

Library closes campaign book with resounding win

By Susan Wood

South Lake Tahoe voters spoke loudly when they turned funding support of the El Dorado County Library into a no brainer during Tuesday's primary election.

With its funding to operate teetering, citizens overwhelmingly passed the \$20-to-\$28 a year parcel fee with 2,552 votes at 78.52 percent. Measure L needed two thirds of the vote to pass.



Measure L supporters celebrate election night.

Photo/Susan Wood

Friends of the Library and the institution's staff reminded themselves at a gathering Tuesday night that this isn't the first time the library dodged a bullet to keep the doors open and services offered. In 1995 and 2005, library supporters have gone to the voters to keep the operation intact.

And what a necessary component these votes have been. At least 83 percent of the library's budget comes from taxes raised.

"I've long felt what makes our community special is the library and the (Lake Tahoe Community) college," said John

Henderson at a gathering to watch and talk about election results at his home with Kay. (Kay Henderson is president of Friends of the Library.) Within earshot, founding college board member Roberta Mason listened.

The Hendersons erected a retractable television behind the sofa to entertain the attentive guests.

Librarian and branch Manager Katherine Miller told *Lake Tahoe News* that she's noticed people walking into the library asking: "Why wouldn't we vote for the library?"

She would shrug. Staff is not allowed to use time and resources to campaign for a political endeavor.

However, it helps to have Friends, among other supporters.

"We owe everything to this PAC," Miller said of the library political action committee.

In turn, Henderson broadened her acknowledgement to a large group of supporters.

"We were fortunate to have a lot of committed people to Measure L. For me, the real bottom line is I want to live in a community with a library," she said.

The El Dorado County Library has long been a venue for community functions, a creative outlet for gatherings such as the appy hour for those trying to master their computer technology and a resource for audio books, published works to read and tools to conduct professional projects.

As the Lakeview Commons project across Highway 50 comes into full fruition, the library location becomes all the more pertinent in steering visitors and locals to a world of words and vision. And one might catch a glimpse of Mark Twain's character in MacEvoy Lane.