

3-5-2015

Letters to the Editor March 5, 2015

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Recommended Citation

Andrews, Kathleen and DuJan, Kevin, "Letters to the Editor March 5, 2015" (2015). *Orland Park Public Library (Illinois)*, 2013. 266.
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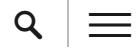
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Letters to the Editor March 5, 2015

9:07 am CST March 5, 2015

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New board members must adhere to budget

Dear Editor,

A survey was recently taken by the [Orland Park Public Library] asking residents if they would prefer to have a 12 percent increase in the tax levy or have services such as storytimes, senior services, etc., cut.

I believe this is misleading. The increase is needed to cover the board's habit of prodigious spending. In my household, we have a budget. Once we spend the amount we have available, we stop spending.

Recently, new lights were installed in the lobby at a cost of \$71,092. I always felt the lobby was very bright and didn't lack for light. No one sits down and reads a book in the lobby, anyway; we go there to check out books. We have [a library director], Mary Weimar, whose total compensation package, per the library's website, exceeds that of the Orland Park chief of police. She has also provided expensive meals with liquor for board members. And she has an account for the library at Noral Diamond Jewelers.

In 2013, the OPPL spent \$1,095 at the jewelry store, and in 2012 the grand total was \$1,341.80. The purchases were for Waterford crystal clocks, watches, pen and pencil sets, pendants, marble paperweights, and key ring charms. These were end-of-the-year presents for OPPL staff, approved by Weimar and listed as "service awards" on the

authorization paperwork. In 2011, the Noral Diamond Jewelers sales receipt was for \$1,614. Since the OPPL spent \$462.50 at the jewelry store in 2014, perhaps Weimar sees this as cutting back in comparison.

While the public certainly loves the library employees and we appreciate them greatly, shouldn't purchases such as these, and other spending, be reconsidered before charging the public a 12 percent increase in the tax levy?

People today do not treasure marble paperweights or write with gold pens. How many staffers even really appreciate these "awards"?

It feels like spending for the sake of spending, because this is what they have always done. Isn't there a cheaper, more modern, more responsible way for the OPPL to show "staff appreciation" than spending all this money year after year at the jewelry store?

I hope our new library board members will help rein in spending by the library board and [library director], and adhere to a budget.

Kathleen Andrews

Orland Park resident

More to the story about adult computers at OPPL

Dear Editor,

I write in response to a letter to the editor published Feb. 19 that was written by a trustee of the Orland Park Public Library. Entitled, "Library staff cares about child safety," I feel it was misleading in the way it described the teen and adult computer areas of the OPPL and the problems therein.

No walls separate the OPPL's second floor adult computer area from the teen area. Both are open spaces bordered only by bookshelves, with only about 60 steps diagonally between them. While it may be true that library staff don't allow teens to use the adult computers and adults to use the teen computers, the OPPL's local history, political science, and Illinois studies sections are all located on bookshelves that form one of the boundaries of the adult computer area. Specifically, all of the Chicago history

books and the books about Orland Park itself are on shelves that directly face the rows of adult computers.

This means that teens needing these books for school reports must stand in unobstructed view of the adult computer area, with nothing but air separating them from the rows of adult computers. Since the OPPL is adamant about keeping the adult computers unfiltered and pornography is accessible on unfiltered computers, adults who become sexually aroused while viewing pornography at the OPPL would be in close proximity to teens who come to this area to find their history and political science books.

This is like butterflies being drawn into spiders' webs, because the OPPL has chosen to locate books the teens need for school reports right by the adult computers.

Because the adult computer area is an open space without walls, teens must also pass right by the rows of adult computers on their walk to the second floor study rooms. This is something else that was not noted in the Feb. 19 letter from the OPPL trustee. Adults using unfiltered computers to view pornography would come in contact with teens in this area, and they would also be using the same restrooms as the teens on the second floor.

Pornography is not an intellectual stimulant. It is a sexual stimulant. Sexual arousal and its resultant behaviors are neither appropriate nor safe in a public library. It is bad policy for the OPPL to ignore the many interactions between teens and adults on the second floor.

Kevin Dujan

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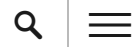
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