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John Clark, visiting from Richmond, Virginia, working on a puzzle at the Sanibel Public Library's new puzzle and games area, which debuted on August 8 photos by Jeff Lysiak



Lenny Abruzzo and his son, Luke, visiting from New Jersey, reading a story in the children's area

Library Patrons, Staff Hail Latest Improvements

by Jeff Lysiak

After being shut down for one month in order to complete the latest phase of the \$5.9 million, year-long renovation project, the Sanibel Public Library recently reopened to rave reviews from both visiting patrons and members of the 5-Star Award-winning facilities' staff.

"This is such a wonderful place to work in," said Wendy Lambrix,

circulation manager. "I love the new, larger windows and the idea that everything is more spread out. And the new back porch is my favorite."

According to library representatives, the renovation project – dubbed Your Library Reimagined – started more than three years ago, when the Sanibel Public Library Foundation's board and library staff analyzed obsolete infrastructure. The renovation included overhauling the 25-year-old mechanical, plumbing, fire suppression and electrical systems. During the renovation, crews tested (and retested) more than 5.1 miles of data cable. More than two miles of ductwork has been installed. The project has also

"reimagined" the layout of the space to better serve community needs.

"There's much better lighting, which is a big thing," said Ian Wainwright, library staff member. "Not only is that better for the people who work here, but people who come here to read are enjoying it too."

Among the latest improvements, in addition to larger windows to maximize the natural light and scenic views, include a brand new A/V (audio/video) department, containing the library's catalog of DVDs, CDs and audiobooks. All multimedia platforms are stored on rolling shelving units, which will allow those units to be relocated in order to

accommodate audiences for special events including the Author Series.

The A/V section is located in the children's section, which had temporarily been relocated adjacent to the circulation desk. The new children's section has returned to its original location on the east side of the building. Surrounding the children's area, which contains color-coordinated seating and visual enhancements, is a Think Tank Maker Space for children to play with Legos, puzzles and games; an expanded seating area with larger windows; and a Teen Space with comfortable seating, three

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The new Teen Space includes three computer stations and space for doing homework



New lighting hanging above the main entrance lobby, which is still under renovation

From page 1

Library

computer stations and space for doing homework.

"This library, compared with what we have in New Jersey, just blows everything away," said Lenny Abruzzo, who stopped by the library with his son, Luke. "It's amazing what you have for a library this size. They did a great job... it looks incredible."

Additional improvements completed during the latest phase, which required the closure of the library between July 9 and August 8, include a greatly expanded fiction section with several themed book displays; four new study rooms; two computer labs with high-speed Internet; a puzzle and games area; a book sale section; expanded back porch with tables and rocking chairs; and new Archives Room with digitization capabilities for easier scanning of photos. Those rooms are accented with etched glass windows created by island artist Luc Century.

"This space is great," said John Clark from Richmond, Virginia, who visited the new puzzle and games area last week. "The bigger windows let in a lot more natural light, which is great for the library."

In addition to the latest enhancements to the facility, several new pieces of furniture have been brought in, while some older chairs have been reupholstered with brightly colored fabrics.

During Phase II of the renovation, more than 35,000 items – including books, multimedia, computers, office equipment, furniture and shelving – had to be moved in order to complete work aimed at improving the infrastructure of the library. Among the "behind the scenes" improvements are state of the art upgrades in plumbing, HVAC, fire suppression, electric and data wiring.

According to Margaret Mohundro, library executive director, her staff has expressed their pleasure with a number of new enhancements, especially those elements related to improved technology.



A center handrail was installed along the main staircase photos by Jeff Lysiak

"The technology upgrades put us in a great position to provide cutting edge services for the next several years: a Wi-Fi network that delivers content at lightning-fast speeds, a robustness that allows the connections of hundreds of devices simultaneously, and the strength and durability to endure inclement weather and power failures," she said. "I know we all feel better about infrastructure upgrades that work well and are more safe and efficient than some of the aging systems we had in place."

Mohundro, who said that her favorite new elements include the colorful youth areas – accented in hues of turquoise, green, purple and orange – also noted the target completion date for the project is this fall.

"Wait until everyone sees the completed lobby and entrance – the lighting shape is similar in shape to the grinning tun shell and reflects off the glass," she added. "It is magical-looking and spectacular."

The Your Library Reimagined project, designed by HBM Architects of Cleveland, Ohio, is being funded with library



The expanded area for fiction books features lower shelves for easier reading

reserves, grants and private donations. The library, which recently earned a Top 8 Libraries in Florida to Spend a Day Indoors rating from www.FloridaRentals.com, will host The Donut Drop-In end-of-summer party this Saturday, August 25 from 10 a.m. to noon. No registration is required and there is no additional cost to attend the party.

Current operating hours for the Sanibel Public Library, located at 770 Dunlop Road, are Monday and Thursday from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m.; Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.; and Saturday from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. For more information, call 472-2483 or visit www.sanilib.org.

Superior Interiors

Making The Most Of A Small Bedroom

by Trinette Nelson

Decorating a small bedroom might seem challenging, but there are so many simple ways to make the space equally functional and stylish.



First, make sure to stick to a strict color palette. Decorating with too many hues will make the room look more cramped and cluttered than it is. A monochromatic color scheme can create a soothing and open atmosphere. Letting as much light in as possible is

another simple way to open the space. Dress the windows with voile drapes instead of dark curtains. Don't limit wall decorations to art. Consider hanging multiple large mirrors. It creates the illusion that there's double the amount of space and bounces light around the room.

Finding storage space can often present a challenge. A floor-to-ceiling fitted storage unit is the perfect answer. Not only is it extremely functional, but it can add a hint of character and personalization to the room. Freeing up the floor space in a small bedroom is key, so do it whenever possible. Consider an innovative approach to the furniture selection, such as a hanging night stand or set of floating shelves.

Making the most of a small bedroom is easy. If you're ready to free up the space in your small bedroom, a design professional can easily assist with space planning.

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