



Street car backers need to get their facts right!

In his October 28th statement to City Council, Lancaster Mayor Rick Gray said, "*In those cities where streetcar systems have been implemented, such as Portland, Oregon, and Kenosha, Wisconsin, the streetcars have been a success and have led to additional economic development and expansion of the original systems.*"

An important difference, however, was

overlooked. In Kenosha, the trolley car runs in its own right-of-way for most of the route! "*The line is routed in a grassy median for about half its length, alongside the street for about a quarter of its length, and in the street for the remaining distance.*"

Again and again, claims by trolley advocates have been shown to be either erroneous or exaggerated. But they just keep on coming.

Asked for their reasons, Library trustees remain silent

In the interest of allowing all parties to be heard, **NewsLanc** sent a questionnaire to board members of the Lancaster Public Library asking them to explain and comment upon their cancellation of the renovation of the downtown library. The action forfeited a million dollars in state and matching grants after spending \$600,000 on plans and studies.

Reporter Chris Hart-Nibbrig made a second request, stating "*I was at the last meeting and observed the tension in the room. But I am*

hopeful that your professionalism and sense of civic responsibility will override personal animus and persuade you to answer the questions and explain why and how you made your decision on the project's future."

By Wednesday's deadline, only the board's former president had responded.

The deadline is being extended through the weekend and **NewsLanc** will then publish a summary of responses received.

Latino high school dropout rate disturbing

On Nov. 7, **Inteligencer Journal** columnist Jeff Hawkes reported "*Half of all Latino students at McCaskey High School drop out.*"

With 60% of the population at McCaskey being Latino, the drop out rate is a huge concern. We are grateful to Hawkes for spotlighting the matter.

A contributing factor to the drop out rate is the abject failure of the School District of Lancaster's

athletic program which has been under the supervision of Assistant Superintendent Drew Miles. Playing on competitive teams induces youngsters to remain in school.

SD of L Fall team results for 2007 / 2008:

Football 3-7 / 0-10; Boys' Soccer 1-17 / 6-12; Boys' XC 13-8 / 12-9; Girls' Field Hockey 2-16 / 3-15
Girls' XC 10-11 / 7-14; Girls' Volleyball 3-14 / 6-12;
Girls' Tennis 1-13 / 2-11

You can afford to send your youngster to Harvard!

One of 35 world traveling representatives of Harvard University, Admissions Officer Meg Swift addressed potential applicants from throughout the county on Wednesday evening in the library of J.P. McCaskey High School. Students were shown a video of Harvard and then were given the opportunity to ask questions of the speaker and distinguished local Harvard alumnae.

The main message and perhaps the purpose of this extensive outreach program can be paraphrased as: *If you are accepted, Harvard will provide whatever funds your family cannot afford to pay.*

Due to huge endowment funds, Harvard and many of the other top colleges and universities are committed to accepting students according to their ability and promise. Ability to pay is not considered. After acceptance, scholarships in appropriate amounts are provided.

Tabor helps homeless to become self-sufficient

Located in its own office building at 308 East King Street, Tabor is a not-for-profit corporation established in Lancaster 40 years ago as a housing and credit counseling agency for persons experiencing difficulties in those areas.

"We don't really have anything to give to them, but we can help individuals develop skills and strategies for personal success," said President Robert Thomas.

Tabor offers financial literacy counseling, mortgage counseling, consumer credit counseling, first time homebuyer counseling programs, and matched savings programs. Tabor also owns three local properties as living spaces for those who were or would probably otherwise be homeless.

NewsLanc toured two of those facilities - the Market View Apartments and the Transitional Living Center.

The Transitional Living Center has 54 rooms of temporary housing and runs almost at full occupancy, according to "Team Leader" Doug Hopwood, the manager.

Though kept neat and clean, the facility is well worn and rooms are small by current hotel standards, although they provide a private bathroom.

There is a common kitchen with bags with locks to enable occupants to safely store their own food. A portion of the former lobby area is used for a children's play area during the day and a lounge in the evening.

Hopwood explained that the goal is to help people who are temporarily down on their luck to be able to return to independent living. "Life Skills" classes and personalized financial counseling are provided. An important part of the program is teaching people how to budget their income.

The outcome is that 73% of participants successfully move into permanent housing with the average length of stay at TLC being four months.

Inhabitants must pay a daily fee which covers housing, education and enforced savings. The savings is held for the client until he or she departs and then it can be used for securing housing elsewhere. The rent is individually negotiated as part of an overall plan for the resident. Occupants are selected according to need.

Hopwood told of a middle aged man who was overwhelmed to learn that he had almost a thousand dollars saved up. The man exclaimed that he had never had so much money in his life.

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