

Letter: Libraries are contemporary, not old-fashioned

To the community,

“Nobody goes to the library,” said Steve. “Libraries are old-fashioned.”

I have great respect for Steve. He’s a smart guy, devoted to our community. If you agree with Steve, this letter is for you. You, like Steve, will hear me out.

Fact: 1,700 people visit our library in the average week.

Fact: In 2012, 130,868 books were checked out, a 23 percent increase over 2011.

People do use the library.

What is old-fashioned? Surely, not knowledge, nor great stories. Steve must be talking about the actual books, the paper and ink format.

Fact: 62 percent of teens choose traditional books over e-books.

For those and others like them, the library buys best-sellers in paperback and large print.

The remaining 38 percent borrow that best-seller as an Mp3, an audio book, or download it on a checked-out iPad.

Steve buys all the technology he wants. Some like him come to the library to use the free Wi-Fi in this tranquil island at the heart of frenzied, modern life. But the library means much more to others. It means access to the World Wide Web.

Fact: At times, 20 people wait to use one of the nine computers.

Fact: According to a 2013 Pew Research Center poll, 63 percent of Americans aged 16 and older say that the closing of their local public library would have a “major” impact on their community.

Vote yes to pass Measure L. Renew this small tax, an investment in our community, that buys so much for so many.

Bonnie Turnbull, South Lake Tahoe