



# Library Reader

Ojai, California

Winter 2018

## PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Jon Lambert

Actually, this installment is the “former president’s” corner this time... and I want to take the opportunity to ‘speak’ about the OVLFF. In the 1980’s a supporting organization called the Friends of the Ojai Library was created. The group merged with the Ojai Library Foundation in 1999 becoming an IRS-recognized, charitable non-profit organization, today’s OVLFF. The Library Friends (to use its familiar name) has, since that time, consisted of a board of directors and a large number of community members who contribute to the work of the organization through voluntary donations and volunteer time.

With a commitment to work with and for the public library, The Friends expanded its support commitment to include the two other Ojai Valley libraries: Oak View and Meiners Oaks. This commitment manifested itself in two major efforts during the last decade of the last century: the creation of the SchoolLinks afterschool homework program (with a center in each of the three valley libraries)- a program that is fully funded by The Friends, and helping to support passage of the parcel tax that was designed to allow the Ojai Library to open seven days each week- a rarity within the Ventura County Library System (VCLS).

The fixed amount paid per parcel did, in 1996, exactly what it was designed to do. The effectiveness of the opening policy is currently seen in two facts: firstly that the Ojai Library is the most

## OVLFF CELEBRATES SERVICE WELL RENDERED



Thank you Anne and Julie...happy retirement!

In January The Friends’ board celebrated the services rendered to the Ojai community by Anne Shrage and Julie Albright, two library employees who retired after decades of service. Anne served as the coordinator of the SchoolLinks homework programs and worked specifically in the Ojai Library as well as being a member of the OVLFF Board of Directors; Julie served as the Ojai Library’s Children’s Librarian and created a vibrant and well-loved program of year-long activities. The board held a small reception in the new meeting room and presented each with a sterling silver pendant, designed by David Whipple, which looks like a book, and the back is engraved "I love to read because of you." 📖

See “President” on page 2

*“President” continued from page 1*

used facility of the Ventura County Library System (on a per-capita basis) and, secondly, that the library staff has enabled the facility to become an integral part of the cultural hub of the Ojai Community. Unfortunately, the amount of funds generated by the tax today falls far short of the current costs associated with the seven-day-a-week opening schedule of the library- a problem that the Library and The Friends will have to address in the near future.

The Friends became involved in the plans to rebuild the Ojai Library in the early 2000’s and, as part of their commitment to the library, acquired ownership of the VanDyke Travel Agency building located adjacent to the Ojai Library along Ojai Avenue. The idea was to turn it over to the VCLS so the parcel could be integrated into the new building. After raising nearly \$400,000 and the purchase of the facility, the VCLS plans fell through and the OVLFF found itself as a property owner- thus the creation of our used bookstore Twice-Sold Tales.

With the funds generated through generous donations of books by the community and the wonderful volunteers who staff all of the tasks associated with operating a used bookstore (management, sorting donations, stocking shelves, sales staff), The Friends have annually funded (among other things) “discretionary funds” to each valley librarian, books acquisition monies for the valley libraries’ collections, support for children and teen programming, and cultural activities on offer to the public. The latest support for the library and the Ojai community is seen in the recently completed meeting room attached to Twice-Sold Tales- a new public venue available in downtown Ojai.

I have been privileged to act as Board President for the past twelve years and look forward to continuing my activity with The Friends as a board member. New leadership and new ideas- OVLFF continues to serve the valley libraries and the Ojai Community, and I thank you for your continuing support.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John'.

**OJAI VALLEY LIBRARY  
FRIENDS & FOUNDATION**

646-4064 info@ovlff.com  
<http://www.Ovlff.com>

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## COMMENTS BY OUR CITY LIBRARIAN

### Delivered to the Ojai City Council (October 10, 2017)

Good evening members of council. My name is Ron Solórzano and I am the Regional Librarian for the Ojai Valley. I wanted to come here tonight for a particularly special reason, in addition to my usual library update.

This year the week of October 15th to the 21st is designated as National Friends of Libraries Week. This is a time for us to highlight and celebrate the contributions made by Friends groups in support of their local libraries. Our Friends group here is of course the Ojai Valley Library Friends & Foundation.

The OVLFF raises money that enables our library to move from good to great, providing the resources for additional programming, materials, and equipment. The work of the OVLFF highlights on an on-going basis the fact that our library is an integral part of the community, provid-

ing opportunities for all ages to engage in the joy of life-long learning, recreation, and cultural enrichment.


The many members of the OVLFF understand the critical importance of well-funded libraries and advocate to ensure that we receive the resources we need to provide a wide variety of services to all ages. The gift of their time and their commitment to the library set an example for all in how volunteerism leads to positive civic engagement and the betterment of our community.

Support from the OVLFF allows us to deliver exciting programming to the residents of the Ojai Valley. For example, thanks to our Friends, on this Saturday, October 14, at 2 p.m. we will host a one-woman show by actor and playwright Stephanie Satie. The play, "Coming to America: Transformations," depicts a gallery of women whose lives have been transformed by extraordinary events in their country of birth and by their journey to and response to living in America.

Our Friends are able to support

such activities thanks in part to their operation of the Twice-Sold Tales bookstore, located right next door to the library on Ojai Avenue and open seven days a week from noon to 5 p.m. Additionally, twice a year the OVLFF holds a major book sale on the front lawn of the library, and the next sale will be the weekend of Ojai Day, October 21 and 22, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. each day. Please come on by to buy some books, support our Friends and the library, and consider staying on Saturday for a lecture by Dr. Carol Mack from CSU Channel Islands, who will speak on the history of the "Death with dignity" movement.


The OVLFF is a tremendous asset to our library and our community, and we are proud to have them as our Friends. That's all I have for now; thank you so much for your time, and please let me know if you have any questions about your Ojai Library.

[Ed. Note: It's easy to support the work of The Library Friends. Become a Supporting Member by sending a tax-deductible donation today.] 

## LITTLE FREE LIBRARY (LFL)

Over the past several years The Friends have placed LFLs in places around our valley. A LFL is a small outdoor box with books inside and a message "Take a book, leave a book." The goal is twofold: to encourage reading by making books

easily available, and to bring books into valley communities that are distant from a brick-and-mortar library building or in a non-English speaking housing sub-group. The Friends have already placed three LFLs and there are several private ones

set up, but the grant we received from the Ojai Women's Fund will enable us to 'plant' 10 more around our valley. If you would like to 'host' a LFL- let Kris Humphries know (kristine-humphries@yahoo.com). 

# HOMWORK HELP BY SKYPE IN TIME OF MUD AND FLOOD

By Sharon Dykstra, Oak  
View Librarian

The saying “Necessity is the mother of invention,” once again proved itself true during the time that Routes 101 and 150 were closed due to mudslides and flooding in mid-January. Oak View Library’s Homework Center Coordinator Rachel D. was north of the closures and unable to commute to the Ojai Valley. Other staff and our excellent volunteer did our best to fill-in, but the middle school students were in need of advanced, time-intensive assistance with their algebra assignments.

Technology to the rescue! Once Rachel had access to electricity and the Internet, we used the Skype application on laptops to video chat. She and the students could see and hear each other, sharing equations and problem-solving methods with ease. Using this communication method with the older tech-savvy students meant the rest of us were available to work with all the elementary-age students.

Overall, this delivery of homework assistance went very well, as Rachel has all the qualities necessary for success - excellent technology skills, algebra-knowledge, established rapport with students, and familiarity with their learning styles.

While remote help can never equal the quality and genuineness of in-person assistance, it did fit the bill as a temporary fix during this time of need.

Thankfully the roads are again open and schedules are back to normal, but we now have another proven tool to use in our endeavor to provide excellent service to our students. For more information about the Homework Center, please visit our web page [www.vencolibrary.org/oakview](http://www.vencolibrary.org/oakview).


Ongoing activities and events at the Oak View Library:

- Tuesdays, 4 p.m.: Early Literacy Class – Stories, rhymes, music, movement, and more! For ages 0-5.
- Wednesdays, 4 p.m.: Skill-Building Through Play Class – Sensory play and art-based learning classes sponsored by the Ojai Valley Neighborhood for Learning. For ages 0-5.
- Saturdays, 10:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.: Family Color & Play Time – Drop by to color, play board games, or solve puzzles.
- Third Thursdays, 3-4 p.m. – Make It! Science Through Arts & Crafts – Introduces science through hands-on projects best suited for students in grades 4-8.
- Oak View Reading Society - Adult participants read a selected title and share their opinions with other readers using comment cards displayed in the library. A communal “no commitment” reading experience on your own terms. 

# GET BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS WITH READTHIS-NEXT APP

by Hayley Tsukayama -  
Washington Post,  
September 8 2017

If you love reading but can never figure out what your next book should be, ReadThis Next, as the name implies, is here to help. You can use the app to follow your favorite authors and see what they suggest. Because you can follow multiple authors, you’ll get a range of recommendations — just in case you’re having one of those days where you’re not ‘vibing’ with Haruki Murakami. Signing up requires your email address. From there, you can search for authors you like and follow accounts accordingly.

The app’s website describes it as being like a book club with all of your favorite authors, which is apt — except that you can’t get together with Stephen King, nosh and dish about the book together. And, of course, no one will ever scold you for not reading the book. Still, ReadThisNext is a solid app for those who love reading but never know what to tackle next. (Free, for iOS devices) 



# RESOURCES, RECOVERY, AND RELIEF AT YOUR LIBRARY

By Ron Solórzano, Re-  
gional Librarian

This December and January brought some serious challenges to our community, with all three libraries in the Ojai Valley forced to close for five days during the worst of the Thomas Fire and staff and customers worried about potential road closures due to the heavy rain that followed. We were fortunate to come through these crises relatively unscathed, and as soon as was possible our staff reopened the Ojai, Meiners Oaks, and Oak View libraries to the public.

Almost immediately people began asking us about recovery and relief efforts, and our libraries became distribution points for both information and resources—including N95 filtration masks to help deal with the at-times hazardous air quality in the Valley. The Ojai Library also hosted multiple Red Cross relief workshops, where caseworkers were able to connect one-on-one with members of the community to create individualized recovery plans, navigate paperwork, and locate help from other agencies. In addition, our library was happy to host a series of meetings of the newly-formed Ojai Valley Habitat Coalition—an entity made up of multiple local organizations with the shared

goal of helping guide Ojai's recovery and development in the wake of the Thomas Fire.

We are so very proud that following the disaster of the Thomas Fire and the subsequent mudslides in Montecito, our libraries were able to function as beacons of information and support for those who were looking to start the recovery process. We are humbled by the losses felt by our neighbors and colleagues, and are filled with a resolve to do what we can to help our communities return to a sense of normalcy.

To that end, we will continue to do what we do best: provide access to materials and resources for recovery and recreation while serving as a place for the community to come together. In the months to come we will continue to host lots of great events in support of our customers' curiosities and passions. We are pleased to welcome back lecturers from CSU Channel Islands and the Santa Barbara Museum of Art to deliver more great programs on a variety of topics, and will also continue to host our poetry readings, book clubs, early literacy programming, and more. Check out what we have going on by visiting [www.vencolibrary.org/ojai](http://www.vencolibrary.org/ojai). If you have ideas for events that you would like to see happen, or if you just want to tell us how we're doing, come by and see us at the library, give us a phone call, or send us an email.

Upcoming and Ongoing Events:

- POP Art and the American Dream – A talk by Shirley Waxman via the Santa Barbara Museum of Art – February 24, 2018; 1 p.m.
- How Does the Brain Produce Consciousness? – A lecture by Arthur Vander – March 3, 2018; 1 p.m.
- Beaches on the Edge – A lecture by Kiki Patsch via CSU Channel Islands – March 10, 2018; 1 p.m.
- Free Noontime Concert – Presented by Opera Santa Barbara – March 15, 2018; 12 p.m.
- A Spirituality of Imperfection at Work – A lecture by Andrew Morris via CSU Channel Islands – April 14, 2018; 1 p.m.
- Touching Dirt – A lecture by Marianne C. McGrath via CSU Channel Islands – April 14, 2018; 1 p.m.
- Mondays, 6:30 p.m.: Knitting & Fiber Arts Club – A drop-in group for people interested in knitting, crochet, and other fiber crafts.
- Wednesdays, 10:30 a.m.: Early Literacy Class – Stories, poems, music, movement, a simple craft, and fun! Ages 0-5.
- Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10 a.m.: Dora's Explorers – Play-based learning classes sponsored by the Ojai Valley Neighborhood for Learning. Ages 0-5.
- First and Third Mondays, 7 p.m.: Shakespeare Salon – Local Shakespeare fans host readings and discussions of classic plays.
- Third Tuesdays, 6 p.m.: Ojai Poetry Series – A chance to share your poetry and be inspired by others. 📖

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## TWICE-SOLD TALES HELPS REPLACE BOOKS LOST IN FIRE

If you lost all of your books in a disaster, how long would it take to replace them? Do you have a book inventory or guess of the count? How much would it cost? Where would you go to find books at a reduced price?

For many of us bibliophiles, this scenario is devastating, almost more so than the loss of clothing or household goods. The recent Thomas Fire destroyed more than 100 homes in Ojai. Over 30 children lost their home and their reading libraries as well as their possessions. Every school in the district has children left homeless due to the fire; that is a significant challenge for teachers, staff and students.

The OVLFF has worked with the OUSD to identify these kids and to issue certificates to our bookstore, Twice-Sold-Tales, so the children can begin to establish a personal book collection again. The certificates were presented to the Superintendent and School Principals to give to the children and their parents. OVLFF will be working with HELP of Ojai to issue certificates to adults, as well.

Healing comes in many forms and from many sources. The OVLFF is grateful for the Ojai Valley community's generosity in donating books to our used bookstore, and providing membership funds to our organiza-

tion. Passing it on to our local community through this certificate program completes the circle. 

### SUPPORT THE OJAI VALLEY FRIENDS

A number of the articles in this issue of the OVLFF Newsletter speak to the importance of supporting our public libraries, both directly and through descriptions of the many programs the libraries offer. The most tangible way to do so is through us, your local Friends group. As a contributing Supporting Member of OVLFF you make the statement "I like what you do, I support public libraries and I'm happy to show others I care." Thank you for your ongoing support. 