

Report on Status of Library Plans from Library Board President, Donna Lee Applegate

Thanks to the over 200 friends and neighbors who came and supported the Albert Wisner Public Library's July 13th event in Lewis Park, *Enriching Our Community, Expanding Your World-Our Vision for a 21st Century Library*. The event was a great success! For those unable to join us, I want to share some important news about the library's plans for the future.

Mission & Vision:

- ◆ Our vision for a 21st century library is still very much a work in progress. The goal of the July 13th event was to report on our progress and share our plans for the future. The Library Board is here to listen and understand what the community would like in a new library.

We still have a bond referendum to pass, and given the recent school budget vote, we have a real challenge ahead of us. But, we feel the challenge is not to get the bond approved, but to provide plans for a building and operating budget that the voters will feel is an improvement and wise investment in our community.

History:

- ◆ The existing library was built in 1927 to serve a population of a little over 2,000 residents and today it serves a population of almost 22,000, half of whom have library cards. Our collection of approximately 50,000 books is less than half the number recommended by national standards for a district of our size. The 21st century library is more than a place to check out books. It provides computer and Internet access, cultural and educational programs, audio and visual materials, community gathering space and services for those with special needs in our community. And, a good library complements and supplements the educational system of our community and empowers our children; teaching them independence, self-initiative, and providing a safe place in which to learn and play. Over three years ago, the Library Board of Trustees and a newly formed building committee began developing a program for a new library that would meet the demands of our community. Based on research and the positive response to community feedback, preliminary building plans were developed. We have shared these preliminary plans with the public, however the plans are not finalized.

Next Steps:

- ◆ The Library Board has employed a project management firm to conduct a real cost analysis and value engineering to determine what a new building will cost. Based on the outcome of that research, the current plans may have to be modified in order to gain approval by our community. As elected representatives the Board of Trustees has a fiduciary responsibility to provide our community the best possible service while controlling cost.

We are waiting for Leyland Alliance to sub-divide the 2.2 acre parcel of land on McFarland Drive and then transfer ownership to the Albert Wisner Public Library. In the meantime we are continuing with work on the SEQR process with assurances that the land will soon be transferred to the library.

We have also formed a new Foundation, which will serve in partnership with public funding. The Foundation's goal is to provide private funding through planned giving, private grants and charitable donations that will offset the costs to the taxpayers. The Foundation will carry on the cultural legacy of the Albert Wisner family who so generously provided the original funding in 1923 that built and provided for the establishment of our current library.

Exciting things are happening at the Albert Wisner Public Library. For more information, visit us at www.albertwisnerlibrary.org. Come check us out!

Donna Lee Applegate
Library Board President