

Golden Isles Arts & Humanities

Brunswick, GA

Grant request: \$15,000

Book selection: *In the Heart of the Sea*

Financial information:

Previous fiscal year expenses: \$283,272

Current fiscal year expenses: \$315,163

Project information:

Proposed programming start date: 02-07-2020

Proposed programming end date: 03-08-2020

Number of partner organizations: 56

Number of book discussions: 12

Total number of events: 50

Anticipated total participants: 15,000

Please describe your community you plan to reach.

Programming takes place in Coastal GA in Glynn, McIntosh and Camden counties with additional activities in Brantley, Charlton, Long and Wayne counties. This is a diverse region that is rich in history and natural beauty with beaches, marshes, farm and timberland. Glynn Co. is the population center for the region with 84,000 people; total for this area is approximately 200,000. Regionally the area is 67% White, 26% Black, 6% Hispanic and 1% other. 23% of the population is under 18 and 18% is over 65. Our community changes during the year with a large influx of tourists in the summer and again in the winter. Tourism is the primary industry; there are few major businesses. Though perceived as a wealthy area, we are home to people of all economic levels. Median household income is \$46,000; 17% of the population is below poverty level. Glynn is the hub of cultural arts for the region; the outlying counties are rural with little arts programming except through churches, schools or libraries.

Why did you choose this book for this community?

We are a community surrounded by the sea and our natural environment is the primary reason that we thrive; much like Nantucket, we are dependent on the sea for our economy as tourism is our primary industry. People come for the beaches, the fishing, the marshes and the wildlife and marine life that inhabit it. As *In the Heart of the Sea* explores the tenuous relationship that we have with the natural world, it is a perfect selection in terms of our own relationship with the environment. The waters off coastal Georgia and north Florida are the only known calving grounds for the Atlantic right whale, allowing for further exploration of the 19th century whaling industry that led to its current designation as one of the most endangered species in the world. Harrowing tales of survival are also fascinating to us as we ponder our own strength of will in the face of insurmountable circumstances and it is certain to engage a broad range of our community.

What are your intended outcomes for this project?

1-To continue to engage as many individuals as we can with our selected book(s). We will accomplish this with a variety of programming including book discussions, lectures, films and art experiences designed to look at our own environment and our relationship to it through the eyes of the past and the present, to explore leadership in the face of calamity and to discuss how true events inspire great literature.

2-To build on our Middle and Little Read events for young people ages K-12. We will add additional performances for both middle and elementary schools connected to their books, expand our resource materials for our selected books for young readers, and offer workshops to share these materials with teachers.

3-To add a minimum of four new partners to our NEA Big Read activities. We have already contacted several of our local environmental organizations that have not partnered with us before and they will not only offer great programs but will bring new audiences with them.

Organization Description

Describe your organization's history, programming, and achievements.

Mission Statement: The mission of Golden Isles Arts and Humanities Association is to provide distinctive cultural events and education that engages, inspires and celebrates our community. Golden Isles Arts and Humanities Association (GIAHA) is the coordinating arts council for Glynn County and the City of Brunswick and managers of the Historic Ritz Theatre since 1989. GIAHA provides the community with: The Annual Performing Art Series, 7 to 9 show series of music, theatre, dance featuring international or national performers or locally or regionally produced performances; Sounds by the Sea, a 5 concert summer series featuring local and regional musicians; Arts-in-Education programs in all elementary and middle public schools in Glynn County including workshops and residencies with local and regional artists, performances, exhibits, poetry and playwriting competitions, and summer theater camps; visual arts and humanities exhibits in the Ritz Theatre Gallery; special events and performances such as the Summer Classic Film Festival and Cinema Gourmet, free concerts by military bands, and the annual Old Fashioned Fourth of July celebration; and serves as the cultural arts information center for Glynn County. GIAHA has a strong history of creating, developing and implementing a variety of programming. In addition to presenting a large number of music, theatre and dance performances, we have produced quality theater productions with both local nonprofessional actors and professional Equity actors. Annually, we produce a Christmas show - this past December, A Christmas Carol. We typically produce 1 to 2 shows during the season. We have successfully continued The Golden Isles Penguin Project a musical theatre production that has young people with disabilities taking on all roles and are about to begin rehearsals for our third production, Shrek, The Musical JR.

Describe your organization's experience with presenting community-wide programming that demonstrates an ability to conduct a successful NEA Big Read.

GIAHA is very proud to have been selected to participate in The NEA Big Read twelve times and each year participation has grown. In September 2007, our first Big Read included a staged reading of "Fahrenheit 451," featuring live music composed specifically for the event; we followed with "To Kill a Mockingbird" (Jan/Feb 2009) which featured "On the Air" daily chapter readings of the novel; in October 2009, the community focused on The Tales and Poems of Edgar Allan Poe with a "Poe Hunt" kickoff event and began to expand programming in the surrounding counties; Big Read 4, "The Great Gatsby," we added new partners in Camden and McIntosh counties and produced a performance, "Ain't We Got Fun - The 1920's In Concert;" for Big Read 5, we did our first radio theatre production of "The Maltese Falcon," to a live audience and aired it on our local radio station; Big Read 6 focused on Thornton Wilder and included a production of "Our Town;" in 2014 we successfully brought "True Grit" to the community including an on air reading of the novel with local actors; February of 2015 featured "A Tribute to Duke Ellington and the Harlem Renaissance" concert with specially arranged music, poetry readings and a video tribute during our "Their Eyes Were Watching God" Big Read. February 2016 "The Adventures of Tom Sawyer" featured Film Fridays, Adventure Saturdays and On Stage Sundays, four full weekends of events. February 2017 and "A Wizard of Earthsea" had a Dragons and Other Fantastical Creatures parade and a live staged reading of the novel; and last February, we produced our own Caravan of the Arts with a Shakespeare Variety Show as we read Station Eleven. We are about to launch Big Read 12 of "Everything I Never Told You" with staged readings of Raisin in the Sun and Clybourne Park. The Big Read ties directly into what we already do and has allowed us to expand and to experiment with our programs as well.

Programming Description

Describe your programming plans in detail. Provide details on the types of activities, target audiences for those activities, locations, and intended dates. Explain how your activities will engage audiences with your selected book.

Our programming for our 13th NEA Big Read, Coastal GA Reads “In the Heart of the Sea,” is intended for audiences K-12, college students and individuals throughout the community. We will give away 1000 copies of the book and copies will be available through all of our partners beginning in mid-December. We will give copies of our Middle and Little Read titles to every library and class sets to every media center in every school in the Camden, Glynn, and McIntosh school systems. We will kick off on February 7, 2020 during the monthly First Friday event that brings hundreds of people into downtown Brunswick. Proclamations will be presented by the city and the county, NEA Big Read exhibits will open, people can pick up A Whale of a Tote Bag with a copy of the book and schedule of events and tour the Environmental Fair that will be set up throughout the downtown area with local organizations including the GA Dept. of Natural Resources, The Georgia Sea Turtle Center, Keep Golden Isles Beautiful, and Green Scene with displays about Coastal GA’s natural resources and marine life and hands on activities for young people. The evening will top off with a screening of the documentary “Saving Luna” at the Ritz Theatre.

Special events will include: A production of “Moby Dick” (script adapted by Mark Rosenwinkel with a four person cast) produced by GIAHA for two student matinees and three public performances Feb 24 – March 1 at the Ritz Theatre; we will bring in a one man stage show, “Pirate School” to the Ritz for K-5 student matinee (date TBD); three film series: “Thar She Blows” featuring whaling and seafaring movies (In the Heart of the Sea, Moby Dick, Master an Commander, Mutiny on the Bounty); “I Will Survive” featuring films about survival (Cast Away, Alive, Life of Pi, Into the Wild) and “Giants of the Sea” featuring documentaries on the history of whaling and our relationship with these mammals (Into the Deep: American Whaling and the World; Saving Luna; Blackfish.) Films will be shown at the Ritz, College of Coastal GA, the Casino Theatre on St Simons Island, and at the branches of the two library systems on various dates and times throughout the month. In addition, Green Scene will host their annual film festival, Green Screen, featuring short films and panel discussions, at the Ritz on Feb. 1. We would love to have author Nathaniel Philbrick give the keynote address but at this writing we have not heard back from his lecture agent to set a date or discuss fee. If he is unavailable or unaffordable, we will have Cody Marrs, Associate Professor of English and Melville scholar at the University of Georgia (who will be doing a lecture as well) to serve as the keynote speaker. Additional lectures include: Clay George with the GA Department of Natural Resources on the Atlantic right whale; Dr. Jim Sanders with the Skidaway Institute of Oceanography on the important role the ocean plays in our lives; and biology professor David Stasek of the College of Coastal GA to discuss marine life in the Golden Isles. Additional lectures will include: Dr. Jon Hershey from Highlands College, ‘True Stories to Great Literature,’ Dr. Hector Monford, College of Coastal GA, ‘How the Industrial Revolution Changed America,’ and Dr. Aurora Nunez, “The Psychology of Decision.” Lectures will take place at the Ritz Theatre, college, Casino Building on St Simons and at other libraries in the system. Hands on activities will include author June Hall McCash leading a ‘Writing History’ workshop, and The Lady Jane shrimp boat and Jekyll Island Dolphin Excursions will offer special tour rates for guests to go out on the sea do some shrimping or maybe even see a right whale. We are in discussion with Little St Simons Island about doing a discounted tour to explore the Island's maritime forests and diverse wetland ecosystems. We will also be promoting the Red Cross CPR Workshops and our local EMA will host disaster preparedness workshops. The “Sea of Art” exhibit in the Ritz Theatre Gallery will feature artwork that focuses on the users of the ocean- man and animal and young readers will create work for “I Am A Pirate” to be displayed at the Brunswick Library. Both exhibits will run from February 7 – 28.

Our Middle and Little Read companion titles will be “The Wreckers” by Iain Lawrence for upper elementary and middle school students and “How I Became A Pirate” by Melinda Long for Pre-K – 3 grades. Resource and activity materials will be created for “The Wreckers” and Pirate kits will be made available to elementary schools and libraries with scripts/costumes/props to act out the story along with additional resource materials. Materials will be ready for schools use August 2019 at the start of the school year and we will host workshops for teachers in September and again in January on how to use provided materials. We are working with the school system to have these happen on in-service learning days. As mentioned above, students will have the opportunity to attend a live performance of ‘Moby Dick’ and ‘Pirate School’ and libraries in both Marshes of Glynn and Three Rivers systems will host films specifically for young people

Applicant: Golden Isles Arts & Humanities

(Free Willy, Finding Dory, Pirates of the Caribbean.) Little Read Story Times for preschoolers will also take place at all libraries. High school and middle school students will create artwork for the “Sea of Art” exhibit and elementary students will create “I Am a Pirate” artwork for the Brunswick Library. Glynn Visual Arts will offer workshops for students creating sea-themed paintings with found beach objects that they will display at Glynn Visual Arts in a special exhibit at the end of the month. Book discussions will be held at the 2 branches of the Marshes of Glynn Libraries and the 8 branches of the Three Rivers Regional Libraries, and 2 on the campus of the College of Coastal GA.

Partnerships Description

(a) Describe your partnerships with libraries (as applicable) and community organizations. (b) Explain the role each partner will play in your program, the activities each partner will undertake with your organization, and whether these partnerships are confirmed or pending. (c) Explain how your partnerships will allow you to reach your intended audience(s) and strengthen or build new communities around the NEA Big Read activities.

1. Our primary partners for The Big Read are The Marshes of Glynn Library System, The College of Coastal Georgia (CCGA), Three Rivers Regional Library System, and the Glynn, McIntosh and Camden County School Systems. Additional partners include The Literary Guild of St. Simons Island, Friends of the Brunswick Library, hello/Goodbuy-St Marks Foundation, Glynn Visual Arts, Green Scene of Coastal Georgia, Georgia Department of Natural Resources (local branch), Keep Golden Isles Beautiful, the Georgia Sea Turtle Center and local media (see Promotion for details of these partnerships.)

2. The Marshes of Glynn Library System is a confirmed and enthusiastic partner. Marshes of Glynn oversees the Brunswick and St. Simons Library. They have staff dedicated to the project and will be instrumental in planning and implementing The Big Read. In addition to hosting book discussions at their library branches, screening films, and having special events, the library will help develop the Little Big Read programming for the schools and the libraries. The College of Coastal Georgia, with campuses in Glynn and Camden counties, is also fully behind this initiative and we work closely with the Department of Arts and Humanities and the college library to select speakers and develop programming for both students and the public. Two English classes during the winter semester are now dedicated to The Big Read selection and students are required to assist with various Big Read events to gain In-Service Learning credit. Several of the college's professors enthusiastically offer lectures in their respective fields and CCGA also provides support by writing grants to secure additional funding. Three Rivers Regional Library Systems serves eight libraries in six rural South Georgia counties. They will coordinate book distribution in those counties as well as set up book discussions, film screenings and Little Big Read programs. They are fully committed to expanding the programming at their libraries and finding new means of promoting these events within the smaller communities. The Glynn, Camden, and McIntosh School Systems are confirmed partners and students in elementary, middle and high school will be a part of the Big., Middle and Little Read. They will provide promotional support of the event and create special programs to tie into the Big Reads at the schools. Media specialists in all the schools will create Big Read activities and art teachers in all the schools will work with their students to create artwork for the Sea of Art and I Am a Pirate exhibits. The Literary Guild of St. Simons Island, Friends of the Brunswick Library and hello/Goodbuy-St Marks Foundation are committed partners providing funding, volunteers, and promotional support. Glynn Visual Arts is confirmed to do the art workshop and Green Scene of Coastal GA is already working on the Green Screen Film Festival. Pending at this writing is the partnership with the GA DNR but Keep Golden Isles Beautiful and the Georgia Sea Turtle Center are on board and we are certain the DNR will join in. Pending also is support both financial and promotional from local businesses like our local bookstores, restaurants, retail shops, though we have always been able to count on many of them for past Big Reads.

3. Each of these partners is able to help us connect with our intended audience of students, parents, and individuals in the Southeast GA area as they each serve one or more of these audiences. We anticipate reaching even more individuals as we add new businesses and organizations, like our local environmental and nature groups, as they each have their own unique audience base that will become a part of The Big Read.

Promotional Description

(a) Describe how you will promote your programming. Discuss any proposed or existing partnerships with specific media outlets. (b) Explain how your program will utilize the PDF digital resources found on arts.gov and distribute copies of your reading selection.

Coastal Georgia Reads In the Heart of the Sea will be promoted through all our local media and online resources. We have an extensive media list covering all the counties within our planned programming area. Partnering with The Brunswick News, our local newspaper that is distributed regionally, we will run two weekly ads for the five weeks of The Big Read featuring a weekly schedule of upcoming events. IHeartRadio, our radio partner, will run PSAs and ads. A poster listing the entire schedule of events will be placed in all 10 public libraries in the region, on the college campus, and other targeted locations. The schedule will also appear in all available online calendars and separate calendar for NEA Big Read events will be created linked to our and our partners' websites. NEA Big Read will be in our season brochure and direct mail postcards will promote events. A page on our website will be dedicated to The Big Read. All partners will link to our site and the NEA Big Read site. GIAHA and our partners will promote NEA Big Read on our respective Facebook pages with daily/weekly posts and through Events invitations. Weekly email blasts will be sent to our 2400+ email list. We have relationships with local papers in our neighboring counties and know that they will provide space for ads, press releases and photos of events.

We will promote the digital educational materials through the libraries', college's and our websites with links to the NEA site along with a special "Teacher's Resources" section that has links directly to the online versions of the Readers Guides. Other local partners will also have links to the online versions on their websites. We will emphasize the availability of the digital resources in all formats. A separate Facebook group will be created for educators to share information along with events targeted to schools and students. We will also have printed copies of the Readers' Guide available to pick up for those who do not go online.

Organizer Biographies

Outline the key individuals and/or volunteers who will plan and implement the programming, noting their anticipated roles and responsibilities in your proposed programs, and experience or capacity for managing a NEA Big Read. Include partner organizations' staff as applicable.

Our NEA Big Read is staffed by GIAHA's Executive Director and Associate Director with assistance from the Program Coordinator for Brunswick-Glynn County Library and the Public Services Librarian for the college. Responsibilities include program development, implementation, scheduling, marketing and securing funding. GIAHA staff coordinates the kick off, theatre productions and field trips for both shows, host film series, and the keynote address. Staff will also develop the "Pirate" kits, "The Wreckers" resource guide and coordinate the teacher workshops. In addition they will be responsible for creating all marketing materials as well as maintain the website and social media and securing additional funding. GIAHA has managed The NEA Big Read in Coastal Georgia twelve times and though the staff is small, their experience and commitment to their mission has increased the level of community participation. The Executive Director has served in that capacity for 20 years; she has a strong background in theatre and in managing the day-to-day operations of the organization. The Associate Director has an MFA in Theatre, teaches part-time at the College of Coastal GA and has strong community connections. Marshes of Glynn Library staff will coordinate events at libraries, and assist with the development of Little Big Read programming for the schools and the libraries. College of Coastal Georgia staff will coordinate events at the Brunswick and Camden campuses, assist with guest speakers and writing grants for additional funding. The director and program coordinator of the Three Rivers Regional Library System will coordinate programming in six additional counties as well as assist with publicity for the program. All of these partners have been involved with past Big Read programs, some since the first year. They all bring great ideas, resources and strong experience in producing and managing programs for the community



January 19, 2019

Heather Heath
Executive Director
Golden Isles Arts and Humanities Association
1530 Newcastle Street
Brunswick, GA 31520

Dear Ms. Heath:

On behalf of the Marshes of Glynn Libraries, I write supporting the partnership with the Golden Isles Arts and Humanities Association for The Big Read: *The Heart of The Sea*. Being part of this wonderful community engaging project again in 2020 will greatly benefit everyone in our area, as well as will once again be deeply cherished by all involved.

As a principal partner, the libraries will hold literacy programs and promote The Big Read within the Glynn County community. The Big Read's mission to restore reading to the center of American culture is at the core of the Marshes of Glynn Libraries' mission. After the 2020 Big Read initiative is complete, the libraries will continue to advocate and push the restoration of the love of reading for our community.

The Marshes of Glynn Libraries are proud to continue its support, and looks forward to collaborating with your organization to make The Big Read: *The Heart of The Sea* another amazing literary celebration for our community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Geri Lynn Mullis". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Gerri Lynn Mullis
Marshes of Glynn Libraries Director



TO: Arts Midwest

January 23, 2019

FROM: Gould Library at the College of Coastal Georgia, One College Dr., Brunswick, GA 31520

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in support of a Big Read grant that is being submitted by the Golden Isles Arts and Humanities Association (GIAHA) in Brunswick, Georgia. Under the leadership of Heather Heath, Executive Director of GIAHA, our coastal community has been fortunate to receive 12 Big Read grants, each one offering months of events, programming, speakers and discussions.

The Big Read began in Brunswick with *Fahrenheit 451* back in the mid90s. It was well received in this area because up until that time cultural offerings were limited. Thanks to Ms. Heath, the program has continued for over a decade with each book bringing a sense of togetherness and appreciation for literature and reading. And we've run the gamut of titles, from *To Kill a Mockingbird* and *The Great Gatsby* to *The Wizard of Earthsea* to *Their Eyes Were Watching God* to *Station 11* and to 2019's *Everything I Never Told You* (the college has had to order more books and the Big Read hasn't even officially started!). The book selected for 2020, *The Heart of the Sea*, is an excellent choice. Not only is it exquisitely written by a well-known author, it will be the first time that a nonfiction book has been offered. There are so many possibilities for lectures and programs, since Brunswick is a port city located just a few miles from coastal waterways and miles of beaches. Just about everyone in coastal Georgia has some connection with water—in industry, education, and recreation. At the college we offer a degree in Marine Biology and it is one of our most popular departments. Those students, in particular, will find *The Heart of the Sea* fascinating.

Ms. Heath has been the Executive Director of GIAHA for over 15 years. Under her direction it has grown from a small arts and humanities organization to an essential and integral part of the community. She is regarded by many as a “local treasure.” She has brought in theater, opera, ballet, film series—her “Gourmet Cinema” is legendary--and workshops, to name a few. Within the last few years she has also spearheaded “The Penguin Project,” which is theater performed by children with special needs. These shows have been awe-inspiring. Ms. Heath is creative and innovative and she reaches out to all ages and ethnic and economic groups. She also has a remarkable talent for partnering with other community and area organizations, such as the public schools and libraries, who participate with “The Little Read,” for school age children. She doesn't limit her outreach to Glynn County, either. She makes sure that anyone and everyone is welcome to participate in whatever GIAHA has to offer. Many “snowbirds” who stay in our community for the winter, come because of GIAHA's cultural offerings and The Big Read is one of their favorites.

We are so fortunate to have opportunities for The Big Read, and it's remarkable that Arts Midwest is able to offer the program year after year. Your efforts are greatly appreciated by communities such as ours.

Cary Knapp, Public Services Librarian