



SEASONAL NEWSLETTER

Winter 2026



Alaskan Sled Dog & Owner Visit Library



What does it feel like to ride behind a team of dogs, steering a sled through the mountains?

What does it take to care for a team of Alaskan huskies?

Could my dog be a sled dog, too?

Musher Karen Land answered this and more when she and Sophia, her Alaskan husky, visited the library on Sunday, Nov. 23rd at 1:30 PM. She gave an in-depth and interesting program for patrons of all ages.

In this newsletter you can expect:

*Program Updates

*Winter Highlights

*Foundation News



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Willow Tree Sculpture Moved to Center of Library



Pictured on the left is the restored “Willow” sculpture by renowned artist Harry Bertoia. The sculpture was originally donated to the library in 1974 through memorials and family contributions in honor of Col. William O. Peak, Mrs. Bernice Peak, Barbara Peak and Mrs. M. H. Allen. Mrs. Peak was Mrs. Allen’s daughter.

Harry Bertoia was born on March 10, 1915, in San Lorenzo, Italy, and immigrated to the United States at age 15. His lifelong interest in art began in childhood, and he went on to become a United States citizen in 1946. Bertoia received numerous architectural and artistic awards for his public sculptures.

The restoration of the Bertoia sculpture, along with the new pedestal and protective enclosure, were made possible by the Byron and Jan Moore Trust, given in their memory. Many library patrons have fond memories of seeing the sculpture at the library and are excited to see it restored and on display once again. A special thank you to Mayhew Signs for the enclosure and stand, as well as for moving the Bertoia to its new permanent location.





Hastings Symphony String Quartet Entertains at Library's 2025 Holiday Open House

Members of the Hastings Symphony String Quartet pose in front of the library's Christmas Tree after playing for patrons at the Holiday Open House on Monday night, December 1, 2025.

Along with the music, patrons enjoyed light refreshments and then got to watch the unveiling of the beautifully restored "Willow" sculpture by renowned artist Harry Bertoia. They also got to explore festive decorations, holiday books and cookbooks, and more at the library's Holiday Readquarters.



Pinecone Decorating Craft Day for Tweens

Tweens enjoyed a crafting day in our Makerspace lab on the afternoon of Thursday, Nov. 6. They decorated pinecones and made them into winter art pieces.

Fun (Really) Was Had By All at Annual Breakfast with Santa



Santa had his work cut out for him this year, trying to make the kids smile at the library's annual "Breakfast with Santa" event held on the morning of Saturday, Dec. 13. This year, 400 kiddos and their families were able to come to the library and have fun with activities and enjoy a light breakfast, along with getting their photos taken with Santa. Previous years' attendance totals were: 2024 (185 due to icy weather), 2023 (500) and 2022 (500).

Cabin Fever Program Helps Get Kids Out of House During Christmas Break



As part of the library's winter break program, parents were able to bring their children to the library on Jan. 2, to help use up some of their energy during the library's "Cabin Fever" afternoon. Kids (ages 3-9) and teens and tweens (ages 10+) attended the afternoon and were able to jump rope, play games and take part in activities, and enjoy a bounce house right in the library!



CHI Health St. Francis brought in a generous donation to our Abbott House on Dec. 19. The donations were much needed and much appreciated! Donations can be brought in at anytime. Any non-expired food items and personal items such as shampoo, soap, toothbrushes, toothpaste, etc. are greatly appreciated. We apologize, but we cannot accept homemade items or any type of clothing.

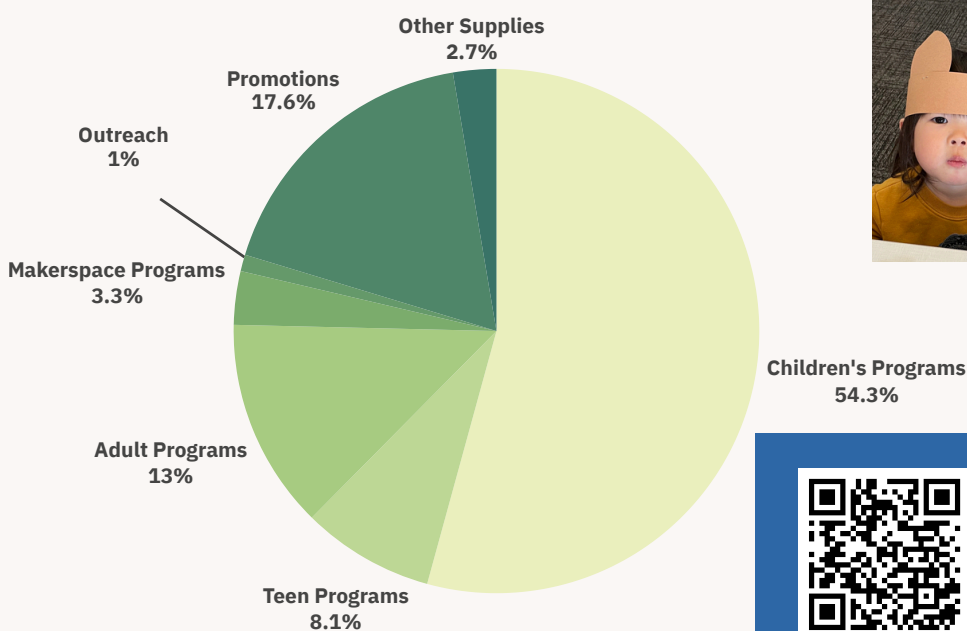
FOUNDATION HIGHLIGHTS



Make a difference as a 2026 annual events sponsor– support lifelong learning resources and programs for library patrons of all ages with a yearly contribution!

With your support, these programs foster a love for reading and learning for patrons within Hall County.

BY THE NUMBERS:



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DAN & DAWN HILL



Teens Impress With Their Artistic Talents During Library's "Bad Art Day"

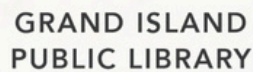


The library hosted a freestyle craft event for teens on Monday, Dec. 29, 2025. Teens had access to a pile of ridiculous crafts and art materials. The "worst" piece of art won a hideously tacky trophy (above right) at the end of the program.

Library Staff Annual Pumpkin Decorating Contest Gets Competitive; So Many Great Pumpkins!



Staff who were brave enough to enter the library's highly-competitive, annual, pumpkin decorating contest should be proud of their entries, with all of them being highly creative and well-done. Patrons were able to vote on their favorites online, with Oscar the Grouch taking home this year's first place honors. Yzma from "The Emperor's New Groove" placed 2nd and Bruce from the children's picture book "Mother Bruce," was voted 3rd.



Dec. 22nd - Jan. 31st

A cute, pinkish-white ghost with large black eyes and rosy cheeks. It is wearing a red book as a hat and holding a blue book in its hands, appearing to be reading. The background is a light blue sky with a few white stars.

kids'
prizes



teens' prizes



Excited to donate your books to the library?

Here's a quick guide to ensure your contributions are a perfect fit!

Book Donations

We do NOT accept:

- Dictionaries
- Encyclopedias
- Magazines
- VHS cassettes
- Music CDs
- Music tapes
- Textbooks
- Operating manuals

We DO accept:

- Current items in good condition



Popular Abbott House Always In Need of Donations

The Abbott House is the library's collection site for donated canned goods and personal items. Everything on these shelves is free to anyone in need. The Abbott House is well used, and items are rarely there for more than a day.

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