

Words

THE NEXT CHAPTER

Freedom Public Library
Expansion Ground Breaking



ALSO IN THIS ISSUE: • CALENDAR • BOOK REVIEW • BOOKMARKS • PROFILE



words

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MARION COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY

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



Find the Library
on [FACEBOOK](#),
[INSTAGRAM](#)
and [TWITTER](#)!

On The Cover

Celebrating each new chapter of the
Marion County Public Library System.

Cover photo by Mark Anderson,
Marion County Public Relations

READ. LEARN. CONNECT.
At Your Public Library.



The Marion County Public Library System is a department of the
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a word from the director



Julie Sieg

MARION COUNTY PUBLIC
LIBRARY SYSTEM DIRECTOR

The Story of Marion County

For those of you who are interested in the "back story" of Marion County, I encourage you to check out **Ocali Country Scrapbook**. **Ocali Country Scrapbook** is a fascinating glimpse into the nooks and crannies of Marion County. The series, divided into eight 30-minute segments, covers people and places from Fellowship to Summerfield, Dunnellon to Salt Springs and downtown Ocala through the years. The scrapbook, narrated by retired broadcast engineer, Tony Blalock, was a bicentennial project of the Kingdom of the Sun Girl Scouts. It was created in 1976, originally as slides, with cassette tape narration. Imagine the public library loaning out a slide carousel, slide projector and cassette player so that groups could enjoy this resource. In 1990 it was converted to video tape and in 2010 it was converted to DVD and is now also available as an e-resource. The historic photos of people and places and tidbits of historical facts take you back in time to when dirt roads were common and the population was sparse. Today, our Marion County population is almost 400,000. There are numerous photo comparisons of historic Marion County locales and 1976 Marion County. It would be interesting to bring these locales forward to 2024 to chronicle what is now on a particular site.

Another fabulous historical resource is the Historic Marion County Photography Collection on the library website. It can be found on a newly available resource called Biblioboard. Visit marionfl.biblioboard.com. Other recommended reads for our Marion County back story include **Marion County Remembers: "Salty Crackers"** by Sybil Browne Bray (*varies*), and **Riverboat Landing: A History of the Ocklawaha River Steamboats** by M. C. Mason & E.A. Mueller (2012).



Julie

Freedom Public Library is Growing!



The beginning of the construction phase for the Freedom Public Library expansion became a reality on Tuesday, Nov. 12th as the Marion County Board of County Commissioners, library and county staff, elected officials, Friends of the Freedom Public Library and the public took part in a celebratory groundbreaking event.

Over the course of the next year, the current Freedom Public Library will more than triple its current space by expanding its square footage from 8,100 square feet to approximately 32,000 square feet. With the expanded public service areas, children, teens and adults will enjoy:

- Additional shelving space for library books and materials
- New study rooms
- Comfortable seating and spacious workspaces
- A separate 5,000-square-foot children's area with space for age-appropriate programming and a story time room
- An additional, larger meeting room
- A Friends of the Freedom Public Library bookstore that will offer gently used books, CDs and other materials for sale to the public. Proceeds from sales will benefit the Freedom Public Library programming and other efforts

"Over the past few years, we have witnessed significant growth in our community, highlighting the increasing demand for more resources and space to serve our patrons effectively. With the expansion comes our very own book store. Please come visit us!"

— JUDY LEACOCK
FRIENDS OF THE FREEDOM PUBLIC
LIBRARY PRESIDENT

"We are excited to celebrate, along with members of the public, the groundbreaking for the expansion of the Freedom Public Library. We look forward to providing space that is inviting and welcoming to all, where students can study and learn, small and large groups can meet and connect with others and where young children can experience the joy and wonder of reading," said Julie Sieg, Marion County Public Library System director.

For updates on the expansion, visit the Marion County Public Library System at Library.MarionFL.org and follow on social media platforms. 



A DESTINATION ON THE RISE

BY JESSICA HELLER,
MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS SUPERVISOR, MARION COUNTY TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

Ocala/Marion County tourism is bright in the Sunshine State with exciting new and future developments making the destination not only a place full of history and culture, but a location fostering opportunity. Visitors are not the only ones who get to enjoy additional activities offered in Ocala/Marion County—locals reap the benefits even more so.

One of the most significant additions to the area is World Equestrian Center (WEC), the largest equestrian facility in the country. WEC features two hotels, an RV park, multiple restaurants, top-notch equestrian facilities and special events open to the public throughout the year! In addition to providing over 80,000 square feet of event space, the upcoming Event Center at WEC will feature four new restaurants, including two rooftop concepts.

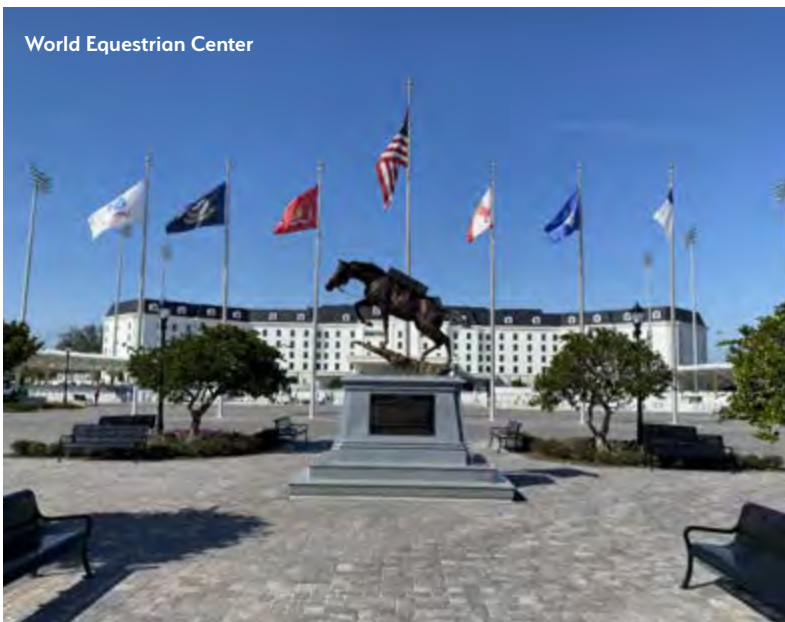
In addition to equestrian sports, Ocala/Marion County is becoming one of the top destinations for elite swimming and aquatic competitions in the southeast with Florida Aquatic Swimming and Training (FAST). FAST features a massive indoor

Olympic competition pool, an outdoor warm-up pool, a splash pad, and free swimming lessons for all third graders in Marion County.

New culinary experiences are also flavoring up Ocala/Marion County! Restaurants are popping up all over town—from upscale steakhouses to rooftop bars and causal pizza eateries in



Walk of Champions



World Equestrian Center





downtown Ocala, there's something for everyone. Midtown Station, a new hot spot looking over Tuscaawilla Park, transformed an old fire station into a brewery, distillery, multiple restaurants and music venue. Expected to open early 2025, The Forge is currently under development just north of the square, in the "Midtown" district and will be a dining experience destination of its own with multiple restaurants, a brewery, a nightclub and event venue.

Downtown Ocala is a vibrant hub with a mix of historic charm and modern amenities. The Walk of Champions, a new self-guided tour, allows visitors to discover the area's rich equestrian history with bronze plaques in the sidewalks representing famous horses connected to the destination. Download the OcalaMarion Travel Guide App to see images and videos of these equestrian stars to make this a truly immersive experience.

The downtown district is also a hub for special events like art walks, concerts, holiday events, markets and more. Check out our full events calendar at OcalaMarion.com.

We want all locals and visitors to know they are welcome in Ocala/Marion County from the moment they arrive and that is one of the reasons for the new signage on Interstate-75 currently under construction! The South Gateway will be located on the 42nd St flyover at mile marker 349 welcoming drivers heading north. This should be complete by early 2025. There will also be a gateway at the future interchange just north of Ocala, where the much anticipated Buc-ee's Ocala Travel Center is planned! 🌊



Scan to download the OcalaMarion Travel Guide App



FOR MORE FUN THINGS TO DO IN OCALA/MARION COUNTY, [visit OcalaMarion.com](http://visitOcalaMarion.com)





Program

Spotlight

SEASONAL TREATS

Arctic Blast

Have a cool day of stories, games and delicious arctic treats with book giveaways.

Co-sponsored by Publix Supermarkets.

Saturday, Dec. 7, 2 p.m.
Forest Public Library

"Christmas in Oz"

Dorothy returns to Oz to save her Kansas farm with the help of her friends. There's no place like home for the holidays!

Presented by Community Stages Trunk & Trek Troupe.

Monday, Dec. 9, 6:30 p.m.
Sankofa Public Library

Polar Express

Don your pajamas and hop aboard "The Polar Express" for a fun-filled night of stories, crafts and more based on the classic Van Allsburg title.

Wednesday, Dec. 11, 5:30 p.m.
Headquarters-Ocala

Polar Paradise: Rodeo Roundup!

Giddy up for a rootin'-tootin' good time! A wagonful of fun with rodeo performances, line dancing and tasty vittles. Wild western wear welcomed. Y'all come!

Saturday, Dec. 14, 10:30 a.m.
Bellevue Public Library

Reindeer Romp

Festive, frosty, in-person fun has begun! Join in all the reindeer games, romp to the music and take home amazing giveaways and prizes!

Saturday, Dec. 21, noon-2 p.m.
Reddick Public Library



BLACK HISTORY MONTH

FLORIDA HUMANITIES AND THE FRIENDS OF THE OCALA LIBRARY PRESENT

FLORIDA TALKS



DALIA COLÓN

Telling Florida Food Stories

Travel Florida's foodways past, present and future with Emmy Award-winning multimedia journalist, Colón. She has eaten her way across Florida and shares the delectable details of her journey. Credited as the birthplace of fusion cuisine, Florida enjoys a distinctive array of epicurean delights. Savor the multifaceted story of culture, traditions and history as told through food.

Saturday, Jan. 11, 11 a.m.
Headquarters-Ocala Public Library

JADA WRIGHT-GREENE

Exploring Florida's Black and African-American Homes

Catch a glimpse of the intimate lives of African American Floridians through the story of their homes. Mary McLeod Bethune, A.L. Lewis and D.A. Dorsey are a few of the prominent African Americans who resided in Florida and created opportunities for others. African Americans from all walks of life and all manner of homes, contributed to the tapestry of our community. Wright-Greene shares images and stories that spotlight this rich history.



Saturday, Feb. 8, 11 a.m. • *Headquarters-Ocala Public Library*



Funding for this Florida Talks program was provided through a grant from Florida Humanities with funds from the National Endowment for the Humanities. Any views, findings, conclusions or recommendations expressed in this program do not necessarily represent those of Florida Humanities or the National Endowment for the Humanities.

AFRICAN AMERICAN READ-IN

Celebrate a rich heritage of literature, film, music and art at the 35th National African American Read-In. Readers, performers and listeners of all ages welcome! Take part in any or all of the events.

Monday, Feb. 3, 11:30 a.m. • *Fort McCoy Public Library*
Tuesday, Feb. 4, 3:30 p.m. • *Freedom Public Library*
Saturday, Feb. 8, 2 p.m. • *Dunnellon Public Library*
Monday, Feb. 10, 11:30 a.m. • *Reddick Public Library*
Wednesday, Feb. 12, 11 a.m. • *Forest Public Library*
Monday, Feb. 17, 2 p.m. • *Bellevue Public Library*
Monday, Feb. 17, 2 p.m. • *Sankofa Public Library*
Wednesday, Feb. 19, 1 p.m. • *Marion Oaks Public Library*
Friday, Feb. 21, 2 p.m. • *Headquarters-Ocala Public Library*



SPECIAL EVENTS

Navigating the Night Sky

Explore the wonders of space! Out-of-this-world activities for astronauts of all ages. Meet Derek Demeter, renowned astrophotographer and Emil Buehler Planetarium Director of Seminole State College.

Tuesday, Jan. 7

Headquarters-Ocala Public Library

3-6 p.m. Cosmic Crafts

3:30 p.m. Stellar Story Time

3:30 p.m. Native American Astronomy
presented by Taylor Benson

4:30 p.m. Exploring the Cosmos
presented by Derek Demeter

5:30 p.m. Stellar Story Time

6 p.m. Stargazing Experience
with Derek Demeter

Renaissance Faire

Hear ye and good morrow! Joineth us for games, festivities and much merriment. Cometh in costume and enjoyeth the excit'ment. We shall see you anon!

Saturday, Jan. 18, noon

Dunnellon Public Library

MUSICAL GUESTS



Miranda Madison

The Vintage Songstress

Return to the iconic era of Jazz and Blues with an enchanting performance of timeless melodies and soulful sounds.

Thursday, Jan. 30, 2 p.m.

Headquarters-Ocala Public Library



Mark Raisch

Swing, Soul & Rock and Roll

Snap your fingers and tap your toes along with these stellar sounds. Groove is in the heart!

Thursday, Feb. 13, 2 p.m.

Headquarters-Ocala Public Library

SPECIAL SERIES



Money Matters

Family and Consumer Science Financial Agent Giovanna Benitez shares essential information that prepares you for a successful financial future.

Presented by UF/IFAS Extension Marion County.

Personal Budgeting

Monday, Jan. 13, 4 p.m.

Bellevue Public Library

Tuesday, Jan. 28, 3 p.m.

Headquarters-Ocala Public Library

Tuesday, Feb. 11, 3 p.m.

Marion Oaks Public Library

Wednesday, Feb. 12, 2 p.m.

Fort McCoy Public Library

You and Your Credit

Tuesday, Jan. 21, 11 a.m.

Headquarters-Ocala Public Library

Wednesday, Jan. 22, 11 a.m.

Reddick Public Library

Wednesday, Jan. 22, 4 p.m.

Forest Public Library

Wednesday, Feb. 12, 3 p.m.

Fort McCoy Public Library

Estate Planning for Everyone

Thursday, Jan. 23, 4 p.m.

Forest Public Library

Tuesday, Feb. 18, 11:30 a.m.

Freedom Public Library

Wednesday, Feb. 19, 11 a.m.

Reddick Public Library

Wednesday, Feb. 19, 2 p.m.

Fort McCoy Public Library

Tuesday, Feb. 25, 1 p.m.

Dunnellon Public Library

Tuesday, Feb. 25, 3 p.m.

Marion Oaks Public Library

Home Buying Preparation

Tuesday, Feb. 4, 1 p.m.

Dunnellon Public Library

Monday, Feb. 10, 4 p.m.

Bellevue Public Library

Wednesday, Feb. 19, 3 p.m.

Fort McCoy Public Library

COOKS & BOOKS and MUSICAL HOOKS!

Friday, Jan. 31, 3 p.m.

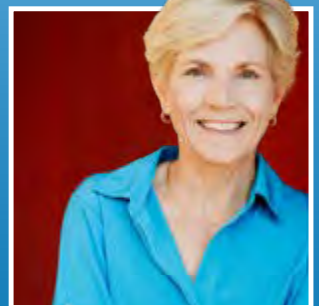
Bellevue Public Library

Enjoy life's simple pleasures as the culinary, literary and musical arts combine into a tasty afternoon feast! Author **Connie Mann**, **Chef Darin Nine** and Florida's Retro Queen **Becky Baby** present an unforgettable menu, jam-packed with flavorful art and conversation.

Co-sponsored by the Marion County Hospital District.



Chef Darin Nine
Director of Culinary Instruction



Connie Mann
Author



Becky Baby
Florida's Retro Queen

Program Spotlight

BOOK CLUBS

Make new friends and talk about books!

Books and Coffee

Mondays, 10:30 a.m.

Fort McCoy Public Library

Dec. 2 The Last Child by John Hart

Jan. 6 The Midnight Library by Matt Haig

Feb. 3 All the Sinners Bled by S.A. Cosby

As the Page Turns

Tuesdays, 2:30 p.m.

Freedom Public Library

Dec. 3 Best. State. Ever. by Dave Barry

Jan. 7 Readers' Choice

Feb. 4 The Nightingale by Kristin Hannah

Let's Talk Books

Mondays, 10:30 a.m.

Reddick Public Library

Dec. 9 Bright Lights, Big Christmas
by Mary Kay Andrews

*Jan. 13 The Lion, the Witch and the
Wardrobe* by C.S. Lewis

Feb. 10 Swamp Story by Dave Barry

Novels at Night

Tuesdays, 5 p.m.

Headquarters-Ocala Public Library

Dec. 10 The Plot by Jean Hanff Korelitz

Jan. 14 Demon Copperhead
by Barbara Kingsolver

Feb. 11 Lessons in Chemistry
by Bonnie Garmus

Forest Readers

Wednesdays, 10:30 a.m.

Forest Public Library

Dec. 11 'Twas the Bite Before Christmas by
David Rosenfelt

*Jan. 8 The Seven Husbands of Evelyn
Hugo* by Taylor Jenkins Reid

Jan. 22 Lessons in Chemistry
by Bonnie Garmus

Feb. 12 The Light We Carry
by Michelle Obama

Feb. 26 The Alchemist by Paulo Coelho

Second Story Readers

Tuesdays, 10:30 a.m.

Sankofa Public Library

*Dec. 17 Caste: The Origins of Our
Discontents* by Isabel Wilkerson

Jan. 21 Pineapple Street by Jenny Jackson

Feb. 18 The Maid by Nita Prose

Novels at Noon

Wednesdays, noon

Marion Oaks Public Library

Dec. 18 Reader's Choice

Jan. 15 A Slow Fire Burning
by Paula Hawkins

Feb. 19 The Heaven & Earth Grocery Store
by James McBride

Rather Be Reading

Fridays, 4 p.m.

Dunnellon Public Library

Dec. 20 Reader's Choice

*Jan. 17 Eleanor Oliphant is Completely
Fine* by Gail Honeyman

*Feb. 21 The Immortal Life of Henrietta
Lacks* by Rebecca Skloot



Power Hour Readers

Tuesdays, 10:30 a.m.

Belleview Public Library

Dec. 31 All Adults Here by Emma Straub

Jan. 28 The Water Dancer
by Ta-Nehisi Coates

Feb. 25 The Fury by Alex Michaelides

YOUTH BOOK CLUBS

Make new friends and talk about books!

Books! Books! Books!

Thursdays, 4 p.m., Jan. 9, Feb. 13

Headquarters-Ocala Public Library

Adventures in Bookland Ages 6-8.

Bookaneers Ages 9-12.

Books! Books! Books!

Wednesdays, 3 p.m., Jan. 29, Feb. 26

Forest Public Library

Adventures in Bookland Ages 6-8.

Bookaneers Ages 9-12.

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.*

SEASONAL TREAT

See Program Spotlight for more seasonal treats.

Polar Express

Wednesday, Dec. 11, 5:30 p.m.

All aboard for a magical night of
imagination and wonder.

SPECIAL EVENTS

See Program Spotlight for more information.

Navigating the Night Sky

Tuesday, Jan. 7

Explore the wonders of space!

3-6 p.m. Cosmic Crafts

3:30 p.m. Stellar Story Time

3:30 p.m. Native American Astronomy
presented by Taylor Benson

4:30 p.m. Exploring the Cosmos
presented by Derek Demeter

5:30 p.m. Stellar Story Time

6 p.m. Stargazing Experience
with Derek Demeter

African American Read-In

Friday, Feb. 21, 2 p.m.

Celebrate a rich heritage in literature,
film, music and art with your friends and
neighbors. Readers, performers and listeners
of all ages welcome!

MUSICAL GUESTS

See Program Spotlight for more information.

Miranda Madison

The Vintage Songstress

Thursday, Jan. 30, 2 p.m.

Timeless melodies and soulful sounds.

Mark Raisch

Swing, Soul & Rock and Roll

Thursday, Feb. 13, 2 p.m.

Swing in and sway!

ALL AGES

Games on a Table

Tuesdays, 5 p.m.

Jan. 21, Feb. 4 & 18

Play classic, contemporary and
tabletop roleplaying games!

ADULTS

Thread Therapy

Thursdays, 2 p.m., Jan. 2-Feb. 27

Make new friends while learning new stitches.

Tech Help

Wednesdays, 2-3:30 p.m., Jan. 8-Feb. 26

Have a technology question?

I Didn't Know That!

A Community Lecture Series

Tuesdays, 3 p.m.

Feed your curious mind! Delve into details, investigate ideas and explore subjects with those who know.

Jan. 14 Get Growing with Sheldon Grant, Master Gardener

Jan. 28 Personal Budgeting with Giovanna Benitez, UF/IFAS Extension

Feb. 11 Bike Walk Central Florida with Jenna Mousseau

Feb. 25 Photography with Mark Anderson

Serving Health Insurance Needs of Elders (SHINE)

Wednesdays, 10 a.m.-noon, Jan. 15, Feb. 19

Call 352-692-5209 for details.

Obtain free Medicare counseling through the Florida Department of Elder Affairs.

Unlocking Your Family History

Saturdays, 10 a.m.

Embark on your genealogical journey with guidance from the experts!

In partnership with the Marion County Genealogical Society.

Jan. 18 How Do I Begin?

Feb. 15 Where Do I Search?

You and Your Credit

Tuesday, Jan. 21, 11 a.m.

Good credit matters. Get tips from Family and Consumer Science Financial Agent Giovanna Benitez.

Presented by UF/IFAS Extension Marion County. See Program Spotlight for special series information.

Escape Room: Can You Get Out?

Thursdays, 4:30 p.m.

For teens and adults.

Find the clues, solve the problems and survive the challenges!

Jan. 23 The Mysterious Melt

Feb. 27 The After-hours Arcade

Crafternoons

Wednesday, 4:30 p.m.

Create something wonderful.

Feb. 5 Paper Heart Baskets

The ABCs of Dementia

Monday, Feb. 17, 11 a.m.

Call 352-422-3663 to register.

Understand the basics of the varied forms of dementia and techniques for becoming a better care partner with Debbie Selsavage, president of Coping with Dementia LLC.

Ride the Roads of Marion County

Friday, Feb. 28, 3 p.m.

Explore local history with enthusiast and librarian Taylor Benson.

BOOK CLUB

See Program Spotlight for more book clubs.

Novels at Night

Tuesdays, 5 p.m.

Dec. 10 The Plot by Jean Hanff Korelitz

Jan. 14 Demon Copperhead by Barbara Kingsolver

Feb. 11 Lessons in Chemistry by Bonnie Garmus

TEENS

YALLA! Teen Club

Thursdays, 4:30 p.m.

Young Adults Lead Library Awareness! Be a part of a talented teen team and make the library a better experience for all. Guide, participate and design innovative library programs while enjoying snacks and making friends as you earn volunteer hours for service. Y'all(a) come!

MANGAlicious! Dec. 5, Jan. 2, Feb. 6

ConFAB Dec. 12, Jan. 9, Feb. 13

Escape Room: Can You Get Out?

Jan. 23, Feb. 27

Scribbles & Nibbles

Thursday, Feb. 20, 4:30 p.m.

Guest author, Sariah Thompson, shares tips and tricks to get you writing.

Bring your creativity and we'll provide the exciting snacks.

FAMILIES

Camp Read S'more

Friday, Jan. 10, 5:30-7 p.m.

For ages 5-12 with caregivers.

Registration required and opens Dec. 30.

Call 352-671-8551.

"Camp-in" after hours with a good book and snacks. The s'more, the s'merrier!

Master the Arts

Tuesdays, 4 p.m., Jan. 14-28

For ages 5-12 with caregivers.

Create your own masterpiece inspired by renowned artists and celebrated styles.

Brick City Builders

Thursdays, 4 p.m., Jan. 16, Feb. 20

For ages 5-12 with caregivers.

Can you build your way through the challenges?

Ready...Set...Kindergarten!

Saturdays, 10 a.m.-noon, Jan. 18, Feb. 15

For ages 3-5 with caregivers.

Before your preschooler takes off on a new adventure, prepare!

Extreme STEAM Team

Thursdays, 4 p.m., Jan. 23, Feb. 27

For ages 8-12.

Push the boundaries of science with dynamic projects and experiments.

Reptile Encounters

Saturday, Feb. 22, 2 p.m.

Slither in and experience the diverse world of snakes, lizards, turtles and more.

YOUTH BOOK CLUBS

See Program Spotlight for more youth book clubs.

Books! Books! Books!

Thursdays, 4 p.m., Jan. 9, Feb. 13

Adventures in Bookland Ages 6-8.

Bookaneers Ages 9-12.

STORY TIMES

Jan. 7-Feb. 27

Stories, songs and activities for children and caregivers.

Bouncing Babies

Tuesdays, 10:30 a.m.

For ages birth-23 months.

Toddling Twos

Wednesdays, 10:30 a.m.

Pajama Story Time

Wednesdays, 6:15 p.m.

For all ages.

Preschool Adventures

Thursdays, 10:30 a.m.

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.

SEASONAL TREAT

See Program Spotlight for more seasonal treats.

Polar Paradise:

Rodeo Roundup!

Saturday, Dec. 14, 10:30 a.m.

Yeehaw! Wild West performances, games, prizes and more.

SPECIAL EVENTS

See Program Spotlight for more information.

Cooks & Books & Musical Hooks: Connie Mann

Friday, Jan. 31, 3 p.m.

A delicious afternoon of culinary, musical and literary arts blending the talents of Author Connie Mann, Chef Darin Nine, Director of Culinary Instruction in the Department of Culinary Arts & Hospitality at the Marion Technical College and Retro Queen Becky Baby.

Co-sponsored by the Marion County Hospital District.

African American Read-In

Monday, Feb. 17, 2 p.m.

Celebrate a rich heritage in literature, film, music and art with your friends and neighbors. Readers, performers and listeners of all ages welcome!

ALL AGES

Games on a Table

Tuesdays, 4 p.m., Jan. 7-Feb. 25

Play classic and contemporary tabletop games!

Knights of the Chess Club

Tuesdays, 4 p.m., Jan. 7-Feb. 25

Learn and play chess!

Knotty Knitters

Thursdays, 4:30 p.m.

Jan. 9 & 23, Feb. 13 & 27

Make friends while trying out new stitches.

Crafternoons

Fridays, 4:30 p.m.

Create something wonderful.

Co-sponsored by the Spruce Creek Golf & CC Kitchen Club.

Jan. 10 *Suncatchers*

Feb. 7 *Papercraft Valentines*

Dragons in the Library!

Wednesdays, 5 p.m., Jan. 15, Feb. 5 & 19

Explore new realms through tabletop gameplay.

ADULTS

Tech Help

Thursdays, 2-4 p.m. Jan. 2-Feb. 27

Have a technology question?

Master Gardener Plant Clinic

Fridays, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

Jan. 3 & 17, Feb. 7 & 21

The plant doctors are in!

Presented by UF/IFAS Extension Marion County.

Just Another Mah-Jongg Monday!

Mondays, 1 p.m., Jan. 6-Feb. 24

Learn and play with other enthusiasts.

Writer's Studio

Wednesdays, 4:30 p.m., Jan. 8, Feb. 12

Writers of all levels share information and encouragement.

ABCs of Dementia

Friday, Jan. 10, 11 a.m.

Monday, Feb. 3, 11 a.m.

Call 352-422-3663 to register.

Understand the basics of the varied forms of dementia and techniques for becoming a better care partner with Debbie Selsavage, president of Coping with Dementia LLC.

Money Matters

Mondays, 4 p.m.

Family and Consumer Science Financial Agent Giovanna Benitez shares essential information.

Presented by UF/IFAS Extension Marion County. See Program Spotlight for special series information.

Jan. 13 *Personal Budgeting*

Feb. 10 *Home Buying Preparation*

Movie Matinée

Tuesdays, 1 p.m.

Movies for adults.

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

Jan. 14

Feb. 11

BOOK CLUB

See Program Spotlight for more book clubs. Attend one or all!

Power Hour Readers

Tuesdays, 10:30 a.m.

Dec. 31 *All Adults Here* by Emma Straub

Jan. 28 *The Water Dancer*
by Ta-Nehisi Coates

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Young Adults Lead Library Awareness! Be a part of a talented teen team and make the library a better experience for all. Guide, participate and design innovative library programs while enjoying snacks and making

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ConFAB Dec. 5, Jan. 2, Feb. 6

MANGAlicious! Dec. 19, Jan. 16, Feb. 20

FAMILIES

Where in the World?

Saturdays, 3:30 p.m.

Explore different cultures through food, art and music!

Jan. 4 *Egypt*

Feb. 1 *Japan*

STORY TIMES

Jan. 7-Feb. 27

Stories, songs and activities for young children with caregivers.

Bouncing Babies

Tuesdays, 10:30 a.m.

For ages birth-23 months.

Preschool Adventures

Wednesdays, 10:30 a.m.

For ages 3-5.

Toddling Twos

Thursdays, 10:30 a.m.

DUNNELTON 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.

SPECIAL EVENTS

See Program Spotlight for more information.

Renaissance Faire

Saturday, Jan. 18, noon

Joineth us at the faire. Huzzah!

African American Read-In

Saturday, Feb. 8, 2 p.m.

Celebrate a rich heritage in literature, film, music and art with your friends and neighbors. Readers, performers and listeners of all ages welcome!

ALL AGES

Madcap Movie:

How to Train Your Dragon

Saturday, Jan. 11, 2 p.m.

Jump into an interactive cinema experience!

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



Song Farmers

Saturdays, 3 p.m., Jan. 25, Feb. 22

Share a love of music with other hometown musicians. Player and listeners of all ages welcome!

ADULTS

Serving Health Insurance Needs of Elders (SHINE)

Tuesdays, 10 a.m.-noon

Dec. 3, Jan. 28, Feb. 25

Call 352-692-5209 for details.

Obtain free Medicare counseling through the Florida Department of Elder Affairs.

Caregiver Support Education Series

Thursdays, noon

Educational information for caregivers who want to know more about available resources.

Jan. 2 *Alyssa Ashley, CCRC, BS*
Project Manager/Recruitment
Director, RenStar Research

Feb. 6 *Kristina Young,*
SHINE Outreach &
Educational Specialist,
Free Medicare Counseling

Put It Together, Get Together

Fridays, 2 p.m., Jan. 3, Feb. 7

Coffee, conversation and casual puzzling.

Master Gardener Plant Clinic

Tuesdays, 10 a.m.-1 p.m., Jan. 7, Feb. 4

The plant doctors are in!

Presented by UF/IFAS Extension Marion County.

Tech Help

Tuesdays, 11 a.m., Jan. 7-Feb. 25

Have a technology question?

Project You!

A Self-Improvement Series

Tuesdays, 1 p.m.

Expand your life skills toolbox!

Jan. 7 *Basics of Meditation*

Jan. 14 *Intro to Chair Yoga*

Jan. 28 *Publish Your Story*

Feb. 4 *Home Buying Preparation*

Feb. 11 *Creating with Fiber Arts*

Feb. 25 *Estate Planning for Everyone*

Gardening with the Masters

Tuesdays, 11 a.m.

Wild discussions on all things green.

Presented by UF/IFAS Extension Marion County.

Jan. 21 *New to Florida Gardening*

Feb. 18 *Vegetable Gardens*

Elder Options Legal Panel

Friday, Jan. 24, 10:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.

Registration recommended. Call 352-438-2520.

Meaningful conversations about advance directives, estate planning, aging in place, living wills and more. Bring questions to the experts! Light lunch provided.

BOOK CLUB

See Program Spotlight for more book clubs.

Attend one or all!

Rather Be Reading

Fridays, 4 p.m.

Dec. 20 *Reader's Choice*

Jan. 17 *Eleanor Oliphant is Completely Fine* by Gail Honeyman

Feb. 21 *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* by Rebecca Skloot

TEENS

YALLA! Teen Club

Tuesdays, 4:30 p.m.

Young Adults Lead Library Awareness! Be a part of a talented teen team and make the library a better experience for all. Guide, participate and design innovative library programs while enjoying snacks and making friends as you earn volunteer hours for service. Y'all(a) come!

ConfAB Jan. 7, Feb. 4

MANGAlicious! Jan. 21, Feb. 18

Art Guild Jan. 28, Feb. 25

FAMILIES

Mindful Mornings

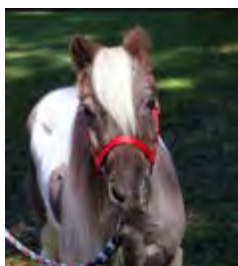
Saturdays, 11 a.m.

Jan. 4, Feb. 1

For ages 5-12 with caregivers.

Registration recommended.

Develop mindfulness skills with educator Alison Whitehurst through stories, games and meditation.



Horse Tales with Sassy

Tuesdays, 4 p.m.

Jan. 14, Feb. 11

Hi, I'm Sassy, a miniature therapy horse! I love stories. Won't you please read to me?

STORY TIMES

Jan. 8-Feb. 27

Stories and more for young children with caregivers.

Family Story Time

Wednesdays, 10:30 a.m.

Bouncing Babies

Thursdays, 10:30 a.m.

For ages birth-23 months.

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.

SEASONAL TREAT

See Program Spotlight for more seasonal treats.

Arctic Blast

Saturday, Dec. 7, 2 p.m.

Breeze in, chill out and party on!

Co-sponsored by Publix Supermarkets.

SPECIAL EVENT

See Program Spotlight for more information.

African American Read-In

Wednesday, Feb. 12, 11 a.m.

Celebrate a rich heritage in literature, film, music and art with your friends and neighbors. Readers, performers and listeners of all ages welcome!

ALL AGES

Rock Art! Paint On!

Saturdays, 2 p.m.

Jan. 18, Feb. 15

Paint miniature masterpieces on rocks.

Games on a Table

Tuesdays, 10:30 a.m.

Jan. 28, Feb. 25

Play classic and contemporary tabletop games!

ADULTS

Master Gardener Plant Clinic

Mondays, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

Dec. 9, Jan. 13, Feb. 10

The plant doctors are in!

Presented by UF/IFAS Extension Marion County.

Tech Help

Thursdays, 2 p.m., Jan. 2-Feb. 27

Have a technology question?

Yearning for Yarn

Tuesdays, 2 p.m., Jan. 7-Feb. 25

Learn how to knit or crochet.

The Art of Book Folding

Tuesdays, 10:30 a.m., Jan. 14 & 21

Break tradition and bindings and give new life to old books.



Money Matters

Wednesday & Thursday, 4 p.m.

Family and Consumer Science Financial Agent Giovanna Benitez shares essential information.

Presented by UF/IFAS Extension Marion County. See Program Spotlight for special series information.

Jan. 22 *You and Your Credit*

Jan. 23 *Estate Planning for Everyone*

Gardening with the Masters

Mondays, 10:30 a.m.

Wild discussions on all things green.

Presented by UF/IFAS Extension Marion County.

Jan. 27 *Preparing Gardens for the Spring*

Feb. 24 *Pollinator Gardens*

Faux Floral Arranging

Tuesday, Feb. 11, 10:30 a.m.

Make something special for someone special!

BOOK CLUB

See Program Spotlight for more book clubs.

Forest Readers

Wednesdays, 10:30 a.m.

Dec. 11 *'Twas the Bite Before Christmas* by David Rosenfelt

Jan. 8 *The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo* by Taylor Jenkins Reid

Jan. 22 *Lessons in Chemistry* by Bonnie Garmus

Feb. 12 *The Light We Carry* by Michelle Obama

Feb. 26 *The Alchemist* by Paulo Coelho

TEENS

YALLA! Teen Club

Thursdays, 5 p.m.

Young Adults Lead Library Awareness! Be a part of a talented teen team and make the library a better experience for all. Guide, participate and design innovative library programs while enjoying snacks and making friends as you earn volunteer hours for service. Y'all(a) come!

ConFAB Dec. 19, Jan. 16, Feb. 20

FAMILIES

Brick City Builders

Fridays, 4 p.m., Jan. 10-Feb. 28

For ages 5-12 with caregivers.

Can you build your way through the challenges?

YOUTH BOOK CLUBS

Books! Books! Books!

Wednesdays, 3 p.m., Jan. 29, Feb. 26

Adventures in Bookland Ages 6-8.

Bookaneers Ages 9-12.

STORY TIMES

Jan. 2-Feb. 28

Stories, songs and activities for children and caregivers.

Bouncing Babies

Thursdays, 10:30 a.m.

For ages birth-23 months.

Family Story Time

Fridays, 10:30 a.m.

FORT M^CCOY PUBLIC LIBRARY

14660 NE Highway 315,
Fort M^CCoy, FL 32134
352-438-2560

Programs are made possible by contributions from the Friends of the Ocala Public Library

SPECIAL EVENT

See Program Spotlight for more information.

African American Read-In

Monday, Feb. 3, 11:30 a.m.

Celebrate a rich heritage in literature, film, music and art with your friends and neighbors. Readers, performers and listeners of all ages welcome!

ADULTS

Master Gardener Plant Clinic

Tuesdays, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

Dec. 10, Jan. 14, Feb. 11

The plant doctors are in!

Presented by UF/IFAS Extension Marion County.



Tech Help

Tuesdays, 3 p.m., Jan. 7-Feb. 25

Have a technology question?

Money Matters

Wednesdays, 2 p.m. & 3 p.m.

Family and Consumer Science Financial Agent Giovanna Benitez shares information.

Presented by UF/IFAS Extension Marion County. See Program Spotlight for special series information.

Feb. 12, 2 p.m. *Personal Budgeting*

Feb. 12, 3 p.m. *You and Your Credit*

Feb. 19, 2 p.m. *Estate Planning for Everyone*

Feb. 19, 3 p.m. *Home Buying Preparation*

BOOK CLUB

See Program Spotlight for more book clubs.

Books and Coffee

Mondays, 10:30 a.m.

Dec. 2 *The Last Child* by John Hart

Jan. 6 *The Midnight Library* by Matt Haig

Feb. 3 *All the Sinners Bleed* by S.A. Cosby

TEENS

YALLA! Teen Club

Saturdays, 1 p.m.

Young Adults Lead Library Awareness! Be a part of a talented teen team and make the library a better experience for all. Guide, participate and design innovative library programs while enjoying snacks and making friends as you earn volunteer hours for service. Y'all(a) come!

ConFAB Dec. 14, Jan. 11, Feb. 8

FAMILIES

Construction Zone

Saturday, Feb. 1, 11 a.m.

Imagine what you can build!

STORY TIMES

Jan. 7-Feb. 26

Stories, songs and activities for children and caregivers.

Bouncing Babies

Tuesdays, 10:30 a.m.

For ages birth-23 months.

Family Story Time

Wednesdays, 10:30 a.m.

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.

SPECIAL EVENT

See Program Spotlight for more information.

African American Read-In

Tuesday, Feb. 4, 3:30 p.m.

Celebrate a rich heritage in literature, film, music and art with your friends and neighbors. Readers, performers and listeners of all ages welcome!

ADULTS

Tech Help

Wednesdays, 3 p.m., Jan. 8-Feb. 26
Have a technology question?

ABCs of Dementia

Thursday, Jan. 9, 11 a.m.
Friday, Feb. 7, 3 p.m.

Call 352-422-3663 to register.

Understand the basics of the varied forms of dementia and techniques for becoming a better care partner with Debbie Selsavage, president of Coping with Dementia LLC.

Estate Planning for Everyone

Tuesday, Feb. 18, 11:30 a.m.

Estate planning matters. Get tips from Family and Consumer Science Financial Agent Giovanna Benitez.

Presented by UF/IFAS Extension Marion County. See Program Spotlight for special series information.

BOOK CLUB

As the Page Turns

Tuesdays, 2:30 p.m.

Dec. 3 *Best. State. Ever.* by Dave Barry

Jan. 7 *Readers' Choice*

Feb. 4 *The Nightingale* by Kristin Hannah

TEENS

YALLA!

YALLA! Teen Club

Thursdays, 5 p.m.

Young Adults Lead Library Awareness! Be a part of a talented teen team and make the library a better experience for all. Guide, participate and design innovative library programs while enjoying snacks and making friends as you earn volunteer hours for service. Y'all(a) come!

ConFAB Dec. 12, Jan. 9, Feb. 13

FAMILIES



Dog Tales with Moka

Tuesdays, 4 p.m.
Jan. 21, Feb. 18

Hi, I'm Moka.
Won't you read to me? Please? (woof!)

STORY TIMES

Family Story Time

Wednesdays, 10:45 a.m.
Jan. 8-Feb. 26

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.

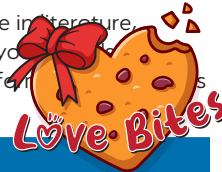
SPECIAL EVENT

See Program Spotlight for more information.

African American Read-In

Wednesday, Feb. 19, 1 p.m.

Celebrate a rich heritage in literature, film, music and art with your neighbors. Readers, performers of all ages welcome!



ALL AGES

Love Bites

Saturday, Feb. 8, 1 p.m.

Decorate and share Valentine's Day cookies.

Madcap Movie: Descendants

Wednesday, Feb. 26, 4 p.m.

Jump into an interactive cinema experience!
Anyone younger than age 13 must be accompanied by an adult.

ADULTS

Tech Help

Fridays, 10:30 a.m.-noon
Jan. 3-Feb. 28

Have a technology question?



Writer's Studio

Tuesdays & Thursdays, 4 p.m.
Jan. 7 & 16, Feb. 4 & 20

Writers of all levels share work and encouragement.

Get Growing with Sheldon

Saturday, Jan. 18, 2 p.m.

Dig into spring gardening with our very own Master Gardener!

Crafternoons

Tuesdays, 4 p.m.

Create something wonderful.

Jan. 28 *Zendoodle*

Feb. 25 *Book Folding*

Money Matters

Tuesdays, 3 p.m.

Family and Consumer Science Financial Agent Giovanna Benitez shares essential information.

Presented by UF/IFAS Extension Marion County. See Program Spotlight for special series information.

Feb. 11 *Personal Budgeting*

Feb. 25 *Estate Planning for Everyone*

BOOK CLUB

See Program Spotlight for more book clubs.

Novels at Noon

Wednesdays, noon

Dec. 18 *Reader's Choice*

Jan. 15 *A Slow Fire Burning*
by Paula Hawkins

Feb. 19 *The Heaven & Earth Grocery Store*
by James McBride

TEENS

YALLA! Teen Club

Tuesdays, 4 p.m.

Young Adults Lead Library Awareness! Be a part of a talented teen team and make the library a better experience for all. Guide, participate and design innovative library programs while enjoying snacks and making friends as you earn volunteer hours for service. Y'all(a) come!

ConFAB Dec. 10, Jan. 14, Feb. 11

MANGALicious Dec. 17, Jan. 21, Feb. 18

FAMILIES

Dog Tales with Moka

Wednesdays, 4 p.m., Jan. 8, Feb. 5

Hi, I'm Moka. Won't you read to me? Please? (woof!)

FUNtasmagoria

Wednesdays, 4 p.m.

Explore the world through science, stories and activities! It's FUNtastic!

Jan. 15 *Awesome Architecture*

Jan. 22 *Go! Go! Go!*

Jan. 29 *Grow it!*

Feb. 12 *Pet Party*

Feb. 19 *Hay is for Horses*

STORY TIMES

Jan. 7-Feb. 26

Stories, songs and activities for children and caregivers.

Family Story Time

Tuesdays, 10:30 a.m.

Bouncing Babies

Wednesdays, 10:30 a.m.

For ages birth-23 months.

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.

SEASONAL TREAT

See Program Spotlight for more treats.

Reindeer Romp

Saturday, Dec. 21, noon-2 p.m.

Celebrate the magic of the season with games, giveaways and fun!



SPECIAL EVENT

See Program Spotlight for more information.

African American Read-In

Monday, Feb. 10, 11:30 a.m.

Celebrate a rich heritage in literature, film, music and art with your friends and neighbors. Readers, performers and listeners of all ages welcome!

ADULTS

Tech Help

Tuesdays, 2 p.m., Jan. 7-Feb. 25

Have a technology question?

Money Matters

Wednesdays, 11 a.m.

Family and Consumer Science Financial Agent Giovanna Benitez shares essential information.

Presented by UF/IFAS Extension Marion County. See Program Spotlight for special series information.

Jan. 22 *You and Your Credit*

Feb. 19 *Estate Planning for Everyone*

Talking Local History with Annabelle Leitner

Mondays, 10:30 a.m.

Discover the fascinating history of the area.

Jan. 27 *All aboard! Trainspotting in Northwest Marion County*

Feb. 24 *Orange Lake Revisited*

BOOK CLUB

See Program Spotlight for more book clubs.

Let's Talk Books

Mondays, 10:30 a.m.

Talk about books with the aficionado of phrase, Jim Stroup! Donuts and coffee provided.

Dec. 9 *Bright Lights, Big Christmas*
by Mary Kay Andrews

Jan. 13 *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* by C.S. Lewis

Feb. 10 *Swamp Story* by Dave Barry

TEENS

YALLA! Teen Club

Saturdays, 1 p.m.

Young Adults Lead Library Awareness! Be a part of a talented teen team and make the library a better experience for all. Guide, participate and design innovative library programs while enjoying snacks and making friends as you earn volunteer hours for service. Y'all(a) come!

ConFAB Dec. 7, Jan. 4, Feb. 8

Movie Matinée

Saturdays, 1 p.m.

Movies for teens.

Anyone under the age of 13 must be accompanied by an adult.

Jan. 18

Jan. 25

Feb. 1

Feb. 8

Cupid's Aftermath

Saturday, Feb. 15, 1 p.m.

Definitely (maybe) a party. Get a pick-me-up of sweet snacks, crafts and games!

STORY TIMES

Jan. 7-Feb. 26

Stories, songs and activities for children and caregivers.

Family Story Time

Tuesdays, 10:30 a.m.

Bouncing Babies

Wednesdays, 10:30 a.m.

For ages birth-23 months.

SANKOFA PUBLIC LIBRARY

1821 NW 21st Ave., Ocala, FL 34475

352-438-2550

Programs made possible by contributions
from the Friends of the Ocala Public Library.

SEASONAL TREAT

See Program Spotlight for more seasonal treats.

"Christmas in Oz"

Monday, Dec. 9, 6:30 p.m.

There's no place like home for the holidays!
Presented by Community Stages Trunk & Trek Troupe.

SPECIAL EVENT

See Program Spotlight for more information.

African American Read-In

Monday, Feb. 17, 2 p.m.

Celebrate a rich heritage in literature, film, music and art with your friends and neighbors. Readers, performers and listeners of all ages welcome!

ALL AGES

Games on a Table

Mondays, 4:30 p.m., Jan. 6-Feb. 24

Play classic and contemporary tabletop games!

Crochet Corner

Thursdays, 4:30 p.m.

Jan. 9 & 23, Feb. 13 & 27

Relax and crochet. All skill levels welcome.



Heroes Wanted!

Saturday, Feb. 8, 10 a.m.-noon

Explore worlds and defeat evil monsters. Discover the basics of turn-based, tabletop gameplay with the highly skilled Storytelling Knights. All levels of experience welcome.

Co-sponsored by the Ocala Municipal Art Commission, the Marion Cultural Alliance and Bearded Browncoat Comics & Games.

ADULTS

Tech Help

Thursdays, 2-4 p.m., Jan. 2-Feb. 27
Have a technology question?

BOOK CLUB

See Program Spotlight for more book clubs.

Second Story Readers

Tuesdays, 10:30 a.m.

Dec. 17 Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents by Isabel Wilkerson

Jan. 21 Pineapple Street by Jenny Jackson

Feb. 18 The Maid by Nita Prose

TEENS

YALLA! Teen Club

Tuesdays, 4:30 p.m.

Young Adults Lead Library Awareness! Be a part of a talented teen team and make the library a better experience for all. Guide, participate and design innovative library programs while enjoying snacks and making

LIBRARY CLOSED DAYS AND HOLIDAYS

Parade Day

Saturday, Dec. 14

Headquarters-Ocala will close at 4 p.m.

Christmas Eve

Tuesday, Dec. 24

All public libraries will close at 5 p.m.

Christmas Day

Wednesday, Dec. 25

All public libraries closed.

New Year's Eve

Tuesday, Dec. 31

All public libraries will close at 5 p.m.

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY

Friends of the Belleview Public Library

Tuesdays, 10 a.m.

Dec. 17, Jan. 21, Feb. 18

Friends of the Dunnellon Public Library

Tuesdays, 10 a.m.

Dec. 10, Jan. 14, Feb. 11

Friends of the Forest Public Library

Wednesdays, 10:30 a.m.

Dec. 18, Jan. 15, Feb. 19

Book Sale

Friday, Feb. 7, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

Saturday, Feb. 8, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.



friends as you earn volunteer hours for service. Y'all(a) come!

MANGAlicious Dec. 3, Jan. 7, Feb. 4

ConFAB Dec. 17, Jan. 21, Feb. 18

STORY TIMES

Jan. 8-Feb. 27

Stories, songs and activities for children and caregivers.

Family Story Time

Wednesdays, 10:30 a.m.

Bouncing Babies

Thursdays, 10:30 a.m.

For ages birth-23 months.



calendar

EXHIBITS & DISPLAYS

Headquarters-Ocala Public Library

Dec. International Plastic Modelers Society

Jan. Dioramas by John Post

Feb. Thread Therapy

Belleview Public Library

Dec. Snow Babies by Margie Pirrwitz

Jan. Painted Glass Pictures by Charles Hopper

Feb. Paintings on Unusual Surfaces by Pat Bell

Dunnellon Public Library

Dec. Thailand by Stephanie Rous

Jan. The Renaissance by staff

Feb. Fiber Arts

Forest Public Library

Dec. Holiday Village

Jan. Hobbies by staff

Feb. Found Bookmarks by staff

Freedom Public Library

Dec. Will the Cookie Crumble? by staff and Friends

Jan. Woodwork by Carl Mitchell

Feb. Floral Inspirations by Patricia MacMurray

New Year's Day

Wednesday, Jan. 1

All public libraries closed.

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

Monday, Jan. 20

All public libraries closed.

Training/Maintenance Day

Friday, Feb. 14

All public libraries closed.

Friends of Freedom Public Library

Mondays, Dec. 2, Jan. 6, Feb. 3, 10:15 a.m.

Book Sale

Dec. 7 & 9, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

Friends of the Marion Oaks Public Library

Fridays, 10 a.m.

Jan. 17, Feb. 21

Friends of the Ocala Public Library

Thursdays, 4 p.m.

Jan. 16, Feb. 20



New Year, New Financial Foundation


BY VICTORIA CONNOLLY

With this New Year soon to unfold, it might be a good time to consider some healthy life changes, to include tackling those financial goals you've considered in the past. When it comes to saving, budgeting and spending money productively, many feel overwhelmed. But, with help from your public library, the days of stressing over those financial stability aspirations can be a thing of the past. Fuel your ambitions with some of these choice reads!

Fostering excellence in financial literacy is for all ages! In *Sled Dog School*, Terry Lynn Johnson tells a heartwarming story about an eleven-year-old boy named Matt who sets out to start his own business as an extra credit assignment. He gains insightful lessons on money planning by tracking expenses and income. Amazingly, he does this while fetching new friends along the way! This adventurous story highlights the significance of resourcefulness and the bravery needed to seize opportunities in the face of uncertainty. Plus, there are dogs. How could it get any better?

If putting money aside regularly and accumulating savings is your goal, then the book, *Your Best Financial Life*, by Anne Lester will serve as the spotlight on a path to success. No matter what stage you're in, this book provides easily digestible advice on how to secure an economically fool-proof future and suggests positive spending habits to do so. Chock-full of rich tips and tricks on how to balance the imbalance, every page will not only inform, but alter even the most rigid perspectives on how to accomplish a triumphant financial symmetry.

Not able to make a trip to the library? Say no more! Explore your public library's digital media **Freeding** database from anywhere! **Freeding** offers eBooks and eAudiobooks about how to spend and save money and how to create a more financially stable future for you and your family! Dive in and develop exercise plans on where to best save dollars with the help of a multitude of authors. The library system's **Freeding** database is also a resource for a variety of other topics to jump start the New Year.

All of these resources and more are available at the Marion County Public Library System. Change that financial landscape for 2025 and aim to the sky with your aspirations. 



A New Chapter to

FINANCIAL LITERACY

BY GIOVANNA M. BENITEZ,
MARION COUNTY EXTENSION SERVICES

As we commence our 2025 chapter of life, let's put a spotlight on financial literacy. For some, this will mean shifting a focus from being a bit casual about their personal finances, to enthusiastically embracing financial management and stability. This new mind set can be instrumental in empowering individuals and families to make wise financial decisions, paving the way for stability, reduced stress, and enhanced financial well-being. Financial literacy gives people the tools to take charge of their finances and conquer the obstacles that might come their way. A few factors are pivotal to individuals and families seeking the financial health they desire.

Budgeting, debt management, and savings are essential elements of financial literacy.



New Public Library Branch Coming Soon TO THE SILVER SPRINGS SHORES AREA


BY KAREN M. JENSEN

As the Silver Springs Shores and surrounding community continues to experience growth, a new Marion County Public Library System branch will soon be a welcome addition for area residents.

Scheduled to open in Spring 2025, the new public library branch will be located in the building west of the Silver Springs Shores community center, known as the youth center. Efforts to renovate this Marion County municipal service taxing unit building will be provided through Marion County Community Services CDBG funding as the site falls within its guidelines. Marion County facilities management will oversee the project and Architecture Studio, Inc. will design the space.

The new public library branch will be a full-service library to include materials and library resources in a variety of formats, including: **Public Computers and Printing; Children, Adult and Young Adult Collections; Children's Programming; Item Request Capability and Reference Services.**


A new branch library supervisor II and two full-time public services assistants will be on-site to assist community residents. Public service hours are pending at this time and will be posted on the Marion County Public Library System website at Library.MarionFL.org as soon as the schedule is determined.

Stay tuned and follow your Marion County Public Library System on social media platforms for updates on the next chapter in public library services for Marion County. 

Understanding how much money is coming in, the household monthly expenses, monitoring spending habits, and setting realistic goals are crucial to achieving financial well-being.

Some financial tips and tricks to developing good financial literacy habits include:

- **A monthly budget will help track the household income and expenses.** Tracking income and expenses visualizes living within your means, avoiding unmanageable debt, and saving for future goals.
- **Pay yourself!** Setting aside a bit at a time of your income improves saving habits, increases security, and grows financial health.
- **Paying bills on time helps individuals and families maintain financial health, build a good credit history, avoid penalties and late fees, and develop a sense of debt control.**
- **Monitor credit reports to recognize potential risk factors that might impact your credit score.** Recognizing the impact of your credit score on interest rates is crucial in developing strategies to pay down and manage debt.
- **If you have trouble paying bills on time or need assistance developing a budget to pay the debt down, seek advice from a financial counselor.** Contact your Family Consumer Science agent, Giovanna Benitez, at the Marion County Extension office at 352-671-8400 for free one-on-one counseling services.

Financial well-being may be unique to some individuals and families. But practicing better money habits, setting realistic goals, and taking the necessary steps to achieve them can really improve one's overall quality of life. 

IMAGES

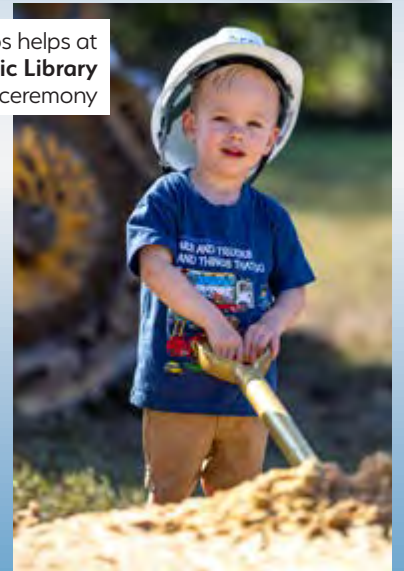
It's a beautiful day for a groundbreaking at **Freedom Public Library**



Dignitaries attend **Freedom Public Library** groundbreaking ceremony



Forrest Zamos helps at **Freedom Public Library** groundbreaking ceremony



PNC bank donates to **Friends of the Ocala Public Library**



Cooks & Books program at **HQ-Ocala Public Library**



Fall fun at **Dunnellon Public Library**



BOOKMARKS

NEWS & NOTES FROM THE FRIENDS OF THE Ocala PUBLIC LIBRARY

WELCOME TO OUR NEW BOARD MEMBERS AND OFFICERS!

We are proud to introduce our new Board members, Diane Johnson and Judy Johnson. They both have impressive resumes. We look forward to working with them.



Diane Johnson

Diane is a dedicated library professional with a rich background in library services and management. Throughout her career, Diane has made significant contributions to various library systems in Florida including roles as Youth Librarian and Branch Manager in Nassau County; Branch Manager in Alachua County; and Children Services Division Manager in Marion County. One notable achievement for Diane is serving as the first Branch Supervisor of the Sankofa Public Library.

Now retired, Diane remains passionate about promoting literacy and expanding library access. Her commitment lies in introducing young children to the joys of reading and ensuring that libraries support underserved communities.



Judy Johnson

Judy has extensive experience in contributing to our community. She was a counselor in the College of Education at UF, a school board attorney for Leon County Schools, an Associate General Counsel for FSU, and a private practice attorney in Marion County. She also served on the Alachua County School Board as a member and as chair. Judy was also a County Commissioner for Marion County and served as chair for the Commission. Her various volunteer roles demonstrate her dedication to the community. Judy has played integral leading roles as a volunteer with the Florida League of Women Voters, the Florida Association of Counties, the Governor's Growth Management Committee, the Marion County Planning Commission, the Early Learning Coalition of Marion County, and the Florida Credit Union. Plus, for 25 years, she has been presenting the pro and con arguments for Florida's amendments to various local organizations.

Our new officers for the Friends of the Library Board of Directors are **Martha Cromwell**, President; **Vicky Nelson**, Vice President and Secretary; and **Barbara West**, Treasurer. We know you'll do a great job!

WHAT A SURPRISE! A Book Store in the Library!

For those of you who have not visited our Book Market, you are in for a surprise. When you enter the lobby of the Headquarters-Ocala Library, turn immediately to the right and you'll see our Book Market. It is full of gently-used books that are for sale at very low prices. Generous donations from our patrons allow us to offer these publications. All monies collected go to library programs. The market is open 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday. Wednesday hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. We'd love for you to visit!



Time to think about holiday gift-giving!

25¢ for each paperback and 50¢ for each hard cover

Friday, Dec. 6, 1:30-3:30 p.m.

FRIENDS MEMBERS ONLY

(Friends of the Library memberships may be purchased at the door during Friday's sale.)

Saturday, Dec. 7, 10 a.m.- 2 p.m.

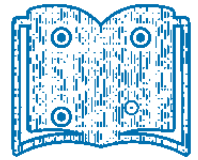
OPEN TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC

Meeting Rooms A, B and C, HQ-Ocala Public Library

SPECIAL BARGAINS:

ALL Children's and Young Adult books (paperbacks and hard covers) 25¢ each.





Scan this QR code and check out the digital edition of WORDS.

profile

Marylyn Ross

BY SCOTT MASON

Marylyn Ross is a familiar face to staff working at the Headquarters-Ocala Public Library. Always fashionably attired in a crisp, stylish shirt, slacks, makeup and jewelry, she graciously greets everyone with a smile as she regularly checks out her books. One would be surprised to learn that a person so regal and independent also has the distinction of being someone who has experienced so many chapters in life and may soon claim the title of centenarian; a person who is 100 years of age.

Marylyn Patricia Ross was born in the wilderness of Ontario Canada, in a little town called Iroquois Falls. Her mother was a musician and opera singer and her father owned a paper mill. Marilyn recalls that when hard times affected some of the plant employees, her father would host talent shows and use the proceeds to help pay for their food and clothing.

She was enrolled in an all-girls boarding school in Winnipeg, Canada and after graduating went to college at the University of Manitoba. "The beautiful thing about Canada is that everyone came from somewhere else. My best friend was from Hungary and served in the Hungarian army," she says. Marylyn was very active in the theater and was in many plays, including **Carmen**. She later made the big move to Florida, where she attended the University of Florida (UF) after it had integrated from an all-boys college to coed.

While studying at UF, Marylyn met her husband George Ross. George later served in the Air Force during World War II. The family moved to Ocala where he operated the DW David Insurance agency. During this time Marylyn started teaching 2nd grade at Blessed Trinity School and then at Grace Episcopal school for 15 years, with an impressive 40 years as a teacher. As a teacher she knew the importance of libraries in the scope of continued learning and would bring her students to the old Ocala Public Library location on Osceola Avenue.



As an avid reader, Marylyn describes her interests as "reading everything". She says, "You can learn how to do just about anything by reading books." While she currently prefers romance novels, she reads books of all kinds. It's this fascination with books and learning that she passed onto her students. "I hope that I instilled in them a joy for the library," she says.

Marylyn has lived a full, rich 98 years with many ups and downs and has learned to "laugh a lot" over the years. She has an everlasting message, "be kind and treat people with kindness". Marylyn reminisces, "I'm very fortunate, I've had a wonderful life and met some wonderful people." With two children, three grandchildren and four great grandchildren, there is much to be shared about each chapter of her life's story. 