

the
Osceola



Library
system

Annual Report

FISCAL YEAR 22 / 23



Mission

The Osceola Library System's mission is to connect people to ideas and information, celebrate our community's vibrant and diverse culture and provide opportunities for life-long learning and personal growth.

Values

- Delivering exceptional service
- Embracing diversity and inclusion
- Literacy and learning in all forms
- Innovative and enriching services and programs
- Creating useful and pleasing spaces
- Open access to information and ideas

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Letter from the Director

More people became members of the Osceola Library System in September 2023 than any previous month in the past five years. This statistic, one of many the Library tracks, tells us so much about how our community is rediscovering the joy and opportunities contained within their local library. We are so excited to welcome everyone back.

Public libraries are certainly having a moment right now, not just in Osceola but all over the country. With President Barack Obama's heartfelt thank you letter to librarians, the Milwaukee Public Library's amazing Instagram account, Mychal Threats' viral affirmations for our youngest patrons, and *The New York Times*' "Love Letter to Libraries, Long Overdue," a window is opening to what you and I probably already know - libraries are the beating heart of a supportive, healthy, welcoming and educated community and THE place to be.

The Osceola Library System offers an exhaustive array of collections, programs, and services for the community that save money, enhance learning, build friendships, and enrich lives. But what makes the Osceola Library System especially beneficial to the community is that everyone is welcome to use all these wonderful things in BIG and SMALL ways. Big ways that can affect your life success, educational opportunities, access to health and government services, building blocks for reading and communication, and exposure to technology and creative outlets. Or small, personal ways as a space to gather, relax, recharge, and connect. Both are critical to the Library being the hub of a thriving community and define it as a unique and special community place. It is both incredible and essential.

We invite you to discover what everyone is talking about, become a member, help us break more records of library use, and experience the joy of the public library in both big and small ways.

Amy Jones
Library Director



Osceola By The Numbers



6 LOCATIONS

NEARLY 95,000 SQUARE FEET OF LIBRARY SPACE + 2 EXPRESS LOCKERS



SERVICE AREA
1,506
SQUARE MILES

424,647
RESIDENTS
SERVED



OPEN 7 DAYS/WEEK
& 72 HOURS/WEEK
SUNDAYS & EVENING
HOURS

622,399
VISITORS

PHONE CALLS
38,167

116,160
REFERENCE
QUESTIONS
ANSWERED

13,406
NEW CARDS
ISSUED
ECARDS & FULL
SERVICE

MEETING & STUDY
ROOM USE
13,728
INDIVIDUAL USES

1,927,172
UNIQUE WIFI SESSIONS



795,503 PHYSICAL CHECKOUTS
223,582 DIGITAL CHECKOUTS
1,027,507 TOTAL CHECKOUTS

PRINT COLLECTION
212,157

EBOOK COPIES
890,611

EAUDIOBOOKS
617,259

DIGITAL VIDEO TITLES
60,574

HOTSPOTS
65

CHROMEBOOKS
40

DIGITAL MAGAZINES & NEWSPAPERS
175 TITLES

VOLUNTEERS
846

VOLUNTEER HOURS
DONATED
5,586



TECHNOLOGY
HELP SESSIONS
21,825

HOURS OF PUBLIC SERVICE
19,058



3,422 PROGRAMS & EVENTS
66,836 PROGRAM ATTENDANCE

Strategic Plan Goals

Check out how the Library is meeting goals and objectives outlined in Osceola Library System Strategic Plan 2021-2024.

Economic Resilience

Welcoming spaces for creation and innovation

The Hot Spot debuted at the Buenaventura Lakes Library. With outdoor bench seating and workspace, fast Wi-Fi and space to spread out, this new “hot spot” enables the community to gather and use Internet service even when the Library isn’t open.

Five new modular spaces provide private areas for collaboration and quiet study for individuals and small groups featuring two Mac computers equipped with graphic design software, one with sewing machines for personal projects or with instruction from a staff member, plus a Cricut for exciting crafting projects.



Resources during and after disasters

The Hart Memorial Library served as a Disaster Recovery Center (DRC) during Hurricanes Ian and Nicole. It was a physical and informational resource for the community before, during, and after the hurricanes. The Library hosted the Federal Emergency Management Association local response teams, along with the Small Business Administration and several local and state agencies that administer relief or aid for citizens in need. In addition, state emergency management personnel installed mobile registration intake centers at the Buenaventura Lakes, Poinciana, and St. Cloud Libraries to facilitate more service points for those affected by Hurricane Ian. Library staff contributed 507 hours of service over two weeks by serving in Osceola County’s Citizens Information Center in the lead up to, during, and aftermath of Hurricane Ian.



Other programs and services highlighting Economic Resilience

Adults

Bright Community Trust delivers **Financial Empowerment Seminars** at the Hart Memorial Library to support their BIPOC@Home initiative to address the gap in homeownership for Black, Indigenous and People of Color.

Orlando Center for Justice supports the **Hello Project/Proyecto Hello**, monthly meetings at the Buenaventura Lakes Library to help new immigrants navigate the citizenship process.

The St. Cloud Library's **Central Florida Business Group** brings local business leaders together to share ideas, network and forge new paths for business development in the region.

Career Online High School graduated 9 individuals who completed the coursework and career certificate program, resulting in a Florida high school diploma and extra knowledge in key local industries such as hospitality, manufacturing and commercial driving.

Here to Help is a partnership between the Hope Partnership and the Library to offer regular opportunities to connect citizens with much needed resources like employment planning and food assistance in the convenience of the Hart Memorial Library.



Osceola  Library System

Here to Help:

COMMUNITY SUPPORT SESSIONS

9am-1pm, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Friday of the month
Get the support you need from the community experts at the Hope Partnership. Community Support Specialists from Hope Center Services are here to help you navigate challenging times and connect you to available community resources.

Exclusively at the Hart Memorial Library



Four diverse people walking and smiling. From left to right: a young woman in a red shirt, a man in a light blue shirt, a woman in a blue and white striped dress, and a man in a blue shirt.

“Very kind people, helped me get a library card, very satisfied, and will definitely be coming here more often :)”

Angie Poinciana Library

Kids

Start Smart with Money: Financial Literacy for Kids, presented by Chase Bank in conjunction with Habitat for Humanity Greater Orlando and Osceola County, shows it's never too early to learn about money management like budgeting, credit cards and loans.

Hands-on Health: Exploring a Career in Healthcare is a grant-funded program that helps school-age kids explore a future healthcare career with immersive activities using medical technology.

Disney Engineers It enables kids to explore a career in engineering with Walt Disney World industrial engineers, with the help of Mr. Potato Head, and get hands-on practice with engineering tips and tricks from the people who help make magic every day.

Creation Station Art Shop at the Buenaventura Lakes Library has kids exploring financial literacy in a meaningful and fun way by assigning a "dollar" value to art supplies then setting a budget to "shop" with before creating an artistic masterpiece.



"Pleasant space to read, research and gather books. Knowledgeable librarians too. There are even STEAM kits created and check out ready!"

Debi W. *Buenaventura Lakes Library*

Virtual Innovation

Digital resources make researching and learning easy

Udemy features over 19,000 videos on topics ranging from management and coding to chess and music. Instruction is available in English, Spanish, and 10 other languages by experts from around the world. Digital Sanborn maps “chart the growth and development of 12,000 American towns and cities” and are indispensable for local history research and genealogy. It gives a window back into a city’s or town’s past to see exactly what was located on each block or street.

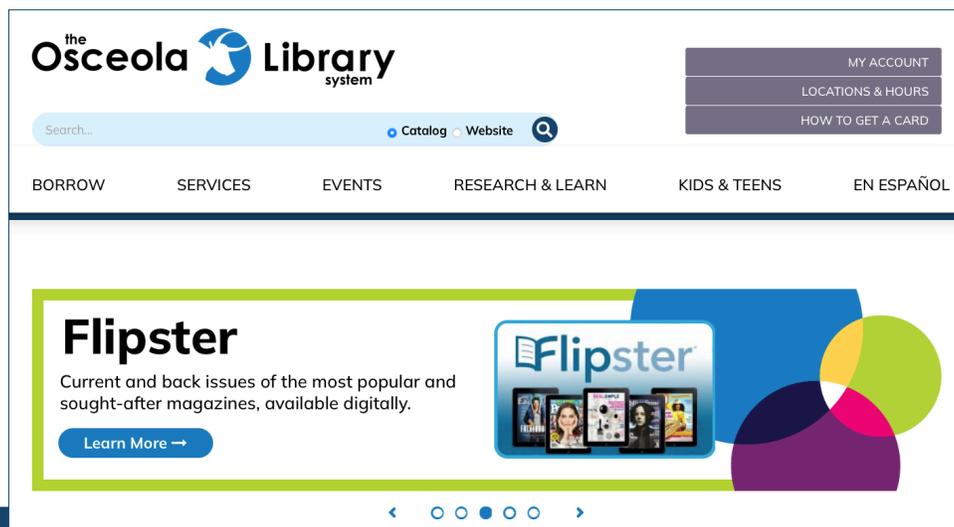
The Library added new content with Candid, especially for non-profits or community members seeking to find grant opportunities and partner with other non-profits. And auto-repair is now at your fingertips with Chilton Automotive.



All databases are accessible through the Library’s website and free with an Osceola Library card!

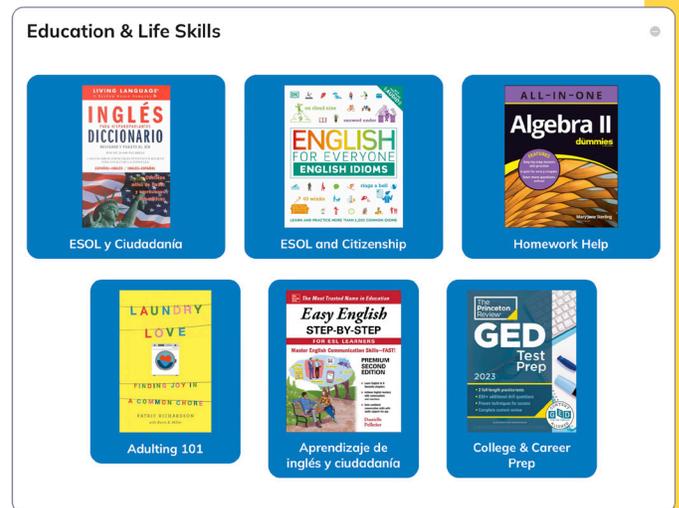
New website launches

With improved organization and navigation, the newly redesigned website debuts one-click access to digital resources, greater discoverability for important information such as locations and hours, expanded meeting room information and an enhanced Youth section. It seamlessly integrates forms, video, and digital content with an appealing, mobile-friendly, accessible and user-friendly design.



Helpful InfoGuides created using LibGuides

Providing organized templates in an easy to use format, LibGuides provides a platform to connect patrons to well-curated information on a host of topics. Made by Librarians to help wrangle the wealth of information on the Internet and to include Library databases and collections in that research, the Library has created InfoGuides using LibGuides on a host of helpful topics such as Adulting 101, Black History Month and ESOL and Citizenship.



LibCal makes rooms and events more accessible

With LibCal, the Library's new room and event management system, making meeting plans and attending programming events is now more user-friendly and transparent. View events by branch, month, week, or type of program; see room availability in real-time hour by hour to make informed choices; schedule appointments with Librarians and Notaries at your convenience; and make reservations for the in-demand rooms and technology in TechCentral.

Hart Memorial Central Library - September - 2023

Time Zone: Eastern Time - US & Canada (change) iCal

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Aug 27	Aug 28	Aug 29	Aug 30	Aug 31	Sep 1	Sep 2
READbox All Day Event	READbox All Day Event	READbox All Day Event	READbox All Day Event	READbox All Day Event	All Day - Spice of the Month Club All Day Event	
	Great Beginnings Storytime Lillie Room - HMC 11:00am	Library for All: Inclusive Activities for Adults Lillie Room - HMC 10:00am	CANCELED: Ocean Explorers Roseada Room - HMC 4:30pm	Here to Help: Community Support Sessions Room 107 - HMC 9:00am	R.I.S.E. Up Osceola: READ Bus 9:15am	
			No Pressure Book Club Roseada Room - HMC 6:30pm	Sensory Playdate HMC Youth Homework Space - 2nd Floor, Lillie Room - HMC 10:00am	R.I.S.E. Up Osceola (formerly Learn 2 Read) Lillie Room - HMC 9:30am	

Community Visibility

Express lockers make pickup and return a breeze

The Narcoossee and Reunion communities now have access to Express Lockers. These lockers allow patrons to pick up and return materials at their convenience. The Narcoossee Express Locker is located at the Narcoossee Community Center, which is a County park facility situated in the growing suburbs between St. Cloud and Orange County. The second Express Locker is located outside the Reunion Fire Station in the southwest part of the County. Both locker locations hosted grand openings featuring County Commissioners Ricky Booth and Peggy Choudhry, respectively.



Library staff provided storytimes and technology tutoring for several months leading up to the launches. The Express Lockers are funded by a Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) grant through the Florida Division of Library and Information Services.



Osceola Arts mural beautifies Hart Memorial Library

In partnership with Osceola Arts, the Hart Memorial Library was gifted a beautiful and eye-catching mural on its southeastern exterior wall facing Johnston Street and the Kissimmee Lakefront Park. Created by Justin “Skip” Skipper over several hot days in July, the brightly colored mural entitled “Day & Night” features all the best of lakeside living like fishing, cranes and waves of blue all under the spotlight of the iconic Kissimmee Lighthouse on Lake Tohopekaliga. The mural draws visitors to the Library for photo ops and appreciation.



Library Card Sign Up Month provides historic results

In recognition of Library Card Sign Up Month, the Show Your Card, Osceola campaign gives a boost to local economic activity and drives up library use by engaging businesses to feature a discount program for Osceola Library card holders. Twenty businesses participated, ranging from restaurants to tattoo parlors, and were provided with Library-branded marketing materials to promote the program. Business owners were very happy to support the Library and see new customers! “I had two clients sign up with me. It may not seem like much but it's a good number due to the type of service I provide. I was very pleased with the results!” said Vanessa H. Weber of Veracity Research Solutions, LLC. Library card drives at the Osceola County Courthouse and Adult Learning Center of Osceola reached new potential users. The Library issued 1,427 Library cards in September which is the most cards issued in one month since August 2018.



Cultural Connector

Programming for all ages highlights diversity

Programs for all ages reflect Osceola's growing diversity. Through storytelling, arts, crafts, music and dance, the Library is the place to learn about countries around the world, holidays and observances, handicrafts and traditions, inclusivity and positivity while engaging in learning and exploration of these enriching new connections.

Here are just a few programs offered during the year:

Celebrate Diwali - the Festival of Lights:

This program introduces school age children to the Hindu festival of Diwali through crafts, storytime and henna designs.

International Festival: This signature annual event brings together education and entertainment as many important world cultures are highlighted through dance, art, music and food.

Over the Rainbow storytimes: In celebration of Pride Month storytellers highlight joyful and validating stories of families of all types.

Cooking with Culture: Authentic Puerto Rican cuisine was on the menu for this tasty cultural introduction.

Sensory Playdates: All five senses are explored in this welcoming storytime particularly great for children on the autism spectrum or with sensory challenges.

Library for All: Inclusive Activities for Adults: This program provides a social and educational outlet for adults with varying intellectual and physical ability with fun group activities like Bingo for Books.



From A to Zine: Creating self-published mini magazines complete with photos, art, literature, and topical essays provided patrons with a new way of self-expression.

Creativity Corner: This school-age program brings to life the works of famous artists and their unique art style, in particular women artists and those with strong cultural and personal identity and influence, such as Jean-Michel Basquiat, Alma Thomas, and Yayoi Kusama, who was featured in celebration of Asian Pacific Heritage Month.

Maker's Café: This adult program uses crafting and hands-on creations to create awareness for a variety of cultures and historical events, such as Women's History Month and Hispanic Heritage Month.

Free Comic Book Day: Comic Books are often the most accessible literature for reluctant readers, and we celebrated their power and entertainment with activities and giveaways.

Tiny Art Show: Tiny canvases tell big stories in this artistic showcase.



“Very calm and huge library. Tech makers space with opportunities for 3D printing, video and audio editing; super spacious children section upstairs, lots of computer work places, and of course plenty of books, magazines, audiobooks, movies, They also offer a good selection of classes!! Very friendly and welcoming desk staff.”

Melanie F. *Hart Memorial Library*

How-To Fest is both simple and ingenious

This one-stop-shop for learning and skill building was a fun and enriching afternoon at the Hart Memorial Library to try something new in a supportive environment. Instructional topics included Vegan Baking, Learning How to Juggle and How to Become a Foster Parent. The How-To Festival is set up in a conference style with participants choosing from a variety of topics within a time slot with experts giving hands-on demonstrations on everyday life skills. Participants walk away with confidence and hands-on experience in areas they've always wanted to explore.



How-To Festival

New Year, New You!

Spend the day learning various fun and valuable skills in everyday life. Discover how to knit, apply makeup, start a podcast and more!

**11am, Saturday
January 28**
Hart Memorial Library

the Osceola Library system

A collection of colorful, stylized icons representing various skills and tools. The icons include a yellow button, a purple and blue sailboat, a green ball of yarn with knitting needles, a pair of purple scissors, a purple and blue paintbrush, a purple and yellow pair of pliers, a purple hairbrush, and a purple paperclip. There are also several small purple and green circles scattered around the icons.

“Very professional...knew exactly what to do...always a great help”

Barbara B. *St. Cloud Library*

Collection Highlights

A variety of materials were added to the collection to offer patrons fun and interesting ways to increase learning opportunities and expand Library use.

- **Udemy:** Over 20,000 on-demand videos teach skills in business, technology and professional and personal development.
- **Sanborn Digital Maps:** Detailed Fire Insurance maps of Florida cities provides a wealth of information about their growth and development from 1867 to 1970.
- **Phonics Kits:** Up to 25 books in a kit focused on the introduction and development of early literacy skills.
- **Hispanic Life in America:** Explores topics in the media relating to the experiences and impact of Hispanic Americans.
- **Musical Instruments:** Check out Kalimbas and Ukuleles accompanied by song books for do-it-yourself music lessons.
- **Plot Your Own Stories books:** The Juvenile Fiction series entices reluctant readers to dive into a good books.
- **New magazines in Flipster:** New titles include Newsweek en Español, Southern Living, Total Guitar and Zoobooks.
- **New magazines in Print:** New titles include Cocina Facil, Family Handyman, Essence and Vanidades.
- **Kids Book Club kits diversified:** New kits were introduced that feature diverse authors and titles like Ben Yokoyama's *Cookie Chronicles* and fan favorites like *Leonard (My Life as a Cat)*.
- **Digital Florida Collection via Friends donations:** The Florida Collection expanded to eBooks and eAudio with a generous donation by the Friends of the Library.
- **GROW kits for local preschools:** Bags of engaging books are checked out to local preschools who use them with their storytimes.
- **Candid:** This suite of databases features the Foundation Directory, Grants to Individuals and Guidestar for Nonprofits.
- **Chilton Automotive:** Repair your car on your own with expert help from Chilton and their trusted guides.
- **Express Reads Pilot Project:** A state-provided collection of short novels for adult literacy learners

Community Relationships

WUCF - PBS affiliate

Bezos Academy

Women's Club of St. Cloud

Second Harvest Food Bank

Orlando Center for Justice

Orlando Chess Association

Hope Partnership

ASL Services

Adult Literacy League

Osceola Writers Group

OneBlood

Centennial Bank

Attorney Carlos Martoral and the Florida Legacy Group

Florida Native Plant Society, Pine Lily Chapter

Chase Bank

Habitat for Humanity

Bright Community Trust

UF/IFAS Extension Osceola County

Senior Life Publications

Osceola Arts



Florida Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles

Arcy Vazquez

Be An Angel Therapy Dogs Ministry

Professor Steve Sweetman

Kissimmee Parks and Recreation

School District of Osceola County

PM Wells Charter Academy and Victory Charter School

Osceola Magic

Boggy Creek Airboats

Osceola Children's Cabinet

Osceola County Emergency Management

Adult Learning Center of Osceola

Valencia College

Lynx

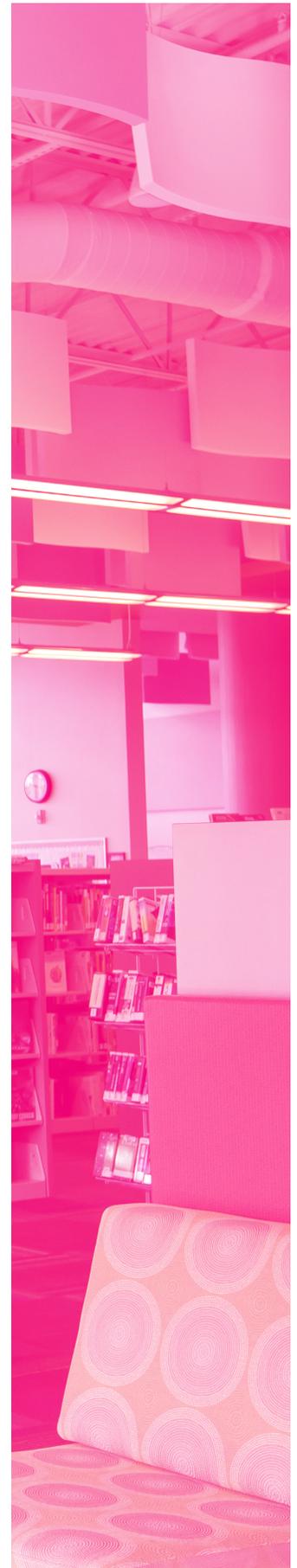
St. Cloud Heritage Museum

Osceola History

Congressman Darren Soto

"It's a great place to get your work done, clean and quiet environment - the butterfly garden is my favorite."

Kenneth S. *West Osceola Library*



Grants

FINRA - Financial Literacy Collection

Up to \$10,000

KUA - International Festival

\$500

PLA - Digital Literacy

Up to \$6,000

Tampa Bay Library Consortium - ALA conference attendance

\$2,000

Express Reads Pilot Project

State-provided collection of short novels for adult literacy learners

Awards & Recognitions

Preservation on Main Street Conference

Celebrating Main Street Award for St. Cloud Library's "Storybook Adventures"

Florida Library Association

Selected for Poster Session:
"Living History: Bringing the Old Frontier to Life in the New Frontier"

American Library Association

Selected for Poster Session:
"Living History: Bringing the Old Frontier to Life in the New Frontier"

Angela Hurst, Library Journal 2023 Mover & Shaker

Recognition of marketing excellence, "Library of the Day" honors

Library staff participate in FEMA's Community Specific Integrated Emergency Management Course in Maryland

Co-host Leadership Osceola's Government Day

PBS Ready to Learn/WUCF Learning Neighborhood

