



# NEWSLETTER

July 2026

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## Library Reopening: 3 Months and Counting Down

When the Modesto Library closed in late fall 2024, the projected reopening date seemed distant. Now we know that the reopening is coming up quickly – October. The specific date has not been announced but it is soon, very soon.

Most of the Modesto Library collection has been stored at the Salida Library. While it has not been available for browsing, people could still request titles. The library staff boxed up all those books for the move out of the Modesto Library and they'll be moving the books, DVDs, and other materials back to the downtown library.

Modesto Library Manager Chris Moreno explained the first impact of the book move begins Sept. 1. "The Modesto Library collection will be temporarily unavailable for hold requests prior to the reopening date. This pause allows staff sufficient time to safely move materials from the Salida Library storage site back to the Modesto Library. All other library branch collections will remain available for hold requests during this period."

The next issue of this newsletter will have more information about the reopening, including the celebration plans and the wall that will recognize donors to our Lifelong Legacy Campaign, which raised \$3 million to enhance the work paid for by a state grant and city and county funds.



## Presidents' Message: Opportunities Await Volunteers in Renovated Building

What an exciting time to be a library enthusiast! With the reopening of the library on the horizon, we hope you share our excitement about the update and seeing what improvements our capital campaign has provided.

Please keep an eye out for upcoming volunteer events as we head toward October. With the library closed for almost two years, our asks have been relatively minimal, but this fall will have many options for you, from helping at the grand reopening bash, our mainstays like the Youth Craft Fair and Halloween, and awareness raising opportunities such as fall farmers market events. Thank you to everyone who has continued rejoining, volunteering, raising money, and especially advocating for our wonderful library. We hope to see you often this fall, enjoying the library renovation that you helped make possible!

With gratitude,  
Ellen Burchett & Jennifer Pereira



Kathy, left, and Anna

## Foundation Honors FOML Stars Who Led Fundraiser

The Stanislaus Library Foundation recently honored Friends of the Modesto Library members Kathy Sniffen and Anna Pagonis-Pitts with Shining Star Awards for volunteerism. Kathy and Anna organized two Pop-Up Gift Shop events that generated \$5,500 for FOML to help the library.

They brought together an energetic group of volunteers, gathered ideas and mapped a plan for success. Together they collected more than 350 one-of-a-kind items donated by 28 local artisans. Anna herself crafted over 100 of the pieces, and her passion for art in the service of the community was a true inspiration for the endeavor. Congratulations to them both!

## FOML Membership – A Simple Way to Demonstrate Ongoing Support for Our Library

Our members care deeply about the Modesto Library. One way they support this treasure is by renewing their Friends of the Modesto Library membership each year. If you value our library, please renew your membership annually. And if you're not a member, please consider joining in 2026. Membership levels begin at just \$25 per year. Dues paid by you and other members account for about 70 percent of our operating budget each year. Our current total is 161; our goal is 200. Go to [modestolibraryfriends.org](http://modestolibraryfriends.org) to join or renew your membership. Please, invite a friend to join, too.

# Advocacy: A Brief Timeline Shows Long View for American Libraries

By Kathy Sniffen, Advocacy Chair

Follow an exciting trail this month to learn about the historical impact of the American Library Association (ALA). Their efforts and advocacy for librarians and libraries ensure that libraries thrive for the benefit of all people.

To commemorate their 150th anniversary, ALA created a timeline of pivotal moments that “shaped the libraries we all rely on.” It offers perspective, raises questions and offers hope about present and future advocacy efforts. You can find the timeline at the website, <https://ala150.org/>. Scroll down to “Celebrating 150 Years. . .”



1 American Library Association website

## FOML Leadership: Co-presidents Continue; 3 New Board Members



Three retired teachers who are regular volunteers for Friends of the Modesto Library activities have joined the board of directors. They were elected unanimously at the annual meeting in March. Jennifer Pereira and Ellen Burchett continue as co-presidents for 2026-27. The new board members:

**Jeanine Oliver**, top left, joined FOML in 2022, soon after retiring from the Waterford Unified School District. “I love the annual used book sale, the Barnes & Noble fundraising event, and the farmers market events. I loved helping at the pop-up shop with all of the donated good from local artisans, and anything that helps raise awareness of all the wonderful things available through our library.”

She recalled hearing a comment that the library is “just a place for the homeless to hang out.” “I’d like to be a part of dispelling that notion.”



**Fran Ewald**, middle left, last taught in Bakersfield before her retirement and joined FOML about four years ago. She, too, is an active volunteer, helping with the Scholastic Book Fairs, the used book sale, Barnes & Noble fundraisers and a farmers market event. “I enjoy all the library services and can’t wait for the reopening of the library,” Fran said.



**Nancy Rieti**, bottom left, is a relatively new member, joining FOML in 2024. She has helped at the Scholastic Book Sales, Barnes & Noble book fairs, Winter Fantasy, farmers market giveaways and the pop-up art sale. “I enjoy youth of any age and art activities,” she says.

## In Memory of Christine Brereton

Christine Brereton, a long-time FOML member, board member and past president (2014-16) passed away June 22 at the age of 78. She will be remembered for many things, including saying “yes” when there was a call for volunteers at

FOML activities, such as the Halloween Parade, book fairs, book sales, and the FOML presidency and for being a thoughtful participant at board meetings.

Barbara Quinn, a long-time friend and FOML member, remembers meeting Christine nearly 45 years ago at the Modesto Parent Participation Preschool, which their children attended. Barbara said Christine was a leader even then, serving as president of the parent group.

Christine was a longtime member of their neighborhood book club, an avid reader and advocate for children’s reading, both in school and home.

Her obituary highlighted her respected career as a register nurse and her commitment to local history, literacy and civic engagement. Christine also was a past president of the McHenry Mansion Foundation. The family suggests that remembrances, in lieu of flowers, be made to Friends of the Modesto Library, [www.modestolibraryfriends.org](http://www.modestolibraryfriends.org)



## Online Book Fair Puts Books Into Hands of Local Agencies

Seven local agencies received books from the May Scholastic Book Fair funded by donors through an eWallet option. Jeanine Oliver hand-delivered books for children and teens to Children's Crisis Center, HAVEN, Hutton House, LearningQuest, Parent Resource Center, Redwood Family Center and Red Shield Center after the spring online book fair. Hopes are to be back to in-person book fairs in late fall or early winter. Stay tuned!

**Thank you  
to Dittos for  
printing our  
newsletter.**