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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PANAMA CITY BEACH, FL April 29, 2013 – The Panama City Beach Library Foundation received a significant grant from The St. Joe Community Foundation, a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to the ongoing improvement of the quality of life of the people who live, work, and play in Northwest Florida. The St. Joe Community Foundation awarded a grant in the amount of \$2,500 in support of the Beach Library's 2013 Reading and Art Programs for Children and their families.

Upon providing the PCB Library Foundation the good news, Janet P. Greeno, Executive Assistant, St. Joe Community Foundation, said, "One of The St. Joe Community Foundation's key goals is improving education."

A portion of the proceeds from the grant has already begun supporting the Second Annual Children's Art Exhibits. These exhibits showcase the artwork of over 300 students attending the three beach elementary schools, Breakfast Point Academy, Patronis and Hutchison Beach. The PCB Library Foundation began the Children's Art Program last year in response to the need for more art opportunities on the beach. Many of the elementary school art teachers expressed concern about the lack of art exhibits at the beach for talented art students. Those same art teachers were smiling ear to ear when many children, their parents, and even many who weren't in the art show at all were able to show up for the art exhibit held at the PCB Library.

In addition, the library also hosts a Children's Summer Reading Program, which is designed to help children maintain or improve their reading readiness when they go back to school. In 2012, The PCB Public Library increased the attendance 46% from the year before. Over 900 participants joined the Summer Reading Program last year and our goal this year is to increase enrollment again. The Summer Reading program is a great way to help foster the love of reading among the children while helping them maintain strong reading habits during the summer. The public library is important to the reading achievement of many children, particularly those children who lack other reading resources.

Finally, the weekly pre-school reading program and other children's programs such as events to celebrate Children's Book Week and special holidays will be expanded and funded by the grant from St. Joe Community Foundation. In addition to the program funding, there is an allocation for new books for the Children's Department.

"The St. Joe Foundation is proud to be a part of such vibrant and successful programs that offer creative ways to keep young people engaged in art and reading throughout the year," said Lewis Howell, Board of Trustee Member for The St. Joe Community Foundation. "By keeping students engaged and helping to nurture a love for reading and art, the programs can have a profound effect on student achievement."

Over the last couple of years, since relocating to a larger facility, the PCB Library, with the help of the PCB Library Foundation has been able to provide additional services and resources due to the donations received from generous individuals, businesses and organizations such as the St. Joe Community Foundation. On behalf of the Panama City Beach Public Library, the PCB Library Foundation, and all the children who we see smiling and benefitting from these programs each year, thank you!

About The St. Joe Community Foundation:

Since its inception, The St. Joe Community Foundation has provided nearly \$17 million in grants to improve the quality of life in the communities it serves. The Foundation provides charitable grants toward the civic infrastructure of communities in Bay and Walton Counties. The Foundation's primary focus is on strengthening education, improving healthcare, protecting the environment and supporting local cultural interests. These efforts help build healthy, caring, long-lived communities. For more information, visit www.stjcf.com.

About The Panama City Beach Library Foundation, Inc.:

The mission of the Panama City Beach Library Foundation is to support the PCB Library and to help donors achieve their charitable goals. Organized as a 501(c)(3) in 2010 by a group of dedicated volunteers, the Foundation has provided more than \$35,000 to the Beach Library in the last eighteen months. Included in the funding is an endowment, a permanent fund, which produces income annually – and in perpetuity. "A quality community deserves a quality public library" resonates with the Board of Directors of the Foundation.

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