Enjoying the Simple Things in life
For most of us, the last several months have provided unprecedented challenges and new realities. From the long list of concerns including social distancing, back-to-school decisions for families and other new issues, many of us are trying to find solace and comfort from some of life’s simple pleasures. We dedicated this issue of WORDS to that theme and our library staff quickly shared some of their favorite simple pleasures that may touch a chord with our readers as well.

For those who know me, they know I love to give and receive hugs. Although I am very conscious of individual concerns for personal space, it is a meaningful gesture to me and I find myself missing that contact with the people I love. So, I’ve tried to console myself with some of the other simple pleasures that are still within the realm of the new health guidelines.

Family dinners have always been high on my list of favorite pastimes. Now more than ever, I love the simple pleasure of fixing and enjoying a meal with those I love. For my family, we plan our menus and everyone brings their own dish for all to enjoy. We share the highlights of our day and really listen to what each of us has to say. I know I feel this bond more than ever and am reminded every day how fortunate my family is to be together, enjoying a delicious meal, laughter and good conversation.

The new normal of wearing protective face masks has made me more mindful of the simple pleasure of a smile—given or received. I miss seeing the smiles on the faces of children and adults visiting their public library. But I now make every effort to let my eyes generate the smile that a face mask unfortunately hides. I make an effort to catch the attention of others so we can exchange that special “smile” that simply acknowledges we care for one another.

What simple pleasures have you found to be most comforting during these challenging times? Please share your thoughts with us on our Facebook or Twitter. Let’s see if we can fill our Facebook with comments about how we are all coping and finding sincere pleasure in the simple things in life!
A List of Simple Pleasures from Library Staff

If living with the realities of COVID-19 has taught us anything, it’s the importance of day-to-day simple pleasures and the joy they can bring to our lives. A good book (of course), the smell of fresh coffee, a bike ride or walk/jog, a phone call with a loved one, cuddles with a beloved pet, family game night, fresh popcorn, bounty from the garden, and the list goes on! Here are a few simple pleasures our Marion County Public Library System staff members are enjoying.
My two-year-old daughter and I have been painting and, of course, cuddling up on the couch with a good picture book or ten.

— Brittany

One simple pleasure that has helped me so much during this stressful time is the joy of family dinners. It has been so relaxing to cook a large meal, get together with family and completely forget the trials of the day.

— Julie

One of my favorite simple pleasures is sewing. So, during this time, I put that pleasure to use by making 400+ face masks for family, friends, co-workers and members of our community. Not only do I feel a sense of calm and purpose in providing for those I love, I felt a sense of commitment to the safety of my community.

— Karen
Over the past few months, I have focused on gardening. I am working on turning my backyard into a food forest and wildlife sanctuary. The idea is to provide a diversity of plants for wildlife and nature will, in turn, provide me with abundant harvests.

— SHELDON

My parents and I are very lucky to have a back porch that looks out onto a wide horizon. We spend many hours there watching thunderstorms roll through, observing beautiful Sandhill cranes and egrets forage in the yard, and recounting our daily events often while casually reading in the late afternoon sunlight.

— HEATHER
I have discovered the video game Fallout 3 and have invested over 120 hours in it. Scavenging and exploring the DC wasteland (remains of the town of my actual birth) makes any day-to-day troubles seem quite tame!

— ROBIN

My friends and I video chat and watch cheesy movies on Friday nights since we weren’t able to see each other in person this summer. It’s a great way to stay social and enjoy hilarious films!

— SCOTT

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, I have rediscovered my love of swimming. I enjoy morning swims at the local YMCA.

— NE’SAY
The Simple Pleasure of Reading a Good Book

BY MARY THOMPSON

A day devoted to simple pleasures must include time spent reading. By pairing the joy of reading with a book that embraces simple pleasures, we more readily notice the joys all around us.

In her collection of essays, “World of Wonders: In Praise of Fireflies, Whale Sharks, and Other Astonishments,” Aimee Nezhukumatathil describes her life through the lens of nature. She discusses wildlife ranging from the peacocks she saw as a child visiting India to the cara cara oranges her mother started growing in Central Florida after retirement. The illustrator, Fumi Nakamura, embellishes Nezhukumatathil’s appreciation of the beauty and wonder of nature, making this title truly a pleasure to read.

In the follow-up to her bestselling “The Happiness Project,” Gretchen Rubin offers practical advice for finding happiness in one’s own home. In “Happier at Home: Kiss More, Jump More, Abandon a Project, Read Samuel Johnson, and My Other Experiments in the Practice of Everyday Life,” Rubin doesn’t make radical changes; she makes small modifications and pays attention to how they impact her happiness. “Happier at Home” may inspire you to find more enjoyment from the simple pleasures in your life.

Revisiting beloved favorites from childhood can send you back to a time when your life had fewer worries and responsibilities. Think back to the books you loved when you were younger, perhaps “Anne of Green Gables” by L.M. Montgomery or “Island of the Blue Dolphins” by Scott O’Dell, and find comfort and pleasure in their pages.

Whether it is your first or thirty-first read, children’s books can take you to a joyful, simpler world. If you are looking for something new, consider “The Last Last-Day-of-Summer” by Lamar Giles. This book has a camera that can freeze an entire town, time-travelers and antics between cousins that just might transport you back to your own youth.

If you are looking to lose yourself in the simple pleasures of a good book or a new skill, or just want to learn to live graciously with what you have, the library collection has plenty to offer.
Picture this: A warm day, looking out onto a calm lake, with your best friend by your side. No need to speak, you know each other well enough to sit in silence and enjoy the moment. Maybe you love sleeping in on a weekend. Your purring companion is more than happy to share the early morning with you while you contemplate your plans for the day. How about taking a stroll under beautiful, canopied oaks with your special friend? The companion in each of these scenarios is a beloved pet, reminding us that pet parenthood is one of life’s great, simple joys.

There is something to be said about having a friend who cares nothing about your wealth, your education, your style, nor your quirks. Living with a beloved pet can really enhance one’s life in so many ways. If you’ve ever had a special pet, you know the warm feeling that stirs inside your heart when you don’t feel well and your pet supportively curls up beside you while you convalesce.

For most of us, the current reality of social distancing and other limits imposed upon our daily comings and goings are brand new experiences. We’re living in a time like no other, but there are simple ways to make it easier and lift our spirits. Our current situation can offer us an interesting perspective and reminder to what life was like before the age of social media, the internet and cable TV. And, as far as entertainment goes, there is little doubt that cats missing their landing zones or a puppy seeing its own reflection for the first time has been making most people laugh for decades.

We should all take the time to appreciate the small things that can enhance our lives and give us joy. At Marion County Animal Services, we have an abundance of loving companions who would be grateful for the opportunity to help you get back to basics and seek the simple pleasures of a life worth living.

Please contact MCAS to foster, volunteer, or adopt. Call 352-671-8700 or visit Marion County Animal Services at 5701 SE 66th Street, Ocala, FL 34480.

Aquarius, Joe and other pets are available for adoption at Marion County Animal Services.
**Community Conversations**
There are many conversations going on in Marion County libraries. Feel free to join one or all of them! Call the libraries for registration and details and come together for a casual and considerate exchange of ideas.

**TOPIC:** How did a simple act of kindness make a profound difference in your life?
- **Tuesday, Sept. 15, 10:30 a.m.**
  - Belleview Public Library
- **Friday, Oct. 9, 3 p.m.**
  - Freedom Public Library
- **Friday, Oct. 30, 4 p.m.**
  - Dunnellon Public Library

**TOPIC:** How do you keep your spirits up during difficult times?
- **Tuesday, Sept. 22, 4 p.m.**
  - Marion Oaks Public Library
- **Saturday, Oct. 3, 10:30 a.m.**
  - Forest Public Library
- **Monday, Oct. 19, 10:30 a.m.**
  - Reddick Public Library

**TOPIC:** What makes Thanksgiving special for you?
- **Saturday, Nov. 14, 11 a.m.**
  - Fort McCoy Public Library

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**SPECIAL PROGRAMS**

**Ride the Rails of Marion County**
All aboard! Explore the history of railroad travel and commerce in Marion County with history enthusiast and librarian Taylor Benson. Adults.
- **Monday, Sept. 14, 3 p.m.**
  - Headquarters-Ocala
- **Wednesday, Sept. 30, 2 p.m.**
  - Freedom Public Library

**Are You Smarter Than a Librarian?**
Match wits with our librarians and other competitors in this zany virtual game show!
- **Tuesday, Sept. 29, 4:30 p.m.**
  - Belleview Public Library

**Grow Something to Eat!**
Get the basics of vegetable gardening from our own master gardening enthusiast! What a simple way to stock the fridge! Adults.
- **Saturday, Oct. 3, 2 p.m.**
  - Marion Oaks Public Library

**Chalk4Peace Day**
Create sidewalk art that inspires peace.
- **All ages.**
  - **Saturday, Oct. 10, noon**
    - Dunnellon Public Library

**Pumpkin Decorating Contest**
Dress your pumpkin for the season! Bring in your best decorated (not carved) pumpkin and vote for your favorite!
- **Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2 p.m.**
  - Freedom Public Library

**Come Write In! It’s NaNoWriMo Time!**
National Novel Writing Month comes with a challenge to write 50,000 words in 30 days! Bring your own device and write with us.
- **All ages.**
  - **Monday Nov. 2, 4 p.m.**
    - Forest Public Library

**Camp Read S’More**
Camp-in with a good book and s’mores. Registration begins Monday, Oct. 28.
- **Ages 5-12 with caregivers.**
  - **Friday, Nov. 13, 5:30-7 p.m.**
    - Headquarters-Ocala

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**VIRTUAL PROGRAMS**

Check out our Facebook page www.facebook.com/MCPLibrary/ for more details.
SPECIAL PROGRAMS
See Program Spotlight. All programs require pre-registration. Call 352-671-8551 to register.

Ride the Rails of Marion County
Monday, Sept. 14, 3 p.m. Adults
All aboard! Explore the history of railroad travel and commerce in Marion County with history enthusiast and librarian Taylor Benson.
See Program Spotlight for more locations.

Camp Read S'More
Friday, Nov. 13, 5:30-7 p.m.
Ages 5-12 with caregivers.
Camp-in with a good book and s'mores.

ADULTS
All programs require pre-registration. Call 352-671-8551 to register.

Crafternoons
Wednesdays, 4:30 p.m.
Get in touch with the right side of your brain!
Sept. 2 Tie Dye Scarves
Oct. 7 Faux Stained Glass
Nov. 4 Junk Journals

Novels at Night Book Club
Tuesdays, 4 p.m.
Enjoy spirited book discussions, virtually!
Sept. 8 “Daisy Jones & the Six” by Taylor Jenkins Reid
Oct. 13 “The Nickel Boys” by Colson Whitehead
Nov. 10 “Ninth House” by Leigh Bardugo

Mondays, 2 p.m.
Sept. 14-Oct. 26
Express yourself through coloring and interesting conversation!

Heart Felt Hygge
Wednesday, Nov. 18, 2 p.m.
Learn new stitches to add Nordic nuance to your felt art.

TEENS
All programs require pre-registration. Call 352-671-8551 to register.

MANGAlicious Teen Club!
Thursdays, 4:30 p.m.
Sept. 3, Oct. 1, Nov. 5
Anime and manga fans, unite!

Show and Sketch
Teen Artist Club
Mondays, 4:30 p.m.
Sept. 14, Oct. 12, Nov. 9
Share your art and learn new techniques. All skill levels welcome.

Geekfest! Fandoms and Comic Club
Wednesdays, 4:30 p.m.
Sept. 23, Oct. 28, Nov. 25
Explore the world of pop culture and comics with fellow fans.

Fab Lab: Oh Sew Magical!
Wednesday, Oct. 14, 4:50 p.m.
Make your own misfit. Learn basic hand stitches with unicorns, gnomes and sasquatches.

CHILDRREN
All programs require pre-registration. Call 352-671-8551 to register.

Talk Like a Pirate Day
Saturday, Sept. 19, 2 p.m.
Ages 5-12 with caregivers.
Ahoy, me mateys! Party like a buccaneer with high-seas humor and a treasure chest full of fun! Pirate dress encouraged. ARRRGH!

Spooktacular Crafts
Saturday, Oct. 24, 2 p.m.
Ages 5-12 with caregivers.
Have a spooky good time making spiders, ghosts and more.

Camp Read S'More
Friday, Nov. 13, 5:30-7 p.m.
Ages 5-12 with caregivers.
Camp-in with a good book and s'mores. Registration begins Monday, Oct. 28.

STORY TIMES
A variety of stories, songs, and activities for children and caregivers. All programs require pre-registration. Call 352-671-8551 to register.

Fresh Air Story Time
Tuesdays, Wednesdays, 10:30 a.m.
Sept. 8-Nov. 4
Program is held at the Veterans Memorial Park pavilion, 2601 E. Fort King Street, Ocala.
Ages 5 and younger with caregiver.

Family Story Time
Saturdays, 10:30 a.m.
Sept. 12, Oct. 3
Ages 5 and younger with caregiver.

Are You Smarter Than a Librarian?
Tuesday, Sept. 29, 4:30 p.m.
Topic: How did a simple act of kindness make a profound difference in your life?
There are many conversations going on in Marion County libraries. Feel free to join one or all of them! Call the library for registration and details and come together for a casual and considerate exchange of ideas.
See Program Spotlight for other locations and topics.

Mystery Theater! Virtual Edition
Tuesday, Oct. 27, 4:30 p.m.
Ages 13 and older.
It’s a dark and daring mystery. Can you solve it?

YALLA! South!
Tuesdays, 5 p.m.
Sept. 1, Oct. 6, Nov. 3
Be a part of the library experience. Teens, earn volunteer hours for service.

Are You Smarter Than a Librarian?
Tuesday, Sept. 29, 4:30 p.m.
Match wits with our librarians and other competitors in this zany virtual game show!

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Tuesday, Oct. 27, 4:30 p.m.
Ages 13 and older.
It’s a dark and daring mystery. Can you solve it?

CHILDREN
All programs require pre-registration. Call 352-438-2500 to register.

Can you solve it?
Ages 13 and older.
Virtual Edition
Tuesday, Sept. 29, 4:30 p.m.
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Mystery Theater! Virtual Edition
Tuesday, Oct. 27, 4:30 p.m.
Ages 13 and older.
It’s a dark and daring mystery. Can you solve it?

STORY TIMES
Sept. 2-Oct. 14
A variety of stories, songs and activities for young children with caregivers.
All programs require pre-registration. Call 352-438-2500 to register.

Storytime Adventures
Wednesdays, 10:30 a.m.
Infants-age 5

TEENS & TWEENS
All programs require pre-registration. Call 352-438-2500 to register.

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A variety of stories, songs and activities for young children with caregivers.
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Infants-age 5

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Are You Smarter Than a Librarian?
Tuesday, Sept. 29, 4:30 p.m.
Match wits with our librarians and other competitors in this zany virtual game show!

Mystery Theater! Virtual Edition
Tuesday, Oct. 27, 4:30 p.m.
Ages 13 and older.
It’s a dark and daring mystery. Can you solve it?
Invent, discover and dream!

What to do with all those pine cones?

TEENS
to store them!
give it its due as you make your own bowl
Wednesday, Oct. 21, 2 p.m.
Count Your Buttons Day
Saturday, Oct. 10, noon
Create sidewalk art that inspires peace!

ADULTS

Bag-a-Book
Tuesday, Sept. 8, 11 a.m.
Create your own book bag in a flash, just in time for National Read a Book Day!

National Live Creative Day!
Monday, Sept. 14, 4 p.m.
What to do with all those pine cones? Invent, discover and dream!

Dunnellon Rocks!
Wednesday, Sept. 16, 3 p.m.
It's National Collect Rocks Day! Paint them, keep them or give them to a friend.

Count Your Buttons Day
Wednesday, Oct. 21, 2 p.m.
Ever consider the button? Well, it's time to give it its due as you make your own bowl to store them!

ADULTS

All programs require pre-registration. Call 352-438-2520 to register.

Chalk4Peace Day
Saturday, Oct. 10, noon
Create sidewalk art that inspires peace!

DIY Art
Wednesday, 10:30 a.m.
Express yourself through art!

Dunnellon Rocks!
Wednesday, Sept. 16, 3 p.m.
It's National Collect Rocks Day! Paint them, keep them or give them to a friend.

Family Trees
Thursday, Sept. 24, 3 p.m.
Make your own special family tree, complete with thumbprint leaves.

Chalk4Peace Day
Saturday, Oct. 10, noon
Create sidewalk art that inspires peace!

COUNT YOUR BUTTONS DAY

How to Register:
Visit the Library’s Website

TEENS & TWEENS

All programs require pre-registration. Call 352-438-2520 to register.

Chalk4Peace Day
Saturday, Oct. 10, noon
Create sidewalk art that inspires peace!

Count Your Buttons Day
Wednesday, Oct. 21, 2 p.m.
Ever consider the button? Well, it's time to give it its due as you make your own bowl to store them!

Pine Cone Gnomes
Saturday, Oct. 24, 11 a.m.
No garden should be without one!

STORY TIMES

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

All programs require pre-registration. Call 352-438-2520 to register.

Family Story Time
Wednesdays, 11 a.m.
Sept. 9-Oct. 28

DUNNELLON PUBLIC LIBRARY
303 Robinson Road, Dunnellon, FL 34431
352-438-2520
Programs are made possible by contributions from the Friends of the Dunnellon Public Library.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

All programs require pre-registration. Call 352-438-2520 to register.

Chalk4Peace Day
Saturday, Oct. 10, noon
Create sidewalk art that inspires peace!

Community Conversation
Friday, Oct. 30, 4 p.m.
There are many conversations going on in Marion County libraries. Feel free to join one or all of them! Call the library for registration and details and come together for a casual and considerate exchange of ideas.

See Program Spotlight for other locations and topics.

DUNNELLON PUBLIC LIBRARY
905 S. Highway 344A, Okeechobee FL 33479
352-438-2540
Programs are made possible by contributions from the Friends of the Dunnellon Public Library.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

All programs require pre-registration. Call 352-438-2540 to register.

Community Conversation
Saturday, Oct. 3, 2 p.m.
Make a bouquet of scrap paper roses for someone special.

Make a special family tree, Hero an National Comic Book Day!
Chalk4Peace Day
Saturday, Oct. 10, noon
Create sidewalk art that inspires peace!

ADULTS

All programs require pre-registration. Call 352-438-2520 to register.

NaNoWriMo Time!
Monday, Nov. 2, 4 p.m.
National Novel Writing Month comes with a challenge to write 50,000 words in 30 days! Bring your own device and write with us.

TEENS

All programs require pre-registration. Call 352-438-2520 to register.

NaNoWriMo Time!
Monday, Nov. 2, 4 p.m.
National Novel Writing Month comes with a challenge to write 50,000 words in 30 days! Bring your own device and write with us.

FAMILIES

All programs require pre-registration. Call 352-438-2520 to register.

NaNoWriMo Time!
Monday, Nov. 2, 4 p.m.
National Novel Writing Month comes with a challenge to write 50,000 words in 30 days! Bring your own device and write with us.

FAMILY STORY TIMES

A variety of stories, songs, and activities for children and caregivers. All programs require pre-registration. Call 352-438-2540 to register.

Family Story Time
Fridays, 10:30 a.m.
Sept. 4-Oct. 16

FOREST PUBLIC LIBRARY
11111 20th Ave, Okeechobee FL 34974
352-438-2524
Programs are made possible by contributions from the Friends of the Forest Public Library.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

All programs require pre-registration. Call 352-438-2524 to register.

NaNoWriMo Time!
Monday, Nov. 2, 4 p.m.
National Novel Writing Month comes with a challenge to write 50,000 words in 30 days! Bring your own device and write with us.

TEENS

All programs require pre-registration. Call 352-438-2520 to register.

NaNoWriMo Time!
Monday, Nov. 2, 4 p.m.
National Novel Writing Month comes with a challenge to write 50,000 words in 30 days! Bring your own device and write with us.

CREATIONS!

Thursday, 4 p.m.
Let your creative side out!

FOREST PUBLIC LIBRARY
905 S. Highway 344A, Okeechobee FL 33479
352-438-2540
Programs are made possible by contributions from the Friends of the Forest Public Library.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

All programs require pre-registration. Call 352-438-2540 to register.

Community Conversation
Saturday, Oct. 3, 10:30 a.m.
Topic: How do you keep your spirits up during difficult times?

There are many conversations going on in Marion County libraries. Feel free to join one or all of them! Call the library for registration and details and come together for a casual and considerate exchange of ideas. See Program Spotlight for other locations and topics.

Come Write In! It’s NaNoWriMo Time!
Monday, Nov. 2, 4 p.m.
National Novel Writing Month comes with a challenge to write 50,000 words in 30 days! Bring your own device and write with us.

DIY Art
Wednesday, 10:30 a.m.
Express yourself through art!

Sept. 2
Decorate Flower Pots
Oct. 7
Nail Polish on Tiles
Nov. 4
Make a Journal

Coloring Club
Thursdays, 10:30 a.m.
Color your world!

Forest Readers Book Club
Wednesday, 10:30 a.m.
Make new friends and talk about books!

Sept. 9
"Where the Crawdads Sing" by Delia Owens
Oct. 23
"The Woods" by Harlan Coben
Oct. 28
"Sparring Gold" by Clive Cussler

Forest Writers Studio
Thursdays, 4 p.m.
Bring your own device and write with us.

Sept. 4
"Cooking with the Sun"
Oct. 15
"Message in a Bottle"
Nov. 4
"Spartan Gold" by Clive Cussler

Enjoy the world of books with the Forest Readers Book Club and Forest Writers Studio! Practice writing and reading in a supportive environment. Be part of the library experience. Teens, earn volunteer service hours.

Imagination Station
Wednesdays, 4 p.m.
Explore the world through stories and activities! It’s FUNtastic!

Sept. 2
"Cooking with the Sun"
Sept. 9
Art on the Porch
Sept. 16
Making Ice Cream
Sept. 30
Speedy Racer
Oct. 7
Go Fly a Kite
Oct. 14
"Sparrow's Gold" by Clive Cussler

Rock Art!
Saturdays, 2 p.m.
Paint miniature masterpieces on river rocks.

Come Write In! It’s NaNoWriMo Time!
Monday, Nov. 2, 4 p.m.
National Novel Writing Month comes with a challenge to write 50,000 words in 30 days! Bring your own device and write with us.

There are many conversations going on in Marion County libraries. Feel free to join one or all of them! Call the library for registration and details and come together for a casual and considerate exchange of ideas. See Program Spotlight for other locations and topics.

Come Write In! It’s NaNoWriMo Time!
Monday, Nov. 2, 4 p.m.
National Novel Writing Month comes with a challenge to write 50,000 words in 30 days! Bring your own device and write with us.
FORT McCOY PUBLIC LIBRARY
14660 NE Hwy 315, Fort McCoy, FL 32134
352-438-2560

FREEDOM PUBLIC LIBRARY
5870 SW 95th St., Ocala 34476
352-438-2580

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

SPECIAL PROGRAM
All programs require pre-registration. Call 352-438-2560 to register.
Community Conversation
Saturday, Nov. 14, 11 a.m.
Topic: What makes Thanksgiving special for you?
There are many conversations going on in Marion County libraries. Feel free to join one or all of them! Call the library for registration and details and come together for a casual and considerate exchange of ideas.
See Program Spotlight for other locations and topics.

ADULTS
All programs require pre-registration. Call 352-438-2560 to register.
Tech Help Tuesday
Tuesdays, 3-4 p.m., Sept. 1-Nov. 24
Bring your question or device and come on in.
Monday Morning Book Club
Mondays, 10:30 a.m.
Make some new friends and talk about books.
Sept. 14 “Before We Were Yours” by Lisa Genova
Oct. 5 “An American Marriage” by Tayari Jones
Nov. 2 “Dead Wake: The Last Crossing of the Lusitania” by Erik Larson

MARRION 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 PROGRAMS
All programs require pre-registration. Call 352-438-2570 to register.
Community Conversation
Tuesday, Sept. 22, 4 p.m.
Topic: How do you keep your spirits up during difficult times?
There are many conversations going on in Marion County libraries. Feel free to join one or all of them! Call the library for registration and details and come together for a casual and considerate exchange of ideas.
See Program Spotlight for other locations and topics.
Grow Something to Eat!
Saturday, Oct. 3, 2 p.m.
Get the basics of vegetable gardening from our own master gardening enthusiast! What a simple way to stock the fridge!

ADULTS
All programs require pre-registration. Call 352-438-2560 to register.
Novels at Noon
Wednesdays, noon
Make new friends and talk about books!

Monday Matinée
Mondays, 12:30 p.m.
Movies for adults. Anyone younger than age 15 must be accompanied by an adult.
Sept. 14 “Miss Pettigrew Lives for a Day”
Oct. 5 “The Lovely Bones”

TEENS & TWEENS
All programs require pre-registration. Call 352-438-2560 to register.
YALLA FM! Virtual Edition
Tuesdays, 5-6 p.m., Sept. 22, Oct. 27, Nov. 24
Be a part of the library experience. Teens, earn volunteer service hours.

FAMILIES
All programs require pre-registration. Call 352-438-2560 to register.
Family Games Unplugged
Saturday, 11 a.m., Sept. 5, Oct. 3, Nov. 7
Reconnect with a favorite board game or discover a new one!

Rock Art
Saturdays, 11 a.m., Sept. 12, Oct. 10
Paint miniature masterpieces on river rocks.

Family Flicks!
Saturdays, 11 a.m.
Films for the entire family to enjoy!
Sept. 26 “The NeverEnding Story”
Oct. 24 “Maleficent: Mistress of Evil”
Oct. 31 “Frankenweenie”

YALLA Oaks!
Thursdays, 5 p.m., Sept. 10, Oct. 8, Nov. 12
Be a part of the library experience. Teens, earn volunteer service hours.

MANGAlicious Teen Club!
Tuesdays, 4 p.m., Sept. 15, Oct. 20, Nov. 17
Anime and manga fans, unite!

Next Level Computing
Mondays, 2 p.m.
Learn new skills and master your online experience!
Oct. 5 YouTube for Beginners
Oct. 12 Basics of Pinterest

TEENS & TWEENS
All programs require pre-registration. Call 352-438-2580 to register.
MANGAlicious Teen Club!
Tuesdays, 4:30 p.m., Sept. 8, Oct. 13, Nov. 10
Anime and manga fans, unite!

YALLA Free!
Thursdays, 5 p.m., Sept. 10, Oct. 8, Nov. 12
Be a part of the library experience. Teens, earn volunteer service hours.

DIY Monster Masks
Thursday, Oct. 15, 4 p.m.
Just in time for the holiday!

Crafty Kids Day
Monday, Nov. 16, 2-4 p.m.
Get ready for the holiday with great craft ideas and fun!

FAMILIES
All programs require pre-registration. Call 352-438-2580 to register.
Kindness Rocks!
Thursday, Oct. 8, 3 p.m.
Embrace your imagination! Paint inspiring messages on river rocks and spread kindness throughout our community!

Pumpkin Decorating Contest
Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2 p.m.
Dress your pumpkin for the season! Bring in your best decorated (not carved) pumpkin and vote for your favorite!

STORY TIMES
A variety of stories, songs, and activities for children and caregivers. All programs require pre-registration. Call 352-438-2580 to register.
Family Story Time
Wednesday, 10:30 a.m.
Sept. 9-Oct. 28

YALLA! – YALLA Oak’s Free!
YALLA Oak’s Free!
YALLA Oak’s Free!

FAMILIES
All programs require pre-registration. Call 352-438-2570 to register.
FUNtasmagoria!
Wednesday, 3:30 p.m.
Explore the world through stories and activities. It’s FLUNastic!
Sept. 9 Shark Attack!
Sept. 16 Scales and Tales
Sept. 23 Whoa is it?
Oct. 7 Big and not so Bad
Oct. 21 Monkey Business
Oct. 28 Bats in Your Belfry

Call 352-438-2580 to register.
All programs require pre-registration. Call 352-438-2580 to register.
MANGAlicious Teen Club!
Tuesdays, 4 p.m., Sept. 15, Oct. 20, Nov. 17
Anime and manga fans, unite!
**Exhibits & Displays**

**Headquarters-Ocala**
- **September** Bay Scouts of America, Marion District
- **October** General Francis Marion Stamp Club
- **November** Daughters of the American Revolution

**Bellevue Public Library**
- **September** Oil Paintings by Lucy Pinkstaff
- **October** Book Selections by Word Weavers
- **November** Wood Carvings by Del Webb
  - Wood Carvers Club

**Dunnellon Public Library**
- **September** Dog Tag Pride
- **October** Cats out of the Bag
- **November** Fun with Film

**Forest Public Library**
- **September** Decorative Flower Pots
- **October** All About Ice Cream by James Phillips
- **November** Charles Dickens Village
  - Collection by Pam Knox

**Freedom Public Library**
- **September** Cross-stitch and Quilting by Judy Leacock
- **October** All About Ice Cream by James Phillips
- **November**
  - October: Halloween Collectibles by Reddick Patrons
  - November: Thanksgiving by Reddick Patrons

**Reddick Public Library**
- **September** Ancient Greece by Cary Walker
- **October** Halloween Collectibles by Reddick Patrons

**Library Closed Days & Holidays**

**Labor Day**
- **Monday, Sept 7**
- All Marion County public libraries will be closed.

**Library Maintenance Day (Columbus Day)**
- **Monday, Oct 19**
- Headquarters-Ocala, Bellevue and Dunnellon public libraries will be closed to the public.

**Veterans Day**
- **Wednesday, Nov 11**
- All Marion County public libraries will be closed.

**Day before Thanksgiving Day**
- **Wednesday, Nov 25**
- Headquarters-Ocala Public Library will close at 6 p.m.

**Thanksgiving Day**
- **Thursday, Nov 26**
- Headquarters-Ocala Public Library will close at 6 p.m.

**Day after Thanksgiving Day**
- **Friday, Nov 27**
- All Marion County public libraries will be closed.

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**Library Events**

**Friends of the Library**

**Meetings & Information**

Friends of the Bellevue Public Library
Stay up-to-date on the Friends of Bellevue Public Library news by following them on Facebook for meeting updates and information.

www.facebook.com/FOBLBookNook/

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**At Your Service**

**Early Voting at the Library**
- **Oct 19-Oct 31, 8 a.m.-6 p.m.**

Our Belleview, Dunnellon, Freedom and Forest public libraries serve as early voting sites.


**Marion County Polling site**
- **Nov 3, 7 a.m.-7 p.m., Fort McCoy Public Library**


**Access Florida Assistance**
Help provided with filing for various government assistance programs.
- Call Forest Public Library (352-438-2540) for schedule.

**CareerSource Citrus Levy Marion**
Job seeker services available! Call your nearest library for schedule and locations.

**Citizen’s and Immigration Services (USCIS)**
- Visit www.uscis.gov or call 1-800-375-5283 to schedule.

**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.

**GED Classes**
Earn your GED at the library through Marion Technical College (MTC). It’s FREE! Call MTC at 352-671-7200 or contact the Dunnellon Public Library at 352-438-2520 for more information and schedule.

**Serving Health Insurance Needs of Elders (SHINE)**
- Visit www.uscis.gov or call 1-800-375-5283 to schedule.

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**SPECIAL PROGRAMS**

All programs require pre-registration. Call 352-438-2566 to register.

**Community Conversation**

**Monday, Oct 19, 10:30 a.m.**

**Topic: How do you keep your spirits up during difficult times?**

There are many conversations going on in Marion County libraries. Feel free to join one or all of them! Call the library for registration and details and come together for a casual and considerate exchange of ideas.

See Program Spotlight for other locations and topics.

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**Friends of the Library**

**Meetings & Information**

Friends of the Dunnellon Public Library
Call the Dunnellon Public Library at 352-438-2500 for more information about Friends of the Dunnellon Public Library meetings.

Friends of the Forest Public Library
Call the Forest Public Library at 352-438-2540 for more information about Friends of the Forest Public Library meetings.

Friends of the Freedom Public Library
Stay up-to-date on the Friends of the Freedom Public Library news by following them on Facebook www.facebook.com/foflibrary or visit their website at www.foflibrary.org.

Friends of the Marion Oaks Public Library
Call the Marion Oaks Public Library at 352-438-2570 for more information about Friends of the Marion Oaks Public Library meetings.

Friends of the Ocala Public Library
Call the Headquarters-Ocala Public library or the Friends Bookmarket at 352-368-4590 for more information about friends of the Ocala Public Library meetings.

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**TEENS**

All programs require pre-registration.
- Call 352-438-2566 to register.

**LET’S TALK BOOKS**
- **Monday, Oct 12, 10:30 a.m.**
- Make new friends and talk about books with Jim Stroup!

**STORY TIMES**
- **Sept-9-Oct 28**
- A variety of stories, songs, and activities for children and caregivers.
- All programs require pre-registration.
- Call 352-438-2566 to register.

**Family Story Time**
- **Wednesdays, 10:30 a.m.**
The Simple Joy of Cooking

BY AMBER GRISSOM

As we navigate a new “normal,” most of us find ourselves reevaluating our everyday activities, including the availability to shop for certain foods or eating out at our favorite restaurants. However, for cooking enthusiasts like myself, this is an opportunity to stretch our culinary skills outside our comfort zones and create reminiscent meals with ingredients that may be hiding in our own pantries.

One recipe I found myself missing was the fish sauce glazed chicken wings I used to share with my husband and uncle at a local-chain Vietnamese restaurant in Orlando. Desperate to enjoy those wings once again, I found “The Fish Sauce Cookbook” by Veronica Meewes on the library’s Freading e-book platform, which contains a similar recipe. I was up for the challenge, and delighted to find a bottle of fish sauce in my own cupboard.

Fish sauce is an ingredient I generally have lying around, though I use it infrequently in my daily meals. If you are unfamiliar with it, uncooked fish sauce has a pungent odor, as it is made through a process of fermenting fish. Despite the odor, fish sauce has a much sweeter taste that is difficult to compare. Drawing inspiration from the similar recipe in Meewes’ book and my memories of the dish, I made my own fish sauce glazed chicken wings. The wings were delicious! They were crispy and bursting with flavor, just like those I remember thoroughly enjoying at the restaurant in Orlando. Notes of aromatic garlic and playful pepper combined perfectly with the sweetness of the fish sauce glaze and the savory nature of the chicken.

The satisfaction of recreating this dish in the kitchen was like transporting myself to the delightful memory of the dining experience. Experimenting in the kitchen has always been a simple pleasure I have shared with my family. Learning to cook new dishes with ingredients I already have stocked in my pantry has opened the door to a world of creating new cooking adventures and memories.
A New Twist on Fall Holiday Favorites

BY SCOTT MASON

As a former Michigan resident, I admit that I still miss the sound of leaves crunching under my sneakers. But now, as a Florida transplant, I’ve adapted to the new fall 72-degree "chill" that makes me want to bundle up with a quilt and a good book. Fall reminds me of wonderful times spent with friends and family, but with the current “normal” of 2020, those activities will be challenging to say the least. Here are some ideas to stay safe while enjoying time honored fall traditions.

At first it may seem that “Trick or Treating” virtually would be difficult, but through the power of a Google search, there are many ways to successfully simulate this activity without venturing outside one’s home. One new way to “Trick or Treat” is to use your own home as a candy foraging site. Simply have your children, or pets, dress up as they normally would and knock on the doors in your own home. Your bedroom, bathroom, and even your closet could be another “house” that they can visit and receive candy or a spooky sighting! Your family can even change costumes to make it seem like you’re actually visiting different houses.

This year, consider hosting a digital costume party. Purchase or create a costume and share with your friends on social media. There are dozens of ways to accomplish this with streaming apps like Facebook, Twitter, SnapChat, Zoom or other platforms. Make some fun, fall snacks like pumpkin cupcakes or snickerdoodles. There are also pumpkin carving videos available to create masterpieces of all kinds. Just be certain that your children are being safe online so everyone will have a good time.

Many of us have been stuck inside and are catching up on our book lists, but maybe now is the time to consider a scary genre? There are countless authors to choose from like Stephen King, with some of his titles like "The Shining" and "Misery" that are available at the Marion County Public Library System. "Interview with the Vampire" by Anne Rice, "Intensity" by Dean Koontz, and "Heart-shaped Box" by Joe Hill are some additional spooky titles for the teen and adult audience. For the younger crowd, check out "Coraline" by Neil Gaiman, "The Haunted Mask" by R.L. Stine and "Scary Stories to Tell in the Dark" by Alvin Schwartz. Now you can add a few new twists to timeless fall traditions.

Image courtesy of freepik.com
Writing Letters to Close the Distance

BY ASA DRAKE

This spring at the library we started getting letters, check-up calls, even boxes of chocolate (delicious!) from our patrons. Some of the notes were anonymous, some were from frequent visitors, but they all made clear that no matter how the world might be different, our connections to one another matter. Thank you all. It’s easy to feel disconnected right now, but we’re in this together. Each note sent to the library made its way from room to room as affirmation that we make a difference. I want you to know that you do, too!

There’s a simple pleasure in being able to share what matters and, in doing so, make the mailbox a place of unexpected joy. A handwritten letter always stands out in the mail, and as the world goes digital, I place more value in these small exchanges. I get a postcard from a colleague across the country, and I immediately have a reason to call. I mail photos to friends. I exchange recipes with the people I love. While loved ones may not always reply to a correspondence, the letter offers a physical connection when we’re feeling a little, well, distant. Haven’t we all held on to a letter or handwritten note as a way to feel close to someone special?

Crafting a letter offers a unique opportunity to surround ourselves with things that remind us of how we’re connected to our friends, our family and our community. We can revisit past correspondences, address books, family albums and souvenirs. Why not drink the tea your grandmother used to serve to you and your cousins around the holidays? Or maybe pull out your aunt’s cookie recipe for a care package? Letters are about sharing memories, so take time to enjoy what you share. Break out the scented ink! Dig out your old calligraphy set! Not sure how to use it? Our Hobbies and Crafts Reference Center will show you how. This is the kind of writing that’s worth the extra effort.

Need help getting started? Explore letters and postcards sent from Marion County’s historic attractions using our Historic Marion County Digital Collection. Or strike up a conversation by sharing an article you’ve read from our Ocala Star Banner archives. You might even send a sketch or a photograph you’ve recently taken. Have fun! After all, you can mail a letter on almost anything that follows the U.S. Postal Service’s guidelines, including handmade paper, a Frisbee, or even a potato. No matter what you do, your letter is sure to bring your loved one just a little bit closer! 💌
Solar Pleasures

BY KAREN DILLON

What could be better on a hot summer day than a tall glass of iced sun tea? Or more refreshing than a warm solar shower after a long, sweaty day?

Not every comfort of daily living requires commercial power or an expensive solar setup. Using sunlight just as it comes—passive solar—is the simplest way of all to harness the power of our sun.

The most basic method is harvesting its heat. Full sun can be miserably hot, but what a great way to turn a jar of water and a handful of fresh herbs—the original solar powerhouses—into a delicious drink! On a larger scale, something as simple as a black bag or tank of water, set out in the sun over the course of a day, becomes a labor-free source of hot bathwater. And a solar oven, whether bought online or homemade from a pizza box and foil, is the ultimate in resource-free cooking.

But what happens when all that sunshine becomes too much? Florida’s pioneer residents, Native American and European alike, struggled to stay cool and comfortable, and came up with their own no-tech solutions. Open chickees, raised high on stilts to catch the breeze, served the original inhabitants of this state. Later, American settlers built cabins on pilings, with wide, deep porches and open breezeways down the middle of the house, and kitchens at the end of walkways to keep the cooking heat out. Today, thick-walled housing options like rammed-earth construction, combined with engineered ventilation systems and careful siting, make off-the-grid Florida living not just bearable, but enjoyable.

Simple living has changed over time, thanks to science and technology, but one thing has not: The best things in life really are free!
Tying fishing flies at Dunnellon Public Library.

Checking out those Marion County READS brag tags.

DIY birdhouses at Dunnellon Public Library.

Youth Adults Leading Library Awareness (YALLA) volunteer making face masks.

Summer BreakSpot carry-out dinners at Freedom Public Library.

Virtual public library storytime program.

Tying fishing flies at Dunnellon Public Library.

Young Adults Leading Library Awareness (YALLA) volunteer making face masks.
In July 3, we lost one of our very special volunteers. Marilyn Stadick passed away, leaving us with many fond memories of a wonderful lady.

After Marilyn retired in 1990, she and her husband Bernard moved to Florida from Waukegan, Illinois. Shortly thereafter, she joined the Friends of the Ocala Public Library and enjoyed participating in the annual Book Sales. In 1996, she was elected to the Board of Directors of the Friends, serving as Recording Secretary, performing this duty until 1998. During this time, Marilyn continued to be active in the annual Book Sales, primarily supervising the setup of the paperback books section.

When the library was being shifted from its location downtown to the new and improved current facility, Marilyn continued her dedication by becoming the Treasurer of the Friends. Due to the multitude of contracts, payments and tracking necessary to create the current library space, her tenure as Treasurer was extended to a four-year term.

In 2005, after serving as Treasurer, Marilyn was then elected Vice President. Soon afterward, she became President of the Friends in 2006, and served in that capacity for three years.

Marilyn was a volunteer in the Book Market from the first day it opened, working in the back room, balancing the cash register and pricing books to be placed on the shelves.

She did it all—volunteering in the Book Market, and serving as Recording Secretary, Treasurer, Vice President, and President. What a juggling act! Plus, for every event, program, luncheon, and book sale, Marilyn was always cooking. She served as our unofficial Hospitality person before we actually established a Hospitality Committee. And her food was always delicious!

Not only was Marilyn a volunteer for the Friends of the Ocala Public Library, she was a member of the Greater Federation Woman’s Club of Ocala and volunteered at the Ocala Civic Theatre. She also volunteered at St. Paul’s United Methodist Church, helping with office work.

She was a fun person and a hard worker. She could make you giggle in an instant. She was honest, sincere, and caring.

We will miss her dearly.

“MEET THE AUTHOR” PRESENTATION & FRIENDS’ ANNUAL MEETING

Normally, we invite an author to join us in September during our FRIENDS’ annual meeting. This year, things will be different due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Our guest author will be visiting on a future date, and the annual meeting has been cancelled. During the normal meeting, we have members vote for the new Board members and officers. This year, members of the Friends will be receiving proxy letters to vote for the new Board members and officers. It is very important that you complete and return these forms to us in a timely manner. Thank you.

Quarterly Book Sales

The Quarterly Book Sales have been canceled for August and November 2020. Watch for updates on when the next Book Sale will be scheduled.
Providing free, nutritious meals to the children in his community is more than an outreach service for Pastor John Delcamp and his Shores Assembly of God church. It’s a commitment to address a community need. The inspiration behind their efforts began several years ago when the church operated a free, summer camp for area youth and needed a way to provide healthy meals at a realistic cost. Pastor John was introduced to the USDA Summer Feeding Program and initially utilized that meal source. But he and his team quickly realized they needed to pursue a summer food service effort of their own and began the arduous task of getting approved as a Summer Break Spot provider. The church was finally approved as a pilot program nine years ago and the rest, as the saying goes, is history.

Each summer an average of 45-60 church volunteers help with the Summer Break Spot efforts that serve free, nutritious meals to children ages one to 18 at various locations in Marion County. Shelley Smith, a member of the team, remembers so many stories of children who come and eat at a Summer Break Spot site, ask for seconds and thirds, and take remaining food home in their pockets. According to Shelley, “we feed children because of the need we see in the community. We don’t really know how many children are hungry and need our help. We hope someday they will remember that someone helped them when they could not help themselves.”

The Shores Assembly of God church volunteer team has been extremely busy serving meals to the children of Marion County. Their conservative estimate is that more than 100,000 meals have been served since the beginning of their Summer Break Spot program. Since May, 2020 and as part of the COVID-19 response, their team has given away more than 10 pallets of food and 1,000 gallons of milk to families who were unsure how they were going to provide for their children.

For the past four years, several Marion County Public Library System locations have served as Summer Break Spot sites for Pastor John. “The public library is a place where the community comes together and this is a great illustration. There is something wonderful about the sharing spirit of this program. Even this summer, when meals are “take-out”, sharing in a pleasant conversation with families restores our belief in one another and our community,” said Lee Schwartz, Belleview Public Library supervisor.