

THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF STANISLAUS  
ACTION AGENDA SUMMARY

DEPT: Chief Executive Office

BOARD AGENDA # \*B-2

Urgent

Routine

AGENDA DATE April 1, 2008

CEO Concurs with Recommendation YES  NO   
(Information Attached)

4/5 Vote Required YES  NO

SUBJECT:

Approval to Accept the Donation of Ryan's Reading Tree to the Stanislaus County Library - Modesto Library Children's Room from the Dickerson Family and Friends

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Accept the donation of Ryan's Reading Tree to the Stanislaus County Library - Modesto Library Children's Room from the Dickerson family and friends.
2. Authorize the Chief Executive Office and General Services Agency to make necessary improvements to the Modesto Library to adequately accommodate the donated monument.
3. Authorize the installation of an acceptance plaque in remembrance of Ryan Dickerson and honoring young readers in Stanislaus County.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Ryan's Reading Tree will be provided through a generous donation by the Dickerson family and other private contributions at an estimated cost of \$80,000. The Dickerson family have agreed to match donations dollar for dollar up to \$40,000. The monument is planned to be designed, engineered, fabricated and installed by Naturemaker Monumental Trees company. The Chief Executive Office and General Services Agency will make some minor modifications in the Children's Reading Room such as structural engineering, lighting, and painting to adequately accommodate the donated item. Costs associated with these improvements will be funded through existing budgeted appropriations.

BOARD ACTION AS FOLLOWS:

No. 2008-235

On motion of Supervisor Grover, Seconded by Supervisor DeMartini

and approved by the following vote,

Ayes: Supervisors: O'Brien, Grover, Monteith, DeMartini, and Chairman Mayfield

Noes: Supervisors: None

Excused or Absent: Supervisors: None

Abstaining: Supervisor: None

1) X Approved as recommended

2) \_\_\_\_\_ Denied

3) \_\_\_\_\_ Approved as amended

4) \_\_\_\_\_ Other:

MOTION:

ATTEST: CHRISTINE FERRARO TALLMAN, Clerk

File No.

## Approval to Accept the Donation of Ryan's Reading Tree to the Stanislaus County Library - Modesto Library Children's Room from the Dickerson Family and Friends

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### **DISCUSSION:**

#### **Ryan's Reading Tree**

An ongoing goal of the Stanislaus County Library has been to provide an environment at all of its branches that is conducive to reading. The Library's mission is to "foster the love of reading and open the door to knowledge." This includes providing appropriate collection materials and programs in an reader-friendly atmosphere. Early this year, the Library was approached about a wonderful opportunity to enhance the reading environment at the Modesto Library Children's Room. The Library was contacted by a representative on behalf of Ron and Lynn Dickerson who were interested in donating a monumental tree in remembrance of their son, Ryan.

Ryan Dickerson was an avid reader, supporter, and user of the Stanislaus County Library. He volunteered as a "prefect" at the Library's 2005 and 2007 Harry Potter children's events. Ryan passed away suddenly last summer at the age of 18. The Dickerson's vision is to transform the central column in the Modesto Children's Room into a beautiful oak tree that will be a lasting memory of Ryan and become a focal point in creating an inviting and welcoming atmosphere that promotes the joys of reading.

Ryan's Reading Tree will be a life-like artificial tree encircled by a bench, where children can sit and read. This is a steel structure with a realistic façade. It will be designed and constructed off-site, then reassembled at the Modesto Library. A plaque will be placed near the tree to describe the inspiration for the tree.

#### **NatureMaker Monumental Trees**

NatureMaker Monumental Trees was contacted regarding the development of Ryan's Reading Tree and has submitted a proposal to the Dickerson Family/Library Foundation to engineer, fabricate, ship and install one (1) 15' tall x 18' x 18' canopy diameter column clad oak tree for the Children's Reading Room at the Modesto Library. The column clad oak tree will be custom designed and handcrafted on an engineered steel substructure. NatureMaker applies an inherently fire retardant, naturalistic bark texture to the steel tree structure. The bark medium is then hand crafted, hand painted, and scenically aged to reflect the realistic nuances of specific oak bark. Special attention will be made to accommodate overhead lighting and heating vents.

NatureMaker is nationally known for developing and perfecting the techniques used to build what they have dubbed their "monumetal" trees. These arboreal creations have become a unique art form, and the company's designers, artisans

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and engineers assist with every aspect of interior landscaping with NatureMaker Steel Art Trees. Handcrafted to architectural specifications, NatureMaker trees have emerged as major design elements at prestigious resorts, casinos, retailers, museums, libraries, zoos, nature centers, commercial buildings, hotels and residences. Each tree, perfectly balanced and magnificently detailed, stands as a one-of-a-kind ode to nature.

### **Stanislaus County Library Foundation**

The mission of the Library Foundation is to promote the enrichment of the Stanislaus County Library system by cultivating community involvement and support. It was established in 1994 to raise funds to support the Library in its mission to foster the love of reading and open the door to knowledge. The Library Foundation will support Ryan's Reading Tree by being actively involved in the fundraising and acting as the fiscal agent for private donations and contributions. The Library Foundation is a non-profit organization and will coordinate all activities in support of this project in collaboration with the Dickerson family. To assist with the fundraising process, a presence has been established on the internet at RyansTree.com. Donations can be made directly to the Library Foundation or via the established web site.

### **Process for Accepting the Generous Donation**

The following describes the process that the County, the Dickerson family, and the Stanislaus County Library Foundation and other partners will go through to accept the generous gift of Ryan's Reading Tree to be installed in the Children's Room of the Modesto Library in memory of Ryan Dickerson:

- The County accepts the generous gift of Ryan's Reading Tree to be installed in the Children's Room of the Modesto Library in memory of Ryan Dickerson.
- The County will prepare the area for the "installation" of the gift, including lighting and painting of the ceiling area.
- Fundraising is conducted. Funds are held with the non-profit Library Foundation as approved by the Dickerson Family.
- The Dickerson Family contracts with NatureMaker for the design, engineering, custom fabrication and installation of the Ryan's Reading Tree.
- NatureMaker begins work (proposal calls for a 50% deposit required with contract). Project schedule estimated at 7-8 months from receipt of contract to completion of installation.
- Ryan's Reading Tree is crafted offsite by NatureMaker.
- Fundraising continues through the Library Foundation to attain total project goal prior to tree being shipped by NatureMaker.

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- Prior to the installation, NatureMaker will provide the County with proof of certificate of insurance, for \$1 million, naming the County as additional insured during the period of installation when they will be on-site assembling the tree at the Modesto Library. Regular County insurance will also be in place.
- Ryan's Reading Tree arrives at Library for assembly and installation and is appropriately dedicated in accordance with the Dickerson family wishes.

If the Board of Supervisors approves the acceptance of this generous donation, it will enhance the reading environment at the Children's Room at the Modesto Library for children and families of Stanislaus County. A plaque to be provided by the County, and prepared in accordance with the Dickerson family wishes, will recognize the generosity of the donations and be a remembrance of Ryan Dickerson and honor young readers in Stanislaus County. Ryan's Reading Tree will be permanently placed at the Stanislaus County Library.

**POLICY ISSUE:**

The Board should determine if approval of this very generous donation is consistent with the Board Priority of Effective Partnerships.

**STAFFING IMPACT:**

The Chief Executive Office, General Services Agency and the Library will be responsible for coordinating the acceptance of the donation of Ryan's Reading Tree at the Modesto Library.