

# Library Connections

The MOBILE PUBLIC LIBRARY Newsletter

## Summer Library Celebration Is Here!

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Summer 2022

by Valerie Longa, Public Relations Officer

**R**egistration for the Mobile Public Library's (MPL) Summer Library Celebration is now open! Register at any Mobile Public Library location or online at [slc.mobilepubliclibrary.org](http://slc.mobilepubliclibrary.org). All registrants will have a chance to win passes to the



Alabama Aquarium or GulfQuest Maritime Museum.

The theme for the 2022 Summer Library Celebration is Oceans of Possibilities. The library invites the public to participate in a wide variety of activities for all ages including special performances, reading challenges, crafts, games and more. The celebration lasts all of June and July with the following special performances:

- June 6-9: Didgeridoo Down Under
- June 13-14: Musician Gabe Willis of Paw Paw's Medicine Cabinet
- June 15-16: Musician Ryan Balthrop
- June 27-30: Mobile Baykeeper: Down by the Bay
- July 11-14: Environmental Studies Center's Reptile Show
- July 18-20: Juggler Ron Anglin: Quite a Catch
- July 25-28: Bubble Lady Kit Killingsworth

Make the most of your summer with the Mobile Public Library. For more information, including times and locations of the special performances, please visit [slc.mobilepubliclibrary.org](http://slc.mobilepubliclibrary.org) or call 251-340-1458.



## Up for the Challenge?

**T**his summer's reading challenge is simple and is for all ages: Read for 400 minutes and be entered to win fabulous prizes. Readers in each age category receive a unique prize when they complete the challenge. Track your reading through the free Beanstack app or pick up a reading log at any library. The children who read 400 minutes will receive a Frisbee, teens a metal water bottle, and adults a commemorative



MPL 120th anniversary metal bookmark.

The grand prize drawings will be done at the end of the summer. One lucky child and teen will receive a Nintendo Switch and game, and the adult winner will get a beach pack, complete with a rolling cooler.

May the odds be ever in your favor. Happy reading!

# A Vision of Reconciliation with Ben Raines and Clotilda Descendants

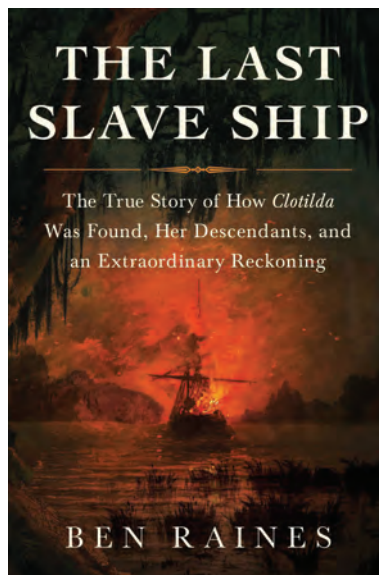
by Marian Ponder, Special Events Coordinator

In 2021, June 19 became a federal and state holiday known as Juneteenth National Independence Day to commemorate the post-Civil War emancipation of enslaved African-Americans. On Saturday, June 18, the Mobile Public Library is proud to present a signature event exploring the recent global attention Mobile has received for our unique history in the slave trade and how our response going forward will shape our community. Ben Raines, the award-winning environmental journalist, filmmaker, author and charter captain, who

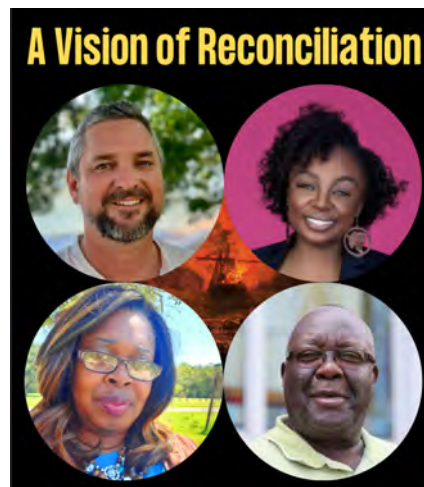
discovered the wreckage of the Clotilda in April 2018, will discuss his book "The Last Slave Ship: The True Story of How Clotilda Was Found, Her Descendants, and an Extraordinary Reckoning" at 2:00 p.m. in Bernheim Hall at the Ben May Main Library. He will be joined on a Q&A panel by Darron Patterson and Joycelyn Davis of the Clotilda Descendants Association, along with Vickii Howell, founder of the M.O.V.E Gulf Coast Community Development Corporation. They will discuss the importance of how our future actions will help to define the character

of our community and the quality of life for all of the residents of Africatown and Mobile.

After the book talk, the group will then take questions from the audience. Following the Q&A, there will be a reception in the



Armbrecht/Briskman Meeting Room, where Raines will sign copies of his book, with sales provided by The Haunted Book Shop. For more information, please email Marian Ponder at [mponder@mplonline.org](mailto:mponder@mplonline.org) or call 251-494-2298.



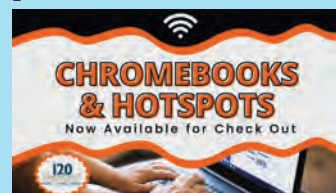
## Chromebooks and Hotspots Now Available Across MPL System

by Veronica McCoo, Grand Bay Library Manager

The Mobile Public Library's mission is to support literacy and connect our community. In an effort to further connect with our community, through a grant received from the Alabama Public Library Service, MPL has obtained Chromebooks and hotspots to be checked out to the public free of charge.

These Chromebooks and hotspots will help bridge the digital divide by making the internet readily available for school-age children, as well as adults who are seeking to improve their lives. Chromebooks and hotspots are available for checkout for a two-week time period at 10 Mobile Public Library

locations. This technology provides online access to benefit those families in the county who are most underserved by internet providers.





# Kaleidoscope Exhibit Connects Patrons with the Life of Mobile's Renaissance Man

by Carly Akers, Acquisitions Manager

**M**obile Public Library is participating in a citywide collaboration for the 100th birthday celebration of Mobile's own "Renaissance Man," Eugene Walter. Hailing from Mobile, Walter was known worldwide as a poet, author, gourmand, puppeteer, actor and theater costume designer. After living in Europe and New York, Walter returned to Mobile in 1979, where he was

sketches of productions housed in the vault at the Local History & Genealogy Department of the library, as well as Mardi Gras costume designs from Auburn, are also on display.

Panels about the process of costume design are accompanied by tutus on loan from the University of Alabama Theatre and Dance Department. Walter's fondness for dressing his felines in



tutus is reflected in a children's element of the exhibit that invites younger visitors to design a costume on our free cat template.

Youth are

active in the arts community until his death in 1998.

Mobile Public Library launched an exhibit titled *Kaleidoscope: The World of Eugene Walter* at the West Regional Library in the month of March. It is now on display at the Ben May Main Library until June 16. The *Kaleidoscope* exhibit is a partnership between the library and the University of Alabama, Auburn University and the Southern Literary Trail, and it highlights Walter's work in costume design. Included in the exhibit are text panels from the Southern Literary Trail outlining Walter's life and career. Watercolor

welcome to design their cat in costume at the Ben May Main Library or take it home and return it to become part of a library display. Bringing the whimsy full circle, visitors of all ages can have their photo made by posing in a cutout of a dancing cat in a tutu designed by local artist and library staff member Jaime Lee.



# Libraries Make Great Locations for Tutoring

by Cherold Rhodes, Children and Youth Services



**T**he summer slide is the academic loss students experience during the summer break from school. It has always been a problem, but losses have increased during the pandemic. It has been more difficult for teachers to monitor progress and know which concepts the students need to practice.

The Mobile Public Library is here to help. In addition to the Summer Library Celebration, MPL offers free space for meeting a tutor for the one-on-one instruction missed during the school year.



# Summer Computer Classes at the Ben May Main Library

by Lisa Barnes, Saraland Public Library Manager

Get ready to develop your computer skills at Ben May Main Library this summer. Main offers Computers 101 on Monday, June 6 at 10 a.m.; Internet 101 on Wednesdays, June 8 and July 13 at 10 a.m.; Microsoft Word Basics on Tuesdays, June 14 and July 12 at 2 p.m.; Wix: Website Building on Thursdays; June 16 and July 21 at 2 p.m.; and Microsoft Excel Basics on Wednesdays June 29 and July 27 at 10 a.m.



# Updates From the Friends of the Mobile Public Library

by Kathy Hamilton, FOL Vice President

The board of directors of the Friends of the Mobile Public Library (FOL) has been busy assessing needs and reorganizing since the departure of retired, seasoned members. We are seeking new members and recruiting chairpersons for our various committees in order to provide assistance and increase the services and resources of the Mobile Public Library system. We are in need of active volunteer members to assist with planning and executing programs, events and fundraising. Here are some of the actions the Friends have taken thus far this year:

- We have secured a date, location and author for our next annual meeting in January 2023. Our author is Gabriella Saab, who resides in Mobile and has published an electrifying novel titled "The Last Checkmate." We encourage you to read ahead and join us on Thursday, January 19 at 6 p.m. in Bernheim Hall. for an author presentation and book signing
- To encourage young poets, the Friends co-sponsored the annual Poetry Slam-a-Rama competition held at the Virginia Dillard Smith/Toulminville Branch on April

30.

- We are in the process of planning a writing contest for high school students on the topic "What does the U.S. Bill of Rights mean to you?"
- To recruit new members and volunteers, we tabled at the Mobile Literary Festival on May 14 at the Ben May Main Library.
- We are sorry to say that the spring Book Sale had to be postponed. The FOL board is looking into alternative ways to conduct a book sale later. It will take a vast number of FOL member volunteers to load, unload, unpack, sort and display the books and videos during the week prior to the sale as well as work during the sale. We also need a location.
- If you are interested in organizing, recruiting and/or working, please contact us at: [VolunteersMobileFOL@gmail.com](mailto:VolunteersMobileFOL@gmail.com). We need you!



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**Our mission is to support literacy and connect our community.**

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