



County of Fresno

Fresno County Public Library
Laurel Prysiazny, County Librarian

September 1, 2011

Letters to the Editor
Fresno Bee
P.O. Box 12504
Fresno, CA 93778-2504

OPEN LETTER TO THE RESIDENTS OF FRESNO COUNTY:

On behalf of the staff of the Fresno County Public Library I want to thank all of those who came out in support of the recent Book Drive sponsored by Channel 47 and the Friends of the Fresno County Public Library.

This was the first book drive of its kind held in this county and it was a tremendous success thanks to the efforts of the community. The Drive collected over 180,000 volumes through only one day of collection. That alone was unprecedented. Then, over four days almost all of these books were re-sold back to the community.

The Friends of the Library received approximately \$28,500 that will be directed toward literacy programs throughout the county. Plans are already underway for next year's sale.

I have been overwhelmed by the community support, and I cannot thank you enough. The Library has experienced budget reductions like all other organizations in the region. While we have been able to ride out the downturn in the economy due to our Measure B sales tax funding (1/8 of one percent on every sales tax dollar), our continually increasing expenses had started to far outstrip the decline in our revenues, necessitating our making some difficult budget decisions. This has been a hard time for all staff and our customers as well.

The number of organizations that have come forward to help with the Book Drive was also amazing: the Fresno Bee, Reading and Beyond, the City of Clovis, the County of Fresno, Mobile Mini, Eppler Towing and Transport, New Rock 104.1, Sierra Vista Mall, Pinc: Philanthropy Inspired, the Book Barn and of course CBS Channel 47 and our Friends of the Library. We can't thank these groups enough. And of course the hundreds of volunteers who helped out was incredible!

To have the community come out and support us with the Book Drive is a real testament to the caring and concern our residents have for their libraries. We look forward to continuing these efforts as we work to extend Measure B next year.

Again, many thanks.

Sincerely,

Laurel C. Prysiazny