

It's time for the first ever Summer Reading Button Exchange!

What the heck is a button exchange?

The Guild of Library Makers is inviting everyone to make buttons and send them in to be mixed into mystery boxes to be sent back out to everyone who participates. Show off your creativity and get a cool box of buttons from strange and exotic corners of the state!

All you have to do is make 50 buttons with a summer reading theme and send them to us. We'll mix all the buttons, sort them into mystery boxes, and then send those boxes back out to everyone who participates!

If your organization has multiple locations or teams who would like to participate (multiple branches of the same library system or different classes at a school, for example), that's great! Please enter each location/team separately so that we can keep track of all the participants.

Do you think your local senior center or fire department would like to participate? Good news! The program is open to all libraries, schools, library co-ops, and other organizations partnered with their local library who want to promote and support summer reading.

Help us save on shipping costs! If you participate in RIDES and you invite a group to join the exchange that doesn't, *please* have them use your library as the receiving location for their mystery box! If your organization is entering multiple teams who share a mailing address (like different classes at the same school), we will try to group your mystery boxes together when we return them.

What you do with the buttons is up to you; display them, wear them, give them to patrons, trade them with other libraries...whatever feels right, just make sure you show off the buttons you get and think about sending a thank you or a shout out to everyone that sent you one!

Sounds great! How do we sign up?

To participate, here's what you'll need to do:

1. **EITHER fill out the entry form here:**
<https://forms.gle/9UxCCgPtkYdMt7Yd7>

OR send an email to:

guildoflibrarymakers@gmail.com

The email **MUST**:

- a. Have "2026 Button Exchange" in the subject line

- b. Include the name of your library, institution, or organization
- c. Include your RIDES code if you have one

You can find your RIDES code here:

members.mcls.org/w/melcatforms/melcontacts-rides.cfm

- d. Include your physical mailing address
- e. Include a good point of contact (phone number and email)

2. **Make 50 buttons**

This is the fun part, so be creative! Your buttons can be made on a button press, colored by first graders, 3D printed, crocheted, lovingly hand carved from imported marble...whatever! Use whatever you like for a fastener (pin back, magnet clasp, etc), but please make sure any pointy bits aren't going to poke anyone when you ship the buttons and please try to keep the total weight down.

Your buttons should:

- a. Have a summer reading theme
- b. Include your organization's name or logo so people will know where it came from and who to thank!

If you're not sure how to make a button or you need some help, reach out to the Guild of Library Makers at guildoflibrarymakers.com or guildoflibrarymakers@gmail.com and we'll do what we can to support you directly or connect you with a local resource who can help!

3. **Box up the buttons**

- a. Put all your buttons in a box...*please* do not ship them in an envelope.
- b. Write "2026 SUMMER READING BUTTON EXCHANGE" on the outside of the box or print a label and stick it on there.
- c. Put a a piece of paper with the following information inside the box with the buttons:
 - i. The name of your library, institution, or organization
 - ii. Your RIDES code if you have one
You can find your RIDES code here:
members.mcls.org/w/melcatforms/melcontacts-rides.cfm
 - iii. Your physical mailing address
 - iv. A good point of contact (phone number and email)

4. **Ship us the buttons.**

BUTTONS MUST BE RECEIVED NO LATER THAN MARCH 31, 2026!

You can send us the buttons one of two ways:

- a. Send them through the RIDES network to:
Dearborn Heights Library, John F. Kennedy, Jr. Branch

ATTN: Carolyn Smith
RIDES code: 500-ZV370_28

- b. Mail them to or drop them off at the Wilder branch of the Detroit Public Library:
Wilder Branch Library
ATTN: Sarah Mills / Justine Cucchi-Dietlin
7140 E 7 Mile Rd
Detroit, MI 48234

5. **That's it!**

Sit back, relax, and wait for your mystery box to arrive! We'll start processing the submissions the first week of April and will be shipping everything out by the end of the month so that everyone receives their boxes in time for the start of summer reading!

6. **Actually...**

Well...there is *one* more thing you can do.

TAKE PICTURES! Show off your design, give a shout out to your staff and volunteers, give us a virtual tour of your space, challenge other groups to out-sparkle your fabulous creations...whatever! This is a great opportunity to connect with each other and promote libraries and reading, so let's take advantage of it!

Post them on your websites and social media pages and tag them with #SummerReadingButtonExchange. Email them to us at guildoflibrarymakers@gmail.com or join our Discord at <https://discord.gg/9vRYyXKPrf> and share them with the GoLM community!

Please join the Guild of Library Makers in giving a *huge* thank you to the John F. Kennedy, Jr. branch of the Dearborn Heights Library and the Wilder branch of the Detroit Public Library for helping us make this happen, and thank you to the Deliveries team at The Library Network for being so great to work with!

Questions? Suggestions? Want to pitch in? Connect with GoLM!

Website: guildoflibrarymakers.com
Email: guildoflibrarymakers@gmail.com
Discord: <https://discord.gg/9vRYyXKPrf>

Happy making, everyone!