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SC Library Spotlight- Beaufort County Public Libraries

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SC Library Spotlight- Beaufort County Public Libraries

Abstract

Spotlight article on Beaufort County Public Libraries



SC LIBRARY SPOTLIGHT

Beaufort County Library

Nestled amidst miles of salt marshes, shrimp boats, and centuries-old live oaks, sit the five branches of the Beaufort County Library system: Beaufort, St. Helena Island, Lobeco, Bluffton, and Hilton Head Island. The Library serves a diverse population of over 162,000, which includes long-time locals, tourists, retirees, military, college students, older adults, children, teens, and young families.

In the past year, roughly 25,000 patrons attended over 1,200 library programs that range from a variety of topics such as free tax assistance, game design workshops, *Wee Read* story times that provide reading readiness skills, credit card clinics, local author talks, playful cooking competitions, and much more. The Library has extended its strategic plan initiatives to help prepare residents to succeed in the ever-changing 21st century with educational programs on environmental literacy, digital literacy, civic literacy, health and wellness literacy, and digital literacy.

In 2013, the Beaufort County Library was awarded a federal LSTA grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services, administered by the South Carolina State Library to create a makerspace at the St. Helena Branch Library. The staff teamed up to name this space the *CreationStation*. The project provides a dynamic, interactive library



environment where people can come together to tinker, experiment, collaborate, and create with tools such as a 3D printer, Arduino Boards, Raspberry Pi computers, Bristlebots, and LittleBit kits for little ones.



*A 3D printed bull

Another unique feature of the Library is its Beaufort District Collection (BDC), which is the Special Collections and Archives unit of the Library system. The BDC focuses on the heritage and history of the people, places, culture, and natural environment of our part of Lowcountry South Carolina.

In 2009, the Library was one of the first to join the South Carolina Library Evergreen Network Delivery System (SCLENDS). In 2011, RFID tags were placed in all Library materials, and self-checkout stations became available options at each of the branches.

The Library continues to embrace new technologies while celebrating its rich history and culture. To explore more, visit BeaufortCountyLibrary.org.

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Beaufort County Library

Photos by Traci Cox