

What did our Founding Fathers say about libraries...

Unfortunately, there have been calls lately by city government to defund the Pottsboro Library over budgetary concerns. This is understandable, but this library is NOT just a place for dusty old books! It is a cultural center where various community groups can meet in a town and a surrounding rural area where no other free facilities are available. The library hosts educational classes constantly covering MANY subjects from "How to Navigate Medicare" to understanding how to master computer programs like Canva and Excel. They provide FREE "in home" wireless internet services for the entire community, as well as access to computers for use at the library, with access to many valuable aids. You can not only check out books, but telescopes and a MIRIAD of useful objects for FREE! There is even a room there dedicated to tele-med services! Their monthly newsletter describes only a few of the community services offered at our award-winning Pottsboro Library.

Founding father Benjamin Franklin knew better than most the benefits of self-education. Franklin wished to ensure access to useful books since most people could not afford their own books. By 1771, as the Revolution neared, Franklin reflected in his autobiography on the lending library's crucial role in fostering democracy: "These libraries have improved the general conversation of the Americans" and "made the common tradesmen and farmers as intelligent as most gentlemen from other countries." Many of the founding fathers remarked that the continued function of our Republic was only possible with an educated and informed citizenry in all classes capable of voting intelligently on all issues.

In modern times, this belief has been held by some of our most esteemed thinkers. "The only thing that you absolutely have to know is the location of the library." Albert Einstein (1879-1955. Theoretical physicist). "Whatever the cost of our libraries, the price is cheap compared to that of an ignorant nation" – Walter Cronkite, newsman. "Libraries store the energy that fuels the imagination. They open up windows to the world and inspire us to explore and achieve, and contribute to improving our quality of life." - Sidney Sheldon (1917-2007. Successful American writer and producer). "Good libraries build services; great libraries build communities." R. David Lankes -(Professor and Director of the School of Library & Information Science at the University of South Carolina, the Follett Chair at Dominican's Graduate School of Library & Information Science, and recipient of the American Library Association's 2016 Ken Haycock Award for Promoting Librarianship).

Pottsboro, Texas indeed has a GREAT library, known and recognized as such throughout the State of Texas and the entire country. It is an integral part of our community here and has been for many years. We must not lose it. I personally remember how many years it took to establish this library in Pottsboro and the struggle was long and difficult. This cannot be simply thrown away on a whim for if so, it can never be undone. If this community is to grow and prosper and we soon hope to , we must hold on to our cultural assets to make us stronger and more appealing as a town. As our founding fathers did, as our town's former leaders have, we must continue to have a clear vision of our future and hold on what is good in our community.

Natalie Bauman, Pottsboro, Texas Historian

Pottsboro Chamber of Commerce Member

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