



Members of The Cambridge Friends of the Library gathered to offer another donation to the Cambridge Library building fund Jan. 21. Shown above, Friends of the Library president Sharon Erb hands the check to Cambridge Library building fund treasurer Patty Strobusch. Photo by Tristan McGough.

Library addition heads toward final phase of construction

By Tristan McGough
Hometown News LP

"The Cambridge Community Library is very pleased and very grateful for the generous support of the new library building by the Town of Christiana," declared David Wilcox, president of the Board of Trustees for the Cambridge Community Library, who just received a donation from the Town of Christiana in the amount of \$50,000.

Similarly, on Wednesday, Jan. 21 the Friends of the Library contributed another \$145,610 to the cause. It was

added to the recently donated \$7,500 from the Ralph Evinrude Foundation, and a substantial dent was made in the \$225,000 needed yet to finish all library construction.

"My push," confided Bob Salov, Dane County supervisor and also a member of the library funding committee, "is to collect the funds necessary to complete the addition in the shortest time possible before our June of 2015 deadline."

The endeavor to fund the library addition from scratch has been monumental and, actually, has been decades in

the making. Salov would like to see enough money raised to start an endowment for the library that would grow over time to meet future needs of the library.

For the present building project, financial essentials were met by a wide range of constituencies, including residents from Cambridge, Rockdale, London, Oakland and Christiana; both municipal and rural businesses; and many foundations, civic groups, and public agencies.

Wilcox pointed out, "While the Cambridge Community Library is located in the Village of Cambridge, we are a community library, serving patrons well beyond the village limits. We thank the Town of Christiana board for their leadership and community spirit as they help us cross the finish line."

Gary Rattmann, Town of Christiana's board chair, said in an interview, "A lot of township residents supported the project from the start. And at the recent town meeting, there was strong endorsement for donating more to a project that can have significant advantages for all residents, old and young alike. And the Cambridge Community Library does just that."

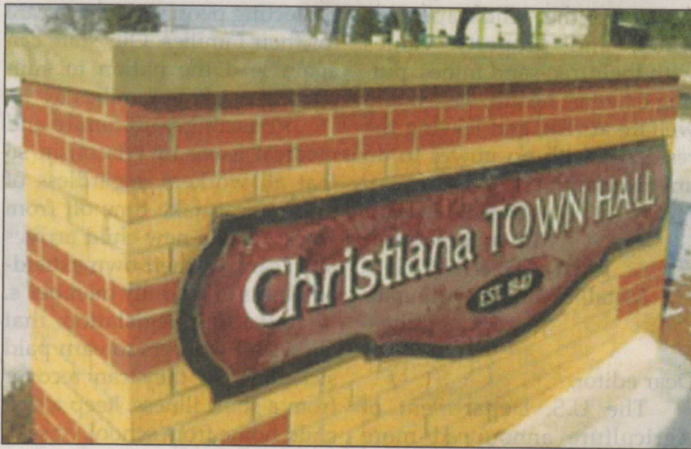
Besides being designed three times the size of the current library, expanding to 6,800 square feet, the new library will feature a 24-hour drive-thru book return, drive-thru book check-out, a computer center, community activities room and a completely furnished complex of interiors designed for study and meetings.

Also, according to Library Director Joan Behm, "We plan to upgrade our library Web site and purchase digital devices that will be able to be checked out that will allow free access to books, audio books and magazines."

The \$225,000 being gathered now will be dedicated to several forward-looking features that anchor the imminent expansions of the library's design as a comprehensive and technologically-sophisticated information center equipped for the 21st century. These novel features can be put into three groups:

- Wi-Fi Courtyard. This is designed to build a physical connection directly to Main Street, as well as to the recently expanded CamRock Trail, offering the community an appealing outdoor experience in land-

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The Town of Christiana has contributed over \$100,000 to the building campaign of the new Cambridge library and will have naming writes to one of the spaces.

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scaped elegance where shoppers, hikers and bikers, as well as guests can mingle casually and conveniently.

•Data and Computing Infrastructure. Constructed with the most advanced fiber optics

technology, library patrons – the young, the old and those yet-to-be-born – will be assured state-of-the-art data access and telecommunications media for decades to come. The library also plans to expand some of its currently available online offerings, such as

free digital book and audio downloads via "Overdrive" and, similarly, magazine downloads through a digital product known as "Flipster." Already offering a wide variety of "Online Reference Databases," a planned upgrade in design of the library's

Web site will make such databases more visible to onliners. (You may presently access Overdrive, Flipster and these knowledge bases at www.cambridgelib.org.)

•Interior Building Furnishings. In keeping with the original purpose of the Amundson Community Center, the library will, in addition to its library and information services, serve as a social focal point for sustaining the Greater Cambridge Community. Correspondingly, the interior is designed to welcome families and individuals, acting as an inviting facility to those looking to make Cambridge their home. Other important and interrelated components to this vital project include: Connectivity to distance learning; family-friendly children and young adult areas; a well-equipped technology area; and space for a one-of-a-kind local history collection.

Backers of the new library with expanded capabilities who have helped raise funds for the construction of the addition to the Amundson Community Center, find the cause of having a well-informed citizenry so significant they have given again.

Just recently and for a second time, the Library Capital Campaign Committee received a contribution of \$7,500 from the

Ralph Evinrude Foundation, after earlier in the campaign the Foundation was first gifted \$7,500, showing its initial support for the new library in Cambridge.

The Friends have raised, with the recent contribution, a total of \$185,610 for the campaign.

Christiana originally contributed \$54,000 to building the new library complex, and, like other groups finding that additional gifting makes a big difference, especially during this final count-down phase to securing the necessary remaining funds, the town rose to the occasion and underwrote another \$50,000.

Of course, any agency, firm, individual or group that exceeds the \$100,000 contribution threshold gets naming rights.

Rattmann confessed he would like to see a "Town of Christiana Young Adult Center," but the town has yet to formally decide on "what name" and "which space."

However, the children's area is already being sponsored by Cambridge State Bank and the reading, or "quiet" room with fireplace is being christened by the Friends of the Library.

"Many saw the need for a larger library and decided for their community they would give of themselves, their time, energy and heartfelt donations over

many years," said Behm. "Thus when the time was right and with the committed donation the people of our community helped to fulfill the need of a larger library not only for themselves but for everyone who calls Cambridge home. Over the years I have had the privilege of knowing and seeing in action many committed individuals. I now have the privilege of knowing and serving other committed individuals and it is my pleasure. Thank you, Friends, for helping to give all those that call Cambridge home one more reason to be proud."

Keeping this update in mind, the fact remains that the Library Building Project has only until June to raise the capital required to finish and detail the library as the multifaceted complex it is intended to be, which will serve as a treasured cultural institution in the community well into the 21st century.

"I cannot emphasize enough that fundraising is still aggressively seeking funds to complete the project," Salov said.

For more information on the new library – its features, architecture and fundraising activity – go to <http://www.newcambridgelibrary.com/>.

Donation information is also available there.