

# Friends' News and Notes

A publication of the **Friends of the Merced County Library**

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**THANKSGIVING APPEAL**

### **BLING SALE #3**

January 29<sup>th</sup> 10:00 am – 2:00 pm

For donations & information:

drsusanwalsh@gmail.com



## ONE GOAL DOWN, NEXT ONE UNDERWAY

Like parents saving for their children's college expenses, the FOMCL decided in September 2017 that our nonprofit could better serve the Merced County Library by earning and reserving funds for long-term projects. Over the past 5 years, **the Friends have raised \$30,000 for our first long-term goal, a new bookmobile.** The bookmobile will be here early next year, and so we recently reset our longer-term sights on a new teen center bearing the name of Mary Hofmann, a former leader of the Merced County library community and of the FOMCL.

### 1<sup>st</sup> Goal: New Bookmobile Arriving Soon

County Librarian Amy Taylor indicates that the new bookmobile will arrive in January and be on the road in March. Consequently **the Friends will discontinue fundraising for the new bookmobile in December 2021**, and we will present the County Librarian with our final check for new bookmobile books at that time. In partnership with the Merced County Library, the County Board of Supervisors, First 5 Merced County, and the California State Library Association, the FOMCL will then have met our first long-term goal of a bigger, better bookmobile!

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Goal: the Mary Hofmann Teen Center

In consultation with the County Librarian and her staff, the FOMCL Board decided that a new teen center in Merced Library would be a fitting and much-needed memorial for Mary Hofmann, former middle-school library teacher, FOMCL Board member, and lifelong library advocate. Mary loved working with this age group, and she often discussed how important libraries can be in teen learning and socialization. The teen center will allow her vision of supporting youth to live on [continued on pg. 4]

**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



### GOLD-LEVEL SPONSOR:



MERCO Credit Union

### SILVER-LEVEL SPONSOR:

Hattie Givens Testamentary Trust

### BRONZE-LEVEL SPONSOR:



Rotary Club of Merced

## Summer Reading 2021 Successes

By Alicia Heims, Children's Librarian



**Gift card winners**

This year we celebrated Summer Reading in hybrid fashion. We kept the show running with virtual programming to follow pandemic restrictions but also welcomed patrons back into the Merced County Library to browse for books. Families joined the *Reading Colors Your World* Summer Reading program through our Beanstack platform. 677 readers of all ages participate in Summer Reading, and 439 completed their reading challenges to earn a free book and prizes! A whopping 15,857 books were logged this summer! In addition 7,926 badges were earned, and 2,081 reading and learning activities were completed. The Library gave out over 100 Target gift cards, as well as puppet sets and learning toys. 39 grand-prize winners won Megabloks activity tables, Amazon Fire Tablets, and backpacks filled with school supplies!

Our virtual programming for Summer Reading brought fun right to the community at home. The summer program kicked off with colorful bubbles, followed by Zumba, art lessons, science experiments, home workshops, magic shows, puppet shows, music performances, educational animal shows, and even shows about vegetables! Including these performers and our own StoryTime and craft programs, we aired a total of 71 videos and racked up almost 4,000 views online. We also had the privilege of seeing countless happy patrons of all ages return to the Merced County Library after the pandemic closures. A huge thank you to the Friends for helping to make all this possible!



**A grand prize winner**

## Bookstore News & Notes

By Sharon Terry

Join us at the Friends' Bookstore for **PUZZLEMANIA** on Oct. 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>, a sale featuring our wide selection of gently used puzzles.



Welcome Fall from the Friends' Bookstore, located just inside Merced Library at 2100 O Street, Merced. The Bookstore is open every afternoon. Foot traffic has been slow. We miss our customers; please come back!

Book donors brought us some great new stock. Materials for children, young adults, and adults. Check out our many DVDs, CDs, puzzles, hardback books, paperbacks, and more at rock-bottom prices.

Applications to volunteer in the Friends' Bookstore are available on our website and in the Bookstore.

**Mark your calendars for our Holiday Sale** in Merced Library (details below). For donations or information, email Sharon Terry at [sterry67@sbcglobal.net](mailto:sterry67@sbcglobal.net).



## New Library Cards for 556 Third Graders

By Birdi Olivarez-Kidwell

At the FOMCL meeting in May, members made the decision to partner with Merced City School District (MCS D) with the goal of helping 100% of third graders obtain a Merced County Library card. Contact was made with the MCS D Board of Education and the District Office, and the ball was rolling! Consulting with Library Media Teachers and Principals, the County Library staff and FOMCL members worked during summer months to develop a process and an incentive program for participating teachers. September is National Library Card Sign-Up Month, so the program was launched and new cards delivered to students in September. Although many of the 1200 MCS D third graders already possessed a Library card, 556 NEW cards were issued!

But this isn't the end of the story! The partners forged a multi-pronged strategy to get students and families to frequent the Merced County Library. Each student who visits the Library this fall with a shiny new card in hand will receive a free book! The County Librarian and the district staff responsible for curriculum and instruction are also arranging for both the Library's Children's staff to visit classrooms and third-grade field trips to Merced Library later in the school year. This is the start of what we hope will be an annual campaign to ensure that every MCS D third grader has and uses a Library card, potentially improving not only the lives of these students, but also the lives of their family members. This partnership may even have a positive generational impact. A BIG thank you to these partners for supporting literacy for all students in Merced City School District!

## Library Reopening: Friends' Homecoming

By Denise Seely



**President Susan Flinspach presents County Librarian Amy Taylor with the annual fall check for programs.**

September 1<sup>st</sup> was the day the FOMCL had long been waiting for! After the library closure for a year and a half due to the pandemic, 45 members and volunteers gathered in the Gracey Room to celebrate the reopening for in-person programming. Volunteers created a festive atmosphere with balloon

towers and posters highlighting the Friends' accomplishments. A Powerpoint presentation included photos from Merced Reads, Summer Reading, and Read Woke discussions. Guitarist Adam Durbin provided music while guests were [continued on page 6]

## Mary Hofmann Teen Center

[continued from page 1]

at the Merced County Library.

Library staff have developed a preliminary design of the center that places it on the east side of the third floor of Merced Library, directly above the Children's Room. The space will be separated from the rest of the third floor by a glass wall, like the one that divides the children and adult spaces on the second floor. In addition to several types of individual and group areas for working and or collaborating, the space will provide opportunities such as zones for making or enjoying music and videos, for experiencing virtual reality, and for 3-D printing. Current cost estimates are \$60,000 for construction and \$40,000 for furnishing/equipping the center. Although no timeline has been set, County Librarian Amy Taylor believes it may take three to four years to complete the project.

This summer the FOMCL Board pledged \$25,000 of its reserve funding for the new center, and we have raised about \$4,000 more through donations. We are also writing grants and advocating for federal funds to meet more of the center's costs. Contact the Friends to learn more, to request a presentation for your group, or to donate. Donations should be clearly marked for the teen center. FOMCL contact information is on page 6 of this newsletter.

## Memorial Donations

### For Joanna d'Escoto

Diane Penders

### For Mary Hofmann

Karen & Rick Albright  
Philip & Betty Block  
Christine Boyenga  
Kenra & Don Bragonier  
John & Veronica Carlisle  
Pauline & Michael Cuchna  
Margie & Austin Drake  
Susan Flinspach & Jack Vevea  
Janet Fujimoto McCabe  
Patricia & David Green  
Donna Hall  
Kathy & Ron Hansen  
David & Jeane Hetland  
John Hofmann  
Judith S. & John Kirihara  
Christine Long  
Anita Martin  
Prudy Mook  
Richard Peltier  
Brianna Pivrotto & Jamie McNiel  
Karen and Rich Poso  
Eileen Tanioka  
Samuel & Kathleen Tenenbaum  
Steve Teranishi  
Steve & Rebecca Tietjen  
Hub & Rita Walsh  
Susan Walsh  
Ruth Wax  
Cathy & Don Weber

## Adopt-A-Book

## Memorial Donations

### For Donnie L. Cahoon

Leigh-Ann & Diane Thornhill

### For Mary Hofmann

Rachel Trumm

### For Mel Thornhill

Leigh-Ann & Diane Thornhill

## Bookmobile

## Memorial Donation

### For Betsy Walker, Bryon Drew, & Fred Loughridge

Kathleen Brady

## Adopt-A-Book

## Honorary Donation

### For the Staff of the Merced County Library

Joyce Walling

## Strategic Plan 2021-2024

In March County Librarian Amy Taylor and Deputy County Librarian Olga Castaneda initiated a strategic planning process so that the Merced County Library can better meet community needs in the coming years. Olga led the staff Strategy Team in collecting, analyzing, and using data to inform the plan. The Merced County Library's Strategic Plan 2021-2024 is expected to be approved by the Board of Supervisors on October 19<sup>th</sup>; it will be available on the Library's website.



Library Strategy Team

## FOMCL Observes Banned Book Week

By Leigh-Ann Thornhill

Banned Books Week is a yearly event held the last week in September to celebrate and raise awareness of the value of free and open access to information. The American Library Association (ALA) and the Office of Intellectual Freedom (OIF) keep track of all books and other library items that are challenged or banned. The week was first celebrated in 1982 when the ALA & OIF saw an influx of books being banned. Banned Books Week brings together the entire book community — librarians, booksellers, publishers, journalists, teachers, and readers of all types. This year's theme is "Books Unite Us, Censorship Divides Us". Every year the ALA & OIF release a top 10 list of the most frequently banned or challenged books from the previous year. The 2020 list appears below. This year the Merced County Library and the Friends launched a vigorous social media campaign to call attention to banned books and censorship. Swing by the Library to check out a banned book today!

- √ **George.** Challenged, banned, and restricted for LGBTQIA+ content, conflicting with a religious viewpoint, and not reflecting "the values of our community."
- √ **Stamped: Racism, Antiracism, and You.** Banned and challenged because of the author's public statements and because of claims that the book contains "selective storytelling incidents" and does not encompass racism against all people.
- √ **All American Boys.** Banned and challenged for profanity, drug use, and alcoholism and because it was thought to promote antipolice views, contain divisive topics, and be "too much of a sensitive matter right now."
- √ **Speak.** Banned, challenged, and restricted because it was thought to contain a political viewpoint, claimed to be biased against male students, and it included rape and profanity.
- √ **The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian.** Banned and challenged for profanity, sexual references, and allegations of sexual misconduct on the part of the author.
- √ **Something Happened in Our Town: A Child's Story about Racial Injustice.** Challenged for "divisive language" and because it was thought to promote antipolice views.
- √ **To Kill a Mockingbird.** Banned and challenged for racial slurs and their negative effect on students, featuring a "white savior" character, and its perception of the Black experience.
- √ **Of Mice and Men** Banned and challenged for racial slurs and racist stereotypes and their negative effect on students.
- √ **The Bluest Eye.** Banned and challenged because it was considered sexually explicit and depicts child sexual abuse.
- √ **The Hate U Give.** Challenged for profanity and because it was thought to promote an antipolice message.

### FOMCL Meetings

5:30 pm – 7:00 pm  
Gracey Room OR  
by Zoom upon request

November 3

January 5

March 2

Organizational Meeting  
May 11

### Take the Survey, Again

FOLs around the county are asking Library patrons to fill out a short survey card (below), available at the circulation desk, **EVERY TIME they visit a Library branch during the evening hours (6:00 pm to 8:00 pm).** Yes, every time! Why?

The evening hours are a pilot program—experimental and temporary. The cards will document that the hours are being used (more cards = more users) and provide the data needed to make the extra hours permanent next year.

#### **Current Library Evening Hours (6:00 – 8:00 pm)**

A Friends' survey to document library use in the evenings

**I use the evening hours at (check all that you use):**

Atwater Library       Delhi Library  
 Livingston Library     Los Banos Library  
 Merced Library

**I come to the library in the evening (check one):**

Weekly     Once a month     Less often

**I am glad the library has evening hours because (check all that apply, or write in another reason):**

It is the only time I have to go to the library  
 I can relax at the library in the evenings  
 It's a good time to study  
 It's a quiet, safe place to go at night

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

*Thank you. Please give this card to library staff.*

## Changes on the FOMCL Board

Hello and welcome, Denise Seely

Denise grew up in Mariposa and earned degrees from Merced College and CSU Stanislaus. She worked for the Merced City Schools in the media center and at the Tenaya Middle School library, as well as teaching English at Merced College. Then she moved to the North Bay Area for 25 years, becoming a social worker. Returning to Merced felt like coming home. Denise visits the Library regularly, and she joined the FOMCL in 2019.

Good bye and thank you, Jeannette McCollum

For many years Jeannette served on the FOMCL Board and the membership work group, was a Friends' Bookstore volunteer, and was the Board member in charge of FOMCL mailings. She stepped down when she moved to the Sacramento area in September to be closer to family. "Thank you" seems inadequate for her dedication to the FOMCL, but we can start there: thank you so much, Jeannette!

## The Traveling Library Gets a Permanent Home

By Zachery Ramos

I am excited to share that this year I have opened the first-ever education center with the main focus being on literacy in Gustine, California. Since July 2<sup>nd</sup>, the grand opening of the Gustine Traveling Library Headquarters (located at 417 5<sup>th</sup> Street, Gustine), we have already given away 2000 free books to children as well as distributed over a million dollars' worth of food to families in need.



Zach Ramos in the new facility

The Traveling Library Headquarters allows us to help even more children develop literacy skills and to encourage their parents to grow with them. We plan to offer adult

literacy tutoring so parents in our community can get the help they need to work with their children and to live happier, more successful lives.

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## Friends' Homecoming [continued from page 3]

treated to a variety of food and drinks as they greeted old friends, met new friends, and visited.

Masks and hand sanitizer were offered at the door, and tables were set up for attendees to browse. The evening hours survey was introduced at one table. Another showcased lists of banned books, and guests made note of their favorites. One person commented, "These are all the books that *should* be read!"

FOMCL President Susan Flinspach welcomed everyone back the Merced County Library and thanked them for supporting the work of the Friends through the pandemic. She discussed the Friends' new goals, and she presented County Librarian Amy Taylor with the annual fall check for programs. Amy thanked the FOMCL, stating that the support of the Friends is vital to Library programming and services, and that the work of the Merced County Library is critical for our children, teens, and community. The evening concluded with drawings for prizes, and the guests left looking forward to the Friends' next in-person event on December 11<sup>th</sup>, the Holiday Sale on the main floor of Merced Library.

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## Friends of the Merced County Library

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Merced, CA 95344-0463

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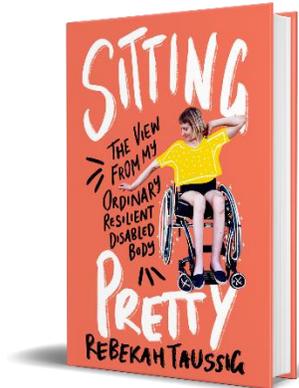
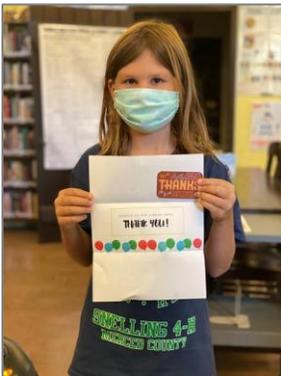
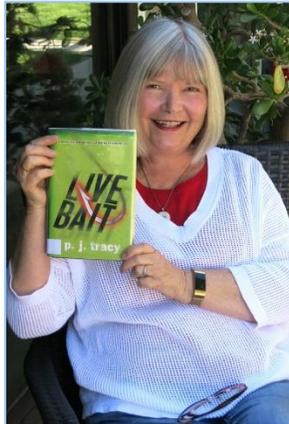


# Happy Thanksgiving Friends!

We are thankful for you—our members and donors! Your generosity is the bedrock for the FOMCL’s work with the Merced County Library.

We turn to you during this second-hardest fundraising year in recent history **to help us finance SUMMER READING 2022**. Yes, the Friends’ Bookstore is open again, but foot traffic is way down—and so are our earnings. Yes, we can hold fundraisers in the Library again, but will the public come? And what hangs in the balance? What might not be fully funded by the Friends this year? --**Summer Reading 2022**

We thank you for your support last year which, as shown below, assisted readers and engaged minds so wonderfully! We hope you will help us keep reading at the heart of our community.



## Thanksgiving Appeal 2021

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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Merced, CA 95344-0463  
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**FRIENDS' LEADERSHIP 2021 - 2022**

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