

Friends' News and Notes

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**THANKSGIVING APPEAL
MATCHED THIS YEAR!!**



Julia Larson

Library Evening-Hours Pilot Project: Past and Future

By Donald A. Barclay

Among the many things knocked off the rails by the COVID-19 pandemic, you can include the Merced County Library evening-hours pilot project. The pilot, which started on January 14, 2020, funded evening hours—to 8:00 PM on selected days of the week—at the following branches:

Atwater Library (District 3): Tuesdays 6 p.m.-8 p.m.

Livingston Library (District 1): Tuesdays 6 p.m.-8 p.m.

Merced Library (District 2): Tuesdays & Wednesdays 6 p.m.-8 p.m.

Delhi Library (District 4): Wednesdays 6 p.m.-8 p.m.

Los Banos Library (District 5): Wednesdays 6 p.m.-8 p.m.

In November 2019, the Merced County Board of Supervisors approved the evening-hours pilot in response to public advocacy and a February 2018 survey of Merced County residents in which 82% of respondents asked that the Library offer evening hours. The purpose of the pilot was to gather data on evening usage and, from that data, determine if evening hours should become permanent. Just as the pilot was gathering steam [continued page 4]

Honoring Former President Julia Larson

By Birdi Olivarez-Kidwell

Quiet elegance. That is what most people see when Julia Larson shows up at an event. But along with her refined grace, there is staunch advocacy, philanthropy, and a heart of service. Raised in San Francisco, and a proud graduate of Mills College's class of '46, Mrs. Larson has lived in Merced for more than 50 years. She is a former FOMCL President and an active member of several service and community groups. Her support has changed the course of Merced history. [continued on page 5]

The mission of the Friends of the Merced County Library is to enhance, focus public attention on, and generate community support for Library services, facilities, and other needs in Merced County.

The Friends Thank Our Generous Corporate Sponsors



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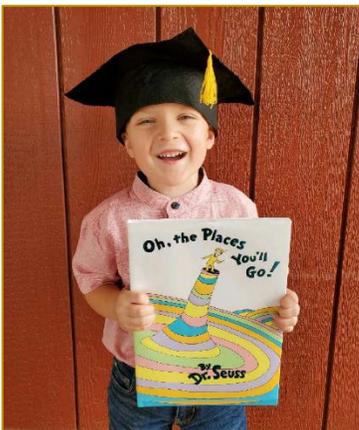
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1000 Books before Kindergarten Graduation



In August, the Merced County Library aired its third graduation for “1000 Books before Kindergarten,” an early literacy program that promotes the love of reading and family interactions around books. This year the 19 program graduates were honored in a video ceremony with congratulatory messages from County Librarian Amy Taylor, Children’s Librarian Alicia Heim, many other library staff, and Congressman Jim Costa. The program featured a read-aloud of Sandra Boynton’s book *Yay, You! Moving Up and Moving On*, a puppet show presenting *The Three Billy Goats Gruff*, and “a procession” of graduates’ photos. For having been read 1000 books before they enter Kindergarten, graduates received a gold medal, a graduation certificate, and the book *Oh, the Places You’ll Go!* by Dr. Seuss. The graduation video is available for viewing at <https://linktr.ee/mercedcolibrary>.

To participate in 1000 Books before Kindergarten, families may register and record reading logs either on paper (contact Daniel O’Brien, Daniel.Obrien@mercedcountylibrary.org) or virtually by signing up for 1000 Books as one of the Beanstack Reading Challenges at <https://linktr.ee/mercedcolibrary>. The FOMCL co-sponsors 1000 Books before Kindergarten and other Library programs for children and youth.

Bookstore News and Notes

By Sharon Terry

All of us who volunteer in the Friends' Bookstore are missing it mightily! Patrons often ask when we will get back to business. Fingers crossed, it will be soon.



Summer Reading 2020

By Leigh-Ann Thornhill

Summer Reading is an opportunity to foster the love of reading in children, teens, and adults, stave off the summer slide, and expose the library's collection to Merced County residents. COVID-19 restrictions threw a monkey wrench into the plans, but the Library staff rose to the sudden challenge of running Summer Reading 2020 virtually. This year's theme was about digging deeper into stories, discovering new facts, learning about new places and cultures, and appreciating the science behind daily life. 712 participants registered for Summer Reading this year, and they read a total of 11,287 books.

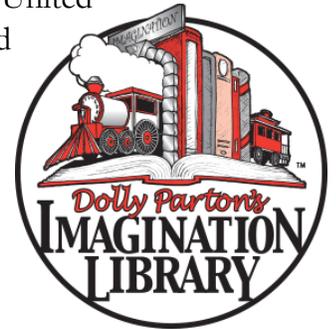
This year the online platform let readers share book reviews (see right). It offered 106 programs—music, theater, science, exercise, and crafts—enjoyed by 6,262 viewers. Summer Reading 2020 was an online success!

An Exciting New Partnership for the FOMCL

By Linda Weems

The FOMCL has been offered an opportunity to partner with First 5 Merced County, the Merced County Library, and the Merced County Office of Education on a project to send county children from 0-5 years of age a free book each month. First 5 is initiating the project with Dolly Parton's Imagination Library, and it has asked the Friends to help with nonprofit bulk mailing. The project is in the planning stages.

Dolly Parton started a foundation that she called the Imagination Library (<https://imaginationlibrary.com/>) in 1995 in her birthplace of eastern Tennessee to send books monthly to young children of the area. Her foundation now has over 1.6 million children registered throughout the United States, the United Kingdom, Ireland, Australia, and Canada and has mailed out over 145 million books!



First 5 Merced County has committed \$210,000 dollars per year for 5 years to this project and will be working on registering children from 0-5 years old in select Merced County zip codes. It will hire an outreach coordinator to inform and encourage parents to sign up. First 5 estimates that it will be able to cover 20% of eligible children--4000 preschoolers--in year 1. Each child will receive a book monthly from the Imagination Library in hopes that it will nurture a lifetime love of books and will position the child for improved literacy. As the project grows in popularity, First 5 plans to set up a waiting list and seek additional resources until it can fully meet the goal of serving 20,000 Merced County children aged 0-5 years.

This partnership is an exciting new opportunity for the FOMCL! It strengthens our capacity to work with the Merced County Library and others to promote literacy and to encourage community support for a lifetime love of reading.

A 5-Star Book Review (Summer Reading 2020)

The Southern Book Club's Guide to Slaying Vampires by Grady Hendrix
It's Steel Magnolias meet book clubs meet vampire hunting. It's a classic thriller-horror novel with bits of humor tossed in. A great throwback to the nostalgia of the south in the 1990s and the inner workings of southern housewives with a deadly book club. I read it in 5 days. It's a quick and fun read. It needs to be made into a movie ASAP.

Evening-Hours Pilot Project

[continued from page 1]

and starting to attract more library users (789 patrons were served on the few evenings in the pilot), the pandemic brought things to a screeching halt. Evening (as well as daytime) hours were suspended on March 10, 2020, three months ahead of the pilot's scheduled end date.

In spite of the pandemic, the Merced County Library has continued to offer information resources and services virtually, to remain in touch with library users via an active social media presence, and to meet the demand for printed materials by offering curbside pick-up service. Reopening the libraries for in-person use is, of course, on hold until Merced County's COVID numbers are reduced and the county can move into a safer tier.

The good news is that the Board of Supervisors approved the 2020-21 budget for the Merced County Library with the evening-hours pilot program.

Fortunately, the county is able to maintain Library funding levels thanks to resources provided by the Cares Act. The Board was reminded that county residents want evening hours and other Library services by the letters sent and the phone calls made to Supervisors. The many supporters of the Merced County Library came through when it counted, and their voices were heard loud and clear. When the Library branches reopen—and

they will—evening hours will again be on the menu. The original evening-hours schedule (see page 1) will resume (same libraries, same days, same hours). If anything, the isolation that so many have experienced during the pandemic will inspire even greater appreciation for being able to share the spaces and resources of our County Library.

Honorary Donations

For Julia Larson

Kenra Bragonier
Joanna Browning
Nancy Crane
Henry & Leona DuPertuis
Susan Flinspach
Sally Landels
Carol Linneman
Chris Long
Anita Martin
Jeannette McCollum
Dee Near
Jolene Schadler
Stephen & Sharon Wainwright
Susan Walsh
Holly Zacharias

Bookmobile Honorary Donations

For Florence DeSimone

For Jack Escobar (for his seventh birthday)
Karla Seijas & Gustavo Escobar

For Rhylan A. Escobar (for her eighth birthday)
Karla Seijas & Gustavo Escobar

For Carl and Janet Larsen
Carolyn Vara

Adopt-A-Book Honorary Donations

For the Staff of the Merced County Library

(for keeping Library services available during the pandemic)
Kenra Bragonier

For Kenra Bragonier (for her service to the FOMCL)
Susan Flinspach

For Jack Escobar (for his neighborhood leadership)
Don & Kenra Bragonier

For Rhylan A. Escobar (for her neighborhood leadership)
Don & Kenra Bragonier

For Susan Walsh (for her birthday)
Rick & Karen Albright



National Library Card Sign-up Month

September was National Library Card Sign-up Month. Wonder Woman and Batman championed the power of a Merced County Library card. They did curbside pick-up, gave away incentives, and registered 159 new cards by phone and 118 e-cards! Super!



Memorial Donations

For Ann Bean

Julia Larson

For Ray Blevins

Julia Larson

For Dr. Robert B. Northway

Suzan Banchero

For Ralph Temple

Cynthia A. Temple

For Peggy Tilley (a dedicated member of the Library staff)

Ann & Lee Andersen

Dee Near



Adopt-A-Book Memorials

For Rich Gipson

Don & Kenra Bragonier

For Bob Morita

Susan Flinspach & Jack Vevea

For Joan Stribling

Rick & Karen Albright

For Mary Ellen Wood

AAUW Book Section III



FOMCL Meetings via Zoom

Members and the public are welcome to attend.

- November 5, 2:00 p.m.
- January 7, 2:00 p.m.
- March 4, 2:00 p.m.
- May 6, 2:00 p.m.

Request an invitation at:

friendsofmercedcountylibrary@gmail.com

Many thanks to Susan Walsh,
our Zoom hostess.

More Library News

Social Media Focus. In the wake of the pandemic closures, the Library has shifted programming and outreach to the virtual world with social media. With the addition of a Library YouTube channel along with its existing Facebook and Instagram pages, the Children's Department has aired StoryTimes, science and craft videos, special virtual performers, and more to a wider audience online.

4 Beanstack Reading Challenges: Virtual Field Trips, 100 Books before College, 1,000 Books before Kindergarten, and Read Woke. Sign up at <https://linktr.ee/mercedcolibrary> or download the app!

Julia Larson Honored [continued from page 1]

Julia Larson has served as a poll-worker during local elections, is an active member and past-president of AAUW, and is a supporter of the Merced County Historical Society, to name just a few. But as landlord and sponsor of Playhouse Merced, Mrs. Larson has graciously enabled it to stay active when so many businesses and organizations are struggling due to COVID-19.

Not only does Julia Larson publicly support these organizations, she offers her personal support as well. Many Mercedians have been the recipients of her gracious hostessing at luncheons or other events for various organizations. Beyond that, the Larson home has been opened numerous times for visiting artists and guest speakers to support the organization and give visitors a more personal experience in our city.

Mrs. Larson's dedication to the Merced County Library demonstrates both the public and personal support she consistently offers. With inspiration and mentoring from Maggie Randolph, Julia was an active member and served as president of the Friends for several years in the 1980s. During her tenure, the Friends were responsible for planning speaker visits, organizing a children's story-hour, and promoting community donations of books to the collection. She looks back proudly and fondly on providing Merced Library with a tree and decorations for the holidays. When the library system was closed in the early 1990s, as part of a team, her advocacy was pivotal in the effort to reopen. Beyond her sponsorship of various Library efforts, her attendance at nearly every event provides a personal touch and shows her dedication. Because of her leadership, devotion, years of support, and pivotal efforts in keeping the Merced County Library operating, she has been selected as an Honorary Lifetime Member. Many Friends have contributed to this effort, and the funds raised in her honor will support Summer Reading 2021. Please join the Friends in congratulating Julia Larson!

County Librarian's Report

By Amy Taylor, County Librarian

Merced County Library is committed to our mission: To inspire lifelong learning, advance knowledge and strengthen our communities. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Library is following our mission by providing contactless curbside pick-up services, increasing access to electronic resources such as e-books, e-audiobooks, and online databases as well as offering enriching programming promoting recreational and educational performances virtually. Staff are dedicated to assisting our customers in a safe manner following all safety protocols.

The Library has put together

A REOPEN PLAN following the California Blueprint for a Safer Economy plan. The plan is being submitted to the Merced County Public Health Department for approval. Prior to reopening, all recommended safety precautions must be in place. These precautions include sneeze guards at public service counters, cleaning/disinfecting protocols, customer signage for facility capacity limits/social distancing, and staff training on these guidelines. Our goal has been and will continue to be to provide a safe space for residents to seek information.

We look forward to the day when we may safely open our doors and welcome the community into the Library again. Until that time, stay safe and happy reading!

GALE ONLINE RESOURCES

WE HAVE THE INFO YOU NEED!

Merced County Library offers the following Gale Online Resources

- Academic Onefile
- Biographies
- Books and Authors
- Business
- Chiltonlibrary.com
- Diversity Studies
- Elementary School
- Entrepreneurship
- Environmental Studies
- Gardening and Horticulture
- Gender Studies
- General Onefile
- Global Business Insights
- Global Issues
- Health and Wellness
- High School
- Onefile: High School Edition
- Home Improvement
- Information Science
- Informe Académico (en español)
- Legal Forms
- LegalTrac
- LitFinder
- Literature Resource Center
- Middle School
- News
- Opposing Viewpoints
- Science
- Testing & Education Reference Center
- U.S. History
- World History

CHECK THEM OUT TODAY BY GOING TO OUR WEBSITE AND CLICKING ON E-LIBRARY. IT'S FREE!

WWW.MERCEDCOUNTYLIBRARY.ORG



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Happy Thanksgiving

Dear Friends,

We know you are grateful for the Merced County Library and all that it offers the communities it serves – online databases and subscriptions, print books and other materials, information resources, community partnerships, programming for children and also for youth and adults, reading and discussion groups, guest speakers, and more.

We also know you are grateful that the Merced County Library serves all the residents of the county. Its information, materials, activities, outreach, and services are particularly important to individuals and families who are not financially secure. And, in the time of COVID-19, the number of those individuals and families is growing.

The Friends’ highest priority every year is Summer Reading. The reasons for this are powerful. Children and teens need something to do in the summer that educates, encourages, and challenges them. Reading in the summer – by themselves or with friends and family – helps keep in check the summer slide of academic skills, particularly English Language skills. Summer Reading activities expand the imagination of children in creative ways. Summer Reading is essential.

This year the Estate of Philip Wilson will match up to a total of \$5,000 of your Thanksgiving Appeal donations!
Every dollar raised will help meet our \$10,000 goal for Summer Reading.

Yes—that’s right—every dollar you donate will become two dollars for Summer Reading 2021. Your \$5 gift will become \$10. So please donate as much as you can. The Friends’ fundraising abilities were cut short with the safety measures brought about by COVID-19 – no bookstore sales and no parties or other money-making group events have been allowed. Your donation is vital to the Friends, and it will mean so much to our families and communities. Thank you very much.

Thanksgiving Appeal 2020
Donations this year will be matched, so your gift is doubled in value!

Please make your check out to: Friends of the Merced County Library
P.O. Box 2463
Merced, CA 95344-0463



Donation amount: \$ _____

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

EMAIL: _____ PHONE: _____

Thank you for your generous response.

Friends of the Merced County Library

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