



NEWSLETTER

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Sutter Health Boosts FOML Legacy Campaign

In late March Friends of the Modesto Library received notice of a \$100,000 investment from Sutter Health that puts a crown on the Lifelong Legacy campaign to raise funds for the Modesto Library renovation. The Community Health Investment Award will enhance the library's abilities to support job readiness, increase digital access to the community, and promote mental wellness through art, according to County Librarian Sarah Dentan.



"Because a person's health is affected by many factors outside the walls of our hospital and care centers, such as access to employment or mental health support, we invest in organizations and projects that help close these gaps," said Gino Patrizio, president of Sutter Health's Greater Central Valley Division. "Individuals, families and communities can flourish when we address these factors together."

FOML began its campaign with an ambitious goal of \$3 million. The campaign has raised \$3,132,408 through the generosity of 450 people, including more than 30 major contributors. Most of the work is funded by Stanislaus County, state library grants, and library reserves. The Lifelong Legacy effort will provide important enhancements such as a reimagined Early Childhood space, tech upgrades for public meeting rooms, quiet reading rooms and more.

By the Numbers -- The Renovation Project

While we don't yet have a specific date for the summer reopening of the Modesto Library at 15th and I streets, Stanislaus County Librarian Sarah Dentan shared exciting information about what is going on:

- A recent survey showed that 92 percent of the responders are satisfied or very satisfied with library services.
- Last year, 1,093,048 library materials circulated – even with the Modesto main library closed.
- The circulation includes 994 deliveries to homebound residents.
- The small Modesto Express Library, located in Tenth Street Plaza as a temporary location while the main library is closed, was the third busiest in the county's 13-branch system.
- 56 staff members from the Modesto Library have relocated during the renovation, which started in November 2024. Most of them work out of the Salida Library.
- The staff members moved the books – 207,000 volumes in all.
- The move also involved 4.5 miles of shelving, weighing 21.5 tons

Presidents' Message: Show You Appreciate the Library Staff

By Jennifer Pereira and Ellen Burchett

Where do you find library joy?

Undoubtedly, a library staff member has been instrumental in creating that experience. Did they place a book in your hands that sparked a lifelong passion for the power of the written word? Perhaps they took the time to guide you to a resource that provided the answers to a critical question. Maybe they ensure a safe, inclusive space to study or peruse the stacks for your next read. Library employees are invaluable.



On April 21, Library Workers Appreciation Day, Friends of the Modesto and Salida Libraries will be celebrating their efforts with a luncheon. Despite the relentless challenges they have faced with the renovation of our Modesto branch, each of them has continued to provide essential access to everything that makes libraries vital to a thriving community. So, next time you encounter a library staff member, share your appreciation for how they provide opportunities to Find Your Library Joy!

Jennifer and Ellen are co-presidents of Friends of the Modesto Library.

What About the Outside? A Potential Vision

The Modesto Library will look dramatically different when it reopens later this year. There has been far less discussion about the outside appearance.

At the FOML annual meeting, Assistant County Librarian Brian Sontag and Chris Moreno, Modesto Library supervisor, shared some possibilities for the exterior. The renovation budget includes money for painting, removal of overgrown trees and basic rehab of the planter boxes. Money is not yet earmarked for landscaping.



“The goal,” Chris said, “is to deliver visible, community-focused improvements that help the library stand out as a community landmark.” The two have partnered with the California Native Plant Society – North San Joaquin Valley Chapter, working with master gardener Rhonda Allen and her team to design a landscape plan specifically for the library’s portico. The plan includes a variety of native plants and trees that use little water and provide food and habitat for birds, bees and other pollinators.

The garden would not require weekly mowing or other expensive maintenance. It could serve as a living classroom. Signs would identify the various plants. The project also would include low (3-foot) fencing around the planters to protect the landscaping from heavy foot traffic.

Custom bicycle racks also are envisioned, to improve safety and accessibility for cyclists and to tie in with the city’s goal of being more bike friendly. A preliminary estimate puts the total cost of all this at \$125,000.

In Brief: Help Wanted, Eating for a Good Cause, Online Book Fair

Help Wanted -- Co-Presidents Jennifer Pereira and Ellen Burchett are looking for members to lead some of our key activities. Here are some unclaimed positions that might interest you:

- Organize First Fridays tables and volunteer at First Friday events in downtown Modesto May through October,
- Organize volunteers at our Modesto Farmers Market tables in spring and summer,
- Serve as recording secretary for the FOML Board,
- Be the historian,
- Photograph FOML activities for use on social media, our website, etc.

Details on job duties and options are available in the digital version of this newsletter, available on the website, www.modestolibraryfriends.org.

Imagination Library -- FOML supports the Imagination Library in our county. This nationwide effort was launched years ago by entertainer Dolly Parton to get books into the hands of young children. The basics of this simple fundraiser offered by Panda Express:

When: Friday, May 1. Place order online for pickup or delivery on that day.

Where: Available at Panda Express locations nationwide www.pandaexpress.com

Why: In celebration of Día De Los Niños/Libros (Children’s Book Day)

How: Online orders only. Use 9012002 in the Fundraiser Code box when checking out at www.pandaexpress.com or via the Panda app.

Scholastic Online Book Fair -- While we wait for the library to reopen, Friends is continuing to offer Scholastic Book Fairs online. These fairs offer low-cost, high-quality books and other items so people can stock up on books for friends’ or family birthdays, holidays, vacations or summer reading. Book orders totaling over \$35 ship free. Your purchases between May 14 and 27 earn credit that FOML uses for books for library programs.

FOML also invites shoppers using the online book fair to contribute to buying books for local charities serving children, including: Children’s Crisis Center, LearningQuest – Family Literacy Program, Haven, Hutton House, Parent Resource Center, Red Shield Community Center and the Redwood Family Center

Look for details on our website: modestolibraryfriends.org

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