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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

National Library Card Sign-Up Month

(Panama City, Fla.) The value of today's libraries goes beyond books. Librarians are leaders in their communities – helping people of any age to find what they need to help improve their quality of life. This September, the Northwest Regional Library System (NWRLS) is joining with libraries nationwide for Library Card Sign-up Month, an initiative to make sure that every student has the most important school supply of all – a free library card.

Libraries build a foundation for children's future success starting from the earliest stages of development. The library offers books, classes, and events that instill a love of reading and encourages creativity and exploration. Early literacy classes prepare preschoolers for Kindergarten by exposing them to new vocabulary, a structured learning environment, and social experiences. School-aged children's academic needs are supported through the availability of homework and research resources, high-speed internet access, and experienced staff who can teach students how to use these tools.

NWRLS has branches in Panama City, Panama City Beach, Parker, Springfield, Port St. Joe, Wewahitchka, Bristol and Hosford. An important part of the library's mission is to provide every resident with access to current technology and the opportunity to participate in hands-on training and innovative programming. All NWRLS locations provide access to high-speed internet computers with black and white and color printing, as well as Wi-Fi so students can connect their personal devices to the internet. Group and one-on-one technology tutoring is available, including instruction on how to download ebooks available through the library to a laptop, tablet, or smartphone. Many locations now also offer 3D printing services including one-on-one or small group instruction so students can have hands-on opportunities to learn this emerging technology.

Libraries are an essential part of the educational infrastructure of any community and we are here to serve you. The NWRLS collection includes over 300,000 books, audio books, DVD movies, and more (including ukuleles!), which can be borrowed for 3 weeks at a time.

"A library card can put a whole world of information, adventure, and discovery in your hands," says Library Director Robin Shader. "Our libraries offer services that inspire children and give them the tools and support they need to achieve their academic goals. Our pre-school programs prepare children to be successful when they start school; our programs for older children provide opportunities to learn new technologies, engage socially with their peers, and learn life skills. There's really something for everyone, and it's all free with a library card."

For more information about how to sign up for a library card, visit any NWRLS location in person or online at www.nwrls.com.

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