



## Library first victim of Convention Center funding

It is tempting to place the blame on board members for the Lancaster Public Library debacle this week whereby six members rejected a million dollars in public and private grants after spending \$400,000 on plans and specs. Rather than proceed with the renovation of the library, they aborted the project because they feared not being able to raise an additional \$1.2 million over the course of the next year or two and were unwilling to borrow any shortfall from the library's large endowment fund.

But these are but ordinary citizens, suddenly involved in overseeing a major project, lacking experience and confidence in leadership, and, above all, not all sharing a passion for the undertaking.

Having spurned "half a loaf", they may yet prove their mettle by achieving both the renovation and the expansion within the next few years. We wish them well.

**But the primary cause was the failure to receive \$2.5 million in state RCAP funding that the library's representatives to Senator Gibson Armstrong had indicated was assured. Indeed, the state budget called for the library to receive a \$3.5million RCAP grant. Not a cent was forthcoming.**

So where did the state money to renovate and expand the Duke Street library end up? Certainly

Armstrong, the powerful Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, did not allow it to escape our county.

Perhaps we need look no further for an answer than to Armstrong's repeated trips to the state treasury to channel more and more state funds into the ever growing budget, now approaching \$190 million, for the Convention Center project of questionable merit.

So when the Convention Center opens next spring to pomp and grandeur, let's keep in mind that about 1500 Lancastrians visit the Duke Street library every day and suffer with a building from 1953 which, by and large, is in substandard and worn condition. If you have any doubts, try to find and then use a rest room.

**The true cost of the Convention Center Project isn't just the plus or minus \$180 million in grants and public guarantees plus the impediment it poses to downtown residential growth, but it must also be measured by essential needs of the community that now and in the future will go unfunded.**

*Editor's note: The wife of NewsLanc's publisher was President of the Board of the Lancaster Public Library until the renovation was voted down. Field himself was Project Manager. However, his advice concerning fund raising was not welcome.*

## Lancaster Post Suspends Publication

A message posted on Oct. 30th at [www.LancasterPost.com](http://www.LancasterPost.com) in part states:

***"The publishers of the Lancaster Post announced they are changing their focus from a print newspaper that happens to have a website, to a website that occasionally prints a newspaper."***

## Will *New Era* defy the League of Women Voters?

*NewsLanc* has twice inquired of Ernest Schreiber, Editor of the *Lancaster New Era*, as to whether he intends to continue to publish morning exit poll results in the Election Day afternoon edition. He has not responded.

The League of Women Voters is critical of such practices and national and state exit polls are embargoed until after polls close. This is to prevent early reports from discouraging voter turnout and influencing how people vote.

## The law: drivers MUST stop for pedestrians in crosswalks

*NewsLanc* received the following clarification from a representative of the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation in response to our difficulty in determining the law concerning pedestrians in crosswalks from the Drivers Manual: ***“Drivers must yield to pedestrians***

***when they are...crossing the roadway in marked crosswalks, whether or not at an intersection.”***

Let's hope all drivers on Chestnut and Walnut Streets pay heed, especially when youngsters are going and coming from school.

## **EDITORIAL: Armstrong slaps down Penn Square Partners**

An Oct. 31 *Intelligencer Journal* report carried the good news that the \$3 million in additional state aid for the Convention Center will not be allowed to be split with the greedy Lancaster Newspapers and The High Group who are partners in the Marriott Hotel.

Among other one sided and predatory provisions in the contract between the Convention Center Authority (LCCCA) and Penn Square Partners (PSP) that then chairmen Ted Darcus had rammed through despite objections from board members, there is a provision requiring the LCCCA share any additional state funds along with income from naming rights with PSP.

The rationale for such an arrangement is almost impossible to explain this side of the law. (*NewsLanc* has speculated that Darcus, an otherwise decent man, allowed himself to be used by PSP in return for the partners financial support for the development of the Brightside Opportunity Center.)

**Apparently Senator Gibson Armstrong does not want scorn heaped on him as he leaves the Senate and decided that 'enough is enough' when it comes to carrying the pail for High and the Lancaster Newspapers.**

But of course Armstrong has scarred the community by directing ear-marked funds that were promised to the Lancaster Public Library and should have also supported other worthwhile projects to the misguided, inept, wrong headed and possibly corrupt Convention Center undertaking.

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