

WORLDS

EXPLORE YOUR WORLD

Read, Learn, Connect at Your Library



- CALENDAR
- BOOK REVIEW
- BOOKMARKS
- PROFILE

words

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MARION COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY

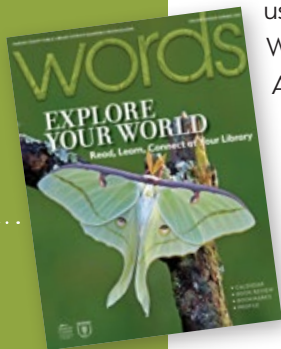
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ON THE COVER

This Luna moth, with a wingspan up to four and a half inches, was photographed by Leroy Simon. His beautiful photos of nature are reminders to explore our world!



The Marion County Public Library System is a department of the Marion County Board of County Commissioners and is funded by them through general funds. WORDS newsmagazine is funded by the Friends of the Ocala Public Library, Inc.

a word from the director



Julie Sieg

MARION COUNTY PUBLIC
LIBRARY SYSTEM DIRECTOR

EXPLORE YOUR WORLD can take on different meanings depending upon your perspective. Some of you may think of this exploration as traveling to and experiencing new places and cultures. Others may think of learning more about the place you live, people you encounter and activities to enjoy. Others may think of remaining hyper vigilant of your surroundings, for safety sake. We're all so very different.

When I think of "Explore Your World," I think back to when our 23-year-old son was a toddler and began to explore his world and thus, helped to expand my world as well. From the get-go, my husband and I realized our son was a nature boy, and he still is. He learned and responded to all things nature. Counting games went along the lines of "How many lizards, squirrels, shells, do you see?" His favorite children's book was *A Fish Out of Water*. His wonder, exploration and observation knew no bounds.

Imagine following a trail of ants as they carry food that weighs much more than their body weight, and then all the worker ants scurrying around on the anthill. What are they doing? How many ants are below the ground?

Imagine a patch of limerock and all the various fossilized shells it contains. These were found simply by exploring the road bed in front of our house.

Imagine finding an arrowhead that the Native Americans created out of flint rock. How did they make this tool and what were the various ways they used it? What made a good arrowhead and what made it worthless? What if you got your own flint and tried to mimic the way the Native Americans made arrowheads?

As you enjoy the photos from Mr. Simon, think about the wonder of the world he helps to bring to life with his beautiful, detailed photos.

Julie Sieg

CONNECT WITH YOUR LIBRARY

NATIONAL LIBRARY WEEK: THEN AND NOW

BY JESSICA MASON

As far back as 1916, communities have celebrated their public libraries with various events. The first National Library Week observance was established in 1958, when the American Library Association (ALA) and the National Book Committee teamed up.

In the early 1950s, post war Americans were spending much of their free time watching television or listening to the radio and less time reading books. The National Book Committee came up with the concept of a National Library Week celebration to encourage children and adults to get excited about reading!

As a result, public libraries started raising funds for library materials and bookmobiles, and Friends of the Library groups were established in many cities. Although the National Book Committee was dissolved in the 1970s, ALA pushed forward and got creative with National Library Week promotional efforts. Press releases, featuring national celebrities talking about the great things occurring in public libraries, were featured in newspapers, on television and the radio.



In the 1990s, a website was created for "Log-on @ the Library Day" to help libraries introduce Americans to the internet. And in 2008, celebrity support of National Library Week was expanded with the selection of an honorary chair for each year's celebration.

Today, National Library Week also coincides with National Library Workers Day, National Bookmobile Day and Take Action for Libraries Day. This year National Library Week will be celebrated April 3-9, and the theme is "Connect with Your Library." As communities everywhere deal with the realities of the Covid-19 pandemic, this phrase has

taken on a whole new meaning for public libraries. Over the past two years, your Marion County Public Library System has developed new ways to stay connected to the community by offering curbside pickup of library materials and virtual programming for all ages. Access to the public library system's digital resources such as OverDrive, Freading and various databases continues to provide opportunities to stay connected with one's community and the world. 🌐



EXPLORE YOUR WORLD

AT MARION COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION SITES

BY SCOTT MASON

People love to explore. Whether it's an extensively planned excursion to another country or a new location within your own home town, these adventures are a welcome respite for most everyone. Speaking of local areas to visit, why not take a trip to one of the over 50 unique sites managed by the Marion County Parks & Recreation Department? With many parks, memorials, beautiful natural springs, sports complexes, boat ramps and more, adventures are just around the corner!

The Parks and Recreation Department has four divisions: Administration, Operations, Recreation and Design with a total of 61 employees managing the department. In 2021, Parks brought in \$1,769,000 in revenue and hosted 2.5 million visitors. They also generated over \$3.5 million in direct economic benefit

to our community. According to Director of Parks and Recreation, Jim Couillard, "The parks system saw record setting attendance over the past two years as the benefits of being outside and leading a healthy lifestyle have never been as important as they are today."

“ We could not provide the top-notch services that we provide without our staff and the support from the Marion County Commissioners. We are truly fortunate, and I am grateful to lead such a tremendous team.”

—JIM COUILLARD
Parks and Recreation Director

Other highlights from the Parks 2021 calendar of activities included a pickle ball tournament at Coehadjoe Park, the annual Brick City Carnival with 4,000 attendees and the Cal Ripken 8U World Series held at the Rotary Sportsplex. Many improvements have been made to Parks locations, including ADA accessible sidewalks at the Babe Ruth baseball fields and a rebuilt parking lot at Moss Bluff North.



Parks staff have lots of exciting ideas for 2022 as well. Later this year, Parks will host the first ever Paddle Battle, a kayak race for the general public at KP Hole, with prizes awarded to the winners. Other events include a kayak race to raise money for their summer camp scholarships and new events at the Forest Community Center.

Exploring your world isn't always about finding something new, it can also be about reconnecting in familiar places with family and friends. From hiking trails to boating and swimming or even a relaxing picnic, there are many local ways to "explore your world" right here at Marion County Parks and Recreation. Visit the Parks and Recreation Department's website at parks.marionfl.org for details. 🌿



DAY TRIPS

FOR EXPLORING MARION COUNTY

BY BELLEVIEW PUBLIC LIBRARY STAFF



Marion County may be known for its horse farms, but scattered throughout this beautiful region are some delightful hidden gems. Whether you are just looking for a quick day trip or trying to find your new favorite place, we suggest giving these scenic must-sees a try.



The Canyons Zip Line and Adventure Park

BY HANNAH HIRST

Have you ever wanted to know what it feels like to soar through the treetops of Marion County? If so, The Canyons Zip Line and Adventure Park is the perfect venue. With various zip line tours ranging from one to three hours,

this Central Florida attraction offers views of canyons, cliffs and spring-fed lakes that were once the site of a limestone rock quarry. In addition to zip line tours, kayaking, horseback riding and gem mining are also among the activities one can experience at this adventure park. If you're looking to elevate your day trips to new heights, The Canyons Zip Line and Adventure Park is the place to do it!

Marjorie Harris Carr Cross Florida Greenway

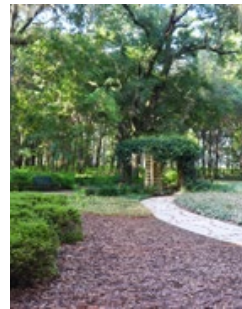
BY KIM DREXEL



The Marjorie Harris Carr Cross Florida Greenway is more than a corridor for wildlife, it's also a hotspot for cyclists! From a smooth paved trail fit for road bikes to double black diamond trails for expert mountain bikers, the Florida Greenway has offerings for all levels of riders. Need a bike? From hardtail to

full-suspension frames and even electric, local bike shops offer an assortment of bicycles for rental. Pack a picnic, because, with numerous trailheads and over 80 miles of trails, you can easily spend all day exploring.

Sholom Park BY STACEY MOYE

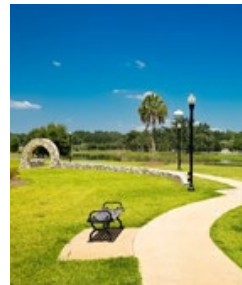


Need a break from the hurry and flurry of modern life? Try the beauty and magic of Sholom Park. The labyrinth path has prompts to encourage introspection. Features include a gorgeous ginger garden, a pond frequented by many local birds, a babbling brook, a pergebo (a flower-covered trellis) and a multitude of

benches where you can sit and gather your thoughts or just relax and enjoy nature. Remarkably, this amazing wonder is open to the public, free of charge!

Tuscawilla Art Park

BY HEATHER WEBB



Looking for a spot where art and the outdoors strike the perfect harmony? This is just what you get at the Tuscawilla Art Park north of the downtown square in Ocala. Larger-than-life sculptures intermingled with botanical wonders are sure to whet your appetite for the arts here at this

Marion County wonder. You can enjoy a self-guided tour or use a smartphone QR code scanner to listen and learn about the artwork situated throughout the park. Some of the artwork is on rotation, so there is always something new to see. Tuscawilla Art Park is a definite must-see in Marion County. 🌿

Día

BY JEROME AZBELL

April 30 is *Día*, a national celebration of both Children's Day and Book Day. *Día* serves as a reminder of the value of literacy for all children, as well as of the value of diversity in children's literature. Join the celebration with these children's books focusing on the diverse experiences of various cultures.

"Salma the Syrian Chef" by Danny Ramadan

The stress of starting a new life in a new country has left Salma's mother tired and sad. Salma wants to cook a Syrian dish to make her smile, but she doesn't know the names of the vegetables in English. It will take a little ingenuity and a lot of help to make Salma's dream a reality.

"When You Trap a Tiger" by Tae Keller

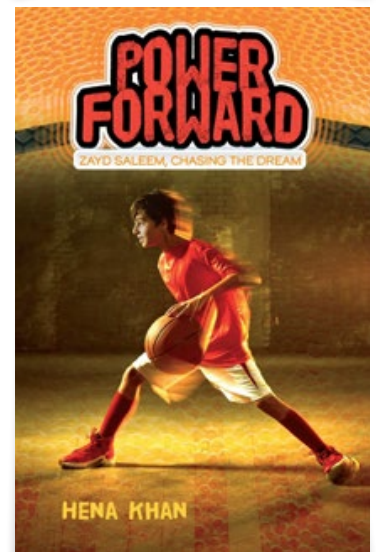
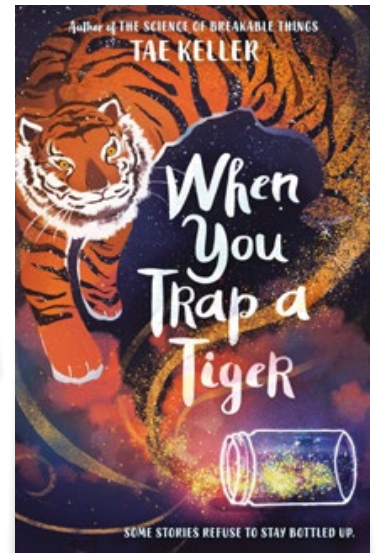
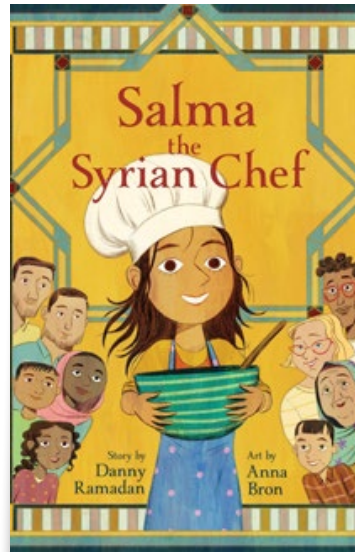
Lily's family is moving to take care of her *Halmoni* (grandmother), a first-generation Korean immigrant who tells magical folktales. During the trip, Lily meets a magical tiger out of Halmoni's stories. Now Lily must discover a secret that, she hopes, will convince the tiger to save Halmoni's life and keep her family whole.

"Red, White, and Whole" by Rajani LaRocca

"I have two lives. One that is Indian, one that is not." Reha struggles to fit into both the Indian-American community of her family and the primarily white middle school she attends. When her mother becomes ill, though, Reha finds that it will take both lives to give her the strength she needs.

"Power Forward" by Hena Khan

Pakistani-American Zayd Saleem dreams of being a basketball star—if only he could convince his parents to let him play ball instead of violin. Small for his age, Zayd will still stop at nothing to see his dream through and become the ball player he wants to be. 🏀





Marion County Day Celebrates Marion County's Unique 178-Year History

BY MARK ANDERSON

On March 26, the county gathers to celebrate Marion County's unique 178-year history at Marion County Day, an annual festival featuring food trucks, vendors and fun activities from around the county.

First held in 2019 to celebrate the county's 175th birthday, Marion County Day was put on hold in both 2020 and 2021 due to Covid-19. Now, Marion County is excited to again host Marion County Day at the McPherson Governmental Complex on March 26 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

MARION COUNTY HISTORY

Many settlers relocating to the area after Florida's purchase from Spain in 1821 came from South Carolina. When forming a new county in 1844, settlers also came from parts of Alachua, Hillsborough, and Mosquito (Orange) Counties. Those settlers decided to name it after Revolutionary War hero General Francis Marion, the "Swamp Fox" who also hailed from South Carolina.

Florida officially became a state in 1845, and the first county commission in 1846 named the county seat "Ocala," a modification of the name "Ocali," a Timucuan Native American name for the area.

On Thanksgiving Day in 1883, a fire raged through downtown Ocala, destroying several businesses. When rebuilding, construction crews used bricks instead of wood or other materials, leading to the "Brick City" nickname that's still used today in Ocala's downtown square. The fire also led to the formation of Ocala's first fire department in 1885, one of the oldest in the state of Florida.

These are just a few of the stories from nearly two centuries of history right here in our community.

MARION COUNTY DAY

Marion County Day celebrates that history with fun, family-friendly activities spanning the parking lot in front of the property appraiser building at McPherson Governmental Complex.



With food trucks, cold beverages, a Kid Zone that's sponsored by Marion County Parks & Recreation, a bounce house, archery station and a petting zoo, Marion County Day is an event you won't want to miss. Plus, stop by Memory Lane, an exhibit featuring Marion County history and artifacts.

Marion County Day is completely free to attend as well, so bring along your friends and neighbors and come celebrate everything our great county has to offer! ♻️

WHAT: Marion County Day

**WHERE: McPherson Governmental Complex
601 SE 25th Ave. Ocala, FL 34471**

WHEN: Saturday, Mar. 26 from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

HOW TO ATTEND: Marion County Day is completely free to attend! Parking will be in the field to the south of the McPherson Complex.



MARION COUNTY NAMES FREEDOM PUBLIC LIBRARY MEETING ROOM IN HONOR OF LIFELONG EDUCATION ADVOCATE, FLORENCE FAY PRITCHARD

The Marion County Commission recognized Florence Fay Pritchard on Nov. 16, 2021 for her help promoting literacy, the Friends of the Freedom Public Library and the Marion County Public Library System. In honor of her efforts, the county commission announced that it was renaming the meeting room at the Freedom Public Library in southwest Ocala the “Florence Fay Pritchard Meeting Room.”

At the meeting, county commissioners called Pritchard to the stage to highlight the work she has done in aid to the Marion County Public Library System, as well as to award her a certificate of recognition.

Pritchard holds a doctorate degree in administration, supervision and curriculum development. She joined the

Friends of the Freedom Public Library after moving to Marion County in 2012. She immediately assumed a leadership role with the group, serving as both vice president and eventually president, a role she continues to hold today.

She was instrumental in developing and guiding the Marion County Friends Council that helps to bring together the six Friends of the Library groups in Marion County.

Pritchard was also recognized for her efforts by Marion County Commissioner Kathy Bryant and Commission Chairman Carl Zalak at the Jan. 22 Friends of the Freedom Public Library annual meeting at the Freedom Public Library. 🌱

MARION COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM AWARDED FLORIDA STATE AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT (ARPA) GRANT

The Marion County Public Library System was awarded a Division of Library and Information Services (DLIS) Florida American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) grant for \$150,278 last fall.

According to Julie Sieg, director of the Marion County Public Library System (MCPLS), “The grant funds will be used for purchasing e-audio for general interest and developing a collection of e-books to expand access to vocational and career electronic resources. This collection will assist job

seekers, those wanting to learn new skills and advance job opportunities, as well as those who may wish to start their own business.”


The expanded digital resources will be available for check out to all those with a Marion County Public Library System card.

In addition to the expansion of their digital collection, the Marion County Public Library System will add self-checkout kiosks at the Headquarters-Ocala, Belleview, Dunnellon, Freedom, Forest and the new 2022 library branch

in the Mary Sue Rich Community Center at Reed Place. The ARPA funding will also allow the MCPLS to implement wireless printing system-wide, as well as install two new in-service printers at the Headquarters-Ocala Public Library.

This project is funded under the provisions of the DLIS Florida American Rescue Act (ARPA) from the Institute of Museum and Library Services. Florida’s DLIS Florida ARPA program is administered by the Department of State’s Division of Library and Information Services. 🌱

program spotlight

Facial coverings are highly encouraged for those attending our programs in-person. If there is a  symbol shown next to a program or group of programs, you may attend virtually or in-person. Contact the listed Marion County Public Library to receive your virtual invitation to those programs.

EXPLORE YOUR WORLD: READ, LEARN, CONNECT!

Marion County Day

Saturday, March 26, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.
McPherson Governmental Complex
Come together with your neighbors and celebrate Marion County's unique 178-year history with this annual festival. See additional details in this issue of WORDS magazine.

Free Comic Book Day

Saturday, May 7
All library locations
Stop by your local library and grab a free comic book while supplies last.
Courtesy of Diamond Comic Distributors.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Seuss-a-palooza! Happy Birthday, Dr. Seuss!

Celebrate the imagination of a creative genius with books, games and crafts inspired by Dr. Seuss!

All programs are sponsored by the Friends of Marion County Public Library groups and the Early Learning Coalition of Marion County. The Headquarters-Ocala program is co-sponsored by the Marion Education Association. All other programs are co-sponsored by United Way of Marion County Reading Pals.

Wednesday, March 2, 4 p.m.
Forest Public Library

Saturday, March 5, 10:30 a.m.
Headquarters-Ocala Public Library

Wednesday, March 9, 10:30 a.m.
Reddick Public Library

Saturday, March 12, 11 a.m.
Fort McCoy Public Library

Tuesday, March 15, 3:30 p.m.
Freedom Public Library

Wednesday, March 16, 3 p.m.
Dunnellon Public Library

Saturday, March 19, 1:30 p.m.
Marion Oaks Public Library

Wednesday, March 23, 10:30 a.m.
Bellevue Public Library



Community Job Fairs

Looking for a career? Find your future at the library.
Thursday, March 24, 11 a.m.–2 p.m.
Forest Public Library
Wednesday, April 20, 11 a.m.–2 p.m.
Bellevue Public Library

FAMILIES

Expand young minds through scientific exploration! Check out other library listings for even more brainy activities for the whole family.

STREAM Dreams

Science + art = fun for the whole family.
Saturdays, March 5 & April 2, 11 a.m.
Fort McCoy Public Library

The Slime Society

Make a slimy stash of your very own.
Saturdays, March 5–April 16, 1 p.m.
Dunnellon Public Library

Science Explorers!

Build your brain and make discoveries!
Wednesdays, March 23 & April 27, 3:30 p.m.
Bellevue Public Library

TEENS

Connect with other teens and change the world! More teen programs and library clubs are listed for each library.

Totally Teen Trivia!

Bring your friends and show off what you know, Jeopardy-style.
Wednesday, March 16, 2 p.m.
Freedom Public Library

Pizza Poetry Slam

Grab the mic and a slice and get poetic! Registration recommended. Call 352-438-2520 to reserve a piece of the pie!
Saturday, April 23, 2 p.m.
Dunnellon Public Library

ADULTS

Project You: Automotive Basics

Expand your life skills toolbox! Expert Clint Foley from Marion County Fleet Management teaches the basics of car maintenance, from checking your car's fluids to changing a tire. It's a gas!
Saturday, April 9, 2 p.m.
Marion Oaks Public Library

Lunch and Learn: Small Business First Steps

Lunch provided. Registration required. Call the host library to register.
The Hispanic Business Council's Julian Sinisterra and Esmirna Caraballo share resources and insights for those ready to start their own small businesses.
Presented by the Hispanic Business Council. Presentado por el Hispanic Business Council.

Tuesday, April 12, 1 p.m.
Headquarters-Ocala Public Library
Tuesday, April 19, 1 p.m.
Marion Oaks Public Library

HEALTH & WELL-BEING

Diabetes Self-Management Class

Registration required. Contact the listed library to register.

Speaker: Jessie Driggers, Health Education Consultant

Learn to manage your diabetes risk by making small changes, such as improving food choices, increasing physical activity, meal planning, preventing complications and medicine and medical care.

Co-sponsored by the Florida Department of Health in Marion County and Marion County Hospital District.

Thursdays, March 3–April 7, 1:30 p.m.
Dunnellon Public Library
Tuesdays, April 5–May 10, 10:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m. (Lunch provided.)
Forest Public Library

The ABCs of Dementia

Debbie Selsalvage, president of Coping with Dementia LLC, presents the basics of Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia and techniques for becoming a better care partner.

Wednesdays, March 9 & April 13, 11 a.m.

Headquarters—Ocala Public Library

Thursday, March 17, 11 a.m.

Forest Public Library

Stress Less

Learn about healthy stress management and discover helpful tools to deal with the daily stressors of life.

Sponsored by the Florida Department of Health in Marion County.

Friday, March 11, 10:30 a.m.

Bellevue Public Library

Caregiver College: Effective

Communication Strategies (VIRTUAL)

Tuesday, April 5, 1 p.m., Online only

Registration required. Visit

<https://tinyurl.com/mcplsalz> or call 800-272-3900 to register.

Explore how communication takes place when someone has Alzheimer's or dementia and identify strategies for communication at each stage of the disease.

Presented by Josephine Cirrinone, BSW, Alzheimer's Community Educator and the Alzheimer's Association.

TAYLOR TIME!

Get more out of life with Renaissance man (and librarian), Taylor Benson. It's eclectic!



Ride the Roads of Marion County

Explore the history of roads and highways in Marion County.

Wednesday,

March 16, 2 p.m.–5 p.m.

Forest Public Library

Shredding in the Stacks

Become an air guitar rock star!

Wednesday, April 20, 3 p.m.

Headquarters—Ocala Public Library

For adults.

BOOK CLUBS

Make new friends and talk about books! Join most groups in person at the library or call the listed library to join via Zoom. You are welcome to attend one or all.

As the Page Turns

Tuesdays, 2:30 p.m.

Freedom Public Library

March 1 "Dewey: The Small-Town Library Cat Who Touched the World" by Vicki Myron

April 5 "The Woman in Cabin 10" by Ruth Ware

May 3 "Leave the World Behind" by Rumaan Alam

Books and Coffee

Mondays, 10:30 a.m.

Fort McCoy Public Library

March 7 Reader's Choice. Bring your favorite!

April 4 "The Help" by Kathryn Stockett

May 2 "Nine Perfect Strangers" by Liane Moriarty

Novels at Night (VIRTUAL ONLY)

Tuesdays, 4:30 p.m.

Headquarters—Ocala Public Library

Call 352-671-8551 to register.

March 8 "Enchantress of Numbers" by Jennifer Chiaverini

April 12 "Woman 99" by Greer Macallister

May 10 "The Midnight Library" by Matt Haig

Forest Readers

Wednesdays, 10:30 a.m.

Forest Public Library

March 9 "The Call of the Wild" by Jack London

March 23 "American Dirt" by Jeanine Cummins

April 13 "The Four Winds" by Kristin Hannah

April 27 "A Walk in the Woods" by Bill Bryson

May 11 "The Exiles" by Christina Baker Kline

May 25 "The Beach House" by Jane Green

Let's Talk Books with Jim!

Mondays, 10:30 a.m.

Reddick Public Library

March 14 "The Four Winds" by Kristin Hannah

April 11 "Cross Creek" by Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings

May 9 "Appaloosa" by Robert B. Parker



Novels at Noon

Wednesdays, noon

Marion Oaks Public Library

March 16 "The Library Book" by Susan Orlean

April 20 "Around the World in 80 Days" by Jules Verne

May 18 "The Handmaid's Tale" by Margaret Atwood

Novels at Night

Thursdays, 5 p.m.

Dunnellon Public Library

March 17 "Big Trouble" by Dave Barry

April 21 "In the Heart of the Sea: The Tragedy of the Whaleship Essex" by Nathaniel Philbrick

May 19 "The Lost City of the Monkey God" by Douglas Preston

Power Hour

Tuesdays, 10:30 a.m.

Bellevue Public Library


March 22 "The Exiles" by Christina Baker Kline

April 26 "The Boys in the Boat" by Daniel James Brown

May 24 "The Giver" by Lois Lowry

HEADQUARTERS—OCALA

2720 E. Silver Springs Blvd.,
Ocala, FL 34470
352-671-8551

Programs are made possible by contributions from the Friends of the Ocala Public Library. Facial coverings are highly encouraged for those attending our programs in person. If there is a  symbol shown next to a program, you may attend in person or virtually. Contact the library to receive your virtual invitation.

SPECIAL EVENT

Seuss-a-palooza! Happy Birthday, Dr. Seuss!

Saturday, March 5, 10:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

For ages 5–12 with caregivers.

Celebrate creativity! See Program Spotlight for more locations.

Sponsored by the Early Learning Coalition of Marion County and the Marion Education Association.



SPECIAL PROGRAMS

HEALTH & WELL-BEING

Improve your life as you connect with others. See Program Spotlight for more information, programs and locations.

The ABCs of Dementia

Wednesdays, March 9 & April 13, 11 a.m.

Caregiver College: Effective Communication Strategies

Tuesday, April 5, 1 p.m.

Virtual only. Registration required.

Visit <https://tinyurl.com/mcplsalz> or call 800-272-3900 to register.

Lunch and Learn:

Small Business First Steps

Tuesday, April 12, 1 p.m.

Lunch provided. Registration required.

Call 352-671-8551 to register.

Get that business started! See

Program Spotlight for more information and locations.

Presented by the Hispanic Business Council.

Presentado por el Hispanic Business Council.

Taylor Time! Shredding in The Stacks

Wednesday, April 20, 3 p.m.

Become an air guitar rock star! See Program Spotlight for more adventures with our own Renaissance man! It's eclectic!

ADULTS

Technology Help Center

Wednesdays, 2–3:30 p.m.

March 2–May 25

Bring your device and drop in.

Crafternoons

Wednesdays, 4:30 p.m.

Get in touch with the right side of your brain.

March 2 *Pressed Floral Bookmarks*

April 6 *Leafy Greeting Cards*

May 4 *Ewok Plushies*

Monday Matinée

Mondays, 2 p.m.

Movies for adults. Anyone younger than age 13 must be accompanied by an adult.

March 7

March 14

March 21

March 28

April 4

April 11

April 18

April 25



Plant Swap

Tuesday, March 29, 4:30 p.m.

Grow new friends! Exchange plants, seeds and propagation techniques with fellow gardeners.

Whodunit? Death of The Author

Friday, April 1, 4 p.m.

Collaborate with fellow sleuths to get to the bottom of this library scandal.

Bridgerton Brews

Wednesday, April 13, 4 p.m.

Put the kettle on for afternoon tea! Make your own blends with other Regency romance fans.

BOOK CLUB

Make new friends and talk about books! Our system-wide book club offerings are listed under Program Spotlight. Attend one or all.

Novels at Night (VIRTUAL ONLY)

Tuesdays, 4:30 p.m.

Registration required. Call 352-671-8551 to register.

March 8 *"Enchantress of Numbers"*
by Jennifer Chiaverini

April 12 *"Woman 99"*
by Greer Macallister

May 10 *"The Midnight Library"*
by Matt Haig

TEENS

Connect with other teens and have a great time! More teen programs and library clubs are listed for each library. Take a look and change the world!

MANGAlicious Teen Club

Thursdays, 4:30 p.m.

March 3, April 7, May 5

Anime and manga fans, unite!

YALLA

Tuesdays, 4:30 p.m.

March 22, April 26, May 24

Be a part of the library experience and earn volunteer hours for service.

CHILDREN

LEGO® Engineers

Tuesdays, March 8–22, 4 p.m.

For ages 5–12 with caregivers.

Can you build your way through the challenges? See Program Spotlight and other listings for more science-related activities for the whole family.

Spring Break Shenanigans

March 14–18, 4 p.m.

For ages 5–12 with caregivers.

Drop in to celebrate and keep boredom at bay!

Monday *Unplugged!*

Tuesday *LEGO® Engineers*

Wednesday *Reading with Emma*

Thursday *Art in the Afternoon*

Friday *Movie Time!*

Spring into Spring

Saturday, April 2, 1:30–3:30 p.m.

For ages 5–12 with caregivers.

Spring crafts are in full bloom at the library.

Draw Me a Poem

Tuesdays, April 5–19, 4 p.m.

For ages 8–12 with caregivers.

Celebrate National Poetry Month and get creative with words and art.

Ready... Set... Kindergarten!

Saturday, April 30, 10:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

For ages 4–5 with caregivers.

Prep your preschoolers for the fun times ahead as they get ready for kindergarten.



WEEKLY STORY TIMES

March 8–April 21, 10:15 a.m.

A variety of stories, songs and activities for children and caregivers.

Bouncing Babies

Tuesdays

For infants–23 months

Toddling Twos

Wednesdays


Preschool Story Time

Thursdays

For ages 3–5

BELLEVUE PUBLIC LIBRARY

13145 SE Highway 484,
Bellevue, FL 34420
352-438-2500

Programs are made possible by contributions from the Friends of the Bellevue Public Library. Facial coverings are highly encouraged for those attending our programs in person. If there is a  symbol shown next to a program, you may attend in person or virtually. Contact the library to receive your virtual invitation.

Community Conversation

Tuesday, March 29, 10:30 a.m.

Connect with others over a cup of coffee and good conversation.

Topic: Tell us of a time when you realized something surprising about your world.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Seuss-a-palooza!

Happy Birthday, Dr. Seuss!

Wednesday, March 23, 10:30 a.m.

Celebrate creativity! See Program Spotlight for more locations.

Co-sponsored by the Early Learning Coalition of Marion County and the United Way of Marion County Reading Pals.

Community Job Fair

Wednesday, April 20, 11 a.m.–2 p.m.

See Program Spotlight for other locations.

Sponsored by the City of Bellevue.

SPECIAL PROGRAM

HEALTH & WELL-BEING

Improve your life as you connect with others. See Program Spotlight for more information, programs and locations.

Stress Less

Friday, March 11, 10:30 a.m.

Sponsored by the Florida Department of Health in Marion County.

ADULTS

Tech Help Center

Thursdays, 2–4 p.m.

March 3–April 28

Bring your device and drop in.

Master Gardener Plant Clinic

Fridays, 10 a.m.–1 p.m.

March 4, 18, April 1, 15, May 6, 20

The plant doctors are in!

Presented by UF/IFAS Extension Marion County.

Just Another Mah–Jongg Monday!

Mondays, 1 p.m., March 7–April 25

Learn and play with other enthusiasts.

Writers Studio

Wednesdays, 2 p.m.

March 9, April 13, May 11

Writers of all levels share information and encouragement. Program held in-person and through Zoom. Call 352-438-2500 to register for online access.

BOOK CLUB

Make new friends and talk about books! Our system-wide book club offerings are listed under Program Spotlight. Attend one or all.

Power Hour

Tuesdays, 10:30 a.m.

March 22 "The Exiles"

by Christina Baker Kline

April 26 "The Boys in the Boat"

by Daniel James Brown

May 24 "The Giver" by Lois Lowry

TEENS

Connect with other teens and change the world! More teen programs and library clubs are listed for each library.

YALLA South

Thursdays, 4:30 p.m.

March 3, April 7, May 5

Be a part of the library experience and earn volunteer hours for service.

MANGAlicious Teen Club

Thursdays, 4:30 p.m.

March 17, April 21, May 19

Anime and manga fans, unite!

Whodunit? Malevolence at the Miskatonic University Library

Thursday, April 14, 4:30 p.m.

Thwart disaster! Connect the clues and save the world in this Lovecraftian mystery theater.

FAMILIES

Games on a Table

Tuesdays, 4 p.m.

March 1–April 26

Play classic and contemporary tabletop games!

Knights of the Chess Club

Tuesdays, 4 p.m.

March 1–April 26

Learn and play chess!



Science Explorers

Wednesdays, 3:30 p.m.

March 23, April 27

Build your brain and make discoveries!

See Program Spotlight and other listings for more science-related activities for the whole family.



STORY TIMES

March 2–April 28

A variety of stories, songs and activities for young children with caregivers.

Preschool Adventures

Wednesdays, 10:30 a.m.

For ages 3–5.


Toddler Time

Thursdays, 10:30 a.m.

For infants–age 2.

DUNNELLON PUBLIC LIBRARY

20351 Robinson Road,
Dunnellon, FL 34431
352-438-2520

Programs are made possible by contributions from the Friends of the Dunnellon Public Library. Facial coverings are highly encouraged for those attending our programs in person. If there is a  symbol shown next to a program, you may attend in person or virtually. Contact the library to receive your virtual invitation.

SPECIAL EVENT

Seuss-a-palooza!

Happy Birthday, Dr. Seuss!

Wednesday, March 16, 3 p.m.

Celebrate creativity! See Program Spotlight for more locations.

Co-sponsored by the Early Learning Coalition of Marion County and the United Way of Marion County Reading Pals.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

HEALTH & WELL-BEING

Improve your life as you connect with others. See Program Spotlight for more information, programs and locations.

Living Healthy with Diabetes

Thursdays, March 3–April 7, 1:30 p.m.

Registration required. Call 352-438-2520 to register.

Pizza Poetry Slam

Saturday, April 23, 2 p.m.

For ages 13–18.

Registration recommended. Call 352-438-2520 to reserve a piece of the pie! See Program Spotlight for more teen programs.

Great Hall Gathering

Saturday, May 7, 2 p.m.

Registration required.

Call 352-438-2520 to register.

For all ages.

An invitation to all Harry Potter fans! We are pleased to inform you that you have been selected to attend a special Sorting Ceremony. We look forward to receiving you as part of the next class of the Hogwarts student body!

ADULTS

Yarn Lovers

Wednesdays, 10 a.m.

March 2–April 27

Make new friends and keep each other in stitches.

Fly Tyers Club

Mondays, 10 a.m.

March 7–April 25

Learn the art of luring fish!

BOOK CLUB

Make new friends and talk about books! Our system-wide book club offerings are listed under Program Spotlight. Attend one or all.

Novels at Night

Thursdays, 5 p.m.

March 17 "Big Trouble" by Dave Barry

April 21 "In the Heart of the Sea: the Tragedy of the Whaleship Essex" by Nathaniel Philbrick

May 19 "The Lost City of the Monkey God" by Douglas Preston



TEENS

Connect with other teens and change the world! More teen programs and library clubs are listed for each library.

YALLA West

Thursdays, 4:30 p.m.

March 24, April 28, May 26

Be a part of the library experience and earn volunteer hours for service.

FAMILIES

The Slime Society

Saturdays, 1 p.m.

Join the Slime Society and make a slimy stash of your very own!

See Program Spotlight and other listings for more science-related activities for the whole family.

March 5 Edible Fluffy Slime

March 19 Spider Web Slime

April 2 Super Stretchy Slime

April 16 Apple Slime

Zany Crayon Day Fun

Thursday, March 31, 11 a.m.

Play with crayons in some different ways.

STORY TIME

Shake Your Sillies Out


Wednesdays, 11 a.m.

March 2–April 27

High energy and great times abound with this perfect remedy for the 'there's nothing-to-do' blues.

FOREST PUBLIC LIBRARY

905 S. Highway 314A,
Ocklawaha, FL 32179
352-438-2540

Programs are made possible by contributions from the Friends of the Forest Public Library. Facial coverings are highly encouraged for those attending our programs in person. If there is a  symbol shown next to a program, you may attend in person or virtually. Contact the library to receive your virtual invitation.

Community Conversation

Saturday, April 2, 10:30 a.m.

Connect with others over a cup of coffee and good conversation.

Topic: How has the library made a difference in your life?

SPECIAL EVENTS

Seuss-a-palooza!

Happy Birthday, Dr. Seuss!

Wednesday, March 2, 4 p.m.

Celebrate creativity! See Program Spotlight for more locations.

Co-sponsored by the Early Learning Coalition of Marion County and the United Way of Marion County Reading Pals.

Community Job Fair

Thursday, March 24, 11 a.m.–2 p.m.

See Program Spotlight for other locations.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

Taylor Time! Ride the Roads of Marion County

Wednesday, March 16, 2 p.m.

See Program Spotlight for more adventures with our own Renaissance man! It's eclectic!

HEALTH & WELL-BEING

Improve your life as you connect with others. See Program Spotlight for more information, programs and locations.

The ABCs of Dementia

Thursday, March 17, 11 a.m.

Lunch & Learn:

Diabetes Self-Management Class

Registration required.

Tuesdays, April 5–May 10

10:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

Co-sponsored by the Florida Department of Health in Marion County and Marion County Hospital District.

Unlocking Keyhole Gardening

Thursday, April 28, 10:30 a.m.

Grow new friends! Our local plant enthusiast shares her knowledge and experience with the ups and downs of permaculture.

ADULTS

Yearning for Yarn

Tuesdays, 2 p.m.

March 1–April 26

Bring your own project or come to learn how to knit or crochet.

DIY Art

Wednesdays, 10:30 a.m.

Express yourself through art!

March 2 Envelope Art

April 6 Hapa-Zome:
Printmaking with Flowers

May 4 Watercolor Instruction
by Sandra Sanders

Color to Calm*Thursdays, 10:30 a.m.**March 3, April 7, May 5*

Seek serenity through coloring!

**Tech Help Center***Thursdays, 2–3 p.m.**March 3–April 28*

Bring your device and drop in.

Writers Studio*Thursdays, 4 p.m.**March 10, April 14, May 12*

Writers of all levels share work and encouragement. Program held in-person and through Zoom. Call 352-438-2540 to register.

BOOK CLUB*Make new friends and talk about books! Our system-wide book club offerings are listed under Program Spotlight. Attend one or all.***Forest Readers***Wednesdays, 10:30 a.m.**March 9 "The Call of the Wild" by Jack London**March 23 "American Dirt" by Jeanine Cummins**April 13 "The Four Winds" by Kristin Hannah**April 27 "A Walk in the Woods" by Bill Bryson**May 11 "The Exiles" by Christina Baker Kline**May 25 "The Beach House" by Jane Green***TEENS***Connect with other teens and have a great time! More teen programs and library clubs are listed for each library. Take a look and change the world!***YALLA East***Thursdays, 5 p.m.**March 17, April 21, May 19*

Be part of the library experience and earn volunteer service hours.

FAMILIES**FUNtasmagoria***Wednesdays, 4 p.m.*

Explore the world through science, stories and activities! It's FUNtastic! See Program Spotlight and other listings for more science-related activities for the whole family.


<i>March 9</i>	<i>Cool Chemistry</i>
<i>March 23</i>	<i>Sights and Sounds</i>
<i>March 30</i>	<i>Wild Weather</i>
<i>April 6</i>	<i>I Dig Dinosaurs</i>
<i>April 13</i>	<i>Grow it</i>
<i>April 20</i>	<i>Don't Bug Me</i>
<i>April 27</i>	<i>Shark Attack</i>

Rock Art Paint On*Saturdays, 2 p.m.**March 19, April 16*

With a rock as your canvas, a masterpiece is inevitable.

Family Story Time*Fridays, 10:30 a.m.**March 4–April 29*

A variety of stories, songs and activities for children and caregivers.

**FORT M^CCOY
PUBLIC LIBRARY**14660 NE Hwy 315, Fort M^cCoy, FL 32134
352-438-2560*Programs are made possible by contributions from the Friends of the Ocala Public Library. Facial coverings are highly encouraged for those attending our programs in person. If there is a  symbol shown next to a program, you may attend in person or virtually. Contact the library to receive your virtual invitation.***SPECIAL EVENT****Seuss-a-palooza!
Happy Birthday, Dr. Seuss!***Saturday, March 12, 11 a.m.*

Celebrate creativity! See Program Spotlight for more locations.

*Co-sponsored by the Early Learning Coalition of Marion County and the United Way of Marion County Reading Pals.***SPECIAL PROGRAM****STREAM Dreams***Saturdays, March 5 & April 2, 11 a.m.*

Science + art = fun for the whole family! See Program Spotlight and other listings for more science-related activities for the whole family.

ADULTS**Tech Help***Tuesdays, 3 p.m.**March 1–April 26*

Bring your device and drop in.

Monday Matinée*Mondays, 3 p.m.*

Movies for adults. Anyone younger than age 13 must be accompanied by an adult.

*March 7**April 4***BOOK CLUB***Make new friends and talk about books! Our system-wide book club offerings are listed under Program Spotlight. Attend one or all.***Books and Coffee***Mondays, 10:30 a.m.**March 7 Reader's Choice**April 4 "The Help" by Kathryn Stockett**May 2 "Nine Perfect Strangers" by Liane Moriarty***TEENS***Connect with other teens and change the world! More teen programs and library clubs are listed for each library.***YALLA Northeast***Saturdays, 1 p.m.**March 12, April 9, May 14*

Be a part of the library experience and earn volunteer hours for service.


FAMILIES**Family Story Time***Wednesdays, 10:30 a.m.**March 2–April 27*

A variety of stories, songs and activities for young children with caregivers.



FREEDOM PUBLIC LIBRARY

5870 SW 95th St., Ocala, FL 34476
352-438-2580

Programs are made possible by contributions from the Friends of Freedom Public Library. Facial coverings are highly encouraged for those attending our programs in person. If there is a  symbol shown next to a program, you may attend in person or virtually. Contact the library to receive your virtual invitation.

Community Conversation

Tuesday, March 22, 10:30 a.m.

Connect with others over a cup of coffee and good conversation.

Topic: Tell us of a time when you realized something surprising about your world.

SPECIAL EVENT

Seuss-a-palooza! Happy Birthday, Dr. Seuss!

Tuesday, March 15, 3:30 p.m.

Celebrate creativity! See Program Spotlight for more locations.

Co-sponsored by the Early Learning Coalition of Marion County and the United Way of Marion County Reading Pals.

SPECIAL PROGRAM

Totally Teen Trivia!

Wednesday, March 16, 2 p.m.

It's what you know! See Program Spotlight for more information and other library programs for teens.

ADULTS

Friday Matinée

Fridays, 2:30 p.m.

Movies for adults. Anyone younger than age 13 must be accompanied by an adult.

March 11

April 8

Computer Basics

Tuesdays, 10:30 a.m.

Get connected!

April 12 *Computer Basics*

April 19 *eBooks*

April 26 *KOHA*

Show & Tell:

What's in Your World?

Thursday, April 21, 11 a.m.

Dig out a piece of memorabilia from your cedar chest and share a bit of your life with others. We all want to hear the stories! Program held in-person and through Zoom. Call 352-438-2580 for online access.

BOOK CLUB

Make new friends and talk about books! Our system-wide book club offerings are listed under Program Spotlight. Attend one or all.

As the Page Turns

Tuesdays, 2:30 p.m.

March 1 "Dewey: The Small-Town Library Cat Who Touched the World" by Vicki Myron

April 5 "The Woman in Cabin 10" by Ruth Ware

May 3 "Leave the World Behind" by Rumaan Alam

TEENS

Connect with other teens and change the world! More teen programs and library clubs are listed for each library.

MANGAlicious Teen Club

Tuesdays, 4:30 p.m.

March 8, April 12, May 10

Anime and manga fans, unite!

YALLA Free

Thursdays, 5 p.m.

March 10, April 14, May 12

Be a part of the library experience and earn volunteer hours for service.

FAMILIES

Games on a Table

Wednesdays, 4 p.m.

March 2–April 27

Play classic and contemporary tabletop games!



STORY TIME

Family Outdoor Story Time


Wednesdays, 10:30 a.m.

March 2–April 27

Bring a blanket and enjoy a variety of stories, songs and activities for children and caregivers

MARION OAKS PUBLIC LIBRARY

294 Marion Oaks Lane, Ocala, FL 34473
352-438-2570

Programs are made possible by contributions from the Friends of the Marion Oaks Public Library. Facial coverings are highly encouraged for those attending our programs in person. If there is a  symbol shown next to a program, you may attend in person or virtually. Contact the library to receive your virtual invitation.

SPECIAL EVENT

Seuss-a-palooza! Happy Birthday, Dr. Seuss!

Saturday, March 19, 1:30 p.m.

Celebrate creativity! See Program Spotlight for more locations.

Co-sponsored by the Early Learning Coalition of Marion County and the United Way of Marion County Reading Pals.

SPECIAL PROGRAM

Lunch and Learn: Small Business First Steps

Tuesday, April 19, 1 p.m.

Lunch provided. Registration required. Call 352-438-2570 to register.

Get your business started! See Program Spotlight for more information.

Presented by the Hispanic Business Council.
Presentado por el Hispanic Business Council.

ADULTS

Project You: Automotive Basics

Saturday, April 9, 2 p.m.

Expand your life skills toolbox. It's a gas! See Program Spotlight for more information.

BOOK CLUB

Make new friends and talk about books! Our system-wide book club offerings are listed under Program Spotlight. Attend one or all.

Novels at Noon

Wednesdays, noon

March 16 "The Library Book" by Susan Orlean

April 20 "Around the World in 80 Days" by Jules Verne

May 18 "The Handmaid's Tale" by Margaret Atwood



TEENS

Connect with other teens and change the world! More teen programs and library clubs are listed for each library.

YALLA OAKS

Saturdays, noon

March 12, April 9, May 14

Be a part of the library experience and earn volunteer hours for service.

MANGAlicious Teen Club

Tuesdays, 4:30 p.m.

March 15, April 19, May 17

Anime and manga fans, unite!

FAMILIES**FUNtasmagoria**

Wednesdays, 4 p.m.

Explore the world through science, stories and activities! It's FUNtastic! See Program Spotlight and other listings for more science-related activities for the whole family.

March 2 *Passport to Africa*

March 9 *Passport to North America*

March 16 *Passport to South America*

March 23 *Passport to Australia*

March 30 *Passport to Antarctica*

April 6 *Spring has Sprung!*

April 13 *Games to Go*

April 20 *So Many Sports*


Kung Fu For You

Saturday, March 12, 2 p.m.

Learn about the origins and styles of Kung Fu and enjoy a demonstration by local martial arts expert Shifu Derrick Void.

REDDICK PUBLIC LIBRARY

15150 NW Gainesville Road,
Reddick, FL 32686
352-438-2566

Programs are made possible by contributions from the Friends of the Ocala Public Library. Facial coverings are highly encouraged for those attending our programs in person. If there is a  symbol shown next to a program, you may attend in person or virtually. Contact the library to receive your virtual invitation.

SPECIAL EVENT**Seuss-a-palooza!
Happy Birthday,
Dr. Seuss!**

Wednesday, March 9,
10:30 a.m.

Celebrate creativity!
See Program Spotlight
for more locations.

Co-sponsored by the Early Learning
Coalition of Marion County and the United
Way of Marion County Reading Pals.

**SPECIAL PROGRAM****Talking Local History With...
the Leitner Sisters**

Mondays, 10:30 a.m.

Discover the fascinating backstory of northwest Marion County through the reflections and findings of our local expert historians. Learn about the area as you start growing your family tree.

March 7 *Tracing Family History Basics*

April 4 *Reddick and Millwood Areas*

ADULTS**Computer Basics**

Tuesdays, 1 p.m.

Get connected!

March 1 *Basic Genealogy*

April 12 *Home Repair*

BOOK CLUB

Make new friends and talk about books! Our system-wide book club offerings are listed under Program Spotlight. Attend one or all.

Let's Talk Books with Jim

Mondays, 10:30 a.m.

March 14 *"The Four Winds"*
by Kristin Hannah

April 11 *"Cross Creek"* by
Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings

May 9 *"Appaloosa"* by
Robert B. Parker

TEENS

Connect with other teens and change the world! More teen programs and library clubs are listed for each library.

YALLA North

Saturdays, 1 p.m.

Share pizza and ideas as you earn volunteer hours for service. Good times!

March 5 *Leaping Leprechauns*

April 2 *Blackout Poetry*

May 7 *Games, Games, Games!*

FAMILIES**Movie Time**

Wednesday, March 16, 1 p.m.

True love, high adventure, pirates, princesses, giants! What a great way to spend spring break! Anyone younger than age 13 must be accompanied by an adult.

**Games on a Table**

Saturdays, 10:30 a.m.

March 26, April 30

Play classic and contemporary tabletop games!

STORY TIMES

March 8–April 27

A variety of stories, songs and activities for children and caregivers.

Toddler Time

Tuesdays, 10:30 a.m.

Preschool Story Time

Wednesdays, 10:30 a.m.



EXHIBITS & DISPLAYS

Headquarters–Ocala Public Library

March *Die–Cast Model Cars*
April *Girl Scouts*
May *Free Comic Book Day*

Bellevue Public Library

March *Decorative Eggs from Kathy Vollmer*
April *Underwater Photography*
by Various Artists
May *Winged Wildlife Photography*
by Leroy Simon

Forest Public Library

March *Dementia Education*
April *Watercolor Art by Sandra Sanders*
May *Pet Photos by Forest Staff*

Freedom Public Library

March *Miniature Quilts by Carol Henry*
April *Designs of U.S. Coins by*
Ocala Coin Club
May *Rock'n Famous Artists and Their*
Work by Carole Drost Lopez

LIBRARY CLOSED DAYS & HOLIDAYS

Maintenance Day

Friday, May 6

Headquarters-Ocala and Freedom Library locations closed.

Memorial Day

Monday, May 30

All Marion County Public Library System locations closed.

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY

Friends of the Bellevue Public Library

Tuesdays, 10 a.m.
March 15, April 19, May 17
The Book Nook, Bellevue

Friends of the Dunnellon Public Library

Tuesdays, 10 a.m.
March 1, April 5, May 3
Dunnellon Public Library

Friends of the Forest Public Library

Wednesdays, 10:30 a.m.
March 16, April 20, May 18

BOOK SALE:

Friday, May 13, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
Saturday, May 14, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.
Forest Public Library

Friends of Freedom Public Library

Mondays, 10:15 a.m.
March 7, April 4, May 2
Freedom Public Library

Friends of the Marion Oaks Public Library

Fridays, 10 a.m.
March 18, April 15, May 20
Marion Oaks Community Center

Friends of the Ocala Public Library

Thursdays, 4 p.m. Zoom meeting.
March 17, April 21, May 19

AT YOUR SERVICE

AARP Tax Prep Assistance

Tax help is available at most libraries. Call your nearest library for schedule and locations.

Access Florida Assistance

Help provided with filing for various government assistance programs.

Forest Public Library

Tuesdays, 10:30 a.m.-noon

CareerSource Citrus Levy Marion

Job seeker services available! Call your nearest library for schedule and locations.

Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS)

Visit www.uscis.gov or call 1-800-375-5283 to schedule an appointment at your local library with an official for the USCIS Orlando Field Office.

Florida Diagnostic & Learning Resources System

Free screenings for children birth through age 5 who may have difficulty with learning, speaking, playing, seeing, walking and hearing. Screening appointments may be held at your local library. Contact ChildFind at 352-671-6051 to schedule.

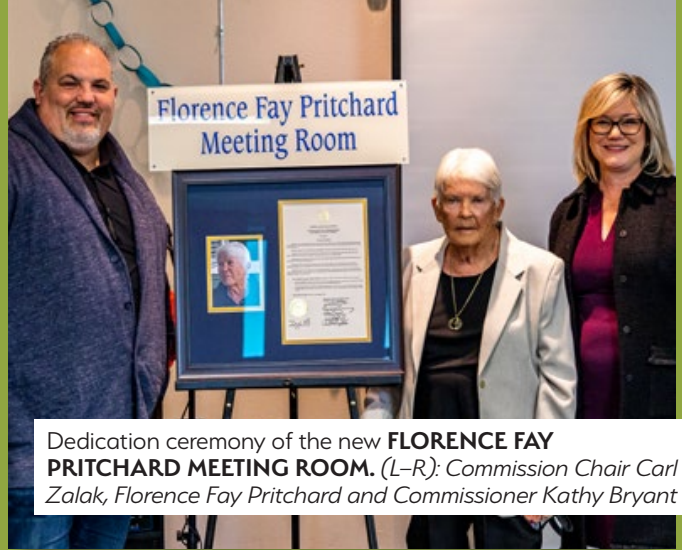
Serving Health Insurance Needs of Elders (SHINE)

Obtain free Medicare counseling through the Florida Department of Elder Affairs. Contact the Headquarters-Ocala, Bellevue, Dunnellon and Forest public libraries for the schedule.

MAGES



Author Dylan Newton dropping off a signed copy of her book at Headquarters-Ocala Public Library.



Dedication ceremony of the new **FLORENCE FAY PRITCHARD MEETING ROOM**. (L-R): Commission Chair Carl Zalak, Florence Fay Pritchard and Commissioner Kathy Bryant



Freedom Public Library staff Suzanne Chiauzzi at Freedom's Family Outdoor Story Time.



Bellevue Community Job Fair at Bellevue Public Library. (L-R): Mariah Moody and Anglia Pittsley



Corrugation Station at Headquarters-Ocala Public Library.



BOOKMARKS

NEWS & NOTES FROM THE FRIENDS OF THE OCALA PUBLIC LIBRARY



WE ARE FRIENDS!

The Friends of the Ocala Public Library is a group of community advocates who understand the importance of public libraries in our local communities. They strive to help others appreciate the library's importance to our lives.

They believe that libraries provide opportunities for everyone to engage in the joy of life-long learning. Their advocacy is focused on helping libraries remain the valuable entities that they are.

Friends members also understand the importance of well-funded libraries. Friends donate their time to provide the community with Quarterly Book Sales; plus, they operate and staff the Book Market, a wonderful discount store of donated books from the community. Funds from these efforts help our libraries provide additional

programming for all ages, support for children's summer reading, author programs, and special events throughout the year. Our public libraries provide so many resources to their community, and the Friends help them to do so!

The Friends' commitment to the library is a wonderful example of how volunteerism can lead to positive civic engagement and the betterment of our community. We urge everyone to join the Friends of the Public Library. To join, visit the Book Market in the Headquarters building or go online to friendsoftheocalalibrary.org.

If you are looking for a speaker for your next community group or church function, consider a volunteer speaker from the Friends who will share more about their organization and how you can get involved. For more information, contact the Friends of the Ocala Public Library at 352-368-4591 or folbookmarketocala@gmail.com.



QUARTERLY BOOK SALE

We're back.. and we have plenty of books for you!
Paperbacks 25¢
Hard covers 50¢

**FRIDAY, MAY 6,
11 A.M. – 2 P.M.**

Friends members only

**SATURDAY, MAY 7,
10 A.M. – 2 P.M.**

Open to the public

*Meeting Rooms B and
C, Headquarters-Ocala
Public Library*

READ-A-THON Sneak Preview

Our third annual Read-A-Thon is scheduled for August 6. If you would like to volunteer to read a selection, or if your company would like to sponsor readers, please contact Joe Kays at kays.joe@gmail.com. We will be reading selections from the classic Florida saga of "A Land Remembered," by Patrick Smith. This entertaining event provides fun for the readers and listeners, and it helps to fund library programming and other services to the public. As the date nears, we will be providing more details about the event.



DID YOU KNOW?

The Friends of the Ocala Library continues to fund programs and fulfill many needs of the the Headquarters-Ocala Public Library, the Fort McCoy Public Library, and the Reddick Public Library. In the last few months, the Friends have provided financial assistance in many ways, including the following:

- "Seuss-a-Palooza" program for Children's Services
- "Marion Reads" awards
- Marion Children's Alliance membership
- Tuition assistance for library staff
- FLA membership
- Community Foundation membership
- Program supplies for Headquarters, Reddick, and Fort McCoy branches
- Producing and printing WORDS newsmagazine for the county

Please help us to continue helping our libraries. Join the Friends. To become a member of the Friends, complete a membership application on our website at friendsoftheocalalibrary.org or visit the Book Market.



profile

Leroy Simon

BY ERIN ARNOLD

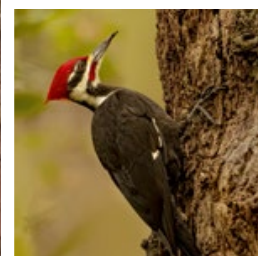
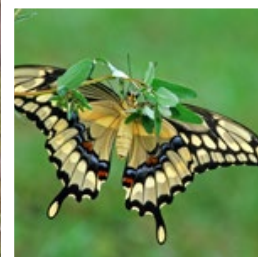
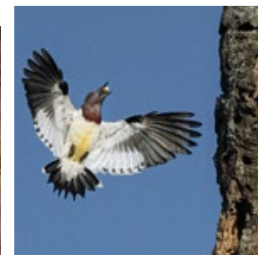
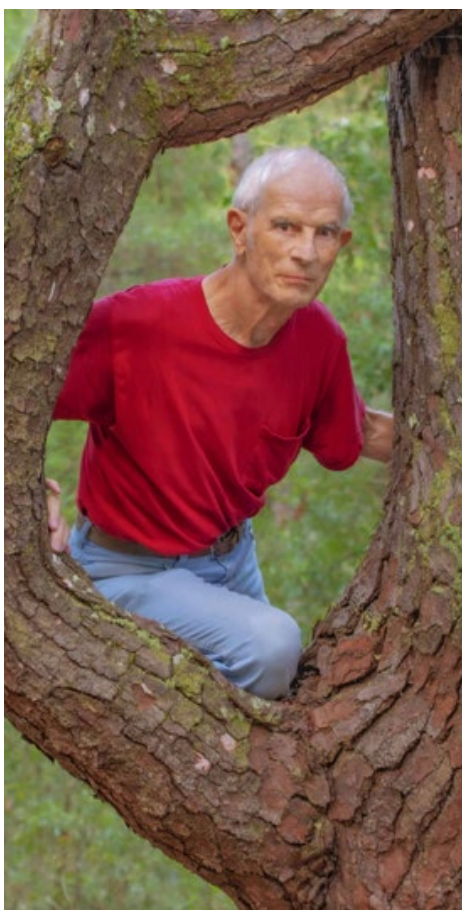
Leroy Simon and his camera have explored the rainforests of Costa Rica and Ecuador six times. One time, a monkey stole his hat, put it on its head and climbed up a tree. Simon released the shutter just before the monkey dropped the hat. On another trip, an ocelot sneaked into his hotel room through an open window. A woman from the hotel caught the cat and held it long enough for Simon to capture a photograph.

These photographs are just a few of the thousands Simon has captured over 70 years. At 89 years old, Simon has been fascinated by nature his whole life. When he was 20 years old, serving in the army, he “got serious” about photography and bought a Contax camera. Simon has no formal education in photography and insists, “Everything I learn is from listening to people who know more than I do.”

At Belleview Public Library, staff look forward to Simon bringing his most recent photographs to share while he checks out books. Over the years he has loaned his photographs for public displays, donated prints to the Friends of the Belleview Library for fundraising efforts and presented programs to the public on butterflies, moths and birds.

Simon is a frequent speaker for Marion Audubon, has won countless photography contests and has the honor of having more than 30 photographs published in the classic book “Florida’s Fabulous Butterflies and Moths.” He has also curated and printed 15 photography books, but these books are not for sale. Their value is in the stories he shares.

For new nature photographers, Simon stresses the importance of patience. His advice is to watch birds and take notice of their behavior. If you are hoping to photograph a moth or butterfly, it’s a different process. “On a lucky day you might find just a few



insects,” he says. To find large moths, try visiting a gas station in the Ocala National Forest just before daylight.

Simon’s stories prove you don’t have to travel far to explore your world. Locally, he frequents Gainesville’s Sweetwater Wetlands Park and the Ocala Wetland Recharge Park. But for those looking for a daytrip, he recommends Fort DeSoto Park in Pinellas County, which “is so preciously undeveloped that there is only one snack stand if you get hungry!”

Check out Leroy Simon’s photographs on display at the Belleview Public Library and keep an eye on the Marion Audubon website for recordings of his presentations and to see where he will be speaking next. 🌿