



BPLinks

the newsletter

14 September 2018

Program Spotlights



Teens Engineer BHM at Ensley Branch Library

Middle and high school students with a passion for engineering will learn how to program robots, and how to solder and gain computer coding skills this fall at Birmingham Public Library locations across the city. Teens Engineer BHM kicked off its fall after-school schedule this week. Between September and late November, the popular program will be held at 12 of BPL's 19 locations. **Teens Engineer BHM is made possible by the generous support from the Community Foundation of Greater Birmingham (CFGB).** [Read More](#)



Gaming Days Returns to Woodlawn Branch Library

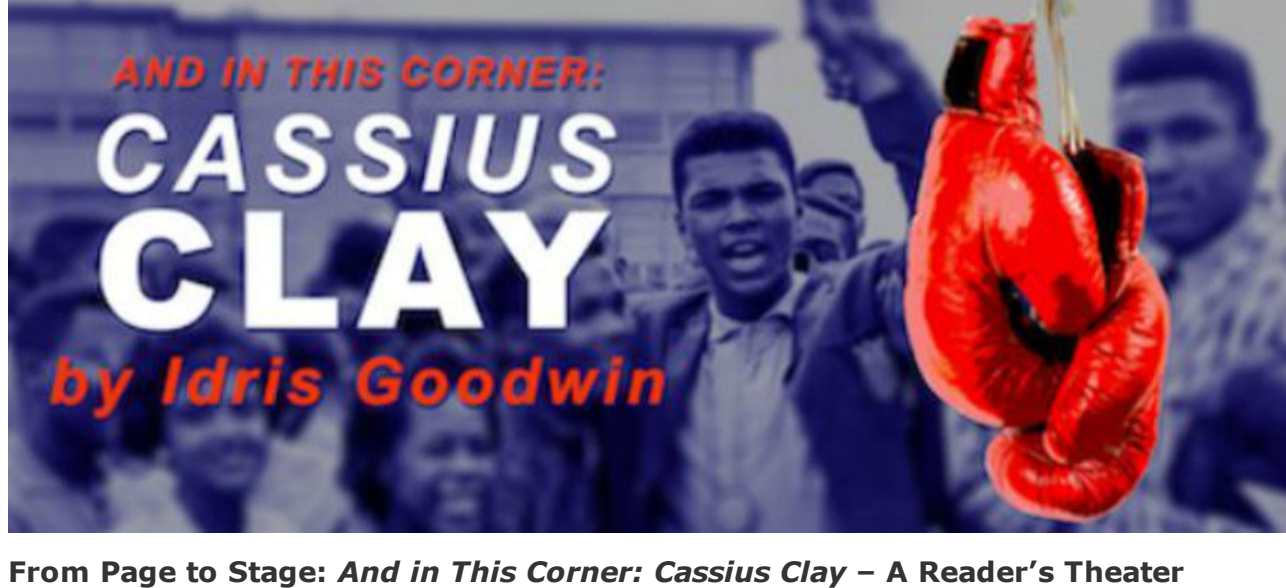
Now that school is back in session, the Woodlawn Branch Library has brought back one of its more popular after-school activities—Gaming Days at Woodlawn Library. On Wednesday afternoons from 4:00 to 5:00 p.m., youth of all ages are invited to participate in friendly competition—both in video games such as X-Box One, Retro NES, Wii, and classic board games such as chess and checkers. [Read More](#)



Diabetes Workshop Series at Powderly Branch Library

Maxine Starks, a registered nurse and performance improvement adviser at Birmingham's Alabama Quality Assurance Foundation, began hosting the free workshop series Everyone with Diabetes Counts on September 6 at Powderly Library. Starks said the diabetes prevention workshops are designed for diabetics, those with pre-diabetes symptoms, their family members, and caregivers. [Read More](#)

From Page to Stage Workshops



From Page to Stage: *And in This Corner: Cassius Clay* – A Reader's Theater Workshop for Children

The Birmingham Public Library, in partnership with the Birmingham Children's Theatre (BCT) and Junior League of Birmingham (JLB), would like to invite you to attend From Page to Stage: *And in This Corner: Cassius Clay* – A Readers' Theater Workshop for Children. In anticipation of the upcoming BCT performance at School House Rock Live!, JLB will be hosting free workshops at several of its area libraries. Children, aged 7 to 12, will learn how stories come alive through the magic of theater. JLB members will coach the children and introduce them to similar literature located in their local library. Each child will receive two free tickets (one child and one adult ticket) to the BCT *And in This Corner: Cassius Clay* production on October 6 or 7, 2018. [Read More](#)

Apply for Passports at Select BPL Branches



Public Can Obtain Passports at Five Birmingham Public Library Locations

Do you need to get a US passport? It is now easier than ever in Birmingham. You can now obtain US passports or have questions answered at five Birmingham Public Library locations across the city. The Central Library downtown and four regional libraries—Avondale, Five Points West, North Birmingham, and Springville Road—will serve as official Passport Acceptance Facilities. [Read More](#)

BPL Perspectives

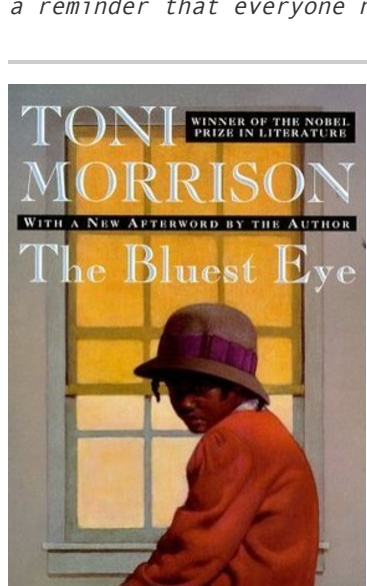


Q&A with BPL Storyteller Ms. Eve

Eve Parker was in the zone, leading about two dozen kids in a dance to the Pharrell Williams hit song "Happy," then stopping the music and coaxing the children to hug their neighbor. It was a fitting scene as a few minutes earlier Parker had been reading a book called *Hug*. The storytime program held September 7 at Southside Branch Library is among many led throughout the year by Parker aka Ms. Eve, Avondale Regional Branch Library's popular storyteller. [Read More](#)

BPL Reads Banned Books

Banned Books Week, an annual national event celebrating the freedom to read, will be observed September 23-29, 2018. This event was launched in 1982 in response to a sudden surge in the number of challenges to popular books in schools, bookstores, and libraries. *Banned Books Week* brings together the entire book community—librarians, booksellers, publishers, journalists, and readers. The 2018 theme, "Banning Books Silences Stories," is a reminder that everyone needs to speak out against the tide of censorship.



The Bluest Eye by Toni Morrison

Reviewed by Melvia Walton, Community Engagement

"They lived there because they were poor and black, and they stayed there because they believed they were ugly. Although their poverty was traditional and stultifying, it was not unique. But their ugliness was unique. No one could have convinced them that they were not relentlessly and aggressively ugly."

"And Pecola. She hid behind hers. Concealed, veiled, eclipsed—peeping out from behind the shroud very seldom, and then only to yearn for the return of her mask."

I read Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye* for the first time, nearly three decades ago. Reading it again felt like getting reacquainted with a dear friend – effortless, comfortable, honest, and raw. Her writing is smooth, like poetry; and the imagery takes me to another place. Why had it taken me so long to revisit this powerful work of fiction? Morrison began writing this story in 1962, and transitioned it into a book in 1965. Though published in 1970, the novel's themes still ring true almost fifty years later.

Morrison's prose artfully describes the disdain and contempt society exhibits toward those who live in poverty; and also the misery and brokenness of those who live helplessly and hopelessly within it. Her characters struggle with emotional and physical isolation, anger turned inward and outward, and relationships buoyed by dysfunction. Pecola, the protagonist, struggles to find self-acceptance and a sense of place in world that does not acknowledge or embrace her. She is female, poor, black, and abused, and years for the acceptance and validation of a world intent on denying her beauty, value, and worth.

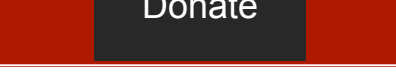
Upcoming Events

- Prime Time Family Reading Time**
September 18, 6:00-7:30 p.m., Five Points West Regional Branch Library
- Bards & Brews Poetry Event**
October 5, 6:30-9:00 p.m., Location TBA
- Old Photographs: Solving the Mysteries**
October 6, 1:00-3:00 p.m., Central Library
- Teen Writing Workshop with Chandra Sparks Splond**
October 10, 3:30-4:30 p.m., West End Branch Library
- Beyond the Basics of Genealogy – Dear Cousin: Corresponding with Your DNA Relatives**
October 14, 2:30-3:30 p.m., Central Library
- Church Records and Histories for the Genealogist**
October 28, 2:30-3:30 p.m., Central Library

Closures

Staff Day
All Birmingham Public Library locations closed October 18

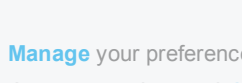
Magic City Classic
Smithfield Branch Library closing at 1:00 p.m. October 26; closed all day October 27



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Birmingham Public Library, 2100 Park Place, Birmingham, Alabama, 35203

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