



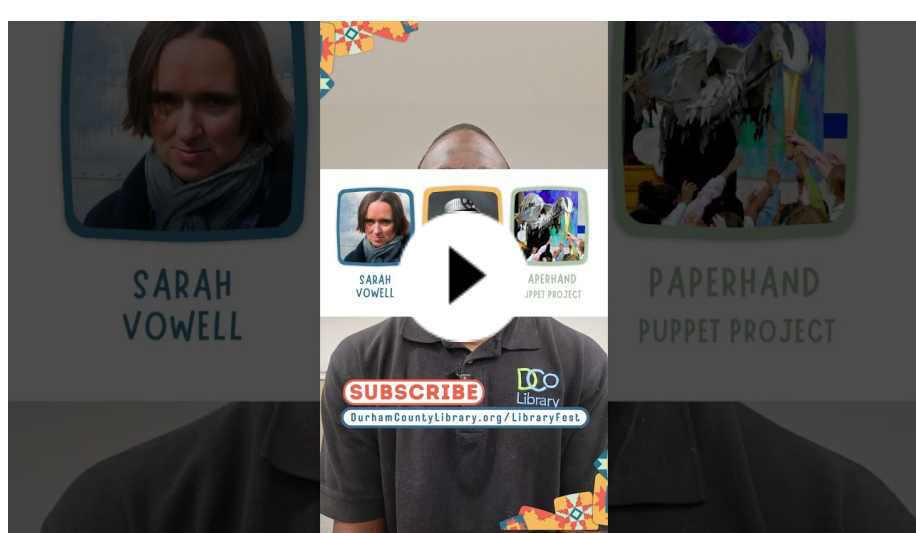
Library Fest 2026: The Stories That Built US

6th Annual Celebration is April 20-25



Durham County Library is excited to announce that the sixth annual Library Fest, in celebration of National Library Week, will take place from Monday, April 20 to Saturday, April 25. The theme for this year is The Stories That Built Us (U.S.). Thanks to the generous support of the Durham Library Foundation and community partners, Durham County Library proudly provides free access to world-class author talks and over 30 programs and events that will help all of us commemorate the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence and reflect upon the nation's past, honor the contributions of all people, and shape a better future for generations to come.

All programs hosted for Library Fest are free and open to the public; some programming requires registration via the [Durham County Library events calendar](#).



Everyone is Invited!

Stanford L. Warren Branch Library Manager Larry Daniels is excited to invite everyone to find what moves you and take part in Library Fest 2026 - The Stories That Built Us (U.S.).

Library Fest Headliners!

This year's edition of Library Fest has amazing headliners, including *New York Times* bestseller Sarah Vowell. The author of seven nonfiction books on American history and culture, including Lafayette in the "Somewhat United States," will join Durham County Library's own Jennifer Jamsky in a conversation brought to you by the Friends of the Durham Library. The Paperhand Puppet Project presents "A World of Wonder!"; Library Fest keynote speaker Alvin Hall has a conversation with Adrienne Nirdé, Director of NC African American Heritage Commission with the NC Department of Natural and Cultural Resources, surrounding his "Driving the Green Book." Willa Brigham, two-time Emmy Award-winning host of the children's educational television show "Smart Start Kids," will lead a storytelling session for all ages.



Flashback Durham



Librarians Hustle

In April, we celebrate libraries and librarians with National Library Month! At Durham County Library we will celebrate the occasion with [Library Fest from April 20-25](#) at all of our locations, so today we look back at some of our library employees of the past.

In the image on the right, one of our past colleagues heroically manages large piles of newspapers in the stacks during the 1970s. Today, we have much fewer physical newspapers to wrangle, but our intrepid staff is still here to help you access the materials you need – whatever the format!

For the image above, we step into the Bragtown Branch Library in March of 1939 as librarian Mrs. Hawkins, assists two young Durhamites find fun and fascinating content.



Look back at more Library employees, bookmobiles, and library facilities of the past in the [Durham County Library records digital collection](#). You can always visit our [North Carolina Collection](#) on the third floor of [Main Library](#), or view their [digital materials](#) on our website.

The North Carolina Collection – Durham history research happens here.

Digital Resource Highlight

LinkedIn Learning

LinkedIn Learning is a great way to build your resume by learning new skills! There are classes on time management, working with artificial intelligence (AI), business leadership, software training, and so much more. The best part is, this resource is free with your Durham County Library card!



Behind the Stacks

Board Chair McLain has lifelong ties to Library

On a bright Durham afternoon, Ann McLain, Chair of the [Library Board of Trustees](#), reflects on her lifelong connection to the public library – a space she describes as one of the community's most democratic, offering free and open access to all.

Ann lights up when talking about Durham County Library's energy: "I love to see the students studying, teens chatting, children exploring new technologies, and even the 'mesmerizing' automated book return," said Ann. After retiring, she joined the board to give back to a system she sees as essential, especially as libraries nationwide face increasing challenges. She's grateful Durham continues to support and invest in its library system.

Her love of libraries traces back to weekly childhood library visits and bookmobile stops that fostered her lifelong reading habit. Today, she celebrates the library's evolution into a hub for creativity and learning, highlighting the MakerLab and the seed library. She also acknowledges the work still needed to reach underserved communities who may be unaware of available resources or lack reliable internet access.

As board chair, Ann emphasizes the importance of measuring meaningful impact – understanding who the library is reaching, who it isn't, and how community needs are changing. She's especially passionate about the library's role in empowering

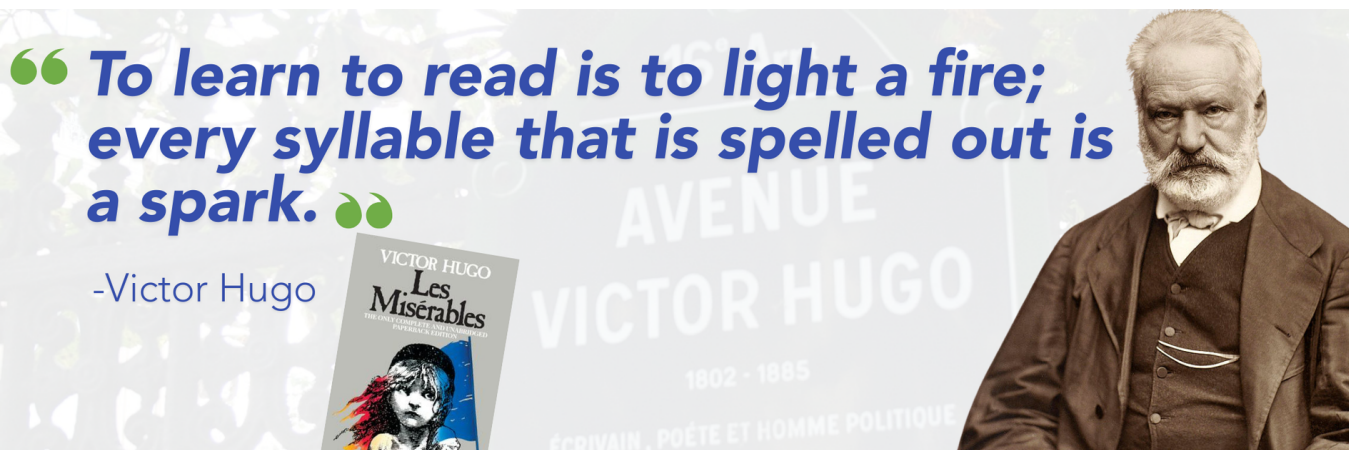


youth through technology and hands on learning.

Ann is quick to dispel the misconception that libraries are "just books," saying "I often surprise residents with tours that reveal digital tools, courses, and creative spaces." She's equally enthusiastic about the leadership of Director Dana Conners, whose renewed direction and energy are guiding the library forward.

In the end, Ann's conversation reveals a deep love for the library – its people, its purpose, and its potential – and her unwavering belief in the power of public libraries to transform lives.

Library Inspiration



Click to search our collection for items written about this month's library inspiration

Events and Programs by Location

Discover what's happening at Durham County Library!

Each month, Durham County Library hosts over 500 programs - there's something for everyone! There are too many to share here, but you can explore April's offerings by clicking on a location below to see programs for all age groups.

Want to know if the [Bookmobile](#) is making a public stop near you? Just click on Outreach Programs to find out!



Career Opportunities

Durham County is a fantastic place to work!

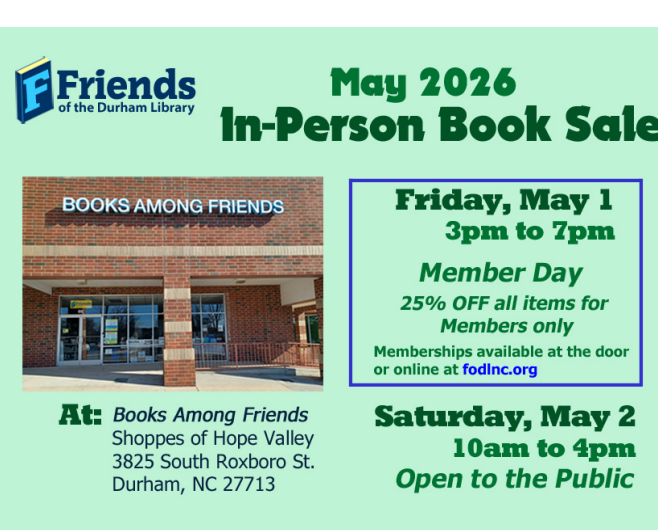
A rewarding career in public service awaits you at the links below.



Durham County is committed to fair and equitable treatment in employment, rooted in the principles of merit and equal opportunity.

Friends of the Durham Library

Join the [Friends of the Durham Library](#) for an April Online Sale! Get 25 percent off books in all of these categories - Children's: Baby Board, Children's: Chapter Books, Children's: Easy Readers, Children's: Little Golden Books, Children's: Nonfiction, Children's: Picture Books, Parenting, and Pop-Up Books. The best part is that every dollar you spend goes directly back to supporting library team members through programming grants, continuing education scholarships, and other forms of morale-boosting support. Visit [shop.dclnc.org](#) to start saving now through April 30th!



In-Person Book Sale May 1-2

The Friends of the Durham Library is hosting an In-Person Book Sale on Friday, May 1 from 3 - 7 p.m. (members only) and Saturday, May 2 from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. (open to the public). Members get 25 percent off all items on Friday. Become a member at the door or go online anytime at [fdclnc.org](#). The sale is held at Books Among Friends in the Shoppes of Hope Valley, located at 3825 S. Roxboro Street.

Remember that every purchase you make, the money goes directly to supporting Library team members through programming grants, continuing education scholarships, and other forms of support!