

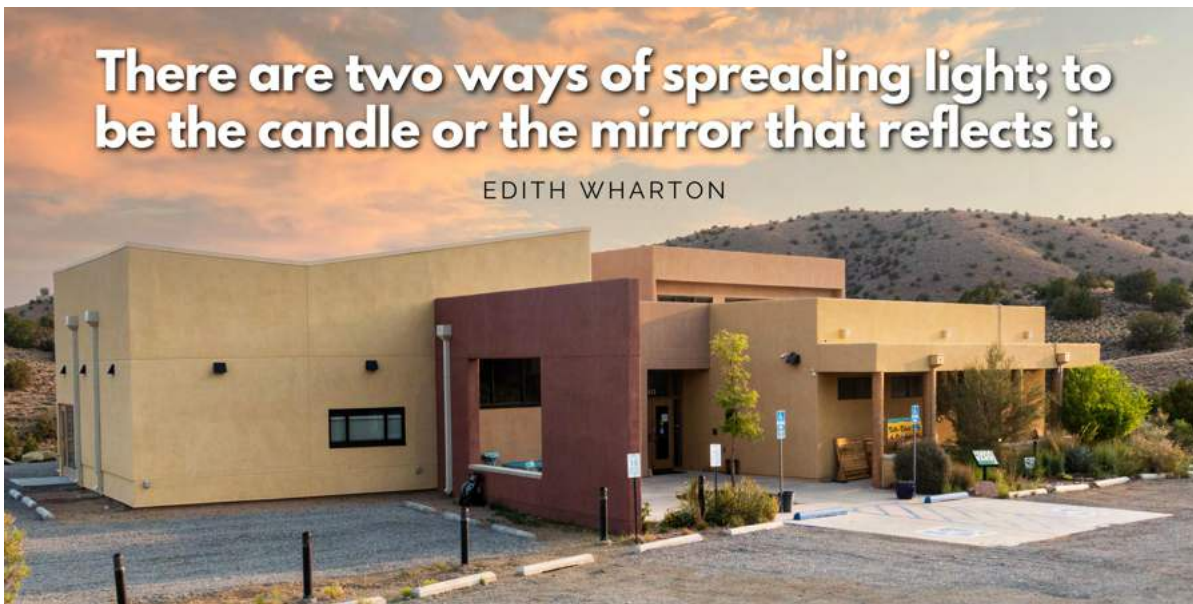
# PLACITAS *Community* LIBRARY



## NEWSLETTER NOV/DEC 2025

There are two ways of spreading light; to  
be the candle or the mirror that reflects it.

EDITH WHARTON



### **PLACITAS COMMUNITY LIBRARY HOURS**

**SUN: 1 - 4**  
**TUES: 10 - 7**  
**WED/THURS/SAT: 10 - 5**

## ADULT PROGRAMS

- **NOV 15 (5 PM):** Placitas Star Party and Star Talk
- **NOV 22-23 (10 AM - 4 PM):** 5th Annual Placitas Holiday Market
- **NOV 25:** Community Giving Tree goes up at the library (return UWRAPPED gift to library by Dec 13)

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## ARTISTS' RECEPTION & EXHIBIT

- **DEC 12 (5 PM):** Artists' Reception: All Mixed Up – Mixed Media Textile Artists of New Mexico (exhibit runs 11/25 – 1/1)

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## CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES

- **NOV 9 (12 PM):** Artists' Reception: Children's Art – Art Inspired by Books (exhibit runs 11/8 – 11/18), featuring works by Placitas Elementary School students
- **NOV 11 (10 AM):** Pre-K Story Time featuring the theme "owls" and special guest Mikail Deese, founder of bird rescue, *On a Wing and a Prayer*
- **DEC 9 (10 AM):** Pre-K Story Time featuring *The Reindeer Christmas* by Moe Price and Atsuko Morozumi
- **DEC 14 (1 PM):** Holiday Open House – A Celebration of Cultures and New Mexican Holiday Traditions, with a variety of activities including the Pueblo Enchantment Dancers from Acoma

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## RECURRING EVENTS

- **Social Justice Discussion Group** (3rd Tues of each month at 1 PM): Meet to discuss issues of social justice and how we can make a difference in the world today!
- **La Parranda: Club de Español** (Every Wed at 10 AM): Enjoy the opportunity to experience español with Diane Herrera Shepard and other guests. The Club is open to anyone who wants to learn, use, practice, or converse in Spanish.
- **Drumming Circle** (1st Sun of each month at 4 PM): Bring your own drum or use one of the many we have!



### NEWS FROM YOUR LIBRARY BOARD

By Lynnette Fields, PCL Board Chair



Placitas Community Library's (PCL's) vision is to be a learning and social hub with a technology-forward approach to services. To achieve this vision, these are some of the goal areas we are currently working on:

- Developing specialized collections
- Expanding digital resources
- Developing self-sustaining funding models
- Investing in technology to serve our community

You might be asking yourself how you can help with these goals. A Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) can be a great way to support PCL and reduce your tax burden at the same time. A QCD gift to PCL lowers your yearly taxes and helps PCL support its goals. You receive an immediate income tax benefit toward your current year's taxes.

QCDs are taken from your Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) which is the distribution you are required to take from your Traditional IRA every year after you turn 72. If you make PCL a recipient of a QCD it will be mailed directly to the library from your account. Contact your financial advisor for more information if you think a QCD would work for you as a way to support PCL in our goals.

### **Customer Relationship Management (CRM) software**

In the last newsletter, I reported that the Board had chosen Bloomerang from among four CRM providers that they reviewed. CRM software is a comprehensive strategy and technology used by not-for-profits to manage and analyze interactions with donors, volunteers, and patrons.

A CRM Implementation Committee was formed and has been charged with getting us started with the CRM and making decisions on data migration, data input, and general set-up of the CRM. The Implementation Committee is meeting and making decisions. We hope to have the CRM functional by mid-November. Stay tuned for more details.

### **Strategic Planning**

Implementation of our Strategic Plan continues to move forward. Progress made since the last report:

Goal 1: Create a Library Resource Center

- Gathering quotes for the Resource Center
- Lynne continues to evaluate resources to be included in the Resource Center

Goal 2: Create a patron technology needs assessment

- Lynne is continuing work on the patron technology needs assessment

Goal 3: Streamline operational processes to grow PCL's mission services

- Job descriptions have been created for all current volunteer positions. Procedures have also been developed for maintaining job descriptions.
- A volunteer exit survey with procedures has been created
- A volunteer satisfaction survey has been created. This will be sent via Survey Monkey to all volunteers in January 2026.
- Work continues on documenting procedures

Goal 4: Deepen the value of our reciprocal partnerships with donors and community partner

- Work continues on a prospectus for fundraising

Goal 5: Enhance marketing communications

- The CRM software will be instrumental in this goal and goal 4



# Library BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Meetings are held the 3rd Thursday  
of each month at 6:00 PM in the  
Gracie Lee Community Room. The  
public is invited and welcome to  
attend. Agendas are posted here  
and at the library.

**UPCOMING BOARD MEETINGS:**  
**THURS, NOV 20, 6:00 PM**  
**THURS, DEC 18, 6:00 PM**



## SOCIAL JUSTICE

Artwork created by pikisuperstar at www.freepik.com



## DISCUSSION GROUP

Meet to discuss issues of  
social justice and how we  
can make a difference in  
the world today!

Please contact Anne at  
[annegrey3@gmail.com](mailto:annegrey3@gmail.com) for more information

Meets the 3rd Tuesday of each month  
at 1 PM in the Collin Meeting Room



# Lynne's Letters

MESSAGE FROM  
THE DIRECTOR



Do you get excited about the holidays? Do you want to find gifts for your friends and family that are unique? *I know I do.*

This year, I plan to once again attend the **Placitas Holiday Market** that is being held on Saturday, November 22nd and Sunday, November 23rd from 10 AM to 4 PM.

There are **6** wonderful stops where **over 100 artists and artisans** have created very special items!!!! Plus, a **portion of all sales will benefit local non-profits, community groups, and charities.**



Here is the list of stops:

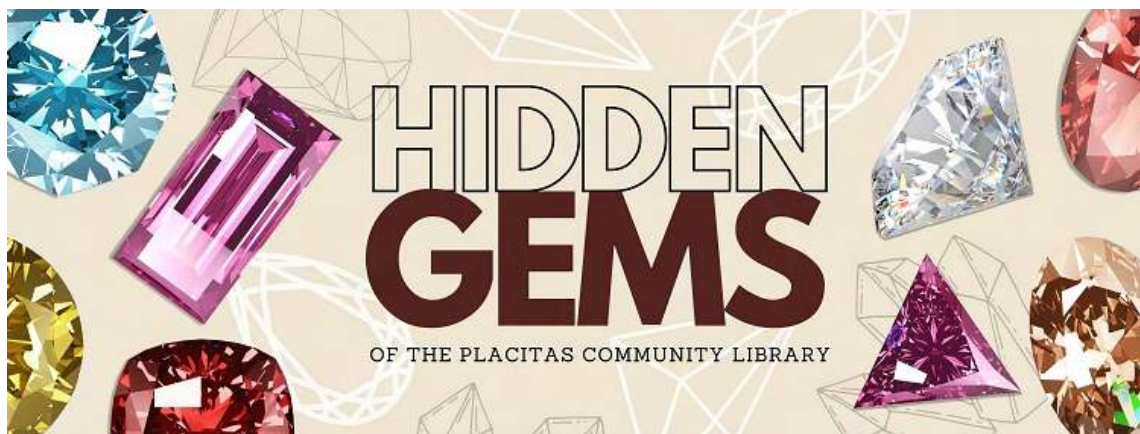
1. Wild Hearts Gallery
2. Placitas Community Library
3. Placitas Winery
4. Las Placitas Presbyterian Church
5. Placitas Elementary School
6. Placitas Community Senior Center

PLEASE FOLLOW THE **RED CANDY CANE** signs to the **6 wonderful locations!!!!**

*Hope to see you there.  
Happy Holidays!!!!  
Lynne*







### **A Merry Band: The Adult Program Team**

*by Anne Frost, Adult Program Coordinator*

The members of this Merry Band gather monthly, often at the Placitas Café for breakfast. We plot and plan to provide our community with a wide variety of experiences right in their own home town. During the course of a year, we might offer book talks by authors of new and interesting reads such as Anne Hillerman and Hampton Sides. We also share the work of less well-known authors, often local, who share experiences like growing up in the wild in New Mexico, cut off from modern culture (*The Soulful Child*), or a novel exploring the music imbued life of biracial Native American teens (*The Half-White Album*). Expert speakers discuss everything from growing up as a descendent of the original families of the San Antonio de las Huertas Land Grant to witches in Abiquiu. Sometimes we explore geology, the African diaspora, PCL library history, finance, poetry, Native American pottery, or health. You might decide to learn Spanish and join La Parranda on Wednesday mornings—gracias Diane Shepard! Sometimes we **DANCE OUT!** or gaze at our glorious night sky during a Star Party!

Keep up with all these marvelous offerings by watching for the PCL half-page ad in the Sandoval Signpost. Thanks to the Signpost for donating this space. Our wonderful volunteer, Pam Troutman, creates this ad and sends press releases on all PCL events to the major news outlets in the area. The talented Jenny Trujillo, creates most of our flyers which are posted in PCL and around town. The little A-frame sign at the top of the PCL driveway shows Adult Programs on the East side. You will also find posts about Adult Programs on social media.

Placitas's own low power FM radio station, KUPR—99.9 on your dial—also announces our events. Another great way to learn about what's happening at your library is to visit our [website](#) often! This marvelous, newly-updated website is created and maintained by a cadre of volunteers, who will have their own article soon. Special thanks from Adult Programs to our fearless webmaster poster, Kathy Kitts. Perhaps easiest of all, our fabulous newsletter is delivered directly to your email inbox every other month. If you don't receive one, visit the website and click on 'newsletter' near the bottom of the first page. Yet another talented volunteer, Joanne Lim-Pousard, creates our newsletter every two months.

The dedicated members of the Adult Program Team work on articles for the programs they coordinate to help get the word out. This Merry Band is made up of Jeanne Banks (Dance Out!), Seth Betterly, Doris Fields, Sheila Foard, Jill Kennedy, Phyllis Knight, Jim Neal, Janet Shaw, Diane Shepard (La Parranda), Wanda Yazzie, and 'led' by me—Anne Frost. They, with help from willing spouses, set-up and take down the chairs, and perform myriad other tasks involved in creating all that is needed for the community to experience, learn and, enjoy. Yes, we love help restacking on the carts after each program. For events when we anticipate particularly large attendance, we have a cadre of

parking JEDI, complete with light sabers! This group is headed by the ever-helpful Wayne Gordon. Please contact the PCL volunteer area of the website if you can help out.

Of course, none of this would be possible without the support of the PCL Board, Library Director Lynne Hynes, and PCL Administrator Furman Kelley. They keep the wheels on the bus as PCL's many volunteers roll along.

Adult Programs are generally offered on Saturday afternoons at 2 PM; weekday and evening programs are possible. The team welcomes your ideas for future programs and welcomes your participation as a member. Program suggestions are considered on the basis of their perceived value and interest to the community as well as the enthusiasm of the team. To suggest a program or join us simply contact [Anne Frost](#) or the [website](#).

We strive to provide the community with a diverse selection of experiences which are enlightening and enlivening. All PCL programs are free of charge to attendees, though every so often there may be a materials charge for a hands-on program. Most presenters offer their time and talent free of charge. We are a very lucky community indeed to have so many generous brilliant people around.

A colorful poster for a Drumming Circle. On the left, the words "DRUMMING CIRCLE" are written vertically in large, bold, red capital letters. In the center is a large, stylized drum with red and yellow stripes and a blue rim, with two drumsticks crossed over it. Surrounding the drum are various musical notes and symbols in different colors (yellow, blue, red, black). On the right, a red speech bubble contains the text "JOIN US!". Below this, in bold red capital letters, is "FIRST SUNDAY OF EACH MONTH AT 4 PM". Underneath that, in black text, is "Bring your own drum or use one of the many we have!". At the bottom right, in small italicized text, is "\*Children are welcomed but parents should be aware this is an adult, meditation-like experience".A memorial poster for Harriet Pearl Neal. On the left is a photograph of an elderly woman with short white hair, wearing a dark top and a necklace, holding a black DSLR camera up to her eye. The background of the poster is a light blue gradient with a faint image of a classical building. On the right, the text "PLACITAS COMMUNITY LIBRARY HAS LOST AN INESTIMABLE" is written in black capital letters. Below this, the name "Pearl" is written in a large, elegant, pink cursive script. Underneath the name, in a small black oval, is the text "BY DR. DORIS FIELDS".

The Placitas community and, especially, PCL have lost a dear and valued community member. Harriet Pearl Neal gave the three things all non-profit organizations need: Time, Talent, and Treasure. She was a volunteer with, a patron of, and a donor to PCL. For several years, Harriet worked a steady shift on the Help Desk, interfacing directly with library patrons. A patron herself, Harriet was an avid reader and had a broad palate for literature. In addition to serving as Vice Chair of the Board, Harriet served on the Capital Campaign Committee, the Sustainability Committee, and the Finance Committee. Using her academic and professional background in mathematics and finance, Harriet served as Treasurer of the



PCL Board of Directors, where she worked with the Bookkeeper and the Administrator to establish systems to streamline the library's financial affairs.

A Fine Art photographer with a keen eye for focus, Harriet shared her work in many of the exhibitions of the PCL Art Committee, New Mexico EXPO, Placitas Studio Tour, and the Placitas Artists Series. For all the years she lived in Placitas, along with her beloved husband, James "Jim" Neal, Harriet made major, generous contributions to PCL and many other community organizations. She never talked about any of her contributions; however, it should be noticed that Harriet and Jim's contribution helped meet the financial goal to build the Kellum-Rose and Deuel Wing of the library. The Pearl Children's Room is named for Harriet, several ancestors, and her granddaughter who shared her middle name, Pearl. All who have not had an opportunity are urged to read the plaque that speaks of the genuine Pearls for whom the room is named.

One of my fondest memories is camping at the North Rim of the Grand Canyon on a trip organized by Harriet and Jim. Altogether, we were six, and four of us were about five to twenty years younger than Harriet and Jim. Harriet and Jim, however, were considerably more physically fit for the hikes than the four of us. Harriet and Jim would be hiking along, showing us various geologic formations Jim identified and photogenic views Harriet helped us see. Sometimes, the younger of us needed to stop for a rest and, not wanting to expose our lack of fitness, we used the excuse that we wanted to know more about a geologic formation (an alluvial fan) where we were standing or the photogenic effect of morning light on a particular cliff. Although I have camped many times and in many locations, this trip with Harriet and Jim remains one of my favorites. Seeing their beloved North Rim of the Grand Canyon through their eyes enriched our experience immeasurably.



*One of Harriet's favorite views to capture in various types of weather, seasons, and lighting at the North Rim of the Grand Canyon. Photo courtesy of Lilith Ren.*

Harriet urged me to serve as chair of the Board of Directors of PCL. I agreed but only if she would serve as Vice Chair. During my tenure as Chair, Harriet was at my side for every major decision the library



needed. As I sat with her one evening during the final weeks of her life on this plane, I told her how much her support meant to me and noted that I never made one decision without consulting her. In a tone that spoke of her distinct character, dignity, integrity and, of course wit, she responded with a big smile and a direct look into my eyes, "I know." We both laughed out loud, a gut-busting laugh. This was acknowledgement of a "knowing" we shared. I am honored to have known Harriet Pearl Neal and grateful for the myriad contributions she made to PCL and to Placitas overall. I will treasure the time and wisdom Harriet shared with me over the years. I will remember her always. I miss her greatly and, indeed, her memory is a blessing.

PEACE,  
Doris Fields



*Resting on our hike at the North Rim of the Grand Canyon. L-R: Doris, Jim, Harriet, and Judith. Photo courtesy of Lilith Ren.*



**Fall Star Party and Star Talk**  
*November 15 (5 – 10 PM)*

PCL's Fall Star Party will be on November 15, beginning at 5 PM with solar viewing. At 7 PM, The Albuquerque Astronomical Society's (TAAS) own Star Master will teach us about the multitude of stars and planets which will be in view that night. Afterwards, the sky will be dark and the stars will have begun to show themselves. Viewing will continue into the night, wrapping up at 10 PM. There will be a variety of types and sizes of telescopes to guide you to the wonders of our dark skies.

The Placitas Star Party is free and open to all people between the ages of 1 day and 120 years, so bring your family, friends, and your curiosity. The enthusiastic members of TAAS will be on hand to share their knowledge of the heavens, as well as the different telescopes on hand. Star parties are a fun and informal way to learn, meet other sky watchers, and inspire lifelong learning about our universe.

It is highly recommended that you arrive well before dark for ease of parking and for watching the setup of the various types of telescopes. Please have only parking lights on as you come into the parking lot. PCL's magnificent "Parking Jedis" will be on hand with their light sabers to direct you. If you bring a flashlight, please cover it with red, which is the only light which does not affect night vision. Dress warmly and only use red flashlights or headlamps in the observing area in order to preserve night vision. This event is co-sponsored by TAAS and PCL.

For more information, visit [www.taas.org](http://www.taas.org), [www.placitaslibrary.com](http://www.placitaslibrary.com), call (505) 867-3355, or email





## SAVE THE DATE!

### *Placitas Holiday Market*

Sat Nov 22 | Sun Nov 23 | 10am to 4pm

#### AT THE FOLLOWING LOCATIONS:

1. Wild Hearts Gallery
2. Placitas Community Library
3. Placitas Winery
4. Las Placitas Presbyterian Church
5. Placitas Elementary School
6. Placitas Senior Center

*Learn more at [PlacitasHolidayMarket.com](http://PlacitasHolidayMarket.com)*



#### **5th Annual Placitas Holiday Market**

*November 22-23, 2025 (10 AM - 4 PM)*

The 5th Annual Placitas Holiday Market will return to the traditional weekend before Thanksgiving with events at six sites located on or near Highway 165. Pick up a map and follow the Candy Cane signage to the market sites. You will find art, crafts, food, and drink to benefit the good works of local community groups and charities as well. Maps will be available at all venue sites and online. Admission is free. For more information, go to [www.placitasholidaymarket.com](http://www.placitasholidaymarket.com).





**Site #1 – Wild Hearts Gallery, Homestead Village Shopping Center, 220-B NM-165:** An artist collective of 14 members that features painters, sculptors, potters, photographers, printmakers, jewelers, woodworkers, glass, fiber, and mosaic artists. A portion of sales will benefit Placitas District Volunteer Fire Brigade, Inc. in memory of the late Dr. David Johnson, a long-time gallery member. We will also be selling what remains of David's inventory – his well-known cutting boards and some smaller items.

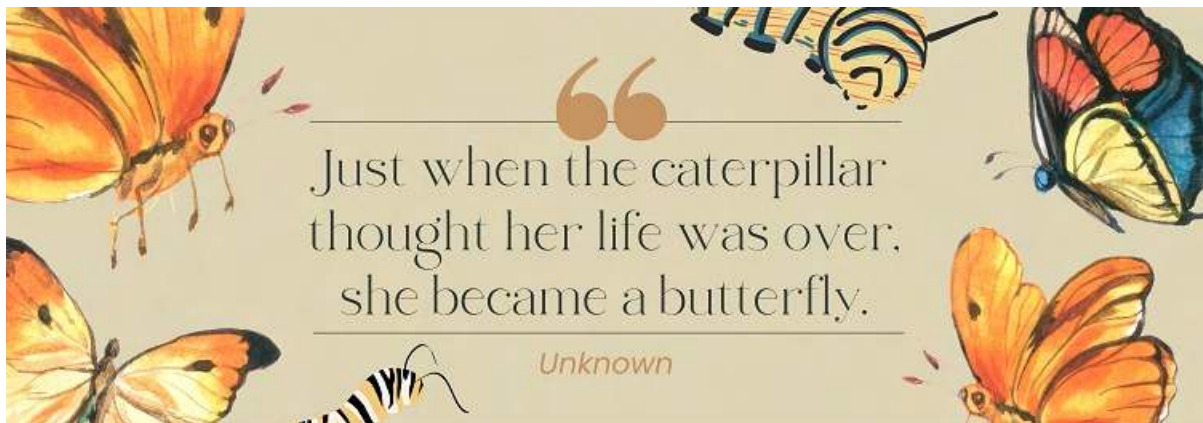
**Site #2 – Placitas Community Library, 453 NM-165:** A nonprofit providing children and adult programs, an art gallery, and meeting space for community use. With a Holiday Fiesta theme, the library will feature 13 artists, a raffle benefiting library programs, bake and book sale.

**Site #3 – Placitas Winery, 26 Camino de los Pueblitos:** A micro-winery producing fruit wines and a community event center. It will feature 26 artists, a raffle, wine, beer, cocktails, and food to warm the spirits. Raffle sales to benefit Placitas Elementary School's art and music programs.

**Site #4 – Historic Las Placitas Presbyterian Church, 7 Paseo de San Antonio:** This 19th century Spanish village church will feature the artwork of 15 artists and a raffle that will benefit Placitas Artists Series, a nonprofit that produces annual music performances and art exhibitions in the church. Traditional homemade tamales, posole, and Frito pie will be available for purchase. The church will be open on Sunday at 10 AM.

**Site #5 – Placitas Elementary School, 5 Camino del Carbon:** PES ranks among the top 25% of public and charter schools in the state. It will feature over 25 artists, and a raffle and bake sale benefiting the school's educational programs.

**Site #6 – Placitas Community Senior Center, 41 Camino de Las Huertas:** This heartbeat in our community provides classes, exercise, field trips, and more, plus services for seniors including congregate meals, meal delivery, and transportation. The center will display a variety of artwork and crafts from 20 artisans.



**Community Giving Tree**  
*November 25: Tree goes up at the library*  
*December 13: Return UNWRAPPED gift to the library*

It's almost that time of year once again! Our Community Giving Tree will be up at PCL on November



25th. The tree benefits kids in Placitas and Bernalillo and is sponsored by PCL, Sophia's Giving Circle and Casa Rosa. Come grab an ornament, shop for the desired gift (\$35 limit so there's equanimity in all gifts), and return UNWRAPPED to the library by 12/13. Thank you, in advance, for your continued support!

FROM THE  
**LANDSCAPE &  
BUILDING  
MAINTENANCE  
COMMITTEES**

by Dawn Foster, SEMG 2017,  
Landscape Committee Co-Chair



### **The Oft-Maligned Broom Snakeweed**

It's Fall, and yellow flowers abound – Annual and Maximilian sunflowers, Golden crownbeards, ragworts, and chamisas. And don't forget the beautiful, Fall-blooming, yellow-flowering subshrub, called snakeweed. But like most things, snakeweed has both positive and negative attributes. Negative characteristics include its potential “weediness” and flammability, especially when dry. I have a friend that yanks it from his yard at first bloom.

As for its positive attributes:

- “Snakeweed is a time-honored herb recognized for its diverse healing properties and wide-ranging applications in traditional and modern herbal medicine. Rich in bioactive compounds such as flavonoids, terpenoids, and alkaloids, snakeweed has been used by indigenous peoples for centuries to manage inflammatory conditions, relieve pain, and support digestive and immune health. Traditionally prepared as teas, tinctures, or topical extracts, this versatile herb offers a natural approach to wellness and stress relief.” (2)
- The abundant tiny florets of snakeweed collectively attract various insects – bees and butterflies – as pollinators. Snakeweed also has wildlife benefits; it provides food, shelter, and protection (as cover) for wildlife, including small mammals and birds, and provides food for birds, jackrabbits, and some large ungulates including mule deer and pronghorn antelope.

Happy gardening!

1. USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service Plant Guide; [https://plants.usda.gov/DocumentLibrary/plantguide/pdf/cs\\_gusa2.pdf](https://plants.usda.gov/DocumentLibrary/plantguide/pdf/cs_gusa2.pdf) (accessed 9/25/25)
2. Snakeweed: Therapeutic Uses, Active Properties, and Integrative Health Benefits; <https://vitalibrary.com/snakeweed-medicinal-health-benefits/> (accessed 9/25/25)
3. Southwest Desert Flora; [http://southwestdesertflora.com/WebsiteFolders/All\\_Species/Asteraceae/Gutierrezia sarothrae, Broom Snakeweed.html](http://southwestdesertflora.com/WebsiteFolders/All_Species/Asteraceae/Gutierrezia_sarothrae,_Broom_Snakeweed.html) (accessed 9/25/25)



Sincere thanks to all the volunteers that have lovingly helped grow and maintain the library's gardens this past year! Wayne and I greatly appreciate your efforts, and we, all us Landscape volunteers, have received *many* compliments on the gardens throughout the year!



*All Mixed Up*  
**MIXED MEDIA TEXTILE**  
**ARTISTS OF NEW MEXICO**

EXHIBIT: NOV 25, 2025 - JAN 1, 2026  
RECEPTION: DECEMBER 12, 5 - 6:30 PM



**All Mixed Up: Mixed Media Textile Artists of New Mexico**

*Exhibit: Nov 25, 2025 - Jan 1, 2026*

*Reception: December 12, 5 - 6:30 PM*

The Mixed Media Textile Artists of New Mexico work in a vibrant, magical realm where fabrics, fibers, and found objects collide—a little bit of everything, and then some, reimagined into art.





## NOVEMBER

**NOV 9 (12 PM):** Artists' Reception: Children's Art – Art Inspired by Books, featuring works by Placitas Elementary School students. This show was created over the course of the last school year, September, 2024 – June, 2025, under the direction of their art teacher, Joanne Collier. The show runs from November 8–18. An artist reception will be held on Sunday, November 9 from 12 – 2 PM.



The  
PLACITAS Community LIBRARY  
Children's Committee

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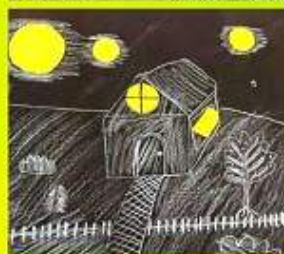
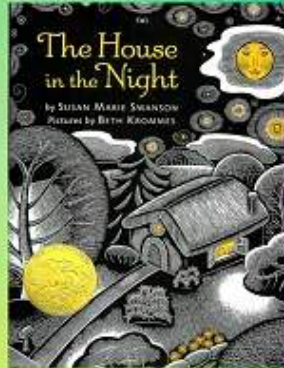
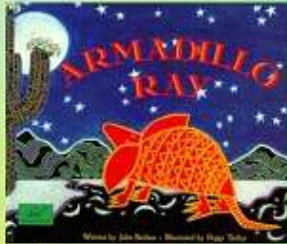
The  
PLACITAS Community LIBRARY  
Art Committee

are very excited to present an art exhibit by  
The Artists of Placitas Elementary School

# CHILDREN'S ART *Inspired* BY BOOKS

RECEPTION: NOV 9 | NOON – 2

Special Thanks to PES art teacher, Joanne Collier!




453 hwy 165 / 505.867.3355 / [placitaslibrary.com](http://placitaslibrary.com)

**NOV 11 (10 AM):** Pre-K Story Time featuring the theme "owls" and special guest Mikail Deese, founder of bird rescue, *On a Wing and a Prayer*. Mikail is bringing live owls for the children to meet and will provide lots of interesting information. We will have stories and an art activity plus refreshments. This is going to be fun and educational – don't miss it!




The  
**PLACITAS Community LIBRARY**  
 Children's Committee  
 invites you to attend our



**PRE-K  
STORY  
HOUR**

Ages infant-five




LOOK WHO WHO WHOOO'S  
 COMING TO STORY HOUR!  
 OWLS

WITH MIKAIL DEESE


TUES / NOV 11 / 10 AM

**FEATURED  
BOOK:**

**Owl Babies**  
 By Martin Waddell  
 & Patrick Benson



Our special guest is **Mikail Deese**, the founder of the bird rescue, *On a Wing and a Prayer*. She will be bringing **LIVE** owls! Mikail is very well known and respected in the birding community. She has rescued many beautiful birds.



453 hwy 165 / 505.867.3355 / [placitaslibrary.com](http://placitaslibrary.com)

## DECEMBER

**DEC 9 (10 AM):** Pre-K Story Time – Children will learn how Santa chose reindeer as the animals that would pull his sleigh in the book *The Reindeer Christmas* by Moe Price and Atsuko Morozumi. There will be activities and snacks!



**DEC 14 (1 PM):** Holiday Open House – A Celebration of Cultures and New Mexican Holiday Traditions, with a variety of activities. The Pueblo Enchantment Dancers from Acoma will be here to dance for you! The dancers will be children from the Pueblo presenting traditional dances. For the last dance, children will be invited to join in with the Friendship Dance. If you have a special holiday treat that you would like to share, please feel free bring it. We will have new books for the children donated by the Davis Foundation. Come celebrate the holidays with your community at the library!



## *Susanne's Selections*

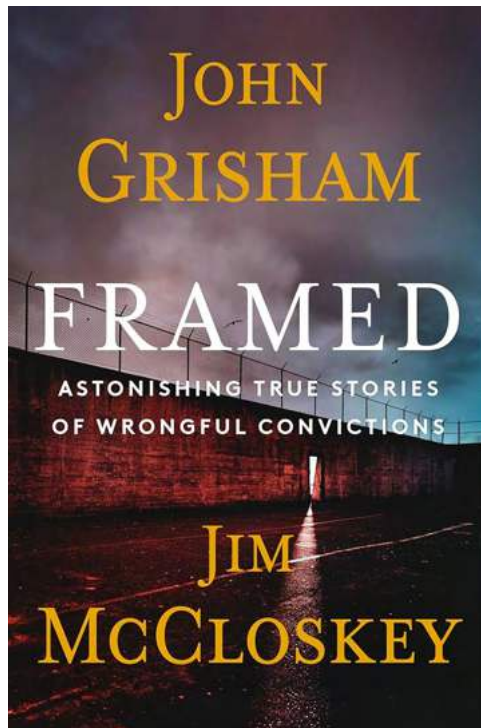
*Reading Recommendations  
By Susanne Domínguez*





## Available for e-Checkout!

The titles in *Susanne's Selections* have been added to our [Online Catalog](#) (which you can access with your library card).



### *Framed: Astonishing True Stories of Wrongful Convictions*

by John Grisham and Jim McCloskey

Author John Grisham was a personal injury and criminal defense attorney before becoming an author. He states: *"There are still thousands of innocent people in prison and more get locked up every year. The police and prosecutors responsible for wrongful convictions are immune from punishment. Racism is a huge factor at every phase: suspicion, arrest, bail, indictment, trial, and sentencing."*

Grisham and Jim McCloskey, the founder of the nonprofit organization, Centurion Ministries, that works to exonerate wrongfully-convicted people, collaborated on this important and compelling book. *Framed* has ten chapters. Each chapter relates a frightening true story of an erroneous conviction, caused by perjury, police, prosecutorial and judicial malfeasance, suppression of exculpatory evidence from the defense, and/or other acts obstructing justice (*"...they were not caused by*

*unintentional mistakes by local law enforcement or mis-identification by well-meaning eyewitnesses or honest but erroneous forensic analysis."*)

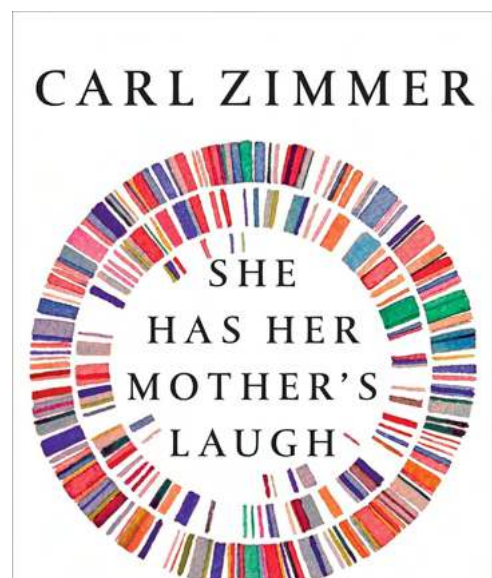
*Framed* is not a leisurely read, although it's definitely incredibly worthy and extraordinary. I had to read it in small sections since it is so shocking and heartbreaking. This unconscionable and horrible behavior has been happening in real life for decades. Dear readers, please share it with other readers to increase awareness and hopefully prevent these egregious situations from happening.

### *She Has Her Mother's Laugh: The Powers, Perversions, and Potential of Heredity*

by Carl Zimmer

*"We are all complex mosaics of many different ethnic groups, with even some Neanderthal DNA thrown in for good measure."* ~ Carl Zimmer

Zimmer, a Professor (Adjunct) of Molecular Biophysics and Biochemistry at Yale University, discusses the history of heredity and genetics including genetic testing and the ethical implications and dilemmas of genetic engineering. His narrative traces the evolution of genetic science from early theories of inheritance to present day discoveries, beginning with Charles Darwin's contributions, in a readable, not too technical manner.



Weaving together current scientific research and historical milestones, with humorous and fascinating anecdotes in order to illustrate specific points and make his book more relatable, he presents intriguing topics.

## The Powers, Perversions, and Potential of Heredity

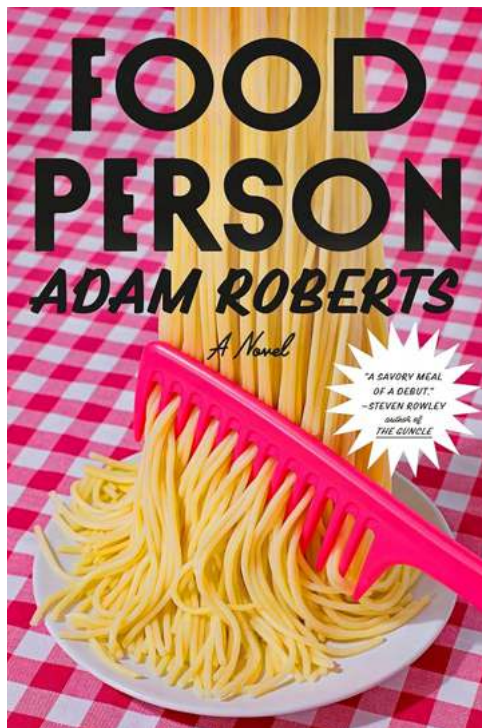
I was unaware of many, such as genetic mosaicism and microchimerism. Astonishingly, as I was taught and led to believe decades ago, genes aren't fixed. According to Zimmer, each individual carries fragments of DNA from numerous ancestors. Our bodies are not static. Cells are dynamic and mutate as we live and even carry traces of other people such as cells passed between mothers and their babies, including surrogate mothers. The field of epigenetics, reveals how environmental factors (for example, diet and stress) can influence gene expression through endless generations.

CRISPR technology, a gene-editing technology, raises ethical concerns about genetic manipulation, such as "designer babies." Zimmer writes about its good points such as defeating inherited maladies, but also warns about its misuse. *"In 2015 a reporter asked inventor Elon Musk if he was considering getting into the business of reprogramming DNA. Musk replied 'How do you avoid the Hitler Problem?'"*

*"The myth of white purity (as promoted by the Nazis) has endured even after the study of ancient DNA has proven that Europeans have inherited genes from wave after wave of migrants – people with ancestries separated by tens of thousands of years of history, mixing their genes together. "*

There is much to consider after reading this engaging, enlightening book. I hope you enjoy it!!!

From The Smithsonian Magazine: *Carl Zimmer is the award-winning New York Times columnist who has been hailed as "the country's most respected science journalist." He is the author 14 previous books, including Parasite Rex. Zimmer contributed to the coverage that won the New York Times the Pulitzer Prize for public service in 2021.*



## Food Person by Adam Roberts

*"The place where she felt the most confident – where she knew who she was, where she knew she felt completely in command and utterly herself – was at the stove."*

In this endearing debut novel by food writer and blogger Adam Roberts, Isabella Pasternak, a frumpy, socially-awkward, yet talented twenty-something food writer – after demonstrating a catastrophic live-streamed chocolate soufflé demonstration at her job at a food magazine and being fired in the aftermath – accepts a job ghostwriting a cookbook for Molly Babcock – a has-been, self-absorbed actress hoping to reclaim her former celebrity status.

In the course of attempting to write Molly's cookbook, Isabella accompanies Molly to New Jersey to rescue a binder filled with Molly's mother's recipes, which Isabella hopes to include in her memoir-filled cookbook. Despite Molly's arrogance, lack of cooking skills, and total disinterest in food, Molly and Isabella, eventually become friends. As Molly learns and accepts herself and works through past traumas, she begins to enjoy food and begins to nourish herself – just as we readers nourish our minds by reading books! Meanwhile Isabella gains new confidence in her



passion for ghostwriting Molly's cookbook.

I enjoyed reading *Food Person* immensely and appreciate Robert's witty, heartfelt narrative, and insight.

From Penguin Random House: *Adam Roberts is the author of The Amateur Gourmet, Secrets of the Best Chefs, and Give My Swiss Chards to Broadway. He started his food blog The Amateur Gourmet in 2004, and also hosts the podcast Lunch Therapy. Roberts has also written for The Washington Post and The Los Angeles Times, and for film and television. He lives in Brooklyn with his husband and their dog Winston.*



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**El Camino Real De Tierra Adentro**  
*Presented by*  
**Martha Vera of El Paso TX, Honorary Consul of Spain**



We are thrilled and honored to have Martha Vera, Honorary Consul of Spain, speak about the history of the El Camino Real De Tierra Adentro and how we can work collectively to establish the trail in our country as a UNESCO World Heritage site in unison with the Mexican portion designated in 2010. Martha will also discuss the Vatican's desire to establish this trail as a Holy Route, the source of bringing Christianity to our country, while adding markers for those wanting to make the religious pilgrimage along this special trail.

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