Library Staff Advocacy: The Unquiet Zone

Presented by Libby Post, President, Communication Services for the Connecticut State Library and The Connecticut Library Association

Your Library Is Not an Island Onto Itself
How Important are Libraries to the People We Serve? How are Libraries positioned in their minds?

Quick Look at 2013 National Numbers

- Annual circ: 1.51B
- Visits: 806,250,494
- Program attendance: 51,972,072
- Number of programs: 2,355,809
- These numbers are down from 2012 stats
  - Healthier economy
Funding Is Always The Issue

Figure 6. Percentage change in Operating Expenditures and Income, FY2004 – FY2013 - Continuous Responding Libraries (n=230)

% Change in Expenditures and Income per Capita Since 2003
- Material Expenditure per Capita
- Other Expenditures Per Capita
- Staff Expenditures per Capita
- Total Income Per Capita

Funding Is Always The Issue

Figure 3. Percentage change in Mean Income per capita and Expenditure per capita, FY2004-FY2013 - Continuous responding libraries (n=230)

% Change Since 2003
- Operating Expenditures Per Capita
- Total Income Per Capita

MESSAGE: WHAT YOU SAY
STRATEGY: HOW YOU SAY IT
RESULTS: THEY SPEAK FOR THEMSELVES!
Funding Is Always The Issue

What Libraries Do To Help

- Borrowing from collections saves people money

www.masslib.org/LibraryValue.html
What Libraries Do To Help

• Value of Library Programs and Services
  – Wilson Community Library: $508,750.50
  – Prendergast in Jamestown: $6,174,471.50
  – Dunkirk Public Library: $940,413.50
  – Victor-Farmington Library: $3,545,386

• Libraries demonstrate a great public service return on investment
• ROI calculator at the MHLS site
  – www.midhudson.org/admin/eco_impact.htm
• Using it we’ve found
  – Wilson Library has $1:$9.20 PSROI
  – Jervis in Rome, NY has a $1:$6 PSROI
  – Pawling Library has a $1:$7.48 PSROI
  – Hudson Area Library has a $1:$8 PSROI
  – Albany Public Library has a $1:$4.03 PSROI
What Libraries Do To Help

• Not just hardware, also expertise
  – Google gives patron 50,000 responses
  – Librarian give patrons help in finding the one answer they need
• Most effective use of all public services
• Serve 2/3 of the public using less than 2% of all tax dollars

Pew Research
Jan. 2013 Public Library Study

• People love their libraries even more for what they say about their communities than for how libraries met their personal needs.
• Libraries have rebranded themselves as technology hubs. Change is built into a Library’s DNA.
• The public wants everything equally so library leadership matters in setting priorities.
**Pew Research**  
**Jan. 2013 Public Library Study**

- The public invites you to be engaged in more difficult problems—coordinate with local schools, offer literacy programs, be innovative.
- Libraries have both a public relations problem and opportunity—some people still don’t know what the library offers.  
  – Need to reach them.
- The target audiences for engagement and outreach are not hard to find.

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**Pew Research**  
**Dec. 2013 Public Library Study**

- 90% of Americans, 16 and older, say that closing their local public library would impact their community. **63%--major impact.**
- 95%, 16 or older, agree that public library materials and resources play an important role in giving everyone **a chance to succeed!**
- 94% say having a public library improves quality of life in their community
Pew Research
Dec. 2013 Public Library Study

- Over half (54%) 16 and older have used a public library in past 12 months—in person or online
- 94% of those who have used a library said that “public libraries are welcoming, friendly places.”
- 91% said they never had a negative experience.

Pew Research
March 2014 Public Library Study

- Public library users and proponents are not a niche group
  - 30% of Americans are highly engaged with public libraries
  - 39% fall into medium engagement categories
Pew Research
March 2014 Public Library Study

- People who have extensive economic, social, technological and cultural resources are most like to use and value libraries
  - Less engaged=lower technology use, fewer local ties, lower feelings of personal efficacy and less cultural activity engagement

September 2014 Pew Study on Younger Americans

- Despite use of technology, 62% of Millennials (under 30) agree there is “a lot of useful, important information that is not available on the internet.”
- Millennials are as likely as older adults to have used a library in the past 12 months
  - More likely to have used a library’s website
September 2014 Pew Study on Younger Americans

- Most know where their library is but are unaware of all the services available
- Most feel they can easily navigate
- Vast majority describe libraries as warm, welcoming places

September 2015 Pew Study: Libraries at the Crossroads

- Library usage has edged downward in the last three years, but we want public libraries to:
  - support local education
  - serve special constituents such as veterans, active-duty military personnel and immigrants
  - help local businesses, job seekers and those upgrading their work skills
  - embrace new technologies such as 3-D printers and provide services to help patrons learn about high-tech gadgetry
September 2015 Pew Study: Libraries at the Crossroads

- Of those who have used a public library website, 50% accessed it in the past 12 months using a mobile device
  - Up from 39% in 2012
- 10% increase since 2012 in those saying library should “definitely” move some books and stacks to free up space for tech centers, reading and meeting rooms, cultural events

September 2015 Pew Study: Libraries at the Crossroads

- 64%, age 16 and over, say libraries should “definitely” have more comfortable spaces for reading, working and relaxing.
  - Don’t want libraries to have a smaller footprint
- 85% of Americans say that libraries should “definitely” coordinate with schools in providing resources for children.
September 2015 Pew Study: Libraries at the Crossroads

• 85% also say that libraries should “definitely” offer free literacy programs to help kids prepare for school.
• 78% believe that libraries are effective at promoting literacy and love of reading.
• 65% maintain that libraries contribute to helping people decide what information they can trust.

September 2015 Pew Study: Libraries at the Crossroads

• 78% of those 16 and older say libraries should “definitely” offer programs to teach people how to use digital tools such as computers, smartphones and apps.
• 75% say libraries have been effective at helping people learn how to use new technologies.
What Do We Do With This Info?

1. Put it on a shelf?
2. Refer to it when someone challenges whether libraries are relevant?
3. Use it as the basis for building relationships, messaging and advocating for your library?
   • ANSWER?
     – 2: Sometimes
     – 3: All the time

Your Library Is Not an Island Onto Itself
It’s the hub of your community with incredible opportunities to advocate and build your base of support.

What is Your Library’s Universe?

Or, Who are Your Audiences?
Start with Mapping Your Community

Our Community

Public Sector Institutions
- Health Care
- Social Services
- Schools
- Police/Justice
- Politicians

Non-Profit Service Organizations
- Health care services
- Housing services
- Immigrant services
- Drug and alcohol groups
- Food banks/shelters

Private Businesses
- Hospitals
- Key employers
- Banks
- Development
- Manufacturing
- Retail

Community Organizations/Associations
- Religious institutions
- Cultural organizations
-unions
- Business associations
- Neighborhood groups

Informal Networks
- By culture
- By activity
- By geography
- By unique skill
- By service

What Can You Provide to . . .

- Local elected officials
- Community organizations
- Schools
- Local businesses
- Not for profit groups
- Public sector
- Opinion/Community leaders
What Can You Provide . . .

- Programs
- Workshops
- At the Library or their place
- Research
- Access to information in a timely manner
- Community connection

Target, Target, Target.

Who Can You Reach?
Who Can They Reach?
Some Advocates We’ve Known

- John Brown
  - Leading Abolitionist
  - Anti-Slavery Advocate
Some Advocates We’ve Known

• Eleanor Roosevelt
  – First Lady
  – Human Rights Advocate

Some Advocates We’ve Known

• Eunice Kennedy Shriver
  – Founder of the Special Olympics
  – Disabilities Advocate
Some Advocates We’ve Known

• Cesar Chavez
  – President, United Farm Workers
  – Migrant Workers Advocate

• Marian Wright Edelman
  – President, Children’s Defense Fund
  – Children’s Rights Advocate
Some Advocates We’ve Known

• Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
  – President, Southern Christian Leadership Council
  – Civil Rights Advocate

Some Advocates We’ve Known

• Harvey Milk
  – Martyred San Francisco Supervisor
  – Lesbian and Gay Rights Advocate
Some Advocates We’ve Known

• Ted Kennedy
  – U.S. Senator
  – Health Care Reform Advocate

Some advocates We’ve Yet to Meet

Any of these people could be you!
Why Be An Advocate?

• “If I am not for myself, who will be for me? And when I am for myself, what am 'I'? And if not now, when?“
  – Hillel

Why Be An Advocate

• If you, as a staff person, doesn’t stand up for your library, who will?
• If you stand up for your library
  – Trustees will
  – Patrons will
  – Community leaders will
  – Our elected officials possibly will (if we make it politically safe for them)
Why Be An Advocate?

• Stand up for what you believe in
  – Frame the debate and determine the message
• Express your passion about libraries
• Become a leader
• Organize supporters
  – Allow them to express their passion as well
• Develop strategies
• Execute and see how well you do

Staff As Advocates

• Relationship between good customer service and advocacy
• It all comes down to funding
• Set Up Staff Advocacy Council
What Is Advocacy All About?

• Taking action to impact an issue
  – Why you want to take action?
  – What do you want to accomplish?
  – How can you be best prepared?
  – What resources will you need?
  – Who will lead?

What Is Advocacy All About?

• Advocacy comes alive as a campaign
  – Effective message that moves people to action
  – Series of tactics based on message and resources
  – Clear attainable goal
    • Internal goal
    • External goal
Key Components of an Advocacy Campaign

- Strong leadership
- Clear goals
- Strong, clear message
- Determine targets to pressure
- Organize people
- Determine tactics
- Use media
  - Traditional
  - New
- Celebrate
Strong Leadership

• Essential to have someone in charge
  – Campaigns require planning, focus, discipline and organization
• Decisions need to be made quickly and decisively
• Everyone has a role to play

Clear Goals

• Articulate vision
  – Have a clear understanding of what you’re trying to accomplish
  – Can not be all things to all people
  – May not be able to talk about other important issues
• Define victory
Strong, clear message

- Clear, concise
- You define it
  - Don’t let opposition define your message
- Internal message
  - What you use to engage and motivate your base
- External message
  - What you communicate in various ways to your intended targets—policy makers, elected, etc.

Determine targets

- Who are you trying to impact
  - Policy makers
  - Decision makers
  - Elected Officials
- Helps determine where you have or where you need to build supporters
Organize people

• Organize People
  – Excite your base with your message
  – Gain their commitment to act
  – Give them specific things to do
  – Constantly reach out and bring in new people

Determine tactics

• Personal visits with targets
• Letters, e-mails, social media, text messages, postcards and phone calls to targets
• Rallies and demonstrations
• Direct action strategies
  – Book In: Pile up books in front of a legislators’ office to show value of one visit
• Political theater
  – Bread and Puppet
CLA’s Advocacy Campaign

• Governor’s Budget zeroed out funding for
  – Connecticard
  – Cooperating Library Support Units (CLC)
  – Grants to Public Libraries

CLA’s Advocacy Campaign

• It’s time to stand up for our libraries
• If we don’t do it, no one is going to do it for us
• We have the tools
• We have the passion
• We have the facts
CLA’s Advocacy Campaign

• Began with outreach to your patrons
• Bookmarks at circ desk
• Posters up by public computers asking folks to go to www.ctlibraryassociation.org and send a message to their state reps
• Flyers and posters about the 4/15 Rally at the Capitol up around libraries

CLA’s Advocacy Campaign

Speak Out for Our Libraries.
STOP THE BUDGET CUTS!

The Governor's budget eliminates funding for Connecticut, Connecticut Library Consortium and Grants to Public Libraries. AND eliminates the statutes that allow needed library programs and services to exist.

What does this mean to you?
• CT residents will only be able to borrow books from their hometown library - the ability to borrow from any public library in the state will disappear.
• The Connecticut Library Consortium (CLC) will no longer be able to save CT Libraries and taxpayers over $7.1M annually through statewide purchasing.
• Fiscally stressed libraries will struggle to provide necessary services to the urban populations they serve.

Write, call or email your local and state legislators NOW! Capwiz.com/ala/ct/home
CLA’s Advocacy Campaign

• Red state graphic in email signatures with a note about the rally on 4/15
• Info in libraries’ email blasts
• The rally flyer embedded into emails
• Used Facebook and YouTube to promote the campaign
• Put the information on library website and asked others to do the same

What We Asked For

• Remember this? Governor’s Budget zeroed out funding for
  – Connecticard
  – Cooperating Library Support Units (CLC)
  – Grants to Public Libraries
• Asking for $2M
  – $1.25 for Connecticard
  – $500,000 for CLC
  – $250,000 for Grants to Public Libraries
What Happened?

• Most programs were restored to 90-95% of budget request
  – CLC only 47%
• More importantly—people got organized
• See where the shortfalls were
• Revitalized online advocacy tools
• Will be ready for next session

What Happening Since the Budget was Approved?

• 5% cuts to Statewide Digital Library, Grants to Public Libraries and Connecticard Payments
  – $289,000
• An additional 4% cuts to Statewide Digital Library and Law and Legislative Materials budget in December bringing both to close to a 9% cut
What We’re Doing To Build the CLAdvocacy Network?

- E-mail blast
- Print materials
- E-mail signatures

What We’re Doing To Build the CLAdvocacy Network?

- E-mail blasts to supporter networks, library staff, etc.
- Get others to send e-mails asking people to sign up as ad CLAdvocate
- Posters and bookmarks distributed at libraries
- Centralizing communication between libraries, Library Links and Regional Reps
Advocacy or Lobbying

• Advocacy
  – Talking about issues
  – Educating about the importance of libraries
  – White papers
  – Changing regulations (they are not laws)

• Lobbying
  – Asking elected officials to vote a certain way on a piece of legislation
  – Reflecting a point of view on a specific piece of legislation

Tools At Your Disposal for Both

• One-to-one meetings
• Groups presentations
• Library Tours
• Social media
• Website
• E-mail
• Direct mail
• Newsletters
Let Them Know What You’re Doing

• Be prepared
• Develop a Q&A that leaves you well versed in the proposition
  – Building Referendum
  – Budget or Funding proposition
  – Funding District
• Leave behind a fact sheet with just enough info

Let Them Know What You’re Doing

• Follow up quickly on questions you didn’t have an answer for
• Track those questions, keep adding to your Q&A
• Ask the people you’re talking with for their support
Let Them Know What They Can Do

• Spread the word
• Volunteer messengers not directly affiliated with the Library can be more powerful

So, What Do Libraries Do To Tell Their Story?
Branding, Marketing and Strategic Communication

What Do They Help Me Do?

- Establish the library as an “essential service” in the community
- Market the library using emotional branding methods
- Have the library be a reflection of your community
- Advocate for library while building community support
Libraries are Essential Services

What is Branding?

- Integral part of marketing
- Sets libraries apart from other public institutions
- Sum total of all attitudes, perceptions and beliefs about your library
- Emotional branding:
  - Love
  - Hate
  - Hope
  - Fear
- Libraries give people hope, a sense of community, a long life of learning
Examine your strengths & weaknesses: Focus Groups

- INTERNAL
  - Strengths
  - Weaknesses
- EXPLORE
  - People
    - Staff
    - Board
    - Patrons
  - Programs and Services
- EXTERNAL
  - Opportunities
  - Threats
- EXPLORE
  - Position of the library in the community
  - What values the library stands for in the community?
  - What’s important to the community above and beyond the library?
  - How does the library impact quality of life?

Developing Your Message

- Draw people in on an emotional level
  - Appeals to positive emotions of love and hope
    - What’s in it for them (WIIFM)
    - What’s in it for their families (WIIFMF)
  - Speak to people in ways that reflect their values and show how their values align with the library’s values
  - Always maintaining the “essential service” theme
Developing Your Message

• Empathy/compassion
• Strength
• Fairness
• Fulfillment
• Education
• Prosperity
• Service
• Trust
• Open Communication

• Responsibility
• Protection
• Opportunity
• Freedom
• Community
• Cooperation
• Honesty
• Creativity
• Equal Opportunity

Emotions That Work

• Curiosity
• Amazement
• Interest
• Astonishment

Reinforce the message that your public library is for the public good.
Developing Your Message

• Bold, clear, concise
• Articulate values that patrons and community members will relate to
• People identify with values – not always the same as their self-interest
• Leave people empowered to act—Supporting Your Library!

Focus: Developing Your Message

• Message Box

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What we are saying about ourselves</th>
<th>What they are saying about themselves</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What we are saying about them</td>
<td>What they are saying about us</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Message Box

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What Library Says About Itself</th>
<th>What the anti-tax people say about themselves</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Our library is an essential service</td>
<td>We know what the community needs—no new taxes for anything</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Jobs and opportunity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Lifelong learning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Quality of Life</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Community Empowerment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Message Boxes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Library on Library</th>
<th>Opposition on Opposition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Continue the Investment</td>
<td>We represent the taxpayers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• More people use library now than ever before</td>
<td>• Need to lower taxes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Helped XX with job searches since economic downturn</td>
<td>• Stop wasteful spending</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• For every tax dollar we invest, get XX back in public service ROI</td>
<td>• Only fund essential services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Working with the Chamber to develop small business resource center</td>
<td>• Run government like a business</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Message Box

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Library on Opposition</th>
<th>Opposition on Library</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Anti-library=</td>
<td>• Waste of taxpayer money</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• We have Google, why do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anti-family,</td>
<td>we need libraries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anti-children,</td>
<td>• Everyone has a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anti-senior</td>
<td>computer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Don't want to see</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>how many use, need</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and value the library</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Library’s response: The Library is all about the community. This is where our neighbors and families turn for life long learning, for help in job searches, to create small businesses and, in a crisis, for information and compassion.

### Marketing Tools

- Facebook/Twitter/etc.
- User friendly, easy to navigate website
- E-mails newsletters
- Newsletters
- Bookmarks
- Posters
- Post Cards
- Branded clothing

- Outstanding Customer Service
- Name tags
- Message on Hold
- Signage
- PowerPoint presentations
- Displays
- Public Relations
A few social media stats for 2013

• 5.3 trillion display ads online annually
• 400 million tweets sent daily
• 144,000 hours of YouTube video uploaded each day
• 4.75 billion Facebook posts every day

Social Marketing/Networking

• Enables you to build an online base
• Interactive
  – Ask what new books they want
  – Answer community wide questions
• Link back to blogs, websites
• Provide forum for community to provide feedback
• Create an online community for the library
Use Your Annual Report

• Constantly remind the public what you do
  – How many people came through your doors
  – How many items were checked out
  – How many programs were held
  – How many people used public access computers

Use Your Annual Report

• Make the connection between the numbers and your message
  – We help people in times of economic stress
  – Free Services
  – Go back to the beginning of presentation, how does your library fit the bill?
Developing Your Message

• In 1992, when James Carville ran Bill Clinton’s first presidential campaign the following phrase was on the white board

**KISS**
Keep It Simple Stupid
Don’t over think.
Remember who your audience is.

Case Study:
Mount Vernon Public Library

• Originally chartered as a small cities school district public library.
  – Grandfathered in when School District Public Library law was enacted
• Was not operating like a district library
Case Study:
Mount Vernon Public Library

- Funding came directly from the City (like a municipal) and board was appointed by school district
- City told Library it could no longer afford to fund
  - Funding had decreased from over $4 in 2010 to $2.8 in 2014
- School district lost interest in appointing trustees

Case Study:
Mount Vernon Public Library

- 75,000 people comprised of 100 different cultural groups
- 14% poverty rate
- City split by railroad tracks
  - Library located south of the tracks (“wrong side”), poorer, rental community
  - Northside: rentals and homeowners
- 4 square miles
Case Study: Mount Vernon Public Library

- After a lot of deliberation, board came to the decision to go to the public for a $4.35M budget
- Elect four new trustees
- Had to educate the public about the governance issues
- Relatively new director, campaign committee comprised of staff and Friends

Case Study: Mount Vernon Public Library

- Branding
- Direct mail
- Websites
- Social media
- Petitioning
  - Voter tracking
- Phone banking
  - Voter tracking
- Public Presentations
- Get Out the Vote
  - Targeted mail
  - Robocalls
  - Rides to the Polls
  - Coffee and Cake at the Library after voting
Case Study: Mount Vernon Public Library

• Branding

“Even for the Mount Vernon Public Library, providing user-friendly services in a timely manner is key to our success...” — Dave Coleman, Director of Business Development and Training.

Case Study: Mount Vernon Public Library

• Branding Campaign Kickoff

You’re invited to an Open House
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 6-8 P.M.

Celebrate with the Mt. Vernon Public Library

Celebrate with the Mt. Vernon Public Library
Case Study: Mount Vernon Public Library

- Out of the focus groups, need to respect the materials and fellow patrons more

Case Study: Mount Vernon Public Library

- Public Education Campaign

District Wide Mailer: Explains the initiative in detail
Case Study: Mount Vernon Public Library

- Public Education Campaign

Postcard 1: Explains Updated Tax Impact

Case Study: Mount Vernon Public Library

- Public Education Campaign

Fold Over Postcard: Explains what happens if the budget passes or fails
Case Study: Mount Vernon Public Library

- Public Presentations
  - Rotary
  - Lions
  - PTAs
  - Neighborhood Associations

- Stand alone website linked to the Library’s site

Facts and Figures About the Library’s 2014 Budget and Trustee Vote
The Library is Busier Than Ever

• In 2013:
  • Over 208,000 crossed our threshold
  • 12,482 children attended 749 programs
  • Our WiFi was used 25,067 times
  • 135,338 items were borrowed

The Library is Busier Than Ever

• In 2013:
  • Our 20 public computers were used 37,171 times
  • 49,078 reference questions were answered
  • Our website was accessed 513,565 times
2013 Highlights

• Reopened the Fiction Room
• Opened the Computer Lab every afternoon with upgraded computers
• Restored weekend hours
• Enhanced CyberCorner services
• Collaborated with community groups on job development initiatives
• Developed new programs
• Increased access to information resources

The Library’s Charter

• Library is chartered as a District Library that serves the school district
  • Public needs to vote on the Library’s Budget
  • Public also elects trustees
• Division of Library Development has told the Library it must live up to its charter responsibilities
The Library’s Charter

• Legally called a “School District Public Library”
• Library District that has the same service area as the school district
  • School District has same boundaries as the City of Mount Vernon
  • Will continue to serve the City of Mount Vernon

The Library’s Charter

• Two basic features of a Library District
  • Vote on funding
  • Elect trustees
• Over 150 School District Public Libraries in NY
• Doesn’t take any funds away from the school district
• Funding will be collected by City on the same bills that come for the School’s funding
Funding Issues

- City has funded the Library since its doors were opened in 1896

- The City has only funded the Library through September of this year
- Will not be able to fund the Library moving forward
- Library must ask the residents of the school district to provide it with sufficient and stable community-based funding
Library is Committed to the Community But Needs Stability

• The Library’s funding has been decreasing steadily
• Wants to continue providing the important Library programs and services the community is asking for
• Library’s funding must be stable and sustainable
• A public vote is key to that stability

Public Commitment=
Library Programs and Services

• Library is asking School District residents to approve $4.35M in community-based funding
• $28.32 per $1,000 of assessed value
• Home assessed at $10,000=direct Library support of $283.20 per year
Public Commitment=
Library Programs and Services

Mount Vernon Public Library
Proposed 2015 Operating Budget

- Salaries
- Enhanced library programs
- Building Operations
- Collection Development
- Staff/Services
- Insurance
- New Technology
- Library Operations
- Benefits

Library Funding Will Account for 2% of all taxes paid in Mount Vernon

City, County, Sewer, Refuse and School make up the other 98%.
City Taxes Will Decrease

• Once voters approve this funding, the City will no longer keep a line item in its budget for the Library
• The City will not keep the funds and use it for other purposes

City Taxes Will Decrease

• City presently funds library at $18.31 per $1,000 of assessed value. At $10,000 of assessed value:

  - City taxes will decrease $183.10
  - New Library Funding: $283.20
  - Real Impact of Library Funding: $100.10

Payment will be split in half between July and January tax bills. Funds collected by the City and turned over to the Library.
Impact of Library Funding

- $1.93 a week—less than a cup of coffee
- Borrowing four books over the course of a year saves you more than what you’ll be paying

Electing Trustees

- Being a library district also means electing trustees
- Four trustee positions will be up for election this year
- Any qualified voter in the school district can run
- Must get at least 25 signatures on a petition
- Petitions available on Library’s website
If Funding Passes

• Open on Sundays and extend weekday hours
• Have more public computers and an expanded Computer Lab with classes for all ages
• Expand our popular book and DVD collections
• Create Streaming Video Collections and online magazines

If Funding Passes

• Establish an Early Learning Center so that every child will be ready to read
• Enlarge our Homework Help Center
• Enhance our Job Center and Career Assistance
• Greatly improve our facility including furniture upgrades
If Funding is Denied

• Either close or be severely hampered in our ability to provide programs and services
• Cut hours to the bone
• Cut new materials including children’s books and DVDs for all ages
• Lose Central Library status and funding

If Funding is Denied

• Extensively cut all programs—including Story Time for children and Homework Help
• Limit access for community groups to use our meeting space
• No repairs or protection for our historic building
• Negative local economic impact because Mt. Vernon residents who work at the Library will lose their job
It’s Up To You

• Tuesday, May 6th
• Polls open 7 a.m. to 9 p.m.
• Community Room at the Library
• Absentee ballots are available
• Working to increase free parking around building
• Proposition passes with simple majority of those who have voted

For More Information

• www.mountvernon.fundourlibraries.org
• Call Carolyn Karwoski, Library Director, at 914/668-1840, ext. 215
Case Study: Mount Vernon Public Library

- Vote Yes/Advocacy Campaign
- Paper and Online petition

Email and Facebook pushed people to sign up online as well.

Case Study: Mount Vernon Public Library

- Facebook: Top of Page
Case Study: Mount Vernon Public Library

- Facebook: Middle of Page

Case Study: Mount Vernon Public Library

- Facebook: Further down on Page
Case Study: Mount Vernon Public Library

- Facebook boosts—spent around $350

Case Study: Mount Vernon Public Library

- Vote Yes Graphics used on Facebook, YouTube and Email blasts

Vote Yes!
For the Mount Vernon Public Library Budget
On May 6th, from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. in the Library
 mountvern.tendolibrary.org
Case Study: Mount Vernon Public Library

- Mount Vernon Taxpayers also became a small PAC to raise money online.

Case Study: Mount Vernon Public Library

- YouTube: First video highlight people and message.
Case Study: Mount Vernon Public Library

• Phone Banking and Voter Tracking
  – Worked with PrimeOne and purchased updated phones, cells and emails for entire voter file
  – Targeted voters by Election Districts
    • Mayor won
    • Geographically located around library

Case Study: Mount Vernon Public Library

• Phone Banking and Voter Tracking
  – Phone banked for 1 month straights to identify voters
    • Script was clear: will you support the budget
  – Tracked voters
    • 1=Support  2=Maybe  3=No
  – Used 1s as base of voters we pulled out on day of vote
Case Study: Mount Vernon Public Library

• With a week to go, the opposition started

It is NOT about the library. It is about how the money will be used.

1. Of the 431 million dollar budget $386 million for employee salaries and benefits - over 1 million dollars.
2. The highest paid employee in the library is neither Mount Vernon property owner nor Mount Vernon resident.
3. Mount Vernon Public Library employees receive NO contribution to their pensions or medical benefits.
4. The library’s infrastructure is perilously compromised.
5. Much of the library’s collection has disappeared over the years and is no longer available to the public.
6. In 2012, some library staff members began raising over $200,000 per year.

Once established a library tax will be permanent, it cannot be eliminated, NEVER be reduced.

Mount Vernon Public Library is operating a substantial sum of money to an external organization under a contract of $1.6 million per year.

It is imperative to vote with knowledge of all of the facts.

Case Study: Mount Vernon Public Library

• One Vote Yes piece paid for by PAC

Bandwagon brochure:

• List of folks who signed petitions
• Quotes from highlighted community folks
• Quotes from prominent African-Americans

You want me to invest in the library?

Answer these questions:

On other sources of revenue - In the past 5 years, how many grants have been awarded to the library? What is their value, what did the community realize as a result?
What specifically is the plan going forward for the next 5 years? How much of the library’s budget will be addressed through fundraising? How much money has the Friends raised and how has it been used? How much money has the Foundation raised and how has it been used?

On the tax burden - Provide proof/insurances you are not that the city tax will be reduced. How long and how effectively the library can be sustained on a $1.75 million dollar budget. When will the library budget increase be requested?

On the communications - What is the use of this publicity relations campaign? Where did the funds come from to pay for it? Why was the entire amount so late, so incompletely and so inexpensive?

Those who would tear the heart of an additional tax are certified to complete and helpful answers. You MUST vote on May 6, 2014 at the library.
**Case Study:** Mount Vernon Public Library

- **Get Out the Vote**
  - Email blasts

- **Case Study:** Mount Vernon Public Library
  - RoboCalls
    - To entire district from
      - Library director reminding folks of the vote
      - Grandma: “We need to invest in our kids even if it does raise our taxes”
    - Targeted districts that supported the Mayor: “We need to support our library.”
    - Final GOTV call to our identified voters
  - Rides to the Polls
Case Study: Mount Vernon Public Library

- Identified 851 yes voters
- 2,582 people came out to vote
- Constant stream from 7 a.m. until 9 p.m.
- Electric feeling
- Won with 77% of the vote
- Yes: 1,997
- No: 585

You Can Bring Advocacy to Your Library!

- Don’t get overwhelmed
- Have a plan
- Determine your brand
- Be bold
- Be clear and concise.
- Look at other successful libraries
Be A Library Advocate Everyday Take Every Opportunity To Tell Your Story & Build Your Base!