

Kent County PUBLIC LIBRARY

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From: The Kent County Public Library
Contact: Jack Stenger, President, Kent County Public Library
Re: I Love My Library campaign

Everyone loves the library. It's the first thing patrons say about the services provided by the Kent County Public Library (KCPL). The nice part is that the Library is free to citizens, right?

While services seem free, they are not. Funding comes from the State of Maryland and Kent County. It is insufficient to cover actual operating expenses and has led, over time, to the deficit faced today. State funding is provided by formula based on population. Even though the basic overhead of running a physical facility has the same types of costs as all counties, regardless of population, the State's formula for library funding puts Kent County at the bottom on a per capita basis for small counties. Fortunately the County funds the Library at a higher rate than the state requires, but the combination is still not enough to cover actual Library operations, even with cuts to the budget.

The Library is asking Kent County citizens to help out to offset the chronic annual level of need. In a fast-paced "I Love My Library" campaign, the Library hopes to raise \$100,000 in the next four months, calendar year 2010. "This can be done quickly and inexpensively through our facilities," says Jack Stenger, president of the Kent County Library Board. "To succeed in our goal, we need 1,000 Library Lovers to contribute \$100 each. The campaign is being underwritten by several supporters. Now we need the support of our patrons"

The check-out desks at the Main Library and the Rock Hall and Galena branches will be the locations for donations, and it's as easy, if not easier than, checking out a book. Each \$100 donor will be given an "I Love KCPL" button to indicate their support, while the diminishing level of the "button jar" will show the pace of support. Any size donation is welcome, but the \$100 donations are key.

"We want to provide the best services we can and community financial support is the only way for us to continue to do this," Stenger said.
