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Nurture Your Mind and Learn About Nature This Month at Your Library

In April, Orange County Library System is proud to participate once again in NEA Big Read, a program of the National Endowment for the Arts in partnership with Arts Midwest. This year, OCLS, in partnership with Valencia College, presents *Catalog of Unabashed Gratitude* by poet and author Ross Gay. Events highlighting the message of meditation and healing found in *Catalog of Unabashed Gratitude* will take place at all 15 library locations between April 2–30, 2023. For an opportunity to receive a free copy of *Catalog of Unabashed Gratitude*, register to attend the [keynote/kickoff event with author Ross Gay](#) at Orlando Public Library on April 2, or a book discussion at select branch locations during April. Check out ocls.info/bigread for a full calendar of events and for more information.

The Orlando Book Festival will be held Saturday, April 15, at Orlando Public Library. Hear from bestselling authors from all over the state in panels and writing workshops at a day-long celebration of all things bookish, including a keynote from *Goosebumps* author R.L. Stine. Visit ocls.info/obf for a full schedule and more details.

OCLS also invites the community to celebrate National Library Week from April 23–29. Events will include the [16th Annual Southwest Author Series](#) at Southwest Branch on April 28, presented in partnership with the Rotary Club of Dr. Phillips, with featured author Jane Green. For details, visit ocls.info/national-library-week.

Earth Day is April 22, but OCLS will be hosting engaging earthy events for all ages throughout the month of April. [Discuss renewable energies](#), safely dispose of unwanted documents at [a free shredding event](#), or make a fun craft while learning about the environment. Visit ocls.info/earthday for more information.

Registration is strongly recommended for all in-person events due to limited capacity. If you have any questions about the information shared below, call 407.835.7323. Visit us online at ocls.info to register, or to view a complete listing of both virtual and in-person library events.

General events:

NEA Big Read Keynote with Author Ross Gay

Orlando Public Library, Library Central

Sunday, April 2, 2 p.m.

Catalog of Unabashed Gratitude is a book that studies the wisdom of the garden and orchard, places where all – death, sorrow, loss – is converted into what might, with patience, nourish us.

Local Author Festival

Orlando Public Library, Library Central

Sunday, April 23, 2–4 p.m.

Meet and greet local authors at our Local Author Festival. Authors from a variety of genres will share their experiences and books. Each author will have books available for purchase and signing.

Butterfly and Pollinator Gardening

West Oaks Branch

Monday, April 3, Noon

Learn how to attract the butterflies, bees and everything in between to your Florida garden! Attendees will learn the latest and safest methods for growing a garden that is pollinator friendly.

Yarnfiti: Gardens of Books

NEA Big Read: *Catalog of Unabashed Gratitude*

Orlando Public Library

Wednesdays, April 5–26, 10 a.m.–Noon

Help create mini garden dioramas to delight visitors to the library. Contribute your fiber arts skills to make garden themed dioramas. Dioramas will be placed within the library as a cute surprise for guests.

Orlando Book Festival

Orlando Public Library

Saturday, April 15, 10:30 a.m.–5 p.m.

A day-long celebration of books! Join us for panels and talks from bestselling authors from all over the state, including a keynote from R.L. Stine. For more information, visit ocls.info/obf.

Five Easy Steps to Downsizing

North Orange Branch

Monday, April 17, 1 p.m.

Let's have a conversation about aging. Discover steps that make downsizing easier to manage. Presented in Spanish and English. Space is limited. Registration required.

Virtual - All Things Energy: Savings, Reductions, Solar & Renewables

Wednesday, April 19, 7–8:30 p.m.

Representatives from Orange County's Sustainability Division will discuss ways to save energy. Explore sustainability through our energy consumption.

This is a virtual event. For more information, visit attend.ocls.info/event/7955069.

Free Shredding Event

South Trail Branch

Saturday, April 22, Noon–2 p.m.

Celebrate Earth Day with a free shredding event. We will be hosting the Shred-It truck in front of the branch to shred your unwanted documents. Please limit your shredding to two copy paper size boxes. Sponsored by the Orange Blossom Trail Development Board.

Southwest Author Series

Southwest Branch

Friday, April 28, 7–9 p.m.

Join us for the 16th Annual Southwest Author Series, presented in partnership with The Rotary Club of Dr. Phillips, featuring author Jane Green.

Central Florida Ballet Presents *Alice in Wonderland*

Orlando Public Library, Library Central

Saturday, April 29, 3 p.m.

Join Alice on a nonsensical adventure. The Central Florida Ballet will perform scenes from their presentation of *Alice in Wonderland*.

Rory Stuart / Glenn Wilson Duo: An Intimate Dialogue in Jazz

Orlando Public Library, Library Central

Sunday, April 30, 1:15 p.m.

Explore jazz with composer and jazz guitarist Rory Stuart and baritone saxophonist Glenn Wilson. They will show you how to listen to jazz with interactive exercises and demonstrations.

Youth events:

READING Paws

Chickasaw Branch

Saturday, April 1, 11 a.m.–1 p.m.

North Orange Branch

Saturday, April 22, 11 a.m.

Alafaya Branch

Saturday, April 22, 11:30 a.m.

West Oaks Branch

Saturday, April 22, 11:30 a.m.–1:30 p.m.

The Reading Education Assistance Dogs (R.E.A.D.) program improves children's reading and communication skills by employing a powerful method: reading to a therapy dog. Recommended for ages 6–12.

Arab American Heritage

Washington Park Branch

Wednesday, April 5, 4 p.m.

Eatonville Branch

Thursday, April 13, 3:45 p.m.

Southeast Branch

Saturday, April 15, 10:30 a.m.

West Oaks Branch

Wednesday, April 26, 4 p.m.

Children will explore stories and activities that introduce them to the Arabic language and teach them about understanding and celebrating cultures outside of their own. Recommended for ages 6–8.

Mother Goose on the Loose

Fairview Shores Branch

Thursdays, April 6–27, 10:30 a.m.

Southwest Branch

Mondays, April 10 & 24, 10:30 a.m.

North Orange Branch

Tuesday, April 25, 10:30 a.m.

Using rhymes, songs, puppets, musical instruments and more, we will be interacting together to help develop important pre-literacy skills in our littlest ones.

Meet the Author Kelly J. Baptist

Alafaya Branch

Monday, April 10, 2 p.m.

Enjoy an interactive presentation, storytime and Q&A with Kelly J. Baptist, author of the Sunshine State Award-winning book *The Electric Slide and Kai*. Recommended for ages 5–8.

Earth Day, Hooray!

Southwest Branch

Wednesday, April 12, 10:30 a.m.

West Oaks Branch

Tuesday, April 18, 11 a.m.

Chickasaw Branch

Saturday, April 22, 3:30 p.m.

It's never too early to start learning about protecting our planet! Enjoy nature-friendly stories, crafts and activities with your little one. Recommended for ages 2–5.

Visual Poetry for Teens

Winter Garden Branch

Wednesday, April 12, 3:30 p.m.

Transform words, poems or your favorite song lyrics into visual art. Inspired by the NEA Big Read companion title *The Rose that Grew from Concrete* by Tupac Shakur.

Acrylic Paint Pouring

Orlando Public Library, Club Central

Thursday, April 20, 3 p.m.

Participants will learn the essentials of flow art. Utilize an innovative new approach for creating and transporting your very own masterpiece: The Gravity Easel!

Green Thumbs, Dirty Feet

Southeast Branch

Friday, April 21, 4 p.m.

Earth Day is April 22 and we are celebrating! Plant a seed and learn how you can get your feet dirty while showing your appreciation for our planet. Recommended for families with children ages 5 and up.

Library Pop-up: Lake Nona StoryWalk

Randal Park

8730 Randal Park Blvd.

Saturday, April 29, 10 a.m.

StoryWalk is a way to enjoy the benefits of reading and the outdoors at the same time! Exercise your body and mind as you have fun reading the story and enjoying nature along the way.

Teen Book Club

Alafaya Branch

Sunday, April 30, 1:30 p.m.

Discuss a monthly novel and talk about your favorite books in Teen Book Club! This month we're reading *Children of Ragnarok* by Cinda Williams Chima.

LEARN. GROW. CONNECT.

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