



# April 2025 Newsletter



On March 5, our Fundraising Chair, Lori Preciado, announced the launch of MFOTL's major Brick Fundraiser for the new Moorpark City Library before the Moorpark City Council. In partnership with the Moorpark Morning Rotary Club, this campaign will help fund essential enhancements—furnishings, fixtures, specialized equipment, and materials—for the new library.

As of mid-April, 18 donations have been made to purchase engraved bricks honoring individuals, families, and organizations. These commemorative bricks will be installed on the north entry walkway upon the library's completion. You can be part of this meaningful community effort by ordering your own engraved brick through the link available at [www.mfotl.com](http://www.mfotl.com) or directly through <https://donate.brickmarkers.com/mfotl>. Please see below for more information on the Brick Fundraiser and the latest update on the New Library project.

We are also excited to announce that MFOTL has joined the Moorpark Chamber of Commerce! This membership will strengthen our presence in the business community, allowing us to build valuable connections and further promote the library's resources and impact on our community's quality of life. We look forward to engaging with fellow Chamber members.

Additionally, we hope you were able to attend the Afternoon of International Dance & Culture on March 15 and join us afterward at Habit Burger & Grill. We raised a net total of \$3,517.33 from the two events, which will go toward supporting programs at the Moorpark City Library.

We invite you to pay special attention to two sections of this newsletter: Moorpark Library News and Federal Funding for Libraries at Risk. The first demonstrates why our Moorpark Library is so important to the mental and physical health of our community. Be assured that the programs described are only a few of the activities offered on the Library's calendar, and your contributions to its support are paramount! The second is a vital alert to the damage that withdrawal of funding to our country's libraries would cause. Please consider how important you are to both of these calls to action.

Bernadette McDowell  
President, Moorpark Friends of the Library



## Moorpark Library News!

**Staffing Update** - Ms. Kellsie, our wonderful children's librarian, spent her last day at the Library on Saturday, March 22. We will miss you!

**Library Usage and Statistics** - In Fiscal Year 2024 - 2025 (as of February 28, 2024):

- 37,644 visitors to the Library
- 1,100 new cards issued
- 63,755 items circulated
- 53,209 physical items circulated
- 10,546 digital items circulated
- 228 programs with 4,789 participants
- 62 children's programs with 2,902 participants
- 50 teen programs with 313 participants
- 44 adult programs with 452 participants
- 72 all-ages programs with 1,122 participants
- 41 self-directed programs with 959 participants



### **Cancellations & Community Support**

Southern California experienced severe winds and devastating fires in January, leading to widespread power outages that left many Moorpark residents without electricity for several days. During this challenging time, the library reaffirmed its role as a vital community resource, providing access to electricity, Wi-Fi, and a safe space for respite. While program cancellations were necessary, the library's adaptability ensured it remained a cornerstone of support for the community when it was needed most.

### **Studio Ghibli Guild: A Magical New Program for Anime & Film Enthusiasts**

The library is excited to launch the Studio Ghibli Guild, a new program celebrating the artistry, storytelling, and magic of Studio Ghibli films. Each session begins with a hands-on activity inspired by the film before a screening of a beloved Ghibli classic. Explore the world of Hayao Miyazaki and other Ghibli creators through film screenings, creative activities, and discussions on themes of nature, friendship, and adventure!

### **Mini Med Minds: A Hands-On Health & Science Club for Kids!**

Created and led by a passionate teen volunteer, Mini Med Minds is an exciting new program that introduces children to medical topics and basic health knowledge through hands-on activities and guided discoveries. This club helps young learners explore the human body, healthy habits, and the fascinating world of medicine in a fun and engaging way. Mini Med Minds not only inspires kids to learn but also empowers teen leaders to take on mentorship roles, making this a truly unique and enriching experience for all!

## Read Across America Week - Flory Elementary

To wrap up Read Across America Week with a bang, Ms. Kellsie led two high-energy assemblies for 400 enthusiastic students at Flory Elementary School, transforming storytime into an unforgettable, interactive experience! The excitement and energy were off the charts, making for a memorable and engaging celebration of reading. While teachers may have had some very *energized* students to manage afterward, it's safe to say this was a Read Across America event they won't soon forget!

## Collections and Resources

Our commitment to supporting local voices has led to the creation of a Local Author Collection at the beginning of the adult fiction section, providing a dedicated space to showcase books by talented writers in our community. With the support of the local writers' group, we're not only highlighting homegrown literary talent but also creating new opportunities for writers to connect with readers through workshops, author talks, and networking events.

## Community Engagement and Outreach

I am looking for volunteers to help represent the library at the following events:

- Easter Egg Hunt: Saturday, April 19, from 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.
- KidsFest: Saturday, April 26, from 11 a.m. – 2 p.m.
- Moorpark Earth Festival: Saturday, May 3, from 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.



These events are great opportunities for our members and their families to get involved! Volunteers will assist with activities, share library resources, and engage with the community. I'd like to start recruiting volunteers now and will hold a meeting closer to the event to go over all the details. If you're available to help at any of these events, please let me know!

## Fine Free Policy

On March 11, 2025, the Moorpark Library Board reviewed the fine-free policy, which eliminates overdue fines to enhance community access to library resources. The policy is scheduled to go before the City Council in April or May 2025, with an exact date to be announced.

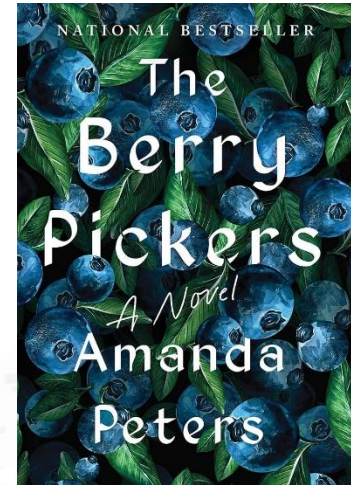
- Stay Updated – We'll share the City Council meeting date once it's confirmed.
- Make Your Voice Heard – Attend the meeting in person or submit a public comment.
- Spread the Word – Tell friends, family, and neighbors how going fine-free benefits the entire community.

~Christine Conwell

## What Are You Reading?

*The Berry Pickers* (2023) by Amanda Peters

In 1962, a Mi'kmaq family including six-year-old Joe and four-year-old Ruthie, traveled from Nova Scotia to Maine to pick blueberries, a tradition for Indigenous workers. After a few weeks, Ruthie vanishes, and Joe, her older brother, is the last one to see her. Norma, a young girl raised in Maine by an emotionally distant father and an overprotective mother, is troubled by recurring dreams and visions that seem more like memories than imagination. As Norma grows older, she realizes her parents are hiding something from her, and she embarks on a quest to uncover the truth, while Joe grapples with the trauma of Ruthie's disappearance.



I should have titled this, "What Are You Listening To", as I listened to this book on long walks. This is an excellent inaugural work of fiction by Amanda Peters who was inspired by her father's stories about his family experiences as berry pickers in Maine. This story explores themes of family belonging, and the search for truth, as well as the impact of historical injustices and trauma in Indigenous communities. I highly recommend this book.

~Teri Glazier



## New Library Update

The City Council has a policy that requires pre-approval of contractors that bid on a contract over \$1M. The pre-qualification process closed on March 4. Our consultant hoped for submittals from five contractors; however, eleven submitted pre-qualifications! This means the pool of general contractors should be excellent and bodes well for the budget. If all goes well, the contract will go out to bid formally in May or June. The contract will have schedule requirements, but the City is limited in the penalties it can enforce and cannot penalize contractors if supply lead times are out of their control. Let's hope for the best and see construction move forward expeditiously! We are looking forward to a Groundbreaking Ceremony held by the city towards the end of June, before Troy Brown retires, and will send a special reminder to our Members as soon as the date is announced.

~Rosalie Barili

## BE OUR GUEST

Do you know that anyone may attend a meeting of the MFOTL Board of Directors? We warmly welcome you to learn more about what MFOTL does to support the Moorpark City Library, especially as we move forward to our New Library!

Who: You and others who might be interested in joining us!

When: The 3rd Tuesday of every other month starting at 2 p.m.

Where: Conference Room of the Ruben Castro Human Services facility

How to Attend: Just pick your desired date and notify the board president at MFOTLpresident@gmail.com three days before to receive information about attendance.



The remaining four meetings for 2025 are scheduled for: May 20, July 15, September 18 & November 18.

## Federal Funding for Libraries at Risk

The Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) has proposed eliminating the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS)—a decision with serious implications for our local library and others across the country.



### Why Does This Matter?

Established by Congress in 1996, the IMLS oversees federal grants for libraries and museums nationwide. It receives funding through the annual appropriations process and administers these funds via the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA), which distributes resources to state library agencies based on population.

In Fiscal Year 2024–2025, the California State Library received \$15.7 million in LSTA funds through the IMLS. These funds support library programs and services throughout the state. However, approximately 21% of the grant—about \$3 million—has not been received, and the State Library was recently informed it will likely not receive it. Critically, much of this funding had already been awarded to California libraries, including Moorpark City Library.

### What's At Stake Locally?

Moorpark City Library was awarded \$5,400 for its “Lunch at the Library” summer program, which was to offer enrichment activities at two summer meal sites: Flory Elementary and Walnut Canyon. In partnership with Moorpark Unified School District and a local food bank, the library planned to provide:

- Pop-up library services (book lending, information)
- Bilingual storytimes
- Take-home activity kits
- Caregiver meals
- Free books

The goal was to promote literacy and strengthen family engagement during the summer. However, with the grant funds potentially unreleased, this program is now in jeopardy.

The library also submitted applications for two additional LSTA grants for Fiscal Year 2025–2026:

- **\$5,000 for “Book to Action Programming”**: A program that blends reading with community engagement. The plan was to pair it with “Lunch at the Library” to inspire conversations around local issues such as food insecurity.
- **\$15,000 for “Play for All”**: Funding for creating inclusive and innovative play-based learning opportunities for children and their families. The library planned to use funds for a “Toddler Rave” —a dynamic, music-filled event for young children and their caregivers, featuring age-appropriate music, colorful lighting, interactive dance activities, and sensory-friendly play stations—to promote physical activity, early literacy, and social interaction.

Without IMLS funding, these programs will not be realized.

While lawsuits are underway to challenge the dismantling of the IMLS, we can act now by advocating for library funding. Contact your congressional representatives to share how vital federal support is to our libraries and encourage them to take action. To learn more and find ways to help, visit:

- [ALA FAQ on the IMLS Situation](#)
- [ALA Advocacy Actions](#)

Finally, now more than ever, local fundraising is essential. Please continue to support the Moorpark Friends of the Library, whose efforts help fund the programs and services that make the Moorpark City Library a vital part of our community.

~Bernadette McDowell



## Bricks Fundraising for the New Moorpark City Library



The Moorpark Friends of the Library are excited to announce a major campaign for the benefit of the new Moorpark City Library. We invite individuals, families, organizations, and businesses to memorialize their support of this beautiful place of learning and experience, by buying a personalized paving brick for the patio on the north side. 100% of the profits from this campaign will be dedicated to purchasing furniture, fixtures, equipment, materials, and a special children's area.

Supporters of this campaign will have the opportunity to personalize a brick with their name or that of others as a remembrance or a gift for holidays, anniversaries, birthdays, graduations, or "In Memoriam" in memory of a loved one. Each brick will form a part of the fabric of this amazing community and a special legacy to the City of Moorpark for many years.

Each brick is \$250 and there is an additional option to purchase a mini brick keepsake for \$30.00 each.

Options on how to order your bricks:

- Go to [donate.brickmarkers.com/mfotl](https://donate.brickmarkers.com/mfotl)
- Go to the Moorpark Friends of the Library website at [mfotl.com](https://mfotl.com)
  - click on the link for the bricks and it will take you directly to the website to order.
- You can also scan the QR Code below.



The Moorpark Friends of the Library (MFOTL) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit tax-exempt organization registered with the IRS and the State of California.

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Many thanks to our Fantastic Friends for their ongoing support!

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[MFOTLpresident@gmail.com](mailto:MFOTLpresident@gmail.com)  
[vpMFOTL@gmail.com](mailto:vpMFOTL@gmail.com)  
[christine@imaginemath.com](mailto:christine@imaginemath.com)  
[carmenjerome@hotmail.com](mailto:carmenjerome@hotmail.com)  
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[donadpugh@gmail.com](mailto:donadpugh@gmail.com)

[serendipity\\_ellie@yahoo.com](mailto:serendipity_ellie@yahoo.com)  
[lgoble116@aol.com](mailto:lgoble116@aol.com)

[eleanor.labarbera@gmail.com](mailto:eleanor.labarbera@gmail.com)