



Learning to use computers

In today's world, computers have become a basic need in everyday life. From emails to calendars, computer skills are needed to get through life.

The Huntsville Public Library is offering free, basic computer skills classes to help the public meet their everyday need. Classes will be held on Tuesdays or Fridays from 10 to 11 a.m. or on Tuesdays or Thursdays from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. January 3rd through March 31st.

Classes will feature activities on how to use a mouse, typing, web-based email and internet browsing.

"We realize that there are still a selection of our general public that struggles to understand the basic skills of using a computer," Tech Coordinator Ashley Newsome said. "So we are offering services to those who need the help. We are happy to go as slow or as fast as needed. The world involves using a lot of Mi-

crosoft products, like Word and Excel. We are teaching the basic skills needed to use these programs."

Huntsville Public Library boasts an inventory of 30 public use computers for adults, two teen computers, eight children's computers and seven genealogy computers, as well as a handful of laptops.

"Patrons like the hands-on learning environment," Newsome said. "I am teaching them at their own pace with one-on-one help if they have a question."

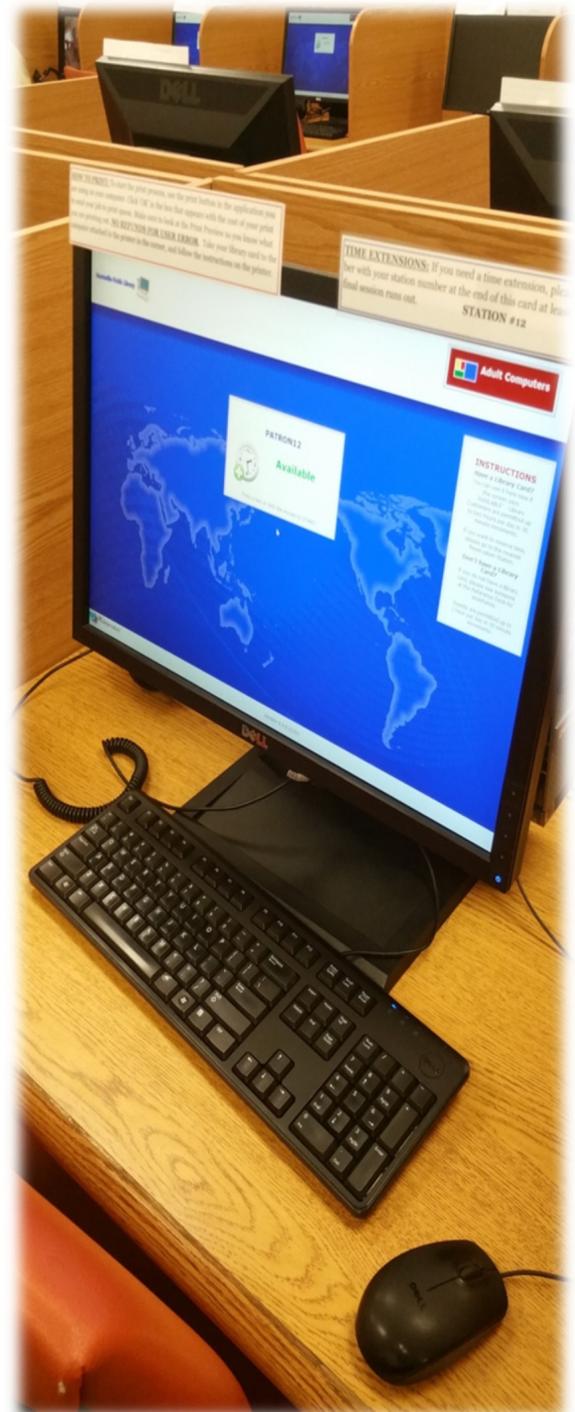
These resources make it possible for patrons to access emails, search the internet, complete homework or job searching needs, and a world of other possibilities.

"We feel that learning doesn't have to be limited," Assistant City Librarian Anne Sparks said. "We want to provide the public with the services they need to continue to learn, whether it is a new language or a certification for advancement at work. Our staff is dedicated to helping our patrons, from finding a book on a shelf to finding ways to improve themselves with classes."

HPL's mission is to provide the resources, classes and connections to educate and empower our community.

Registration started Tuesday, Dec. 6, 2016, and class size are limited. Patrons must be registered to take the class. Register online at myhuntsvillelibrary.com or at the Tech Reference Desk at HPL. For more information, stop by the library or call 936-291-5472 to speak with a tech coordinator.

- Story and photo by Brenda Poe



HUNTSVILLE
PUBLIC LIBRARY

1219 13th Street
Huntsville, TX 77340
936-291-5472

www.myhuntsvillelibrary.com
@HuntsvilleLib—Twitter
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Monday through Friday
10 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Saturdays Noon to 4 p.m.
Closed Sunday

Holiday Gatherings: A time for family history

Each year in November and December, families journey across our nation for gatherings with seldom seen relatives. We look forward to rekindling relationships and, as often as not, try to calm down our apprehensions over past differences and heated exchanges. It happens, even in the best of families.

Here's a piece of advice. Uncle George and Aunt Hilda, as curmudgeonly as they may seem, often hold a wealth of knowledge about our family tree. Be prepared to engage them. Steer the conversation from world events and politics to family history. Be cordial and be prepared to exchange stories and share photographs, letters and family memorabilia. One may be amazed to learn that family members welcome the opportunity to learn and share family lore and legend. Beyond facts and data extracted from databases and print, family stories are first and foremost oral history.

Genealogy



Oral history is the memories of living people about events or social conditions which they experienced in their earlier

lives. Oral history also has an element of transferred memory from one generation to another.

Here are some suggestions taken from several sources on how to conduct oral history:

- Explain the purpose of your inquiries.
- Respect the people telling their story. It's their story. Confirmation of details can be made later.
- Ask permission from family members to take notes or recordings.
- Respect the privacy of the person telling the story. He or she may not want to be quoted or identified. Be sure to inform each family member if the family history is to be published.
- Set the tone. Be cordial. Be polite. Be respectful.

*- Richard Lane,
Genealogy Reference Librarian*

Calendar of Events Find this information online at www.myhuntsvillelibrary.com

Prev	December ▼	Next	2016 ▼	Expand All Events		
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
27	28	29	30	01	02 Excel 2010 class Story Time	03 Jubilee on the Bayou Genealogy Dead Ends: Where do I go now?
04	05 Mother Goose Lap Sit	06 Excel 2010 class	07 Story Time	08	09 Excel 2010 class Story Time	10 Genealogy Dead Ends: Where do I go now?
11	12 Mother Goose Lap Sit	13 Excel 2010 class 3-D Printing for Kids!	14 Story Time 3-D Printing for Kids!	15 Brown Bag Lecture Series Comic Book Club	16 Excel 2010 class Story Time	17
18	19 Mother Goose Lap Sit	20 Excel 2010 class 3-D Printing for Kids!	21 Story Time 3-D Printing for Kids!	22 Wii Games	23 Library closed for Holidays	24 Library closed for Holidays
25 Library closed for Holidays	26 Library closed for Holidays	27 Excel 2010 class Elementary Craft Time	28 Story Time Holiday S.T.E.A.M.	29	30 Excel 2010 class Story Time	31

A QUICK GUIDE TO READING ON THE GO!

Libraries are becoming more advance every day. With that being said, digital copies of books are more of a demand than physical copies. eBooks are the digital copy of a book that you read on an electronic device like a Kindle, Nook, tablet or iPad. One advantage is accessibility; you can read an eBook anywhere and never have to worry about a late fee, **AUTOMATIC SEND BACK!** Also, eBooks are good to use for someone who prefers to have a large print version of a book. The electronic device that is being used has the function to turn small print into large print with a push of a button.

How do you get your hands on one of these digitals copies? First you must buy an electronic device that supports the functionality of an eBook; it can be a Kindle, Nook, tablet or iPad. Each of these devices functions differently from one another. Next you will download an app that is used for listening or reading eBooks. Some of the popular apps are, Kindle Books, iBook app for Apple and Audible for audiobooks. The most common question I get about eBooks is how to download them to your electronic device.

Each device uses different techniques to download eBooks. Let's start with the Kindle, depending on what versions of the Kindle you have; you may need to use an USB cord or internet to start. You will also need to have an Amazon account or Kindle app to start downloading books. To download using a Nook you will need the Adobe Digital Editions app and the file name of the book. A tablet and an iPad functions are similar, you download an app compatible for reading eBooks and download the book straight to your tablet or iPad. You can also choose to read the books online inside the browser but you will need to have internet access.



Many people like the idea of having a book to read on the go without having to carry it around with you. The Huntsville Public Library has an eBook collection on a website called Overdrive. Our Overdrive collection currently has 375 audiobooks, 4,797 eBooks and 41 videos (36 TV shows, three feature films and one animated film) available for checkout at your leisure. You can download the app straight to your electronic device or computer, all you need is a library card. If you cannot find a physical copy in the library, there is a possibility that we have an eBook version. Downloading can be difficult for some, but do not worry there is help available, just stop by the Tech Desk next to the computer lab or use the how-to-videos on the library's website, www.myhuntsvillelibrary.com, for extra help.

- Ashley Newsome, Tech Coordinator

Microscope made of paper

With the festive shopping period quickly upon us, shopping is on many minds, mine included. This season a particular item caught my eye: a microscope made of paper! The Foldscope, created by Manu Prakash of Stanford University, has recently started an online crowdfunding drive, and while the pocket-sized microscopes from this drive won't be arriving until the middle of next year, I'm already hooked.

The Foldscope has been around for several years, with already over 50,000 of these origami microscopes shipped, but now you can reserve your very own Foldscope kit, complete with microscope slides, tweezers, pipettes, and more from their Kickstarter. The Foldscope weighs

less than a pencil and can be constructed by someone with only the most basic folding experience in around ten minutes. In addition to the ease of construction the Foldscope is affordable, each unit, even with improved magnifying lenses, costs less than a dollar, though the kit costs a little more due to the extra items.

With up to 2000 times magnification, and being made of paper, I expected the Foldscope to be delicate. Not at all! The testers have stepped on and even dropped the Foldscope from three stories and it still works! With this sort of affordable, durable and user friendly device, areas that were previously unable to receive the benefit of having the availability



of a closer examination can now be provided. The creators believe that "curiosity is sparked by genuine "aha" moments" that having access to tools that were previously bound to laboratories or specialists will allow people to have the excitement of feeling out the world around them, of getting to actually see the microscopic world instead of just seeing pictures. Even though I won't be getting one this year, I'm already excited to build and start using my own pocket sized, paper microscope!

- Peirs Anderson,
Tech Specialist

Hoppin' Cajun Holiday at HPL

Winter in the Cajun area is an exciting time with traditions varying by the geographic area as well as the history of the region. It is nearly impossible to generalize every belief and tradition celebrated by the Cajun culture as many of the traditions' origins are unknown or debated. Some of these holidays and customs are still enjoyed today while others have fallen out of popularity.

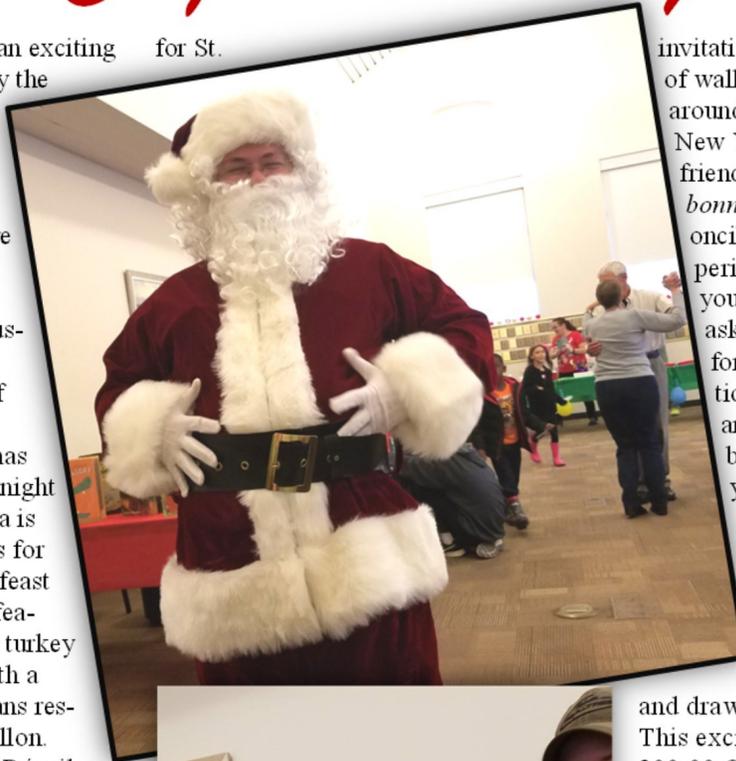
For many families, Christmas Eve is centralized around Midnight Mass, during which time Santa is believed to drop off small toys for children. After Mass comes a feast called Réveillon which often featured the famous turducken (a turkey stuffed with a duck stuffed with a hen). Today many New Orleans restaurants have embraced Réveillon. Restaurants must submit their Réveillon menus in advance to a panel for approval and chefs try to outdo last year's menu as well as each other. Prices for these four to six course meals are lower than usual to make it possible for the less wealthy to enjoy this newly revived tradition.

In areas near the Mississippi River, families have constructed bonfires since the mid-1800s with different theories as to the origin. Some claim that the practice was transplanted from France by priests while others claim that the light from the bonfires helps people see on their walks to Mass. Others state that Santa (who is transported by a pirogue or skiff pulled by alligators) uses the light to see. Today, the practice of building bonfires continues with families competing to see who can build the biggest or most elaborate structure.

Santa Claus is called by different names in this culture based on the geographic region. For those with a French background, he is called Papa Noel. For Germans in the area, he is called Kris Kringle or St. Nicholas. For the Cajuns, the gift-giving figure is a woman called La Christianne.

In addition to festivities on December 25th, families of German descent in the Louisiana area celebrate St. Nicholas Day on December 5th. Families gather to wait

for St.



Nicholas to bring gifts. Another holiday celebrated in past times was Trappers' Christmas which was celebrated in February to accommodate the busy schedules of those in the fur industry during December.

In the southern region, families celebrate New Year's Eve by waiting for a mysterious figure called *Bonhomme Janvier* (January Man) who would pass out gifts and sweets. For some families, New Year's Eve is the gift giving occasion instead of Christmas. Another custom for this day is *La Guignolee* to gather pledges of food and money for a ball to be held between Twelfth Night and Mardi Gras. Men dress in disguise and sneak from house to house and sing a song begging for entry to the house, a 96 foot long sausage, a dance with the eldest daughter, forgiveness for all the mischief, and an

invitation for next year. Today, instead of walking, the men typically drive around in trucks.

New Year's Day is used to visit friends and neighbors and proclaim *bonne annee* (Happy New Year), reconcile any grievances, and wish prosperity on each other. On this day, a young person wishing to marry often asks his or her sweetheart's parents for permission to marry. A traditional dish eaten is black-eyed peas and cabbage which is supposed to bring good luck in the coming year.

Another fun tradition still celebrated today is the Festival of Lights which has been celebrated since 1927. Today's celebration runs from November 20th through January 6th and draws more than 100,000 visitors. This exciting event features more than 300,00 Christmas lights, one hundred displays, and a parade.

The Huntsville Public Library is proud to continue to educate the community on how different cultures celebrate winter holidays in our annual "Holidays Around the World," program which is sponsored by the Friends of the Huntsville Public Library. In the past, we have set up various country booths from Sri Lanka and Belgium to Hanukah and Kwanza to entertain and teach families with crafts, cultural cuisine, and informational displays.

The library is excited to offer a new approach on this yearly favorite. This year we focused on one culture in "Holidays around the World: Jubilee on the Bayou" as we celebrated the Cajun culture and educate on the rich traditions found in it.

This event featured live music courtesy of the *Port Arthur Playboys Cajun Band*. In addition to enjoying the toe-tapping rhythms of the "swamp pop" music, participants also munched on Cajun goodies donated by Huntsville restaurant Arnaud's Cajun Kitchen.

What's a bayou party without some local wildlife? Crocodile Encounters featured alligators and event-goers talked to the staff of Crocodile Encounters in a "Meet the Keeper" type presentation.

- Rachel McPhail,
Children's Coordinator