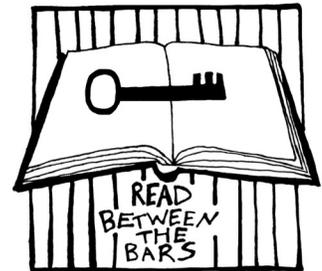


Partying for a Purpose

Read Between the Bars

Fundraising House Party Guide

Would you like to catch up with friends and neighbors, build community, and support Read Between the Bars? If so, a fundraising house party gives you the chance to do all of that at once. RBtB is solely volunteer-based, and all of the funds we collect go toward the cost of collecting, packaging, and mailing books to prisoners in Arizona. Meeting postage costs is our collective's biggest challenge, but the good news is that you can help us meet those costs—and have fun while doing it! This guide will help you organize a fundraising house party so that you can help get books directly into the hands of prisoners.



Essential Ingredients for a Successful House Party

Because RBtB has no paid staff and no other overhead, any amount of money helps. Five dollars will send a package to one prisoner (and hopefully leave us some change for another package!), so a few dollars from each of your guests will have a big impact on the lives of a lot of people inside Arizona's prisons. Your house party will also introduce RBtB to new community members. To ensure the greatest success, make sure your house party planning includes these essential ingredients:

- ✓ Your guests receive invitations to the party.
- ✓ The invitations make it clear that your party will be a fundraising event.
- ✓ Guests arrive and enjoy finger foods, snacks, and drinks.
- ✓ Guests get a brief overview of what RBtB does.
- ✓ The host or another volunteer enthusiastically asks guests to make contributions.

The next sections will give you tips on how to put these essential ingredients together.

The Invitations

Before sending out invitations, think of an attendance goal for your house party. You can base it on the amount of space you have for guests and the amount of time you have to prepare

entertainment for them. Once that's done, you're ready to start your guest list. Successful house party planners usually invite two to four times as many guests as they want in attendance. To make your guest list, think of friends, neighbors, co-workers, and members of your social clubs and organizations who share your interests in causes.

Are you still short on people to invite? If so, you can word your invitations to encourage your guests to bring additional guests. You can also use Facebook or other social media to passively invite your other friends and acquaintances.

Now that you're ready to work on the invitations, think of how you'll send them. Will your friends respond best to invitations they get in their mailboxes or their email inboxes? Once that's decided, you can work on writing your invitations. If you tend to be more formal with your friends, be formal with your invitations. If you tend to be more relaxed and casual with your friends, use the same tone in your invitations.

Remember to make it clear that your party will be a fundraising event. A great way to reinforce that aspect of the party is to mention in your invitations that if the invited person can't make it, she or he can mail a check to you (or directly to RBtB) or donate to RBtB online at readbetweenthebars.com.

A good time frame for sending out your invitations is about two to three weeks prior to your house party.

The Refreshments

You have your attendance goal and now you need to think of what to serve your guests. What was a hit at prior parties you've hosted or attended? What do you like to eat or drink when you go to parties? If you're short on ideas, you can ask a friend or acquaintance who enjoys entertaining guests, or go to your local library for ideas. You can also contact RBtB to ask for advice from a volunteer.



If you have *too many* ideas and can't decide which ones to use, consider the timing of your house party. Will some people be enjoying your refreshments in lieu of having dinner? If so, consider having more hors d'oeuvres and savory foods and fewer desserts. Do some of your friends follow kosher, halal, or vegetarian diets, or have medically necessary dietary restrictions? If so, you can pick recipes based on their needs.

Finally, it's time to think about logistics! If you're expecting a large group, spread your refreshments around so that people aren't crowded into one spot when they want something to eat or drink.



The Overview of What Read Between the Bars Does

The day of your house party has arrived. Your guests have arrived and are enjoying finger foods, snacks, and drinks. Now is your chance to tell them about RBtB. Start by thanking your guests for arriving. Just by showing up they've shown a willingness to learn more about RBtB. A great way to tell them about RBtB is to tell them about your own convictions and why you think RBtB is important. That will sound less rehearsed and more from the heart. Your pitch doesn't have to be long. By deciding to show up, your guests have already shown some understanding of what RBtB does and why it's important.

The Request for Contributions

Maybe you're a natural at asking for donations, or maybe you hate asking people for money and dread this part of your fundraising house party. If the latter is the case, keep in mind that by showing up, your guests have already expressed a willingness to be asked for funds. They're expecting this part of the party and wouldn't be there if they didn't want to pitch in with a check or a cash donation. Alternately, you can recruit someone else to step in after your pitch about RBtB to make the request for donations.

Do You Need Additional Help with Your Fundraising House Party?

We hope this guide has helped you think through the planning process for your fundraising house party. Remember, though, that it's just a guide, and putting your own creativity into party planning might be the magic ingredient that makes your party an even bigger success. You can also get the support of other RBtB volunteers. Here are some ways other volunteers could help:

- ✓ Help with wording for your invitations.
- ✓ Give advice (and recipes!) for foods you can serve.
- ✓ Announce your house party on the RBtB Facebook page.
- ✓ Announce your house party on the RBtB website.
- ✓ Announce your house party to the RBtB volunteer email list.
- ✓ Help with talking points for your overview of what RBtB does.
- ✓ Show up at your house party to speak briefly about RBtB.
- ✓ Bring or send informational materials about RBtB.
- ✓ Send you PDFs so that you can print and copy your own informational materials about RBtB.

Since RBtB is a Tucson-based collective, some assistance might not be available for house parties elsewhere in Arizona. However, it never hurts to ask. As our network of supporters grows, so will the geographic reach of our volunteers! You can contact RBtB by mail or email.

Address

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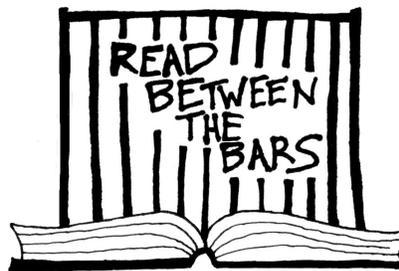
Email

readbetweenthebars@gmail.com

Website

readbetweenthebars.com

Thanks for your generous support!



**Arizona's
Books-to-Prisoners Program**

“The degree of civilization in a society can be judged by entering its prisons. “

—Fyodor Dostoyevsky

Read Between the Bars is a volunteer-based, non-profit program under the umbrella of Casa Libre en la Solana, 501(c)3 number 56-2371298.