



NEWSLETTER

November 2025

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Campaign Reaches \$3 Million Goal

Friends of the Modesto Library has announced the success of the Lifelong Legacy campaign to raise funds for the renovation of the Modesto Library. The ambitious \$3 million goal was met through the generosity of more than 30 major donors and hundreds of donations from individual library supporters.

"When we embarked on this campaign, we were taking a leap of faith, counting on the fact that others love and value the library as much as we do," said Denise Nordell, FOML's immediate past president and campaign chair. "One of our main goals was to be sure every member of the community had an opportunity to be a part of the effort to transform the library into a place of pride for Modesto."



The library renovation, currently underway, is funded by \$18 million from Stanislaus County, state library grants and library reserves. The Lifelong Legacy effort will provide

enhancements such as a reimagined early childhood space; comfortable, durable furnishings; tech upgrades for public meeting rooms; quiet reading rooms and more.

The major fundraising effort was led by Lynn Dickerson and Katy Menges, whose team reached out to large donors. "I'm thrilled the campaign to beautify our beloved downtown library hit the goal of \$3 million less than two years after we began asking our generous friends to support this project," said Dickerson, former CEO of the Gallo Center for the Arts. "What a community we live in! So much generosity and willingness to make our community better for everyone."

Menges commented, "The library is a child's first adventure, a teenager's escape, and an adult's rescue. It is the enduring legacy of a free, advanced democracy and the hope of every generation."

She continued, "Without free, public libraries, democracies would not thrive or survive. Our imaginations would not fly!"

Eric Benson, whose donation helped the campaign over the finish line, said, "Carol Benson, my wife and friend for over 40 years, devoted her life to teaching reading. She inspired hundreds of children through her work. Honoring her legacy by continuing this mission is a fitting tribute that will help many more experience the joy of reading."

The main library is expected to reopen to the public in fall 2026. Donations to the Lifelong Legacy are still being accepted. For more information and a complete list of donors, visit modestolibraryfriends.org/legacy.

Two Book Fairs Benefit FOML

The online Scholastic Book Fair continues through Nov. 18. Friends of the Modesto Library

receives 25 percent credit, at no cost to you; we

use that money to purchase books for the library or to give away at community events. Shop at

<https://bit.ly/4i68S41> or find a link on our home page at modestolibraryfriends.org



Our annual **Barnes & Noble Book Fair** will be Dec. 12 to 14 at the Modesto store, 3501 McHenry Ave. A portion of the sales from that weekend will be donated to FOML. Last year, we received \$2,500 from the book fair. Members will be on hand to explain our organization and mission to shoppers.

Please, Join Us

As of Nov. 5, we have 178 paid memberships. With more members, we could help the library even more. If you are a current member, thank you so much! If you're not, it's not too late to join or renew a membership. Go to modestolibraryfriends.org/join/

Thanks to Dittos for printing the FOML newsletter.

Yarning Friends Busy in Salida

Despite the library renovation, Yarning with Friends continues to hold monthly classes for adults who want to learn to knit or crochet or to improve their skills. (Children 12 and older may attend if accompanied by a participating adult.)

We also welcome skilled yarners who prefer to work on their projects in the company of others.

Throughout the year, we make yarn art for the library. If you visit the Salida branch this fall, look for garlands of fall leaves draped around the room. If you visit the Modesto Express branch, you'll see colorful fall pumpkins everywhere you look. All were knitted or crocheted by local crafters.



Our current project is making mini hats and scarves to decorate books. Both

Salida and Modesto Express branches will feature "wrap up with a good book" displays this winter.

Our next meeting is Tuesday, Nov. 18, from 5:30 to 7:30 pm, at the Salida Regional Library. More information on our website.

Board Meeting Open

Friends of the Modesto Library's quarterly board meeting will be Wednesday, Dec. 3, in the Salida Regional Library Community Room. It is open to all members and others interested in supporting the Modesto library. The meeting begins at 4 p.m.



On Oct. 28, FOML joined Library staff, the McHenry Mansion and other groups to sponsor a Halloween party. Over 1,470 parents and kids enjoyed a fun time. Our volunteers gave out 600 treats.

Telling the Story of What Library Has to Offer

By Kathy Sniffen

Each time Friends of the Modesto Library volunteers at an event, we have an opportunity to build support for the library. One goal of advocacy is to connect groups together for a common cause. Another is to focus on community needs that support the mission of the library.

Most people are not aware of all the services, benefits, and positive impacts available through the library. FOML members engage with people to find a service or benefit they care about, then let them know the library's role in fulfilling that need. We talk about FOML and invite individuals to join. We hand out information, ask about their volunteer interests, mention upcoming activities, and make new friends.

The Pop-Up Shop at the Farmers Market in mid-October is an example of advocating for the library. It was a small event where we could engage, interact with, and inform community about library programs and resources. We wanted to build relationships that generate active support for the library and raise funds to support library programs. We approached everyone using those messages – especially community members in the weeks leading up to the Pop-Up, but also FOML members, artist donors, and volunteers. Shoppers received messages of support for the library.

We encountered three kinds of library engagement: A strong community of people ready to actively engage in support of the library exists. Another group is familiar with the library, open to involvement, and wanting information. Many people are confused about the temporary library closure and where to find services. All were willing to talk to a friendly, knowledgeable volunteer. Over time these interactions lead people to active support for the library. Our work is meaningful, important, and we will continue to build our efforts.

Pop-Up At A Glance

Who: 8 team members, 20 volunteers, 28 artists contributed 350 items total

When: Oct. 23 and 25

Bottom line: \$5,100 and untold goodwill raised for FOML and the library