

Editorial: Measure L – vote yes in June

Publisher's note: *Lake Tahoe News convened an editorial panel of six South Shore residents to decide on this endorsement for the June primary.*

Twenty bucks doesn't get you much these days unless you are at the South Lake Tahoe Library.

For that amount of money you get unlimited access to books, periodicals, an array of events, time on computers and the ability to pick the brain of the experts who work behind the counter.

In all of those resources a whole new world could be discovered – life beyond the confines of Tahoe, as well as imaginary places. Books stimulate the imagination, they educate us, they relax us and they challenge us to think differently.

Libraries are the great equalizer. The cost is the same for everyone – free. This is because property owners pay the taxes to keep them going.

But they are also an equalizer in that they provide access to information. Even in this high-tech world we live in, not everyone has a personal computer or smart phone. Nor does everyone have the means to purchase books.

Even for those who do have the money to buy books, the library is still a resource. So many people don't want to buy books so the libraries "rent" them. These days they can even be checked out as an ebook. Many people who are in book clubs choose the library over the bookstore.

Audio books are also available. These are great for long car

rides or for those whose eyesight isn't what it was.

Programs are offered starting with infants. Study after study proves that reading to children will better prepare them for school, and thus life. For adults whose first language is not English, these programs help teach them a new written and verbal language as well.

The library is constantly coming up with creative ways to reach people. The "appy hour" was developed to help people with smart phones learn how to use various apps.

Then there is the Friends of the Library that brings in authors to give readings and sign books. This nonprofit group is an extension of the library and is able to provide events beyond what the county can do.

But the problem is the tax that supports the library is about to expire. If it does, it means the South Lake Tahoe Library would have to cut hours and programs, and one day may not exist.

We can't imagine our town without a library. That is why we whole-heartedly support Measure L.

Measure L will be on the June 3 ballot. It is specific to the South Lake Tahoe library. It asks residents to continue paying the \$20 year fee per parcel. This is not a new tax, but would be continuing the one already in place. The amount could go up based on the Consumer Price Index of no more than 3 percent per year. It will never exceed \$28.50 per year. It would expire in 12 years. It will require two-thirds of the voters' approval for passage.