

BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING AGENDA WILLIAM F. LAMAN PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM

February 9, 2015

10:30 AM

1. Roll call of members.
2. Acceptance or revision of January minutes.
3. Financial report.
4. Director's report.
 - A. Patrons Usage.
 - B. Library Programs.
 - C. NLR Chamber of Commerce Annual Meeting.
 - D. Exhibits.
 - a. Step Right Up
 - b. List Branch Exhibits
 - c. Harry Potter
 - d. Juvenile in Justice
 - e. Mail Call/Smithsonian
 - f. Suitcases
5. Correspondence/Information Items.
 - A. Exhibits
 - a. Step Right Up. Mid-America Arts Alliance.
 - b. List of Branch Exhibits - Email from Debra Wood – 1/16/15.
 - c. Harry Potter Exhibit - Email from Debra Wood – 1/20/15.
 - d. Juvenile in Justice Exhibit – Email from Debra Wood – 1/23/15.
 - e. Hal Matthews – The North Little Rock Economic Development Corporation
Email- 1/26/15.
 - f. Suitcases Exhibit – Email Richard Theilig sent to Luke Kramer – 1/30/15.
 - g. Hal Matthews - Harry Potter Exhibit –Email 2/2/15.

B. Media Report

- a. NLR Lends Hand To Insolvent Library Jake Sandlin. Jake Sandlin. Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, January 4, 2015.
- b. North Little Rock Notebook, Jake Sandlin. Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, January 11, 2015.
- c. Library's WWII Exhibit Rescued: NLR Tourism Bureau Steps In to Pay Display's Rental Fee. Jake Sandlin. Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, January 11, 2015.
- d. Library in NLR Sets Opening of LR artist's 'Beyond Layers'. Jake Sandlin. Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, January 14, 2015.
- e. Keeping the Past Alive, Helaine Williams. Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, January 18, 2015.
- f. Council Revamps Argenta Library Lease, by Greg Rayburn. The NLR Times, January 22. 2015.
- g. Martin's New Laman Exhibit Pairs Faces, Household Objects. Cary Jenkins. Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, January 25, 2015.
- h. Martin Art Peels Away Lawyers of Beauty, Truth, by Ellis Widner. Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, January 27, 2015

6. Committee reports.

7. Unfinished business.

- A. Insurance.
- B. Trees around Library – Letter to Mayor.
- C. Friends of Library.

8. New business.

- A. Election of Officers.

9. Public comment.

10. Adjournment.

Minutes of the Board of Trustees
William F. Laman Public Library

January 12, 2015

The Board met in the board room at 10:30 AM. Those present were Mr. Ron Oliver, Chair; Mrs. Kay Alonzo; Ms. Esther Crawford; Mrs. Shirley Lindsey; Mrs. Vicki Matthews; Mrs. Nancy White; and, Mrs. Mary Furlough, Interim Director. Paula Jones from the City Attorney's office was present, in case legal advice was needed.

On a motion by Ms. Crawford, second by Mrs. Lindsey, the Board unanimously accepted as written the December 2014 minutes.

The December financial report was discussed. The Board suggested that the bank CD of \$34,000 that is due to mature in April should be liquidated, not rolled over, and held as reserve in case of emergency need. The Board set up a sub-committee of Mrs. Alonzo and Mrs. Matthews, with Mr. Oliver as backup, to meet with an insurance rep to talk about a new insurance plan for the library. The Board suggested Mary Furlough select a couple of staff members to also serve on this committee. The financial report was accepted as printed, with the addition of approval of the sub-committee, on a motion by Mrs. White, second by Mrs. Lindsey.

Director's Report:

Patron access numbers keep going up, which is a good thing. Book circulation is going down, which is in line with library usage all across the country.

Argenta exhibit statistics are more than at the Main library. This is perhaps due to the more popular subject matter in the Argenta exhibits. Argenta exhibits are a big draw for the branch library.

The library has received a \$3,000 exhibit sponsorship gift from the North Little Rock Visitors Bureau. This will help keep the Pearl Harbor exhibit for next December back on the schedule. The North Little Rock Economic Development committee has offered \$10,000 to assist with our 2015 exhibits. The Board agreed with Mary Furlough that a separate account for these exhibit funds be created. The Board also suggested that the library should be looking for sponsors for our exhibits, with the Board assisting in this endeavor. Mrs. Matthews suggested that Mary and Debra Wood create a plan for selecting and funding future exhibits, for both libraries.

Laman Library processed 3,432 passports in 2014, more than any other year. The library was also one of seven libraries in the U.S. that took part in a customer preference survey about services at acceptance facilities. The two most important things to customers were photo services and walk-in availability. Laman Library does both already.

Argent Branch was awarded the Public Sector Award for "Excellence in Preservation Through Rehabilitation" by the Historic Preservation Alliance of Arkansas. The award will be displayed at the Argenta Library.

Correspondence/Information Items:

Since the correspondence and information materials are included in the Board packet for everyone to read, it was decided not to review that material in the meeting.

Executive Session:

On a motion by Mrs. White and second by Mrs. Matthews, the Board went into executive session. When the meeting resumed, a motion was made by Mrs. White, second by Mrs. Matthews, that the Board empower the city to begin a search for a new library director. The Board unanimously approved.

New Business:

Mary Furlough asked the Board if it would be all right for her to hire a former accounts payable employee to assist our new employee in that position with the workings of Peachtree. She also wanted to hire our own part-time maintenance person in place of the cleaning service person. The Board agreed that these were reasonable requests and authorized Mary to proceed as she thought best.

Mrs. Matthews suggested that Mary instruct the staff in both libraries to keep the thermostat set at 70 degrees. Mary said she would remind the staff not to adjust the thermostats.

The next problem discussed were the large trees planted next to the library. It was pointed out that not only were they blocking the windows, but could be a problem for the building's foundation. Mary was asked to contact the city parks and recreation office to have someone come and review the situation to see what needs to be done about the problem, and if they can help.

Mary indicated she was not happy with the yard maintenance people at the Argenta library, and intends not to renew their contract when it comes due in March. The main library's maintenance company is excellent, and will add on the Argenta branch for much less than the current costs are. The Board agreed that was a good idea.

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Furlough
Secretary

Patron Access - 2015

MONTH	Argenta		Main			TOTAL	Exhibit Halls		Days	Daily Average	Virtual Visits	Monthly Total	Daily Average
	Front	Back	Front	Children's	Teens		Argenta	Main					
January	1,058	2,984	16,034	8,181	856	28,257	1,256	833	31	912	5,834	34,091	1,100
February						0			28	0		0	0
March						0			31	0		0	0
April						0			30	0		0	0
May						0			31	0		0	0
June						0			30	0		0	0
July						0			31	0		0	0
August						0			31	0		0	0
September						0			30	0		0	0
October						0			31	0		0	0
November						0			30	0		0	0
December						0			31	0		0	0
ANNUAL	1,058	2,984	16,034	8,181	856	28,257	1,256	833	365	912	5,834	34,091	92

Children – Main

Main

Children

The children's department presented **22** programs in the month of January with **344** attending them.

Programs presented:

Story Time are Tuesday mornings
Baby Time is each Wednesdays
Terrific Tuesday each Tuesdays
Creation Station each Thursdays
Family Night second Tuesday in January

Teen

There were **25** programs presented to the Teens in the month of January with **856** teens participating. During the month of January the visiting children from Korea were able to visit the library and enjoying spending time in the Teen Center. Below is a list of some of the game presented.

Teen Board Games
Life Sized Monopoly
Teen Computer Gaming
Monday Movie Marathon
Nerd Night Pokémon
Whose Line Is It Anyway
Afternoon Toons
Open Mic Night

Adult

Adult presented **3** programs with **178** attending.

Zumba (started back January 24th)

Small Works Reception

Argenta

Children

The children's department presented **9** programs in the month of January with **67** attending.

Programs Presented:

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH:

Arvest Bank

AT&T

Bank of the Ozarks

Baptist Health Medical Center

North Little Rock

Camp Robinson/Camp Pike

Community Council

Coulson Oil

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**JOIN US FOR THE
30TH ANNUAL MEETING**



Tuesday, February 24, 2015
Reception: 5:15 p.m.
Dinner and Program: 6:30 p.m.
Verizon Arena
North Little Rock



**FEATURING KEYNOTE SPEAKER:
GOVERNOR ASA HUTCHINSON**

Exhibits

Main

"Small Works on Paper," Exhibit 883

New Exhibit is **Mail Call/Smithsonian** - Saturday February 7, 2015.

Argenta

Grand Ole Opry (ended February 7)

Beyond Layers: Delita Pinchback Martin (started February 16)

Total for both 1,256

Mike Anderson Photography (starts February 20)

Total attendance for exhibits for January **2,139**

The North Little Rock Economic Development Corporation awarded the W. F. Laman Library a grant of \$5,625.00 for the "Mail Call/Smithsonian exhibit from February 7 – April 19, 2015.

Hal and Vicki Matthews is sponsoring the "Harry Potter's World" exhibit which will be housed at the Argenta Branch Library from May 11, - August 15, 2015. Time was extended from June 20 to August 15, to cover the summer so that more Children will be able to visit it.

Mary Furlough

From: Debra Wood
Sent: Wednesday, January 07, 2015 11:15 AM
To: nhamilton@nlr.ar.gov
Cc: Mary Furlough
Subject: Addendum to previous message...

Hi Nathan,

In the list I sent you regarding the exhibits, please note I have just received word that the Mid-America Arts Alliance has secured funding for us that will cover the exhibit cost and shipping for "Step Right Up" (about the history of the circus). In my other message, I mentioned that they were also securing funding for the Prohibition exhibit. So we will now be getting both of those exhibitions at no cost other than the deposit already paid on the circus exhibit. The Prohibition exhibit had no deposit, as it is an "NEH on the Road" exhibit. Those have a flat rate of \$1,000 for the exhibit and \$1,000 for shipping. The National Endowment for the Humanities pays anything in excess of those costs. However, we will be getting that at zero cost to us.

Hope I am getting this to you in time. I just found out myself. Let me know if you need anything else.

Thanks,
Debra

Debra S. Wood

Exhibits and Events Manager

William F. Laman Public Library

2801 Orange Street

North Little Rock, AR 72114

Office: 501.771.1995 extension 105

debra.wood@lamanlibrary.org

Mary Furlough

From: Debra Wood
Sent: Friday, January 16, 2015 10:59 AM
To: Mary Furlough
Cc: Jenny Heard
Subject: List

You asked for a list of artists for the branch. Here's where I am so far...

First, they open on an Art Walk night and end 4 weeks later. They were originally going to end the weekend prior to the next Art Walk, but can't due to the branch closing on Saturdays now. So, it's the Friday before the next Art Walk. These have contracts. Note: The artists named their shows, not me.

Beyond Layers: The Artwork of Delita Pinchback Martin
January 16 – February 13

The Art of Arkansas: Photography by Mike Anderson
February 20 – March 13

Carole Katchen: 40 Years of Art
March 20 – April 10

In final stages with Dennis and Jason McCann. Dennis is a LR firefighter and very well-collected and well-known artist. He is coming to the reception tomorrow night to see the space and we should have everything confirmed Monday.

Have also talked with Linda Palmer, but she wanted something later in the year, so we haven't touched base on dates until I get past the summer.

These were the others on my list I was working through...

John Kushmaul

Matt McLeod

Rex Deloney

Emily Wood

Tim Jacob

Copying to Jenny, as she doesn't have some of this information.

Let me know if you need anything else.

Debra

Mary Furlough

From: Debra Wood
Sent: Tuesday, January 20, 2015 12:07 PM
To: Mary Furlough
Cc: Jenny Heard
Subject: FW: branch exhibit question

Never heard back on this one. Do you want me to cancel it or keep it?

Thanks,
Debra

From: Debra Wood <debra.wood@lamanlibrary.org>
Date: Monday, December 22, 2014 at 5:24 PM
To: Mary Furlough <mary.furlough@lamanlibrary.org>
Cc: Jenny Heard <jenny.heard@lamanlibrary.org>
Subject: branch exhibit question

I forgot that we have an exhibit booked at the branch (not on hold, but booked and with a contract) that is a traveling exhibit. It is from the National Library of Medicine, and it is called "Harry Potter's World: Renaissance Science, Magic, and Medicine." While we signed a contract, the exhibit is actually free. All we pay is shipping. It is very small. I almost didn't book it due to the size, but the subject matter is just too cool, and at the time, the branch staff was really excited about some programming they could do around it. We do have to pay shipping. The estimates are \$200-\$500 each way (only one way if they have someone after us). Do you want me to keep it or cancel it?

Thanks,
Debra

Mary Furlough

From: Hal Matthews <hc.matthews@comcast.net>
Sent: Monday, February 02, 2015 9:58 AM
To: Mary Furlough
Cc: vmmatthews@sbcglobal.net
Subject: Harry Potter's World - Argenta

Mary:

Vicki and I would like to sponsor the subject exhibit. Our understanding is that the sponsorship would be "about \$1,000.00". At the appropriate time please let either Vicki and I know when payment needs to be made.

Best regards,
Hal

MATTHEWS PROPERTIES, LLC
P.O. BOX 94435
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(501) 771-1997

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Mary Furlough

From: Debra Wood
Sent: Friday, January 23, 2015 12:17 PM
To: Studio, Richard Ross
Cc: Mary Furlough
Subject: Re: Laman Library/2016 Exhibit

Okay, thank you so much for your assistance.

Debra

From: <Studio>, Richard Ross <studio@richardross.net>
Date: Friday, January 23, 2015 at 12:14 PM
To: Debra Wood <debra.wood@lamanlibrary.org>
Cc: Mary Furlough <mary.furlough@lamanlibrary.org>
Subject: Re: FW: Laman Library/2016 Exhibit

You are cancelled. Good luck,
No further steps need to be taken

On Fri, Jan 23, 2015 at 10:13 AM, Debra Wood <debra.wood@lamanlibrary.org> wrote:
Hi Richard,

I am writing to follow-up on the email sent in December regarding the cancellation of "Juvenile in Justice." I hadn't heard back, and I am leaving Laman Library for another position. Today is my last day. Could you please copy our interim director on your response and let us know what steps need to be taken to cancel this exhibit?

Many thanks for your assistance,
Debra

From: Debra Wood <debra.wood@lamanlibrary.org>
Date: Tuesday, December 9, 2014 at 4:39 PM
To: "Studio, Richard Ross" <studio@richardross.net>
Subject: Laman Library/2016 Exhibit

Hi Richard,

The library where I work is undergoing some financial difficulties. At this time, our board has requested that I cancel all of the exhibitions that were booked for 2016. As you know, our director signed a contract in June of this year. We were to have the exhibit March 18 – May 22, 2016. Can you let me know what steps I need to take to cancel? I am so sorry, as I was so looking forward to working with you and displaying your fine photography in our gallery.

Sincerely,
Debra Wood

Mary Furlough

From: Hal Matthews <hc.matthews@comcast.net>
Sent: Monday, January 26, 2015 3:47 PM
To: Mary Furlough
Subject: RE: Exhibits

Importance: High

Mary:

The North Little Rock Economic Development Corporation is pleased to award the W. F. Laman Library a grant of \$5,625.00 for the "Mail Call/Smithsonian exhibit from February 7 – April 19, 2015. I can bring you a check tomorrow morning if you like. Our thought process is that with success from the Birch Tree Community in funding "The Lives They Left Behind" this will get you all the way to October 2015 to seek additional funding from public or private sources. I'm sure you, your board and others can make that a reality. If I can be of assistance in those endeavors please do not hesitate to let me know.

Best regards,
Hal

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From: Mary Furlough [mailto:mary.furlough@lamanlibrary.org]
Sent: Monday, January 26, 2015 12:55 PM
To: hc.matthews@comcast.net
Subject: Exhibits

Here's the information I promised you. If you have any questions please contact me.

Thanks
Mary



Mary Furlough

Interim Director

2801 Orange Street
North Little Rock, AR 72114
Office: 501-771-1995 x 107
Cell: 501-413-8088
mary.furlough@lamanlibrary.org

Mary Furlough

From: Richard Theilig
Sent: Friday, January 30, 2015 4:25 PM
To: Luke Kramer
Subject: Suitcase Exhibit

Hi Luke,

I believe Debra Wood informed you that she is no longer with the library and that I will be taking over the management of the exhibits, at least temporarily.

She told me that you are trying to help us with the funding for the "Suitcase Exhibit." I wanted to thank you so much on behalf of the library and our patrons for your efforts. I am not sure where you two were on this project. Debra mentioned that about \$7,000 was what you and she were trying to raise. What do you need me to do to assist you with this? I know the exhibit is not until the end of April, but that will be here before we know it.

If you have any questions or concerns, please be sure to contact me.

Thanks again,



Richard Theilig
Digital Resources Manager

2801 Orange Street
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Office: 501-771-1995 x116
Cell: 501-416-4729
richard.theilig@lamanlibrary.org



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NLR to forfeit 2013-14 football, basketball victories

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NLR lends a hand to insolvent library

City offers loan aid, shares services

By Jake Sandlin

This article was published January 4, 2015 at 3:57 a.m.

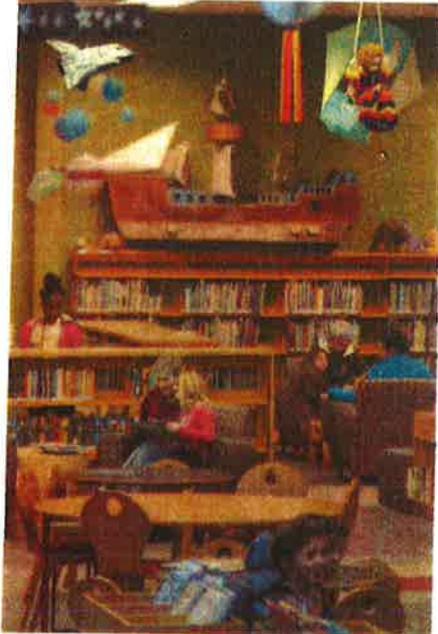


PHOTO BY BENJAMIN KRAIN

Brittany Franklin of Maumelle (cover left) and her daughter Emma, read books Saturday in the children-and-teen area of the Laman Library in North Little Rock. Budget problems have led to reduced focus on programs at the library.

Comments

Font Size

With a branch library expansion in North Little Rock's downtown, numerous community functions, museum quality exhibits and an annual writers fellowship, the independent William F. Laman Library System has been praised for its innovation and for offering a valuable public service.

But innovation often comes at a cost. Late last year, with the library's budget stretched too thin, things came crashing down.

Library hours had to be curtailed Dec. 1 at both the main library, 2801 Orange St., and the new Argenta Branch Library, 420 Main St., and 11 staff members lost their jobs as of Thursday. An annual writer's fellowship for Arkansas authors was canceled, and programs and exhibits for the next two years will be downsized or eliminated.

Through the first 11 months of 2014, the library showed a \$516,815 deficit in its \$4.3 million annual budget. The 2015 budget has been reduced to less than \$3.2 million.

North Little Rock's government, which doesn't fund any of the library's operations, has stepped in to help the library system find its footing over the next two years or so, Mayor Joe Smith confirmed last week.

The Laman Library System also is independent of the Central Arkansas Library System, which is based in Little Rock.

At a meeting last week between the city's Public Building Authority and the Laman Library board of trustees, Smith said he wanted to focus on "what happens next" with the library system, instead of how it ended up in financial trouble.

What happened, Smith said afterward, is that the library may have tried to do too much with too little funding under former Executive Director Jeff Baskin, who died Sept. 9, less than two months after he was diagnosed with an advanced stage of cancer.

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Cna's (all shifts)

Baskin -- who was often praised for his innovations and the services offered at Laman Library and who had worked for years to acquire the former post office building for a downtown branch -- might have had a plan, Smith said, to keep the system above water financially. Any such plan dissipated with his death.

"My opinion is, I think it was the intent of the director to pay the difference from the cost of the construction and the loan out of the library's operating funds, because he didn't want to borrow \$3.7 million, he wanted to only borrow \$2.7 million, to keep the loan low," Smith said. "Once the branch was open, there wasn't enough money in operations to pay either of the loan amounts. So, they quickly ran out of cash.

"His intent was to keep the loan as low as possible, but what was needed in the amount of cash available to make up the difference wasn't there."

The library's board of trustees, which oversees the system's operations and finances, also should "realize now that they really needed to be an active participant in the money management of the library," Smith added.

So now the city is offering to help the Laman Library System.

The most significant assistance is restructuring two loans for \$782,000 and \$2.71 million that were taken out at the end of 2012 to purchase and renovate the 83-year-old former downtown post office building into the Argenta Branch, which opened in April.

Through the North Little Rock Public Building Authority, two annual loan payments for the Argenta Branch have been changed to be interest-only for 2015-16, with no principal to be paid those two years.

The restructuring will save the library system \$624,716 over the next two years, with the loans also extended two years to come due in 2025, an agreement approved by Centennial Bank on Wednesday. The loans will return to their normal debt payment schedule in 2017. The change immediately puts \$312,358 back into the library's 2015 funds.

"This will give the [principal payment] back to the library to go back into the library's operations money," Smith said last week. "Over this two-year period, you'll have over a half-million dollars in savings.

"If we run into issues in 2017, we'll fix it. I don't know how, but we'll fix it."

The only caveat for the city's financial assistance, Smith said, is that a city representative will co-sign all checks written by the library. He said the move was intended to better manage the library's expenses, not to be "looking over [the library's] shoulder."

The city also will help the library by providing assistance from the city attorney's office, Finance Department and maintenance to save the library system from spending money to hire those professional services, Smith said.

"The city is going to help them out with their overhead," Smith said after the meeting. "If the partnership works like I think it will, I think this might become the norm. I think we all realize we can help save some taxpayer dollars as partners."

Metro on 01/04/2015

Print Headline: NLR lends a hand to insolvent library

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NLR to forfeit 2013-14 football, basketball victories

Thursday, February 05, 2015, 3:05 p.m.

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Our Town North Little Rock notebook

By [Jake Sandlin](#)

This article was published January 11, 2015 at 2:28 a.m.

Comments

Font Size

Library displaying small-art exhibit

"Small Works on Paper," a competitive visual art exhibition by the Arkansas Arts Council, is on display at the William F. Laman Library exhibition gallery, 2801 Orange St., in North Little Rock through Jan. 27.

In its 28th year, the mobile exhibit showcases artwork no larger than 24-by-24 inches by Arkansas artists who are members of the Arkansas Artist Registry, an online gallery of Arkansas artists.

The show, featuring 40 works of art by 29 artists, will be at 10 galleries throughout the state during the year-long tour.

More information on the exhibit is available online at arkansasarts.org.

The Arkansas Arts Council is an agency of the state Department of Arkansas Heritage.

Deadlines soon for nonprofit's awards

Scholarship deadlines are approaching in competitions sponsored by the nonprofit Thea Foundation, 401 Main St., North Little Rock.

High school seniors are eligible to register for one of six 2015 scholarship competitions: Performing Arts, Visual Arts, Creative Writing, Fashion Design, Poetry Slam and Film.

The Performing Arts competition deadline is Monday, and the competition will take place Saturday. For more information or to register online, visit theafoundation.org.

The Visual Arts deadline is Jan. 19, which includes senior and junior levels. The senior level is for scholarships while the junior competition is for cash prizes.

Deadlines for registering for other competitions are: Jan. 26 for Creative Writing, March 2 for Fashion Design, March 16 for Poetry Slam and March 27 for Film.

The Thea Foundation annually awards \$80,000 in the six scholarship categories to 30 graduating high school seniors from throughout the state, according to the nonprofit's website.

Metro on 01/11/2015

Print Headline: North Little Rock notebook

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Library's WWII exhibit rescued

NLR tourism bureau steps in to pay display's rental fee

By Jake Sandlin

This article was published January 11, 2015 at 2:33 a.m.

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A national touring exhibit about the attack on Pearl Harbor is back on the William F. Laman Library's exhibition schedule for late this year with the support of the North Little Rock Visitors Bureau.

Bob Major, the Visitors Bureau's executive director, said last week that he saw a lost opportunity - both for residents and for military tourism possibilities -- if the Laman Library had to miss out on displaying such a historic exhibit. The Visitors Bureau agreed to sponsor the exhibit, he said, and pay the \$3,000 rental fee.

"I read in the newspaper about it being canceled, so I called and went by to see Mary Furlough, the [library's] acting director, and said I really think that would be a great one for the Visitors Bureau to sponsor, if you can get it back," Major said.

The library, hampered by financial problems because of outstanding loans, had announced in December that it was canceling the exhibit planned for Oct. 30-Dec. 7 as one of its cost-cutting moves. The library also reduced hours at the main library, 2801 Orange St., and at its Argenta Branch Library, 420 Main St., and laid off 11 staff members, as of Jan. 1.

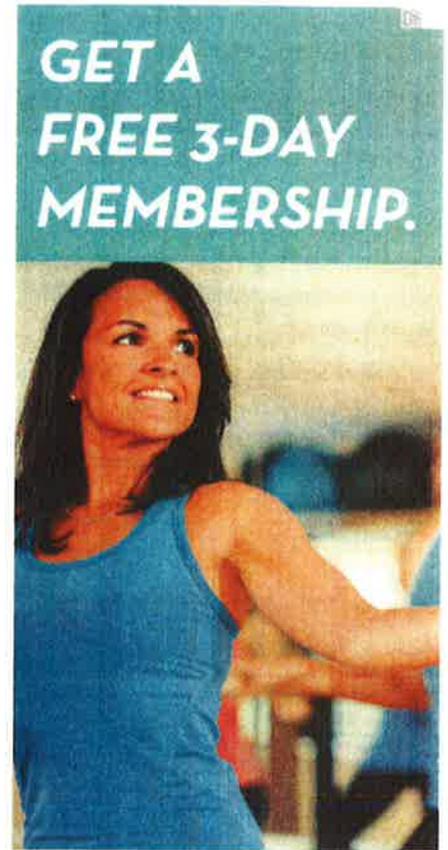
North Little Rock's city government has since helped to restructure two library loans from late 2012 for the purchase and renovation of the former downtown post office building for the Argenta Branch Library. Changing the loans to interest-only, with no principal payments on the loans this year or next year, will save the library system \$624,716 over the two-year period, Mayor Joe Smith has said.

The exhibit "Infamy: December 7, 1941" from the World World II Museum in New Orleans is described on the museum's website, nationalww2museum.org, as "a powerful photographic exhibit" of the Japanese attack on the U.S. naval base that led the United States to enter World War II. The exhibit features 62 photographic panels with integrated captions.

"We're excited about the opportunity to sponsor this exhibit," Major said. "Allowing the people here to see an exhibit about something that is such a great part of American history, the day of infamy. That would really be something that I think a lot of people would want to see. I wouldn't want to see that one be canceled.

"If the library hadn't been in the financial straits it's in, and we'd been made aware of the opportunity to sponsor the exhibit, I think we would have jumped on this one anyway. It's just a natural," he said.

The Visitors Bureau will tie in the exhibit with North Little Rock's Arkansas Inland Maritime Museum on the Arkansas River in downtown, Major said, which still plans to include a direct Pearl



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Harbor connection by year's end.

North Little Rock owns the Hoga, a tugboat that fought battleship fires at Pearl Harbor, but it remains in a shipyard at Mare Island near Vallejo, Calif. A Save the Hoga Committee, working through the museum, is still trying to raise funds to move the Hoga to the North Little Rock museum, an effort that's been hampered by both cost and transport requirements for the boat, which has been designated as a National Historic Landmark.

The city, under former Mayor Patrick Hays, began trying to acquire the Hoga from the Navy in 2002. The city gained the title in 2005, then took custody in August 2012.

"The Hoga is still a very distinct possibility for the museum," said Major, who is a museum board member. "I know it's been going on for a long time, but there really are some things underfoot to make it a reality.

"Even if it's not there, the tie-in between the [Infamy] exhibit and the Hoga and the USS Razorback seemed like a good fit for us to help bring people into North Little Rock and into the library and down to the maritime museum," he said.

The "Infamy" exhibit will be the last of five national touring displays scheduled to be at the Laman Library this year. The others originally had to be retained because contracts couldn't be canceled without the library forfeiting deposits.

However, the Mid-America Arts Alliance, which presents two of the exhibits, has agreed to fund "Spirited: Prohibition in America" to be on display June 16-Aug. 11 and "Step Right Up! Behind the Scenes of the Circus Big Top, 1890-1965," set for Sept. 1-Oct. 20, said Debra Wood, the library's exhibits and events manager.

The alliance's sponsorship will waive the rental and shipping costs of \$2,000 for "Spirited" and \$2,400 for "Step Right Up!" that would have been charged to the library, Wood said through city spokesman Nathan Hamilton. An \$800 deposit on the circus exhibit will be the library's only cost, Wood added.

No national exhibits are scheduled this year at the Argenta branch.

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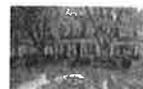
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Library in NLR sets opening of LR artist's 'Beyond Layers'

By Jake Sandlin

This article was published January 14, 2015 at 3:13 a.m.

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Little Rock artist Delita Martin's exhibition "Beyond Layers" will open Friday at the Argenta Branch of the William F. Laman Public Library System in North Little Rock for a month-long showing, library officials announced.

The exhibit will be open during regular library hours through Feb. 13 at the Argenta Branch Library, 420 Main St.

"Beyond Layers" consists of portraits that "explore ideas of identity and the role of black women within community and family structures," a news release said.

Martin, a Fine Arts Department faculty member at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, is founding director of Black Box Press Studio. Her artwork, which has been on exhibit nationally and internationally, also is included in the "State of the Art" exhibition that ends Monday at Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art in Bentonville.

Library exhibits are free and open to the public. No other exhibits have been announced for the Argenta Branch's schedule this year. More information on library activities is available at lamanlibrary.org.

The library system reduced library hours and laid off 11 staff members late last year in cost-cutting moves that also included canceling programs and some planned exhibits.

Two national touring exhibits previously scheduled for later this year at the Argenta Branch were canceled late last year. "Harry Potter's World: Renaissance, Science, Magic and Medicine" was to be May-June and "Backstage Pass: Baron Wolman and the Early Years of *Rolling Stone*" had been scheduled for June-August.

Laman Library, 2801 Orange St., currently has "Small Works on Paper" on display, an exhibition from the Arkansas Arts Council that consists of 40 works of art no larger than 24-by-24 inches created by 29 Arkansas artists. The exhibit will continue through Jan. 27.

The exhibit "Mail Call" from the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service will open at Laman Library on Feb. 7, the first of five national touring exhibits this year to be at the main library's exhibit hall. The exhibition, which was organized with the Smithsonian's National Postal Service Museum and tells the story of military mail and communication through America's war times, is to run through April 19.

Metro on 01/14/2015

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Keeping the past alive

Lifetime achievement honor turns page in state's historic preservation

Ruth Hawkins of Jonesboro apparently hasn't met a historic landmark she didn't like. She certainly has shown her dedication to the preservation of such landmarks and other projects in the Arkansas Delta.

She has had her hand in the National Scenic Byways program, which recognized Crowley's Ridge Parkway and a segment of the Great River Road in Arkansas; Arkansas State University's Heritage Sites program, which she led, that includes seven historic sites such as the boyhood home of the late country singer Johnny Cash; and Arkansas Delta Byways, the regional tourism promotion association of which she serves as executive director. She also helped facilitate the Sam Epstein Angel family's gift of the 1859 Lakeport Plantation, now a museum, to ASU.

For these and other achievements, Hawkins was presented the Parker Westbrook Award for Lifetime Achievement at the 2014 Arkansas Preservation Awards dinner, held Jan. 9 in the Annunciation Cultural Center in Little Rock. Guests mingled during a pre-event reception before sitting down to a dinner of bourbon-glazed chicken breast.

Jamie C. Brandon, president of the Historic Preservation Alliance of Arkansas, welcomed attendees prior to dinner. Courtney C. Crouch III, past president, introduced master of ceremonies Matt DeCamp and presented awards along with Brandon.

Other award recipients, in various categories, were Paula Dempsey for rehabilitation of Dempsey Bakery in Little Rock; the Argenta Branch of the William F. Laman Public



Charles and Becky Witsell

Library in North Little Rock; Beth El Heritage Hall in Helena-West Helena; Gordon Wittenberg and Charles Witsell for their book *Architects of Little Rock: 1833-1950*; the Hot Springs Historic Baseball Trail; Jennifer Carman and Donna Thomas for rehabilitation and restoration projects in the Central High School Neighborhood Historic District in Little Rock; Clancy McMahon and Keith Newton for craftsmanship in restoration of the A.R. Carroll Drugstore in Canehill and the Frank Gibb House in Little Rock, respectively; and Rex Nelson for preservation reporting.

The alliance works to preserve the state's architectural and cultural resources and empower Arkansans to save and rehabilitate historic places, some of which might otherwise be lost to demolition.

— Story and photos by Helaine R. Williams



Mary Furlough, Susan Weinstein and John Gardin

NORTH LITTLE ROCK |

Council revamps Argenta Library lease

BY GREG RAYBURN

During the next two years, the Laman Library System in North Little Rock will be receiving a bit of a financial break following the Jan. 12 decision by the North Little Rock City Council to modify the city's lease, agreement for the new Argenta library

branch.

"The city wanted to give the library a shot in the arm," said Nathan Hamilton, North Little Rock's director of communications.

Centennial Bank, the lending institution responsible for providing the financing for the city to procure the former downtown post office proper-

ty and turn it into the Argenta library branch, agreed to the lease adjustment.

In December, the Laman library system announced there would be layoffs of some personnel. A major reason for the financial cutbacks were expenses incurred due

See LAMAN, Page 3A



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to the Argenta Branch library project.

In the modified lease agreement, North Little Rock will be paying to the bank only interest on the outstanding debts during the next two years.

Hamilton said paying only interest will reduce the annual payments made to the bank during the next two years.

In the council-approved resolution, aldermen agreed to authorize Mayor Joe Smith and City Clerk Diane Whitbey to enter into an amended lease agreement with the city Public Building Authority for the Argenta Branch of the William F. Laman Public Library property formerly known as the downtown post office.

The PBA agreed to

extend the term and a decrease in the rent that was due on Jan. 1 and on Jan. 1, 2016, provided that certain controls apply to Library Checks and that the city provides quarterly financial reports on the Laman Public Library system, according to the resolution.

The Library also got some relief from the Mid-America Arts Alliance as the Kansas City-based arts group will now be paying for two of the upcoming exhibits.

"The Laman Library has been a strong partner with Mid-America Arts Alliance," said Mary Kennedy, CEO for the group in a release. "As a longstanding user of our traveling exhibition programs, ExhibitsUSA and NEH on the Road, the Laman Library has brought innovative, high quality arts and humanities exhibitions to their visitors, and we wanted to ensure that continued."



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BEYOND LAYERS

Martin's new Laman exhibit pairs faces, household objects

This article was published January 25, 2015 at 2:55 a.m.

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Delita Martin, whose multimedia work was recently on display at Crystal Bridges Museum's "State of the Art" exhibit, has moved her show over to William F. Laman Public Library System's Argenta Branch in North Little Rock. The opening reception was Jan. 16 during Argenta's Art Walk.

"Beyond Layers" features portraits paired with domestic objects using printmaking, drawing, sewing and collage.

Guests were able to meet the artist and view the artwork in the gallery and enjoy wine and nibbles in the library's lobby. Boswell Mourot Fine Art helped host the reception.

The works will be on display through Feb. 13.

-- Story and photos by Cary Jenkins

High Profile on 01/25/2015

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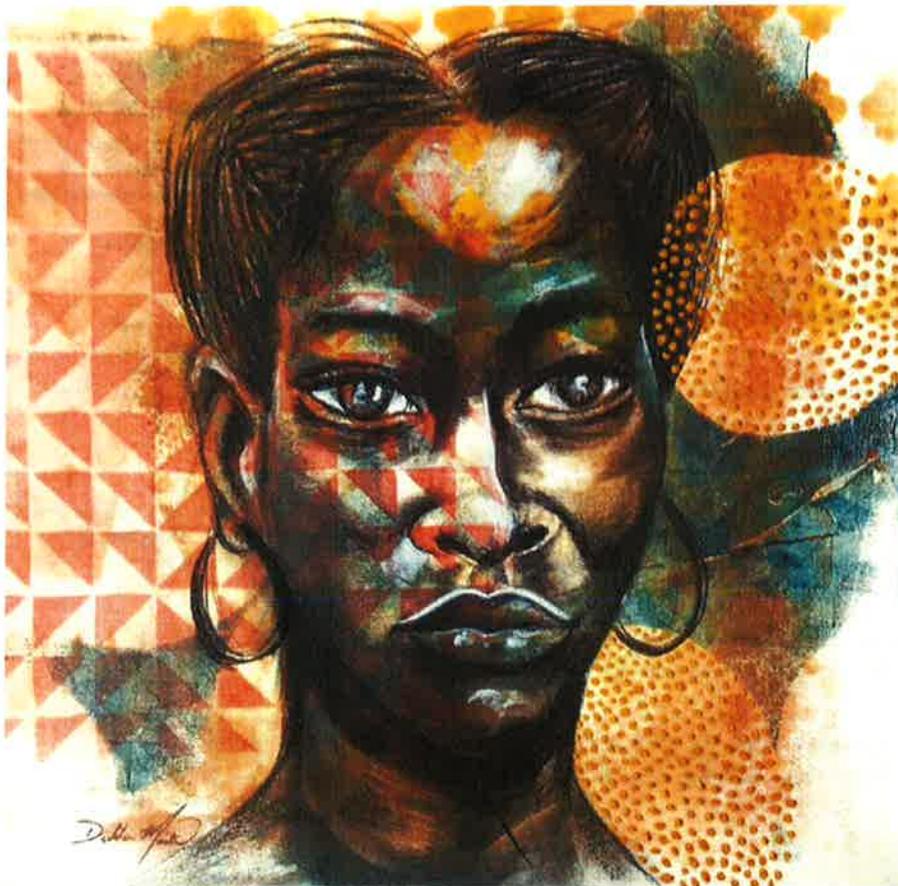
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Artbeat

Martin art peels away layers of beauty, truth

By Ellis Widner

This article was published January 27, 2015 at 2:08 a.m.



Delita Pinchback Martin "Beyond Layers Portrait #2" 13"x 13" (18"x 18" framed) mixed media on paper

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For artist Delita Pinchback Martin, this is apparently not the time to slow down.

Martin had a breakthrough year in 2014 with solo exhibits that included Boswell Mourot Fine Art, The Arts and Science Center for Southeast Arkansas in Pine Bluff, a couple of shows in Texas and "State of the Art" at Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, which included three of her works. In addition, Martin's multimedia piece *She Walked With Me* was recently added to the permanent

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collection of the Arkansas Arts Center.

Does this ever woman take a day off?

It doesn't look that way. Martin has kicked off 2015 with "Beyond Layers," a show of new works at the Argenta Branch of the William F. Laman Public Library System, 420 Main St., North Little Rock.

"Beyond Layers" explores themes that reverberate throughout Martin's work, inspired by her close-knit family and the stories she was told. With that foundation, the multimedia artist and printmaker expresses that experience in works that explore the roles and psyche of black women in their families and communities.

Along with the expressive, emotionally deep portraits, Martin utilizes common and familiar objects -- cups, saucers, coffee pots, spoons, bowls, bottles -- to help move her stories forward. These women have a presence that haunts and touches the viewer; their expressive faces (particularly the eyes) reveal much about their struggles and joys.

Martin's style -- mixing printmaking, collage, sewing, writing, painting and more -- brings an uncommon visual depth as she adds layers (literal and metaphorical) to her surfaces.

The exhibit mixes a few earlier pieces (a striking *Ajani: She Fights for What Is Hers* and the moving *Kamile: She Listens* from 2009) with more recent work. A series of portraits titled *Beyond Layers* is particularly strong. *No. 4*, a profile, features colorful, wonderful patterns and stitching.

Little Girl 1 is especially thought-provoking. Iron skillets are depicted in this piece, along with the portrait. Is this young female sensing her future and feeling trapped by cultural/societal expectations?

"Beyond Layers" invites us to peel back and examine the layers in Martin's beautiful works and seek -- and perhaps even find -- a deeper, personal truth.

"Beyond Layers," through Feb. 13, Argenta Branch, Laman Library, 420 Main St., North Little Rock. Hours: 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Monday-Friday; Info: lamanlibrary.org, (501) 687-1061

...

The 20th anniversary exhibit at Greg Thompson Fine Art is a lively sample of works by Southern artists, including photorealists Glennray Tutor of Oxford, Miss., and Arkansas native/Dallas resident Kendall Stallings; Fayetteville's Donald Roller Wilson, the realist known for his fantasy paintings of monkeys and other animals; and magical realist Sheila Cotton and impressionist Rebecca Thompson, both of Little Rock.

Among the high points: Stallings' *Leisure Suit*, which portrays an uptight businessman, still in his suit, relaxing on the beach; Edward Rice's sly commentary on greed in the form of a piggy bank, *Icon II*; Cotton's very Southern-feeling landscape *Swans of the Marsh*; and Southern realist William Dunlap's *Union Blue-Sabre Too*, an oil and dry pigment on paper, of a Union soldier's jacket and saber.

Three paintings by Carroll Cloar are a welcome presence, particularly *Charlie Mae as a Baby*, as is an oil by another Arkansas great, Louis Freund. His *Cave at Eureka Springs* was painted in 1938.

John Harlan Norris, who teaches at Arkansas State University, has created portraits loaded with symbology about the subject's occupation and hobbies. The works take on a fantasy, almost comic-book edge.

20th Anniversary Celebration, through March 21, Greg Thompson Fine Art, 429 Main St., North Little Rock. Hours: 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Tuesday-Friday, 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Saturday. Info: gregthompsonfineart.com, (501) 664-2787

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Humor and surprise link recent works by Amy Edgington and Sulac at Gallery 26.

With both, some of the humor is in the title of the work.

Edgington's collages, enhanced by painting and drawing in some pieces, are a wonder. They charm, they sometimes puzzle, but her craftsmanship often brings a painterly quality to her work.

Nowhere does that come through more powerfully than in *The Smoldering Fire*, a stark contrast to most of her usually bright and colorful work. *Fire* has a somber, dark edge. Two figures -- one wrapped in white, another in black -- stand in a dark landscape next to a pile of smoldering leaves. The trees have an almost snakeskin texture. Social/psychological implications abound.

Those who like Edgington's playful side will especially appreciate *Who Invited Tyrannosaurus Tex*,

<http://www.arkansasonline.com/news/2015/jan/27/martin-art-peels-away-layers-of-beauty-/>

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which depicts a dinosaur wearing a cowboy hat crashing a children's party. With *Rainbows Everywhere*, she took a completed puzzle of two zebras and painted them in vivid rainbow stripes.

Sulac's collages can bring a smile from the titles, too. *Approaching the Gilded Palace of Sin* has mushroom-shape people-like figures around a palace. *Where You Come From Is Gone* rings true to its title, as time changes everything. This work includes objects such as restaurant guest checks, bridge forms and a tax form from 1942, underscoring the title's theme.

New works by Amy Edgington and Sulac, through March 14, Gallery 26, 2601 Kavanaugh Blvd., Suite 1, Little Rock. Hours: 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Tuesday-Saturday. Info: gallery26.com, (501) 664-8996

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Cantrell Gallery is celebrating its 45th birthday with a group show by more than two dozen artists.

The well-organized exhibit, which continues through Feb. 28, includes painters Daniel Coston, Warren Criswell, Cici Davidson and Lee Nora Parlor and woodcut artist Neal Harrington. It's well worth a visit.

45th Birthday Show, through Feb. 28, Cantrell Gallery, 8206 Cantrell Road, Little Rock. Hours: 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday-Saturday. Info: cantrellgallery.com, (501) 224-1335

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