



F·R·I·E·N·D·S

OF NORTH CAROLINA PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Supporting Friends of the Library Statewide

F * R * I * E * N * D * S TALK

June 2025

Dear Friends,

June should mean that summer is close at hand - not that you can tell in our state. Cool, cloudy, and rainy weather seems to be everywhere. June 1 is "Say Something Nice Day," so I'll do my best to turn the tone around. You have much to look forward to in the rest of this edition. Judy has filled it with tons of interesting articles and ideas.

There are a few serious items to be aware of, however. One is the President's executive order to dismantle the Institute of Museum and Library Services. This was mentioned in the previous edition of this newsletter; so, if your library board is not aware of this, please share. Contacts to legislators are in order, especially those who are running for reelection. Phone calls and letters are both effective. The next page provides you with links to resources that will help.

Several libraries have Story Walks that have been provided by Friends groups. I'm happy to report that we will be getting one soon here in

Sparta. It's actually on order, and we're getting excited to add this feature to our downtown park near the children's play area. It would be fun to hear from those of you who already have them. Send pictures!

Graduation time has arrived at all levels. Do you have something planned for graduates in your area? Do some of them serve as tutors after school or volunteer in other ways in your library? What are some ideas to say thank you for the time and knowledge they shared with others? Pictures would be nice for this as well.

And, we can't forget DADS! In many cases, they are unsung heroes. Will you plan something for your dads that involves books? My dad was a Big Reader. He almost always had a book or newspaper at hand. He was a good model. How about yours?

WELCOME SUMMER!

Yours in Friendship,

JUNETEENTH

Celebrate Freedom

JUNE 19

HB 636 Could Impact You

NC House Bill 636 might appear reasonable on first reading, but look more closely. It is a troubling proposal that threatens student rights, undermines local control of school libraries, and risks costly censorship battles across NC.

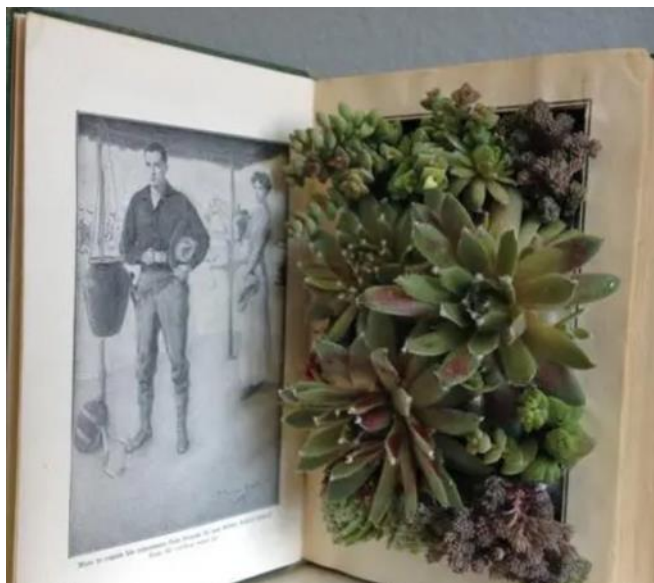
The [NC Library Association](#) and [EveryLibrary](#) are sounding the alarm. Contact your state Senator and urge them to oppose HB 636 to protect the rights of students, families, and educators in our public schools.

To read the NCLA statement of concern about HB636, [click here](#) then TAKE ACTION! EveryLibrary has a simplified way to send a message to your senators. [Click here.](#)

To access the link for a list of library-related legislation that NCLA is tracking in our state in 2025, [click here.](#) There are a number of bills in which Friends have a stake.

Ideas to Repurpose Old Books

The internet is filled with ideas to repurpose or upcycle old books and magazines. Just Google the term and browse all your options. Hosting a workshop using books donated to the Friends is a fun, easy, and cheap craft project—and a good recruitment tool. Have examples handy.



Some Websites of Interest

Federal Funding for Libraries:

- As you may be aware, there was a presidential executive order on March 14 which called for the dismantling of the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). More information: <https://www.ala.org/faq-executive-order-targeting-impls>.
- To learn more about federal funding in North Carolina and how Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) funds are spent: <https://statelibrary.ncdcr.gov/lsta-federal-funding-north-carolina>.

Other State Library and Department of Natural and Cultural Resources Information:

- The State Library provides access for all 84 public library systems across the state to participate in the Collaborative Summer Learning Program (CSLP). Theme for 2025 is Color Our World. More information: <https://www.cslpreads.org/>
- Learn more about how the State Library Accessible Books and Library Services (ABLS) get materials to patrons across the state by watching this video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LOHG0gXoeWo&t=1s>

Recognizing your outstanding librarian

AI overview: To recognize an outstanding librarian, consider nominating them for prestigious awards like the American Library Association's (ALA) awards, or the I Love My Librarian Award, or create a local award or recognition program. Other methods include public appreciation through social media, [Libby Life blog](#) and thank you notes, and celebrating them with a gift basket or other gestures.

[I Love My Librarian](#)—online nomination by 9/30

[Librarian of the Year Award](#) by Library Journal

[ALA Awards](#)

[AI Overview](#) has lots of creative ideas for local recognition.

[Reddit ideas and comments](#) on how to thank our librarians.

And you don't need to wait for National Library week to do so!!!

Other

[United for Libraries—Promotion and Celebration Idea for Friends](#)

WebJunction—[Friends of the Library tools and resources](#)

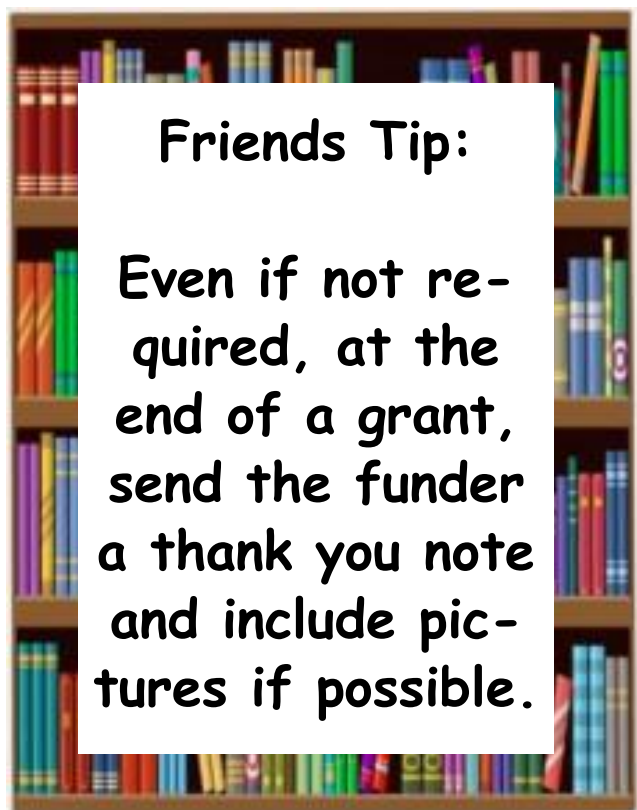
[Pinterest Friends](#) of the Library Ideas

[Top 10 Fundraising Strategies](#) for FOLs from EveryLibrary Institute

[How to start a Little Free Library](#)

Friends Tip:

Even if not required, at the end of a grant, send the funder a thank you note and include pictures if possible.



United State's 250th Birthday—Join the Celebration

How might your Friends participate in this auspicious event? **America will celebrate its 250th anniversary on July 4, 2026**, so you have lots of time to plan and implement.

The following was AI generated:

Friends of the Library organizations can actively participate in America's 250th anniversary by collaborating with their local libraries to create exhibitions, host programs, and share stories related to the nation's history and future. This includes showcasing library collections, partnering with community groups, and nominating unsung champions of history.

Here's how Friends of the Library can get involved:

Exhibitions: Partner with the library to create thematic exhibitions showcasing local history, library collections, or community-specific perspectives related to the 250th anniversary.

Programs: Host events, workshops, or lectures that explore historical themes, connect with local experts, and engage the community in discussions about the nation's past, present, and future.

Storytelling: Encourage the sharing of personal stories, family histories, and local narratives through oral history projects, writing contests, or online platforms, as [America250](#) is doing.

Community Engagement: Collaborate with local organizations and community groups to develop programs, projects, and initiatives that celebrate the nation's history and foster a sense of civic engagement.

Nominate Historical Figures: Submit nominations for unsung champions of history to America250 to ensure diverse perspectives are recognized.

Field Trips: Support the [America250's](#) "America's Field Trip" initiative, which provides opportunities for extraordinary visits to national landmarks.

America Gives: Participate in the [America250's](#) "America Gives" initiative, which highlights the importance of community service and public service.

North Carolina has set up an [America 250 NC website](#) to collect the voices of North Carolina and to share a whole host of planned events. They have already begun, so do check out this website for additional ideas.

By working together, Friends of the Library and their local libraries can create meaningful and impactful experiences that celebrate America's 250th anniversary and inspire a shared sense of national pride and civic responsibility.

"America's 250th anniversary is about more than reflecting on our past, it's about honoring the contributions of individuals who built this country, the innovations that put this country on the map and a man on the moon, and imagining what the next 250 years might look like for our children and the generations to come."

Rosie Rios, Chair, U.S. Semiquincentennial Commission



Friends of Rube McCrary Library Co-Host Friday Fest Dinners

Here is a collaborative idea for your Friends, especially in a small community where there are few restaurants. This is a recent announcement sent to their Friends asking for volunteers:

We are excited to announce a volunteer opportunity for our membership that you are sure to enjoy! Friday Fest dinners are underway at the LKW Depot Museum and we need volunteers to co-host each month. Co-hosting generally involves: helping with set up and clean up, bringing a covered dish and making brief announcements. The dates are:

June 13th - Low Country Boil (Depot Hosts - Gaston Ray/Megan Wooten)

July 11th - Fried Chicken Picnic (Depot Host - David Worley)

August 8th - Appetizers (Depot Host - Mandy Kelly)

September 12th - BBQ Cook Off (Depot Host - Theresa McKeithan)

October 24th - Halloween Party



It's super easy to be a co-host! If you enjoy a good covered dish dinner and a wonderful gathering, please consider volunteering for one of these events on behalf of the Friends of RMML. Donations are collected at the dinners and proceeds are divided between the LKW Depot Museum and the Friends of RMML. Both are great organizations that need your support!

What local nonprofit might your Friends partner with?

Book Sales: The Backbone of Fundraising for Most Friends

The Friends of the Johnston County Library sent us a picture of their recent book sale. Book sales continue to be popular and profitable—at least for now.

What upgrades have you made to your book sale? Any new methods to market it? Are you using QR codes on print media? Are you allowing patrons to pay with a credit card? Are you pre-selling gift cards for the sale? Are you bundling or special pricing any items? Are you selling more than just books, puzzles, CDs and DVDs? Do you sell old books?

What are you doing with the books and other items that are left over from the sale?

[Email your ideas to the editor.](#)



NC Library Association

FONCPL is committed to keeping Friends informed. While you may be aware of NCPLDA, you may not be familiar with NCLA. Please read and consider [joining](#) both as a group and as an individual.

"The mission of the North Carolina Library Association shall be to promote libraries, library and information services, and librarianship; and to champion intellectual freedom and literacy programs.

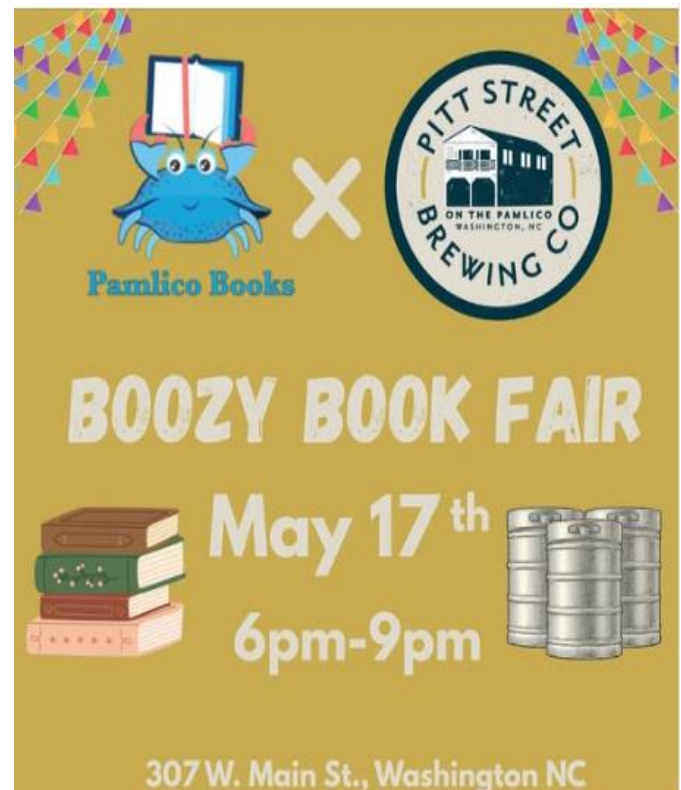
"The North Carolina Library Association (NCLA) is committed to promoting libraries, librarianship, literacy, and the professional judgment of educators and librarians, while standing firmly for intellectual freedom and equitable access to information for all. We oppose legislation that promotes censorship, undermines constitutional rights, or imposes politically motivated restrictions on library and educational materials. NCLA

supports inclusive, developmentally appropriate, and diverse collections that serve the needs of all community members. We support transparent, balanced policymaking that respects the expertise of library professionals and upholds the freedom to read, learn, and explore without fear or intimidation." [NCLA website](#)



Another idea: Boozy Book Fair

From Washington, NC: Boozy Book Fair on the Pamlico Date: May 17th Time: 6 PM - 9 PM Location: Pitt Street on the Pamlico Sip, shop, and soak up the literary vibes at our Boozy Book Fair, a spirited evening of books and beverages right on the waterfront! We're bringing back the nostalgic charm of a classic book fair, but with a grown-up twist. Browse curated reads from Pamlico Books, discover new favorites, and enjoy craft beer, cocktails, wine, and more as you mingle with fellow book lovers. Whether you're a fiction fanatic or non-fiction nerd, there's a perfect pour and a perfect page waiting for you. Come thirsty for stories and a good drink. **A local book store is supplying the books, but Friends could do a blind date with a book fundraiser. How fun would that be!**



Services to Assisted Living Facilities

While some libraries in NC do offer services specifically tailored for assisted living facilities, many do not have the resources to do so. This is one void that the Friends could help fill. We suggest that you begin with researching what your library or library system provides to assisted living facilities and see where there are gaps. We recommend including your library outreach specialist in the discussion. Most facilities employ an activity director. This would be the best person to contact. You could also connect with the Area Agency on Aging.

Keep in mind the type of patient that the facility serves. A patient in a memory care facility will have different needs than those who only required minimal physical assistance.

A facility that serves mostly Medicaid patients will probably not have a true activity director—it may be someone in name only. These facilities are the ones that have the fewest resources and need the most help.

Also keep in mind that some facilities may have a "Friends of..." group that provides some services to the residents. Be sure to find out if such a group exists and include them in the discussion before offering services.

The following is a list of the types of services that Friends could help provide.

- Reading aloud
- Book clubs
- Discussion series
- Craft workshops
- Board Games
- Card games
- Bingo
- Special events
- Helping residents apply for accessible books and library services from the State Library
- Helping residents apply for a library card
- Helping residents learn to use the library's online services
- Teaching a resident how to use an e-reader
- Curating the facility's library collection.

The Friends of the New Bern-Craven County Public Library have had a program in place since 2021. They use their donated books to curate the libraries at local assisted living facilities—where permitted. Not every facility wants the service. At the outset of this program, they assisted the "library" at each facility. The library in most cases was 1 to 4 bookcases. They found old titles, books in disrepair, whole series of westerns, whole series of romance novels, and not much variety. They began by discarding old and torn books. They removed the series. They put in a variety of genres, titles, and authors. While they were at the facility, they asked the activity director to identify frequent readers. They interviewed those individuals and found out what they liked to read. They made sure that those needs were met.

So, if you are interested, begin by doing your homework. You need to understand both sides of this equation.—matching needs to resources. What you find might surprise you and give your Friends a new opportunity to be of service. And remember that many of these individuals have little opportunity to have contact with others outside of the facility. Just interacting with you may brighten their day.



Reading for Mental Health

Recently I read an article entitled, "8 evening habits of people who remain mentally strong in their 80's." Since there are many of us who are getting up there in age, I thought you might be interested in some of the points made. To get your attention, the article starts out, "Some people stay sharp well into their 80's, while others start to struggle with memory and focus much earlier. What's their secret?" Now that I have your attention, the very first evening habit listed was, "They read before they go to bed." Reading is one way to have a strong mind—one that is always learning. It can be anything: fiction, non-fiction, poetry, or newspapers. The key is to expose the brain to new ideas. "Reading not only strengthens memory and cognitive function, but it also helps reduce stress and improve sleep quality." It encourages deep focus.

Another related habit is limiting use of technology at night—even TV. Your mind needs time to wind down from the day. Read,



listen to music, write in your journal, or just have a quiet conversation before bed. These small habits over time can make a big difference in maintaining focus, memory, and overall cognitive health.

So, pick up a book before you go to bed—you'll be in good company.

Maintaining Your Focus When Reading

"In today's world, handheld devices, instant messengers, and other similar types of distractions make it very hard to maintain a strong focus while reading."

Here are some "focus-stealing" factors: 1) distractions; 2) multitasking; 3) anxiety/stress; 4) fatigue; 5) boredom; 6) sleep deprivation; 7) poor reading position; and 8) health issues.

Tips to improve focus: 1) turn off all cell phone notifications; 2) practice proper posture; 3) clear your mind for one minute; 4) read in 50-minute intervals; 5) read with a

specific goal in mind; 6) use your finger or pointer under lines as you read; 7) do not multitask; 8) take breaks; 9) have a caffeinated drink; and 10) deliberately engage with the information in the text.

"As simple as these tips might sound, they can make the world of a difference for positively impacting your ability to focus while reading. Practicing these tips will not only improve your reading, they will also help you build better focus involving other areas of your life."

[Click here](#) to read the whole article.

And the beat goes on...by Karen Robbins

Cautionary Tale Out of Texas...

We have all heard it from would-be censors. They are not banning books. They are protecting children. If they can't find the book at school, it's not banned. They can get it at the public library. If the library does not have the book, or keeps it in an adults only room, it is not banned. They can buy it at the bookstore.

Well, in Texas, the legislature tried to do what no one would talk about—they targeted book stores. A bill introduced in the Texas House would have held bookstores liable for "damages arising from the distribution, transmission, or display of harmful material to a minor."

Now they want to "protect" children outside the classroom.

"HB 1375 would open bookstores to civil liability if they're found to have made 'harmful material' available to minors, even inadvertently. The bill defines this as anything 'readily accessible' to children that includes graphic content or 'harmful material' featuring a minor in any visual or audio form."

Book sellers, book store owners, and Texas Freedom to Read Project are super concerned that punitive lawsuits will put small stores out of business, and tarnish their reputations.

Remember, it only takes one person to start a lawsuit. Instead of trusting parents and professionals, this legislation is making it the business of the state to "protect" children. There are already laws that keep obscenity off the shelves. This law will have a chilling effect on store owners, and may lead to self-censorship to avoid a possible legal battle. Finally, this sort of restriction can create an information gap, leaving a community without the full story available — even for purchase at a bookstore.

Dallas-based Half Price Books led the opposition to the bill. They said it "placed an unrealistic burden on sellers and effectively required them to screen every title for potential objections."

For now the bill appears to be dead after missing key deadlines. My advice— be vigilant. This type of censorship can grow quickly.

Sources

Tiffani Jackson **Fort Worth Star-Telegram**. "Bookstores brace for legal risks as Texas House targets 'harmful' content in new bill" Updated May 5, 2025 11:05 AM

Katherine Hobbs **KERA**. "Bill making bookstores liable for 'obscene displays' appears dead in Texas House" May 19, 2025 at 8:02 AM CDT

Books for Dads



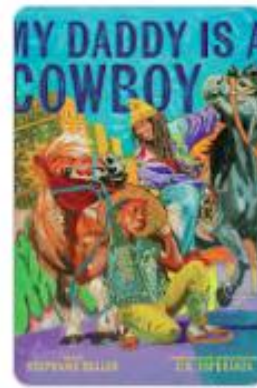
I Love Dad with
the Very Hungry...
Eric Carle



Meet January
April Martin



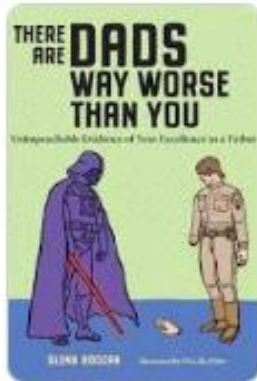
Bluey: Daddy
Robot



My Daddy Is a
Cowboy
Stephanie Seales



Dad Is Fat
Jim Gaffigan



There Are Dads
Way Worse Tha...
Glenn Boozan



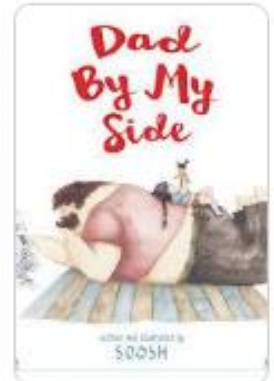
Girl Dad
Sean Williams



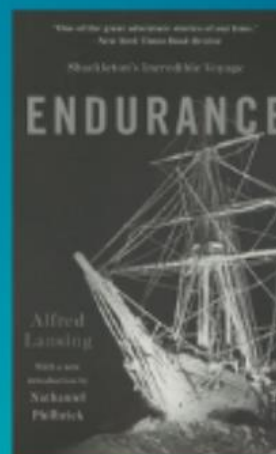
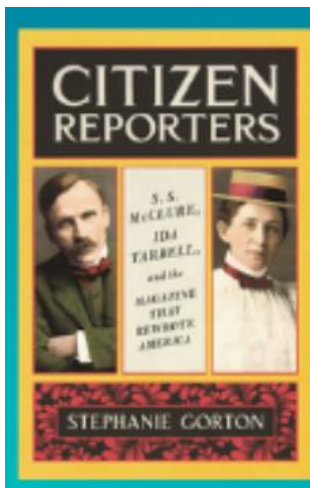
Just Between
Dad and Me: A ...
Worldwide
Mindfulness



Amazing Dad
Alison Brown



Dad By My Side
Soosh





**Friends of North Carolina
Public Libraries**

Helping Friends Build Resilience

Officers

President

Joyce Speas (Alleghany County)

Vice-President

Vacant

Secretary

Karen Robbins (Brunswick County)

Treasurer

Tim Como (Catawba County)

Directors

Tess Thais (Haywood County)

Lyn Marsh (Forsyth County)

Cindy Shipley (Craven County)

Billie Lawson (Johnston County)

Functional Roles

Webmaster--Lyn Marsh

Newsletter Editor--Judy Hills

Grants & Awards Coordinator—Tess Theis

Advocacy Coordinator—Karen Robbins

Membership Coordinator—Vacant

Contact Information

1190 18th Ave NE

Hickory, NC 28601

828.446.9472

826mechanic@gmail.com

<https://foncpl.org/>

CALENDAR

All material for the newsletter is due to editor **Judy Hills** by the 25th of each month.

Click here for the 2025 Calendar of National Events—use these to plan your activities.

FONCPL Board Zoom Meetings 10 AM on: 8/9, with annual meeting on 11/15.

Challenge Grant Applications due **9/15/25**.

Friend of the Year nominations due **9/30/25**.

Here are a few dates of note:

JUNE

6/1 Say Something Nice Day

6/3 World Bicycle Day

6/6 D-Day

6/6 National donut day

6/14 Army Birthday

6/14 Flag Day

6/15 Nature Photography Day

6/15 World Elder Abuse Awareness Day

6/15 Father's Day

6/19 Juneteenth

6/20 American Eagle Day

6/20 Summer Solstice

6/21 National Selfie Day

6/26 Forgiveness Day

6/27 National Bingo Day

6/29 National Camera Day

JULY

7/1 International Joke Day

7/2 World UFO Day

7/4 Independence Day

7/17 World Emoji Day

7/20 National Ice Cream Day

7/26 Uncle and Aunt Day

7/27 Parents' Day