



Broward Public Library Foundation  
100 S. Andrews Ave.  
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301

First Edition



MAY 2026

# First Edition

News of Interest from the Broward Public Library Foundation



*The Broward Public Library Foundation was founded in 1982 to enhance the collections, programs and services of the Broward County Library beyond the means of public funding. The nonprofit Foundation is the catalyst in sparking private funding and endowments to enrich the Broward County Library system.*



**Dig In: This Summer, Every Child Deserves a Great Story**



The Broward Public Library Foundation is proud to support the Broward County Library's **"Unearth A Story" Summer Learning Program** — and we need your help to put books in children's hands this summer.

Fewer than 50% of students in Broward County are reading at grade level. The "summer slide", a loss of up to two months of skills when

school is out, makes that gap worse. The good news? With just a \$50 donation you can provide book packs for children of all ages, helping them build home libraries they'll treasure long after summer ends.

Running June through August, the 10-week "Unearth A Story" program invites children and families across Broward County to dig into reading, explore new ideas, and keep their minds growing. With book giveaways throughout the summer, the Broward County Library system will encourage children of all ages to visit their local library for fun, educational activities such as archeological experimentation with the Museum of Discovery & Science and exploring ancient underwater worlds with the Marine Environmental Education Center.

Ensure no child spends their summer without a great book and a place to explore it. Please make your gift by August 7, 2026. You can donate online at [bplfoundation.org/summer-learning](https://bplfoundation.org/summer-learning).

Together, we can make sure every child in Broward County has a great book AND a great summer!

## Children's BookFest

The **21st Annual Children's BookFest** is Broward County Library's official kick-off for the Summer Learning Program. Scheduled for Saturday, May 30, the day will be filled with activities for children and families, including face painting, art workshops, music and dance presentations, and a FREE book for the first 1,000 children! Entertainers will include the USVI Mocko Jumbie Stilt Dancers, Page Turner Adventures, and more. It's the perfect time to sign up for the 10-week Summer Learning Program. The Children's BookFest, funded by the Broward Public Library Foundation, will take place from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the West Regional Library, 8601 W. Broward Blvd., in Plantation. For more information, visit [bplfoundation.org/childrens-bookfest](https://bplfoundation.org/childrens-bookfest).

## Broward County Library Named Florida's 2026 Library of the Year

For the third time in just 11 years, the Broward County Library has been named the Florida Library Association's 2026 Library of the Year! This recognition was previously presented to Broward's library system in 2020 and 2015.

The Library also earned three additional FLA awards: The African American Research Library and Cultural Center's Saturday School earned FLA's Intellectual Freedom award; the Library's Marketing Team won the FLA Communications Award for their Freegal Wizard Campaign; and *The Westside Gazette* newspaper was recognized by FLA as Media Partner of the Year.

"Winning Library of the Year and these prestigious honors is a testament to our staff's dedication to innovation, intellectual freedom,



and to providing Broward County residents with a full range of outstanding informational, educational, and recreational library services and resources," said Broward County Library Director Allison Grubbs.

"We're proud to support Broward County Library's extraordinary programs and services," said Broward Public Library Foundation Executive Director Dorothy Klein. "Whether it's at children's literacy festivals, or workforce development programs, we know that the library is changing lives every day. This is an honor that our entire community can be thrilled about."

In celebration, Broward County Library will release a commemorative "Library of the Year" library card later this year.



## Literary Feast unites authors, readers, and the library

The Broward Public Library Foundation's 37th annual celebration of books and authors raised more than \$250,000 at its two component events, **A Night of Literary Feasts**, sponsored by the Helen Ingham Foundation, and **LitLIVE!**, sponsored by Nova Southeastern University and the NSU Alvin Sherman Library.

In 2026, Jennifer and John Uustal served as honorary co-chairs, with Alexa Lanier and Ellen Crane returning as co-chairs. Together, the Uustals, Lanier, and Crane connected hundreds of donors and book lovers with 11 bestselling authors, including Jeff Boyd, Chanel Cleeton, Scott Eyman, Nicole Glover, Deborah Goodrich Royce, Lenore Nolan-Ryan, Hannah Pittard, ReShonda Tate, Brad Taylor, and Robert Watson.

The Helen Ingham Foundation was the Literary Feast Presenting Sponsor. More than 30 other sponsors supported the event, as did the dozens of generous dinner hosts who celebrated the authors at individual dinners with Feast guests.

LitLIVE!, a free community event, was held Friday, April 17 at the Broward County Main Library auditorium in Fort Lauderdale. Authors signed books and spoke about their latest books across three panels (Fiction, Mystery, Nonfiction) to over one hundred attendees. On Saturday, April 18, more than 300 guests attended the fundraising Night of Literary Feasts' Welcome Reception, sponsored by JM Family Enterprises, at The Westin Fort Lauderdale Beach Resort, followed by individual dinners with authors in upscale restaurants and clubs.

Of the two-day Literary Feast weekend, guest author and celebrity biographer Scott Eyman said, "Conversation with readers is invariably heartening and enlightening, because readers are ultimately why we do what we do, and that's why the Literary Feast is a joy from start to finish."

Historical fiction author Chanel Cleeton shared, "It was so special to be in the company of such passionate, engaged readers united in the goal of supporting the important work that libraries do in our communities. The weekend was filled with fascinating conversations centering on the love of books that unites us."

The proceeds support vital Broward County Library programs and services, including free SAT/ACT classes for high school students, the Moon Rock exhibit at the Main Library, and the annual Books 'n' Bears at the Holidays program.

Follow us on social media **@bplfoundation** in the coming months for our 2027 event date announcements.



John Coates, Michael Blair



James Jones, Jacqueline Lorber, Mark Nedlin



Alexa Lanier, Dorothy Klein, Ellen Crane



Guests enjoying the Night of Literary Feasts Welcome Reception



John Uustal, author Deborah Goodrich Royce, Jennifer Uustal



### A new way to view the American Revolution

This summer, Broward County Library will offer an opportunity to experience the American Revolution in a new way - 3-D.

From July through September, **"American Revolution: The Augmented Exhibition by Histovery"** will provide an interactive 3-D reconstruction of the defining moments of the

Revolution, using a "Histo-Pad" tablet. Visitors can explore the Boston Tea Party, the Declaration of Independence, the victory at Yorktown, and the election of George Washington as president in 1789.

The exhibition will travel from the Main Library, to the Southwest Regional and Northwest Regional libraries, spending a month in each library.

Developed by a team of historians, including author Stacy Schiff, the exhibit is designed as a series of eight panels that showcase our 250-year-old story. Using the tablets to scan the panels, visitors can manipulate interactive 3D scenes, objects and characters. Visits may range from 30 minutes to an hour.

Histovery is a leading company in augmented exhibitions, including at the Louvre, the Alamo, and Notre Dame Cathedral.

This exhibition is underwritten by the Broward Public Library Foundation. For more details, visit **broward.org/library** in June.



### BPLF Board Welcomes New Member

**Ilene Rothman** is the newest member of the Broward Public Library Foundation Board of Directors. Her nomination was approved at the Board's April meeting.

Rothman joins the Board through the Emerge Broward's Board Engagement Program. Emerge Broward is a nonprofit that promotes leadership and personal development for young professionals ages 21-35.

She works at Lunar Solar Group, as the Director of Paid Social Strategies, and lives in Fort Lauderdale.

Rothman is a graduate of the Honors College University at Albany, State University of New York, majoring in business administration.

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