

December 2025



Monthly Newsletter for the Florida Library Youth Program

"To learn to read is to light a fire.
Every syllable that is spelled out is a spark."

-Victor Hugo

Twinkling Lights

I absolutely love this time of year! From cozy moments with friends and family to sweet holiday treats and festive gatherings, the season is full of magic. But my favorite part? The lights!

It's a cherished tradition for my husband and me to fill our thermoses with hot chocolate and drive around town at least once a week to admire the holiday displays. And if you ever visit my office in Tallahassee, you'll see that the glow doesn't stop after December. Strings of colorful lights brighten the space all year long. Their sparkle brings me so much joy.



Also during this time at the end of the year, I like to reflect on the growth and change the year has brought. Some of it has been challenging and heavy, but there have also been brilliant bursts of joy and light. One of the brightest has been stepping into the role of FLYP Consultant and having the honor of serving each of you.

When I look across the state, your creativity and tenacity shine like the most dazzling lights. I'm so excited to continue supporting your glow in the new year!

With gratitude,
Chelsea LaFever
FLYP Consultant

Do you need to ask a question, pass along a bright idea or share the great things happening at your library? I would love to talk with you!

Please use my [bookings link](#) to schedule a one-on-one meeting with me or contact me at Chelsea.LaFever@dos.fl.gov or 850.245.6630.

News

Children's Week Florida

February 22-27, 2026.



One of the highlights of each Florida legislative session is **Children's Week Florida**. This celebration of Florida's children draws nearly 5,000 children, parents, advocates, teachers and others to the Florida Capitol for events and activities including the [Celebration of the Hands](#) art display, the [Storybook Village](#) and [Teen Day at the Capitol](#). This week is Florida's largest event that celebrates and honors the state's commitment to the health and well-being of its children.

Children's Week Florida is hosted by the [Children's Forum](#). To learn more about the event and prepare for 2026, [visit the website](#).

The FLYP Side

Friday, December 19, 2025
3 - 4 p.m. Eastern
[Register now.](#)



Do you have awesome outreach at your library or have questions on getting started or what has worked for others?

Join me on [The FLYP Side](#) to celebrate your collective successes, share innovative programming ideas, and collaboratively brainstorm solutions to challenges.

If you can't join us live, don't worry—simply complete the registration form, and you will receive a summary with links to the resources shared during the session in a follow-up email. I can't wait to see you there!

America250 Florida



The Division of Library and Information Services is excited to join with other Florida government agencies to celebrate [America250 Florida](#)!

Keep an eye on this section for ideas and resources to help celebrate the U.S. Semiquincentennial at your library.

America's Field Trip

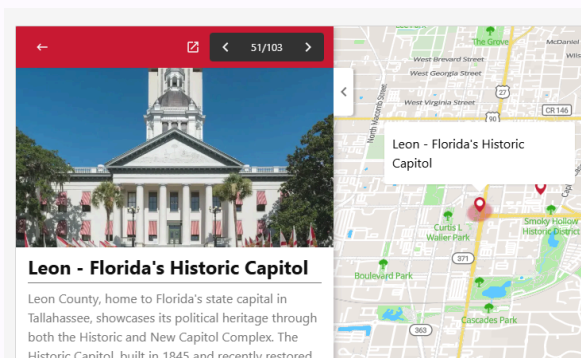
I am excited to share a unique opportunity for youth across Florida! [America's Field Trip](#) is a nationwide contest inviting students in grades 3-12 to respond to the prompt: "What does America mean to you?" Participants can submit writing or original artwork. The deadline for submission is Monday, March 30, 2025. In celebration of the U.S. Semiquincentennial, 250 winners will receive once-in-a-lifetime experiences such as private tours of the Kennedy Space Center, the National Archives, Yellowstone and [more](#). This is a wonderful opportunity to engage young people in history and civic reflection. I encourage you to share this information with your library community and help students take part in this inspiring celebration!

For more information about the contest, check out the [Official Contest Rules](#) or the [FAQs](#).



AMERICA250FL ROAD TRIP

Have you or your patrons ever wondered what important Florida historical landmarks are nearby or along the route of a road trip? Wonder no more! Check out [this interactive map](#) of over 100 important sites in our state and plan your next exploration destination.



The MOST American Thing

If you think there's something even **more** American than apple pie, [this online matchup](#) from the [U.S. Department of State](#) is for you! Pit blue jeans against the Superbowl and Rock 'n' Roll against skateboarding, then learn about the history of each of these quintessentially American staples.

When you're done, check out other interactive resources from the U.S. Department of State including [A Timeline of the American Revolution](#) and [120 Years in Flight](#).

Resources

STEM and STEAM Kits

Is your library interested in offering kits for check-out so patrons can explore STEAM experiences at home? This [online resource](#) from [STARnet](#) shares a wide variety of

examples and tools to help you get started or expand your offerings. You will find example kits from libraries across the country, guidance for customizing kits to fit your patrons' needs and suggestions for cataloging materials.



Winter STEAM in the Library

As temperatures drop, Winter STEAM activities are a great way to keep young minds active and engaged. These hands-on projects blend science, technology, engineering, art, and math into fun, seasonal experiences perfect for storytime extensions, maker programs or passive activities.



Check out [this month's Pinterest Board](#) for programming ideas that blend art and science with minimal prep and materials. Winter STEAM brings learning to life...even when it's cool outside!



Listserv!

I am excited to share that there is a dedicated listserv for library Youth Services staff in Florida! A listserv is an email list that distributes messages to all subscribers on the list when a message is sent to the list address.

The FLYP listserv is an open, moderated discussion group. This space is designed for sharing ideas, brainstorming, problem-solving, and making valuable contacts across the state.

To join the listserv, send a request to flyp-subscribe-request@listserver.dos.state.fl.us or click the weblink [here](#).

FLYP Exchange

The [FLYP Exchange Facebook group](#) is active again.

FLYP Exchange is a closed group for Youth Services library staff across the state of Florida to exchange ideas, ask questions and support one another. Keep an eye on the group for opportunities to share your successes and garner support.



Youth Services Spotlight

St. Lucie County Library System

This summer, the [Susan Broom Kilmer Branch Library](#) welcomed over 80 children and families to its second annual Summer Reading Glow Party. The event space was transformed with black lights, glow-in-the-dark tattoos, balloons, glow sticks and vibrant decorations. Attendees danced, laughed and lit up the library with joy, making it one of the most memorable events of the summer. Families were thrilled and immediately asked for the party to return next year.



Staff began planning for the Summer Reading Program months in advance, kicking off preparations in the winter. They purchased black lights with adhesive backing to easily mount to the ceiling and turned to Amazon for all things glow-related, like tattoos, balloons, glasses, streamers and more. One of the most time-consuming tasks involved curating a playlist of kid-friendly music. Staff carefully reviewed hours of songs to ensure they were appropriate, ultimately discovering fun, family-friendly mixes on platforms like Mixcloud and SoundCloud.

If you would like to know more about the Summer Reading Glow Party or other youth programming at [St. Lucie Library System](#), contact Gabriel Gresham at Gabriel.Gresham@stlucieco.gov.



We want to celebrate the magnificent things happening in your libraries! Please send any events, successful programs or meaningful anecdotes to Chelsea.LaFever@dos.fl.gov.

Note: Photos are welcome, but please make sure you have photo releases on file at your library for any individuals in the images. Stories that you share may be edited for clarity or brevity. Also, while we appreciate every story you submit, space constraints limit the number we can add to the newsletter.

Calendar



*Denotes a DLIS event.

December 2025

Month-Long Events

Month of Giving

Read a New Book Month

Write a Friend Month

Week-Long Events

Week 1 - National Cookie Cutter Week

January 2026

Month-Long Events

[Book Blitz Month](#)

Week-Long Events

Jan 11-17: National Pizza Week

1: New Year's Day

Week 2 - Computer Science Education
Week

1: Rosa Parks Day
3: National Make a Gift Day
4: National Sock Day
7: National Letter Writing Day
9: National Llama Day
10: Dewey Decimal System Day
12: Gingerbread House Day
13: National Cocoa Day
14: Hanukkah begins at sundown
17: [Wright Brothers Day](#)
20: Games Day
21: Winter Solstice
24: Christmas Eve
25: Christmas
26: Kwanzaa Begins
28: National Card Playing Day
31: New Year's Eve

On this day in December 1775:

Dec 5 - [Henry Knox](#) begins his historic transport of abandoned British artillery from [Fort Ticonderoga, New York](#), to Boston, Massachusetts. This sets in motion the events that later force the British to evacuate Boston.

Dec 31 - Battle of Quebec: The American Continental Army is defeated trying to take Quebec City. [Benedict Arnold](#) is injured.

2: National Science Fiction Day
3: [J.R.R. Tolkien Day](#)
4: Trivia Day
5: National Bird Day
9: Word Nerd Day
10: National Peculiar People Day
12: National Hot Tea Day
13: National Rubber Ducky Day
16: [Appreciate a Dragon Day](#)
17: Benjamin Franklin Day
18: Thesaurus Day
19: [Martin Luther King Jr. Day](#)
24: National Compliment Day
25: [National Florida Day](#)
28: [Library Shelfie Day](#)
29: National Puzzle Day

On this day in January 1776:

Jan 2 - George Washington's army hoists the Grand Union Flag at Prospect Hill, Charlestown, MA.

Jan 10 - "Common Sense", the pro-American independence pamphlet by [Thomas Paine](#) is published.

Jan 27 - Henry Knox arrives at Cambridge, Massachusetts with the stolen British artillery he transported from Fort Ticonderoga, New York.

(Not a full list of events for each month.)



For FY2025-26, the percentage of total costs for the Florida Library Youth Program financed with federal money is 67%; the federal dollar amount to be spent on FLYP is \$217,456. This program does not receive any non-governmental funding.

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