

We need our libraries now more than ever

FROM : EVELYN BURKHOUSE, ELKTON

Like other property owners, I do not like paying taxes. However, I know the services we want are not free. I applaud any effort to be efficient and to save on costs where possible, such as Ms. Hornberger's plan to combine new wash bay projects for two departments, sharing use and with an eye on federal funding. However, beware "Penny Wise, Pound Foolish." We expect pot holes to be filled, ice and snow removal from our roads to keep us safe. We want good police protection and services for our seniors. And I believe most of us want excellent schools and libraries. Public services require financial contributions from citizens. Cutting funding to our libraries, particularly during the pandemic, is especially disturbing. Library parking lots are usually full with rotating customers. Libraries serve our youngest citizens and all others with many services. Students are tutored there and many use the resources for school projects. With schools using remote learning, libraries offer a place for parents to enhance their children's learning opportunities. My friend reads her newspapers there to reduce house clutter. Our libraries provide free informational and/or entertainment programs as well as workshops. The new North East library was set up to help with job search and success, benefitting Veterans, youth trying to start independent lives, those who lost their job or want to qualify for a better job. As a senior without a computer, much less computer savvy, I have received much-appreciated help in getting communication needs met. The staff is always helpful and patient. We have a beautiful county with charming, historic towns and waterways. The quality of life here attracts good businesses and increases the value of our homes. The library, like many other county services, adds to our quality of life. It meets important needs of our citizens and offers free use of a variety of excellent films, CDs, and books. If we have great libraries, schools, roads, parks and recreation, transportation, health care and services for all ages, people will want to live here, retire here, and buy our homes when we need to sell. Our property tax is lower than most. Living in a great community is well worth paying a fair property tax. Ms. Hornberger and Cecil County Council, I urge you to restore full funding to our wonderful library system.

Evelyn Burkhouse, Elkton