

"ALWAYS WORTH A BROWSE"
FRIENDS OF THE OCEAN TOWNSHIP LIBRARY NEWS
SEPTEMBER 2026

 Important News

(1) The Township of Ocean Library will be closed on:

- **September 7, 2026 in observance of Labor Day**
- **September 11, 2026 for A Day of Remembrance**

(2) Special Free Event -- Don't miss the program "The Neil Diamond Story" happening on October 1, 2026 from 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. at the West Park Recreation Center (615 West Park Avenue -- Next to the town's pool complex). [Registration opens September 2, 2026.](#)

Presented by edu-tainer Phil Bruschi, the program, sponsored by the Department of Human Services & the Friends of the Township of Ocean Library, showcases the remarkable career of singer/songwriter Neil Diamond & rousing sing-along numbers.

This event is extra special for another reason -- it jumps starts the the Friends of the Township of Ocean Library 2027 Membership Drive and the Department of the Human Services/Community Hope Fund annual Thanksgiving Food Drive.

Come enjoy a fun afternoon and:

- **Renew your 2027 membership in the Friends.** When you do, you'll be entered into a **drawing for a Kindle Paperwhite device.** (Drawing to be held in February at the conclusion of our annual membership drive which runs from October 1, 2026 to February 15, 2027))
- **Bring a donation of non-perishable food items with you to help local families facing food insecurity.** Most needed items: stuffing, canned soup, canned fruit/vegetables, cranberry sauce, pasta & sauces, instant potatoes, gravy, hot/cold cereals, peanut butter & jelly, instant hot chocolate & coffee, cookies & crackers. **Just be sure to check expiration dates!**

The performance is free and open to all Ocean Township residents and everyone who attends will have an opportunity to win a basket of Neil Diamond-related prizes!

Registration is required. Space is limited so be sure to sign up as soon as registration begins on September 2, 2026. **To register simply click on this link: <https://forms.gle/6bUVi1ebR2C1qopc9>**

We hope you'll come renew your Friends 2027 membership, donate non-perishable food items and enjoy a fun afternoon of entertainment.

(3) Fall Cleaning -- Are you starting your fall cleaning this month? Then, consider setting aside your unwanted books, DVDs, vinyl records and CDs and bringing them to The Friends of the

Township of Ocean Library's upcoming donation day at our library (701 Deal Road). **The donation day is October 17, 2026 from 9:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. (or until our book room shelves are full).** For more information about the donation day event (including what we can and cannot accept) see the "Keeping Up with the Friends" section below.

(4) 2027 Membership Drive Kick Off Includes a Special Prize Giveaway! -- As 2026 begins to wind down, please take a moment to renew your 2027 membership in the Friends of the Township of Ocean Library. **And, as an extra special thank you, anyone who joins or renews between October 1, 2026 and February 15, 2027 will be automatically entered in a giveaway for a Kindle Paperwhite device!** You'll find more details about how to renew in the "Keeping Up with the Friends" section below.

(5) The Friends of the Township of Ocean Library and the Ocean Township Garden Club are co-hosting another book club discussion on October 21, 2026 at our library. **Be sure to check out the "Keeping Up with the Friends" section below for details about the discussion and how you can participate!**

(6) As a reminder, **beginning this month the Township of Ocean Library returns to its normal Saturday schedule -- our branch will be open on Saturday's from 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m**

(7) **"250th 🏰"** Exciting Program News -- As you know, 2026 marks the 250th anniversary of our country and throughout the year the Monmouth County Library system is hosting a number of informative and fun programs to mark this historic milestone. There are three "History Runs Through Us" programs being held at Monmouth County Library branches this month -- just browse the "More to the Story" section below and look for the special **"250th 🏰"** symbol to learn more.

(8) Your Passport to Adventures Galore -- With a library card you can travel to far off places, meet new and diverse characters, solve mysteries, explore unique perspectives, fall in love, better understand the world around you, and so much more -- all through the great works of literature, magazines, audio and large print books, exciting movies, educational programming, and a host of digital resources like e-books available at our library. **September is Library Card Sign-up Month, a perfect time to get a library card so you can begin your adventure.** Just visit our library and our branch's staff will be glad to help you. (Remember to bring along your driver's license.) **And, if you have family, friends or neighbors who don't yet have a library card -- be sure to encourage them to get a card so they can experience all the wonderful things that our library has to offer. And, don't forget the little ones in your life -- it's never too early to foster an appreciation of our library and a love of reading.**

(9) Coming This Month -- Book club discussions, wonderful movies, engaging children's programs, and more. **Be sure to review the "Updates from the Township of Ocean Library" section below for details about these and other wonderful programs coming in September to our branch.**

 **Keeping Up with the Friends**

(1) There's Still Time to Volunteer -- If you want to meet new people and get more involved with the Friends of the Township of Ocean Library -- there's good news! There are several fun events coming up where volunteers are needed. So, if you have some free time and want to meet other book lovers who share your passion for our town's library, sign up to help with one of the following upcoming activities:

- **Staff our table at our town's Fall Fest on September 26, 2026 (rain date September 27) during the hours of 9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. (You don't have to sign up for the entire event, even just an hour or two is appreciated!)**
- **Volunteer at our Book Donation Day on October 17, 2026 anytime between the hours of 9:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. as we collect, sort and shelve donations in anticipation of our next book sale.**
- **Help set-up for our next joint Ocean Township Garden Club/Friends of the Township of Ocean Library book club discussion on October 21, 2026.**

Signing up to help is easy. Simply reply to this email with the event(s) you are interested in and the time(s) you are available. We look forward to seeing you at one (or more!) of these upcoming activities!

(2) Get a Jump Start on the New Year -- by renewing your 2027 membership in the Friends of the Township of Ocean Library. Our 2027 membership drive kicks off on October 1, 2026 and runs through February 15, 2027. And, as an extra-special thank you -- anyone who renews their 2027 membership during this membership drive will be entered into a giveaway for a Kindle Paperwhite device!

Our 100% volunteer-driven, member-supported, non-profit 501(c)(3) group relies on fund raising efforts and membership dues (**our annual dues are only \$5.00**) to provide services and fund programs to support our library, promote literacy, and keep you informed of what programs, events and services are available to you.

But, we need your help if we are to continue to provide these services going forward. It's easy to do...

(A) Plan ahead and pay your 2027 membership dues when our drive kicks off on October 1st.

Membership Renewal Forms are available online at our website:

<https://www.friendsofoceantwplibrary.org/> or directly by clicking:

https://www.friendsofoceantwplibrary.org/files/ugd/ebfcd1_1e5079c9d7d24e45a0aa9ca1f2248cbe.pdf

(B) If you love our library and find the services we provide helpful, let your friends, family and neighbors know about the Friends of the Ocean Township Library and ask them to consider becoming a member. Simply print out a copy of our membership form (located on our website: <https://www.friendsofoceantwplibrary.org/>) and ask them to return it to the address provided on the form. And, be sure to let them know they will be automatically entered into our Kindle Paperwhite device giveaway when they sign up!

Please note: For your convenience you can choose to pay your \$5.00 annual membership dues either by check/money order or via our electronic payment option (which allows you to pay with PayPal or with a Debit or Credit Card). Simply go to our website to renew:

<https://www.friendsofcoastwplibrary.org/>

We appreciate your support and thank you!

(3) Fall Cleaning Help -- Due to the overwhelming success of our recent book sale, we've decided to hold another **Book Donation Day at our library, on **October 17, 2026 (RAIN OR SHINE)** from **9:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. (or until our shelves reach capacity)**. So, as you fall clean, set aside those unwanted books, DVDs, CDs and vinyl records and bring them over on our donation day.**

This will help us ensure that we have plenty of new inventory for our next book sale (in the spring of next year). As you know, the proceeds from our sales help us support our library and its many wonderful adult, teen and children's programs.

Of Special Note: Our donation day is open to all residents of our town, so please spread the word and let your friends, family and neighbors know about our October 17th Book Donation Day.

Encourage them to join you in gathering up unwanted books, CDs, vinyl records, and DVDs (that are in good condition) and heading over to the library on October 17th.

BUT BEFORE YOU DO...PLEASE READ AND SHARE THE FOLLOWING IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT WHAT WE NEED AND WHAT WE CAN AND CANNOT ACCEPT...

Items we ESPECIALLY NEED:

- Recent Hardcover and Paperback Books
- The Classics -- Twain, Austen, Shakespeare, Dickens, etc.
- True Crime Books
- Children's Books
- History Books (No Current Political Event Books Please)
- Biographies
- Art Books
- Large Print Books
- Science/Math-Related Books (No Textbooks Please)

Items we can ACCEPT:

- Adult and Children's Fiction and Non-Fiction hard or soft covered books in good or better condition
- Vinyl Records
- CD audiobooks, music CDs, and DVDs in good condition (**Please check that each case has a disc inside before donating -- thank you**)

- Puzzles (Please make sure all of the pieces are in the box -- thank you)

Items we CANNOT ACCEPT:

- Books in poor or damaged condition
- Books with mildew, mold, water, or other stains, or without covers
- Books with wrinkled, marked, or highlighted pages
- Encyclopedias, Text books, Text books, Reference, Reader's Digest
- Dated Non-Fiction
- Self Help Books
- Travel Books
- Current Political Event Books
- VHS or Cassette Tapes

(4) Unpacking a Secret Life -- The Friends of the Township of Ocean Library and the Ocean Township Garden Club are partnering for another exciting book club discussion at our library on October 21, 2026 at 2:00 p.m. Participants will be discussing the book (Hint: Click on the title to learn more about the book): "The Secret Life of Sunflowers", by author Marta Molnar.

Seating is limited and registration is required. So, act fast if you'd like to participate in this book club discussion. **Please RSVP to this email to register.** Once you are registered, you will receive an email letting you know when you can pick up a copy of the book at our library's circulation desk. (FYI: There will be large print copies of the book available.) Just remember that you will need your valid library card to check out the book. (No problem if you don't yet have a library card -- just bring your driver's license and sign up for a card at our branch before you ask for the book.) Please note, that if you borrow the book you must return the book before or on the day of the discussion.

Updates from the Township of Ocean Library

(1) Calling All Fans of Book Clubs -- Our branch's book club will meet on September 3, 2026 at 10:30 a.m. to discuss the classic "*Fahrenheit 451*" by Ray Bradbury. Guy Montag is a fireman and his job is to destroy the most illegal of all commodities -- the printed book and the houses in which they are hidden. Montag never questions the destruction he brings, returning each day to his bland life and a wife who spends all of her time watching TV. But, when he meets an eccentric young neighbor, Montag is introduced to a past where people didn't live in fear and a present where one sees the world through books instead of the mindless chatter of TV. Soon, Montag begins to question everything he has ever known. **Copies of the book are available at our library. Please Note: No registration is required.**

Sneak Peek: Our branch's book club will meet on October 1, 2026 at 10:30 a.m. to discuss "*The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*" by Robert Louis Stevenson. When a brute tramples an

innocent girl, apparently out of spite, bystanders catch the fellow and force him to pay reparations to the girl's family. The brute is Edward Hyde. A respected lawyer, Utterson, hears about this story and tries to unravel the seemingly manic behavior of his best friend, Dr. Henry Jekyll, and his connection with Hyde. Several months earlier Utterson had drawn up an inexplicable will for the doctor naming Hyde as his heir in the event Jekyll disappears. Fearing his friend is being blackmailed, Utterson probes deeper into both Jekyll and his unlikely protege -- and is increasingly unnerved at each new revelation he uncovers.

Copies of the book are available at our library. Please Note: No registration is required.

(2) Movies...Movies....Movies -- Interested in enjoying a good movie? Then look no further than our library, where a number of terrific movies are being shown this month. And, best of all, the movies are all free to attend! Movies are shown every Thursday at 2:00 p.m.

This month's movies feature a kid who loves karate, an astronaut who awakens from a coma to realize he must find a way to stop the extinction of humanity, a singer whose career began with his brothers before he launches a solo career which included a thriller, and a sequel about a high-powered magazine publishing "devil" who faces off against her former assistant.

You can find details about the movies available this month by clicking on [this link](#):

(3) Especially for the Little Ones -- Our library is the place to go for engaging, fun and informative children's programs each month. You'll find many children's programs involving exciting stories, song singing and even craft making at our branch. Among the special activities coming up this month is:

- **Exploration Stations: Bring your little one to a sensory play program designed to engage children in imaginative activities while promoting early literacy, cognitive development and social skills on September 29, 2026 from 10:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. Open to ages 1 - 4 with parent or caregiver**

Children's programs at our branch are a great way for the little one in your life to have fun, make friends, and develop a love for our library that will last a lifetime. **To find out what other programs are happening this month simply go to: <https://monmouthcountylib.org/wp-content/uploads/cocean.pdf>**

Monthly Tip

Be an Influencer -- You don't need a social media account to be an influencer -- you just need to have read a good book recently. That's because our members ♥ hearing about books that other Friends members have enjoyed. In fact, the "Friends Picks" display at our book sale is always a popular stop for our members.

So, if you've read a good book recently, don't forget to let us know so that we can feature your recommendation in our newsletter as a "A Friend's Pick". And, if you do, you'll receive a coupon for one free regularly-priced book at our next book sale. Simply reply to this email with the name of the book, the author, and 1 - 2 sentences about why you enjoyed the book. You can even choose

to submit your recommendation anonymously if you wish. That's all there is to it. So please consider sharing your favorite book with other Friends members. Thank you!

Happening Around Town

(1) Fall Fest Fun -- Fall is in the air and what a perfect time for our town's popular Fall Fest. **This year the Fall Fest will be held on September 26, 2026 (Rain date is September 27, 2026) from 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. at the Joe Palaia Park.** The day will be filled with vendors, a craft fair, food trucks, live music, pumpkin painting, fire truck rides, children's activities, and so much more. **Don't miss this spectacular day of fun.**

Please Note: The Friends of the Township of Ocean Library will have a table at the Fall Fest to sign up new members and provide information regarding our library and all that it offers. Volunteering at this event is always fun so you're bound to have a great time. If you'd like to volunteer to help out, simply RSVP to this email and let us know your availability for the Fall Fest event. Thanks!!

(2) Labor Day Closure -- Please note that **Township offices will be closed on September 7, 2026** in observance of Labor Day.

(3) Lace Up Your Sneakers -- And plan to participate in the Ocean Parks 5K walk/run on Saturday, September 26, 2026 at the Joe Palaia Park. Check in begins at 7:30 a.m. and the race kicks off at 9:00 a.m. **All ages are welcome to participate!** Join other town residents for an exciting day of fitness, fun and community. All participants receive a runner's medal and awards will be given for the top finishers in each age category. **And, when you participate you'll help our town in the process - all proceeds will go towards local outdoor recreation improvements. Registration is required.** For more information and to register go to: <https://runsignup.com/Race/NJ/Ocean/OceanParks5k>

(4) AI Help -- Our town's municipal website (www.oceantwp.org) now features an AI Assistant to help residents find information about municipal services, departments, events, permits, meetings, and other frequently searched topics. **You'll find the AI Assistant icon at the bottom right corner of the town's website home page (look for a blue circle with a small conversation icon inside).** The AI Assistant is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week to help you locate the information you need. **Please keep in mind that the AI Assistant is new and still learning, so it may not have every answer right now.** Our town municipal staff will continue to update and improve the AI Assistant's knowledge. **If you don't receive the information you need, please contact the appropriate municipal department or Tracey Berkowitz at tberkowitz@oceantwp.org for help.**

(5) Craft Time -- Town seniors can enjoy a fun morning of crafting every Thursday at 10:00 a.m. at the Don & Marie Curtis Senior Center ([615 West Park Avenue](#)). For more details call 732-531-2600.

(6) Did You Know? -- The Department of Human Services offers free professional counseling services to residents of Ocean Township. Services are available for a variety of needs, including individual counseling, couples and family counseling, and grief counseling. For more information or to schedule an appointment call 732-531-2600.

(7) If you are a senior living in Ocean Township, you won't want to miss the interesting and fun senior programs offered each month through the Department of Human Services. All programs take place at 615 West Park Avenue in the Oakhurst section of town.

- **Health Screenings -- Join other town seniors on September 3, 2026 at 10:00 a.m. for free health screenings from Hackensack Meridian Health, including blood pressure, cholesterol*, glucose*, stroke risk assessment, BMI, and pulse. Open to all seniors 60 and older. *Fasting is not required.**
- **Health Fair -- Family & Children's Services will host a community Health Fair on September 10, 2026 from 11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.** The fair promotes health, wellness and access to local services. The event will connect you with healthcare providers, partner organizations, and valuable health and wellness information. **Admission is free and all are welcome!**
- **Coming to You -- The Office of Senator Gopal, Assemblywoman Donlon and Assemblywoman Peterpaul is bringing their Mobile Office to our town's senior center on September 11, 2026 from 10:00 am. - 12:00 p.m.** Representatives of these legislators will be on hand to answer questions and provide information on: Property Tax Relief, Veterans' Benefits, Utility Assistance, Disability Services, State Agencies, and more. **This event is open to all residents of Legislative District 11.**
- **Did You Know? -- September is Fall Prevention Awareness Month. Come join other town seniors on September 17, 2026 from 11:30 a.m. - 12:30 a.m. for an informative Fall Prevention presentation led by Trauma Injury Prevention Coordinator Tracy Nerney RN of Jersey Shore University Medical Center.** Nurse Nerney will share practical strategies to prevent falls, explain how to make your home and surroundings safer, and discuss what to do if you experience a fall. Whether you are looking to stay active, maintain your independence, or help keep a loved one safe -- this presentation will provide you valuable tips and resources. **Registration is required for this FREE event. [Click Here to Register](#)**
- **Caregiver Coaching -- Join other town residents on September 24, 2026 from 11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. when Kat Verdi, a trusted resource for seniors navigating life's transitions, shares helpful information on senior living options, healthcare transitions, in-home services, relocation and other resources.** Come learn about options available to help you stay informed, independent, and empowered. **Registration is required for this FREE event.**

[Click Here to Register](#)

Grab a Book and Sit Awhile

Looking for a good book to read this month? No problem! This month we once again are spotlighting several different ways you can locate recommended books in just about every genre.

(1) Calling All Lovers of Reading -- Imagine you could hop into any book you wanted -- which novels would YOU choose? If the concept of entering the pages of your favorite books intrigues you, then you won't want to miss "*The Book Witch*" by Meg Shaffer. Rainy March is a proud, third generation Book Witch, sworn to defend works of fiction from all foes -- real or imaginary. Book Witches have a strict code: Real people belong in the real world and fictional characters belong -- well, in books of fiction of course! And, falling in love with a fictional character? Don't even think about it. Which is why, Rainy has been forbidden from seeing the Duke of Chicago -- the dashing British detective who stars in her favorite mystery series. If she's even seen with him again, she'll be expelled from the book coven. But, when Rainy's dear grandfather disappears and a priceless book is stolen, there's only one person she trusts to help her -- the Duke. Their quest takes them through the pages of Alice in Wonderland, King Arthur, and a host of other classics as the duo uncovers long-buried secrets and hidden enemies. **Library Journal says "Shaffer delightfully reminds readers of the power of stories and books". And, Kirkus Reviews says this novel is "catnip for anyone who ever wished they could walk around in their favorite book" This book has a 4.2 (out of 5.0) rating on Amazon.**

(2) Luminous Read -- *The Boston Globe* calls "*Whistler*" by Ann Patchett "a rare phenomenon in contemporary fiction: a novel both majestic and intimate, original and masterful in its structure, crystalline in its prose, revelatory in its insights, utterly devastating yet ultimately uplifting in its emotional impact". With reviews like that (not to mention that the book is a Katie Couric Book Club Pick, a Good Housekeeping Book Club Pick AND a Goodreads Most Anticipated Book of the Summer Pick), you'll be sure to want to pick up of a copy of *Whistler*. When Daphne Fuller and her husband visit the Metropolitan Museum of Art they notice an older man following them. The man turns out to be Eddie Triplett, Daphne's former stepfather who was married to her mother for about a year when Daphne was nine. Now 53, Daphne hasn't seen Eddie in years -- not since a fateful event changed the direction of both of their lives. Meeting again, time falls away and they have no intention of ever being separated again. *Whistler* is ultimately a story about two adults looking back over their lives, the choices they made and that were made for them. It's a story about bravery and the small seemingly inconsequential moments in our lives that ultimately define it. **This book has earned a 4.6 (out of 5.0) rating on Amazon with over 21,000 reviews. And, great news -- our library has this novel available in both ebook and audiobook formats.**

(3) Traveling Through Time -- If you enjoy books that feature two (or more) stories connected across time, then you will want to check out BookBub's list of "18 Enthralling New Dual-Timeline" Novels. The books included on the list will take you from present day to Venice in 1609, Scotland in 1931, London in 1968, Egypt in the 1920s -- and more. With vivid historical settings and connections that link generations across time, you are sure to find just the book that will captivate you and transport you. **To start your time travel check out BookBub's list [here](#).**

(4) Explore Our Collective History -- If you enjoy books about American history then be sure to check out our newsletter's latest feature. This month we'll once again explore our country's collective history by recommending a topic or individual worth investigating through books.

This month, we suggest exploring what happened on December 29, 1890 at Wounded Knee.

In the late 19th century, many Native Americans had been forced from their ancestral lands onto reservations, where they endured poverty, disease, drought, and the loss of traditional ways of life. These conditions helped give rise to the Ghost Dance, a spiritual movement promising cultural renewal and the restoration of Native American life.

Federal officials feared that the movement could lead to rebellion. Tensions escalated after Lakota leader Sitting Bull was killed in an attempt to arrest him in December 1890. Later that month, U.S. troops intercepted Lakota leader Chief Big Foot (Spotted Elk) and his followers near Wounded Knee Creek in South Dakota. While soldiers, acting against orders, attempted to disarm the group, gunfire erupted. An estimated 150 - 300 Lakota, many of them women and children, were killed.

The Wounded Knee Massacre remains an enduring symbol of the tragic treatment of Native Americans during this period in American history.

There are many excellent books available to learn more about Wounded Knee -- *"Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee"* by Dee Brown, *"The Heartbeat of Wounded Knee: Native America from 1890 to the Present"* by David Treuer, *"They Called Me Uncivilized: The Memoir of an Everyday Lakota Man from Wounded Knee"* by Walter Littlemoon, *"The Wounded Knee Massacre: A Captivating Guide to the Battle of Wounded Knee and its Impact on the Native Americans after the Final Clash between Federal Troops and the Sioux"* by Captivating History, *"Wounded Knee: Party Politics and the Road to an American Massacre"* by Heather Cox Richardson, *"Wounded Knee and the Ghost Dance Tragedy"* by Jack Utter, *"Wounded Knee: Lest We Forget"* by Alvin M. Josephy, *"Eyewitness at Wounded Knee: Great Plains Photography"* by Richard E. Jensen, *"Wounded Knee: Still Bleeding 1973"* by Stew Magnuson, *"Descendants of Wounded Knee"* by Alan Hafer and Sandy Sauser, *"Surviving Wounded Knee: The Lakotas and the Politics of Memory"* by David W. Grua, *"In the Shadow of Wounded Knee: The Untold Chapter of the Indian Wars"* by Roger L. DiSilvestro, and *"Wounded Knee Massacre: A History from Beginning to the End"* by Hourly History.

If you are interested in making your exploration of this difficult, but important, historical subject into a family affair, there are also a number of well-written children's books on the subject -- *"The Story of Wounded Knee"* by R. Conrad Stein (geared for grades 3 - 4), *"Last Battle: Causes and Effects of the Massacre at Wounded Knee"* by Pamela Dell (geared for ages 8 -10), *"Brave Bird at Wounded Knee: A Story of Protest on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation"* by Rachel Bithell and Eric Freeberg (geared for ages 8 -12), *"A Boy Becomes a Man at Wounded Knee"* by Ted Wood (geared for grades 4 - 6), and *"The Heartbeat of Wounded Knee"* by Shelia Keenan and David Treuer (geared for ages 12 and up).

We hope you'll find reading about this dark period of American history enlightening.

(5) Who Am I? -- He's Kayden Hern who, at the tender age of nine, literally brought the house down at New York Governor Kathy Hochul's Inauguration. The young Harlem native recited a poem he calls "In My Mind" -- a thought provoking piece on race and growing up as a young black boy in America in the aftermath of George Floyd's killing. Kayden's love of poetry, nurtured by his grandmother, has even taken him to the stage at the world famous Apollo Theater. **Now, he has added published author to his resume with his first book of poetry. The book, "Who Am I" contains a**

poem in which Kayden shares his story. This powerful and beautifully illustrated book, geared for ages 8 - 10 is available from Scholastic Books [here](#).

(6) Love is in the Air -- Thanks to Goodreads's list of "The Most Popular Romance and Romantasy Reads of 2026 (So Far)". If you enjoy a great romance and are always rooting for the couple to succeed, you'll definitely want to check out Goodreads' list to find the highly rated romances on bookshelves this year. The list includes titles from popular authors such as Abby Jimenez, Meghan Quinn, Melissa De La Cruz, Catherine Walsh, Elle Kennedy, and more. **So, add some love to your reading by browsing [this list](#) for your next romance**

(7) Simply Mad Science -- Abounds in the zany *New York Times* bestselling three book series "The Millicent Quibb School of Etiquette for Young Ladies of Mad Science" from Saturday Night Live comedic legend Kate McKinnon. **Each book in the series -- "*The Millicent Quibb School of Etiquette for Young Ladies of Mad Science*", "*Secrets of the Purple Pearl*", and "*The Jungle of Carabanana*" will take the middle school children in your life on a wild adventure about mad science, three peculiar sisters, and the mysterious Millicent Quibb.** Kirkus calls the books "fiercely feisty and unapologetically goofy". Publishers Weekly says "McKinnon celebrates weirdness in this ludicrous and unpredictable female-centered romp...ink drawings by Caceres give vivid life to the amusing absurdity of the over-the-top 1911-set tales." **So if your children enjoy mad science and wacky adventures considering picking up this series for them to enjoy! These books have a 4.6 and 4.8 rating (out of 5.0) on Amazon.**

(8) True Crime -- Patricia Cornwell is a New York Times bestselling author known for her thriller series featuring forensic pathologist, Dr. Kay Scarpetta. Now, Patricia Cornwell is turning the spotlight inward with her newest book "*True Crime: A Memoir*". In this brutally honest account, she details her own life -- including her traumatic childhood being raised by neglectful parents, her father abandoning her on Christmas Day, her mother being institutionalized twice, an abusive foster family, and a near-death car accident. But it is also a testament to overcoming obstacles -- obstacles that led her to become an award-winning police reporter, a forensic expert, and a publishing powerhouse. **Kirkus calls the book "A literary memoir (that) is as good as it gets, with more action and drama than many novels". And, Oprah Daily comments "If you've ever wondered how crime writers manage to dream up the mayhem they write about, this book is an excellent window into the process". This book has a 4.5 rating (out of 5.0) on Amazon.**

(9) Burning Bright -- Where would you go and what would you do if you knew the world was ending? That question is the basis for the compelling novel "*We Burned So Bright*" by TJ Klune. This novel follows an elder gay couple on an end-of-the-world road trip. Husbands Don and Rodney have lived a good life together for 40 years -- experiencing the highs of love and lows so low that they felt like their world was ending. Now, the world is ending for real as a black hole is coming for Earth and in a month everything and everyone will be gone. In a race against time the couple attempts to get from Maine to Washington State to take care of unfinished business before it's too late. On the soul-searching road they meet some refusing to believe the end is near and others rushing to meet it. But, there are also countless others living their final days as best as they can -- hosting spur-of-the-minute weddings, burning

bright bonfires, sharing meals, and meeting new friends. As the black hole draws near, Don and Rodney will look back at their lives and wonder if their best was good enough. Is it enough to burn brightly if nothing remains in the end? **This amazing novel is a LibraryReads pick, an Indie Next Pick, a Spotify and Apple Best Book of the Year So Far, and Most Anticipated Pick by People Magazine, Parade, Page Six, and Spokesman Review.**

(10) Consider Joining a Monmouth County Library Book Discussion This Month**

- **September 9, 2026 at 10:30 a.m. -- Join a hybrid (in-person or on Zoom) discussion of "*The View From Lake Como*" by Adriana Trigiani.** In Lake Como, New Jersey, recently divorced Jess Bilancia moves into her parents' basement to hide and heal. Jess is the overlooked daughter, who dutifully takes care of her parents, cooks Sunday dinner, and puts herself last. Jess is also a talented draftsman in the family marble business. When her own family and her ex-husband's family endure an unexpected loss, the shock unearths long-buried secrets that will force Jess to question her loyalty to those she trusted. **Registration is required.**
- **September 16, 2026 at 6:00 p.m. -- Join an online (via Zoom) discussion of the "*Northanger Abbey*" by Jane Austen.** Catherine Morland's obsession with gothic horror novels contributes to her overactive imagination, which leads her to believe she is living her own gothic fantasy while visiting the city of Bath during its bustling social season. This novel is Austen's satirical response to the gothic fiction that was all the rage at the time *Northanger Abbey* was published. **Registration is required.**

****To register simply go to the Monmouth County Library Calendar site by clicking on [this link](#). Select the date from the drop down box at the top of the page and then click search. When the event/program/discussion you are interested appears click on it and you'll see a full description as well as a button to push for registration.**

We hope you find this spotlight helpful. Happy Reading!!

More to the Story

(1) Coming in September -- The Monmouth County Library System will host a wide range of virtual and in-person programs this month including:

- **"250th 🇺🇸": Revolution in Harmony: Celebrating America 250** -- Come enjoy a lively afternoon concert featuring music from the Revolutionary era. Hear songs depicting iconic moments from the American Revolution and other music that was popular at the time **(This event will be held at the MCL's Marlboro branch on September 10, 2026 at 1:00 p.m.)**
- **"250th 🇺🇸": All History is Local: The Sand Hill Indians and the Minisink Trail** -- The history of the Sand Hill Indians living on the northern shores of Monmouth County can be traced back to the 1700s. The Minisink Trail, which crosses Monmouth County, was a major migration and trade route, a small part of which still exists unpaved. **(This event will be held at the MCL's Eastern Branch in Shrewsbury on September 10, 2026 at 7:00 p.m.)**

- **"250th 🇺🇸": America's 250th Birthday Celebration Concert** -- Come celebrate America's 250th Birthday with the St. Peter's Brass Quintet. The concert features stirring patriotic favorites including the Armed Forces Salute, God Bless America, and Stars and Stripes Forever. **(This event will be held at the MCL's Eastern Branch in Shrewsbury on September 27, 2026 at 2:00 p.m.)**
- **Author Talks (David O. Stewart, Daniel Kraus, Priya Parker, and Lucky Diaz)**
- **Lectures** (The Secret to a Good Night's Sleep, Artists' Eyes on the American Revolution: John Singleton Copley Painting Realism and History, Foray into Mushrooms, A Return to the Moon: Artemis II and Beyond, Astrology 101: Unlocking Your Cosmic Superpower, Introduction to Chatting with AI, Thriving Houseplants: Simple Care for Healthy Indoor Plants, Thomas Jefferson's Complicated Quaker Relationships: Work & Slavery, It Hurts When I Do This: An Illustrated History of Quack Medicine, The History of Jersey Diners, Perennials: Plants that Keep Giving, Scam Alert!: What State & County Consumer Affairs Want You to Know, Plan with Purpose: Creating Your Will, Nuestra America: Stories of 30 Inspiring Latinas/Latinos Who Have Shaped the United States, Beginning Jewish Genealogy Research, Grow Your Small Business with NJEDA Grants and Loans, Using the Record Collections at the Monmouth County Archives, Emergency Preparedness, the Haunted History of New Jersey, and Honey Bees: A Powerful Pollinator, etc.)
- **Book Bedazzling for Teens**
- **A Salute to Molly Picon: A Concert Lecture**
- **Ragtime Concert: Fred Lehotay and the Ragtimers!**
- **Create Your Own Autumn Canvas**
- **Prevention Coalition of Monmouth County Flag Display**
- **Knitting for a Cause with Each Stitch Counts**
- **Adult Coloring**
- **Free Health Screening**
- **Mobile Mental Health Van**
- **80 Years of Wood and Fire**
- **Movement and Meditation**
- **Shades of Autumn with David Podles**
- **Social Dance Club**
- **Circle of Origami Paperfolders**
- **Free Visual and Blood Pressure Screenings**
- **Free Flu Vaccine Clinic by the Monmouth County Health Department**
- **Genealogy Club**
- **Yoga**
- **Mahjongg**
- **Writing Workshops**
- **Learn to Play Bridge**
- **and so much more....**

****To register for any of these programs simply go to the Monmouth County Library Calendar site by clicking on [this link](#) Select the date from the drop down box at the top of the page and then click**

search. When the event/program/discussion you are interested appears click on it and you'll see a full description, as well as a button to push for registration.

(2) Coming in September to the New Jersey State Library System (NJSL) -- **The New Jersey State Library System offers "NJSL Presents Webinars" which are free and open to anyone interested in attending.** Registration is required in advance and all webinars are recorded and posted to their **YouTube page** afterward. You can also check out event recaps on their **blog**.

Here's what is on tap in September from the NJSL:

- **The Truth Behind Diets and Healthy Eating** -- September 9, 2026 at 12:00 p.m.
- **Library and Exhibit Tour** - September 14, 2026 and September 30, 2026 at 1:30 p.m.
- **Virtual Author Talk: Bergen County Voices from the American Revolution** -- September 15, 2026, at 12:00 p.m.

For a description of each webinar's content and to register -- simply go to:

<https://www.njstatelib.org/> Scroll down to the listing of Upcoming Events and click on the program you are interested in attending.

Looking for Links?

Here are some links for our town, county, and state that we hope will help you stay connected:

Ocean Township:

- Friends of the Township of Ocean Library: www.friendsofoceantwplibrary.org
- Ocean Township Department of Human Services website: <https://oceantwp.org/p/departement-of-human-services>
- Ocean Township Garden Club: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/597553924494267/>
- Ocean Township Historical Museum: www.oceanmuseum.org
- Ocean Township Town Website: www.oceantwp.org

Monmouth County:

- Monmouth County Department of Health: www.visitmonmouth.com
- Monmouth County Library: www.MonmouthCountyLib.org

New Jersey:

- New Jersey Official State Web Site: www.nj.gov
- New Jersey State Library: <https://www.njstatelib.org/>

Thank you again for your continued support of
The Friends of The Township of Ocean Library
You truly are making a difference!

