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**Press Release
Photo Opportunity**

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Fresno County Public Library Announces 2015 Big Read Kickoff

The Fresno County Public Library is proud to announce the kickoff for the 2015 Big Read taking place on Friday March 13, 2015 at Arte Americas. The event will start at 2:00 p.m. and is scheduled to end at 4:00 p.m. The chosen book for this year's Big Read is Dashiell Hammett's novel, *The Maltese Falcon*. *The Maltese Falcon*, a detective novel written in 1930, set the standard by which all detective novels thereafter would be judged.

There will be a live reading of *The Maltese Falcon* during the first hour by dignitaries. The second hour will provide attendees a sampling of music and dancing from the 1930's courtesy of Scats on the Sly and Fresno Swing Dance. The Library will also be giving away 50 copies of the book to attendees. This is the 9th Big Read event for Fresno. The Big Read is a program of the National Endowment for the Arts in partnership with Arts Midwest.

In addition to the kickoff, the Library has planned many exciting, entertaining and thought-provoking Big Read events throughout Fresno County. They include:

- The Fresno Connection – Freelance author and pulp magazine historian Warren Harris will be speaking on the Fresno case that inspired *The Maltese Falcon*.
- Author Talk – Julie Rivett, Dashiell Hammett's granddaughter will discuss unpublished Hammett fiction, screen stories and an unpublished Sam Spade adventure.
- 1930s Speakeasy – Back by popular demand! 1920s and 1930s music, dance, games, costume contests and a whodunit mystery that will have guests on the

edge of their seats! All in the spirit of Hammett's *The Maltese Falcon*, hosted at the Fresno City College Library.

- Live Radio Play – *The Maltese Falcon* story jumps to life in front of your eyes as a LIVE 1940s radio broadcast.
- How to Become a Private Eye – Thomas Haverty, founder of Fresno-based Strategic Investigative Services will explain how to become a private investigator.
- Geocaching game – Log on to the Library's website and play a geocaching game in downtown Fresno. Smartphone required.
- Letterbox Game – Pick up clues to find a hidden letterbox. Participants will win a prize, and all names written in the letterbox will be entered into a drawing to win a replica Maltese falcon. Letterbox game is available at the following libraries: Central (downtown), Caruthers, Cedar-Clinton, Fig Garden, Gillis, Sanger and West Fresno.

For a complete list of details and events, please visit www.fresnolibrary.org.

“Being able to work with the NEA to promote literacy in Fresno County is something that the Library looks forward to every year. The support we have received from the community during previous Big Read events shows that this is an endeavor that appeals to everyone” said County Librarian Laurel Prysiazny.

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