



Dear friends and neighbors,

As many of you know, on Wednesday, June 12, Governor Ron DeSantis signed the 2024-2025 State of Florida budget into law. This budget included line-item vetoes totaling more than \$32 million, which represents a mere 0.02% of the total state budget and **the complete elimination of grant funding for arts and culture across the state.**

Ocala Civic Theatre is among those directly impacted by this unprecedented decision. Locally, this also impacts our friends at the Reilly Arts Center (Ocala Symphony Orchestra, the Marion Theatre); the Appleton Museum of Art, operated by the College of Central Florida; Marion Cultural Alliance, and Arts in Health Ocala Metro.

While we have seen 40%-60% funding cuts to this state-run competitive grant program in recent years, a complete veto of the long-standing Florida Division of Arts and Culture Grants program is unprecedented and came without warning. These cuts disregard the significant contributions of our cultural institutions and undermine our community's economic wellbeing. Together, arts organizations pump nearly \$6 billion into Florida's economy. These cuts are effective immediately and are already impacting more than 600 organizations just like ours. With this cut, we must now work to fill the gap created by the loss of our largest grant of \$90,000 just as we begin our new season and our new fiscal year.

Like our fellow arts organizations, ticket sales cover only a fraction of the budget required for us to continue our work: producing creative, innovative, and accessible programming, and providing a broad range of opportunities in arts education. In light of these cuts, we must ask for your support. We are here today due to the generosity of our donors, community partners, and

loyal patrons like you. Generations of civic pride and support have enabled us to give back to Ocala/Marion County for nearly 75 years. Asking for help is never an easy thing to do, but we believe our community knows the value of the arts, trusts OCT, and counts on us to provide quality theatre experiences and exceptional education in the arts.

## HERE'S HOW YOU CAN HELP

### Purchase season tickets or single tickets

As a season subscriber, you'll enjoy savings and convenience. Choose the day and time that works best for you and your schedule. You get first choice of seats, free exchanges, and the ability to buy additional single tickets before the rest of the world. If a season subscription isn't a good fit for you, please watch for our upcoming performances and events, and purchase tickets for the shows you can attend.

### Become a Community Partner

Ocala Civic Theatre is grateful for the local businesses and organizations who step into the spotlight as Community Partners each season. These community partnerships provide support for OCT from the financial to the promotional. Your contributions and collaborations help each show to shine even brighter for our community.

### Share the love

When you purchase a season subscription or single ticket to a performance or event, make it an experience by inviting family and friends to join you. We know our patrons love the arts, and one of the best things you can do is share your passion by spreading the word about Ocala Civic Theatre. Another great way you can help is to follow us on Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok; like and share our social media posts; and encourage others to follow our pages. You can also stay up to date on all things OCT by signing up for our e-mails and our audition newsletter, the *Cue Sheet*.

### Raise awareness

Spread the word! Let people know the impact of these funding cuts on the arts organizations that make a positive difference in your life and the vitality of our community.

Thank you for your support!

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Greg Thompson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Greg Thompson, OCT Executive & Artistic Director

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**SUBSCRIBE TO OCT:** <https://ocalacivictheatre.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/Season-74-web-brochure-fillable.pdf>