

DRAFT I'm Scott Major Giese, a Rockville citizen and Co-Chair of the Davis Library Library Advisory COMMITTEE.

The County Executive's budget for libraries shows that he is being responsive to the citizens who care about their libraries – their centers of education, their community centers and their quality of life. I hope you will be at least as responsive as he has been.

Davis Library's services are needed and utilized by a wide range of our community, from neighbors looking for jobs to teenagers preparing for college to children learning to read. The library's available meeting rooms are used for children's activities, conversational language classes, mentoring, and other community-driven programs. Through its programming and resources, Davis serves Montgomery County as a whole as well as children who are learning that reading is a valued and enjoyable activity.

As an example of our value to the community, on October 5 – Library “Snapshot” Day – Davis Library had more than 1200 visitors who checked out more than 1500 items – more than the Rockville Memorial Library. And that’s just in a single day!

The motto for the 21st century has become “do more with less.” And Davis’ staff and volunteers do indeed. In fact, our staff and volunteers have made Davis the successful hub of activity and service that is, not with less, but with a LOT less. The cuts of the past two years hit all the libraries hard. Davis was hit particularly hard. Let me tell you why:

We’ve repeatedly postponed renovations at Davis. Given the County’s budget situation, patience is, of course, called for. But the extra burden that Davis’ has had to face is the closing of nearly half of its floor space due to air quality problems. Its inadequate heating/AC system and cutbacks in maintenance mean that its ground floor is off limits to the people who pay for it.

The ground floor has been closed for so long that many people do not even realize that Davis is a two-floor building. The space is not useable for children's programs or afterschool programs, even though Davis is across the street from Walter Johnson High School and a quarter-mile from Ashburton Elementary. Instead of being a center of knowledge, it is a wasteland in a County where waste should be unacceptable to you.

Davis' high utilization rates – even when space and staff and hours have been cut dramatically – is a testament to the reality that the library matters to your taxpayers.

It is also a testament to the staff and volunteers and to the Friends of the Davis Library that they have persevered through these harsh cuts. They have done more with less – in fact, much more with much less. They've worked very hard to keep Davis Library functioning on behalf of the people who NEED it. Our community members deserve a place where they can expand their knowledge, excite their imaginations,

support their neighbors, and know that the County they pay taxes to, supports their mental nourishment and quality of life.

Mr. Leggett rightly recognizes that the library budget has suffered enough, and that its time to invest in the County's self-education centers.

On behalf of Davis Library, where the half of the building that's OPEN suffers from staff shortages, book shortages and days when there aren't paper towels in the restrooms, I urge you to fully support restoring strong funding to our libraries. Thank *you*. ***DRAFT***