

# Culture, Learning and Recreation



West Regional Library



Libraries offer computer access



- Libraries hosted 9.4 million walk-in customers — 90 percent service satisfaction rating.
- 585,000 customers participated in 20,000 library programs.
- Parks Division manages approximately 6,500 acres.
- Cultural Division awarded \$3.2 million to 122 artists and art organizations to support the arts.

Broward County is a multi-cultural community serving residents and visitors with diverse needs and interests. The County seeks to provide a culturally rich environment with recreational and educational opportunities for everyone. This is accomplished through award-winning park and library systems, and a continuing commitment to cultural enrichment and historical preservation.

## Libraries

Broward County Libraries have responded to the public's growing demand for access to information through technology. In 2010, a new 70 station "Cybrary" opened at the Main Library and served more than 80,000 library customers. New social networking sites, including Facebook and Twitter, were launched. Wireless access was added at all branches, and for greater customer convenience, 50 self-checkout terminals were installed.

County libraries are centers for enhanced learning opportunities. More than 10.7 million items were checked out from 37 library locations throughout Broward County. Through a \$100,000 grant from the Knight Foundation through the Broward Public Library Foundation, 1,169 free public computer classes reached 14,000 library customers. A grant through the Foundation from the National Endowment for the Arts allowed the purchase of 2,000 books for more than 65 public events at 30 libraries and community organizations during "The Big Read."

This year marked groundbreaking ceremonies for two new library facilities: the new Dania Beach Branch Library, which will replace a leased facility; and the new Children's Reading Center and Museum, a partnership with Young at Art. A new Lauderdale Lakes branch was also opened in 2010.

The Broward County Historical Commission, now part of the Libraries Division, moved into its new home, the former West Side Grade School in Fort Lauderdale.

## Parks

In FY 2010, the County's park system hosted 4 million visitors in its 18 regional parks, four nature centers, and natural areas.

Through 42 partnerships with municipalities and other agencies, SWIM Central taught water safety to more than 29,000 children from 135 elementary schools. More than 275,000 children have gone through the program since it was created a decade ago, and none has become a drowning or near-drowning victim.



*Caitlyn's Corral*

The Parks' Special Populations Section implemented an Education for Leisure Program with 65 initiatives for more than 1,000 participants, and collaborated with community organizations to hold the 30th Annual South Florida DisAbilities Expo.

Vista View Park celebrated a \$2.2 million expansion with a re-opening ceremony in November 2009. Caitlyn's Corral playground was awarded certification from Boundless Playgrounds in recognition of going beyond the minimum requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act.



*Central Broward Regional Park*

Central Broward Regional Park in Lauderhill played host to The Pearls Cup, the first international cricket match played in the United States, where Sri Lanka and the New Zealand BLACKCAPS faced off in a three-match Twenty20 Series last May. More than 7,500 people attended.

The County Parks system is committed to preserving natural areas and on May 7, the Herman and Dorothy Shooster Preserve in Margate was dedicated. In other locations, staff and volunteers worked to clean trails and remove invasive plants, replacing them with native vegetation.

### **Cultural Arts**



*Miramar Cultural Center*

The County's Cultural Division enhances quality of life in the community through development of the arts. This is accomplished through funding local jobs, organizing major Public Art and Design Exhibits, and engaging the public in long-term planning for Broward County's cultural and economic development.

This past year, the Cultural Division used a \$250,000 ARRA grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, to preserve 48 jobs in 16 cultural organizations.

The "Natural Forces" exhibition of Public Art and Design traveled to local cultural centers and museums and was viewed by more than 1.4 million people.

CreativeBROWARD 2020, A Plan for Cultural and Economic Development, was completed. More than 1,000 participants contributed recommendations to help create a blueprint for the next decade.