

A message to the citizens of Dewitt Public Library District from the DeWitt Library Board of Trustees

2/1/09

Dear Patrons,

Greetings and best wishes for a good New Year. As Trustees of the DeWitt Public Library District, we are taking this opportunity to communicate with the citizens of our service area.

As you may know, a .95 mill proposal to build and operate a new library was placed on the August 5, 2008 primary election ballot. It was defeated by 240 votes with 2,668 votes cast. Our decision to place this issue on the ballot was the result of over two years of trustee deliberation, a professional needs assessment, and input from several open citizen-planning meetings.

Library use data indicates a doubling of our circulation from the year 2000 to 2007. Generally accepted library standards, as revealed in a 2006 comprehensive assessment, indicated that our library needs to double its size to meet current needs and will require a building of 20,000 to 25,000 square feet in 20 years. Our current library has 5% of the recommended seating area for a district of our current size. Clearly, the current 6,000 square feet library building at 13101 Schavey Road is inadequate for our community.

Our proposal was to build a 20,000 to 25,000 square feet library based on an architectural design that could be easily expanded when needed. Additionally, we have accepted a generous gift of a four-acre building site from Norman and Renee Farnum near the geographic center of our library's service area, east of the DeWitt Public Schools complex on DeWitt Road. To assure the adequacy of the site for future library needs, we have purchased an additional two acres west and adjacent to the donated four-acre building site.

Unfortunately, the local, state, national and world economy substantially declined between our March 6th, 2008 decision to seek citizen approval of the .95 mill proposal for a new library and the August 5th vote. We believe that this deepening economic climate contributed to the defeat of the library proposal. In fact, many citizens have indicated to us that they understood the need for a new library but felt that current economic difficulties created an unfavorable context for a 'yes' vote at this time.

Based on the feedback received, and the compelling need for a new library we intend to place another proposal before the citizens in the future. However, we do not plan to do so until the economic situation improves to the point where we feel it would be prudent to seek voter support for a new library.

Finally, we believe that our citizens and families deserve and want an excellent public library. Additionally, we know that a quality library will be a source of community pride and an important institution for the quality of life that we all desire. We look forward to the time when our citizens will be able and willing to support the construction and operation of a new 21st century library.

In the meantime, we will continue to deliver the best possible library services within the constraints of our current library building and operating millage. We look forward to your support and welcome citizen feedback and suggestions.

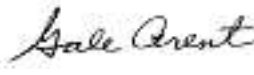
Wayne Summers
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DeWitt Township



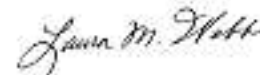
Paul Perpich
Secretary
City of DeWitt



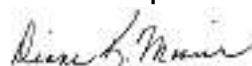
Gale Arent
Trustee
DeWitt Township



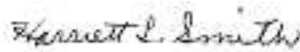
Laura Webb
Trustee
City of DeWitt



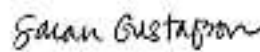
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