Today’s Presenters

John Chrastka
Executive Director, EveryLibrary

Carrie Andrew
Director, Lone Cone Library District, Norwood, CO
Build Your Political Literacy Skills for Advocacy

John Chrastka | @everylibrary

Carrie Andrew | carrie@loneconelibrary.org
About EveryLibrary

- First Nationwide Super PAC for Libraries
- Set up as a c4 rather than a c3
- 61 Campaigns to date 41 wins
- $210+ million in stable tax funding
- Pro Bono Approach
About *Lone Cone Library District*

- Rural library in SW Colorado
- Service Area = 2000
- 2 Full-time, 5 part-time employees
- 2016 passed a ballot issue for operating and facility construction
Voter Data that Frames Our Discussion

“From Awareness to Funding” says...
Library Use Does Not Matter

A voter’s willingness to support increased library funding is not driven, or limited, by library use.

- OCLC "From Awareness to Funding" p. 7-2
Library as Transformative Force

[T]he library is not perceived as just a provider of practical answers and information; the most committed supporters hold the belief that the library is a transformational force.

- OCLC "From Awareness to Funding" p. 7-4
Attitude - Not Demographics

The factors that determine residents’ willingness to increase their taxes to support their local library are their perceptions and attitudes about the library and the librarian.

- OCLC "From Awareness to Funding" p. 7-3
Perception of the Librarian(s)

[Voters] recognize the value of a ‘passionate librarian’ as a true advocate for lifelong learning.

- OCLC "From Awareness to Funding" p. 7-4
What Activates Voters?

Seven Factors:

- A Reason to Vote
- Mobilized
- Personal Contact with Candidate or Issue*
- Culture/Tradition/Habit of Voting*
- Trust in Government
- Decided to Vote
- Weather/Access to Polls
Voter Attitudes

Nationwide, of all voters:

37% will Definitely vote yes for the library
37% will Probably vote yes for the library
26% will Probably or Definitely vote no or may vote either way.
What Activates Advocates?

1. An Identified Need
2. Personal Motivation
3. Experience of the Issue*
4. Prior Success as an Advocate*
5. Institutional Reputation
6. Made a Pledge
7. Ease of Access to Advocacy Tools
Activate in Either Context

**VOTERS:**
1. A Reason to Vote
2. Mobilization
3. Personal Contact with Candidate*
4. Culture/Tradition/Habit of Voting*
5. Trust in Government (pro or con)
6. Decided to Vote
7. Weather/Access to Polls

**ADVOCATES:**
1. An Identified Need
2. Personal Motivation
3. *Experience of the Issue*
4. *Prior Success as Advocate*
5. Institutional Reputation
6. Made a Pledge
7. Ease of Access to Tools
“Librarian as Candidate”
What Activates Voters for a Library Measure?

The Librarian is the Candidate

The Library is the Incumbent

Library = Librarians + Community

@everylibrary
How Candidates “Surface”

- Write the book
- Tell their story
- Be seen as an expert
- Start an Exploratory Team
- Get endorsed
- Launch their Campaign

@everylibrary
*What is Your Book?*

Strategic Plan
Management Plan
Service/Programs/Collections Plan
Fundraising Goals
Financials and Fiduciary

@everylibrary
In Practice: Norwood

● Aligned organization to a powerful mission
● Partnered with community organizations
● Conducted capital feasibility study-
  ○ 70 stakeholder interviews
  ○ Greatest holder of public knowledge
● Joined a number of community boards to move community goals forward
● Integral and respected community leader
“Library as Cause”
Remember – Use Does Not Matter

To Library Users:

- “As you know...”
- Personal Value Proposition
- Value for Other
- Activation as a Voter

To Non-Users:

- “As you can imagine...”
- Value to/for “Other”
- Satisfaction as a Voter
What Activates Voters for a Library Issue?

- Is the reason for the tax - and process to get there - legitimate?
- Is there a difference between Plan A and Plan B?
- Where is my money going? and
  Who is spending my money?
Identify Your Team with 5 Quick Questions

Q1. Why is the library important to you, personally?

Q2. What is your favorite reason to use the library?

Q3. Who does the Library serve? *

Q4. Why is the library important to those people?

Q5. What will new funding do to serve those communities?
How Do We Find Those People?
Drink Coffee
Drink Coffee w/ Partners

1. Educational Partners
2. Social Welfare and Religious Partners
3. Governmental Partners
4. Civic (clubs) Partners
5. Business Partners
6. Politicians
7. Media
Drink More Coffee

I Like what you’re doing --->

I Support what you are doing --->

I Want to identify us with what you are doing.
In Practice: Norwood

- Be intentional in seeking out community influencers
- Recruit formal and informal advocates from different sectors
- Tailored a message for each sector of the community
- Be prepared to answer the tough questions
Extending Your Influence
All Issues are won by Coalitions
Extending Your Influence

What systems already exist in your community or statewide that align with libraries? Where are your natural partnerships?

State and Local Systems:

- Boards and Commissions
- Coalitions of Common Cause
- Coalitions of Common Concern
What Coalitions are Right for You?

- Economic Development
- Early Literacy and Early Childhood
- Grade Level Reading
- Housing and Food Security
- Immigration
- Safety and Violence
In Practice: Norwood

- Establish library as community asset through partnership
- Other community leaders advocated for cause because worth was evident
- Resolutions of support from the School board and the Town board
- Neutralize objectors when possible
Guiding Principle: Dread Pirate Roberts
action.everylibrary.org
Thank You

John Chrastka, EveryLibrary
Carrie Andrew, Lone Cone Library District

john.chrastka@everylibrary
carrie@loneconelibrary.org