

# Library system plays important role in Sheridan's future

First of all a disclaimer: This article is not intended to reflect the policy or position of the Sheridan County Public Library System, the director, the employees, or the various boards of that entity. The article does reflect the perceptions and opinions of the writer only.

Recently, Philippe Chino, president/CEO of Forward Sheridan, presented the rough draft of their Strategic Plan for Economic Development to employees and board members of the Sheridan County Public Library System.

The presentation was timely because the library system is in the process of developing its own Strategic Plan.

Obviously the library system, which is a vital asset to the community, will play an important role in the implementation of the Sheridan Economic Development Strategic Plan.

As the meeting unfolded, it was pointed out that, although there have been other similar efforts in the past, Forward Sheridan is building on those efforts and differs in that with this Strategic Plan, the focus will be on implementation.

Things are happening and will continue to do so. Perhaps, to me at least, the most valuable part of the meeting took

place during the question/answer portion.

The role of the library system in economic development was explored as being an essential community resource.

It was pointed out that the Community Information Resource Center is housed in the Fulmer Library, and I thought, how convenient.

Remembering the TV commercials and my own experience, when you need some information, whom do you ask? A librarian!

Some of the other aspects of the library system were explored; the existence of fine library facilities and personnel in Clearmont, Ranchester and Story; the involvement of all ages of individuals in all walks of life; the children's programs essential to early education efforts; the increased use of technology in the facilities including the wireless connections which many people use to access the Internet to search for employment and more:

## A Community Affair

Bob  
Orrell



*Planning for Sheridan's economic development*

the general public, the children's programs for the youth, in-home services and outreach to the Senior Center for older citizens, and the involvement of many employees in various community organizations.

What does all of the above have to do with economic development and Forward Sheridan?

It seems to me that no organization/institution/community can exist without growth; the Economic Development Strategic Plan of Forward Sheridan provides the pathway for quality growth in our community.

Our library system is a tremendous,

The library system provides easy access to a variety of information sources in a nonthreatening manner.

Library employees are good ambassadors in the community in their roles of offering information services to

though sometimes overlooked, resource that is available to all at no charge, and our county commissioners are to be applauded for appropriately funding this important community asset.

Each branch library as well as the Fulmer Library has copies of the entire group of "Community Affair" columns that Forward Sheridan and volunteers have been printed weekly in The Press.

If you have missed any and would like to read them, please ask at the front desk. Also, please contact Forward Sheridan if you have any questions or thoughts to share at 673-8004.

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*"A Community Affair" is a weekly column from citizens who support Forward Sheridan, a professional business organization of invested partners whose purpose is to develop and maintain a sound economy in Sheridan County. Philippe Chino is president/CEO of Forward Sheridan.*