photo Gallery	13

Osceola Library System Annual Review 2017

Introduction

The Osceola Library System's 2017 Annual Review is an opportunity to highlight the developments and activities of the sixth year of the partnership between Osceola County and Library Systems and Services (LS&S). On behalf of Osceola County and its citizens, LS&S manages six Libraries and their staffing, collections, services, events and community relationships.

Many exciting developments occurred in 2017 in the form of programs, partnerships and promotions. One of the most notable events was the reopening of the two of our largest Libraries after months of renovation. The St. Cloud Library reopened on January 30 after a 6-month closure and the Hart Memorial Library reopening May 30 after a 4-month renovation, bringing the renovation project of four out of five full-service Libraries to a close in the spring of 2017.

This report will detail all the exciting events and achievements of 2017 with photos for a dynamic snapshot of the Osceola Library System, and how it continues to grow and serve the needs of the community.

Renovating Libraries

A multi-year renovation project to update the furnishing and fixtures of the Osceola Library System concluded in 2017 with the renovation and reopening of the St. Cloud and Hart Memorial Libraries, the system's busiest locations.

The St. Cloud Library reopened on January 30, undergoing the most extensive "down to the studs" renovation of all the Libraries. LS&S staff was influential in the choice of finishes, furniture, floor plan and design to ensure a patron-pleasing environment of this 17,000 square foot facility and were always on hand during the renovation process, working with contractors and County staff to offer support and information. The result is a bright and modern facility that brings the collection front and center, gives cozy spots for computer use and dedicates large areas to children's resources and activities.

Library staff managed the closing of the Library, including notifying patrons of changes in services, ensuring items on hold had a new home, signage and communication was prominent, rescheduling popular programming at community centers for continuity of service and placing a book drop outside the Library construction site for convenient return of Library resources. Staff coordinated the packing up of the Library's collection and furnishings, communicated with vendors who provide services to the Library of the impending closure and provided updates to our Library's website so the community could follow along with the progress being made. Staff was re-assigned to other Library locations during the closure.

The St. Cloud Library reopened on Monday, January 30, after being closed for renovations for six months. A grand reopening was held on Saturday, February 4, that was truly a community event for the whole family! Attendees were able to tour the Library and enjoy entertainment such as a Meet-n-Greet with the Queens of The Silver Spurs Rodeo and a balloon-magic show.

St. Cloud Veterans Memorial Library Renovation Highlights:

Project dates: Closed August 1, 2016
 Reopened January 30, 2017
 Grand Re-Opening February 4, 2017

- Replacement of the air handler
- Several structural changes that improve the usability of the public, staff, and maintenance space
- One meeting room was reconfigured to introduce a hallway to the staff area upstairs
- A group study room was configured on the bottom floor
- Circulation desk moved to be more central
- Children’s area moved upstairs to provide additional room and divide noisy areas from quiet areas
- Additional tables and chairs provide increased seating for all areas
- Bright colors add liveliness to the overall effect
- The outdoor bank service area was demolished to update the exterior look.
- New exterior signage
- Mixed flooring with carpet and vinyl
- Changes to floor plan to better accommodate use, including creation of storage room for meeting room furniture, expansion and redesign of first-floor staff area and creation of a more secure area for IT
- Creation of two offices from one large office space for management and technology training
- Public computer lab moved to first floor providing easier access to staff for assistance

The Hart Memorial Library closed for renovations on the first day of reopening for the St. Cloud Library, Monday, January 30. Due to the main Library’s size and multi-floors, this renovation was conducted in stages over five months, with the Library reopening on Tuesday, May 30. Library staff was very involved with County staff and vendors in choosing the right designs, floor plans, and furnishings that would complement the large facility, provide convenient study and meeting space, capitalize on the ample windows and natural light, bring the collection front and center, emphasize technology and brighten the entire building with new lights and paint inside and out. A camera system for improved security was also installed across the entire facility.

As with all previous renovations, Library staff managed the closing of the Library, including notifying patrons of changes in services, ensuring items on hold had a new home, signage and communication

was prominent, popular programming at community centers for continuity of service and placing a book drop outside the Library construction site for convenient return of Library resources. Staff coordinated the moving of the Library's collection and furnishings, communicated with vendors who provide services to the Library of the impending closure, and posted updates to our Library's website so the community could follow along with the progress being made in the local Library.

To ensure continuity of services, some support staff were able to remain in the Hart Memorial Library to offer courier service, call center, collection services, and reference services to the entire Library system while undergoing remodeling.

The Hart Memorial Library held its grand reopening on Friday, June 2, with special guest Commissioner Cheryl Grieb presiding over the ribbon cutting and festivities, which included face painting and a "Know Your Library" scavenger hunt.

Hart Memorial Library Renovation Highlights:

Project dates: Closed – Monday, January 30

Reopened Tuesday, May 30

Grand Reopening Friday, June 2

- Fresh paint in light, refreshing colors and complimentary carpet throughout
- New lighting inside and outside
- Collection featured front and center with inviting stack and high-demand item placement
- Creation of new service desks on main floor and children's area to create a welcoming space for patron assistance; desk in children's area is child-height
- Creation of a new group study/meeting space on the first floor with movable tables and chairs for collaboration
- Addition of a study room and the conversion of one study room to support the newly updated Video Relay Service for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
- Computer area space increased with more elbow room for patrons, consolidating technology into one main resource area for ease of service
- Placement of furniture to capitalize on electrical outlets and quiet study
- Refreshed bathrooms and foyer area with durable yet attractive tile
- Additional display furniture, LCD TV, and wall racks to promote collection and programming
- Reconfigured front entryway to comply with federal ADA requirements
- Security system installed inside the Library and along the perimeter for improved safety
- All new seating in adult, children's, and meeting room spaces
- Inside book drop for more convenient resource returns
- Updated children's shelving such as book browsers and mobile stacks to make browsing more convenient and to switch up floor plans based on patron response

Innovative and Engaging Programming

The year 2017 was chock full of programming that delighted patrons young and old, educated and informed, and opened doors to new opportunities and experiences. Staff harnessed their creativity and ingenuity to present innovative and informative classes and programs that cannot be found anywhere else in the community.

Here are some of the programming highlights for 2017.

Fan Faire 2017

Fan Faire V: Times Wars, the 5th annual Comic Con event presented by the Library was held on September 16. This year, the Library collaborated with the City of Kissimmee, and the event took place at two venues simultaneously, the Hart Memorial Library and the Kissimmee Civic Center. More than 2,000 attendees enjoyed a variety of activities, including author talks by *New York Times* Best Selling author Christie Golden and YA author Christina Farley, as well as a presentation by actress Anna Van Hooft. Patrons attended sessions with a DC comic book artist on how to draw super heroes, and learned about building and re-purposing with a professional prop maker and special effects artist. A cosplay make-up tutorial with a professional cosplayer added interest for adults and teens, while a storytime with Cinderella and her stepsisters entertained children. Fan Faire ended with the ever-popular costume contests and raffle drawings—the prizes for which consisted of donated items from our sponsors as well as books related to different “fandom” genres.

Eclipse Viewing Events

The Poinciana and Hart Memorial Libraries observed the August 21 solar eclipse where most of North America was in prime viewing path for watching the moon cover the entire disc of the sun. Professor Michael McConville of Seminole State University presented a pre-solar event talk on the science behind the solar eclipse and discussed what to expect with the eclipse and the history of the eclipses. He also distributed solar eclipse glasses to attendees. On the day of the event, the two Libraries invited the community to share in viewing the eclipse (which was preceded by staff fielding thousands of calls for eclipse glasses!). More than 2,800 people shared in this event. At Hart Memorial Library, participants were treated to personal photos taken against a green screen showing a picture of a solar eclipse. NOAA streaming of the event was also running on TVs in various parts of the Libraries.

STEAM Day and Fab Lab

The Osceola Library System rolled out its first STEAM Day at the Veteran’s Memorial Library in St. Cloud in May 13. This STEAM Day event was the kick-off of our Fab Lab program that went on to be hosted at our various Library branches and throughout the community. STEAM Day featured a station-based, multi-generational, branch-wide program that encouraged adults, teens, and children to learn, explore, and use various types of science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics. Over 200 participants were offered the chance to become an inventor, a maker, and use their creativity to imagine and design via experiments that taught about basic coding, circuitry, 3D printing, physics and force, and electricity and motion. The Library created the Fab Lab as a mobile smaller version of the equipment and experiments featured on STEAM Day. The Fab Lab was first presented at Cypress Elementary. Then, in

October, the Library teamed up with the Early Learning Coalition of Osceola County to deliver STEAM activities to a local child development center. The Coalition helped identify a center that would be willing and interested in learning how they can use STEAM-based activities in their center through the Fab Lab. The activities showed teachers how they can implement STEAM into their classroom and engage students in experimental learning. STEAM Day and the Fab Lab helped to transform the overall nature of youth programming for the year to come.

American Sign Language

In October, the Hart Memorial Library launched a continuing series of American Sign Language classes aimed at the beginner student, open to the hearing, Hard of Hearing, and Deaf alike. The classes, taught in partnership with the local interpreting service, ASL Services, taught basic skills necessary for communication with Deaf and Hard of Hearing people in the community. All classes were taught by Deaf instructors and featured role-playing and games with a focus on alphabet, numbers, communicating about personal and family topics, and much more. ASL was also featured in a series of classes at the West Osceola Library where tweens, as part of the Summer Reading theme of "Build a Better World," were invited to make a difference in their community by learning how to engage and connect with their Deaf peers and learn all about Deaf culture, language, and literature. These workshops on ASL are part of the Library's overall goal of bringing more inclusive activities to those who may have barriers to using or enjoying the Library.

Inclusive Activities

The Library is committed to serving the underserved with innovative and assistive programming and services that will complement the interests and needs of these patrons. We began offering Inclusive Activities that were adapted for a variety of skill levels for adults with intellectual and physical challenges, limiting barriers for participation. In the first part of 2017 the Hart Memorial Library was being renovated, so the Inclusive Activities were held at the St. Cloud Library. Topics included "Low Impact Aerobics" which featured simple exercises that would raise heart rate and were easy to follow, "Sand Painting" with glue and colored sand as the basis of an art masterpiece, and "Simple Sculpture" where our featured artist from Osceola Arts taught the hands-on class using self-hardening clay. We also featured information-based programs, "Knowing Your Rights-ADA" and "American Sign Language for Beginners" aimed at the Inclusive Activities attendees, to enlighten and inform as well as entertain.

Summer Reading and Backpack Giveaways

Summer Reading kicked off the first full week of June with the Pantry Putt Putt Golf Challenge at Hart Memorial Library and presentations by Amazing Animals at the Buenaventura Lakes, Poinciana, St. Cloud, and West Osceola Libraries. The Florida Fire Frogs mascot was on-site for several programs, lending to the excitement, and Osceola Reads set up tables and engaged parents in conversations about the merits of early exposure to reading and to the Footseps2Brilliance software. Other performers included Medieval Times, Mark Wade (ventriloquist), and Magic and Mayhem, part of whose program at Buenaventura Lakes Library was featured in a short video on icFlorida's website.

Since the theme of Summer Reading was “Build a Better World,” the Library also reached out to County Departments. Both Road and Bridge and Osceola County Animal Services sent representatives to engage children with information and demonstrations showing how these key departments serve them and their families.

For adults and teens, new additions to the Summer Reading excitement were Escape Rooms and a Writer’s Workshop series that brought a literary agent and a local author to the Library to discuss options and provide advice to both local and aspiring authors. Additional programming included a Volunteer Fair at Hart Memorial, attended by 65 persons interested in exploring volunteer opportunities in the County, a presentation by Intuitive Psychic and Life Coach Mitchell Osborn, an expert in communicating with animals, and a series of classes on American Sign Language at the West Osceola Library.

In addition to special programming for Summer Reading, the Library continued with its weekly storytimes and STEAM-focused programming for children. At Hart Memorial Library, a team of teens and tweens commenced work on a stop-motion LEGO® Movie.

During the month of June, more than 8,700 persons attended programs at the Library. By the month’s end, registrations for Summer Reading were at 672.

More than 300 children and adults escaped the summer heat by viewing movies at the Library in July, kids learned basic Spanish, and youngsters enjoyed regular storytimes and STEM classes that continued during the month. The escape room, Rainforest Adventure, continued and brought in even larger crowds than in June.

The final Summer Reading Wrap Up parties featured colorful performers and prizes to reward achievements in reading and participation. In the West Osceola Library, participants in the American Sign Language program signed the Girl Scout pledge as well as a short poem for an audience of about 100. Then children and teen raffle winners chose from book packages assembled by the Library from donations. Osceola Reads joined us at all Wrap Up events.

In total, more than 15,000 persons attended events during the Summer Reading Program and more than 1,300 registered for the Summer Reading challenge.

Also at the close of the summer we celebrated Back to School with Osceola County commissioners giving away backpacks to students in need. At the Poinciana, Hart Memorial, and Buenaventura Lakes Libraries, nearly 1,000 backpacks were distributed with supplies while families enjoyed entertainment and the chance to check out a great book before returning to school.

Escape Rooms

June and Summer Reading saw the kick-off of a new programming adventure, the Escape Room, using resources purchased for the Library from Breakout EDU, a company that specializes in creating challenging puzzles and escape rooms for educational purposes. Escape Rooms are a clever marriage of

literature, problem solving, history, culture, math, and critical thinking and translate perfectly from the entertainment world to the library world with fun for the whole family! Through the imagination and creativity of the staff, the first challenge, Escape Room: Rainforest Adventure, was developed as a fun, fast-paced, and educational contribution to the Summer Reading theme of “Build a Better World.” In 2017, the Library presented three more escape rooms. October was “spooktacular” with the Halloween Haunts Escape Rooms, while Fan Faire featured its own escape room that incorporated that year’s theme of Time Wars, and the year ended with the Escape Room: Holiday Gift Rescue. Over 550 escape artists took the challenge.

Personal Enrichment

The Library continues to be a place where citizens can find enriching and interesting programs and classes that inform or educate but also entertain and delight. Many of our programs and classes are presented in conjunction with community partners and are designed to fulfill a mission of bringing important information on the health and well-being to our underserved population. Events that stand out in this area are the Physicians Lecture Series with the Poinciana Medical Center, Tai Chi for Arthritis and Fall Prevention with the Silver Sneakers and Live Life Well Kissimmee, and *Coma Bien, Manténgase Activo* with the University of Florida.

Other programs and classes help citizens to discover the magic, fun, and excitement of learning something new or different. Some highlights in this area are “Look Who’s Talking to Animals” and Dream Interpretation with Animal Communicator and Psychic Medium, Mitchell Osborn; Special Writer’s Workshop with guest speaker, Literary Agent Lucienne Diver; Scottish Country Dancing; Makeup Fit for a Queen! in conjunction with PrideFest Kissimmee; and a Graphic Novel workshop with Phil Yeh, godfather of the American Graphic Novel. There is something for everyone!

Vibrant Collections and Marketing

Books and other resources are at the central heart of what the Library provides to the community and in 2017 the Library made significant improvements in access to the resources patrons want most.

In October 2017, the Library implemented automatic renewals. This ensured that if a patron had a title checked out and there were no holds from other patrons currently linked to that item, it would be automatically renewed up to a maximum of three (3) times before being due back to the Library. This gave patrons ample time to use the resources they checked out and ensured that unnecessary late fees would be avoided. The daily overdue fee for DVDs was also lowered from \$0.50 per day to \$0.25 per day to make it easier to take out more of the type of materials that patrons want. Another positive change to patron accounts was the removal of limits on the number of DVDs a patron could have checked out at any time. Approved in 2017 but due to be implemented in spring 2018, the Library planned a move to 50 checkouts for any resources regardless of item type. Patrons will be able to binge-watch their favorite movies and shows whenever they wanted and not worry about being limited to five DVDs at a time as in the past.

The Library added a new electronic collection as well. RBDigital, an online magazine database, provides patrons with access to their favorite magazines for check out and downloads to their phone, tablet, or computer. This addition and an overall uptick in use of our electronic collections have helped the Library provide excellent virtual service and provide necessary access to Library materials even when physical branch Libraries are closed.

In 2017, the Library made great efforts to increase its avenues of communication with the public. Our newsletter debuted in December 2016 and during the course of the year as grown in subscribers to over 10,000 recipients receiving notification of new services, updates on programming, book recommendations, and more.

Our social media presence also grew in 2017. The Library is featured on several social media platforms including Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and Tumblr. As creative content and engagement grew, we saw a 48% increase in followers on Instagram, an 11% uptick in likes on Facebook, a 27% increase in Twitter followers, and a 35% jump in followers on Tumblr. Through social media, we created a voice for the Osceola Library System unique to each platform and analyzed trends in social media engagement to ensure we were posting at the most opportune times and with the right message for the platform.

Community Engagement and Partnerships

The Library has successfully engaged businesses and County agencies, leveraged funding opportunities and reached out to community partners to develop or enhance a host of programs and services for Osceola citizens. Here are a few of those success stories.

PrimeTime

The Osceola Library System was awarded a \$10,000 PrimeTime Family Reading Time grant for the 2017 – 2018 year from the Florida Humanities Council. PrimeTime is a six-week reading and discussion program for families with young children. The program, featuring staff in the roles of program coordinator, scholar, and storyteller, demonstrates how literature can enrich one's life, models strategies for continued family bonding through award-winning children's books, and provides families with critical information on Library resources. Staff attended a two-day workshop in New Orleans, Louisiana, in January 2017 to train on how to implement the program.

The first six-week session was held at the Buenaventura Lakes Library March 2017 – April 2017. This session had 336 people attend, averaging 56 people each week. The second six-week session was held at the Poinciana Library October 2017 – November 2017. This session had 193 people attend, averaging 32 people each week.

The program began with a free meal for the entire family provided by local donors. Several businesses in the area contributed to the success of each session from KFC, Bonefish Grill, Olive Garden, Pollo Tropical, Little Caesars, Applebee's, local church, Chili's, and multiple local groceries. Gift cards from Sam's Club and Target, in addition to a \$600 donation from the Kissimmee Utility Authority, was put towards the cost of food.

After eating, the families prepared for a commercial provided by Library staff and local organizations. The 5 -10 minute commercial was designed to showcase local services and programming for families in need. The Library recruited organizations to share their services, such as Extension Services and the Health Department. Library staff also promoted Library services and programs.

Families then engaged in reading an award-winning children's book recommended through the grant. After the storyteller read the story, the scholar then posed questions to both adults and children to promote critical thinking and open communication. The stories are designed to apply to everyday life with lessons families can take home.

After the discussion, families participated in raffles with prizes donated from local groups and organizations. Some of the donations included: family pack to Fun Spot, free tickets to the Crayola Experience, gift certificates to Dave & Busters, family pack to WonderWorks, family pack to Escape Game, free tickets to the Titanic Experience, tickets and coupons to Pirates Cove Gold Adventure, family pack to Medieval Times, and family pack to Skeletons: Museum of Osteology. We also raffled several gift cards from local restaurants: Olive Garden, Chick-fil-A, Abuelos, Pei Wei, and Bonefish Grill.

GROW Program

The Osceola Library System also received an additional \$500 from the Florida Humanities Council in December 2017 to use towards our GROW program, Great Readers on the Way. GROW promoted literacy in over 30 child care centers in Osceola in partnership with the Early Learning Coalition. The Florida Humanities Council had funds to distribute to those libraries that could provide a good use of it for library programs enhancing literacy in the community. With the \$500 the Library was able to replenish many of our GROW easy readers books used in the program.

Hurricane Maria Reception Center

In October, Osceola County began operating the Hurricane Maria Reception Center to provide a one-stop shop for Puerto Rican and US Virgin Island evacuees relocating to Osceola County due to the effects of Hurricane Maria. In addition to receiving assistance with housing, employment, and transportation needs, the Library pitched in to offer access to its unique services and resources. The Library set up a table and provided Spanish-speaking staff to connect those seeking assistance at the Reception Center to the power of a Library card and the doors it can unlock. Nearly 150 children's books were given out as courtesies, crayons and coloring sheets entertained children while the parents sought services, and brochures and handouts in Spanish detailed all of the services and resources that might be of interest.

Food for Fees

The Osceola Library System conducted a Library Fines Amnesty Week, titled Food for Fees, from October 16 to October 22, 2017. In partnership with the Greenbag Project and the Osceola County Food Angels, the Library accepted canned and boxed food items in lieu of overdue fees (one qualifying food item for \$1.00 in overdue fee relief). Donated food items went towards filling backpacks of Osceola students in need.

The amount of food taken in (and dollar amount of fines waived) by branch are listed below:

Buenaventura Lakes Library	627 items received; \$627 in fines waived
Poinciana Library	749 items received; \$749 in fines waived
Hart Memorial Library	1,021 items received; \$1,021 in fines waived
St. Cloud Library	1,464 items received; \$1,464 in fines waived
West Osceola Library	359 items received; \$359 in fines waived
Total	4,220 items received; \$4,220 in fines waived

Although overall food collection was lower than in previous years – due in part to the need to reschedule program dates due to Hurricane Irma, the fact the program had not been ongoing annually during the years of Library renovation, and a community-wide ongoing cleanup effort post hurricanes – the Food for Fees program continues to be an anticipated and appreciated event.

Art in Public Places

The Library continued its vibrant collaboration with Osceola Arts to beautify and enrich the Library’s walls with art from artists chosen by Osceola Arts. The Art in Public Places program administered by Osceola Arts features several local artists such as Carolyn Hutchins, Chris Carr, Eloise Ritt, Dominic DaSylva, and Laura Garza displaying their photography, mixed media art, paintings, and sculptures on the Library’s art hanging systems at the Hart Memorial, Buenaventura Lakes, and West Osceola Libraries. The Library additionally worked with Osceola Arts and the Cornerstone Snitchers to display fabric quilts made by the Cornerstone Stitchers’ volunteers.

The Library featured works of local homeschool groups, art created by staff member Mindy Miles, and the Editorial Hispana display at the Buenaventura Lakes Library as part of the Hispanic Literature Fair in December.

Hurricane Irma

Library staff was active during Hurricane Irma in September. The Library is a critical part of the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) activities when Osceola County is faced with an emergency. The Library provides staffing and leadership to the Citizens Information Center to answer the requests for information before, during, and after an emergency. We also provide staff as Documentation Specialists for operational support of the EOC. Libraries served as sandbag distribution points during Hurricane Irma. Unfortunately, all Libraries were closed for up to five days, and the Poinciana Library for ten days, due to the storm and associated power loss. Some staff was active during those closures with the EOC to ensure smooth County operations and disaster support.

OLS/AJL 7/17/2019

2017 Gallery



ABOVE:
St. Cloud Library
first floor after
renovations.

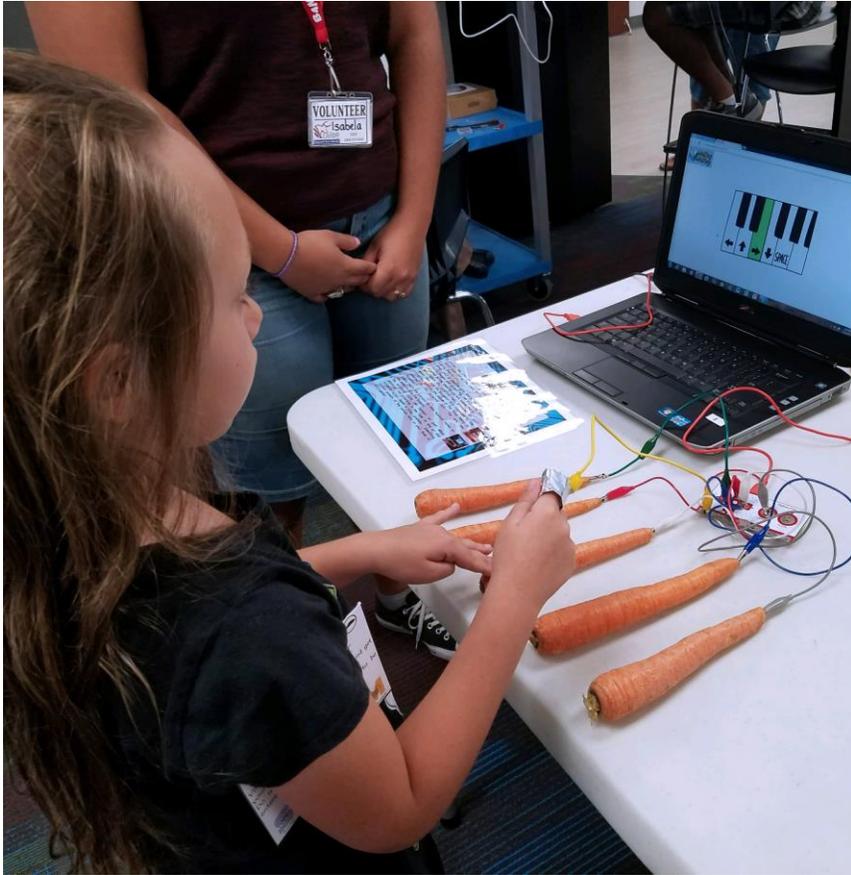
LEFT:
Hart Memorial
Library Children's
Department after
renovations.



LEFT:
Fan Faire V: Time Wars,
a child meets an R2D2
unit at the Kissimmee
Civic Center.

BELOW:
Patrons at Hart
Memorial Library take
a commemorative
photo in front of a
green screen for the
solar eclipse.





LEFT:
STEAM Day at the
St. Cloud Library,
a child learns
about circuitry at
the Makey Makey
station.

BELOW:
American Sign
Language for
Beginners at Hart
Memorial Library.





LEFT:
Sand Painting at
Hart Memorial
Library as an
inclusive program.

BELOW:
Summer Reading,
Amazing Animals
presenting at the
Buenaventura
Lakes Library.





ABOVE:
Backpack Giveaway and storytime with Commissioner Cheryl Grieb at Hart Memorial Library.

LEFT:
Backpack Giveaway with Commissioner Brandon Arrington at the Poinciana Library.



ABOVE:
Rainforest
Adventure Escape
Room at Hart
Memorial Library.

LEFT:
Halloween Haunts
Escape Room at the
St. Cloud Library.



ABOVE:
Ms. Crystal and Ms. Lisa conducting PrimeTime Family Reading Time at the Poinciana Library.

LEFT:
Staff assisting evacuees from Puerto Rico at the Hurricane Maria Reception Center.