

2026

JANE AUSTEN FEST

Mount Dora, Florida



*"I will be calm, I am
Mistress of Myself"*
Jane Austen

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Enjoying a leisurely picnic with friends



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Mount Dora.

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FROM THE PRESIDENT OF JANE AUSTEN FEST

My dear Cherished Jane Austen Friends,

Welcome to Mount Dora and our 6th Annual Jane Austen Fest! Can you imagine that a woman born in a tiny village in England over 250 years ago wrote, with pen-in-hand, 6 novels in her short life of only 41 years, and here we all have gathered to learn more about her life, her friends and family, and the era in which she lived. All in keeping with our tag "A Foot in the 21st Century and a Toe in the Regency Era".

We have excellent speakers this year and welcome Claire Saim all the way from Paris, having written "A Visual Encyclopedia - Jane Austen" and she will be available to autograph your copy. She will share twice with us. Sarah Gorman isn't coming from far away, but she will talk about regency balls "Assemblies and Balls - More than the Dance". And we welcome back Betsy Bashore and her fabulous Regency Fashion Show. She was with us the first two years of the Fest and we have had many requests for her return.

Some new things added this year will be a Perfume Making workshop, a HairUpdo workshop, Regency Table Games, a Fanfiction Writing Workshop, the Dulcimer Concert, a guided tour of Lake Dora from the Board Walk, and a Promenade on Friday night. Our Trivia Hunt is back this year as well as the Picnic, and our Book Discussions.

Something we just added is a Fortune Teller. There were always fortune tellers in the market place during the Regency Era and this should be added fun. And, of course, our market place is getting better and better with more vendors this year.

One brand-new thing that has been added this year is a "Gathering Place" being held at the Pavilion in Annie Donnelly Park. This is a Place you can sit down and rest, meet-up with friends, chit-chat with friends, meet new friends or just be quiet and think. There will be puzzles, etc. if you want to do that as well.

We are here and you are too. Lets make new friends, meet our old friends, learn more about our Jane and the Regency Era and have fun!

**Janefully,
Margaret Jane Andersen
President**

See You Next Year February 12, 13 & 14.



Margaret Andersen

OUR MISSION

In an atmosphere welcoming to all levels of interest and curiosity, the Jane Austen Fest-Mount Dora strives to educate by presenting a wide array of workshops, programs, and presentations in the excitement surrounding Jane Austen, the culture of the Regency Era, and the culture that evolved from it.

Jane Austen, as a woman, followed her passion and is a relevant role model for today's women. And as an outgrowth of this Fest, we want to help today's woman follow her passion by offering college scholarships.

A foot in the 21st Century and a toe in the Regency Era

EVENT SCHEDULE

FRIDAY

8:00 / Registration / Annie Donnelly Park
All Day / Regency Marketplace / Annie Donnelly Park
All Day / Assembly Room (Gathering Place) / Annie Donnelly Park Pavilion
All Day / Jane Austen Trivia Hunt / Downtown Mount Dora
10:00 / Welcome / Community Building Auditorium
10:30 - 11:30 am / Speaker: Claire Saim – Eliza de Feuillide – Jane Austen's Almost French Cousin / Community Building Auditorium
11:45 - 12:45 pm / Perfume Making / 129 W. Fifth Avenue / Downtown Mount Dora
1:00 - 3:00 pm / Jane Austen Fan Fiction Writing Workshop / Annie Donnelly Park Pavilion

1:00 - 3:00 pm / Lawn Bowling Workshop / Lawn Bowling Club
1:00 - 3:00 pm / Bonnet Making Workshop / Community Building - Green Room
1:00 - 3:00 pm / Book Discussion / Barrel of Books and Games / Downtown Mount Dora
4:30 - 5:30 pm / Regency Fashion Show / Community Building Auditorium
6:00 - 9:00 pm / Soirée / Community Building Auditorium
6:30 - 7:00 pm / Promenade to First Baptist Church / Lobby of the Community Building Auditorium
7:00 - 9:30 pm / Dulcimer Concert / First Baptist Church / 1000 E. First Avenue

SATURDAY

8:00 am / Registration / Annie Donnelly Park
All Day / Regency Marketplace / Annie Donnelly Park
All Day / Assembly Room (Gathering Place) / Annie Donnelly Park Pavilion
All Day / Jane Austen Trivia Hunt / Downtown Mount Dora
9:30 am / Welcome & Introduction of Scholarship Winner / Community Building - Auditorium
10:00 - 11:00 am / Speaker: Claire Saim – The Visual Encyclopedia - Behind the scenes of a Creative Journey / Community Building - Auditorium
11:30 am / 1st Tea Sitting / Donnelly House
11:30 am - 1:30 pm / Stained Glass Workshop / Community Building Greenroom
11:30 am - 1:30 pm / Regency Table Games / Annie Donnelly Park Pavilion

1:00 pm / 2nd Tea Sitting / Donnelly House
2:00 - 4:00 pm / 2nd Stained Glass Workshop / Community Building Greenroom
2:00 - 4:00 pm / Regency Dance Class / St. Edward's Episcopal Church / 5th and Grandview
2:00 - 4:00 pm / Book Discussion / Barrel of Books and Games / Downtown Mount Dora
2:00 - 4:00 pm / Hair Updo Workshop / Dressing Room - Green Room
2:30 pm / 3rd Tea Sitting / Donnelly House
4:30 - 5:30 pm / Speaker: Sarah Gorman – Assemblies and Balls - More than the Dance / Community Building - Auditorium
8:00 pm / Regency Ball / First Presbyterian Church / 222 W. 6th Avenue

SUNDAY

8:00-12:00 / Regency Marketplace / Annie Donnelly Park
8:00 - 9:30 am / Tea and Crumpets / Donnelly House
10:00 - 12:00 am / Book Discussion / Gathering Place / Annie Donnelly Park
10:00 am - 12:00 pm / Dora Canal Cruise / Embarks Yacht Club Pier
12:00 am / Regency Picnic / Gilbert Park
1:30 / Guided Tour of Lake Dora Board Walk

Schedule is subject to change.
Scan the QR code for an up to date
schedule on our Website.





BOARD MEMBERS

Margaret Andersen, *President*
Sheena Willis, *Vice President*
Nancy Hurlbert, *Treasurer*
Betsy Arvelo Buzbee, *Creative Director*
Jen Prohaska, *Member at Large*
Jan Farmer, *Vendor Chair*
Rosa Olivo, *Volunteer Chair*
Heather Dhoundt, *Scholarship Chair*
Millie Leon, *Member at Large*
Spencer McDonald, *PR Director*

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Shareen Groce, *Tee Shirts*

*Thank you to all our volunteers.
 We can't do this without you.*

LEFT: Congratulations to last year's scholarship recipient Valeria Morales



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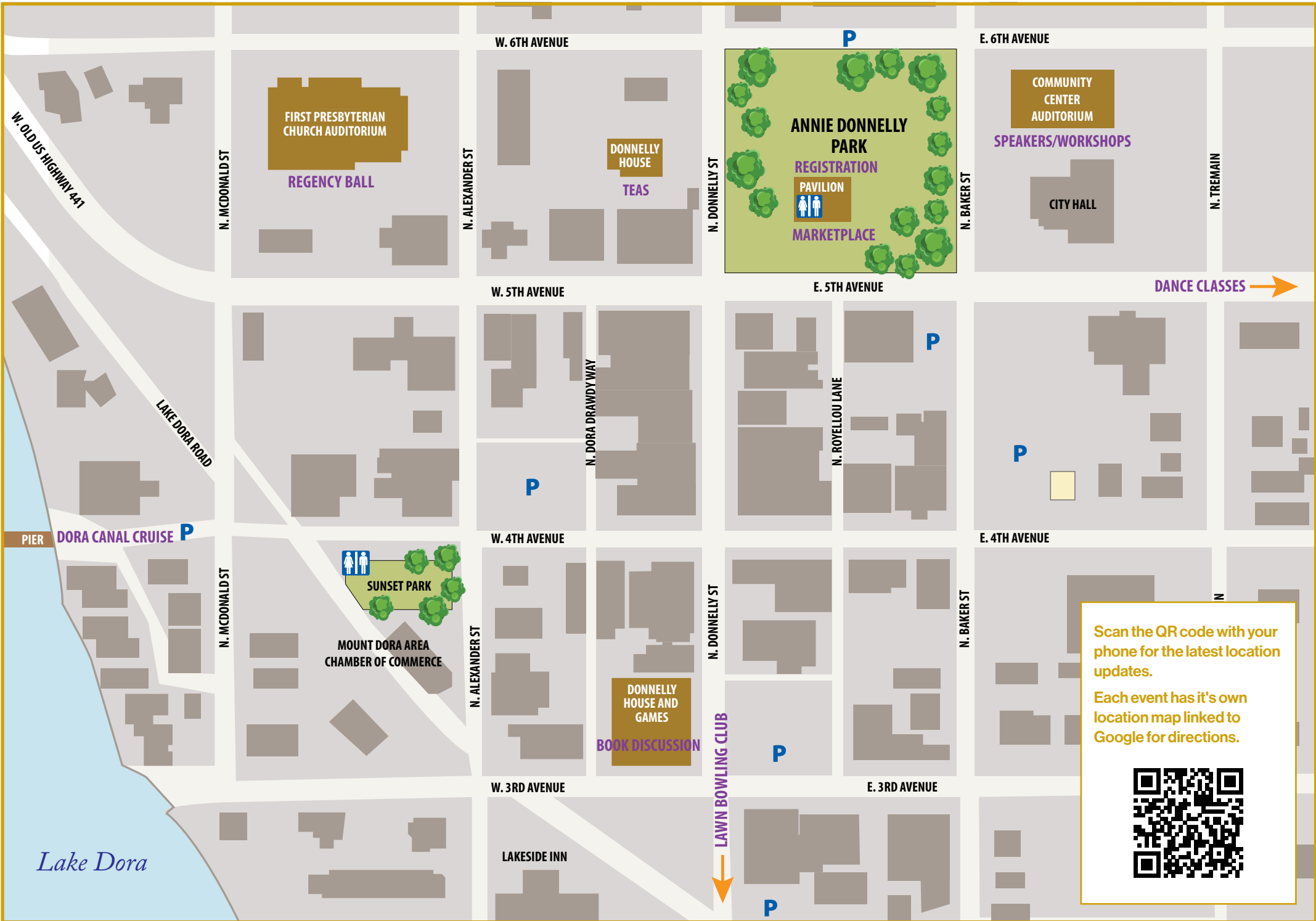


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SUNDAY JUNE 28, 2026	10:00-3:00 O'CLOCK
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MEMORIES OF THE 2025 FEST

The 2025 Fest was special to us as we were celebrating Jane's 250th Birthday, and people from all over the country as well as some from out of the country, came to help us. One of the comments in the evaluation was "So great to find my tribe". We hope you find your tribe this year.



Mount Dora Pipes & Drums



The Marketplace



Tea at Donnelly House



Resting in the Park Parasol



Ladies at the Donnelly House



Picnic at Gilbert Park

MOUNT DORA HISTORY

In 1845 Florida was admitted into the Union and it was in the 1850's that it was known that William and Dora Drawdy settled two miles south of Lake Dora. Government surveyors came to survey the area and were recipients of Dora Drawdy's hospitality. In 1910, in gratitude, they named Lake Dora in her honor. The David Simpson family were the first homesteaders in Mount Dora in 1874. Originally the town was named Royellou, an acronym for the names of the children of the first postmaster Ross Tremain - Roy, Ella and Louis. In 1882-1883 the name was changed to Mount Dora.

In 1886 the local newspaper, the Mount Dora Voice, stated that there were two general stores, a drugstore, a carriage factory, three hotels and two churches. And in 1887 the first train arrived in Mount Dora. Growth was slow and the earliest industry, citrus, had a devastatingly blow when freezes descended in 1894 and again 1895, nearly wiping out the fledgling groves.

It was in 1893 that J.P. Donnelly, had built what we call the Donnelly House. Rumor has it that it was built as a wedding gift to his wife, Annie McDonald Stone. It is an example of Steamboat Gothic/Queen Anne architecture, and the most photographed house in Lake County. The Lakeside Inn was built in that year as well. John Alexander, Annie and J.P. Donnelly as well as John McDonald came together to get the project built to become the first hotel in Mount Dora. Guests over the years have included President and Mrs. Coolidge, Thomas Edison, Henry Ford and President Dwight Eisenhower. Both structures are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

In 1910 Mount Dora was incorporated and reportedly there were 371 people living in the town with 42 residing in the surrounding area. J. P. Donnelly is elected as the first mayor. And the first firehouse was built in 1923 and cells were added to also house the town's jail. It is now the Royellou museum.

In 1928 the Mount Dora Lawn Bowling Club was organized. It began with 3 hard packed sand rinks and 20 members. Eventually another 11 rinks were added and lights for night bowling. It is one of the largest Clubs in the US and attracts national and international lawn bowlers.

In 1929 the Community Building was built for \$35,000. Former President Coolidge and his wife Grace attended the dedication ceremony and planted a tree. In 2010 an expansion took place and the present lobby was added.

The First Art Festival was in 1975. Many other Festivals are now held in Mount Dora and the City is known as the City of Festivals.

In 2020 the first Jane Austen Fest is held!



THE MARKETPLACE

Our Marketplace presents a Curated Treasure Trove by 30 vendors. Explore Home Decor, Vintage Clothing, Silver, Jewelry, Tea and Accessories, Regency Attire, and Historical Collectibles from a Bygone Era.

We thank the Marketplace Vendors for their support of the Fest and our Scholarships.

Open all day Friday & Saturday, and 8 am - 12 Sunday.

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