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Museums, library receive resources to conserve materials

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Many people rely on their local museums and libraries to learn about a culture, research the history of an area or do in-depth research.

By the end of 2008, the Institute of Museum and Library Services will provide the Connecting to Collections Bookshelf, a set of conservation books, DVDs and online resources, to 851 small institutions nationwide to ensure that they can maintain materials that can deteriorate from age or other natural causes.

The Reese Library of Augusta State University, the Lucy Craft Laney Museum of Black History and the Morris Museum of Art were among those chosen to receive the resource last month.

"The IMLS did a survey that showed that a lot of smaller institutions were underfunded or isolated from the resources they need in order to properly take care of their collections," said Carol Waggoner-Angleton, Reese Library's librarian.

The library will use the materials primarily to learn how to store things in its special collections, which include the history of Augusta State University, the Augusta area and Georgia, along with genealogy. It will be readily available to other departments on the campus and to the community, Mrs. Waggoner-Angleton said.

The Lucy Craft Laney Museum of Black History will use the educational tool for its staff to prepare for events that might affect their collections, said Corey Rogers, the museum's historian.

"A good example of this would be the materials supplied by the IMLS bookshelf pertaining to natural disasters and other types of tragic circumstances that may befall an institution like ours," he said. "We as a staff need to be as proficient as possible in dealing with such occurrences."

The museum houses paintings, photographs, documents and artifacts that make up its permanent exhibitions and materials from its rotating exhibitions.

The Morris Museum of Art stores thousands of works of art and pieces of information, so it's important to know how to take care of each one, said librarian Cary Wilkins.

"We have a wide range of materials stored here, including books, audio, videotapes, DVDs, vertical files, manuscript collections, slides and photographs. We have a lot of different kinds of materials, each requiring a different storage strategy," he said. "These resources will help us make sure that we are storing them in the best possible way so that they will remain in excellent condition for years to come."

For more information on the Institute of Museum and Library Services and the Connecting to Collections Bookshelf, visit www.ims.gov.

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Links:

[1] <http://www.ims.gov>

[2] <mailto:nikasha.dicks@augustachronicle.com>