



100 YEARS

STATE LIBRARY *of* LOUISIANA

1925-2025



A GUIDE TO

SERVICES FOR THE PUBLIC, PUBLIC LIBRARIES, & STATE AGENCIES



A



B



C



D



E

A. An early Louisiana Library Commission bookmobile
 B. The State Library's 50th anniversary in 1975
 C. The State Library as seen after its 1990s renovation
 D. Essae M. Culver, Louisiana's first state librarian
 E. Reference Department staffers work in the 1940s

Celebrating a century of service to Louisiana

The State Library of Louisiana opened its doors on Nov. 1, 1925. That's when the Louisiana Library Commission, as we were known at the time, began the work of helping to set up parish libraries around the state. There were just five public libraries back then.

Louisiana now boasts 68 parish and municipal library systems, with 334 locations and 28 bookmobiles, and the State Library's role has changed as the number of libraries grew.

We are still a support system, offering consulting services and training, but there's so much more.

Members of the public, state employees, and lawmakers ask thousands of questions every year that our reference librarians answer.

Since 1998, we have hosted the Louisiana Library Connection, a collection of free electronic databases that are used millions of times a year.

No single library can have all the materials patrons will want. That's where LoanSHARK, our interlibrary loan system, comes in. It allows borrowing and lending among libraries across the globe. If it's in print, we can likely get it for you.

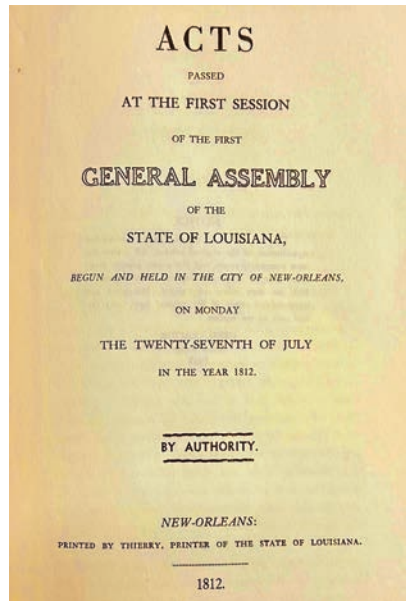
More than 6,000 people who can't easily read standard printed material due to a visual impairment or physical disability use our Talking Books and Braille Library.

The Louisiana Center for the Book works to improve literacy through the Summer Reading Program and Louisiana Readers' Choice Awards. The Center also organizes the Louisiana Book Festival, held every fall at the State Library, State Capitol, State Museum, and surrounding Capitol Park area.

Those are just some of the services your State Library provides. We hope you'll explore the following pages to learn more.



Meg Placke
Meg Placke
 Assistant Secretary/State Librarian



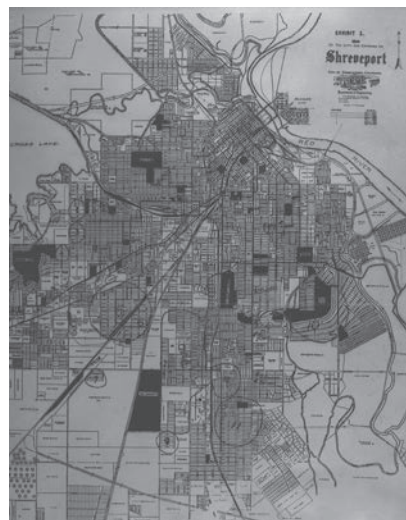
A



STUDENTS FROM NORTHEAST HIGH SCHOOL IN BATON ROUGE look at a historic book during a tour of the Louisiana Collection.



B



C

A. Acts of the state legislature in 1812.
 B. An autographed picture of Gov. Huey Long
 C. A 1940s map of Shreveport

SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

Some of the most fascinating items the State Library has can be found in the Louisiana Collection

Since it was formed in 1947, the Louisiana Collection has worked to preserve important documents, photographs, and books related to the state's history that cannot be found anywhere else.

Today, the Louisiana Collection has more than 1 million items.

For people interested in local history or genealogy, the Louisiana Collection has newspaper clippings from the 1920s to today. Newspapers from as far back as the 1830s are available on microfilm and electronic databases. There is also a collection of genealogy books and journals and historic city directories and phone books.

Historic maps, including those from Colonial times, detail the growth of Louisiana. Works Progress Administration files offer similarly fascinating glimpses into the state's history.

Louisiana Collection staff members have scanned more than 77,000 historic photographs. While they are available to view in person, more than 35,000 of those pictures are also available to the public through the Louisiana Digital Library at LouisianaDigitalLibrary.org.



STATE LIBRARIAN MEG PLACKE and Livingston Parish Library Director Michelle Parrish speak to WBRZ-TV reporter Abigail Whitam about the Check Out Louisiana State Parks pilot program.

SERVICES FOR LOUISIANANS

The State Library provides many popular services and programs available to public library patrons across Louisiana, leading to significant savings for taxpayers

CHECK OUT LOUISIANA STATE PARKS

Check Out Louisiana State Parks is a pilot program from the State Library and Louisiana State Parks operating at 19 public library systems across Louisiana for now. Patrons can check out a day pass to any state park or historic site, as well as a Geaux Explore backpack to help people learn about the natural beauty of Louisiana.

HOMEWORK LOUISIANA

Homework Louisiana provides free live online tutoring in math, science, social studies and English for students from kindergarten to college. An adult Skills Center offers help in resume writing and interview practice. Tutoring in Vietnamese is available, as are Spanish-speaking tutors. People accessed HomeworkLa.org almost 52,000 times in 2023.

INTERLIBRARY LOAN

No single library can have all the materials patrons will want. The State Library's interlibrary loan system, known as LoanSHARK, can help. The service lets libraries borrow materials from each other, whether across the state or around the world. This program allowed borrowing and lending among libraries more than 140,000 times in 2023.

LOUISIANA LIBRARY CONNECTION

The Louisiana Library Connection is a collection of databases that are free to anyone with a card from one of the state's 68 library systems. Job preparation materials, newspapers, language-learning tools, research materials, legal resources, and more are available. Patrons accessed Louisiana Library Connection databases more than 12.9 million times in 2023. (LaLibCon.state.lib.la.us)

THE LOUISIANA BOOK FESTIVAL is the marquee event of the Louisiana Center for the Book and State Library. Almost 200 authors and presenters participate in the annual celebration of readers, writers and their books.



LOUISIANA BOOK FESTIVAL

A favorite on the fall calendar, the Louisiana Book Festival has been the state's flagship book festival since 2002

Since its debut, the Louisiana Book Festival has attracted thousands of authors, poets, panelists, chefs, musicians, and storytellers to become a major literary event in the state. It is also recognized as one of the premiere book festivals in the country.

More than 200 authors and presenters take part in the free day-long festival, which is held in the Louisiana State Capitol, State Museum, State Library, and the surrounding Capitol Park area.

Some of the participating authors

are homegrown. Others have name recognition on a national level. Among those who have taken part are Rick Bragg, Donna Brazile, Ernest J. Gaines, David Halberstam, Elmore Leonard, and Cokie Roberts.

WORDSHOPS

The day before the festival is when the annual WordShops are held. These workshops allow festival attendees to develop their writing skills one-on-one with authors. In recent years, these WordShops have focused on topics including narrative

non-fiction writing, flash fiction, how to craft compelling long-form fiction, and how elements of fiction can be used in poetry.

ONE BOOK, ONE FESTIVAL

Another festival favorite is the One Book, One Festival discussion group. Participants read the same book in advance and join a scholar-led discussion with others at the festival. Each book has a tie to Louisiana.

Among the works that have been featured are Robert Penn Warren's *All the King's Men*, Ernest Gaines's

A Gathering of Old Men, Tennessee Williams's *A Streetcar Named Desire*, John Kennedy Toole's *A Confederacy of Dunces*, and Eudora Welty's *The Optimist's Daughter*.

FOCUS ON YOUTH

The festival features many authors of books for children and young adults. A Young Readers Pavilion and Teen HQ are set up in and around the State Library for presentations and activities. Some authors appear at events at schools and libraries across the state before the festival.

LOUISIANA WRITER AWARD

Among the highlights of the Louisiana Book Festival is the annual presentation of the Louisiana Writer Award.

The award has been given annually for 26 years by the Louisiana Center for the Book in the State Library of Louisiana to recognize the extraordinary contributions to the state's literary heritage exemplified by the artist's body of work.

The presentation of the award serves as the opening ceremony of the book festival.

Past recipients are

- 2000** Ernest J. Gaines
- 2001** William J. Smith
- 2002** James Lee Burke
- 2003** Carl Brasseaux
- 2004** Shirley Ann Grau
- 2005** Lewis P. Simpson
- 2006** Elmore Leonard
- 2007** Yusef Komunyakaa
- 2008** William Joyce
- 2009** Tim Gautreaux
- 2010** Valerie Martin
- 2011** James Wilcox
- 2012** John Biguenet
- 2013** Christine Wiltz
- 2014** Darrell Bourque
- 2015** Tom Piazza
- 2016** Christina Vella
- 2017** Johnette Downing
- 2018** Sheryl St. Germain
- 2019** Richard Campanella
- 2020** John M. Barry
- 2021** Fatima Shaik
- 2022** David Armand
- 2023** Maurice Carlos Ruffin
- 2024** David Kirby
- 2025** Julie Kane

SERVICES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

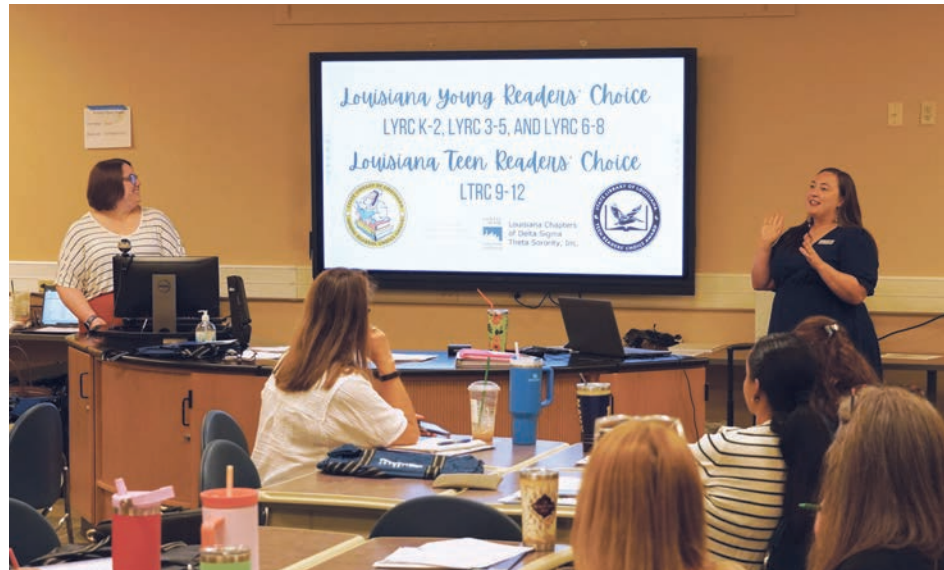
The State Library has several programs designed to increase literacy and instill a love of reading for children and teenagers

CRIB TO CRAYONS

Crib to Crayons is an early-literacy program available through the Talking Books and Braille Library. It helps parents work with their blind or visually-impaired children to develop skills essential for reading success.

HOMEWORK LOUISIANA

Homework Louisiana provides free live online tutoring in math, science, social studies and English for students from kindergarten to college. Tutoring in Vietnamese is available, as are Spanish-speaking tutors. People accessed HomeworkLa.org almost 52,000 times in 2023.



LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT STAFF MEMBERS Katelin LeBleu and Jamie Hebert lead a training session in St. Tammany Parish.

LOUISIANA READERS' CHOICE AWARDS

More than 23,000 students read 80,654 books and voted for their favorites in 2023-2024 through the Louisiana Readers' Choice Awards Program. The State Library offers training and support for public library services to young people.

SUMMER READING

More than 50,000 children and teenagers took part in annual summer reading programs across the state in recent years. State Library consultants offer training to library staff members across the state for the programs.

SHONTATE JACKSON prepares books to be sent out to libraries across Louisiana through the State Library's Interlibrary Loan program.



SERVICES FOR STATE AGENCIES & EMPLOYEES

While anyone may visit the State Library to read books, conduct research, or use the internet, our main patrons are state employees and lawmakers

CATALOGING AND ACQUISITIONS

Cataloging and Acquisitions adds items to the collection and gets them ready for patrons to borrow. If it's on the shelves, Cataloging and Acquisitions staff have received it and cataloged it to make it easy for patrons to find.

RESEARCH HELP

The State Library directly assists patrons by providing research assistance and answers to questions, conducting in-depth research for state employees, officials and Louisiana public and institutional libraries.

RECORDER OF DOCUMENTS

The Recorder of Documents oversees the Louisiana Public Document Depository Program.

Through this program, state government documents are made available to the public. The program distributes documents to designated depository libraries and compiles the official bibliography of state documents that have been received from state agencies.

Archives of digital-only state publications are available through our online catalog.

INTERNET ACCESS

Visitors may use the Internet on public computers. Wireless access is available in most areas in and around the State Library.

SERVICES FOR PUBLIC LIBRARIES

The State Library provides consultative services, training, and more to public and institutional libraries across the state

CONSULTING AND I.T. ASSISTANCE

Consultants from the Library Development Division regularly visit public libraries and advise directors, staff, and trustees on planning, programs, services, and more. The State Library's consultants also help libraries apply for discounts for internet service and host hundreds of training sessions every year.

The Information Technology staff manages the State Library's technology and provides that same assistance to libraries. The I.T. department also regularly hosts computer training seminars.

COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

The Communications Department manages public relations, social media, and the websites for the State Library and Louisiana Book Festival. The staff also produces publications and promotional materials for both. Help with similar efforts is available to public libraries.

LOUISIANA CENTER FOR THE BOOK

Since 1994, the Center's goal has been to stimulate public interest in reading, books, and libraries for people of all ages

The Louisiana Center for the Book's main program is the Louisiana Book Festival. The Center also takes part in the National Book Festival in Washington, D.C. and selects books to represent Louisiana.

The Center presents the Louisiana Writer Award to a living Louisiana writer whose work represents a distinguished contribution to the state's literary heritage.

It also presents a Black History Month program, Women's History Month program, and a National Poetry Month reading in partnership with the state poet laureate.

The Center supports the Summer Reading Program for children, teens, and adults and the Louisiana Readers' Choice Awards Program. Authors of winning books are honored at the Louisiana Book Festival.



FORMER STATE POET LAUREATE MONA LISA SALOY reads during the State Library's National Poetry Month celebration.



TBBL SPECIALIST GORDON LOYD prepares audio book cartridges for patrons. **BELOW:** Participants in Project COPE, which helps elderly residents with vision problems live independently, tour TBBL.

TALKING BOOKS & BRAILLE LIBRARY

Our library-within-a-library offers specialized services to Louisiana residents who are visually impaired, legally blind, have reading disabilities, or cannot handle traditional books

An affiliate of the Library of Congress's National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled, the Talking Books and Braille Library (TBBL) provides access to more than 164,000 audio and braille books, 25,000 large-print books, and playback machines to anyone with permanent or temporary disabilities.

Reader advisors help patrons select materials. An online catalog is also available. Additionally, TBBL dedicates a staff member to serve children up to age 18, allowing them to participate in statewide summer reading programs. The Crib to Crayons program helps parents work with their blind or visually-impaired children to develop reading skills.

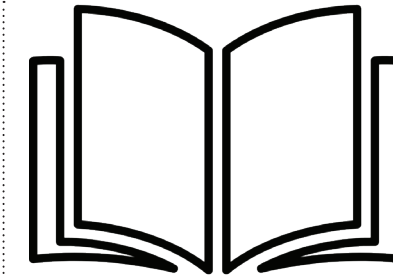


BY THE NUMBERS

From Alexandria to Zachary, there is little doubt that Louisianans love their local libraries



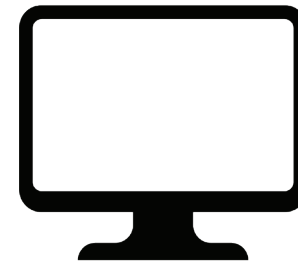
10.4 MILLION
library visits



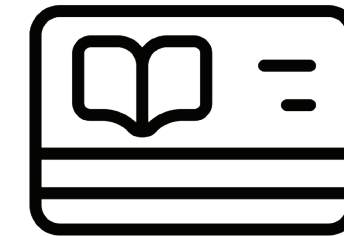
Patrons checked out items
39.8 MILLION TIMES

68 PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEMS

334 locations, 28 bookmobiles



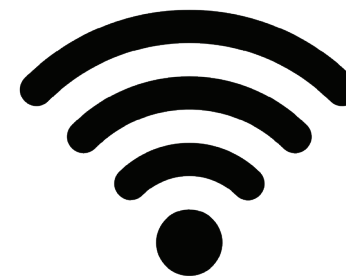
Computers used
1.6 MILLION TIMES



2.3 MILLION
library cards
(Nearly 50% of state's population)



2.6 MILLION
reference questions answered

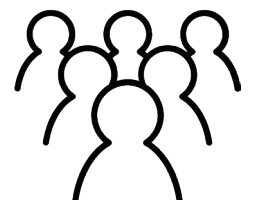


5.6 MILLION
Wi-Fi sessions



Databases accessed
21.6 MILLION TIMES

3 MILLION PEOPLE
attended nearly 91,000 live & virtual events



SOURCE: 2023 Public Libraries in Louisiana Statistical Report



100 YEARS

STATE LIBRARY *of* LOUISIANA

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OFFICE OF LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR
DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE, RECREATION AND TOURISM