



# 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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## SEED LIBRARY



## AND SEED LIBRARY EXPANSION!



Details on page 3!

Friends of the Ridgecrest Branch Library is a 501 (c) 3 not-for-profit organization.

Visit the County Library web site at  
www.kerncountylibrary.org

#### **Board of Directors**

##### **President**

Jerry Bradley  
(760) 371-3590  
[jerry\\_bradley@verizon.net](mailto:jerry_bradley@verizon.net)

##### **V.P. - Memberships**

Carol Pearson  
(760) 375-7258  
[capears66@iwvisp.com](mailto:capears66@iwvisp.com)

##### **Vice President - Sales**

##### **Book Store Mgr.**

Julie Gervais  
[julger67@gmail.com](mailto:julger67@gmail.com)

##### **Treasurer**

Nani Banks  
760-371-2583  
[banksck@iwvisp.com](mailto:banksck@iwvisp.com)

##### **Secretary**

Debra Fields  
[fields517@yahoo.com](mailto:fields517@yahoo.com)

##### **Members-at-Large**

John Freeman  
Kim Metcalf

##### **Branch Supervisor**

Charissa Wagner

##### **Board Meeting Calendar**

August 19, 2026  
September 16, 2026  
October 21, 2026  
November 18, 2026  
No meetings in June, July, or December  
Meetings are held in the Library's Community Room at 1:00 p.m. on the third Wednesday of each month.  
YOU ARE ALWAYS WELCOME!  
Use the Community Room entrance on the west side of the Library  
To attend via Zoom, call Sandy Bradley at (760) 371-3590 or email at [sandy.bradley@verizon.net](mailto:sandy.bradley@verizon.net)

##### **Library Hours**

Tue-Thurs 10am-7pm  
Friday 10am-6pm  
Saturday 10am-4pm  
Curbside service still available  
**Phone: (760) 384-5870**

# President's Message August 2026

## **Bookstore and Online Sales**

The FRBL Board recently voted to renew our lease for the **Books & More** store. The store has been profitable over its first year, and we expect sales to increase as we become better known in the community.

To help get the word out, we have added a banner to the Maturango Museum fence and placed a large, trailer-mounted, double-sided sign on the vacant lot on China Lake Blvd. near the Library. In addition, we are installing an illuminated sign over the store door. This sign will be highly visible from the parking lot of the soon-to-be-open Ale's restaurant nearby.

While we closed our Amazon online store for several reasons, we continue to add rare and collectible books to our AbeBooks site. Although we have only sold a few books online so far, we expect these sales to grow as we increase our listings and learn more about online marketplaces. Many thanks to **Dr. Victoria Schauf** for managing our online sales!

## **Need for Store Volunteers**

We have an ongoing need for volunteers to work in the **Books & More** store. We always schedule two people to run the store together, which means we need over 30 volunteers each month. I have asked all FRBL Board members to volunteer at least once per month. However, that still leaves **over 20 slots to fill** every month. Please consider adding your name to our store volunteer list! You can even pick a friend to volunteer with you. The four-hour shift goes by quickly and affords a wonderful opportunity to meet new people and browse our collection when sales are slow. If you are interested, please contact **Julie Gervais**, our awesome store manager, to get on the schedule and receive brief training. You can reach Julie at [julger67@gmail.com](mailto:julger67@gmail.com).

## **Donations & Fundraisers**

On June 27th, the Friends and Ridgecrest Cinemas hosted a special screening of *Toy Story 5*. We sold out all 173 available tickets! We just received a check from Ridgecrest Cinemas for our share of the concession sales which brings the combined total income of ticket sales and concessions to \$1087! We thank Ridgecrest Cinemas for this wonderful fundraising opportunity.

Overall community donations continue to be strong. These contributions help offset the ongoing reduction in our interest income due to falling interest rates and reduced revenue from book sales. You can support us by donating through any of the following methods:

•**In-Person:** Drop by the **Books & More** store (10:00 AM to 2:00 PM, Wednesday through Saturday).

•**Online:** Visit the official [Friends of the Ridgecrest Branch Library Website](#) and click the large **Donate** button.

•**By Mail / Drop-off:** Send or bring a check made payable to **FRBL** to the Library located at **131 East Las Flores Ave.**

## **Special Thanks**

We are continually grateful for all of our volunteers who keep the store well-stocked and running smoothly. We are also incredibly thankful for the patrons who keep coming back to purchase books and other items. And, of course, we are thankful for our generous donors whose support helps keep our library functioning.

Enjoy your summer, and be sure to stop by the **Books & More** store soon!



# Librarian's Corner



Charissa Wagner, Branch Supervisor

We have had some additions to the library over the past few months!

An incredibly generous donor, **Julie S.** donated funds to the library branch for the new comfortable chairs in the adult reading area, the loveseat in the Children's Room, and for blinds in the staff break room and Community Room (still to be selected and ordered).

We also created a **Seed Library**, which went perfectly with our summer theme of Plant a Seed, Read. The Seed Library drawers are located in the adult reading area. People can stop by to choose some seed envelopes to start a garden. We are adding more seeds as time passes, and we do accept donations of seeds in original full or partial packaging along with seeds not in original packaging. If you are donating seeds, please bring them to staff so we can count them to keep track. Other recent additions, thanks to the EMPOWERing Access grant, include Babylock sewing machines and a light table, very popular with the small and big kids.

We had a fantastic summer and our air conditioning works wonderfully!

While the **Summer Reading Challenge** is officially over, people can still pick up finisher bags and finisher books until Saturday, August 15, so a recap of the Summer Reading Challenge portion will be included in the fall newsletter.

Our partnership with the Sierra Sands Unified School District continued to bring **Lunch at the Library** to our branch! We had a very successful program this summer, with a visitor every day which included:

Waste Management and a recycling truck,  
Navy Federal Credit Union, United Way of Central  
Eastern California, princesses from Sierra Academy  
of Dance every Friday, NAWS China Lake  
Environmental Management, Kern County Fire  
Department Station 84, Just Serve,

Cerro Coso Community College, Liberty Ambulance,  
Ridgecrest Police Department (with the Bear Cat),  
River Sage Revival, Kern Family Health Care, Boy  
Scout Troop 848, Oasis Family Resource Center,  
RidgeWriters, Children's Burn Foundation, and  
Pierce Academy of the Arts.

Many thanks to our visitors and to the families who came to learn more about these visitors!



Ridgecrest Police Department's  
Chief of Police Mario Ysit reads to  
families

We also introduced the **Leaders are Readers** program where guest readers from the community took time out of their days to read to families. We listened to fun stories read by:

Vice Mayor **Solomon Rajaratnam**, Chief of Police **Mario Ysit**,  
**Sarah Dastrup** from Sierra Sands Unified School District, **Rebecca Goldstein**, Executive Director of the Ridgecrest Chamber of Commerce, **Amanda Erwin** from the Women's Center, Princesses from Sierra Academy of Dance, and representatives from the Navy Federal Credit Union, United Way Central Eastern California, and Kern County Fire Station 84.

Our Regional Supervisor (Rafael Moreno) challenged us to increase our numbers from last summer. In 2025, we served 1,866 child lunches and had 2,651 in attendance. This summer, we served 1,951 child lunches and had 2,757 in attendance, or about a 4.5% increase. Our lowest day was 45 child lunches on 7/2 and our highest day was 133 child lunches. Our average lunches served per day is 88.7 (we could round it up to 89). It is important to note that SSUSD offered lunches at the Splash Pad on Mon-Thu from 12-12:30 pm again this summer, so families who may have previously come to the library after going to the splash pad are now able to get lunch at the splash pad during part of our Lunch at the Library time.

Lunch at the Library grant funding also allowed us to give out 1,392 books to build home libraries! We offered board books through high school appropriate chapter books as options for lunch attendees to take for their home libraries. We are doing what we can to help prevent the summer slide, where students who do not challenge their brains during the summer can lose some of what they learned in the school year.[cont. p.4]

Every day, we had a “**This or That**” choice for people to vote on. There were some days where the This or That votes were pretty close: summer (54) vs winter (52), and other days where there was an obvious landslide: fruit (69) vs vegetables (19).

We also offered an outdoor activity and indoor activities on the tables.

We had another summer with some amazing teen/young adult volunteers, who all helped make lunch successful. MANY THANKS to **Brady, Brodey, Callie, Jerry, and Noah** for their volunteer hours. We also had two awesome summer hires **Samuel and Sophia** who were incredibly helpful as well.

As we start looking to August and beyond, keep an eye out on some new programs we will be introducing, such as gardening/plant related chat, adult crafts, and American Mahjong for adults, along with a Saturday morning Bingo session, Things Teens Should Know, Chompsaw, and Chess Open Play for youth.

We remain grateful for all of the ongoing support we have received from the Friends of the Ridgecrest Branch Library, from providing program supplies to sponsoring experiences for the community this past summer. I am looking forward to the next newsletter article, where there will be a recap for this summer's numbers in the Summer Reading Challenge!

## Book Store Information

Julie Gervais, VP Sales & Book Store Manager

**BOOKS & MORE**

**1513 N Norma**

**Open: Wed-Sat 10am-2pm**

### Happy Anniversary

We celebrated our first anniversary with a 50% off sale for the entire month of July! While sales were slow when we opened last year, they have been steadily increasing thanks to our returning and new customers and a steady flow of nice donations. Some of our new customers saw our new signs - one on the street and one on a trailer near the library.



### Volunteers

We could not have been successful without our dedicated volunteers! I cannot express enough my appreciation for all of you and the hours you have put into working at the store. If you are interested in working at the store, please contact me. We can always use more workers!



### Donations

While we receive many very nice donations, I would like to remind donors to donate books that are sellable – good condition and either newer or collectible. We also take donations other than books – puzzles, games, etc. If you have a large donation, please contact us beforehand as we have limited storage space.

### Free Books for Little Free Libraries

We have boxes of free books in the back room of the store for LFL custodians. So, if you are a custodian needing books for your LFL, come by during normal store hours and ask for access to the back room.



# Membership News

Carol Pearson, Vice President-Membership

We welcome the following new member who helps to support our mission of providing resources to our local library:

**Mark Pahuta**

Where possible, we will send you our newsletters via email. For those who do not have an email address or prefer the mailed paper version, we are requesting an additional \$10 in the Individual and Family categories. If you have an email address that you did not submit on your member-ship application, please email it to me at [capears66@iwvisp.com](mailto:capears66@iwvisp.com). If you have questions about this you can also phone me at 760-375-7258. **When you do renew your membership, please address it to our library and include "Friends" on your envelope address so library staff can quickly route it to us.** For email newsletter members I will email you a notice re renewing. You may also renew your membership on our website:

<https://www.ridgecrestfriends.org/>

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|  <b>FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                         |                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| PLEASE PRINT LEGIBLY                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                         | <input type="checkbox"/> New Member<br><input type="checkbox"/> Renewal                                                                                                           |
| <b>Date:</b><br><input type="checkbox"/> Miss <input type="checkbox"/> Mr.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Ms. <input type="checkbox"/> Mx.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Mrs. <input type="checkbox"/> ____                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | <b>Individual Name:</b> |                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Organization/Business Name:</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                         |                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Mailing Address:</b> _____                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                         |                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Email:</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                         | <b>Phone:</b>                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Type of Membership:</b> [select one, along with preferred newsletter format]                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                         | Mail or bring check/cash to:<br>Ridgecrest Branch Library<br>131 E. Las Flores Ave<br>Ridgecrest, CA 93555<br>Make checks payable to:<br>Friends of the Ridgecrest Branch Library |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual (email): ...\$5.00 <input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining: .....\$25.00<br><input type="checkbox"/> Individual (print): ...\$15.00 <input type="checkbox"/> Sponsoring: .....\$50.00<br><input type="checkbox"/> Family (email): .....\$10.00 <input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor: .....\$100.00<br><input type="checkbox"/> Family (print): .....\$20.00 <input type="checkbox"/> Other Contribution: \$_____  |                         |                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Volunteer Opportunities</b> [check all activities that you are interested in]                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                         |                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Annual Book Sale <input type="checkbox"/> Sort Books for Sale <input type="checkbox"/> Answering Email<br><input type="checkbox"/> Ongoing Book/Magazine Sale <input type="checkbox"/> Writing for the Newsletter <input type="checkbox"/> Becoming a Board Member<br><input type="checkbox"/> Online Book Sales <input type="checkbox"/> Special Events <input type="checkbox"/> I don't know yet – please contact me! |                         |                                                                                                                                                                                   |

***The Friends Thank These Donors Who Have Contributed, as of June 30, 2026:*****\$10,000 + (Lifetime)**

Anonymous 1  
 Anonymous 2  
 Elizabeth Starr Estate  
 Mary & Dan Kus  
 Nancy George Estate  
 Sierra Sands School District\*\*

**\$5,000-\$9,999 (Over 5 years)**

Jerry & Sandy Bradley  
 Rotary Club of China Lake\*\*

**\$1,000-\$4,999 (Over 5 years)**

Barbara Lupei  
 Billy Campbell  
 James & Barbara Vijay  
 James & Tamara Tucker  
 John & Charlotte Freeman  
 Libby Vincent  
 Mark Pahuta  
 Peter & Elaine Wiley  
 Pizza Factory \*\*  
 Richard Carmer  
 Ridgecrest Cinemas \*\*  
 Ridgecrest Hospital\*\*  
 Roadrunner Ridge Community Foundation\*\*  
 United Way of IWV\*\*  
 WACOM\*\*

**\$250-\$990 (Over 5 years)**

Alta One\*\*  
 Anonymous 3  
 Barbara Bane  
 Cathy Douglas  
 Dan & Brenda Burnett  
 David & Molly Cooley  
 Deborah Buffum

Don & Eileen Shibley  
 Dr. Victoria Schauf  
 Elaine Miller  
 Fidelity Charitable\*\*  
 Gregory & Ann Lenz  
 Kathy Donahue  
 Ken & Nani Banks  
 Kim Metcalf  
 Lindgren & Heydlauff  
 Mary Lundstrum  
 Mojave Pistachios\*\*  
 Ridgewriters\*\*  
 Rob & Julie Gervais  
 Robert Collins  
 Rod & Judy Ditzler  
 Tom & Carol Sakai

\*\*Organization

**NOTE: If you see an error on this list, please contact our treasurer at (760) 371-2583 so we can make corrections before the next newsletter.**



**2026 Pizza Factory/Beansters**  
**Fundraising Dates:** Wed, August 19,  
September 16, October 21, and  
November 18, 2026.  
Mention the Friends when you order.

