



# THE BOOK REPORT

## FRIENDS OF THE LAKEWOOD LIBRARIES NEWSLETTER

### Lakewood Library Locations

**Angelo Iacoboni Library**  
4990 Clark Ave.  
Lakewood CA 90712  
562-866-1777

**George Nye, Jr. Library**  
6600 Del Amo Blvd.  
Lakewood CA 90713  
562-421-8497

**Join our community!  
Celebrate and Volunteer!**  
[LakewoodLibraryFriends.org](http://LakewoodLibraryFriends.org)



### In This Issue

President's Corner  
Page 1

FoLL Annual Membership Meeting  
Page 2

2026 FoLL Officer Nominees  
Page 3

FoLL Scholarship Overview  
Page 5



### FOLL PRESIDENT'S CORNER

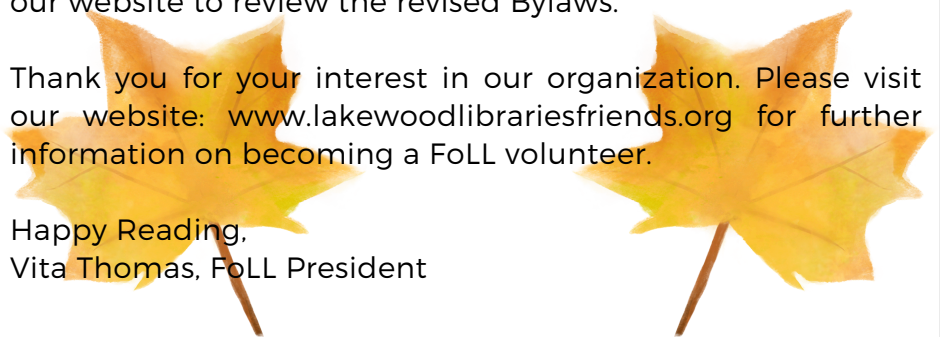
Salutations to all our FoLL members, families, friends and neighbors. Fall is upon us, which is a sign that the holidays will soon be here. The year is going by much too quickly. 2026 is just around the corner.

Our Fall Book Sale was a tremendous success! Both days were very well attended. I wish to thank each and every one who donated books, puzzles, magazines, CDs, DVDs, and many, many more items for the sale. I would also like to thank our amazing volunteers! The NJROTC cadets, under the direction of Master Chief Jorge Tapia from Lakewood High School were exceptional in maneuvering all the boxes of books to their designated tables. They were very quick in unloading the boxes. The Girl Scouts Troop 70233 under the direction of Marisa Perez were fabulous in boxing the unsold books. They prepared 25 boxes of books to be donated to the Burns Center, the Weingart Senior Center and to the Veterans Hospital in Long Beach. AND thank you to all our FoLL volunteers and friends who are so dedicated in supporting our mission and goals. The Book Sale is successful because of each of you sharing your valuable time for a worthy cause.

We are having our Annual Membership Meeting on Sunday, November 9, 2025. Please see the invitation on page 2. We will also be voting on the approval of the Bylaws. Please visit our website to review the revised Bylaws.

Thank you for your interest in our organization. Please visit our website: [www.lakewoodlibrariesfriends.org](http://www.lakewoodlibrariesfriends.org) for further information on becoming a FoLL volunteer.

Happy Reading,  
Vita Thomas, FoLL President





# **FRIENDS OF THE LAKEWOOD LIBRARIES**

## **ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING**

**November 9, 2025 | 2:00 PM**  
**Mayfair Park Swim Pavilion**

Join us on Sunday, November 9, 2025, as we celebrate our Friends of the Lakewood Libraries' members and elect the 2026 FoLL Officers.

Entertainment will be provided by award winning comedian, Cat Alvarado.

Delicious refreshments will be provided.  
The public is cordially invited.

**We hope to see you there!**

Learn more about FoLL on our website:  
[www.lakewoodlibraryfriends.org/](http://www.lakewoodlibraryfriends.org/)



## 2026 FOLL OFFICER NOMINEES

### President

**Vita Thomas** has been the President of the Friends of the Lakewood Libraries (FoLL) for the past year. She enjoys representing the FoLL organization at different Lakewood community events, meeting people, and communicating the many volunteering opportunities that FoLL has to offer. She's looking forward to another rewarding year of fun, volunteering with her very energetic fellow volunteers.

Vita enjoys gardening at the Lakewood Community Garden, going to an event with the Lakewood City bus tours, reading a riveting John Grisham novel, and even crocheting blankets with her Luv Bugs group to donate to the Memorial Care Miller Children's Hospital in Long Beach.

Vita also enjoys quality time with her husband, Larry and their fur baby, Bailey. Chasing after squirrels at El Dorado Park and at Rynerson Park keeps them very active.

### Vice President

**Crystal Cantu** is an HR leader with a passion for fostering inclusive environments where people and culture thrive. Growing up, she was a proud "library kid" who found comfort and inspiration within the bookshelves of her local and school libraries.

Now, amidst the busyness of adulthood, she sought to reconnect with that part of her life and become a "library adult." Joining Friends of Lakewood Libraries was a natural step, as its mission to enhance the programs, services, and materials of the libraries it serves aligns closely with her own values. She is honored to support FoLL and the vital role libraries play in building community, connection, and lifelong learning.

From "library kid" to "library adult," Crystal is dedicated to advancing FoLL's mission and keeping the magic of libraries alive.

## 2026 FOLL OFFICER NOMINEES (CONT.)

### Secretary

**Fatima Castaneda-Gutierrez** spent many childhood summers with her sisters at the local library, reading Shel Silverstein's books of poems and drawings. She and her sons have volunteered with the FoLL for over fifteen years, and she was the most recent treasurer.

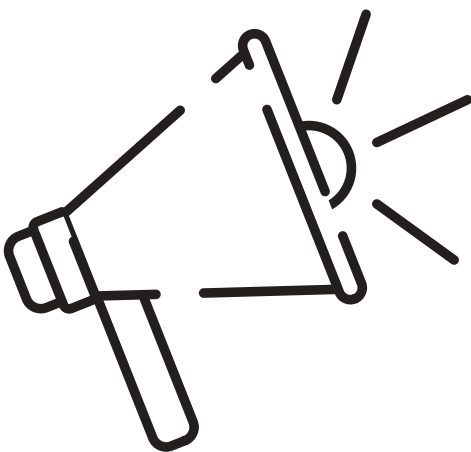
Fatima has worked in education since 1997, and is currently a first grade teacher in Watts. Her hobbies include printmaking, keeping the spider plants in her backyard alive, and trying not to buy all the cute rubber stamps in the world.

### Treasurer

**Tess Croft** and her family have been residents of Lakewood Gardens since 1986. Her work experience in accounting varied from TV show licensing to metal forge relating to the aerospace industry, then working in the corporate offices of a large commercial roofing company. Tess values her experience as a Teacher's Aide at St. Pancratius Parish School, a part-time job that lasted 18 years.

Tess has served as Secretary, President, Vice President, Treasurer, Taste of Lakewood Volunteer Coordinator, Hospitality Chairman, Membership Chairman and a member at large. Gardening gives Tess joy as much as traveling.

## 2026 FOLL OFFICER ELECTIONS



The election of our 2026 Officers will take place at the upcoming annual membership meeting. We encourage members to attend the meeting, where you will have the opportunity to vote for our new officers, participate in shaping our organization, and support FoLL's mission. Additionally, please note that nominations can still be made from the floor during the meeting, ensuring that every voice can be heard. We will also be voting on the approval of the revised Bylaws. Please visit our website to review them.

## FOLL SCHOLARSHIP OVERVIEW

The Friends of the Lakewood Libraries (FoLL) is proud to support students who exemplify excellence in both character and academics, and who demonstrate a strong commitment to furthering their education.

To be eligible, applicants (or their immediate family members) must have volunteered with FoLL and/or directly with the Angelo Iacoboni or George M. Nye Jr. Libraries. Volunteer service will be verified as part of the application process.

### Who Can Apply

- High school seniors preparing to graduate
- Students currently enrolled in an accredited college, university, or trade school

### Selection Criteria

Our scholarships are not based solely on GPA. Instead, recipients will be chosen for their active citizenship, community involvement, and clear dedication to pursuing education beyond high school. Applicants are expected to demonstrate strong personal character, a commitment to learning, and active participation in school and their community.

### Application Requirements

- Statement of volunteer service with FoLL or the libraries
- Three letters of recommendation that speak to your character and accomplishments
- A personal essay (theme to be announced when applications open)

### Timeline

- Scholarship applications open: March 2026
- Recipients announced: April 2026

A FoLL scholarship provides more than financial support. It recognizes students who make a difference in their schools and communities as they prepare to take the next step in their educational journey.

For more information about the scholarship, please visit FoLL Scholarships page on our website at <https://lakewoodlibraryfriends.org/foll-scholarships>.



To stay current on the latest FoLL  
news and communications,  
check out our website:

[www.lakewoodlibraryfriends.org/](http://www.lakewoodlibraryfriends.org/)

or use the QR code below:



Current Resident or

4990 Clark Ave.  
Lakewood, CA 90712



Friends of the  
Lakewood  
Libraries

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