

THE NEWS *of* ORANGE COUNTY

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At the Library: Library offers new services this summer

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While summer often means vacation time and taking it easy for many, we're busily introducing new services here at Orange County Public Library, or OCPL. In this and the July 23 library column, we'll share more about the new—and possibly unexpected—free offerings at the library.

eBooks

We're excited to announce that eBooks from our OverDrive collection can now be checked out for three weeks.

New fiction and non-fiction titles are continually added to this growing and popular collection. Simply download the eBook to your Kindle, NOOK, iPad, computer or mobile device and begin reading. You just need your library card number to log in to OverDrive.

Don't have a device on which to read eBooks? You can borrow Kindles at the Main Library. Kindles come pre-loaded with a long list of popular books. They're available for three weeks at a time and can be requested through the library's online catalog at <http://library.orangecountync.gov>.

Two other eBook options available at OCPL are NC LIVE eBooks and Open Library.

NC LIVE offers online fiction, reference and professional books on topics including art, language learning, literature, medical, health and history.

Open Library offers downloadable eBooks contributed from libraries across the country. Create a username and password to borrow up to five books at a time.

Video game collection

According to a 2012 Library Journal study, about 15 percent of libraries in the U.S. offer video games.

Far outpacing this statistic, a 2013 Entertainment Software Association (ESA) study reveals that 58 percent of all Americans play video or computer games, and more than half of all U.S. households have at least one dedicated game console.

As video games and gaming are very much part of our current culture, OCPL began lending video games in June.

Nearly 100 games for the Xbox, Xbox 360, Wii and PlayStation 2 and 3 can be checked out from the OCPL Main Library for three weeks at a time.

Though many don't associate video games with libraries and learning, video games are more than just entertainment.

Gaming often requires developing strategies, predicting possible outcomes, managing resources, reading and deciphering maps, tracking complex statistics and adapting to increasingly difficult levels within the game. Kids and teens and even adults who game learn a range of media literacies beyond basic reading that give them models for navigating our information-rich world.

Gaming, sometimes perceived as a solitary activity, is also quite social. A 2006 Nielsen study showed that active teen gamers spent an average of seven hours weekly playing games with their friends. Of parents surveyed in the 2013 ESA study, 62 percent believed gaming helped their children connect with friends, and 59 percent reported gaming as an activity that brings their family together.

Not only can you check out video games at OCPL, but you can also game at the library.\

Join us for a Game Day at the Main Library Wednesday, July 16, from 6 to 7:30 p.m. Bring your friends and come meet new ones as we play on the Wii, Xbox Kinect and laptops. Board and card games will also be available. All ages are welcome, but kids younger than 10 years old should be accompanied by an adult.

Folks in the community generously donated many of the video games in our collection. If you have a video game you no longer play or want, please consider donating it to the library. Any questions about gaming at the library? Jess Arnold manages the library's video game collection and can be reached at 919-245-2537.

The Main Library is located at 137 W. Margaret Lane in Hillsborough. Free parking is available in the Eno River Parking Deck. For more information, go to www.orangecountync.gov/library.