



Chattahoochee Valley Libraries
One Card...a World of Possibilities!

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The Columbus Public Library Named One of the “10 Most Beautiful Libraries in Georgia”

The Columbus Public Library was named one of the “10 Most Beautiful Libraries in Georgia” yesterday by the Georgia Public Library Service.

In chronological order, the list includes:

- The Mary Willis Library in Washington (1888)
- The Carnegie Branch Library in Savannah (1914)
- The Washington Memorial Library in Macon (1923)
- The St. Simons Island Public Library (1937)
- The Buckhead Branch Library in Atlanta (1989)
- The Columbus Public Library (2005)
- The Hamilton Mill Library in Dacula (2011)
- The Dog River Public Library in Douglasville (2011)
- The Porter Memorial Library in Covington (2011)
- The Metropolitan Library in Atlanta (2015)

During the selection process, a panel of public library and architecture professionals reviewed the candidates this winter and, over the course of three rounds of voting, narrowed 60 nominees down to 10. “Those libraries were then judged on their overall design, both in form and function, as well as for their interior and exterior styles and sense of timelessness,” explained State Librarian Julie Walker. “We also wanted to recognize libraries that are, or were, innovative for their time, as well as those whose design reflects and serves their respective communities.”

At 100,000 square feet, the Columbus Public Library is the second largest in Georgia. Completed in 2005, the New Classical red-brick-and limestone building was designed by acclaimed architect Robert A. M. Stern. The facility is topped by a central, sixty-foot-diameter “lantern,” which rises to a height of four stories and serves as a visual beacon to the surrounding neighborhoods. Inside, a grand stairway connects the lobby to the second floor collections. Other

significant architectural features include the Grand Reading room (an arced, double-height room reminiscent of great library reading rooms of the past), a dedicated children's story time space and outdoor garden, and a front lawn and park used regularly for outdoor festivals and movies.

Library Director Alan Harkness commented, "Our library is a great example of one of the many beautiful assets that our town has given itself. Our building was a gift to the community by voters of the 1999 SPLOST, and a group of very dedicated volunteers and staff who made it happen. I am personally proud to be temporary steward of that gift. I truly find that I pinch myself that I get to walk into this building daily."

Muscogee County Library Board Chair David Fox also shared, "It is so well deserved. Not only do we have a very unique and functional facility, we have the best of staffs, one which is especially 'customer - centric', and well versed in what makes a library valuable for its community and region. Well-done, Georgia. You selected a winner, of which the Patrons in Columbus were already aware."

Georgia's most beautiful libraries will each be recognized at a 2 p.m. ceremony on April 10 at the Mary Willis Library — the state's first free library and the first in Georgia to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Headquarters of the Bartram Trail Regional Library System, the library is located at 204 East Liberty Street in Washington.

Representatives from each beautiful library will be presented with a framed certificate and individualized "10 Most Beautiful" stamps for endorsing their respective pages in promotional passports that will be available free at each recognized facility and at hundreds of other participating public libraries around the state in time for this year's summer vacation season.

[Read the full press release from Georgia Public Library Service.](#)

[Visit the Library website for more information.](#)

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