Political control over special districts in local government: A case study of the Las Vegas - Clark County Library District

John Thompson Stephens
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

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POLITICAL CONTROL OVER SPECIAL DISTRICTS
IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT: A CASE STUDY
OF THE LAS VEGAS-CLARK
COUNTY LIBRARY
DISTRICT

by

John Thompson Stephens III

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

Masters of Arts
in
Political Science

Department of Political Science
University of Nevada, Las Vegas
May 1996
The Thesis of John Thompson Stephens III for the degree of Master of Arts in Political Science is approved.

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University of Nevada, Las Vegas
May 1996
ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the Las Vegas-Clark County Library District over the five year period from 1991 to 1995. Based on interviews, local media coverage and budgetary data, the work traces the development of the library district during its most turbulent times. As a case study of special districts or "functional feudalities", the Las Vegas-Clark County Library District provides an excellent microcosm for understanding competing elites, interest group politics, budgetary problems, and public perception as determinants of policy made by a non-elected governing board.
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

On, Thursday, October 15, 1992, the words "We want Linda!", coming from African-American children in a single file line could be heard in the board room where the LVCLLD trustees were having their monthly meeting. At least thirty adults and a dozen or more children of African descent were outside of the board members' door screaming demands and howling chants. They were adamant about a West Las Vegas Library employee, who was black, being transferred from their community to work at another library. The crowd cried for more racial sensitivity and for the West Las Vegas Library to receive an equal and adequate portion of books and services for the African-American community library. Assemblyman Wendell Williams, who represents the community served by the WLV library, was asking for the abolishment of the Library Board because it was not accountable to the public. One frequent library patron and book enthusiast who was white received cheers and applause
when he shouted that LVCCLD's director should be fired.

How could this have happened? What went wrong? How does a local government agency produce such unusual extremities of behavior from the very people they are paid to assist and aid in the pursuit of knowledge?

'Political Control over Special Districts in Local Government: A Case Study of the Las Vegas Clark County Library District' is an examination of the local politics of a growing, thriving, and prosperous library system. My thesis will include an introductory review of literature on special districts; a statutory history of the Las Vegas-Clark County Library District; and an analysis of current problems with focus on media coverage, public input, lack of accountability, misappropriation of funds, racism, etc. It will conclude with a look at contemporary reform measures which have been adopted by the board of trustees. The theoretical significance of the thesis lies's in its look at political control over quasi-independent governmental units.
CHAPTER 2

THE LIBRARY

The library is a fascinating world of learning. It is a haven for information, ideas, philosophies, and personalities which can be obtained by anyone who seeks them. The walls are put in place to provide refuge from the disruptions and distractions of the world, so that the seeker of knowledge can quench his or her thirst for information and relative news. The library is a place where an individual may find a good book, a good compact disc or cassette, a newspaper, a magazine, and a video available at no charge. It is a building where one's child may enjoy a story telling, a puppet show, and/or some old fashioned craft project to promote use of the public library. The library may be a building a person uses for direction or guidance for handling a particular problem, or may be a place one unwinds in and enjoys the calm and rest of the day. The library is all of theses scenarios and more, but libraries and their schools are closing despite the urgency for
libraries today. In the great age of the computer and the internet craze, libraries should not be closing, but prospering across the U.S. Libraries and library schools are taking a beating because of cuts in budgets and an underestimated role in the futures of computers and online searches in the comfort of one's home.

The first known library in the United States was the Harvard University Library established in 1638. It was founded by a clergyman named John Harvard who started it with a generous gift of money and 400 books. In 1731 Benjamin Franklin with the help of some friends founded the Library Company of Philadelphia which was the first subscription library in America. The purpose of the Library Company of Philadelphia was to make libraries accessible to anyone who could pay the dues. The money raised from the dues would go towards the purchase of new books for the library. Once the members paid the fee for membership, they were able to check out books free of charge. The first free tax supported public libraries were in Peterborough, New Hampshire, in 1833. The idea of tax funded public libraries really caught on with the notion of public schooling for U.S. children. In 1970 the federal government created the National Commission on Libraries and Information Science. The commission is an advisory board which studies the programs of libraries and develops plans for collaborating libraries with other means of information programs that
are available in the U.S. The largest research library in the world is the U.S. Library of Congress which is located just east of the United States Capitol. It has 90 million items in its collection, including over 23 million books and pamphlets. The Library of Congress also houses millions of charts, manuscripts, maps, engravings, musical sheets, photographs and recordings. The library was established in 1800 to serve the U.S. Congress with research and reference. The facility was started when Congress appropriated 5,000 dollars to the library for books and furniture. Today it sits on 71 acres of land and is comprised of three buildings which are the James Madison Memorial Building, the Thomas Jefferson Building, and the John Adams Building.

Libraries in the United States classify their books by two classification systems which are the Library of Congress Classification and the Dewey Decimal Classification. The Dewey Decimal Classification was invented by Melvil Dewey while he was attending college. The system works by categorizing different subjects of books by numbers. For example 100-199 would cover encyclopedias with 300-399 covering social sciences. This numbering system worked very well in the late 1800's but did not adequately accommodate the needs of precision and specifics when arranging books and materials in the twentieth century.
The Library of Congress Classification operates on a set of capital letters and numbers for shelving books. The first letter in the classification number is one of 21 major areas of wisdom. The areas of knowledge would be A-general works of books, B-philosophy, psychology, and religion, C to F-history, G-geography, anthropology, and recreation, H-social sciences, J-political science, K-law, L-education, M-music, N-arts, P-language and literature, Q-science and math, R-medicine, S-agriculture, T-technology, home repairs, U-military, V-Navy Science, and Z-bibliography and library science books. The second letter stands for the subclassification with the actual number referring to a specific topic. The Library of Congress created the classification system in the early 1900's to have a cataloging system that would better assist in the filing away of materials. The new system allowed for more expansive and specified cataloging of the Library of Congress' collection.

Today there are many forms of libraries that exist in the U.S. There are city libraries, county libraries, non-profit corporation libraries, college libraries, research libraries, school libraries, government libraries, special libraries such as the law library and/or medical library, and independent taxing-district libraries. To govern all these different variations of libraries there are six operation methods to run
a library: municipal, county, non-profit corporation, multijurisdictional, independent taxing district, school district, and state. Municipal are libraries which are a department of the city government. County libraries are a department of the county government. Non-profit corporation are libraries that are contracted by one or more units of local government. Independent taxing district are libraries that are governed by a citizenry board rather than city and county elected officials. The Las Vegas-Clark County Library District is operated as an independent taxing district. School district are libraries that are administrated by public school officials. State are libraries that are run and funded solely by the state government.

The staff of a public library system is headed by a director. The director is appointed by the board of trustees. The board of trustees can be elected or appointed into service by local governments such as the city and/or county. If a library board of trustees does not exist in a library system, the director is then responsible to local government officials. The purpose of the library board is to set policies to operate the library district. The director's job is to see that these policies are carried out and that the board of trustees' rules and regulations are enforced. The library director does have the authority to make suggestions to the board on what policies they should adopt to run
a library: municipal, county, non-profit corporation, multijurisdictional, independent taxing district, school district, and state. Municipal are libraries which are a department of the city government. County libraries are a department of the county government. Non-profit corporation are libraries that are contracted by one or more units of local government. Independent taxing district are libraries that are governed by a citizenry board rather than city and county elected officials. The Las Vegas-Clark County Library District is operated as an independent taxing district. School district are libraries that are administrated by public school officials. State are libraries that are run and funded solely by the state government.

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the library system smoothly. The budget of the library district is prepared by the director and is approved by the board of trustees and local government officials. The director is also responsible for the public relations of the library district. He or she has to get the community involved in the library and muster support for future library endeavors.

The director of a library system carries many responsibilities and is the catalyst for positive or negative happenings to his/her library. Positive would be the building and expansion of libraries in a particular area with the community fully confident with the actions of the library director and the board of trustees. The negative would be budgets being cut and libraries closing.

Services offered in current public libraries are reference, young people's library, programming, museums, and theaters. Reference is the department in a library that answers patrons' questions and aids in the search for information. A reference librarian may answer questions and/or assist in one's research by using books or computers. They also demonstrate how to use the library and its resources. The young people's library is the section of the library which is solely dedicated to the children. The librarian of this department will help young children to complete their homework by showing them how to utilize the library. This department also
hosts programs and projects to keep young people interested and familiar with the library. Some libraries across the country may fund programs or special events to foster support for libraries in the community they serve. The arts and the theater may also find a home in the library for more community use and support. Literacy programs, latchkey programs, and even computers are examples of how far libraries will go to be a part of the community and serve it with well.

Many people and librarians feel that librarianship is on the verge of extinction because of the availability of electronic information. Electronic information would be the internet or any home computer on-line service that would provide information without making a trip to the library. However, others feel exploration of cyber space must not be done alone; it must have the guidance and utilization of the librarian to make it accessible and usable to everyone. In the age of the superhighway, the librarian can be recruited to access, educate, train, navigate, and catalog information on the internet system. Librarians can prove to be excellent information navigators on the superhighway. Some librarians feel that the title librarian should be changed to 'information specialist' to clearly outline their significance and usefulness on the on-line computer services. Many believe that the new information age will pump more federal dollars into the library in
hopes of making electronic information available to all who want it.

Libraries, however, cannot sit back and wait on the federal government to save their facilities and teaching institutions. The library must organize and become a political think tank to survive in the future. Librarians and library staff must go to the voters and convince them that they are a necessary and vital part of the community. They must do public service announcements on television and radio to advertise services offered by the library. Politicians must be contacted and pushed to support libraries and eliminate any budget cuts that would hurt them. Any ally or friend of the library must be recruited in the war to support libraries in America. Organizations such as Friends of the Library, book publishers, book distributors, and library staff should be used to further the cause and needs of the library. Government on a federal, state, and local level must be persuaded to keep libraries funded and financially secured to serve the people.
In 1965, the citizens of Las Vegas and the Clark County area presented to the Clark County Commissioners a certified petition for a special tax district. Former State Senator Jean Ford was the organizer of the library petition to tax Clark County residents for the purpose of establishing library services. In 1972, the officials of the Library District, the Director, and the Assistant Director met with the Las Vegas city manager and assistant city manager, with the concurrence of the mayor and Library Board, to form a new library service by contract. The contract would include the City of Las Vegas the Library District with the city agreeing to pay property taxes to the District beginning January 1, 1973.

In March of 1985, Senate Bill 158 created a merger of the Clark County Library District and the City of Las Vegas Libraries. The merger ended the contractual agreement of the Clark County Library District to operate Las Vegas City Libraries. The new consolidated Library
District which would be called the Las Vegas-Clark County Library District (LVCCLD) served all persons living in Clark County, Nevada. This merger and consolidation of library services in Clark County Nevada, is known as a special district.

Special districts arise from fears of changes in urban political organizations and the way they conduct public policy. Some government agencies will be helped by changes being made and then there are others that will be in jeopardy. In the book, *Political Change in the Metropolis*, by John J. Harrigan, the author argues that there is a bias in political power being expressed and exercised in, what he calls, "metropolitan America." The origin of this bias is rooted in what organizations and/or groups of people will receive political power and/or financial benefits from the government.

The distribution of political favoritism comes at a cost which is not equally shared by all who live, work, and participate in a metropolis. For this reason there exist political conflict, strife, and disillusionment with the entire political process of government. These political variables exist when certain groups of people are alienated from the decision making policies of their local governments. It is their perception that their interests and desires are ignored when they pay the price for local public policies that do not benefit them. Public policy is the
by-product of individuals, groups, and politicians, competing for monies and preferential treatment from local, state, and federal governments. From that competition emerges the urban metropolis which is the demographic area that serves much of the population of a local political district.

Within the metropolis, one of the most impressive changes to occur in recent decades has been the growing importance of functionally organized political power. Especially created agencies and/or special districts have been given considerable power and authority. Theodore Lowi refers to the relationship between such organizations and their constituencies as "functional feudalities." According to Lowi, these feudalities have bureaucracies at their core which are the new machines in urban government. Certainly a look at school districts and library districts illustrate this point.

Special districts are a creation of the state to provide a specific service that local governments will not or cannot provide. The restrictions for providing the much needed service could be tax hikes, laws and regulations, and also voter approval. These obstacles hinder the availability of the desperately needed service to the public. Special districts exist to perform one single function and are highly favored by groups or people who want more independence from the scrutiny of government
officials. The entire concept of the special district is to take the interest and/or desired goal out of the environment of politics.

The special district is an organized entity, structured in form, possessing an official title, that can make contracts, sell and buy real estate, sue and be sued, and most importantly, perpetuate itself. The governing heads can be elected or appointed by local government officials. Action by state legislatures create special districts for a particular geographical area with the function of it, the organization, and the budget authority being explicitly written in the legal document. Finances to support it can be raised by taxation, bond issuance, and/or fees for services rendered. The area covered by a special district may include or exclude other government agencies and the governing officials of it will have their selection and terms of service outlined in the special district legislation. Special districts are quite flexible and contain a great deal of territory that can cover a city, township, town, and county boundaries. Urban and rural areas could also be blanketed by the guidelines of a special district. A special district can also be created by an election, a legal action, and an order from a government official or officials who have received a petition to establish one.

Special districts, once in place, can become very efficient, organized, and structured political power.
The outline of a district can be drawn by the area which is in need of a particular service. This service can be provided by the borrowing of funds from the imposing of property taxes to retire bonds. The retiring of bond money is also used to build new facilities to house the operations of the district. Special districts are not limited or constrained to fiscal laws set by the state to limit tax proposals. It is not uncommon for state government to regulate local governments' authority to impose taxes, the amount of taxes, and the amount of debt they are allowed to incur. The lure and attraction of a special district are the abilities to borrow, tax, and spend like any other government agency without having to abide by the legal limits established by the state for the city and county governments.

The conventional wisdom of an ideal library is one that is an independently funded district. The District should encompass the entire metropolitan area so that each library branch has the same services and policies. The board of directors should be elected by the voters to support voter confidence and the success and growth of the library. Funding for the District should come from property taxes, sales taxes, state income taxes, and miscellaneous fines. The District should not have to go back to the voters every five years for bond money; instead the voters should only be asked to finance special projects, upgrades in technology, and additional
service.

The Las Vegas-Clark County Library District is a special district which is governed by ten individuals who make up the board of trustees. The Board of County Commissioners appoints five members to sit on the board and the Las Vegas city council elects the other five. People who serve as trustees come from all walks of life. It is truly a grassroots type of community service that is open to all who wish to apply. The Board has had doctors, lawyers and even housewives appointed to it by local elected officials. Board members for LVCLD serve a term of four years with the possibility of serving another four years if they so choose. No individual can serve more than two four year terms as a board member. Library trustees are paid forty dollars for each two board meetings held in one particular month. If the Board has to meet more than twice in one month, they are still paid only eighty dollars for their attendance. Terms of service for board members may stagger, but they still can be removed from office for reasonable cause at any time.

The LVCLD is organized on a regional hub library service basis. The philosophy of a hub system is to have one major library supporting and aiding the service of smaller surrounding libraries. Administrators of hub libraries are responsible for their library and the libraries that their facilities back up. Each library
branch does have an administrator and that person, if he/she is not a hub administrator, must report to the regional hub supervisor. There are three hub administrators in the Library District and they are called regional managers. Clark County Library regional manager is responsible for Enterprise Library, Green Valley Library, Whitney Library, Blue Diamond Library, Bunkerville Library, Goodsprings Library, Indian Springs Library, Laughlin Library, Mesquite Library, Moapa Town Library, Mount Charleston Library, Sandy Valley Library, Searchlight Library, and Clark County Library. The Las Vegas Library regional manager supervises the Rainbow Library, the Sunrise Library, the West Las Vegas Library, the Stupak Community Center Library, and the Las Vegas Library. The Sahara West Library regional manager oversees the Spring Valley Library, the Summerlin Library, the West Charleston Library, the Metro Jail Library, and the Sahara West Library.

The three regional managers report to the assistant director of public services. There are only two assistant directors in the library district who report to the director. The other assistant director is responsible for support services, such as computer service, technical service, and material acquisitions. The director, the two assistant directors, and the three regional managers make up LVCLDL's management team, and they are responsible for creating and enforcing library policies throughout
The management team's operation of the library system is financed by many revenue sources. They are ad valorem taxes, supplemental city-county relief taxes, motor vehicle taxes, federal grants, intergovernmental money, fines, public contributions, interest, fees on service, and other. See table I for comparative dollar figures.

These collected moneys go to pay expenditures, such as salaries and wages, employee benefits, supplies and services, capital outlay, and debt service. See table II for comparative dollar figures.

The annual budget of the Library District is submitted to the Clark County Commissioners and the Las Vegas City Council for their annual review and approval. If a majority of both local government bodies reject the budget, an amendment budget must be prepared for passage.

The definition of the ideal library comes from Linda E. Crismond's book, *Against All Odds, Case Studies on Library Financial Management*. It would appear after careful study and observation of the LVCCLD, that it would emerge as the ideal library system that she describes in her book. The District has gone to the voters on several occasions on behalf of itself and has perpetuated its existence and its much needed service. It has utilized many revenue sources to fund its endeavors and grown to be a complex bureaucratic, self-supporting government entity. The Crismond book
also showcases a chapter which was written by Hunsberger after his retirement. The Library District has traveled a long way and has accomplished a great deal for the citizens of Clark County and Las Vegas. In the next chapter I will explain how the library system in five years became the special district that it is today.
Table I. Comparative dollar figures for LVCCLD revenue and their percentage of the total amount.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Revenue Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>Ad valorem taxes</td>
<td>$6,737,105</td>
<td>53.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Supplemental city and county relief taxes</td>
<td>$4,487,413</td>
<td>35.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Motor vehicle privilege taxes</td>
<td>$433,702</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Federal grants</td>
<td>$118,423</td>
<td>.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Intergovernmental</td>
<td>$155,000</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fines and forfeits</td>
<td>$293,289</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Contributions from private sources</td>
<td>$49,081</td>
<td>.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>$171,361</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Charges for service</td>
<td>$59,968</td>
<td>.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>$7,678</td>
<td>.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Revenue Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>Ad valorem taxes</td>
<td>$19,372,831</td>
<td>69.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Supplemental city and county relief taxes</td>
<td>$6,655,402</td>
<td>23.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Motor vehicle privilege taxes</td>
<td>$683,571</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Federal grants</td>
<td>$196,686</td>
<td>.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Intergovernmental</td>
<td>$185,790</td>
<td>.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fines and forfeits</td>
<td>$462,886</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Contributions from private sources</td>
<td>$10,172</td>
<td>.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>$327,199</td>
<td>.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Charges for service</td>
<td>$89,100</td>
<td>.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>$67,148</td>
<td>.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The largest percentage of revenue comes from ad valorem taxes which has increased from 53.8% of the total amount in 1991 to 69.1% in 1995. Note also the change in other's contribution amount from 1991 and 1995.
Table II. Comparative dollar figures for LVCCLD expenses and their percentage of the total amount.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1991</th>
<th>1995</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>salaries and wages</td>
<td>$5,159,589 (40.1%)</td>
<td>$8,303,535 (33.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>employee benefits</td>
<td>$1,040,002 (8.1%)</td>
<td>$1,581,436 (6.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>supplies and services</td>
<td>$3,142,061 (24.7%)</td>
<td>$4,182,315 (16.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>capital outlay</td>
<td>$1,892,984 (14.7%)</td>
<td>$1,911,360 (7.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>debt service</td>
<td>$1,633,373 (12.7%)</td>
<td>$9,113,898 (36.3%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The greatest expense of the District in 1991 was its salaries and wages but notice how in 1995 that changed when debt service became the largest amount.
Chapter four is a historical tabulation of events that led to the downfall of a director and changes in library policies over a four year time span. Data for the series of occurrences were obtained largely from articles from the Review Journal, the Las Vegas Sun, The Circulator, which is the Library District's personnel newsletter.

Several major factors contributed to the demise of Charles Hunsberger: the ongoing battle between the District and the homeless, the continued attempts to support KNPR, the refusal to cooperate with the county commissioners, the neglect of the West Las Vegas Library, and the African-American community, and the hiring of an expensive PR firm. It is my intention to keep the facts as accurate as possible to make the next chapter credible and reliable.
On December 20, 1990, fifteen people were asked to leave the Las Vegas Library because they were unclean and carried an odor about themselves. The policy for ejecting stinky patrons was that if anyone could smell you within a 6 feet radius, he/she would be asked to leave the library. After the homeless complained to the Nevada Legal Service, a public service law firm for the poor, the policy was dropped a few days later. The Nevada Legal Service (NLS) represented the homeless and sat down with the Library District to discuss this problem.

Barbara Buckley, a NLS attorney, wanted LVCCLD to work with her agency to provide the homeless a day shelter where they could shower, have lockers, receive job referrals, and other daily essentials for becoming positive productive citizens. She did, however, understood the District's policy but stated that it could be abusive and discriminatory. Mr. Hunsberger argued that many patrons felt that LVL was becoming a homeless shelter; he believed that people would not come to a library and use its collection if it smelled bad.

Two incidents then occurred in the Las Vegas Library involving a 28 year old Native American woman and a male patron which caused the Library District to enforce strict policies that indeed appeared to be discriminatory towards
the homeless. The woman was found drunk, asleep, and snoring on top of a table and had to be read the trespass law and escorted out by the police. Michael Radding, the coordinator of the Homeless Advocacy Project of Las Vegas felt that the arrest and physical escorting of the woman out of the building was harsh and that she should have been asked to leave. Director Charles Hunsberger thought the arrest was justifiable because the library does not allow sleeping on the premises. If the library staff could not wake the sleeping woman, the paramedics would have been called.

In a second incident, a gentleman who was carrying a small satchel was not allowed to enter the library with it, while another gentleman who was carrying a large shoulder bag but wearing a suit was not denied entry to all the libraries he visited. Michael Radding explained that this could only happen to the homeless because the LVCCLD does not want them in their facilities. Mr. Hunsberger's response was that the homeless are welcomed but they cannot bring in their luggage.

The Library Board, in an attempt to avoid a liability suit, dropped the policy and allowed patrons to bring into the libraries their luggage, backpacks, and briefcases. The Board even went further to cooperate with Social Services by agreeing to have staff fill out a response form if there were a smelly patron. If there is a person who has a strong odor about him/herself,
the library staff would call Social Services and wait a half hour for a representative to appear and help remove the offender. If the Social Service person does not come, the staff member in the company of two witnesses, who are hopefully library users, will ask the person to leave until he/she can correct the problem.

The Library Board of Trustees was very anxious to cooperate with the homeless advocacy groups because on May 7, 1991, the Library District was going to the polls in the city election to ask the voters to vote for a $80 million bond issue. The trustees were eager to terminate any bad press that would jeopardize the passage of the library bond question. The Bond issue, if it passed, would pay for the needs of the libraries (books, theaters, museums, and meeting rooms) and support a public radio station, KNPR-FM. Library officials believed that all of these elements would add to the quality of life in southern Nevada. Of the bond money, $70 million would go towards construction and $10 million to buy new books. The Las Vegas-Clark County Library District would build seven new libraries and expand two libraries. The District would also purchase 444,000 new books over the life span of the bond money.

Asking the voters to support a bond issue was nothing foreign to the Library District. In 1985, the District passed a $15 million bond issue to meet the needs of the present population. Mr. Hunsberger strongly believed
that theaters, auditoriums, and museums were a significant part of the Library district. The District was also reported to have given KNPR, a local classical music station, $28,000 in funds for yearly operations. The District also bought $700,000 worth of exhibits for the Discovery Children's Museum and spent $669,000 on furniture for both the Las Vegas Library and museum.

The 1985 bond money was also used to build libraries. Mount Charleston Library, Searchlight Library, Indian Springs Library, Bunkerville Library, and Sandy Valley Library were built with bond issue funds and additional moneys from the Nevada Interim Finance Committee. The Committee kicked in $4.8 million to aid in construction. All of this building of rural libraries left urban libraries at Rainbow and East Las Vegas to continue to operate out of rented store fronts.

The $80 million bond issue of 1991, if passed by the electorate, would be used primarily for building projects. At West Sahara Avenue and Grand Canyon Drive there would be built a 102,000-square-foot-library and art museum. On the West Charleston campus of a two year junior college would be built a 37,643 square-foot library to replace the Charleston Heights Fine Arts Center. The store front Rainbow Library would have a 26,800 square-foot facility built at Cheyenne Avenue and Buffalo Drive.

The community of Summerlin would have a 38,503 square-foot library. The East Las Vegas Library would
be housed in a 25,000 square-foot building to replace its store front rented operation. Laughlin, Nevada would receive a 14,000 square-foot library and Enterprise would get a 25,000 square foot library. The Clark County Library would be expanded by 61,000 square-feet to accommodate a larger periodicals department, a new auditorium, an increased Young People's Library, and other expanded library services. The West Las Vegas Library would be expanded by the building of a 9,500 square-foot, 225 seat auditorium. The $10 million spent on 444,000 new books would stock the new libraries.

On April 29, 1991, the Review Journal, a local newspaper for Las Vegas, ran an editorial supporting the passage of the bond issue. The local newspaper had done some research on nationwide library statistics and found that an average sized library system has 2.4 books per person in its circulation. The LVCCLD had only a 1.2 book per capita for Las Vegas residents. The Review Journal wanted to see the Library District have 3 or more books per capita to keep up with the increasing population of the city and county. For this reason, the newspaper supported a yes vote on the bond question.

Meanwhile, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, was asking its members to vote no on the bond issue. The reason for this as stated by the president of the local chapter, Rev. Jesse Scott, the LVCCLD had made a proposal for the library without
first consulting the African-American community. The notion of a 225 seat auditorium was out of the question. What the West Las Vegas community wanted was a 300 seat auditorium. Library Director Mr. Hunsberger had stated that the plans for WLV's auditorium were still being worked on and could be changed. He also mentioned that the community leaders for the WLV had agreed to the original number of seats proposed. The Director continued to argue that if the NAACP members voted no on the bond issue where are they going to go get an auditorium built.

Marie Jordan, administrator for the West Las Vegas Library, created a committee of West Las Vegas residents to oversee the construction of the theater-auditorium. Rev. Jesse Scott was concerned that WLV would get the short end of the stick after the election, just like it did after the 1985 bond issue. The West Las Vegas Library was built with federal grant money when the 1985 bond money ran out.

On May 4, 1991, the RJ printed an article stating that the NAACP backed the bond issue. The NAACP changed its position when Charles Hunsberger agreed to give the WLV auditorium 300 seats and promised to build it quickly once the bond question passed. Rev. Jesse Scott wanted the 300-seat auditorium because he also anticipated population growth in Las Vegas at large as well as in the African-American Community.
On May 7, 1991, the bond issue vote passed and the Library District got its $80 million to build libraries and buy new books. Mr. Charles Hunsberger and the Board of Trustees had struck a victory for libraries in southern Nevada. Library officials now had the authority and the money to make their vision of a library system that disseminates information to the public while also fostering a passion and a lust for the arts. This was to be a new beginning for the Library District and a promising era for Mr. Hunsberger in his library career. The new era, however, was also the beginning of much of Mr. Hunsberger's troubles which led to his early retirement two years later. Things began to unravel in early summer.

In the Las Vegas Sun newspaper on June 10, 1991, Mr. Hunsberger wrote their guest opinion. In his segment, he complained about all the negative press the District was getting from the media about the homeless. The library, according to Hunsberger, was not a day shelter for the down-and-out, but a place where people can come to conduct their academic query and do research. The Library District was created to carry out the needs and the functions of a library and not be burdened with the task of solving all the social ills of society.

Meanwhile, the Homeless Rights Coalition filed a lawsuit with the U.S. District Court claiming that hundreds of homeless people were being discriminated against by being
turned away from the Las Vegas Library. The lawsuit called for injunctive and declaratory relief to stop the unlawful and unconstitutional polices of the Library District. The Nevada Legal Services, the American Civil Liberties Union of Nevada, and the Homeless Advocacy Project all joined in to collaborate on this legal action against LVCCCLD. The complaint of these combined organizations was that homeless people were being thrown out of the Las Vegas Library because they stink and take up space that can be used by legitimate patrons. Mr. Hunsberger's opinion was that, "We don't believe that creating a bum's shelter is what our mission is."

A second problem arose during September of 1991, when library officials had a retreat at Mount Charleston to discuss some plans and goals for the District. One goal in particular that was sprung on Mount Charleston retreat members was Hunsberger's idea to move local station KNPR-FM into the East Las Vegas Library. He thought that this would be a great vehicle to reach patrons and do more for the community. Board trustee, Steve Schorr, felt that the 5,500-square-feet that the radio station would take up could be put to better use. Hunsberger had told the Board of Trustees that the LVCCCLD was successful because it was aggressive; however, the $80 million bond issue did not mention that the East Las
Vegas Library would use 20 percent of its space for a radio station.

KNPR-FM is contracted by LVCCLD to broadcast library related announcements and library-sponsored musical performances. The radio station was founded in 1980 and is a non-profit organization that plays classical music. It has its own board of directors and is not controlled by the Library District. Station manager Lamar Marchese was the founder of KNPR-FM and was hired by Mr. Hunsberger in 1973 to put the radio station together.

"KNPR is one of our children", says Mr. Hunsberger. Nancy Hudson, Assistant Director for LVCCLD, argued that housing the radio station in ELV would save the District money on free announcements. Board member, Steve Schorr, felt that the Library District should look elsewhere for free announcements and let KNPR stand on its own. The Library Director thought that the money was being adequately and properly spent. "Books are only a small percentage of the way we receive information. You can go to Walden's, if you want books. The library's role in the community is more than just books;" Mr. Hunsberger told the Review Journal. A week later he was busy trying to clarify his misunderstood statement about Walden's book store.
What the Library Director truly meant was that he would like to see the District grow with the money available from the bond issue. Hunsberger then claimed he told the RJ that people who just want books to read can go to a bookstore, while people who want more than just books can come to the library. He then stated that books are the most vital piece of information because they are the least costly form of information available to a library. Books are much cheaper to purchase than CD-ROMs and on-line computer services that retrieve information electronically.

Board of Trustees President, Diana Wilson, thought the Review Journal article which had Hunsberger making the "go to Walden's if you want books" statement was an insult to the Library District and its Board. She and other board members were present when Hunsberger supposedly made that statement and vowed that he did not tell the RJ that his remark had been taken out of context. While the board president and her associates were defending their library director, one frequent library patron was bad mouthing Hunsberger to the press.

Coulter Irwin, a Las Vegas resident and library user, complained to the Board that he could not find the books he wanted. He was so upset that he compared the Library District to Alice in Wonderland, with Hunsberger as the Mad Hatter. Mr. Hunsberger's response is that if a patron wants a book, all he/she has to do is submit a request
to the library and it will be reviewed and considered in the next book order.

The Review Journal at this time was critical of the District's plans to move KNPR-FM into the newly-built East Las Vegas Library. The radio station has a news and classical music format and is located in a building on Sam's Town's property which is owned by the Boyd Group. Market studies shows KNPR-FM was struggling financially, even with its campaign pledges and fund raisers, and had only managed to captivate a small portion of the Las Vegas listening audience. Mr. Hunsberger, however, saw the station as a means to boost the library district literacy program and provide some services to the blind.

Another critic, Bob Ryan, a newspaper reporter for the Las Vegas Sun, confirmed in his column that Hunsberger did say that the public could go to Walden's if they wanted a book during a library board meeting. Mr. Ryan felt that Mr. Hunsberger should not be misunderstood to be in the library business, but in the information business. The library director's move to support KNPR-FM he felt was logically flawed because, according to Hunsberger's interpretation of information resources, anything could be called informational. As an example, Ryan offered sky writing as a method Charles Hunsberger could claim as informational. He felt that the chief of the Library District did not recognize books as a
priority and believed that KNPR-FM was only supported by Hunsberger because they play classical music and he felt that classical music was informational. Bob Ryan asked Hunsberger since when is classical music informational? If he and the District support classical music, why don't they also fund country western, rock and roll, and rhythm and blues? According to Bob Ryan, the radio station received $28,000 of Clark County's tax dollars which were designated for library operation, despite their poor showing in the ratings. At the time, the District had only $1.56 per capita for books. This did not result from lack of money, but, however, was product of a lack of interest in purchasing books and a heightened interest in cultural centers. According to Hunsberger, much of the Library District's money should go to building theaters, auditoriums, museums, and other agendas not related to buying books. Hunsberger, in Ryan's opinion was building a cultural empire rather than a quality library district. Ryan did not hate or condemn culture but felt that the provision of it is best suited for the county and city. It is not and should be the function and responsibility of a library system.

On December 10, 1991, the Library District and the homeless worked out a compromise which was published in the LV Sun newspaper. People who were homeless and smelled bad would still be asked to leave the
library and they would not be allowed to bring their luggage in. For this agreement, the homeless could read newspapers and magazines without anyone asking for identification to hold while the items were being read. The homeless could also get library cards mailed to them if they presented I.D. from a shelter verifying their address and their housing. Both parties involved liked the agreement and accepted a $250 penalty to be paid by the group reneging on the compromise. This was an excellent bargain where everyone came out a winner except for the tax paying patron. Because the homeless did not have to offer any I.D. for magazines and newspapers, the libraries lost much of their periodical collection without any means of reclaiming their property or holding anyone responsible. This later came to agitate many patrons who wanted or needed to see certain periodicals that seemed to have just disappeared. Though this was a downside of the agreement, Hunsberger felt pretty confident that he would have no more problems with the homeless. Little did he know that problems for him and the Library Board were just beginning.

1992

On January 23, 1992, in the Las Vegas Sun newspaper Clark County Commissioner Don Schlesinger threatened to make the Library District more accountable and
responsive to the Commission. This position came about when the Clark County Commission received a letter from the District not adequately answering their questions nor offering any indication of when they would be answered in the future. The Commission had asked the District to calculate how much more it cost to build unique architectural libraries with community centers and cultural arts instead of more traditional libraries. They also wanted to have public hearings to discuss these ideas and other concerns. Schlesinger said, "Frankly, I'm baffled at their not being forthcoming with information for questions that are very basic."

For these reasons, Commissioner Schlesinger felt that the county must ask the Nevada Legislature to give them the means to remove appointed board members and have the District's budget submitted and approved by the city and the county for more fiscal accountability and responsiveness. He also wanted to utilize county employees to review the budget of LVCCLD to get the information that the Commission had requested.

The Library Director claimed that the information the county wanted was not available in the form that the commission had requested. He also could see why the county and the city needed to approve the library budget unless they planned on increasing its funding. Hunsberger said, "Only if they're going to give us more money."
Otherwise, what would be the purpose? If they aren't going to improve things, what would be the purpose?"

The notion of dismissing appointed board members in his opinion, was the commission's way of saying that they did not trust themselves to make good appointments and would like to have the opportunity to correct themselves and their mistakes if need be. Mr. Hunsberger was quite confident in what he was doing because he had the passage of a $80 million bond issue showing his community support.

On February 9, 1992, Blue Diamond was set to open a 1,440 square-foot library which would have running water, two toilets, a kitchen, and a room for 5,000 books. The librarian who worked there would have her hours increased from 8 to 20 hours a week. The librarian at Blue Diamond did not have training in the library field but did have library experience from working at the 240 square-foot lavender trailer that was formerly the community's library.

In February 26, 1992 at 6301 West Charleston, a groundbreaking ceremony took place for the first library to be built with the 1991 bond money. The new library was to be constructed on 4 acres of land donated by the Community College of Southern Nevada. The facility was on the campus and featured a special medical reference collection to coordinate with the medical slant of the
college. The new West Charleston Library would replace the old Charleston Heights Library located at 800 Brush Street. The new structure would have a lecture hall, an auditorium, and an exhibit gallery. The library was scheduled to be completed in November 1993.

After the grand opening of a rural library and the ground-breaking of a new library, the District redirected its attention to the closure of Clark County Library to have it remodelled as stated in the proposal of the 1991 bond issue. Once the study of CCL's interior for remodeling was completed, the trustees learned that the facility was riddled with asbestos and they needed to have it removed. The cost to have the asbestos taken out of the structure of the building was $28,000. The money would be paid to JMA Architects, the firm that was handling the reconstruction project for Clark County Library. The firm was already receiving $1,040,406 for the remodeling and the cost of asbestos removal could total $150,000.

Board of Trustee member, Sherry Layne and Steve Schorr, were against giving JMA Architects any additional money. Layne felt that the Board should look for other alternatives besides JMA for the asbestos removal. Schorr felt that they should do it without any additional cost as a way of doing good business with the District. Many of the trustees were upset because they did not have adequate time to review JMA Architect's contract for
the asbestos amendment. The contract had to be pushed to a vote in order to keep CCL on schedule for remodeling and reopening. Schorr was not pleased with the vote and felt that the District gave the architect company an open checkbook, which was not an image he would like portrayed to the public. Hunsberger, at the same time, was receiving a 3 percent raise from the board. His salary before the was $96,678.40 a year; with the raise he was making $99,569.60 a year. Schorr was against the raise because of the sluggishness of the economy.

In summer of 1992, the Clark County Library closed its doors and prepared to move across the street to 4020 South Maryland Parkway. Over 262,000 books, videos, cassettes, and compact discs were moved. CCL's collection was divided among 3 separate locations, including the Las Vegas Library and a climate-controlled warehouse on Industrial Road. The bulk and mostly circulated items would go to the store front in the Mission Center where the District leased the space for at least 2 years. The total cost for the renovation of the Clark County Library was $13 million and the price for asbestos removal was $700,000.

Despite the rising cost of the CCL project, the Library District was still pressing forward to accomplish what it had set out to do, which was build libraries. That same summer of 1992, the District held a groundbreaking ceremony for Summerlin Library and the performing Arts
Center. The facility was to house over a 100,000 volumes and a 150 magazines and periodicals. SMR would also have a 300-seat theater with an orchestra pit and a scene shop. The library was scheduled to open in 1993 and cover 40,491 square-feet at an estimated cost of $7 million.

"Arts and libraries go together and we're proud of that marriage we have here in Summerlin" said Mr. Charles Hunsberger. With that idea in mind, he then promoted Program Services Coordinator, Peggy Trassati, to Community Services Administrator. She had worked in her past position 13 years before being moved up to administrator level. Mrs. Trassati's responsibilities were to the supervision of 12 staff members and the hiring of museum curators, technical directors, and additional programming staff.

West Las Vegas Library's patrons, however, were not pleased with the direction the District was going. They complained that their library needed more books and better service and blamed Hunsberger for the unequal treatment. Assemblyman Wendell Williams believed that the Library District was biased when it came to spending money on WLV. Marzette Lewis, a community activist, said that she could not believe the comments made by Hunsberger when she and others had met with him to discuss the plight of the West Las Vegas Library. Mrs. Lewis said,
"This man truly degraded black people. He said, 'Black people don't read.'" This statement by Hunsberger made Marzette so livid that she wrote a letter to the ReviewJournal newspaper complaining about him and his insensitive remark about African-Americans.

Hunsberger denied making the "black people don't read" statement and said he was just merely pointing out WLV's low circulation statistics. He said that the library is under used and 95 percent of its books are always on the shelf. Assemblyman Williams felt that the circulation numbers were low because the West Las Vegas Library does not have the information available that the community needs. "I really felt like he felt that we really didn't need a library over there," said Marzette who wanted to see WLV with more books and community programs. Wendell Williams argued that the black community had to scream "bloody murder" to get a library built and a 300 seat auditorium. The Assemblyman said he would personally draft the legislation that would require the library budget be reviewed and approved by the city and the county. He was confident that this measure would make LVCCLD more accountable and equal in its distribution of funding to all libraries and facilities.

On Monday, July 27, 1992, from 1:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.,
the WLV had an open house where Mr. Hunsberger met with black community leaders and organizations in a question and answer type forum. He was mainly there to explain the policies and operations of the Library District and listen to any comments and/or suggestions. Trustees of the Library District would come to WLV after 5:00 p.m. and stay the rest of the evening. Approximately 30 people attended and met with Hunsberger to express their concern. The African-American community told the Library Director they needed assistance with the Library of Congress cataloging system. They expressed interest in an advisory board to tell the director and trustees what the West Las Vegas Library needed. Patrons also wanted a better selection and collection of books on black culture. One open house attendee complained that she could never find the books she needed and felt that this was a means to limit the use of the WLV by the district. Assemblyman Wendell Williams told the director and the board members that he wanted an advisory committee and a cultural programmer to bring African-American related events to the black library. Hunsberger welcomed the criticism and the suggestions with the company of board members President Diana Wilson, Edna Perkins, and Steve Schorr. West Las Vegas patrons also wanted to know how books were selected and how out-of-date and worn books were discarded. They felt that their library needed more computers and room for
the literacy program. Attending patrons wanted LVCLLD to hire more black subcontractors for its library building projects and talk of the Library District's personnel manual also surfaced and questions were asked about hiring practices.

In response to the questions and comments of the WLVO open house, the LVCLLD printed a flyer-type response newsletter to be passed out to residents and users of the West Las Vegas Library. The newsletter was broken down into 3 categories; staffing, books, and community relations. Staffing discussed the hiring of a new librarian who was recruited by WL VO Administrator, Marie Jordan, from the first National Black Caucus Conference in Columbus, Ohio. He was slated to start work at the West Las Vegas Library on November 9, 1992. WLVO employees would receive more training on the Library of Congress system so that they could better train patrons who needed additional help if they could not understand the Library of Congress handouts furnished to each library in Clark County. The District would hire a cultural events person for the new 300 seat auditorium which was to be completed in February 1993, with the position being posted January 15, 1993. The LVCLLD personnel manual was explained as the District's procedures and policies booklet which is put together by a 10-person committee. The committee is made up of library staff of different departments and organization levels.
Under the topic of books, the handout discussed the weeding out of worn and old books as set by policy created by the board of trustees. On September 10, 1992, the trustees adopted a policy for discarding books which came from Nevada Revised Statute 332.185, entitled "Disposal of Personal Property of Public Entity Books and Library Materials." According to this statute, the Library District can remove worn outdated books and materials from its collection and dispose of them as waste or trash. Outdated books could also be sold in the used bookstores of libraries with the proceeds going towards the betterment of the District.

Book selection was covered as trained librarians were responsible for the selecting and purchasing of books. Books are purchased on four criteria: one, new book information; two, patron's request; three; needs; and four, budget constraints. A committee of librarians from each library in the district comes together and is supervised by Assistant Director Nancy Hudson who assigns each of them a section of the library collection to order books for. A subsection of the Library of Congress alphabet is given to each librarian to decide which books will be purchased, replaced, and collections enhanced. After February 1, 1993, the literacy coordinator would review the space and equipment to ensure that there is enough room for the literacy department to operate efficiently as well as comfortably.
The District welcomed an advisory committee for West Las Vegas Library patrons and the board invited any person or organizations to come to them and express their concerns. As far as the hiring of black subcontractors for library projects, the LVCCLD claimed to follow all contract procedures and did not discriminate against any companies on the basis of race.

In August 13, 1992, at a board meeting at the Las Vegas Library, Assemblyman Williams asked to whom do they address their concerns? The Board of Trustees President and Hunsberger replied that all matters and issues should be brought to the attention of the administrator, the library director, and the board members. Administrator Marie Jordan said that she would take care of any problems in the black community if the disgruntled patron came to see her. Some requests may have gone unanswered because the staff failed to give her the message somehow. Marzette Lewis felt that it was not fair for Mrs. Jordan to talk about employees when they were not present to defend themselves. Lewis was eventually cut-off because the town hall portion of the board meeting was over. Marzette told Review Journal reporters, "I tell them the truth. They don't want to hear it. If they don't want the public to speak, they shouldn't invite the public to the meetings again." Diana Wilson was pleased that the community came out to tell the Board their
comments and their interests, but felt that the open comment period somehow had to be better regulated to ward off speeches and long abusive complaints.

On August 29, 1992, the Library District broke ground on the 11,700 square-foot, 300 seat auditorium. The ceremony was attended by Board of Trustees Chair Diana Wilson, trustee Fran Fine, trustee Edna Perkins, U.S. Senator Harry Reid, State Senator Joe Neal and Assemblyman Wendell Williams. Assemblyman Williams said at the event. "I agree with Hunsberger when he says libraries are more than just books. Libraries should serve the community in which they are located. This is a first step toward bringing change in our community, but we still have work to do."

The groundbreaking for the WLV auditorium was truly a momentous event which had great justification for celebration and community spirit, but it would take less than two months for the African-American community to be in an uproar again. On Thursday, October 15, 1992, at the Las Vegas Library, some thirty adults and over a dozen children were gathered to protest the transfer of a popular West Las Vegas Library employee. The problem all began when Linda Porter was transferred from the West Las Vegas Library to the Clark County Library. Porter was a valued children's library assistant whom the black community loved and cherished.
The removal of her from WLV left an empty hole that just could not be filled with anyone else. A single file of black children were chanting, "We want Linda!" African-American adults were insisting on Linda's return and more sensitivity towards blacks. "These kids are the reason that we're here. The Library District is operating unconstitutionally. We are not going to stand for it," said Wendell Williams. President Diana Wilson made the desperate effort to pass out leaflets to the crowd, showing the District was accountable to the WLV patrons. The attempt was futile and Assemblyman Williams said, "We don't care how much stuff you put down on paper. The fact of the matter is we're here, and we're not going to go away."

Linda Porter was considered to be a role model for black children and as one patron explained it, the WLV employees are family to the community and if one of them is missing, it does not go unnoticed. Trustee Steve Schorr made an informal request to Hunsberger to look into this matter regarding Porter. He also welcomed her to bring her issue to the board members personally for resolution, stating he would resign if there were any wrong doing on the part of the District or Hunsberger. WLV employee Deborah Jackson said, "What's going on is an ugly vicious thing. It should have not happened that
way." She also said, "If it can happen to her, it can happen to me or anybody else." Hunsberger's response to all this was, "My reaction is I'm here to run this library system in the very best possible way and to be fair to all employees, black and white."

To further prove their dissatisfaction with LVCCLD, West Las Vegas Library patrons staged a protest by checking out as many books as they could. One of the reasons for the massive book check out protest was Hunsberger's infamous statement that black people don't read. Assemblyman Williams felt that the library director had a cavalier attitude and lacked accountability. He also included the board of trustees in his opinion, except for Steve Schorr. President Diana Wilson was surprised and saddened by this turn of events, stating "I think we've gone out of our way to be sensitive to their needs." Linda Porter had planned on writing a letter to the board of trustees asking them to review her transfer. Hunsberger had stated that nothing could be done with Linda's transfer until she filed a grievance with the District which is LVCCLD policy. He also volunteered the information that the District had never reversed a transfer of one of its employees.

On October 21, 1992, the Review Journal published an
opinion focusing on the accountability of the library board of trustees. The article credited Assemblyman Wendell Williams with bringing up that a non-elected board should not have so much responsibility, if it is not accountable to the public. He used parks and ball fields for his example of an accountable tax-paid government operation. If a taxpayer has a complaint about a swing, he knows where to go to air his grievance. That complaint would be directed to the elected county commissioners and/or the elected city council. If either of these elected officials ignore this taxpayer's concerns, there will be serious repercussions. Williams pointed out that this type of accountability does not exist for the Library Board. He argued that after they are appointed, they are free to do whatever they please with no fear of sanctions or punishments. The city council and the county commissioners who appoint the board members have no say over them once they are in position. Neither government has any input into library operations or how they spend their money. He supported his argument by citing the problems and troubles Commissioner Schlesinger had when asking the District for a report stating the additional cost for building non-traditional libraries. Schlesinger could only question Hunsberger and the Board about its downplay of books and interest in art and fancy buildings. William's solution to all these heartaches and woes with
the Board was its abolishment. The Board's responsibility should be transferred to the city and county governments. The RJ felt that the assemblyman's idea did show merit because many are unsure whether the board members should be elected or not. William's final point is that his resolution would end the situation whereby bond issues are sold to the public for specific projects and then the board and the Library District change the agendas and priorities after the election.

In response to all the allegations of wrongdoings being perpetrated by the Library District a five member panel was called for to investigate whether the District's practices were discriminatory. The members of the panel would be one state legislator, two county commissioners, and two city councilmen. The panel would make suggestions to the 1993 Nevada Legislature to abolish the LVCCCLD board of trustees and place the Library District under the authority of another agency or the panel would create policies and procedures for better accountability to Las Vegas taxpayers. Patrons who use the West Las Vegas Library also asked the U.S. Justice Department to conduct its own investigation. Three WLV employees filed charges with the Nevada Equal Rights Commission for discrimination. The employees were Linda Porter, Barbara Coleman, and Debra Jackson. Assemblyman Williams was soliciting Governor Bob Miller, County Commissioner Don Schlesinger, County Commissioner Karen Hayes, and
Las Vegas Mayor Jan Jones for their support.

President Diana Wilson said the Board would examine and address the concerns raised by WLV patrons. She said, "We're trying to do some fact finding and help resolve the situation." Sunday, October 25, 1992, Wendell Williams met with at least 25 people at the West Las Vegas Library who stated that they did not want an advisory board now. The attempt to create an advisory board was perceived by the black community as a tool to divide and conquer. Even though many prominent African-American leaders and citizens were asked to be on the advisory committee.

Mayor Jan Jones invited library officials to a city council meeting November 4, 1992. The purpose of their visit would be to address allegations that they are unresponsive and unaccountable to library patrons. Mayor Jones said, "I think the Library Board has a right to be heard by the people who appointed them before we move outside to appoint an investigative body." Assemblyman Williams sent Mayor Jones a letter which stated, "For years, citizens' complaints and concerns about promotional practices, favoritism, illegal partnerships, etc. have gone unanswered and in many cases totally ignored. Fast growing numbers of tax-payers are frustrated with the absence of any accountability factors in management and..."
County Commissioner Karen Hayes gave Wendell some credibility in his claims by stating, "Wendell sure knows his district and if he says there's a problem, there's gotta be a problem." Mayor Jones agreed to be on Wendell's panel if she found any wrongdoing on the part of the Library District.

President Diana Wilson's response was, "We have been working on this current misunderstanding, crisis, whatever you want to call it. The Board is very concerned if members of the community feel we are being insensitive, because we try very hard to be responsive." She went on to list the steps the District has taken to be responsive to the patrons of the West Las Vegas Library:

1. distribution of a report that illustrated the progress the District was making at addressing concerns raised by WLV patrons in July of 1992,
2. additional training was provided to WLV staff for improvement of service delivery,
3. meetings were held with black community leaders to resolve conflict, and
4. the transfer of Linda Porter to the Clark County Library was reviewed,

"Too little, too late", said Williams. The reason
for his response was that he believed that the tactics of the District were nothing more than a smoke screen which was being used to avoid answering questions that he and the African-American community had been asking. The assemblyman felt that the LVCCLD and Hunsberger hoped that the problem would just go away. He argued that the library director and board of trustees president "haven't talked to the very people who have been down to board meetings, pressing them to make changes."

Due to all the controversy surrounding the District, the library officials decided to hire a public relations firm to repair their image in southern Nevada. Gail Tuzzolo, a partner of PR firm Dan Hart and Associates, was working with LVCCLD without a contract or formal discussion about pay. Hunsberger and the board of trustees had asked the consulting firm for its assistance without pay until a contract could be drawn after elections in November. Tuzzolo was asked to help the District after the Board's October 15, 1992, meeting. She had been in meetings with Diana Wilson, Hunsberger, and members of the community almost everyday and felt it would be difficult to put an hourly charge on the District because she had put in so many hours. As for her opinion on whether she and her company would be reimbursed for their time and energy, she said, "We trust
them", referring to the Library District.

Dan Hart and Associates had worked on the Senator Bob Kerry presidential race in Nevada with the West Las Vegas Library being fortunate enough to have him come out to the facility to address the needs and the concerns of Las Vegas African-Americans. U.S. Senator Bob Kerry was the only presidential candidate, excluding Rev. Jesse Jackson, to come to the black community and speak to the people during his 1992 bid for the WhiteHouse. President Wilson felt that the firm was badly needed to handle the District's public relations problems despite the existence of a community relations department housed in LVCCLD. She felt that they already had too much to do and could not handle this monumental task; plus Wilson wanted some objectivity added to the resolution of the District's PR problems.

On Sunday, November 1, 1992 the LVCCLD took out an ad in the Las Vegas Sun, entitled, "We are accountable to You!" The ad was presented in the form of an open letter and sought to communicate a message that the District was accountable and aware of the needs and the concerns of the people they serve. In its rhetoric, 10 concerns of WLV patrons were discussed with an illustration of the steps the Library District has taken to address them. The public's concerns and needs were considered as blue prints for policies and action that
the District must take. The ad even offered an excuse for misinterpreting non-responsive attitudes which many feel the Library District has when it comes to managing problems and community unrest. The ad stated, "Some issues could be solved right away; others take longer and we are working on them." There was a coupon available for readers to send to the District for a full report of its accountability. There was even a space in the ad which taxpayers could use to send in their own suggestions and ideas. Mayor Jones, however, still requested Hunsberger and the board to appear before the city council November 18, 1992, to respond to allegations made be WLV patrons. Diana Wilson then asked for the same type of meeting with county commissioners.

"We are Accountable to You!" was the first step in a process to reverse the image of Las Vegas-Clark County Library District. Hunsberger and Diana Wilson felt that the media focused to much attention on allegations and charges made against LVCCLD and not enough coverage on their actions to eradicate poor and/or negative opinions about the District. "We wanted to say, 'Yes, we are doing things that are responsive. We haven't been sitting here hoping it would go away. We've been working on it daily'," said Hunsberger. He admitted that he did not know how much the PR firm was going to charge
the District because there was not enough time to write out a contract. The Library Director argued, "We needed help immediately. It's urgent that we find solutions to the issues that have been raised by the patrons of the West Las Vegas Library."

After a contract had been drawn, the money that would be used to pay Hart and Associates came out of the District's professional services budget and the contract had to be approved by the board of trustees. Tuzzolo and Wilson both felt that the District was partially to blame for its current position with the taxpayers. Tuzzolo said, "They didn't communicate how they were responding to the issues, so some of these people felt very ignored and they were very angry."

The District was being bombarded with so many attacks of criticism that the trustees asked the Library District's attorney to act as an informal investigator. Trustee Fran Fine said, "I want to be able to defend my library district because I believe in it and don't want to every other year, or every year, deal with these attacks." She felt that allegations raised against the District were unfounded and the Board needed to appoint a subcommittee of trustees to look into them. Gerald Welt, the Board's attorney, agreed to act as a
quasi-investigator for the District. He welcomed any trustee, library staff, and/or others to come talk to him privately about district operations and problems. Welt's comments about the whole ordeal were, "Just see if there's anything going on. I may spend a lot of time talking to people and come up with nothing."

A WLV patron named Yolanda Givens told the RJ newspaper that, "If the District was doing such a great job, it wouldn't need to hire a public relations firm."

The cost for the counsel of Hart and Associates was $125.00 per hour, 50 hours a month, for a grand monthly payment of $6,250 to be paid to the firm if the Board approved of the contract. Hunsberger was in favor of this agreement and was willing to push for the signing of the contract to reimburse Gail Tuzzolo for all her work in October. The District was unaware of how much money it would be charged for previously rendered services and the contract did not have an expiration date. Hunsberger admitted he would like to see the contract as a short time offer hopefully expiring in the next three months. He also said that the contract could be canceled within a 30 day notice by either party. Assemblyman Williams's comment about the Library District's contract with Hart and Associates was that it was nothing but a waste of tax dollars.
The Las Vegas Sun newspaper praised Diana Wilson and Mr. Hunsberger for meeting with black community leaders to resolve conflict but questioned the appropriation of funding to Hart and Associates. The $125.00 an hour price tag for 50 hours a month to be paid to the PR firm, in the newspaper's opinion, was a misappropriation of tax dollars. The Sun felt that this money was being wasted when the District could easily remedy all of its woes with better communication with the people they serve. The money would also be better suited for addressing and solving problems. "A sincere demonstration of responsivness will do worlds more for the library than any public relations campaign," said the LV Sun.

The Las Vegas Review Journal also did an editorial on the LVCCLD in its November 13, 1992, opinion column. In the article, the newspaper discussed the complaints raised against the District for fancy buildings, artwork, and highly paid administrative staff rather than buying books. The city council and county commissioners did not have the experience or the time to staff and fill libraries with books, so they appointed a library board to do this for them. Hunsberger and his staff are hired by the trustees to help them ensure that books will be present in abundance for patrons to use. Library trustees and officials do not know what the community wants but hire a PR firm to convince the public that
whatever Hunsberger gives them is what is best for them. The consulting company has nothing to do with the purchasing or circulation of books but does, however, sell image and presentation.

The Review Journal just did not stop with this editorial but hosted three more to be written by one of its staff writers. Bob Ryan, an RJ columnist, had a commentary that appears in the newspaper 3 times a week. He dedicated November 15, 1992, through November 17, 1992, to the Library District and Hunsberger for their numerous allegations and misappropriation of tax dollars. His opinion of the LVCCLD was that it is "wasteful, arrogant, insensitive, and out of touch." The library board of trustees shared the vision of Hunsberger's ultimate library system, and for this reason they are avoiding realistic investigations into controversial matters. Ryan felt that the Library Board and the Library Director were walking around patting each other on the back. Assemblyman Wendell Williams, Ryan believed, wanted to put an end to all of this by passing a Nevada Law that would have the county commissioners and the city council approve the District's budget. To Bob Ryan this was not enough, and in his column he took three days to discuss the Las Vegas-Clark County Library District as the focus of his commentary.

The RJ columnist said that the Library District was
independently financed. Library funds come from taxes, mostly sales and property taxes. Assemblyman Williams wanted the legislature to conduct an investigation of the District's budget and finances, its hiring and promotion practices, and allocations of money to different libraries. Mr. Ryan supported Mr. Williams' efforts and felt it was long overdue.

The notion of the Library District hiring a PR firm, in his opinion, was nothing more than an effort to block Wendell's legislation. He questioned the validity of Hunsberger and the Library Board financing public relations with tax dollars that were meant to be used for library operations. "If you're ill you need a doctor, and our PR has been sick." Bob Ryan felt the District was squandering tax dollars to pay a PR firm that had a lot of political clout. Hart and Associates have worked for Mayor Jan Jones' campaign and County Commissioner Yvonne Atkinson Gates's campaign. Diana Wilson, president of the Library Board, was also the campaign manager for County Commissioner Gates.

Ryan also brought up the issue of what the District calls "site art", which is a million dollars of tax revenue being set aside for artwork to decorate new libraries and cultural centers. Library art, he argued, is not essential and he felt that the city of Las Vegas had other, greater needs than the purchase of art for
facility decoration. Ryan honestly felt that very little of the city and county populations would benefit from these cultural centers being built in the structures of newly erected libraries. He furthered discussed what he called deceitful practices by the Library District to receive direct funding for its operation and growth of libraries in Clark County.

In fiscal year 1991-1992 the Library District collected $11.5 million in tax dollars to run its operation. This figure excludes the $80 million the District was awarded when it passed the bond issue. Ryan claimed that this good fortune of financing came from two conditions: in 1983 the District ignored the law, and in 1985 Hunsberger misled the Nevada legislature. In 1981 the legislature put a cap on property tax increases. Two years later, the Nevada legislature and local governments met and local government officials told state elected officials that their cap was too strict and they needed some leniency on raising property taxes. Nevada lawmakers allowed local governments to raise property taxes but warned that taxpayers could circulate a petition to have the tax hike reversed in an election. Assembly Bill 449 reads that each local government on or before June 7, 1983, must publish in local newspapers a notice which is at least one quarter of the page in size announcing the rate of property tax. The article is also supposed to explain that the tax hike can be reversed and show
taxpayers how-to steps to do so. Assembly Bill 449 also included special districts like the LVCCCLD to follow these steps to raise property taxes. Ryan claimed that the District never did this, so their property tax hike was never rolled back. According to him, all property tax increases were rolled back by voters in elections.

The increase in property taxes for fiscal year 1982-1983 was illegal in Ryan's view. In 1981-1982 fiscal year, the District received $290,945 in property taxes. In 1982-1983 the District received $643,833 in property taxes, an increase of 118%. The Review Journal columnist did not feel that the tax hike just happened once, but compounded itself over 10 years to be very costly to Nevada taxpayers. This he felt is nothing compared to 1985 when the District had to have its budget approved by the county commissioners. In 1985 Mr. Hunsberger had Senate Bill 158 proposed in the Nevada Senate as an "emergency measure." An emergency measure is a bill that is heard and voted upon immediately. Senate Bill 158 was a proposal that voters could change Clark County Library and the Las Vegas Library into one consolidated library system. The emergency measure was necessary to get the legislative bill on the municipal election ballot that spring. Senator Bill Raggio asked Hunsberger if SB 158 would have a non-positive financial effect on other local governments? Hunsberger supposedly said, to have said "absolutely not", without
a pause. Armed with this information, the Senate gave Hunsberger its blessing and let him put it before the voters for their consideration. Later on, according to Ryan, the state senate found out that Hunsberger misled them.

After the consolidation of Clark County Library and Las Vegas Library, the new Library District had greater entitlement to a bigger percentage of sales tax revenue. The bigger percentages caused other local government agencies to receive less sales tax revenue. When angry state senators asked Hunsberger to explain what had happened with the consolidation of the library system, Hunsberger claimed that the District was not fully aware of the affects they would have on other local government agencies. Bob Ryan did not buy the Library Director's explanation. In May 1985, the voters approved the consolidation which meant that the Library District's budget no longer had to be accepted and reviewed by the county commissioners and that was to be the key to building new libraries and cultural centers for southern Nevada.

The final editorial to end the trilogy of commentaries showed Ryan believing that the consolidation of libraries left the newly formed District swimming in unsupervised cash. Before the 1985 consolidation, the earlier district received money from five sources: property taxes, sales tax, motor vehicle privilege tax, an appropriation from
the general fund of the city of Las Vegas, and miscellaneous which was library fines and donations. After the consolidation was put in effect, the city no longer made direct payments to the Library District. For this reason, the new district was granted a greater portion of property and sales tax which was a very lucrative deal, according to Mr. Ryan.

In fiscal year 1984-85 the District received $668,433 in property taxes and $1,343,806 in sales taxes, with the city of Las Vegas's share in appropriations totaling $1,301,146. Bob Ryan got his statistical information from audited budget documents. The sum of the three revenue sources put together before the consolidation was $3,313,385. After the consolidation, the city's appropriation was gone and the District received in property taxes $2,438,576 and $2,370,058 in sales taxes for a grand total of $4,808,634 in taxes with a $1,495,249 profit from a 45% increase in sales and property taxes. An increase in population would cause the District to automatically get more money from taxes, such as in fiscal year 1991-92 when the total from sales and property taxes was $10,629,730.

Bob Ryan felt that the Library District had been over financed since 1981 and offered three of his own solutions to correct what he called LVCCDLD abuses. One, he felt that the District should give the taxpayers a break because they already have more money than they need.
Two, the District should not receive any direct funding. It should be granted appropriations from local government to make them more accountable to elected officials. Three, an elected group of people, such as the county commission and/or LV city council, should approve the District's spending. Until these three incidents occur, warned Ryan, the Las Vegas-Clark County Library District will continue to "be an arrogant purveyor of wanton inefficiency."

On November 17, 1992, The Clark County Commission had a meeting concerning the Library District and the many allegations raised against it. Concerns and criticism were brought up from the patrons who use the West Las Vegas Library who felt that they and their library were being short-changed. The same type of meeting with the Clark County Commission was also held November 18, 1992, with the LV city council. Mr. Hunsberger and Board President Diana Wilson appeared before the Clark County Commissioners to tell their story.

President Wilson began her explanation of the District's criticism with the statement that the LVCCCLD was guilty of "not communicating effectively with the community." She ensured the Commission that the library system was working diligently to solve the problem. The steps that were being taken to correct the problem were: the Board
holding quarterly town meetings, hiring Hart and Associates for better public relations, and an internal investigation of its operation. County Commissioner Don Schlesinger still felt that the LVCCLD had not answered in its presentation the questions the commission asked in a letter a year ago. The letter asked the Library District how much more it cost to build flamboyant libraries rather than traditional ones. The letter also wanted them to quantify extra costs for building cultural centers. President Wilson had said that they did send a response because they could not quantify extra cost. To this Schlesinger retorted, "If you can't answer the questions, I think maybe we need to put trustees in there who can answer these questions."

Assemblyman Wendell Williams was there and he stated that he represented 16 community organizations that felt that the Las Vegas Clark-County Library District was government out of control. He told the commission that the Martin Luther King Jr. Committee sent a letter to the state Ethics Commission regarding the legality of a telephone poll of the trustees being used to hire Tuzzolo of Hart and Associates without a contract, without a meeting, and without an estimated cost. Wendell Williams stated "They basically gave the firm a blank check." Schlesinger requested that the commission
at its next meeting push for legislation that would bring the Las Vegas-Clark County Library District's budget before them for review and approval.

At the meeting the assemblyman also brought up many charges against the District such as: limiting access to the bidding process and job favoritism. One incident that Williams brought to light was that a local construction firm that built libraries also built Hunsberger's house. Mr. Hunsberger denied these charges and said that they were untrue. Assemblyman Williams continued to argue that the District had enforced a double standards approach when dealing with Clark County communities. The West Las Vegas area, which is a predominantly black community, had to complain and fight to receive the same equal treatment in their library that the rich communities like Summerlin received with no hassle or problems. Mr. Hunsberger and Diana Wilson said that Williams was lying and that these allegations were untrue. The charges brought against the District were so severe that Commission Chairman Jay Bingham asked the county manager to send a transcript of the meeting to the district attorney's office.

The charges and the attack on the LVCCLD were so serious that one of its trustees quit. Board of Trustee member, Steve Schorr, resigned saying, "My resignation was out of frustration and out of seeing the things that went
awry." He also said, "What came about with the Library District is a political folly." If Steve Schorr's resignation and the Clark County Commission's sending a transcript of its meeting to the district attorney's office were not enough problems, the press then began to question the relationship of the Library Director and his assistant director.

LVCCCLD Director Charles Hunsberger and Assistant Director Nancy Hudson both own and share a home in Mount Charleston. Ms. Hudson claimed that the mountain home was her weekend retreat and she had an apartment in Las Vegas. Hunsberger said the mountain home was his primary address. Both parties involved said that the home was nothing more than a business arrangement and that they are good friends and had a professional relationship at work. Wilson admitted that she had known about the relationship for quite a long time and felt that there was nothing wrong with their arrangement. Hunsberger purchased the land in 1985 and built a house on it, which Hudson invested money into for an equal share in 1991. Hunsberger told the Review Journal that he was responsible for the hiring of Nancy Hudson into the Library District. Hudson was hired in the District in 1972 as a library coordinator. Hunsberger claimed to never having had any romantic intentions for Hudson, but they do attend
some social events together. At their Mount Charleston home, Hunsberger and Hudson ate together, hiked together, and watched television together. The house was set up where there is a middle recreation area with two separate living quarters on each side. Hunsberger also owns a condominium in Las Vegas which he used as a secondary residence.

Questions were also raised when the *Review Journal* found out that Hunsberger had hired an ex-employee of the construction company that built his Mount Charleston home. The employee was Rusty Coleman who worked for Richardson Construction, the same firm that helped build Hunsberger's house. Richardson Construction was also contracted to work on district library building projects across the county. Rusty Coleman was hired to work as an assistant project manager to help with the construction of new libraries. Neither Hunsberger, Hudson, or Coleman saw anything wrong with Rusty's working for the District and working on the construction of Hunsberger's home. Rusty's position, however, was temporary and will be terminated when the library projects ceased to exist. The assistant projects manager position was never posted because Hunsberger hired him for his experience with library projects and his expertise in theater construction. Richardson Construction had won five bids for library jobs.

Hunsberger and the Library District had so many
allegations and complaints circulating in the newspapers that he felt maybe he should seek the professional counsel of an attorney. Some of the allegations being printed could be viewed as slander against his character and the character and integrity of the LVCCLD and its trustees. "It looks like someone's trying to run me out of town, doesn't it? I am not leaving. I am here to work and build libraries. That's my career, and that's what they're trying to destroy," said Hunsberger.

Despite all of the Library Director's problems he, did have the support of some of his bosses who sat on the Library Board. Board President Diana Wilson, Trustee Preston Hubbs, and Trustee Rev. Marion Bennett saw nothing wrong with Hudson and Hunsberger's weekend living arrangements. Each trustee saw it as no more than an investment and/or taking advantage of a good business opportunity. Resigning Trustee Steve Schorr did not like the Library Director and his Assistant Library Director living together in any fashion. He felt that the weekend retreat raised too many questions and caused too many more problems for the District. Schorr was also quite angry when he was not made aware of Hunsberger and Hudson business investment while he was a board member. "It's just I feel it's a very poor business
practice," said Steve Schorr. He also did not like the idea of Hunsberger hiring Rusty Coleman and said, "The way it looks and the possible questions it raises about the conflict of interest are massive." The chairman of the state commission on ethics said that the commission would not look into the Mount Charleston home or the hiring practices of the Library District unless there was a formal request made by either party involved or a third party. Hunsberger and Hudson did not have the final and/or last word on library policy; this was why Wilson, Hubbs, and Bennett were comfortable with the two top library officials' business investment and living arrangement.

Though there was support for Hunsberger and Hudson from their supervisors, there were still complaints and criticism pouring in from the West Las Vegas Library. Gerald Welt, the Library Board's attorney, was appointed by the library trustees to conduct an informal internal investigation of the Library District. One WLV employee could not understand how Welt could investigate an internal investigation of the District and not talk to the employees of the West Las Vegas Library. Deborah Jackson said, "It just seems to me that if the attorney was really sincere in his fact-finding mission that we would have been the first people he contacted to try
to see what our concerns and problems were." Welt's response was that he welcomed anyone who wanted to talk to him. Ms. Jackson also felt that the District should have hired an independent party to do the investigation.

The same day that Ms. Deborah Jackson's statements were printed in the Review Journal, Gerald Welt was to submit to the Library Board at Las Vegas Library, 11:30 a.m., Tuesday, November 24, 1992, his report on the investigation probe of LVCCLD.

The meeting of the board of trustees that Tuesday morning was a closed session and not opened to the public or the media. The trustees emerged from the meeting to tell the press that the internal investigation of the Library District will continue and another meeting was scheduled. Gerald Welt had wanted to finish his investigation by January 1, 1993, and had already interviewed 10 to 15 people so far. He promised to interview more people who had allegations to make against the Library District. President Diana Wilson was quite confident that Welt was being totally objective in his investigation.

Ande Engleman, executive director of the Nevada State Press Association, believed that the Board violated the state open meeting law which requires meetings of government panels to be open to the public. She debated whether to file a complaint with the state attorney
general's office. The *Review Journal* newspaper, however, took the initiative and wrote a letter to the state attorney general requesting an investigation of the trustees' closed session meeting. Ande Engleman thinks that the District made a mistake listing the Gerald Welt report as a "personnel session" without giving a description of what was being discussed. Nevada Revised Statute 241.030, subsection 2, says that a public organization may close a meeting if it stipulates what the meeting is going to be about. According to this law, the District just can not say "personnel session" and close its meeting to the public.

The state attorney general's office eventually received complaints from the Nevada State Press Association, The *Review Journal*, and Las Vegas *Sun* newspapers for open meeting law violations and telephone polling of trustees to hire Hart and Associates. Library Board attorney Gerald Welt felt no laws were broken and that the Library District reserved the right to close its meeting to the public when discussing its employees. The purpose for the meeting being closed was to allow fairness and equal treatment to the library employees.

Former board Chairman Danny Lee told present library trustees to hang in there despite controversy and criticism. He told them, "I would hope that none of you would leave the kitchen, no more of you would leave the
kitchen because its getting a little hot." Lee did not like the criticism that was coming from the passage of the 1991 bond issue to build new libraries for southern Nevada. He was on the Board for nine years and was very proud of the fact that the bond issue did pass. Steve Schorr, despite Danny Lee's words of encouragement, did not reconsider his resignation because he did not want his reputation in Las Vegas smeared by the LVCCLD scandals.

On Thursday, December 10, 1992, the board of trustees had a meeting to discuss the findings of Gerald Welt's investigation. To date he had interviewed twenty people who were present and former employees, along with some members of the Library Board. Assemblyman Wendell Williams's response to the Gerald Welt report was, "It's just a dog and pony show going around the track, going around and around, picking up the same mud."

Welt, even in the midst of criticism, still made recommendations to the Board. He suggested that the District have a compliance audit conducted by an independent firm, such as Deloitte and Touche, to ensure that the Library District was complying with bidding and affirmative action laws. The LVCCLD have a line-item budget for the Board with each library branch having its own separate book budget. His comments on
the Hart and Associates controversy were that no law was being violated because the PR firm volunteered its services first, freeing the Board from breaking the open meeting law and any contracting of outside company laws. Welt said, "No contract has been signed. No money has been passed." Assemblyman Williams responded in anger, "Publicly they have said they expect to be paid. Now you're saying they're volunteering their time."

1993

In January 1993 the Las Vegas-Clark County Library District launched the new year with a public relations flier entitled, "12 Good Reasons to leave our Libraries in the Hands of Responsible, Competent Citizens." The PR leaflet first cites NRS 379.002 which is "Goal of Public Libraries and Information Centers." The statute reads that the primary goal of the state's public libraries and information centers is to provide resources and trained staff to meet the information needs and desires of all Nevadans. The mission of the LVCCCLD, which was called "The Commitment", was also included in the library pamphlet. "The Commitment" was written as the mission statement of the District and reads, "The mission of Las Vegas-Clark County Library District is to serve
the community as a resource center, providing every library user with materials which satisfy the need for information, assist in the attainment of life long learning goals and promote the creative use of leisure time. The District's aim is to promote the value of information and to raise public awareness of those services which aid in the development of intellectual creativity and excellence." The leaflet is nothing more than a rehash of district accomplishments and an illustration of what services they offer.

On January 7-8 of 1993 librarians of the Library District were involved in a crisis management workshop at the University of Nevada-Las Vegas. The workshop was designed to help the professional staff of the LVCCLD cope and manage the problems, controversies, and allegations facing the District. The seminar featured mock disasters, press conferences, and case studies. Administrators of libraries were asked to write a crisis management plan studying staff weaknesses and their suggestions for handling unexpected disasters. The instructor of the course listed over a hundred different crises which had occurred in other libraries across the country, crises such as bomb threats, arson, sewer explosions, and investigations conducted by the media. It was highly stressed that the administrators should a crisis management plan and the District should establish a planning team to handle any emergencies.
Mock drills were also encouraged so that staff will not panic or perform poorly in the face of a crisis.

It would appear to be a good idea for the Library District to print and circulate its PR pamphlet and have the librarians participate in a crisis management course because the Clark County Commission was still not pleased with the library system. At this time, more than a year had passed and the Commission still had not received the financial information it felt was satisfactory. Schlesinger was telling the press, "I've never said, 'Don't build these buildings. Don't provide culture.' I've simply said, 'What is the cost?'" Chairman Diana Wilson told the Commission that the District was going to ask the architects on the library building projects to prepare a report to answer their queries.

If that was not enough havoc for President Diana Wilson, then the Nevada attorney general decided that an October poll she had conducted of the trustees violated state open-meeting laws. Wilson promised to never do a telephone poll of the Board again unless it was done in a proper meeting place where the public could listen in. Wilson had admitted to the state attorney general's office that she had polled 9 out of 10 of the trustees to get approval for the use and possible hiring of Hart and Associates for public relation problems. The public outcry from the employment of the consulting firm, that
had already done the work without a contract or an agreement of what they expected to be paid and for how long, pushed library officials not to give them a contract. The board president did not intend to poll the trustees before an official vote because a vote on Hart and Associates was not needed. Diana Wilson was only looking for the members' input on the matter of accepting advice from the PR firm. The Nevada district attorney did, however, state that the Library Board did not break the law when it closed its meeting to the public on November 24, 1992, calling it a personnel session.

On Tuesday, January 14, 1993, the LVCCLD's board of trustees asked Hunsberger to hire a personnel coordinator to ensure that its policies for personnel followed state and federal guidelines. Due to financial constraints, Nancy Hudson had to be the assistant director and the acting personnel coordinator. Gerald Welt had recommended that the board members be more involved and visible throughout the District. They should make it an issue to attend library events to get to know the staff and the communities they serve. He also suggested that the District develop a training manual for trustees to help new board members coming on.

On Monday, January 18, 1993, the first library built with the $80 million bond money was opened for business. The West Charleston Library, located at 6301 West Charleston, at a cost of $4.3 million and with 38,000
square feet, checked out more than 3,572 items the first day of service. The WCH was one of seven libraries to be built with the bond money. Summerlin Library, Sahara West Library, Rainbow Library, Laughlin Library, East Las Vegas Library, and Enterprise Library are the other six libraries, alone with expansions of Clark County Library and West Las Vegas Library.

On January 27, 1993, Diana Wilson bought County Commissioner Schlesinger a report that had some library figures calculated by the district capital development director. In the report was the average square feet cost, turn key operations, building construction, connection of utility fees, offsite improvements, furniture, computers, printing, mail postage, site art, and contingency funds which total 5% of each project's construction cost. What was not included in the statistical document were the figures for the cost of the land, asbestos removal from CCL, and the cost for administration of the new library projects. Schlesinger thought that this information was helpful, but asked Wilson for more figures such as architectural costs, land fees, and building material prices. The County Commissioner also wanted to host a meeting of county officials, school district officials, and library officials to make cost comparisons on the architecture of the LVCCCLD and the architecture of the school district which was in the process of building new schools in Clark
County. Schlesinger believed that the price comparison would keep building costs down for new libraries and new schools in southern Nevada. President Diana Wilson was asked for an annual budget of the District's cultural arts and was advised by Schlesinger to seek more donated art for libraries as opposed to purchasing art and to build new libraries off of major streets to keep land cost low. Mrs. Wilson thought that the meeting with Schlesinger was very positive and she wished she had done it sooner.

Fifteen months earlier in November of 1991 Schlesinger had asked for figures on building expenses for Las Vegas libraries as opposed to expenses for traditional libraries. In essence, he still had not received those figures. On January 14, 1993, Diana Wilson supposedly sent a letter to Jay Bingham, the county commission chairman, stating that she did not have to respond to Schlesinger's year old inquiries. She also wondered what the county commissioner meant by 'traditional' when referring to libraries. Her letter is quoted as saying, "Therefore my answer is that we are building traditional libraries that do not incur extra cost. Traditional libraries are community activity centers and provide cultural arts to the community. Therefore I see no extra cost when our libraries provide this." The Review Journal newspaper called Wilson's response silly and
makes a stronger argument for district accountability. The RJ could not understand why the LVCCLD could not say, "It costs 'x' amount to build the kind of libraries we have been building, and 'y' amount to construct an unadorned bare-bones library that will hold books, records, films, etc. we deem necessary for each branch." What Wilson had provided for Schlesinger was only part of what he had originally requested but the RJ felt that he was grateful to get that after waiting over a year. The critical Review Journal felt that the present Library Board was non-responsive and needed new trustees. The newspaper took the time out to mention to its readers that Diana Wilson's term expired March 7, 1993, and said, "That'd be a good place to start." WLV patrons were still complaining about the treatment of their library, airing the same grievances they were expressing last summer. On Wednesday, February 3, 1993, there was a town hall meeting held at the West Las Vegas Library which lasted over 3 hours where library officials and trustees were bombarded with questions they still did not have answers to. Trustees Edna Perkins and Rev. Marion Bennet, who are African-Americans, were highly criticized for not adequately representing the black community. The Library District attempted to video the entire meeting but ran out of tape. City
Councilman Frank Hawkins asked the District to please send a copy of the video to the city council and the county commission so that patrons' complaints and board members' responses could be reviewed by both local governments. Rev. Jesse Scott, President of the local NAACP chapter, requested the board of trustees work harder on answering WLV patrons' concerns and rely less on Hunsberger and his officials' information. "I have terrible reservations about his fairness. You must take that responsibility from him," said Scott. He also warned that the Library Board should not be or ever become a rubber stamp for Hunsberger.

On Monday, February 8, 1993, Bob Ryan was at it again, criticizing Hunsberger and the Library District in his commentary. He began by talking about how Hunsberger was boasting about the LVCCLD being one of the finest library districts in the country. Ryan offered statistics that showed a difference of opinion. He begins by stating that a library district the size of LVCCLD should have a 2.4 per book ratio. The Las Vegas-Clark County Library District had a 1.7 per book and this figure, warned Ryan, is misleading. Included in this 1.7 statistical figure was weekly and monthly magazines and books which had been missing for two years now. Bob Ryan said that the District blamed the poor figures on Nevada's rapid population growth which he felt was nonsense because
the per-person ratio for taxes had tripled. This additional money collected from new taxpayers meant that there is more funding for libraries and their operation. Money for books is being wasted.

Money for books was being wasted on museums, art galleries, and theatrical performances. Libraries in Las Vegas should have more books than they do and columnist Bob Ryan proceeded to offer suggestions as to why they did not. He mentioned the Nevada Chamber Orchestra and called it the LVCCLD's symphony. He then began claiming that the Las Vegas-Clark County Library District is the only library system in the U.S. to support an orchestra which has fewer than a hundred people in attendance. The orchestra was conducted by Rudolfo Fernandez who just happened to be the husband of Programming Administrator Margaret Trasatti. Bob Ryan felt that this was a blatant form of nepotism which Hunsberger condoned because of his relationship with Hudson. He argued that anyone who thinks that Hunsberger and Hudson aren't doing anything were "naive, trusting, or just plain stupid." Ryan felt that taxpayers' money should not be used to support library officials' spouses. Hunsberger was Hudson's boss and it was his responsibility to evaluate the work performance and regulate the salary of a business partner.

The columnist believed that the Las Vegas-Clark County
Library District needed some serious changes and Hunsberger needed to be scrutinized more closely. Ryan's nickname for Hunsberger was Southern Nevada's Cultural Czar. He even wanted the 1994 elections to include the ballot question "Are museums, art galleries, theatrical shows, and orchestras the proper function of a library?" The purpose of the vote was to see if taxpayers really wanted their hard earned tax dollars going to cultural amenities or books. Hunsberger felt that the Bob Ryan ballot question should not be included in the 1994 elections because the passage of the bond issue already showed what the voters wanted.

With all the heat the District was receiving from the media, local government officials, and concerned community patrons, it is no real surprise that only one out of six trustees was seeking reappointment. That one lone trustee requesting her position on the Library Board was Diana Wilson. Trustees Fran Fine and Rev. Marion Bennet did not seek a second term. Mary Laub, Glen Hales, and Joan Adams could not be reappointed because they had already served two terms. Fran Fine was elected as a family court judge, and Bennet did not seek a second term because new County Commissioner Yvonne Atkinson Gates wanted to appoint someone else to his seat. Bennet and Edna Perkins had received many complaints and criticism from the black community they were appointed to serve. Commissioner Gates said she was not replacing
Bennet because he was inadequate, but because he was willing to step down from his position. She told the press that she felt that he did a good job. The new commissioner wanted to appoint a black female to the Board. The person that Gates had in mind did not live in the WLV area but still had close ties and associations with the black community. A trustees' responsibility to the district is "making sure is running efficiently and all of the libraries receive the same quality type of treatment." Marion Bennet felt that the District was not short changing the West Las Vegas Library and the majority of its patrons were quite pleased with the facility.

The Las Vegas Council filled the appointments on March 3, 1993. Mayor Jan Jones nominate Denny Kaye, former Clark County Law Library Director, to a seat on the Board. The mayor's concerns were to appoint individuals who would question Hunsberger and make sure that the District ran efficiently; confidence, she felt, must be restored to the board of trustees.

The Clark County Commission appointed Barbara Robinson and Gloria J. Sturman to replace Bennet and Fine. President of the Board of trustees Diana Wilson was reappointed a second term on the board. On March 3, 1993, the commission appointed new replacements for Hales, Laub, and Adams. "I think you will see a more engaged,
fiscally accountable group of trustees," commented Schlesinger. Robinson was frustrated by trustees not being able to answer the simple questions of the WLV patrons on February 3 of that year. "The questions that were directed toward (the trustees), they just could not answer," said Councilman Frank Hawkins. Barbara Robinson promised to be accountable and responsible to the public and said she wanted direct answers to her questions from library officials and staff.

On March 5, 1993, the District had groundbreaking ceremonies for Rainbow Library. The new facility was located at the corner of southeast Cheyenne Avenue and Buffalo Drive. The library was 28,000 square-feet and the warehouse and maintenance building were 9,800 square-feet. The complete library project sat on 10 acres of donated land from the city of Las Vegas.

Library officials were very pleased with the groundbreaking and future openings of libraries and cultural centers in Las Vegas. Now that the District was going to have facilities with meeting rooms to be used by the public, it had to set a fee policy for its use. The premise behind the LVCCLD's pricing of meeting rooms was to make them accessible to all interested patrons. Groups who use the rooms free of charge cannot charge for entry into their meeting and the meeting
must be opened to the public. The non-paying groups can use the rooms twice a month as long as their meeting does not conflict with library services and activities. The cost for a nonprofit group who charges non-members is $25.00 for at least 2 hours. Nonprofit organizations pay $50.00 for at least 2 hours of meeting space. Commercial users are $50.00 every 2 hours, with an additional $20.00 each hour over 2. The other meeting room users pay only $10.00 for any additional hour over 2. Commercial events charging money would pay $100.00 per every 2 hours and an additional $20.00 for every hour over 2 or pay the District 10% of the gross receipts of the event. Whichever dollar amount is the most is the payment the District prefers.

The auditoriums and meeting rooms of the new libraries were made possible by the passage of the 1991 bond issue. The bond money could only be used to finance building projects that the voters approved of on election day. Controversy of the LVCCLD surfaces again when library officials wanted to build a museum at the Sahara West Library. Clark County Counsel Mahlon Edwards told the commission it "may order the closing of the account and return of the money to the county treasure," If there is any mismanagement of the bond issue funds. Diana Wilson said that the voters knew of the plans to build a museum at the Sahara West branch before they voted
for the bond passage. Museums and auditoriums in her opinion are an example of traditional libraries in Las Vegas, such as the Las Vegas Library and Lied Discovery Children's Museum.

The Review Journal, however, thought that the marriage between the Las Vegas Library and Lied Museum was already an indication that LVCCLD was headed in the wrong direction. Their opinion was that auditoriums and museums should not be a Las Vegas tradition when planning and building a library. The RJ felt that the bond issue only passed because of an expanded definition of the word 'library' from Mr. Charles Hunsberger and his administration. In conclusion, the Review Journal believed that the citizens of Clark County deserved someone better than the present Library Director to run the Las Vegas-Clark County Library District.

In September 1994 Charles Hunsberger told the media that he planned to resign, and denied it had anything to do with the controversy looming around the District and/or himself. The resignation he referred to was his retirement upon reaching 65 years of age in 1994. He told the press that he had been planning his retirement for five years and would like to do some writing, library counseling, and some teaching of library courses. Once Hunsberger retired, he was expected to receive half of his $99,570 yearly salary. Wilson had said she has been aware of his plans to retire for years now. "I think
he has obviously been a very effective Library Director. It was his vision that helped bring (the District) to this point," said Diana Wilson.

The Library Director was proud of the steps that the LVCCLD had taken to be the library system that it was today. His thoughts on the controversy of the District were that criticism is a part of the job and you simply cannot dwell upon it. "If you just listen to that, you're not hearing the total needs of the people. Libraries today have to be very broad based and serve the total community and not just someone that wants to check out a few books for their weekend entertainment. I think I've accomplished what I set out to do, and that was to build libraries of distinction, build collections that are heavily used and provide a talented staff to provide good service," says Hunsberger.

It was very noble of Hunsberger to step down and submit his retirement, but according to the LV Sun, his job was already on the line with some board of trustees members. The Director might have been called into a closed personnel session to review his job performance. The article stated that one trustee predicted that Hunsberger will be going soon because there were enough votes gathered to fire him. Many people believed that the six newly appointed trustees would dump the
Library Director within the next two months.

Hunsberger was not the only one under fire for library controversy; the board of trustees was receiving some heat for the proposed planning of a museum being built along with the new Sahara West Library. County Commissioner Hayes had written an opinion that stated that the 1991 library bond issue money could not be spent on a museum for SAH. The reason for her position was that the ballot question wording did not say or specify that particular use of the bond money. The district attorney also supported this opinion by suggesting that the entire museum concept of the Sahara West Library be abandoned because it was not listed in the bond issue. SAH was to begin construction in August of that year and cost a total $20 million after its projected completion in spring of 1995.

Two trustees, Barbara Robinson and Earl Hawkes, believed that a museum should not be a part of the Sahara West Library. Barbara Robinson said, "We're talking about operating expenses of a minimum of 1.5 million a year. I could not in good conscience take money from books and librarians and put it toward a museum that is located too far away from the majority of the city to get there." Hunsberger's response was, "It's a matter that will be determined in the 1995 budget year because
that's when we would plan to operate it." Diana Wilson commented on the average cost of a traveling exhibit, which is only $12,000, and that the District would host no more than four exhibits in a given year. Robinson, however, pointed out other costs, such as setting up and tearing down of exhibits, hiring a curator, utilities cost, and maintenance cost. The Peccole Ranch Partnership which sold the District eight acres of land for $1.05 million to build the Sahara West Library threatened to intervene in the museum controversy and start reading its contract if the museum was not being built.

On April 13, 1993, the library board of trustees had a meeting where a vote was taken to decide the fate of the Sahara West Library's museum. The trustees voted 4-3 to put the SAH project on hold until an adequate and efficient cost study could be done. One outraged patron said, "I think this is ridiculous. It's obvious that the new members of this board are naive and uninformed. This was already passed by the voters. Now, they're stopping it. It will cost more money, and possibly a lawsuit... They have absolutely no right to do this." Trustee Preston Hubbs had stated at the meeting "to hold up the project now would be a disservice to the community." Bill Snyder an architect who was
working on the SAH and museum project, told the Board that the design for the facility was 95% completed. He warned that his staff could not "put their hearts into it." If the operation was interrupted and put on hold. The administrator for Sahara West Library, Darrell Batson, said more than $2 million had been spent on architectural fees and land cost. Larry Miller, a representative of the trust who made the land available to build the SAH, said that the deal was made with the understanding that a museum was to be built with the new library. Robinson at the meeting had acknowledged the fact that attendance at the Lied Children's Museum is low and that the proposal for another museum would be a weak gesture of accountability when more money is needed for books. Earl Hawkes said, "I voted for the bond issue, I did not know it was about a museum." Hunsberger still felt that the money for the museum was approved by the voters when the bond issue passed.

New Board of Trustee Member Barbara Robinson requested the Board to have a closed personnel session for Hunsberger to evaluate his job performance. "We don't get information, we don't get cooperation. I've never been on a board where I have met with such resistance to obtain information from our director." Much of
Robinson's resentment against Hunsberger was due to the possibility of the District being sued to produce a facility that may or may not be legal. The museum issue pretty much had the Board divided, with some in favor of it and some against it. Chairman Diana Wilson did not participate in the vote to halt the SAH project; however, she did feel that it would be premature to stop the building of the museum. She said, "We're getting ahead of ourselves if we stop things before we have some answers." Wilson's concern was that if the Sahara West Library plans were changed, how much more would it cost the District in new building designs, alterations in contracts, and lawsuits.

Barbara Robinson offered a suggestion to remedy the District from all legal headaches caused by the museum controversy. Her idea was to have the issue of the museum put on the ballot to eliminate all doubts of its construction. "If they vote for a museum, I want money to run it," said Robinson. Preston Hubbs showed Robinson pre-election newspapers that proved that voters were aware that a museum was being considered for the Sahara West Library. "They voted for it with full knowledge it was going to be there," said Hubbs. Moise Denis, a trustee on the Board, agreed with Hubbs. "If
you voted for something and you didn't understand the issue, you shouldn't have voted for it," argued Denis. Former Board President Danny Lee wanted to think that the 1991 bond issue passed because of the construction of museums and cultural centers as a part of Las Vegas libraries. Diana Wilson reported to the Board that she has received calls from patrons asking why had the District not reconsidered building the West Las Vegas Library's auditorium when it was having second thoughts about Sahara West Library's museum. Moise felt that it would be unfair to ask voters to vote for something that was approved by other voters two years ago. The inequality of the museum ballot question came from Las Vegas having a boom in population over the last 30 years. The increase in numbers of people in the Clark County area could possibly cause a reversal of what some people believe is the legal right for the District to build a museum. The changing of the electorate is what concerned Denis.

To ease board of trustees' fears about operation cost of the museum, Mr. Charles Hunsberger presented them some figures for their review. Each square foot of the building would cost about three dollars and ten cents; the total space for it would be 30,000 square feet. The price for four staff members would be $98,000, and 75,000 would be spent on traveling exhibits annually.
He also pointed out that expenses could be cut by private donations from culture enthusiasts. Barbara Robinson felt that Hunsberger underestimated costs and cited the absence of a figure for a curator's salary which could be quite expensive for a District that needs to buy more books.

In the Nevada legislature Wendell Williams was gearing up to introduce his Assembly Bill 468. AB 468 would allow appointed library board members to be removed for any reason or at anytime. Currently trustees were appointed for four years and could only be removed for criminal reasons. Under the new legislation the District would not be able to pass any more bond issues without the approval of the county commission, and also not make any major purchases without their consent. Assemblyman Wendell Williams also offered the library trustees' main mission statement which is "library facilities which contain an adequate supply of books and other materials traditionally made available in a library."

The present board members had some questions and concerns about AB 468. They wanted Assemblyman Williams to offer a list of reasons to the "removal at anytime or any reason" clause. Trustees were also worried that the commission would sink any library bond issues which may conflict with any issues that they supported. Trustee Preston Hubbs commented, "Why not leave it like it
Chairman Diana Wilson caught a plane to Carson City to testify on Assembly Bill 468.

On April 22, 1993, the library board of trustees met in a closed session to discuss Hunsberger's job performance. Approximately two or three trustees had made a list of 15 concerns that they wanted to talk to him about. The Board had only enough time to cover one item on the list because of Wilson's sudden flight to Carson City that evening. The topic that they did discuss covered the staff and trustee working relationship. Hunsberger left the meeting quite confident that his job was secure and not in any jeopardy. He did, however, admit that changes in the focus of the District would occur with the new library board members. Hunsberger was correct with his prediction of changes happening in many district policies, districtwide library operations, and construction projects.

The beginning of change took place May 14, 1993, when West Las Vegas Library's theater stage was considered inadequate because it could not fulfill the needs of the community. The stage was much smaller than the one planned for Summerlin Library which was to be built at a cost of $7 million. The stage was also thought to be too small because it could not accommodate the needs and the space for community dance groups such as Simba. The cost to repair this incident would be between
$500,000 and a million dollars, with the LVCCLD already having invested $2 million in the WLV expansion project. "If this was a private corporation, heads would roll at the top," said Robinson. Hunsberger's excuse was that each library is different and is designed to meet the needs of that specific community. He even mentioned the fact that not all libraries have theaters.

Alterations in the construction of WLV's theater were just the beginning of the changes the District would endure in 1993. At this particular time trustees asked library officials to produce a plan that would include more diversity in its culture programming. Changes in this policy would mostly affect KNPR and the Nevada Symphony Chamber which both stood to lose a great deal of library funding. It was understood that the Nevada Symphony Chamber was supposed to receive $25,000 and radio station KNPR was to get $30,000 which was the Library District's entire radio budget. The new board of trustees voted unanimously to have the radio budget divided among several local radio stations, and Hunsberger was instructed to explore contracts and agreements with TV stations. Trustees Robinson Hawkes, and Sturman all pushed the diversity issue which would support all musicians and all forms and styles of music to perform in libraries. All of this was done despite pleas of art supporters who crowded the meeting rooms. The loudest
group was the advocates for the Nevada Chamber Symphony who warned the Board that cutting its funding would jeopardize the entire orchestra. The Board kindly listened to all statements and moved quickly to adopt and embrace a new cultural diversity plan.

A conspiracy theory had been born when Board of Trustee Dennis Kay told the LV Sun newspaper on the telephone, "I got a call from Barbara Robinson, and as you know, (she) is not thrilled with Charles' performance and she just let it be known that she knows from casual conversation that there are other board members who share her opinion and she just wanted to know where I stood." Preston Hubbs had stated that six members of the board had been polled by one board member to fire Hunsberger. Robinson denied all of this and said that the Board had no time for idle gossip and that there were more serious matters to attend to. "If he (Hubbs) believes the allegations are serious enough, he should go to the attorney general and she, for free, will investigate the charges," said Robinson. Diana Wilson asked board counsel Gerald Welt to investigate the matter and the LV Sun asked Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa to conduct her own investigation. She denied any knowledge of the poll but said she would look into it herself. Trustee Kay did admit that his conversation
with Robinson was not a poll and that they talked about
the job performance of Hunsberger and his personnel review
on June 24, 1993.

This secret polling mess began with Kay talking to
Charles Hunsberger about his conversation with Robinson.
In the Library Director's mind this sounded like a
telephone poll. Kay said he told Hunsberger, "It was

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definitely not a poll or a vote." On June 3, 1993,
the attorney general began an investigation into the
alleged telephone polling. Deputy Attorney General Robert
Auer said that they would see if the Library Board
violated the state open-meeting law again. The attorney
general's office had already warned the Library Board
about polling before it meets to vote.

July 1, 1993, Wendell Williams told the LV Sun that
Assembly Bill 468 has made his stay in Carson City all
worthwhile and satisfying. "The bill eliminates one
of the most outrageous atrocities that's been going on
for several years against tax payers," said Wendell

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Williams. The bill was approved by the Senate
without any changes and went to the governor for his
signature. Williams also exclaimed, "I can't think of
any win I have enjoyed better than getting this bill

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passed. It's a victory for taxpayers."
Some employees of the LVCCLD got together to talk about creating a union to counter negative comments and criticism about the District from public officials and the press. Donna Sword, a district employee, told the media that the move to form a union was caused by what she calls library bashing. "I can tell you that it's the employee perception in the library district that people who don't use the library don't understand what a good job the employees in the district do," said Sword. Teamsters Union local No. 14 was one union organization that the district employees were considering because North Las Vegas Library employees were represented by them. Fears of library closings and loss of jobs had sparked union talk despite Clark County's abundance in funds from an ever growing taxable population. The employees stated that whether they agree or disagree with the new Library board, they would still work with them to eliminate any counter-productivity. Teamster's contracts are good for at least 3 years and the Library District has 350 employees which 175 are full-time.

In mid-July of 1993 Hunsberger put a hold on $700,000 of 'site art' to be used at eight different libraries because library board of trustees wanted to reconsider cost. The Library Director had already slated a $100,000 for a sculpture named 'Spirit Tower' which was to be
placed in the front entrance of Summerlin Library. Other libraries to receive 'site art' included: West Charleston Library, Rainbow Library, East Las Vegas Library, Sahara West Library, Clark County Library, Enterprise Library, Laughlin Library, and the West Las Vegas Library auditorium. Hunsberger then moved to resign.

October 1, 1993, is the date Hunsberger retired from the LVCCLD as its director, a position which he had held for 20 years. The sudden announcement came after a board meeting held on Thursday, July 15, 1993. Controversy caused by criticism for building fancy libraries, district hiring practices, and lack of books in libraries had pushed board members to evaluate his job performance. "I'm always happy to solve problems. That's what this is—problem solving," commented Hunsberger who felt that the Board should have a total commitment to its highest ranking employee. Preston Hubbs called Hunsberger a "friend of libraries." and wished him the best for the future. Diana Wilson said, "Charles has been a visionary, a leader, and a tremendous force for library advancement locally and nationally. It was difficult to accept his resignation." After Hunsberger's announcement, there followed a long round of applause and standing ovation from trustees and library officials.
Staff members were stunned and one library administrator ran out the meeting highly disturbed by the news. "I want to see this Library District continue to be a leader of library districts in this country," stated Hunsberger.

Charles Hunsberger did not admit controversy was the culprit in his resignation. He believed that some people were just upset and jealous with the success of the District. The exiting Library Director admitted that he would not miss all the scrutiny of the LVCCLD's plans once a project was put into action. Hunsberger called this, "The looking back instead of looking forward." The new director, he felt, must have good library experience along with good political skills. Charles Hunsberger believed that he was the center of all the Library District's problems and hoped by resigning that the new director and the new Library Board could start off fresh with each other. It took about six months to replace him and Diana Wilson wanted the Board to hire an interim director. She appointed a search committee of trustees for the job and planned to create a sub-committee of staff and Las Vegas residents to assist in the search. The District also looked for a replacement for Programming Administrator Peggy Trasatti who also resigned October 1, 1993. Commissioner Don Schlesinger
said that Husnberger should be commended for "carrying out what he believed was the appropriate mission of the Library District."

July 20, 1993, the board sub-committee to hire a new director met to establish a search committee to aid them. The search committee consisted of twenty people which are broken down as follows; 5 trustees, 4 staff members, 10 concerned citizens, and 1 Friends of the Library. The board of trustees wanted everyone in the District to be informed about the new director hiring process. Each administrator was required to inform his staff about the director employment situation taking place and have his employees sign a memo acknowledging that they were so notified.

The ten community citizens for the search committee were picked by the sub-committee of trustees. The trustees on this panel were Diana Wilson, Barbara Robinson, Preston Hubbs, Deniston Kay, and Moises Denis. Chairman Wilson predicts that they could get at least a hundred applications from librarians across the country who were interested in the position. No matter how many applied, their numbers will be reduced to 15 applicants and the sub-committee of the board would whittle that figure down to five. The five people chosen would be given interviews and the entire Library Board would make the final decision on who will be the new director of
LVCLLD. Ads for Hunsberger's job were publicized August 20, 1993, and through run through September 15, 1993.

The Summerlin Library and Performing Arts Center located at 1771 Inner Circle Drive has its grandopening to the public August 16, 1993. The facility cost $7 million to build and on the day before the grandopening, the Library District hosted an open house for dignitaries and public office holders. The library was stocked with at least 60,000 books but has the capabilities to hold at least a 100,000 books. Administrator Richard Lee had requested Summerlin patrons to write to him and tell him what kind of books they want in their new library.

The Board not only had the task of hiring a new director but also had to appoint an interim director. The sub-committee of trustees who were assigned the task of recruiting and hiring an interim director was Earl Hawkes, Linda Dougan, Sherry Layne, Edna Perkins, and Gloria Sturman. The position was open to any management employee in the District and whoever was interested in the position should give their resume to the ex-director's secretary. Candidates for the job will be interviewed August 16, 17, and 18 by the sub-committee with a full recommendation presented to the entire Board by September 9, 1993. The interim director sub-committee did not have a lot of candidates to choose from. "I must say that I was surprised that there was only four applicants,"
commented Earl Hawkes. Controversy he believed to be the reason for a poor showing of applicants for the job. The management personnel who were interested in the job was Assistant Director Nancy Hudson, SAH Administrator Darrell Batson, SPV Administrator Laura Golod, and LVL Administrator Doug Henderson. Hawkes informed the four candidates that whoever was hired as interim director had a very strong chance of being hired as director of LVCCLD.

On Wednesday, August 11, 1993, the board members were in a deadlock vote over continued delay of the building of Sahara West Library. Robinson felt that the exhibit space was too big and the Library District could not afford it or a curator for its museum. Wilson wanted the project to continue and suggested that the District seek grants and private donations to support the facility. Hawkes agreed that the library must be built, but hopes that the museum does not take vital funding needed for books.

The board members had been plagued with the question of what is the proper use of the 1991 bond issue when stating that it is supposedly used for library purposes. County counsel Mahlon Edwards from the district attorney's office offered an opinion on the question based on bond legislation. In his statement, pictures, engravings, statutes, coins, works of art, mechanics, and objects
of curiosity in libraries are legally included in library purposes. Diana Wilson thought that the Sahara West Library project would be delayed because of the new board of trustees. She says, "We have been looking at this project for years. As far as I'm concerned, all these matters—funding, design, and now legality—have already been settled. It just takes new board members a while to get up to speed." The Las Vegas Clark County Library District at this point had already paid $2.6 million into SAH and it was estimated to cost the District $3,000 each month for delays. At this rate the District felt it would take at least another two years to have the library completely built and open for the public. For these reasons and the expressed opinion of the county counsel's definition of library purposes, the Sahara West Library project was allowed to proceed in its construction. This decision did not please Hawkes and Robinson. "I'm not going on record supporting the continuation of this project as it is proposed. I want to be in a position to say I told you so," said Barbara Robinson. She also stated that the library's museum would probably drain money from the District's book collection.

On Monday, August 16, 1993, Darrell Batson was hired as the new interim director of LVCLD. A 4-1 vote by
the sub-committee of trustees to hire an interim director backed Batson in an open-meeting type interview. Batson was 41, had been employed by the District for at least 15 years, and had a master's degree in library science from Brigham Young University. He was currently the administrator of extension programs for 11 rural libraries in Nevada. Mr. Batson was also the administrator of Sahara West Library and sat as the chairman for its building site. Darrell told the media, "We always work under the assumption that if you do one job well, you'll do two jobs better." Due to the temporary nature of the interim position, Batson could not alter or make policies which would affect the operation of the Library District. Communication to Batson was the most important element when trying to run a library system. He also ranked staff as being vital for carrying out the goals and missions of the LVCCLD. "The staff has to not perceive the board as the enemy and the board has to not perceive the staff as the enemy. We have to realize that we all have the same goals, just different ways of achieving them," stated Batson, who had also been the administrator of the Metro Jail library and the West Las Vegas Library.

August 23, 1993, the ground was broken for the construction of East Las Vegas Library located at the
corner of Tropicana and Morris street. The facility was to be 23,700 square-feet and hold 125,000 books, 150 magazines, and 2,000 videos and cassettes. It would also have a 200 seat auditorium and study rooms to offer the community it serves. The new building would replace the store front ELV which was opened in 1990 at 4060 S. Nellis Blvd which was only 4,600 square ft. and only held 38,000 books. The library was scheduled to be completed May 1994 at a cost of $2.9 million.

On August 16, 1993, over 2,000 Summerlin and Sun city residents attended the grand opening of Summerlin Library. The building covered 40,000 square ft. and had 60,000 books with over 40 newspapers and 200 magazines, a 291 seat auditorium, an art gallery, and a 4 ft. by 8 ft. living reef aquarium which sits behind the circulation desk. The Young People's Library of SMR has a story telling room, a puppet theater, a parenting room, courtyards, and a play area for children. Richard Lee, the administrator for Summerlin Library, had requested patrons to write and tell him what kind of books they wanted in their library. The resident's request were for financial information, medical books, popular titles, and large print books.

The Library Board voted in the latter part of August to send forms out to would be directors asking them their ethnicity. The premise behind this action was immobilized by two community members who wanted to serve on the search
committee, but were not sure that the LVCCCLD was committed to equal opportunity employment. The library trustees hired a lawyer to combat this equal opportunity employment problem to ensure that the District was not breaking any federal laws in hiring practices. Gregory Kramer, attorney of law hired by the board of trustees, said that the District was not required by any federal law to have an affirmative action plan. He also advised the Board not to implement a voluntary affirmative action plan without proof that discrimination in hiring practices did exist. The ethnicity forms in his opinion could only be sent out for statistical reasons and there should be strict guidelines for applicant anonymity. Ann Mueller, an affirmative action officer for Desert Research Institute, told the Library Board, "I'm just wondering why there was such a push to make this a multicultural search committee if it's not going to be a multicultural search. I'm not here to add window dressing."

Tom Rodriguez, a committee member and affirmative action officer for the Clark County School District, believed that the Las Vegas Clark County Library District had no realistic affirmative action plan to recruit and/or hire minorities. "You don't have to have an affirmative action plan. You should, however, because it's the right thing to do," states Rodriguez. He also complained
that the search committee did not have any information on the minority make up of the District or any practicing existing affirmative action plan. Interim Director Darrell Batson told concerned committee members that such a plan did exist and that it would be presented to them for review at their next meeting. Batson told the Board that the District was hiring a personnel consultant to analyze district hiring practices and make recommendations for improvement. The consultants would also be asked to do a study to see if an affirmative action plan was needed for the Library District.

The search for the new director was not only getting hectic and controversial but was also expanding in number of people to assist the LVCCLD in hiring its most highest paid employee. The number of committee members originally was 20, but grew to be 25 to handle the 47 applicants who wanted Hunsberger's job. The new breakdown for the search committee was; 5 board members, 4 staff employees, 15 community residents, and still 1 Friends of the Library. The employees who were chosen to serve on the personnel committee for the new director's search were Nanci Adams of Summerlin Library, Cynthia Gaffey of the district's community relations department, Jane Lorance administrator for Rainbow Library, and Deborah Jackson of West Las Vegas Library. Members of the search committee as a whole felt that the most important qualification for the new director was good interpersonal
skills followed by fundraising and business skills.

November 3, 1993, the state attorney general's office cleared the trustees of any wrong doing for conducting a telephone poll to fire Hunsberger. Seven trustees, board attorney Gerald Welt, and Hunsberger were interviewed by the Nevada attorney general's office to gather all the facts about the incident before accusing the Library Board of violating the state's open meeting law. Deputy Attorney General Robert Auer wrote in his September 28 opinion that the open meeting law was not broken by the Library District for a telephone poll that was supposed to occur May 13-20. Even though some trustees had talked to one another about Hunsberger's job performance over the phone, there were still no grounds to prove that an official poll was being taken before an official vote.

Once the Library Board was vindicated of breaking any state meeting laws, the trustees focused their attention to Tom Rodriguez who conducted a study of the LVCLD's ethnic composition. What they discovered from his report was that the District employed 68.3% females compared to 49.3% of the Clark County female population. The LVCLD total minority population was 28.2% when the county's minority total population was 25.1%. African-Americans, Asians, and American-Indians numbers working for the Library District exceeded the number of each group in total population figures for Clark
County. Tom Rodriguez did feel that these were some good statistics showing that the Las-Vegas Clark County Library District was trying to keep its staff representative of the total cultural diversity of southern Nevada. He did, however, find that the District was lacking in its employment of minorities in some other areas. The Library District only hired 6.3% Hispanic when the total population figure for Hispanics in Clark County is 11.2%. And 94 percent of all full-time and part-time library employees and administrators are white. The support staff for the administrators are 100% white and new hires for fiscal year 1992-93 of officials, administrators, and technicians were also white. Only one minority was hired out of nine new employees for the same fiscal year. Rodriguez felt that the District should hire more minorities in the areas and positions that they are most vulnerable and weak in numbers.

In December of 1993 the search committee began processing the 41 applications of people interested in the District's top position. Each applicant applying for the position was rated on job qualifications and cut off the list if he/she failed to meet the library director's criteria. Candidates for the job had to have a master's degree in library science, ten years of experience in urban libraries, and five years of experience in administration. The rating scale was 1 to 10 points and each applicant was assigned a grade.
The grades were A, B, C, or D, if an individual received a C or better he/she would get a supplemental form to clarify and explain their qualifications for the next cut. This, the search committee felt, was the fairest and fastest way to find a director to replace Hunsberger.

By February 3, 1994, the search committee had narrowed its search down to five finalists who were to be interviewed by the Library Board. The five impressive candidates were William Sannwald, director of San Diego Library District; Maurice Freedman director of the Westchester library system in Elmsford, New York; Interim Director Darrell Batson, Ann Langevin, administrator of CCL; and Marcia King, former director of Tucson Pima Library District in Arizona. The order that I present the finalists is the order that they ranked when missing the final cut. Diana Wilson believed that the new director would be hired April 1, 1994, with a starting pay of $81,000 a year.

Wednesday, March 9, 1994, the five finalists had their interviews with the library trustees. Each applicant in full detail discussed his/her hopes and ambitions to be the director of the Las Vegas Clark County Library District. Interim Director Darrell Batson told the Board, "The next director will face enormous challenges as the
District's demographics change and as the population increases. I would like to have the opportunity to meet the challenge. Finalists were asked how they would deal with poor communication and perceptions of the LVCCCLD by minorities who say that their library is being short changed. They were asked about funding for the Library District throughout the 90's and how would they make electronic information accessible to all.

Candidates were interviewed before the public and later complained of being uncomfortable about the whole interviewing process. Chairman Diana Wilson stated that the interviews were left open to the public to avoid breaking any open meeting laws in Nevada. After all was said and done, Mr. Darrell Batson was appointed director by a unanimous vote of the trustees.

Batson was appointed library director because board members liked his candor, honesty, and enthusiasm despite his lack of long term experience such as Sannwald and Freedman. Barbara Robinson neatly outlined her reasons for backing Darrell Batson as the new library director. The 1995 state legislature was convening next year and the new Library Director would have to present the District's budget to state elected officials in Carson City. Mr. Batson is a native of Nevada and Robinson felt that he should fare well with the state legislatures. Darrell would also save the District money on relocation
cost if appointed. Barbara Robinson felt that "some of the others (candidates) were just a little too slick." Darrell Batson was offered a contract for two years and a starting salary of $91,228 a year.

In April 10, 1994, on a Sunday, Laughlin Library opened to the public. The new facility was 15,425 square feet and was the fourth library to be built with 1991 bond money. The first 800 patrons to visit the new building received commemorative gold plated brass book markers and a community elementary school's students got to see their hand prints decorate the Young People's Library area. The Laughlin Library was scheduled to be open 56 hours per week and have an Indians lithograph arts collection accompanied by historical pictures of Laughlin.

Once Batson took over as top librarian for the Las Vegas-Clark County Library District, he told the residents of southern Nevada "First, we want to dispel the idea that we don't like books. We love books! That's one of the main reasons people become librarians." With this in mind, Darrell proceeded to invite Las Vegans to rediscover their libraries and see what had changed. Mr. Batson also hired Mr. David Sanchez to be the District's human resources manager, and his first project was to write a proposal for consulting companies to carry out a classification compensation study of the LVCCCLD.
The study was designed to review positions and establish descriptions for positions with proposed salaries for the work that is being done. The salaries for library employees was compared with similar organizations for fairness in arriving at an acceptable wage. Job interest cards would now replace applications for jobs not yet posted and/or opened to the public. Mr. Sanchez and his staff planned to revise the personnel policies and procedure manual, produce an equal employment opportunity diversity policy manual, an employee handbook of responsibilities, a supervisor's manual for employee evaluation and discipline, and offer new merit rules.

In late spring of 1994, a bill draft was written for proposal to the 1995 legislature to have all public librarians certified in the state. If the legislation passed, libraries in the state of Nevada would have five years to comply with the new law. Library directors, reference librarians, and YPL librarians would all have to meet the standards for state certification. Board of trustees for library systems would always have the option to not certify their librarians, but the state would use monetary funding as an incentive for library systems to have certified librarians. Library districts would also be coerced into accepting the certification plan to meet minimum standards set for public libraries.

This idea for the certification of Nevada librarians was the brainchild of state librarian Joan G. Kerschner
who had received favorable endorsements throughout the state. An individual possessing a Master's degree in Library Science who got certified would still be considered a librarian. An individual without a MLS who gets certified would be called a certified librarian. All certification of public librarians would be accomplished by college credits from a university. Recertification would be required every three years and accreditation would equal that of teacher-librarians already mandated by the state. The policy of librarian certification was designed to upgrade libraries and their districts throughout the state of Nevada.

The Las Vegas-Clark County Library District in the month of April hired Caratella Consulting, Inc. to establish and implement a safety program for library employees. Safety engineer John Clark visited 22 urban and rural libraries to gather data on safety conditions for the development of a districtwide safety plan. The compliance and safety training session that he offered lasted four hours and covered several topics. Topics discussed were hazard communication-right to know, blood borne pathogens, codes of safety practices, fire prevention, and evacuation procedures. A safety committee was formed to promote safety and educate employees about safe and sane work habits. "Employee safety and health are important and integral parts of daily library operations. "People are valuable assets and our
employee's safety is our vital concern," said Batson.

This month also gave birth to the LVCCLD's Equal Employment Opportunity and Diversity Policy Statement. The policy reads as, "The Las Vegas-Clark County Library District is committed to equal employment opportunity and will make all employment decisions regarding recruitment, hiring, promotions, and all other conditions of employment, without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, sexual orientation, age, or disability. The District is further committed to ensuring that policies and practices concerning compensation, benefits, transfers, layoffs, recall from layoffs, terminations, training, job assignments, reclassification, and social or recreational programs will be made without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, sexual orientation, age, or disability."

June 13, 1994, the LVCCLD conducted a background investigation of all its employees to comply with Nevada Revised Statute 179A.230. The law states "that an employer is liable to a child served by the employer." The District was looking for employees who had been arrested and/or convicted for sexual crimes.
The statute allows the library system to be free of any discrimination charges if it chooses not to hire or fire a person because of past sexual offenses. This is the law according to NRS 179A.190 to 179A.240. The Library District will pay for the background investigations and employees who do not wish to participate could be subject to termination. If the background search does find a sexual offense on an employee's record, he/she could face termination.

Long Associates, a national management consulting firm, did a compensation and classification study for the Las Vegas-Clark County Library District. The firm was contracted to do a compensation and classification of all library positions and make recommendations on ranges of pay for all of them. The first step in this comp/class study was to have job questionnaires filled out by all employees. Personal interviews with all employees were administered to support statements and information written on job questionnaires. Similar library systems and government agencies had their pay scales reviewed for compatibility with salaries of LVCCLD employees. The job analysis was summarized in a report which was presented to the Library Board for its approval. The questionnaires were returned to employee's supervisor by October 5, 1994. Supervisors are asked to review questionnaires for accuracy and to make comments when
and where necessary. October 10, 1994, was the deadline for managers to submit questionnaires to the human resources department. Long Associates is based in West Palm Beach, Florida, and have done comp/class studies for libraries, special districts, local governments, and public agencies across the United States. It is also a woman-owned business that has been in operation since 1978.

Friday, November 4, 1994, Assistant Director Nancy Hudson retired after 23 years of service to LVCCLD. Hudson started working for the District back in 1972. She is credited for the Library District's new era in library computer technology called CLSI computerized cataloging system for finding books. Nancy Hudson was in the merger of Las Vegas and Clark County libraries in 1985. The ex-Assistant Director was helpful in the passage of a 1984, 1985, and 1991 bond issues for the betterment and improvement of library services in Southern Nevada. Ms. Nancy Hudson was the second administrative library official to retire in 1994, the first was WLV Administrator Marie Jordan. Jordan retired March 4, 1994, after only six and a half years of employment. Her feelings about retirement are, "I hate to leave now with the growth of the District and the West Las Vegas Library auditorium opening."
Nancy Hudson wishes everyone in the District future success and hopes that the LVCCCLD can grow and continue to prosper.

November 13, 1994, Clark County Library reopened to the public after 36 months of renovation and at a cost of $13.8 million.

On November 10, the LVCCCLD hosted a special ribbon cutting ceremony after the trustees' board meeting. Over 200 people, including board members, staff, building committee, and special guests, attended. The Clark County Library can hold 250,000 books, house a used book store, and possess a repair and mending department for old books. The newly reopened facility also has space for a 399-seat theater auditorium, a jewel box theater space, and conference rooms. CCL also has a special collection for the disabled, a literacy department, and a computer lab for patrons to use. The library is three stories tall and has a periodicals department with at least a 125 newspapers, with newspapers from Hong Kong, Italy, and Germany.

1995

On January 30, 1995, the West Las Vegas Library had a town hall meeting where still again African-American patrons are not happy with the operations of the LVCCCLD. At the meeting, issues such as building safety, constant
project delays, waste of tax dollars, and racial inequality still plagued the Library District in 1995. Rumors were circulating around the black community about the safety of the new theater auditorium. The sinking floor, roof falling in, and cracks in the walls were just some of the incidents reported to make the new addition unsafe for occupation and use. It had been three years and $4.2 million and the African-American community still has no completed building project. The Board has pledged to spend another $100,000 or $200,000 to finish the 13,639 square feet theater auditorium. Eddie Watson, a community activist and WLV patron, told a local community newspaper the story of how the West Las Vegas theater and auditorium came about.

The Board had assured the WLV patrons that the new library addition would be completed June of 1995. Recalling the past, Mr. Eddie Watson said that in order for the West Las Vegas Library to be included in the bond issue of 1991, the black community had to go to the board of trustees for a theater. The community was first rejected, but when the Board had trouble getting the bond issue to pass, they came to the black community for help. The trustees promised to build the theater that the African-American community wanted if they helped pass the bond issue. The response of the black community, according to Watson, was "if you will assure us that we will get a theater with all the trimmings we will"
Hunsberger supposedly responded, "If you tell us what you want, we will make sure you get what you want."

The theater that the African-American community wanted was 500 seats, a dressing room for both sexes, a large stage, and very sophisticated theater equipment. Groups such as the Afro-American Summit, NAACP, Professional Black Women, and the Martin Luther King Jr. Committee got together and the word out to the black community to pass the 1991 bond issue. The Library District denies any agreement being made to build a 500 seat auditorium, and if such an agreement does exist, it was with the old administration of Charles Hunsberger and Nancy Hudson. Watson swears that his community was promised a theater, and the one that is being built is not what they asked for. The stage is too small, and the pit is also small, the dressing rooms for actors and actresses were replaced with bathrooms, and instead of 500 seats they were going to receive 297 seats. At a June 1993 board meeting, patrons of the WLV came to Green Valley Library and told the trustees that they wanted their single men and women's dressing rooms, a bigger stage, and 350 seats instead of the promised 500 seats. Board member Barbara Robinson helped push the expansion changes of the theater at a cost of over $800,000. The price tag included cost for
demolition of the existing structure, architect revisions, inspections, permits, the stage being expanded 2,000 square feet with a 500 square feet stage storage, loading dock, and an increase in the orchestra pit. The WLV auditorium theater was 90 percent completed when all of these changes had been made.

Delays in the construction of the facility have led many African-Americans to think that the Library District is not concerned with the wishes of the black community. "They told us it was going to be built first, before the other libraries, then it was March of 1994, then it was March of 1995. Then they told us April. Now they are saying it's going to be the end of May," said Watson. The completion date given at the town hall meeting was June 1, 1995, and the move in date was July 15. Many of the patrons who attended the meeting felt that the auditorium theater would not be open or finished as scheduled by the District. Doubts were evident when one anonymous attendee asked, "If this isn't finished (according to schedule), have you decided what you're going to tell us?" Meanwhile the Actors Repertory Theater (ART) was in dispute with the District over changes and charges for library facility use. In the past, the LVCCCLD supported free use of the facilities to ART and Las Vegas Little Theater in exchange for free
community programs. Trustees changed library space usage policies because of increasing population and fiscal demands on Library District moneys. The changes in rental fees for everyone who uses the theaters would allow fair and equal access to everyone. The District also wanted to get out of funding and sponsoring any and all community events in its libraries. Georgia Neu, artistic director for ART, felt that the new rules were unfair and financially excluded local performing arts groups. Theater groups and companies would have to pay library staff, theater technicians, security guards, and give a percentage of the tickets to the poor as well as give the LVCCLD 10% of concession profits. This, Neu felt, would destroy poorly funded theater groups and stop the formation of new theater companies. She would like for theaters to be accessible to all local groups and the fee for using the facilities waived for theater performances that will benefit the community and the theater company doing the show. Batson said, "I'm incredulous that people want the library to underwrite community productions. We don't go looking for books from a dance company. They shouldn't come looking for art money from the library." He also claimed that the prices of the LVCCLD were the lowest in town and that the District did support the arts by absorbing costs of the theater operations not covered by the rental
fee.

Art was in debt to the District for $7,000 in past rental fees. The new chairman for the board of trustees was Earl Hawkes and his feelings about the whole matter were, "We bent over backwards for ART. We gave them a payment delay but the balance must be paid in full." Neu offered to produce several plays for the Library District as a kind of payment for late rental fees. She was turned down by the board and responded, "I'm baffled to think money was more important. What is this ugliness about the arts?" Barbara Robinson said, "We will not ever take money from books to support the arts. I was asked to be on the Library Board. It is not an arts center or a museum. It is a library."
ENDNOTES

1) Review Journal, July 24, 1991
3) Ibid.
4) Las Vegas Sun, January 23, 1992
5) Ibid.
6) The Circulator, July 1992
7) Review Journal, July 24, 1992
8) Ibid.
9) Review Journal, August 14, 1992
10) The Circulator, September 1992
12) Ibid.
13) Ibid.
14) Ibid.
15) Review Journal, October 17, 1992
16) Las Vegas Sun, October 26, 1992
17) Las Vegas Sun, October 27, 1992
18) Ibid.
19) Ibid.
20) Review Journal, October 28, 1992
21) Ibid.
22) Ibid.
23) Las Vegas Sun, October 29, 1992
24) Ibid.
26) Ibid.
27) Ibid.
28) The Review Journal, November 11, 1992
29) Ibid.
30) Ibid.
31) Las Vegas Sun, November 12, 1992
32) The Review Journal, November 15, 1992
33) Ibid.
34) The Review Journal, November 17, 1992
35) The Review Journal, November 18, 1992
36) Ibid.
37) Ibid.
38) Ibid.
39) Ibid.
40) The Review Journal, November 20, 1992
41) The Review Journal, November 21, 1992
42) Ibid.
43) The Review Journal, November 24, 1992
44) The Review Journal, November 25, 1992
46) Ibid.
47) Ibid.
49) The Review Journal, January 28, 1993
50) Ibid.
51) Ibid.
52) Las Vegas Sun, February 4, 1993
53) The Review Journal, February 8, 1993
54) Ibid.
55) The Review Journal, February 17, 1993
58) Ibid.
59) Las Vegas Sun, April 13, 1993
60) Ibid.
61) Las Vegas Sun, April 14, 1993
62) Ibid.
63) Ibid.
64) Ibid.
65) Las Vegas Sun, April 15, 1993
66) Ibid.
67) Las Vegas Sun, April 20, 1993
68) Ibid.
69) Ibid.
70) Las Vegas Sun, April 20, 1993
71) Ibid.
73) Las Vegas Sun, June 2, 1993
74) Ibid.
75) The Review Journal, June 3, 1993
76) Las Vegas Sun, July 1, 1993
77) Ibid.
78) Las Vegas Sun, July 15, 1993
79) The Review Journal, October 1, 1993
80) Ibid.
81) The Circulator, July 1993
82) The Review Journal, July 17, 1993
83) Ibid.
84) Las Vegas Sun, August 10, 1993
85) Las Vegas Sun, August 12, 1993
86) The Review Journal, August 12, 1993
87) Las Vegas Sun, August 17, 1993
88) Ibid.
89) The Review Journal, August 29, 1993
90) Ibid.
91) Las Vegas Sun, March 10, 1994
92) Las Vegas Sun, March 11, 1994
93) The Circulator, March 1994
94) The Circulator, April 1994
95) Ibid.
96) Interoffice Memorandum, June 13, 1994
   Subject: Background Investigations
97) The Circulator, March 1994
98) Las Vegas Weekly, February 8, 1995
99) Ibid.
100) Ibid.
101) Ibid.
102) Ibid.
103) Ibid.
104) Ibid.
105) Ibid.
106) Ibid.
The purpose of the interviews in chapter five is to show the human side of my research on the Las Vegas-Clark County Library District. My personal sit-down interviews with each candidate were expedited in the hopes of recording the passions and personalities of those individuals closest to the Library District's controversies. My surveys were conducted on a one-to-one basis without the use of a recording device. The reasons for me not to tape or record my interviews were to make my subjects comfortable and at ease about my research. The presence of a recording instrument, I felt, would inhibit my candidate's responses and I would lose the frankness and honesty which I so desperately desire in their answers. The opinions I have recorded are the statements expressed by my subjects. I have done my best to recreate the interviews by solely reviewing and relying on my notes. Major players such as Diana Wilson, Wendell Williams, and Barbara Robinson,
were not interviewed because they were heavily quoted in chapter four.

The following questions I have posed to my subjects were designed to ascertain an unbiased response. I wanted the questions to not stimulate and/or promote any particular reaction which could be observed as a planned response. Reactions should be normal and reflective of that person's personality and sound beliefs. I asked each subject the same exact questions to safeguard the validity of my data. Each question should be self-explanatory and need no further discussion. Question nine, however, I threw in as a bonus to complete the interviews on a positive and humorous note. The premise for this exercise is to offer the reader an alternative source to collaborate the data I have collected from printed resources.
QUESTIONS

1. How many years have you been employed with the Library District?
2. Briefly, share with me some of your personal history and past accomplishments. (education, credentials, organization affiliates, special abilities and/or hobbies)
3. Are you aware of any past history of the Library District before present employment?
4. What is your own personal vision for the future of the Library District?
5. What do you feel is positive about the Library District?
6. What do you feel is negative about the Library District?
7. What is your opinion about the press and its allegations against the Library District? (charges of discrimination, mismanagement of funds and other moneys, and misleading the Nevada legislature)
8. Do you have any closing remarks or opinions that you would like to express?
9. Tell me an interesting and/or funny library story.
1) Three years in September.
2) Linda Porter is a native Nevadan. She attended Eldorado High School and received her diploma in 1984. After graduation, Linda went to Grambling State University and in May of 1989 she was rewarded a degree in Broadcast Journalism. Mrs. Porter is a member of many community organizations and is a founder of her own group. She is a member of the Las Vegas Association of Black Journalists, the Martin Luther King, Jr. Committee, the Professional Black Women's Alliance, and advisor and founder of African-American Ladies to Be. African American Ladies to Be is a social young ladies group that is open to membership for high school juniors and seniors. The purpose of the high school sorority is to prepare young African-American women for college, and strengthen their cultural awareness to make them ready and capable to function and succeed in society. Linda enjoys exercising and working out, reads books, watches movies, does acting, modeling, and writes occasionally for the local African-American newspaper, "The Sentinel Voice." Porter also has aspirations to be a talk show host on TV. Some awards Linda has won are; Woman of the Year 1991 by the Nevada
State Oratorical, Unsung Hero of Nevada 1993, and Outstanding Young Woman of America, 1992.

3) No Comment

4) Linda Porter feels that the District must reflect the multi-cultural essence of Las Vegas and Clark County. She would like to see more minorities hired and not just in entry level positions, but as professionals and administrative positions. Mrs. Porter also notes that there are no people of color in the business office and the community affairs office of LVCCCLD.

5) Mrs. Linda Porter says, "There is a bitter taste in my mouth concerning the Library District because of my trials. I am pleased with the recent appointment of Barbara Robinson and Linda Dougan to the Library Board; these women have shown a sincere concern towards bettering the District. My associations with Debra Jackson, Barbara Coleman, Kelley Richards, and John Stephens have been quite pleasant; without these friendships and their constant support and motivation, thinking something positive about the District would be very hard."

6) Linda believes, "There is definitely an insensitive attitude towards African-Americans within the District. If you happen to be an outspoken African-American, you are immediately labeled a trouble maker. I truly believe that there is a bias when it comes to how materials are allocated to the different branches, more specifically, how they are allocated to the WLV branch. It is obvious
that the West Las Vegas Library has been shafted. The fact that this library was not included in the initial bond and the African-American community had to fight and protest the District to have an auditorium built are disgraceful. As I mentioned before, the lack of Blacks and/or any other minorities in the business office and public relations office speaks for itself. There are qualified African-Americans and people of color who could hold such positions, but are not being sought. The excuse that there are no Blacks with MLS degrees is a lie; the fact is an earnest search for these individuals have not been done.

7) Mrs. Porter is quoted as saying, "I believe within the deepest part of my heart that the allegations are true."

8) The recent announcement of Charles Hunsberger's resignation is a plus for the District. It was obvious that Hunsberger was not a multi-cultural person, nor did he have the sensitivity needed to direct this library district towards the ultimate multi-cultural level that is reflective of the city of Las Vegas. The District needs a person of such caliber and a person who understands that books are definitely more important than huge buildings. Also, that the West Las Vegas community should be entitled as taxpayers to the same resources afforded to other branches. I am leaving to attend library school at the University of Pittsburgh
to obtain my MLS. It is my hope that I will act as
a mentor and role model for African-American children
and teens to pursue careers in the library field. Overall, the District needs a lot of work, but I am hopeful
that changes will be brought forth soon.

9) One day the telephone rang and a patron asked about
a function that was taking place at the West Las Vegas
Library. The inquiry she had was referring to the safety
of her car being parked at WLV. She then went on to
explain to Linda that she heard that West Las Vegas
Library was not safe, and further commented that Mrs.
Porter knows how those people can be. Obviously this
patron mistook Linda to be a Caucasian and not an African
American. She replied, "No I don't know how these people
can be and I drive my car to work every day and nothing
happens to it. Further more, for the record, I am an
African-American!"
Charles Hunsberger
Director
August 4, 1993
3:15 p.m.

1) Mr. Hunsberger began employment with the Las Vegas-Clark County Library District in December 8, 1971.
2) Charles Hunsberger began his library career in 1960 at the Fort Wayne and Allen County Public Library. Charles became the director of Columbia City library system in Indiana in 1962 and director of Monroe County library also in Indiana in 1964. As the director of Monroe County Library he merged the city and county libraries into one library system, built a library headquarters, and developed a bookmobile service for all library branches. In 1972, Hunsberger consolidated the Las Vegas and Clark County libraries into the Las Vegas-Clark County Library District. He expanded the library district budget from 450,000 thousand dollars in 1971 to 1993's 14 million dollar budget. Mr. Hunsberger automated circulation of library books by computer in 1975 and was instrumental in many of its upgrades. He has also been responsible for the passage of three major bond issues for the Library District. In 1984 a bond issue passed for 10 million dollars, in 1985 a bond issue for 15 million dollars passed, and
in 1991 a bond issue passed for 80 million dollars. The bond issue money allowed library officials to build five urban libraries, expand two existing facilities, build nine rural libraries, and construct a library district headquarters. Librarians which possess MLS degrees have increased from 3 to 43.

3) Comments are the same as LVCCLD's history.

4) To create a library system that is well supported financially and has the best collection of library materials that are found in any library of its size in the western states. The library facilities will be of award winning quality and the library services will provide something of value to every citizen. Mr. Hunsberger feels that it is up to the library board and staff to make these visions possible in the next 3 years with the funds available.

5) Its accomplishments. The growth of the Library District, growth of its operation budget from 500 thousand to 14 million. The LVCCLD today is capable of serving over a million people which is an incredible leap from 90 thousand people in 1971.

6) The newspaper press which publicizes the building of second class libraries. The press has no respect for excellence. Excellence is one of the Las Vegas-Clark County Library District's mission statements.

7) All are false statements.

8) The District's future is very good. What is needed
now are community leaders who will support the mission statement of our library system.

9) The assistant director, Nancy Hudson, wrote the contract for the library services for the city of LV which ran from January 19, 1973, to May of 1985 without the help of any attorney which brought millions of dollars to the District. This was all done in one evening and would have been impossible to accomplish with the input of both city and library attorneys.
1) Mr. Batson began working for the Las Vegas-Clark County Library District in November of 1978.

2) Darrell has an associated arts degree in history; a bachelors degree in History; and a masters degree in library science and information. In February of 1977, Mr. Batson was employed in Elko, Nevada, as a reference librarian and, before taking his position as interim director, he was the Administrator for Sahara West Library and extension administrator for programs at 11 rural libraries in Clark County.

3) History account is the same as LVCCLD's history.

4) Mr. Batson sees the Library District providing the informational needs for the community and indefinite future. Libraries, in his opinion, should focus on the needs of the community rather than the wants. Focusing on the evolving needs, for example, of the Hispanic community in Las Vegas. The District should provide books for the Hispanic community that help it to better handle its affairs. The whole philosophy is to adjust the needs of the library to the community's demographics. Library needs are: educational ongoing need, recreational
need, and cultural need which is separate from recreational need. Cultural need is broad and comes from one's heritage, society, and tradition. Aspects of culture would be music, art, language, and food. Culture, Mr. Batson believes, is the most difficult need to fulfill for a community. A community is a dynamic organism, constantly changing and evolving culturally, recreationally, educationally, and informationally.

5) The staff. Darrell is adamant that the Library District has a good staff that loves their jobs and their facilities. The library is a building of identity in which the entire community can take pride.

6) The District is too defensive. We need to be more open and willing to talk. If you are too defensive and arrogant, you will be labeled an elitist and non-responsive. Freedom depends on the free flow of information, and the library is at the center of that flow. Batson warns, you cannot be defensive; you must be responsive.

7) A. The press is trying to sell newspapers
   B. By our response we have aggravated the response
      (we fed fuel to the fire)
   C. Not sure the real story will ever come out.
   D. Must create new relationships with the press.
      more openness, responsiveness, and accountability.

8) No Comment

9) Mr. Batson specializes in jail library services.
One day, a white redneck prisoner came to the jail library requesting a law dictionary. Darrell instinctively handed the gentleman 'Black's Law Dictionary', which was the best in the correctional institute library. The patron stated that he wanted a white's law dictionary.
Nancy Hudson  
Assistant Director  
January 12, 1994  
11:05 a.m.

1) 22 years
2) Mrs. Hudson began her career with the Library District in 1972. She has worked as library coordinator in charge of public services, a library administrator for Clark County Library; personnel manager; and assistant director.
3) Comments were accurate with the history of LVCCLD.
4) Mrs. Hudson feels that the community is growing fast and that the Library District can operate at the current tax rate. She thinks positively that the buildings can be opened and operated successfully by the LVCCLD. Nancy predicts that within two years the book budget will be tighter when the bond issue money runs out. Currently, the district has facilities to last throughout the 90's, but new problems will arise by the year 2000. In conclusion, Mrs. Hudson is very optimistic about the future of the Library District and its new buildings.
5) Nancy feels that everything about the District is positive. LVCCLD is the only government entity to pass successfully a bond issue. In her opinion, the community trusts the Library District and knows that the LVCCLD can responsibly manage the bond issue money. There must
be positive support in the Las Vegas community or the bond issue would have never passed. The District is not a crisis government agency; it is a collaboration of good positive interaction.

6) Everything is positive.

7) "Totally irresponsible, not true, slanted in a negative way. Factually true, but presented for erroneous conclusion or a negative light," as stated by Mrs. Hudson.

8) "What the Library District has been through in the last two years with expose journalism is an epidemic in the nation. The press is always trying to portray everything in a poor light. The racial issue is present nationwide and is happening everywhere and not just in our district, but in society as a whole. It is causing everyone to rethink the problem; the problem should be looked at another way. It is nearly impossible to run an efficient government agency. Bureaucracy and regulations have made it impossible to give a good value to the taxpayer. We need to be freed from regulations and restrictions; business or private sectors have fewer restrictions. Companies can buy what they want, hire what they want, and get rid of who is insufficient."

9) Nancy Hudson was at a bookstore and was standing behind a father and daughter. The father was complaining about the daughter wanting to purchase a picture book. The father and Nancy sparked a conversation and he began asking her about the District's library card and who
pays for it.
1) Ms. Jackson has been working for the Library District for 12 years.

2) Deborah likes to spend her free time as a community activist. She is very concerned with all the problems of African-American people, especially the children of the black community. Ms. Jackson is a member and action chairperson for WAAK-UP (Westside Action Alliance Korp-Uplifting People). The organization known as WAAK-UP was very instrumental in changing Clark County School District's desegregation plan, the previous plan put the sole burden of busing on African-American children. They were bused for 11 out of 12 of their school years, and were allowed to go to their neighborhood schools when they reached the sixth grade. After WAAK-UP led a series of demonstrations and a highly successful school boycott, neighborhood schools once again became a part of the black community. Ms. Deborah Jackson has been the recipient of many prestigious awards along her glorious career with the LVCCCLD and her pain-staking dedication to the African-American community. She has received the Certificate of Appreciation from Congressman Bilbray and the President's Award from the Martin Luther
King, Jr. Committee. Ms. Jackson has also captured services awards from the NAACP, the National Alliance Against Political and Racist Repression, and the Kappa League. Deborah is also the winner of the Library District's highest employee award which is called the Most Valuable Player award.

3) No.

4) I would hope in years to come that the Library District would actively recruit African-American librarians. I also hope that there will one day be African-American administrators other than at the West Las Vegas Library. There is still much racism that exists in the top administration of this district. This will need to change to allow African-Americans a fair chance at promotions and progress.

5) The positive thing about the Library District is that it is one that is steadily growing while in other cities libraries are closing. The growth has allowed library access to all areas of the city.

6) Past Director Charles Hunsberger left with charges of race discrimination, questionable allocation of funds, and sex scandal. A new Library District was expected to emerge that would be racially sensitive and unbiased. The players have changed but the program remains the same. The administration offices are still lily white save for one African-American who was hired last year. Whites are still allowed the freedom of growth within
the system while the rules always change when qualified African-Americans attempt to be promoted or to elevate status. The West Las Vegas Library still lags far behind the other branches in resources. In the past the low circulation statistics were always an excuse to have lower budgets, hand me down reference books, computers, etc. Now that the circulation has more than tripled, there are different reasons for the same inequities. The business office and human resources department still lack any African-American staff; there are qualified applicants who somehow never get selected. If the attitudes do not change, the Library District will continue to be plagued by EEOC complaints and lawsuits.

7) All the allegations I believe to be true and most were proven to be true. An old saying that I have heard so many times in my life comes to mind when thinking of these allegations; what's in the dark will come to the light.

8) No comment.

9) A man called the West Las Vegas Library and asked, "Don't you guys have computers?" I responded, "Yes." He asked, "Can I get some information on prisons?" I asked him, "What specific information he needed?" He said, "I want some information about a prison in Mississippi, but I don't know the name of the prison." I asked him, "If he knew which part of Mississippi or the city it's closest too." He told Deborah that he
would give her the prisoner's name and wanted her to put this information in the computer to tell him which prison he is in. Shocked and amazed, Ms. Jackson attempted to explain that the library does not have access to that type of information. He then responded angrily, "Isn't this a library?" before he slammed the phone down and hung up.
CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

The Las Vegas-Clark County Library District set out to accomplish an agenda that would benefit all southern Nevada residents. Somewhere along the field of dreams, the District hit a mound of public criticism and discontent. The path to achievement was riddled with blockades along the way which would present the District in a poor and irresponsible light. There were charges of discrimination, prejudice, favoritism, nepotism, misappropriations of funds, and unresponsiveness by the Library District. Denials and rebuttals circulated throughout the Las Vegas Valley, which further complicated the successful growth of the Las Vegas-Clark County Library District.

Mr. Hunsberger, Ms. Hudson, Ms. Wilson and the other trustees did a fabulous job of building and operating new libraries in the Clark County area. No one party probably feels that it has done any wrong or mistreated anybody. Whether they admit and/or acknowledge their short comings along with their triumphs, the public will
always be there to tell them what kind of job they are doing. In my research, I found many problems and evidence to support the outcry of the people, the legislation of the state, and the retirement of a director, assistant director, and two administrators.

In my final analysis of the Las Vegas-Clark County Library District, I will offer four variables which I believe to be the culprit of all the problems plaguing the District. The four variables are: public relations, non-responsive identity, public distrust, and special districts. The examples I will use to support my arguments may sometimes overlap, but it is necessary to mention them over again to show how the District continually multiplied its problems. I will also submit other matters of significance which I feel must be discussed and try to tie everything together with some suggestions of my own.

The conclusion of public relations as a cause for the dilemmas of LVCCLD is based on their inability to quash the mounting complaints against them and their unwitting contributions to the public uneasiness. In the following segment I will offer examples which will show why public relations was a factor in the many troubled times of the Las Vegas-Clark County Library District. A plan to move a poorly rated FM radio station in a newly constructed library was not a good idea. The notion that the station was established and promoted by the
Library Director and Assistant Director was not clear thinking or decision making on their part. The existence of a cultural classic music radio station should have been the brain child of someone else and not a service provided by the Library District. The LVCCCLD's subsidizing of the Nevada Chamber Orchestra which was led by Rudolfo Fernandez, the husband of newly appointed Programming Administrator Margaret Trasatti, raised a question about the ethics of the Las Vegas-Clark County Library District. The ethics question soon disappeared when it was brought out the Director and Assistant Director shared a home in the mountains. Both Hunsberger and Hudson swore that it was merely an investment and that there was nothing going on between them but professional librarian work. Who knows whether they were telling the truth, but I would not be surprised if I found out that they got married or were living together full-time.

These two incidents are definitely bad news in the arena of public relations and a positive presentation of the District. This was followed by the hiring of a public relations firm to remove the blemishes and spots on the Library District, but this proved a waste of time for both parties involved. For the Library District to solicit the advice of Dan Hart & Associates without a contract agreement of payment was bad conflict managing, irresponsible managing of tax dollars, poor decision
making, and bad public relations. The outcome of the agency not getting paid for its service was truly a victory for the tax payer. The suggestions that the firm offered were a true example of "you get what you pay for." Dan Hart & Associates' public relation ideas could have easily come from the District's own public relations department. The PR firm idea and all of its surrounding circumstances did nothing but aggravate and intensify the negative public relations of LVCCLD.

The greatest and biggest contribution to the bad public relations of the Las Vegas-Clark County Library District would have to be Mr. Charles Hunsberger himself. This is very simply because, he is the boss. The library decision making and operation weigh heavily upon his shoulders; but his shoulders were not the problem. The motivating force for much of the chaos plaguing the Library District came from some pretty juicy comments made by Hunsberger which caught the attention of the press. Statements such as, "you can go to Walden's if you want a book" and "black people don't read," are the two most famous quotes recited by Mr. Charles Hunsberger, which haunted him until he retired.

The non-responsive identity variable comes from the LVCCLD's inability to communicate and satisfy completely the requests of the citizens they serve. In the following lines I will offer examples that will show how the District can be interpreted as being unconcerned and
non-responsive to the people. The board of trustees and Diane Wilson's taking 15 months to answer the inquiries of the Clark County Commission are a strong argument for the unaccountability of the District. When Clark County Commissioner Schlesinger finally received a response, he still was not completely satisfied with what he saw, but accepted it with some suggestions for the future. The demands of the African-American community and Assemblyman Wendell Williams were resolved primarily by leaflets, discussions, meetings, and the hiring of Dan Hart & Associates. An internal investigation of the Library District by the board of trustees's lawyer who does not begin his fact finding mission at the scene of the resentment and disgust with the District, defiantly shows an evasion of the problem. The most compelling and decisive element in the non-responsive identity is board of trustee member Barbara Robinson complaining that the Board does not get any information or cooperation from the Director.

Public distrust of the District comes from many factors covered in this paper which may again cover some overlapping incidents already discussed. The support of KNPR-FM radio station at a cost of $28,000 a year. The Discovery Children's Museum received $700,000 for exhibits and $669,000 for furniture for the museum and Las Vegas Library. The NAACP asking for a no vote on the 80 million bond issue because of fears that the
African-American community would still be short changed if it passed. Hunsberger told the public to go to the book store if they want books when the Clark County Commission is questioning their financing of cost for the building of new libraries. The hiring of a PR firm without a contract or an agreement of payment was a problem. Local newspaper journalist Bob Ryan charged that the District participated in illegal tax hikes which gave them the revenue to waste on art and cultural-based libraries. Nepotism on the behalf of an appointed administrator, a Director, and an Assistant Director was apparent. Investigations conducted by the state and city district attorney's office for telephone polling closed session meetings, and misleading wording on the 80 million bond question. Bob Ryan accused Hunsberger of inflating book ratio numbers and claimed that the LVCCCLD was one of the best library systems in the nation because of the statistics he presented to the press. Last but not least, Reverend Jesse Scott, president of the NAACP, asked the newly appointed board members not to fully trust the information they received from Hunsberger and his administration.

Inherit characteristics of Special districts, the final element for my Las Vegas-Clark County Library District dilemma formula, is probably the primary cause for all library resent sentiment and discouragement. The rules and regulations of a special district existing only in
state legislation with the absence of political checks and balances, are a catalyst for problems. I will admit, however, that it is impossible to please everybody and that no federal, state, and/or local government agency is free from trouble or possible scandal. The special district clause does make it easier for state and local governments to provide a much needed service to the public absent all the rules, regulations, and taxes which would hinder progress. This provision in the law would also be a temptation for abuse by the government agency which has set itself apart from other public service agencies. It is very difficult to erase and/or eliminate all abuses and waste of all taxed funded public sectors, but there should exist some form of regulatory method to ensure that the taxpayer is getting the most for his and her tax dollars. To accomplish this, I feel that the government officials who establish a special district should provide for greater scrutiny of the actions of the newly formed or existing special district. The special district commission or committee should have the authority to review and initiate policies for the betterment of the agency that is providing the much needed service of the taxpayer.

The certification of Nevada librarians by the state librarian is an excellent example of special district regulating, at least on the level of librarianship in a special district. Certification of librarians squarely
defines the profession as a more specialized, highly trained occupation. The closing of libraries and library schools and the availability of mail order library classes and librarian and assistant librarian Arco test books do siphon the nobility, importance, and academic excellence of this field. The argument among librarians over the purpose and significance of the paraprofessionals have stimulated many heated debates and discussions. A large number of librarians feel that all and any positions which are filled by non-librarians should be halted to save and protect the profession. The tolerance and acceptance of those individuals who wish to work in the library field without a MLS should be allowed for there is strength in numbers. In the discipline of political science and politics we learn that everyone despite their shortcomings or handicaps, is purposeful for achieving the ultimate goal. Now is not the time for librarians to go on elitist ego trips and isolate themselves from people who want to see the library and its profession flourish and prosper to the year 2000 and beyond.

Library districts exist and operate as government agencies even though the rules, regulations, and laws establish them as a self-serving, self-sufficient special district. The public perceives the special district library system as a branch of government which is supported and funded by tax dollars and the reigns of
power are invested in the electorate. This is true despite the fact that special districts are governed only by state legislation that creates them. Indirect control over special districts lies in special interest groups, politicians, and budget cuts. Special interest would be Friends of the Library and the American Library Association (ALA). Politicians would be ambitious aggressive elected officials who would like to use special districts as a political instrument to further their own agendas. Budget cuts diminish funding of tax dollars which can jeopardize the operation, efficiency, and existence of the special districts. These variables are the controlling factors of the special district and they compete with each other to have the final word on what is best for the special district library system and what is best for the community.

The politics of the Library District provide a microcosm for looking at American politics at large. There is ongoing conflict as interest groups compete for limited resources. Political personalities shape policy and public perception becomes an issue in the struggle for credibility. The first five years of this decade were a period of great turmoil for the District; the future looks brighter but the battles are far from over. As priorities shift, with the growing population of southern Nevada, and funds become more scarce, the District will no doubt find itself involved in political battles
with other service agencies. The more things change, the more they stay the same.
The Las Vegas-Clark County Library District has a great deal to be proud of despite the controversies surrounding it. One accomplishment would be the grand opening of the West Las Vegas Library's theater. On Friday, June 30, 1995, the Library District opened the doors to the finally completed 299 seats, opaque skylights, and 9 piece orchestra pit. The theater also has a fly tower to lower sets, props, and lighting on a 2,000 square ft stage. The festivities for the celebration included exhibition booths, a sweet potato pie bake off competition, and entertainment provided by 17 local acts. The opening and completion of the theater were very good things to happen to the African-American community and the Las Vegas-Clark County Library District. The new attached construction to the West Las Vegas Library serves as a symbol to what people can accomplish if they work together. The theater will stand as a witness and a testimony to what accountable government and concerned citizens can achieve if each party compromises to obtain what is acceptable and pleasing to both.
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