



Friends of the

Norfolk Public Library

Jan. 10, 2011

Dear Norfolk Library Patron;

I hesitate to write this letter knowing we have all just received our tax bills for the coming year. I hope you realize that the tax increase we're seeing is not related to the public library in any way. Funding for our Library has actually declined 9% over the last three years and represents less than 1.5% of the total Town budget. The next fiscal year looks to be even tougher and the Library, like all other Town departments, is being asked to consider another 4% reduction. This cut risks the Library's certification which would cancel state aid (\$12,000 p.a.), make us ineligible for grants (\$33,000 last year), and terminate borrowing from other public libraries across the Commonwealth.

So, your continued support of the Friends of the Norfolk Public Library is especially important. Your contributions have been used to preserve services in the face of budget cuts and to support on-going programs that serve the entire community from the young to the not so young. In 2010, the Friends' purchase of a second self check station enabled our decreased staff to help library users without increased wait times. The Friends also supported museum passes, new computers and the best seller rental program, all of which continue to be actively used by Norfolk residents. Children's programs, especially Ed Morgan's monthly visits, garnered large audiences. Our Community Read brought National Book Award winning author, Nathaniel Philbrick, as well as experts and performers from Mystic Seaport and the Whaling Museum to speak about the history of whaling in New England and the disaster of the Essex which served as the basis for *Moby Dick*.

All of us should be proud of what the library, in conjunction with the Friends, has been able to do to keep our library vibrant even in these times of reduced budgets. Some area towns are not so fortunate. Many must contend with sharply reduced hours or no ability to borrow from other libraries because of decertification. The Friends will be called on during this challenging time to provide additional support for our library. Please consider **keeping your charitable donations local by becoming a Friend or renewing your membership now.**

The Friends want to take this opportunity to invite you to participate in our activities. These include:

- Annual meeting and open house scheduled for 3-5 pm on Feb. 12 at the Library. Come learn more about The Friends and our Library. The Meeting agenda & related documents will be available in the Library and posted on the Library website. Refreshments will be served.
- The Friends' Book and Bake Sale on Apr. 15 from 6-9 pm for Members and Apr. 16 from 9am-3pm in the DPW Garage on Medway Branch. The sale offers over 35,000 books in good to excellent condition, most priced between \$1 and \$2. Participation is a great way to save money while supporting an important community resource.
- Regular meetings generally held on the first Monday of every month (except July & August) at 7 pm in the Schoolhouse. See the Library website calendar for details.

We hope you can join us and thank you very sincerely for your support of the Friends and our Library.

Sincerely,

Catherine Elder, President, Friends of the Norfolk Public Library

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