CONTRA COSTA COUNTY LIBRARY COMMISSION
AGENDA ATTACHMENT 3

MEETING DATE: Thursday, July 22, 2010

AGENDA ITEM #: 9

ITEM: CORRESPONDENCE

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

- None
June 8, 2010

David Twa
County Administrator
Contra Costa County
651 Pine Street, 11th Floor
Martinez CA 94552

Dear Mr. Twa,

For nearly twelve years, the advisory Contra Costa County Library Commission has had the unique privilege of working with and supporting Anne Cain, the retiring County Librarian. The many qualities Anne has brought to this position include:

- An enthusiasm and love for libraries and an understanding of how libraries truly change lives.
- Leadership skills that inspire staff to find ways to continue to enhance library services to our customers.
- A consistent embracing of innovative solutions as the library incorporates new modes of bringing people and ideas together with new technology that maximizes today’s scarce resources.
- An inclusive management style that allows her to work collaboratively with elected leaders within the cities, county and at the State. She is well respected when she testifies in Sacramento.

The Commission wishes Anne Cain well in her retirement. During the transition, the Commission is quite willing to assist you and the Board of Supervisors in ways that might be appropriate, and we will work with her replacement as a team to insure the new County Librarian’s success.

Best regards,

Chris Tang
Chair, Contra Costa County Library Commission

cc: Library Commissioners
CONTRA COSTA COUNTY LIBRARY COMMISSION
AGENDA ATTACHMENT 4

MEETING DATE: Thursday, July 22, 2010
AGENDA ITEM #: 10
ITEM: REPORT FROM COUNTY LIBRARIAN

RECOMMENDED ACTION:
• None
Dear Rotary Members,

We are writing this letter to inform you of an academic crisis looming in our community, with the hope that your community based organization will help with a $1,000 donation. The Contra Costa County Office of Education (CCCOE) and the Contra Costa County Library have developed a unique and successful partnership, where students in Contra Costa have been the primary benefactors. The 2010 school year could be the year that our students will be hit twice as hard through budget cuts both at the school level and again at the Public Library, if we don’t act fast.

In order to maintain the current open hours at all 25 County Libraries, the Library announced the painful decision to eliminate their online subscriptions to Gale’s Virtual Reference Center and databases (annual cost $66,000) for 2010. School librarians from Acalanes, West Contra Costa, Brentwood, San Ramon and all points in between have expressed their concerns and fears. Imagine 166,000 students denied access to the highest quality reference materials, or next year’s Seniors not being prepared to use the College Library databases or prepared to conduct basic academic research because of their lack of exposure to online databases.

A brief history of the existing partnership between the CCCOE and the County Library: In 2005, after a successful launch of the CCCOE’s Educational Web Portal, edlstop.net, the County Office of Education and the County Public Library came together for a common goal – to provide easy access to the high quality library online research and reference materials for all students in Contra Costa. Over the last eight years, our school libraries have suffered from extensive budget cuts making online library resources, specifically research and reference databases, too costly for school libraries to maintain. The partnership between edlstop and the County Library was a positive solution to offset school library shortfalls and has been a win-win situation for our shared community of students. Through the County Library’s website along with a link into the Library’s electronic resources via edlstop.net, students have had access to Gale’s academic databases such as: the Student Research Center, Biography Resource Center, Opposing Viewpoints, Science Resource Center, and History Resource Center to name a few. Contra Costa students and residents accessed the County Library Gale databases over 110,000 times during the 2009-2010 budget year.

Consider the following example: Linda Pennock, a school librarian in Oakley wrote, “Yes, the middle and high school library staff is very concerned that the County Library has proposed dropping the Gale databases! These are a valuable resource for our students. As we teach Information Literacy and research skills it is so important to have reputable sources. Our students learn that the information they find in the Gale databases can be trusted. Without these resources, students may turn to unreliable sources of information. It is our hope that the County Library will reconsider their detrimental decision.”
Marian Shostrom, Librarian, also wrote this, “I am the librarian at Miramonte High School, and our students use many of the databases through the County Public Library system. Teachers encourage students to get library cards so that they can access the databases. It would be a huge loss for students to no longer have access, in particular, to Science Resource Center, Opposing ViewPoints, History Resource Center (U.S. and World)."

Please consider helping the 166,000 students, as well as adult learners, in our community with a donation of $1,000 to help provide and maintain the Gale online subscriptions, so our students and adult learners are not left behind.

Tax deductible contributions to Save Our Students' Online Resources, payable to CCCOE, can be sent to the County Superintendent's Office at 77 Santa Barbara Road, Pleasant Hill, CA 94523. Our Tax Identification Number is 94-2675635.

We would be more than happy to answer any questions or present a demonstration of the benefits of these resources to your organization. Please call us at (925) 942-3432.

Respectfully,

Joseph A. Ovick, Ed.D.
Contra Costa County
Superintendent of Schools &
President of the Pleasant Hill
Rotary Club 1999-2000

Anne Cain
County Librarian
Contra Costa County Library