

# Friends of the Ridgecrest Branch Library

131 E. Las Flores Avenue Ridgecrest, California 93555  
Home Page: [www.ridgecrestfriends.org](http://www.ridgecrestfriends.org)



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Friends of the Ridgecrest Branch Library is a 501 (c) 3 not-for-profit organization affiliated with the Friends of Kern County Library since 1986. Visit the County Library web site at [www.kerncountylibrary.org](http://www.kerncountylibrary.org)

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**Branch Supervisor**  
Charissa Wagner

Board Meeting Calendar  
February 19, 2020  
March 18, 2020  
April 15, 2020  
No meetings in June, July, or December

Meetings are held in the Library's Community Room at 10:00 a.m. on the third Wednesday of each month. YOU ARE ALWAYS WELCOME! Use the Community Room entrance on the west side of the Library

Library Hours  
Mon. Closed  
Tues. 11:00 a.m.-7:00 p.m.  
Wed. 11:00 a.m.-7:00 p.m.  
Thurs. 11:00 a.m.-7:00 p.m.  
Fri. 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.  
Sat. 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.  
Sun. Closed  
Phone: (760) 384-5870

# President's Message May 2020

by Brent Clark Palmer

What is the new normal for rural libraries after Pandemic 1? Will there be institutional changes driven by the government's role in promoting the general welfare, or will libraries spontaneously develop new best practices?

As Friends of the Ridgecrest Branch Library, how can we help sustain the role of our local library as a community hub?

We've been working on helping bring community resources to the library to support the many borrowers who have questions about everything from applying for a job to domestic abuse issues. Seems like we will probably see even more demands and new needs to fill in a post-pandemic world.

Even as we continue to track the spread of the novel coronavirus, COVID-19, looking something really scary in the face, and taking precautions accordingly, we also have to look at the less scary but still difficult realities of our organization: the earthquakes displaced us from the warehouse, and the County concurrently ordered us to move our shelves and book sales out of the library.

Maybe it has all been a blessing in disguise. The nature of books as public objects in what I may term a germ warfare dystopia, may someday reverse the upward trend in sharing physical books. The changes in culture and society do not abate. So switching our focus from our traditional operations, which have been totally gutted by Mother Nature and the County of Kern, is something we've been needing to do anyway.

Your board has been prescient! In our last meeting before self-isolating, we re-established Friends' home delivery service for shut-ins. The timing couldn't be better! If you are interested in participating too, please contact Patricia Walters. When we are fully operational again, we will be making contact and starting deliveries! Are we magical, or what?! Home delivery is the new jewel in our crown.

As we help with re-establishing the library after the lockdown, and fill any gaps in funding for the library remodel and new makerspace, we will also be reincorporating to serve other rural libraries in the region and beyond. We'll still do business under the same name and support the Ridgecrest Branch just as much financially. We will draw on funding and grants for our charity from many new sources. As a rural library network, we will seek out and gather ideas from all libraries that wish to work on the issue of keeping libraries relevant in a coming era that'll have a whole lot more face masks and social distancing in it. And we'll thrive and have fun doing it!

Perhaps it may prove that libraries are the new centers for teleconferencing or for catching up on the latest Netflix show. I'm certain there will many resources, but I am excited for our future, because it is sure going to be fun to help our local library and other local libraries discover new ways to support the community in what feels like a new era with new common rules.

As the president of Friends, I have been deeply concerned for your health and safety. And while I respect the rights of every individual to make his or her own choices, I have erred on the side of caution and made decisions that encouraged the board and

other volunteers to isolate. I do not know what the government recommendations will be at the time this letter reaches you, but I have a dear hope if any of you are taking risks, that you are also taking extra precautions, because I'd like to see you all again soon.

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**At this time, the library is closed through May 15 but is working on a phased re-opening with guidance from county and state leaders, and looks forward to serving the community again**

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## 📖 Librarian's Corner 📖

Charissa Wagner, Branch Supervisor

In mid-March, all Kern County Library branches were closed as the county moved to an "essential staffing only" model per orders from CAO Alsop, in compliance with Governor Newsom. We are currently closed through May 15 (at the time of this submission). While we are closed, PLEASE hold onto library materials AND donations to minimize possible exposure for staff checking the book drops!

The sudden closure did not allow many borrowers (or staff) to stock up and resulted in an increase in usage of our digital library collection. In case you didn't know, the Kern County Library offers different platforms for eBooks and eAudiobooks with OverDrive (and the more user-friendly Libby), RB digital (eAudiobooks ONLY), and Cloud Library. Hoopla offers eBooks and eAudiobooks as well as music, movies, TV shows, and comic books. There are different limits for the number of checkouts and length of checkout depending on the platform. Two platforms (RB digital and Hoopla) are simultaneous use so there is NO waiting. We also have databases available (like crafts & hobbies or language learning), and some newspapers (Bakersfield Californian and New York Times). These are all free with a Kern County Library card! If you need a library card, fill out the online form (Request for an eLibrary Card) by going to our website, [kernlibrary.org](http://kernlibrary.org), and clicking on the "Contact KCL" button in the bottom section.

In response to the higher usage of our digital library, we bought more eBooks and increased Hoopla funding to allow more checkouts. Hoopla created a special collection that doesn't count against a borrower's monthly checkouts (called Bonus Borrows). Since some people do not have any internet access or their internet is unreliable, our wi-fi is on 24/7 (instead of just when we are open).

Zip Books, an awesome program allowing borrowers to request books not available in the Kern County Library catalog IS still available even though the libraries are closed. Just fill out the online form that can be found at [kerncountylibrary.org/zipbooks](http://kerncountylibrary.org/zipbooks) to request a book. A valid email address is required.

During the closure, we are trying to reach people online (primarily via Facebook). Different branches are offering different programs: Ukulele Club, Dark Dial Radio Hour, Paper Crafts, Kitchen Science, Crafts, Tatting (lace making), Cooking, Loteria, and of course, the expected Storytimes. Facebook-savvy readers should visit the various Facebook pages. Our page is found by searching for "Ridgecrest Branch Library" (we were an early adopter of using Facebook) while "Kern County Library" has a page and the remaining individual branches follow the format of "KCL - <insert branch name> Library". With virtual programming, staff can now attend programs hosted by other branches and collaborate more easily. If you have any programming suggestions, especially ones not requiring internet, please let us know!



Our #quaranqueen Library Branch Supervisor Charissa Wagner has been conducting online Storytime and Big Kids Storytime during the stay-at-home order, with follow-along drawing activities.

In this time of great uncertainty for everyone, we all wonder what tomorrow will bring as we move towards a post-pandemic life. Out of an abundance of caution, the Summer Reading Challenge will not offer any in-branch programming. What will the new normal look like for the Kern County Library system and specifically, the Ridgecrest Branch Library?

We are working on guidelines and procedures for when we cautiously open our doors again, where you will be greeted by some changes and new opportunities. Although nothing is definite yet as we wait for further guidance from the county, the state, and the CA State Library, I am confident that we will be able to adapt to meet the needs of the community, as we've been doing already and look forward to working with you in our new normal.

#### RIDGECREST BRANCH LIBRARY



## Provide input for our Summer Reading Challenge



Give us some feedback for our Summer Reading Challenge! Ridgecrest participants only, please. Feel free to fill one out for each member in your household who would participate.  
<https://forms.gle/g7SGzc3RrtQetz96>

#### TAKE OUR SURVEY

There is a quick survey in the comments. We want some feedback for our upcoming Summer Reading Challenge, which will look much different this summer.

The hot weather is bringing the annual Kern County Library Summer Reading Challenge. Yes, even with all of the uncertainty surrounding this pandemic-filled world! Due to the current situation, this year's Summer Reading Challenge (Dig Deeper: Read, Investigate, Discover) will look very different than it has in previous summers. Out of abundance of caution, we will not be offering any in-branch programming this summer. Instead, we will be primarily using Facebook for virtual meet-ups and a carryout system for crafts and activities. We will have performances from magician Chris Lopez, Omnipresent Puppet Theater, the always popular Roaming Reptiles (new owner), and featuring some NEW virtual performances with Gypsy Folk Ensemble, Science Tellers, Andy Z, and more. Something new this summer will be a Facebook Relay, with two activities that encourage people to check out the Facebook pages of most of the other branches. I encourage you to keep reading or listening to books (we'll still offer paper logs) and let us know if you need help to access our digital library.

### How Public Libraries Are Responding to the Pandemic

Results of broad PLA survey show libraries continue to launch services, expand access

April 9, 2020

On April 9, the Public Library Association (PLA) announced the release of the broadest survey to date — with 2,545 unique responses nationwide, representing 28% of all US public libraries—on how public libraries are responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. ([http://www.ala.org/pla/sites/ala.org.pla/files/content/advocacy/covid-19/PLA-Libraries-Respond-Survey\\_Aggregate-Results\\_FINAL2.pdf](http://www.ala.org/pla/sites/ala.org.pla/files/content/advocacy/covid-19/PLA-Libraries-Respond-Survey_Aggregate-Results_FINAL2.pdf))

The findings show that as public libraries close their buildings to the public, staff continue to serve their communities in innovative ways. For instance, most respondents (98%) reported their buildings were closed to the public but, in many cases, staff continued to expand access to digital resources, launch virtual programs, and coordinate services with local government agencies. *[there are more statistics in the article which are not included here for space considerations.]*

## Membership News

By Carol Pearson, Vice President-Memberships

Normally I report new members in our newsletter. However, given our hiatus, I do not have any new members to list. In lieu of that I have recorded 45 membership renewals during the months of November & December, 2019 and January & February of 2020. Our librarian is making periodic checks there at the library and will be forwarding renewals to me that have been received from March forward. Currently the Library is closed until at least May 15.

Please note your renewal date that appears on your mailing address of this newsletter. I will send renewal notices via postcard or e-mail to remind you, but it helps a lot when you notice and respond. **When you do renew, please include "Friends" on your envelope so that library staff can route it to us.**

### Membership Application for Friends of the Ridgecrest Branch Library

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ *Memberships are renewable annually*

Miss  Ms.  Mrs.  Mr.

Individual name: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization/Business Name (Business memberships start at \$50.): \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Membership (check one):

- |   |   |                                     |
|---|---|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual - \$10  | <input type="checkbox"/> Family - \$15                | <input type="checkbox"/> New Member |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining - \$25  | <input type="checkbox"/> Sponsoring - \$50            | <input type="checkbox"/> Renewal    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor - \$100 | <input type="checkbox"/> Other Contribution - \$_____ |                                     |

*Please make check payable to: **Friends of the Ridgecrest Branch Library***

Please mail or bring to: Ridgecrest Branch Library 131 E. Las Flores Ridgecrest, CA 93555

I'd like to volunteer!!. I am especially interested in (check all that apply):

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Annual Book Sales                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Internet Book Sales     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ongoing Book Sale in the Library                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Special Events          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ongoing Magazine Sale in the Library                | <input type="checkbox"/> Answering E-mail        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pricing Books for Sale                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Becoming a Board Member |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Writing for the Newsletter                          |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I don't know what I'm interested in, please call me |  |

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