

Lincoln Township Public Library

1959-2009

The First Fifty Years

Presented by

Friends of the Lincoln Township Public Library

2009 Executive Board Members

Carol Reigle, President
Judy Fogarty, Vice President
Michelle Coberley, Secretary

E. Jane Knickerbocker, Treasurer
Carolyn Dorgelo, First Director
Suellen Klein, Second Director

Compiled by the History Committee

Virginia Bedunah
Ruthe Bomberger
Carol Reigle
Bernice Tretheway

The Lincoln Township Public Library: The First Fifty Years
is a history highlighting the establishment, growth, development, and services of the Library. Although not exhaustive, it weaves together changes in buildings, technology, and statistics with events, programs, and the people who have made the Library a unique achievement. From humble beginnings, the Library has become a cultural center serving the needs of the community.

May, 2009

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Board of Directors

Verna Bartz	1959-1986
Lucille Florian	1959-1971
Bruno Heinze	1959-1960
Caroline Stanley	1959-1960
Richard Brown	1959-1971
Edna "Sally" Lawrence	1959-1970
Bernice Tretheway	1960-1963
Robert Robbins	1960-1963
Alice Deetjen	1963-1970
Kenneth Fox	1963-1965
Jack Arndt	1965-1966
Tom Turcotte	1966-1980
William Lawrence	1970-1984
Cheryl Seel	1971-1978
Gail Chapman	1971-1980
Vickie Florin	1978-1987
Warren Peters	1980-1984
Verna Braga	1980-1984
Don Lawrence	1984-1992
Ron Easton	1984-1985
Janet Helm	1984-1987
Marion Maier	1985-1996
Gail Chapman	1986-1990
Jerry Johnson	1987-1990
Lee VanGinhoven	1987-2000
Duane Ostenson	1991-1996
Vickie Florin	1992-1993
Patricia Neiman	1993-2000
Ann E. Dosch	1996-2004
Beth A. Kenagy	1996-2004
Sue Jewell	2000-2008
Robert "Jack" Greendonner	1972-present
David Bailey	1989-present
Mary Sunblad	2004-present
James Bednar	2004-present
Jean Conklin	2008-present
Marion Maier	2008-present
Ronald Goldy	2000-2008

Library Directors

Caroline Stanley	1959-1962
Mary Fugate	1962-1970
Barbara Shawl	1970-1970
Edwin Rauh	1971-1977
Chadwick Raymond	1977-1981
Paul Cochran	1982-1984
Linda Keith	1985-1986
Virginia Bedunah	1986-2004
Dina Reilly	2004-present

HISTORY OF THE LINCOLN TOWNSHIP PUBLIC LIBRARY

How It Began!

In 1938, a group of women, known as the *Stevensville Women's Club (SWC)*, first organized a library upstairs in the Village of Stevensville Fire Station. When the SWC first organized the library, Dorothy Stencel served as the librarian. Although this first effort was discontinued after a short time, their desire for a library remained. Many of these same people spearheaded and supported the idea when it was brought up again in 1958.



Stevensville Women's Club members c. 1938, seated left to right, Eleanore Minor, Jennie Schoenfelder, Minnie Mielke, Marcia Anderson, Verna Cupp, unidentified; standing left to right, Sophie Mongreig, Gertrude Ueck, Minnie Ott, Ida Schulz, unidentified, unidentified, Mamie Dietrick, Edith White and Beatrice Powell.

At the last meeting of the Stevensville Parent-Teacher Association held in June 1958, a question from the floor was, "Why don't we start a library?" The members expected to be idle until fall, but a committee was formed and went to work at once to investigate the idea.

The newly formed Lakeshore School Board agreed to make the gymnasium in the Stevensville High School available to the committee for the library experiment from July 7 to August 27, 1958.



Drawing of the Stevensville High School which was located on the east side of St. Joseph Avenue in Stevensville. A summer library was held in the gymnasium in 1958.

Those in charge of the project were Mrs. Charles Jewell, Mrs. Dominic Binda, Mrs. Dale Shafer, Mrs. Martin Tretheway, Mrs. Richard Lewis, and Mrs. James Williams.

The summer library included books borrowed from the Lakeshore Elementary Schools; a lending collection sent from the Library of Michigan; and books donated by area residents and the *Stevensville Women's Club*.

Lakeshore Library Opens



Mrs. Robert Smith, of Stevensville, is shown enjoying the new Lakeshore summer library, with her two daughters, Kim and Loni, in foreground and Martha Lewis in background.

Newspaper clipping depicting the 1958 summer library. Mrs. Robert Smith is shown enjoying the new Lakeshore summer library with her two daughters, Kim Smith and Loni Smith in the foreground and Martha Lewis in the background.

The summer program was a success. When the program ended, the borrowed books were returned and the donated books were stored.

In the meantime, interest in starting a permanent library was growing. Visits were made to other libraries. Surveys were conducted. The group kept meeting and learning about what had to be done to get a library started.



This group last night launched a move to establish tax supported library service in south suburban Lake, Lincoln and Baroda townships by 1959. Pictured (left to right seated) are Miss Muriel Fuller, Michigan state library consultant; Mrs. J. T. Williams, Lincoln township; Mrs. Walter Lausman and Mrs. Don Gast, Baroda township. Standing (left to right) are Dominic Binda and Paul A. Loeffler, Lincoln township; Walter Briney, Bridgman school superintendent, and William B. Stewart, Lakeshore school superintendent. (News-Palladium photo)

In a newspaper clipping from the News-Palladium, the group pictured above launched a move to establish a tax supported library service in Lake, Lincoln, and Baroda townships by 1959. Pictured seated, from left to right, are Miss Muriel Fuller, Michigan State Library Consultant; Mrs. J. T. Williams, Lincoln Township; Mrs. Walter Lausman and Mrs. Don Gast, Baroda Township. Standing, left to right, are Dominic Binda and Paul A. Loeffler, Lincoln Township; Walter Briney, Bridgman School Superintendent, and William Stewart, Lakeshore School Superintendent.

The
Michigan's
NEWS-PALLADIUM

Lakeshore Library Project Launched

Lake, Lincoln, Baroda Townships Included

A move to establish a tax-supported public library service in the south suburban Lakeshore area by 1959 and under the leadership of the Lakeshore high school in Riverville, Mich., was announced last night by a group of seven people who met at the Lakeshore high school in Riverville, Mich., last night.

The group, which includes Miss Muriel Fuller, Michigan state library consultant; Mrs. J. T. Williams, Lincoln township; Mrs. Walter Lausman and Mrs. Don Gast, Baroda township; Dominic Binda and Paul A. Loeffler, Lincoln township; Walter Briney, Bridgman school superintendent; and William B. Stewart, Lakeshore school superintendent, met last night at the Lakeshore high school in Riverville, Mich., to discuss the possibility of establishing a tax-supported library service in the area.

The group, which includes Miss Muriel Fuller, Michigan state library consultant; Mrs. J. T. Williams, Lincoln township; Mrs. Walter Lausman and Mrs. Don Gast, Baroda township; Dominic Binda and Paul A. Loeffler, Lincoln township; Walter Briney, Bridgman school superintendent; and William B. Stewart, Lakeshore school superintendent, met last night at the Lakeshore high school in Riverville, Mich., to discuss the possibility of establishing a tax-supported library service in the area.

Newspaper clippings from 1959 News-Palladium articles indicate initial planning for the Library.

Help Sought from Lincoln Township

After an initial meeting of area municipalities, only Lincoln Township pursued the establishment of a library. A community committee comprised of Mrs. James Williams, Dominic Binda, William Stewart, and Paul Loeffler approached the Lincoln Township Board seeking funds for a library.

The Lincoln Township Board consisted of Supervisor Alfred Bartz, Clerk Ernest Smith, Treasurer Harry Gast, and Trustees Arthur Siewert, and Arthur Kubath. The committee was advised that the matter would have to be placed before the voters, and petitions would have to be signed by at least fifty Lincoln Township property owners. The library support group again went to work and submitted the necessary petitions.

Feb 27, 1959



The News
Michigan's Biggest Buy
BENTON HARBOR, MI

Lincoln Township Voting April 6 On New Library



Program Is Contingent On Tax O.K.

Plan Calls For Aid From Benton Harbor

Lincoln township property owners will decide in the April 6 election the township is to have a tax supported library.

Petitions requesting a referendum on a special half-mill levy to establish and support a library were submitted to the township clerk Thursday.

The news assured the proposal place on the spring ballot. Township board members were quick to consent to the library plan.

The half-mill tax would gross about \$7,000 a year for library operation. A favorable vote on the proposal would also make the township eligible for a \$3,000 grant through the Michigan state library rural development program to help get the library on its feet the first year.

Library backers said the proposed library will cost the average township taxpayer less than the cost a new book each year.

Each township resident will be eligible for a library card. Under the terms of a proposed contract with the Benton Harbor library Lincoln township residents would also be entitled to use the Benton Harbor library. A similar request was also before the St. Joseph library.

The new library would be administered the first year by a six-member library board appointed by Lincoln township.

ASK LINCOLN TOWNSHIP LIBRARY TAX: Three members of the Lincoln township library committee submit petitions to Township Clerk Ernest Smith, (right), requesting a referendum on a half-mill township tax to establish and support a public library. The proposition will be on the April 6 ballot. The petitioners are (left to right), Mrs. J. T. Williams, committee chairman; Dominic Binda and Mrs. Caroline Stanley. (News-Palladium photo)

Newspaper clipping from the February 27, 1959, News-Palladium. Three members of the Lincoln Township Library committee submit petitions to Township Clerk Ernest Smith, right, requesting a half-mill tax to establish and support a public library. The petitioners are, left to right, Mrs. J. T. Williams, Dominic Binda, and Mrs. Caroline Stanley.

The Election, April 6, 1959

The issue was presented to the voters of Lincoln Township in the form of two questions:

#1 – SHALL THE TOWNSHIP SET A TAX OF ONE-HALF MILL ON THE ASSESSED VALUATION FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT AND OPERATION OF A FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY?

#2 – SHALL THE TOWNSHIP SET A TAX OF ONE-HALF MILL OVER THE 15 MILL LIMITATION TO BE ASSESSED TO OPERATE THE LIBRARY?

Result: #1 – passed by 6 votes with 646 people voting.
#2 – was defeated by 37 votes with 567 voting.

This meant that the voters approved a free public library to be established, and allowed one-half mill only if it could be within the 15-mill limitation. This was not possible as the township, schools and county were already using up the 15 mills.

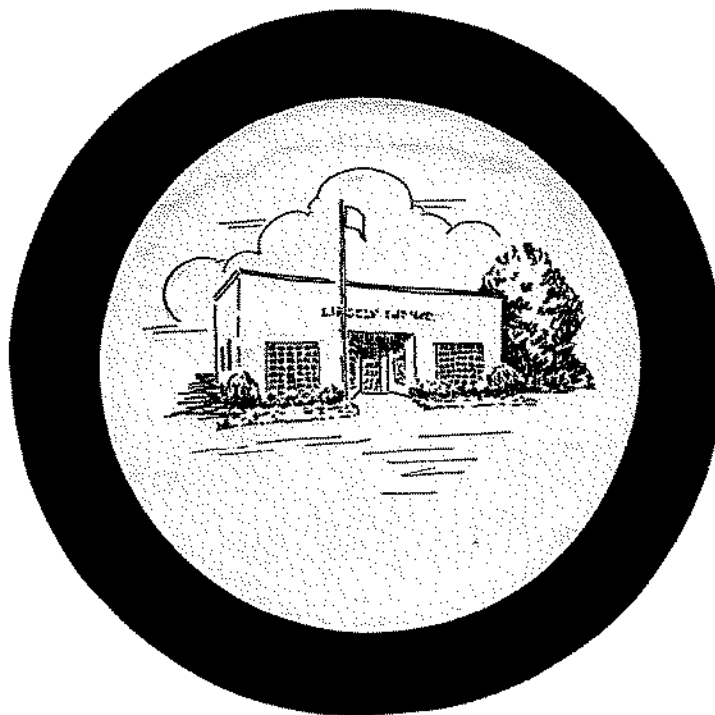
The Lincoln Township Board met in a special session on April 28, 1959, and acknowledged that the voters approved establishing a library. The Township Board agreed to provide \$500.00 for the temporary operation of the library, and to permit the library to use a 12-foot space of the Township Hall on a temporary basis.

They also appointed the following residents of the township to serve as the Lincoln Township Public Library Provisional Board until the election in the spring of 1961: Mrs. Edna "Sally" (William) Lawrence, Mrs. Caroline (Monroe) Stanley, Bruno Heinze, Richard Brown, Mrs. Lucille (James) Florian and Mrs. Verna (Edwin) Bartz.

At the first meeting of the Provisional Library Board on May 18, 1959, the following officers were named: President Bruno Heinze, Vice-President Lucille Florian, Secretary Caroline Stanley, and Treasurer Sally Lawrence. Presentations were made by Muriel Fuller, State Librarian Consultant, and Mrs. Eleanor (Robert) Whitney, Head Librarian at the Benton Harbor Library. Those who worked for the library promotion were called "Friends of the Library."

The "One-Room" Library

The northeast corner of the Lincoln Township Hall, located on St. Joseph Avenue next to the former Stevensville Village Hall & Fire Station, was partitioned off into one room for the Library. Volunteers purchased lumber and a desk, built shelving, and arranged about 500 books on the new shelves.



Drawing of the Lincoln Township Hall located on St. Joseph Avenue in Stevensville (now the Stevensville Village Hall) which housed the "One Room" Library from 1959-1960.

The State of Michigan and the Lincoln Township Board each contributed \$500.00, and an account was set up with the Township whereby the Library, through vouchers, could use these funds. Books were loaned from the State Library and the Benton Harbor Public Library.

Caroline Stanley resigned her position as Acting Children's Librarian at the Benton Harbor Public Library, and was named the Librarian for the Lincoln Township Public Library with a wage of \$1.50 per hour. The Library officially opened on Monday, June 8, 1959, and was open Monday through Friday from 1:00 p.m. until 5:00 p.m.

In the Meantime

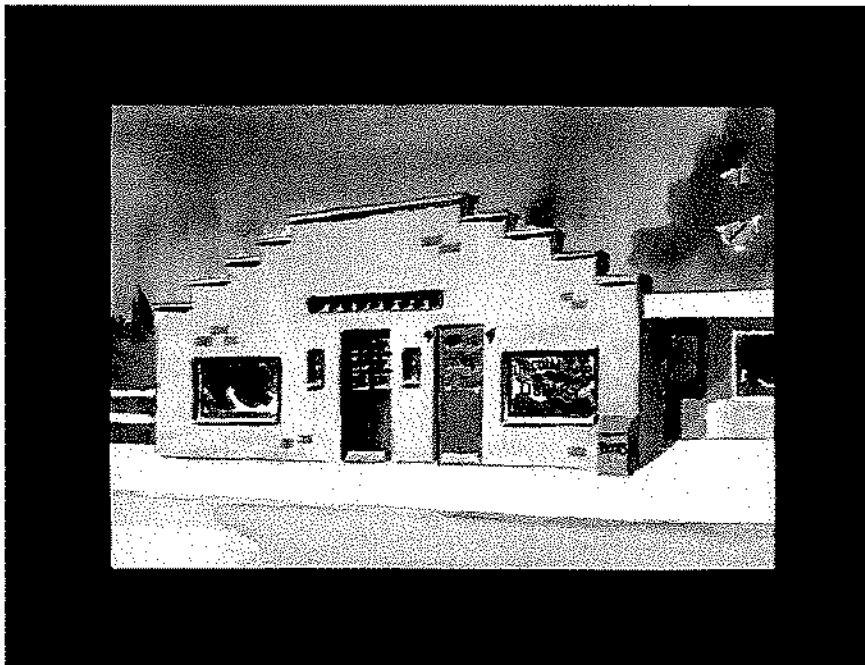
Interest in the Library was growing. It helped to have an operating facility and visible location. Board Members and Friends of the Library worked to schedule and promote a special election to place the millage issue before the voters a second time.

A special election was set for October 5, 1959, and this time the request was for one-half mill as a special assessment for the operation of the Library. With 196 persons voting, the issue passed 120 votes for and 76 against.

A Lakeshore student, Geraldine Siewert, made a sign to identify the Library, which was placed outside the Lincoln Township Hall.

Thus, the fledgling Library was now established and supported by taxpayer funds. It was well received by the public and began to out-grow its one-room location.

"Storefront" Library



Drawing of the Lincoln Farmer's Exchange Building located on St. Joseph Avenue in Stevensville. A space rented in the building served patrons from 1960-1966.

The Board began looking for a larger space and after considering several locations in the Village of Stevensville, the Board rented space from Ben Kral in the Lincoln Farmer's Exchange Building (commonly referred to as the "Feed Store") a few doors south of the Township Hall. The Library moved to this location in the spring of 1960.

New signage was placed on the large window visible from St. Joseph Avenue. The 1960 budget totaled \$7,644.17, of which \$6,875.43 was received from the first tax levy. The book collection increased to 5,000 volumes, and served 600 patrons.

First "Elected" Lincoln Township Library Board

In accordance with the state statute under which the Library was established, (Act 164 of 1877, as amended) six Board members were elected for a term of six years each on a partisan ballot. This was the "initial" election, and thus terms of six, four, and two years were implemented. All provisional Board Members were elected at the April 3, 1961, election. Later, this statute was amended to 4-year terms on a non-partisan ballot. The Library Board members receive no compensation.

The Library was required to seek approval at the Lincoln Township Annual Meeting of the Electors each spring for a vote to continue the levy of one-half mill for another year.

Growth and Changes

The Library continued to grow and additional space was rented from Ben Kral according to the April 27, 1961 Board Minutes.

Caroline Stanley submitted her resignation at the May 22, 1962, Library Board meeting and Mrs. Webster (Mary) Fugate was hired as librarian on June 6, 1962.

First Penal Fines

A substantial source of income for libraries in Michigan comes from penal fines which accrue through municipal and justice courts for violations of the law. Penal fines are distributed to public libraries by the County Treasurer, and the share determined is based on the census and local laws. The Township sought these funds and the records show the first penal fines, amounting to \$2,304.05, were received in September 1963. Based on the 1960 census, 90 cents per capita was paid. The Library Board made a practice of setting these funds aside for future expansion.

Library Service Expands

During this time books were still being rented from the Benton Harbor Public Library and the Library of Michigan. The State Library also provided thirty-eight magazine subscriptions. Service to the public was expanded. A collection box for book donations was placed in the Village. The Lakeshore Jaycee Auxiliary took an active interest in the Library and donated funds for the purchase of reference books.

Library service to neighboring communities was discussed with the County Library Board. If the residents of those communities received the same service as Lincoln Township residents, their penal fine monies could be distributed to the Lincoln Township Public Library. Contracts were signed for service to Baroda

and Royalton Townships, which would automatically renew yearly, and for Lake Township and the City of Bridgman, for one year only, as of September 28, 1964.

At the annual meeting held on April 3, 1965, the Library Board was informed that it was no longer required for the electors at the annual meeting to vote on the library tax levy. The Township Board could receive the Library budget for the coming year and levy up to one-half mill. In August 1965, the Library Board was further informed that it had complete authority over the Library's budget as long as it was within the one-half mill tax levy.

The Library Board began investigating sites for future expansion, as the present space was crowded and service from the Library was expanding.

The "Village Square" Library

On July 26, 1965, the Library Board was presented with an offer from Warren VanOsdal and Robert Luth who would build a 2,000 square-foot building in the Village Square for the Library, and they offered a ten-year lease for \$265.00 per month.

The Library Board voted to approve the lease at their August 30, 1965, meeting. Attorney Arthur G. Preston, Jr. was hired to review the lease and advise the Board. It wasn't required for a lease, but the Library Board advertised for bids upon the attorney's suggestion. Only the bid from VanOsdal & Luth was received and it was accepted.

The Library Board would be responsible for furnishing the new Library. After study and comparison of prices, an order was placed with Buckstaff Company for approximately \$8,000.00 for furnishings. Much of this furniture is still in use.

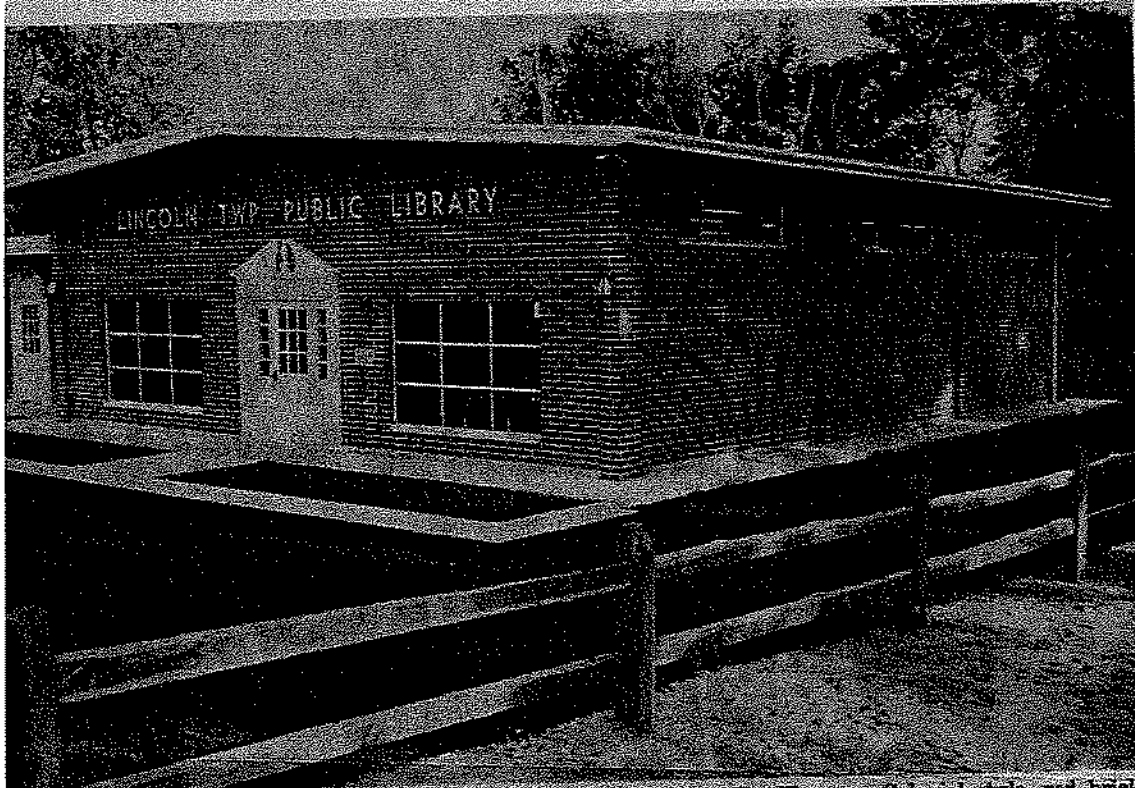
Service from the community was very helpful. Fifty-two children's books were donated by the Lakeshore Lianas. The Lakeshore Lions Club donated science books. The Lakeshore Jaycees Auxiliary offered to help with an open house for the new Library in October 1966. Robert "Jack" Greendonner, with the help of eight Lakeshore High School students, moved books to the new location.

Before the year 1966 ended, the building was finished, furnishings received, and move completed. This was home for the Library until July 1974. (The building is currently Pizza Hut.)

T. JOSEPH, MICH.

PAGE TWENTY-ONE

To New Lincoln Library



PICTURESQUE LIBRARY: The Lincoln Township Library board has leased a 40 by 50-foot section of a building built by Van Osdal Insurance Agency

in Stevensville. The new Colonial style, red brick building is located on John Beers road across from St. Paul's Lutheran school.

Newspaper clipping of the new Library on John Beers Road (the current Pizza Hut Building). The complete newspaper article title reads, "Move to New Lincoln Library." The Library at this site served patrons from 1966-1974.

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 1966

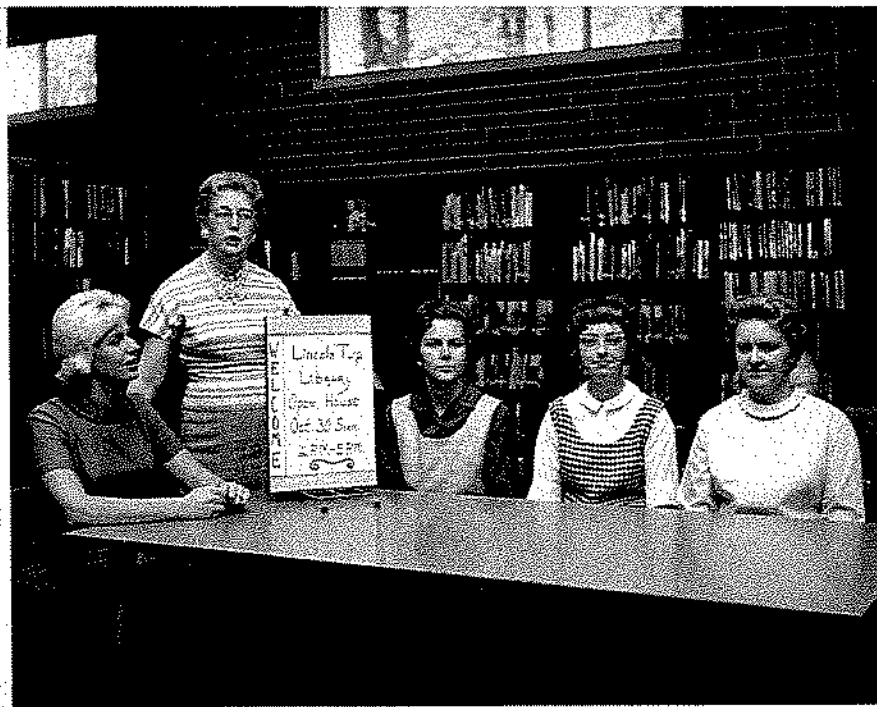
THE HERALD-PRESS

10,000 Books To Be Moved

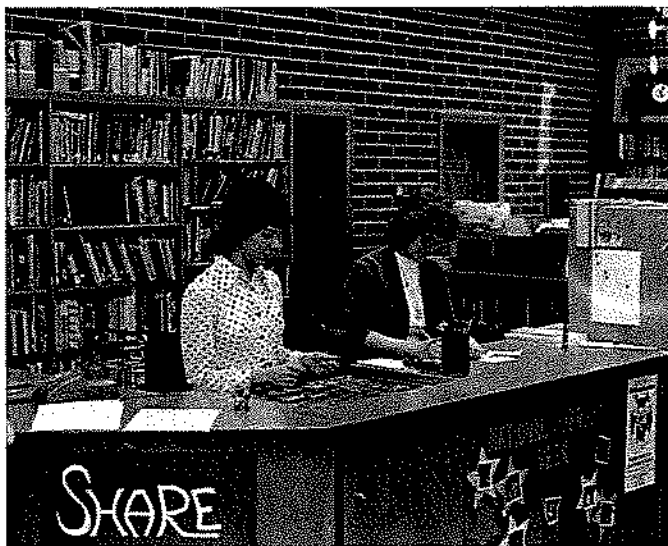


PLANNING LIBRARY MOVE: The Lincoln township public library will move to new quarters starting Tuesday. Shown discussing the move are from left Mrs. Webster Fugate, librarian and Mrs. John Myers, assistant librarian, Miss Kathy Rozinski, library page, a senior at Lakeshore High school and Mrs. Ronald Hall, of the Lakeshore Jaycee Auxiliary. Mrs. Hall said 26 members of the auxiliary will transport books from the old library to the new structure on John Beers road in Stevensville. (Staff photo)

Photo from the Herald-Press, September 19, 1966. Shown discussing the Library move are from left, Mrs. Webster Fugate, Librarian, and Mrs. John (Rosetta) Myers, Assistant Librarian, Miss Kathy Rozinski, Library Page, and Mrs. Ronald Hall.



The Library's Open House occurred on October 30, 1966. The welcoming committee, left to right, includes Mrs. Marvin Abbot, Mrs. Webster Fugate, Librarian, Mrs. Arthur Schneider, Mrs. Ronald Hall and Mrs. Richard Kimball.



Cindy Bonczkowski and Pat Steenbergh work at the circulation desk c. 1973-74.

Summer reading programs were started. Copy machine service was offered. The circulation, registered patrons, and the number of volumes steadily increased. The hours of service to the public were extended from 26 to 34 per week.

The Library Board saved and invested funds for the future. A committee was formed for long range planning.

Continued Growth

In May 1969, the Library joined the Berrien County Library League. The Area Borrowing Card (ABC) system was started, enabling Library patrons to use neighboring libraries and a "hotline" service to Michigan State University Library. Phonograph records, filmstrips, talking books, and large print books were added. Framed prints available from a state-directed regional organization for libraries were loaned out.

As population and home building increased in the service area, so did the revenues from the property taxes and the penal fines.

The Board studied and reviewed salaries of area librarians to keep in line with other libraries, and offer a fair wage scale. For the first time an auditor, Robert Gerbel, was hired, and submitted a favorable report.

At the April 4, 1970, Board Meeting, Sally Lawrence submitted her resignation as Treasurer, and her husband William Lawrence took over. The Library was fortunate to have the services of the Lawrences, a Chicago couple who made Stevensville their home after retirement. Mr. Lawrence, an accountant, had

prepared treasurer's reports for Mrs. Lawrence as her assistant. Mrs. Lawrence was also a member of the *Stevensville Women's Club*.

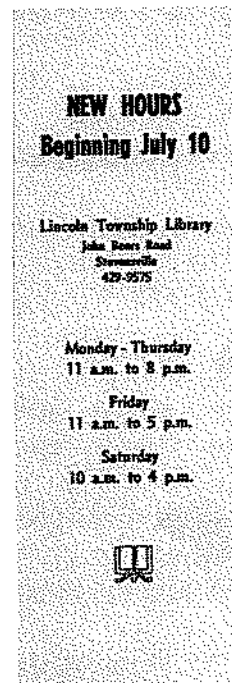


Sally and William Lawrence.

Following the resignation of the librarian in 1970, a search for a replacement resulted in an interview with Edwin Rauh who was hired in 1971. Edwin Rauh, the first librarian with a Master of Library Science (MLS) degree, was responsible for a greater emphasis on children's programs.



Edwin Rauh c. 1971.



Bookmark showing expanded hours.

In 1972, sixty pre-school children participated in the story hours. Service hours were extended to 48 per week, and the staff increased to five persons. As services expanded and the population increased, the Library outgrew the building. A question arose, "Should we buy our own property and build a new library?"

Site for New Building

Donald McGrath, an architect, was hired by the Board to draft a building plan for a new library. Several sites were considered, and an attorney, John Collins, was hired to assist the Board.

In August 1971, the Lincoln Township Board made the Library Board aware of the township's interest in developing a community center on 18.4 acres of land located at the corner of John Beers Road and Roosevelt Road belonging to Ernest and Esther Smith. The asking price for the Smith property was \$47,500.00.

A special meeting of the electors of Lincoln Township was called for September 28, 1971, at which the persons present approved the purchase of the 18.4 acres, and the price for the corner property for the Library, 283' x 393', was set at \$6,500.00. These dimensions include 33' for John Beers Road and Roosevelt Road rights-of-way.

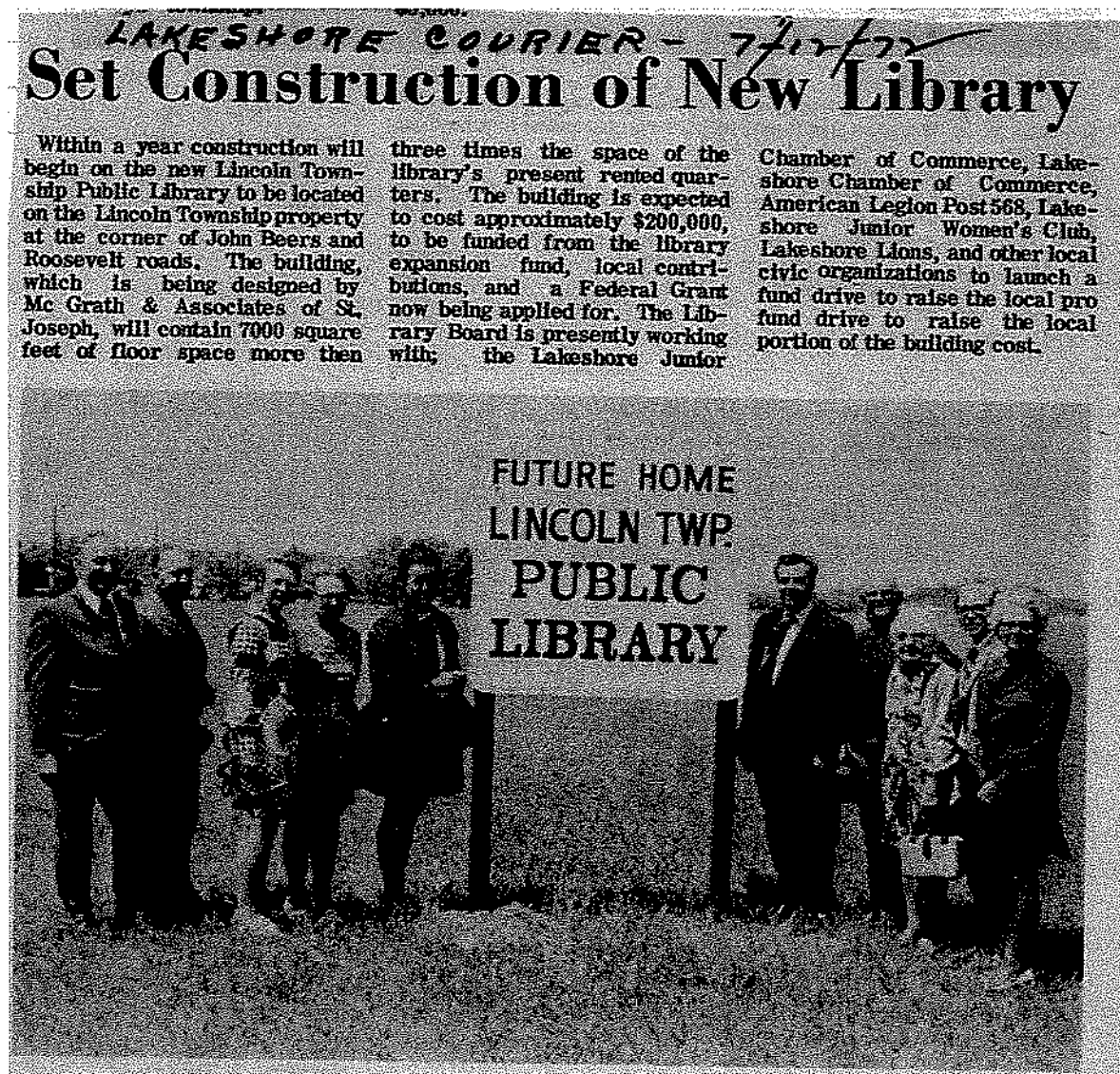
Architect Donald McGrath designed the new library to be erected on the Smith property site. The proposed plan contained 7,000 square feet with room for expansion. This would accommodate 30,000 volumes and allow seating for sixty, at a cost of \$210,000.00, or \$30.00 per square foot.

The annual report of the Library Board cited a collection of 20,000 volumes serving 14,000 people with a circulation of 68,000. The existing Library had seating for twenty.

Preparing for the Next Phase

The year 1972 began with the Library Board approving the clearing of the newly purchased site at the corner of John Beers Road and Roosevelt Road. The property contained an old vineyard.

Construction of Library Owned Facility

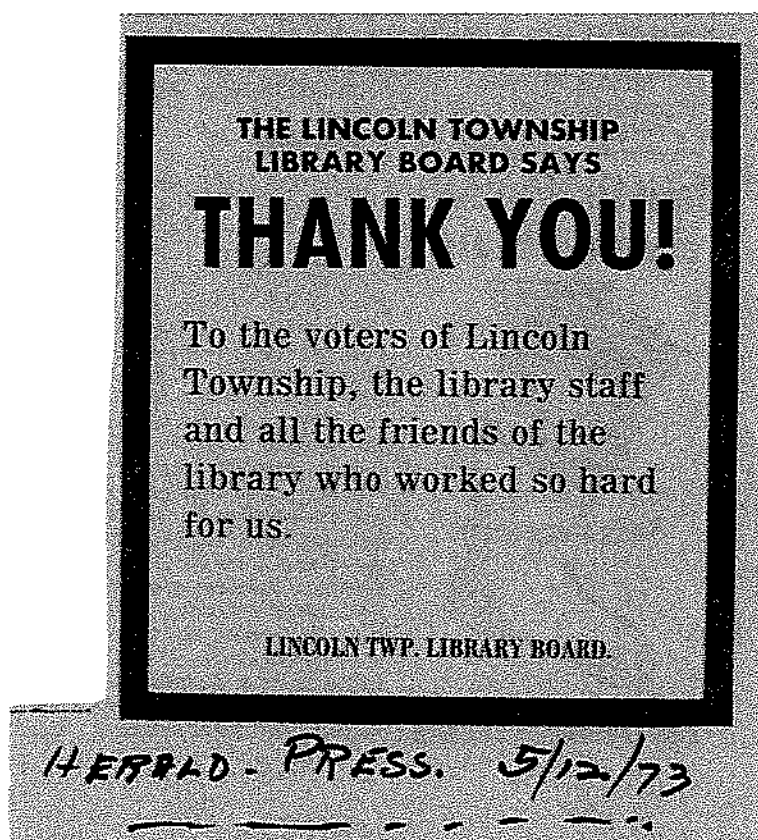


Newspaper clipping from the Lakeshore Courier, July 12, 1972, showing local officials unveiling a sign marking the site of the new Lincoln Township Public Library. Pictured left to right are: Ernie Hauch, Lincoln Township Supervisor; Harry Gast, Jr., Representative for the 43 district; Mrs. Donald (Gail) Chapman, Mrs. Edwin (Verna) Bartz, Mrs. Duane Seel, Tom Turcotte, William Lawrence, Mrs. William (Sally) Lawrence, Library Board members; and Librarians, Edwin Rauh and Mrs. Rosetta Myers.

The Library Board had \$110,000.00 saved for future expansion. It was anticipated to raise the remaining \$100,000.00: \$50,000.00 from local contributions, and \$50,000.00 from an expected Federal grant. An application was made for a Federal grant, but the Library Board was disappointed to learn

that although the grant was approved, there were no Federal funds available at that time.

Since the Federal grant did not materialize plans were changed, and the question of raising one mill, for one year, to construct a library was placed before the voters at a special election held May 8, 1973. This tax was approved by the voters and the new library became a possibility.



Newspaper clipping from the Herald-Press, May 12, 1973.

Local Contributions

Additional funding would be needed for new furnishings and moving costs. Jack Greendonner was appointed temporary Chair of a Library Fund Drive, and later Jan Lancelot was named to coordinate the drive.

Ruth Pierson, Niki Baker, and Jan Reimann, representing the Lakeshore Junior Women's Club, proposed a "Follies" production as a fund-raiser for furnishings for the new building. A variety show titled, "Red Stockings," consisting of local talent, was presented at the Lakeshore High School on November 9 and 10, 1973. In addition to making \$6,600.00 for new furnishings, this endeavor resulted in creating future interest and support for the Library.

MAY 16, 1973

THE LAKESHORE COURIER, Stevensville.

"Red Stockings" Set For Fall



HEAD SHOW — Mrs. Don Lorton, left and Mrs. Charles Nidiffer, center, co-chairmen of patrons and sponsors, talk over plans for "Red Stockings" with Mrs. Richard Pierson, co-chairman of the show, to be presented in the fall.

"Red Stockings," a Cargill company of New York presentation, scheduled for next fall, will be sponsored by Friends of the Lincoln township library, according to Mrs. Richard Pierson, show co-chairman.

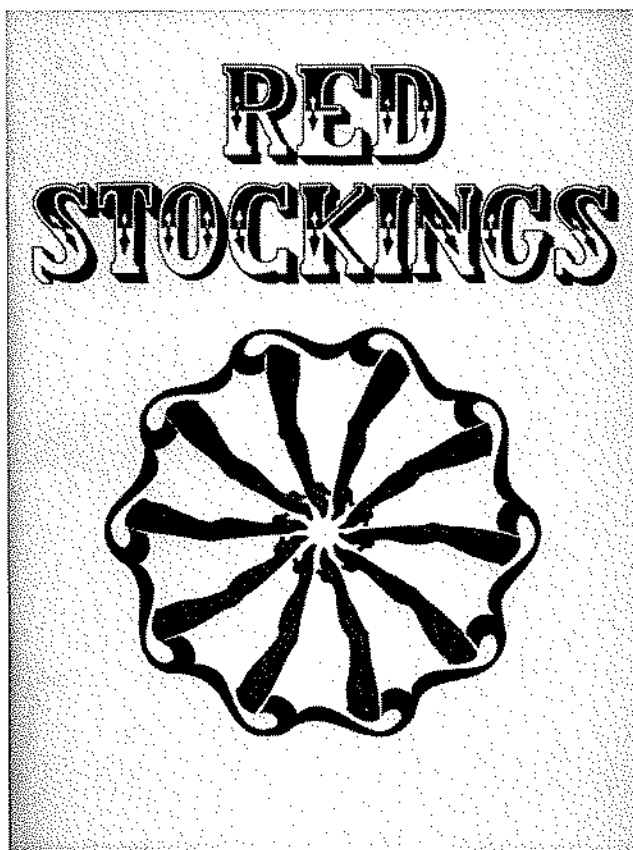
The two-night event, Nov. 9 and 10, will be a professionally directed variety show using local talent and will be held at the Lakeshore auditorium.

Friends of the Lincoln township library, a new organization has been formed by persons in the Lakeshore community interested in assisting the Lincoln township library board with the library building project.

Newspaper clipping from the Lakeshore Courier, May 16, 1973. Mrs. Don Lorton, and Mrs. Charles Nidiffer, talk over plans for "Red Stockings" with Mrs. Richard Pierson.



Newspaper clippings promoting "Red Stockings." Pictured in left photo, left to right, are Mrs. Joseph Ondraka, Mrs. Hillard Friedman, and Mrs. Ken Warner. In right photo, left to right, are Mrs. Jack Greendonner, and Mrs. Jeffrey Schmidt.



Program cover from Red Stockings.

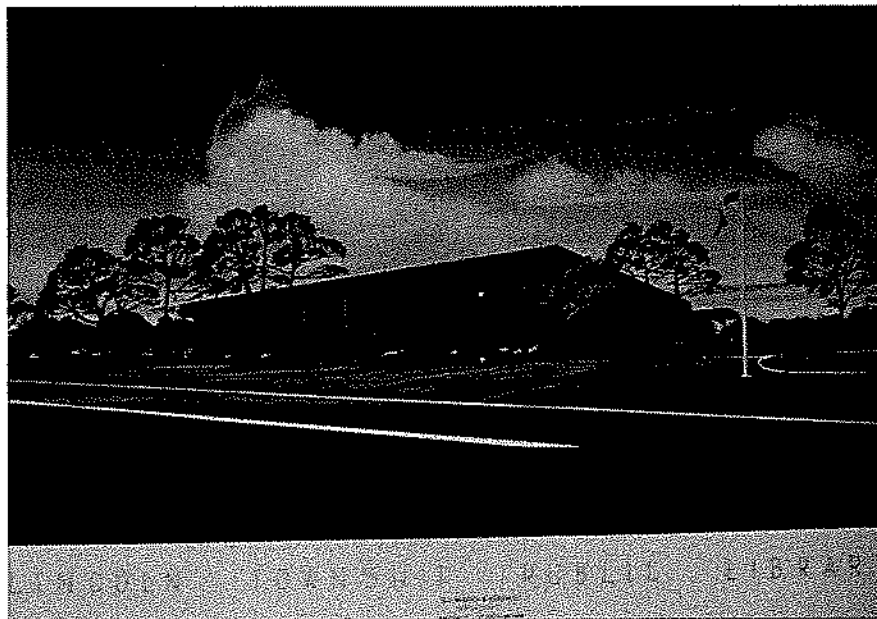


FRIENDLY HAND — Edwin Rauh, Librarian of Lincoln Township Library, gets assistance from Mrs. William Wroblewski, president of the newly formed community group called Friends of the Lincoln Township Library.

Mrs. William Wroblewski, president of the Friends of the Lincoln Township Library, assists Librarian Edwin Rauh.

Construction

The building contract was awarded in October 1973 to Hayes & Sons, from Benton Harbor, who submitted the lowest bid, and construction began in November 1973.



Architect's drawing of the Library.



New Library takes shape!

During 1974, Edwin Rauh, Director, and the Library Board were very busy with the selection of furniture, shelving, carpeting, etc. for the new building. On July 13, 1974, the Library moved into the new building. The landscaping for the site was done by Hunzinger's in September. An Open House was held October 6, 1974.

HERALD-PRESS

Twin City
Highlights

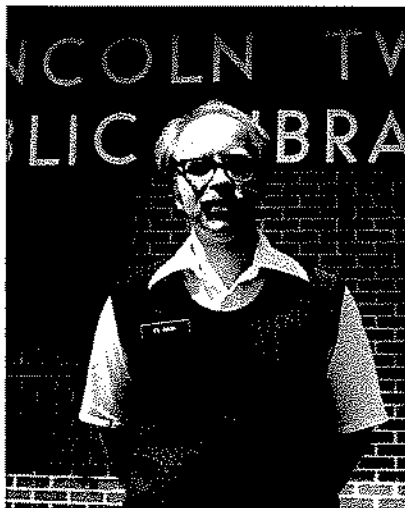
ST. JOSEPH, MICH. MONDAY, OCTOBER 7, 1974



LIBRARY OPEN HOUSE: Mrs. Edwin Bartz, left in photo at left, shows one of many paintings in new Lincoln township library to Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Smith, former owners of property on John Beers road where library is located. Mrs. Bartz is trustee on library board. Mrs. Duane (Cheryl) Seel, seated, in photo at right, looks on

as Miss Dorothy Stencel signs guest book at library open house held Sunday afternoon. Miss Stencel was first Lincoln township librarian 38 years ago. Mrs. Seel is secretary of library board. About 500 attended open house. (Alice Koch photos)

Library Open House newspaper clipping from the Herald-Press, October 7, 1974. In the photo at left, Mrs. Edwin Bartz, left, shows one of many paintings in the new Library to Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Smith, former owners of the property on John Beers Road where the Library is located. Mrs. Bartz is a Library Board Trustee. In the photo at right Mrs. Ouane (Cheryl) Seel, seated, looks as Miss Dorothy Stencel signs the guest book. It should be noted that Dorothy Stencel was the first librarian for the Stevensville Women's Club in the 1930's. Almost 500 people attended the Open House.



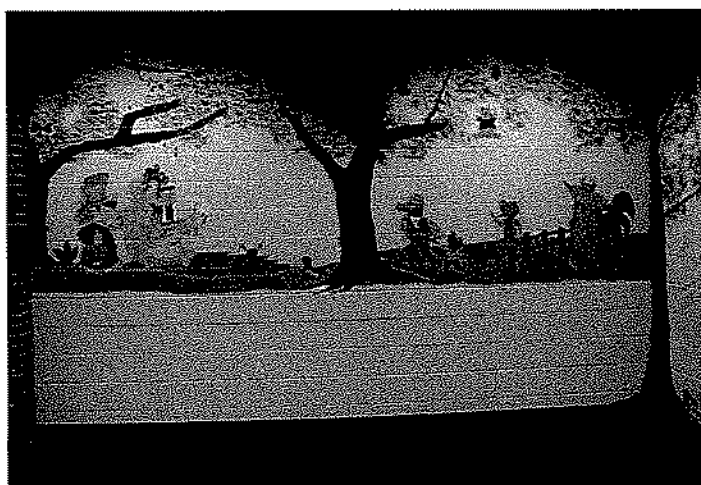
Edwin Rauh, Director, in front of the new Library.

The Lawrence Room

The new Library included a community room named in honor of William and Sally Lawrence. As a team, they supported the Library from its beginning. Mrs. Lawrence was a member of the first board, and served as Treasurer, assisted by her accountant husband. Mr. Lawrence later replaced Mrs. Lawrence as Treasurer on the Board, and after him their son, Donald Lawrence, also an accountant, took over. The Lawrences handled the finances of the Library from 1959 until 1992.

Community Asset

The central location, and public use and enjoyment of the new Library, proved this investment in our area attractive and worthwhile. The Lawrence room was used for meetings and art displays. Additional space included a staff work room; small kitchen; public restrooms; display case available for residents to showcase their hobbies, crafts and collectibles; magazine display area; increased study space; and an expanded children's area. Children's story times could now be held during the regular operational hours of the Library. Cathy Nitz, an eighteen year-old Baroda resident, painted a mural in the children's section depicting the characters in children's books.



Mural painted by Cathy Nitz is in the Lawrence Room.



Cathy Nitz painting the mural.

For a number of years, Santa Claus had a large mailbox at the Library provided by the Lakeshore Junior Women's League with direct service to the North Pole. Later, the US Post Office routed Santa's mail through the Library. All letters were answered when possible. Santa began making two visits to the Library every year in December to help with Christmas stories and songs. This allowed small children to meet and talk with him in a non-threatening environment. Santa continues to visit each December.



Many organizations donated materials to the Library. In the above photo from the Lakeshore Courier, Ruthe Bomberger, center, of the Lincoln Township Public Library, is presented with a Berrien Bicentennial publication. Donating the book on behalf of the Lakeshore Courier is Georgia Mierau, left. Library Director Edwin Rauh is pictured at the right.

As the Library grew, more structured systems were needed and many of the tasks that were performed by the Library Board, such as the bookkeeping, were now taken over by the Library staff.

People and organizations played a large part in enhancing the use and enjoyment of the Library. For example, on June 14, 1975, a reception was held for Jack C. Holme, sculptor, for his presentation of the "Dancers," commissioned by the Lakeshore Junior Women's Club. The Library was becoming a depository for many contributions in memory or honor of persons.



Left photo: Sculptor Jack C. Holme posing with his sculpture in c. 1998. Center photo from 1975. Right photo: Library staff mimicking the "Dancers."

Boy Scout Projects

The Boy Scouts installed shelving. Dave Nosotti designed and built a storage cabinet for the Library for his Eagle Scout project. Pat Bevilacqua made a book return sign with the Library hours on it for his Eagle Scout project.

Services Added

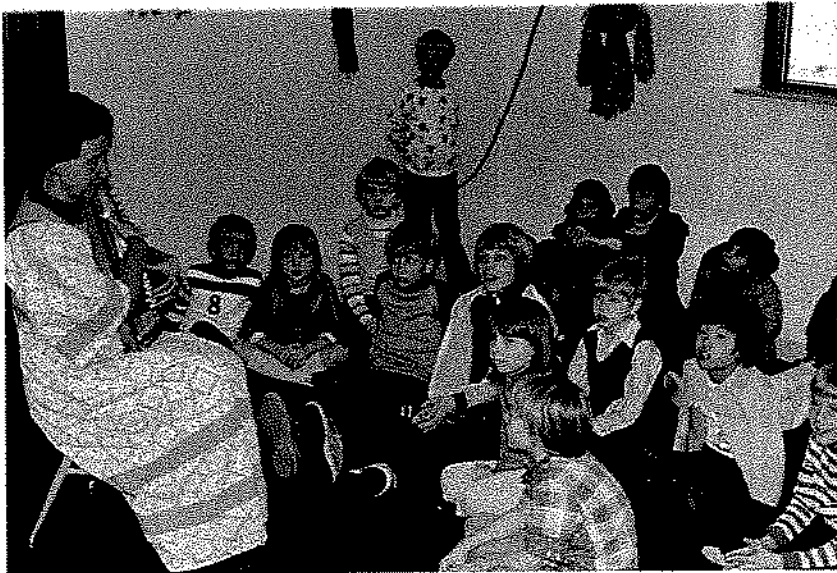
- In 1977, a Kellogg grant was received for Dial-A-Story, a program for children at home. Two machines, a selection of tapes, and two phone lines were acquired so that those dialing 429-1234 could listen to a three-minute story.
- The first Blood Pressure Clinic was organized by Kay VanPatten who recruited volunteers and nurses for the program.
- A Summer Extension Library was established in Baroda at St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church.
- A "Toys for Learning" collection was begun including puzzles, puppets, and educational toys that could be checked out.
- The Library joined the Berrien Library Consortium allowing residents to borrow books from the Andrews University Library.
- Children's story times were conducted by Rosetta Myers and Virginia Bedunah in the Lawrence Room. Seven programs were offered each week for 2-1/2 to 3 year olds; 3 to 4 year olds; and 4 to 5 year olds. They also went to public and parochial elementary schools with the story-telling program.
- A Door Step program to deliver books to homebound patrons was initiated.
- A Santa Claus suit was purchased by the Library for lending out to patrons, and it is still available.
- Conversational German lessons were given by staff member Jan Gorham.

New Director

During 1977 Director Edwin Rauh resigned to take a position in Ohio. He was succeeded by Chadwick Raymond, who was hired in July 1977.



Chadwick Raymond, Library Director, c. 1977



Virginia Bedunah uses her autoharp with story-hour children.



Library Board Members c. 1977-1981. Left to right, Warren Peters, William Lawrence, Vickie Florin, Verna Bartz, Jack Greendonner, Verna Braga, and Chadwick Raymond.

Public Participations and Contributions

The Lakeshore Welding Class built a new outdoor book drop. Patrons appreciated the convenience of this feature.

Gwen Hollman drew plans for a second proposed mural in the children's section depicting characters from Junior Books. The Lakeshore Art Guild painted the mural over the Junior Fiction section. This area is now part of the Lawrence Room.



Junior Fiction mural painted by the Lakeshore Art Guild.

The Friends held Desserts International events to raise funds for Library projects. These well attended fund raisers featured desserts from around the world.



Photos from "Desserts International."

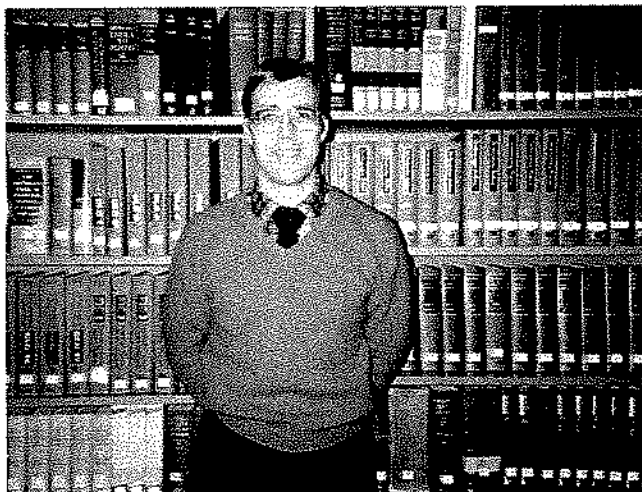
Expansion, aka "The First Addition"

The growth of the Library and the increasing population in the area necessitated plans for expansion. When the Library was first proposed, the population in Lincoln Township was 4,462. In 1980, it had increased to 13,520. The Library also served Baroda Township and two-thirds of Royalton Township, so that the total population served, according to the 1980 census was 18,218. It was evident that the Library was going to run out of space.

The Library Board named an Expansion Committee consisting of board members William Lawrence, Jack Greendonner and Thomas Turcotte, along with Director Chadwick Raymond to study the situation and report to the Board.

It was decided to again turn to the Lincoln Township taxpayers for support. At an election held May 20, 1980, the voters approved one-half mill for five years. The Library also received \$25,000.00 in Federal Revenue Sharing funds from Lincoln Township for the Expansion Fund.

During this time of expansion planning, the Library experienced a change in Directors. Chadwick Raymond resigned in August 1981 and Rosetta Myers was named Interim Director until Paul Cochran was hired in January 1982.



Paul Cochran becomes director in 1982.

Charles Lindblom was hired as architect for a 5,000 square foot addition. Holland Construction Company's bid of \$203,002.00 was accepted, and ground was broken on June 15, 1982, for the expansion.

The Library remained in use during the construction period. The circulation was reported as second in the state among Class 4 libraries, and 20th out of all 362 libraries statewide.

Dedication for the new addition was held November 6, 1983. Wally Pollee was the talented mason who constructed the indoor planter in the magazine area of the Library addition. He was also a talented musician, and played the harpsichord at this dedication.

Teddy Bear Picnics

In 1982, the children's department hosted a *Teddy Bear's Picnic* for three, four and five year old children. The picnic was scheduled from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on the last Thursday of May and children were asked to bring a sack lunch and their teddy bear for a picnic behind the Library. The picnic was a huge success with children. Plans were made to make this an annual event.

In the May 1992 Library Newsletter, the call went out to all teddy bears in the area to bring their three, four, and five year old owners to the tenth annual *Teddy Bear's Picnic*.

The twenty-fifth annual *Teddy Bear's Picnic* was celebrated in May 2006. This well attended and eagerly anticipated event has become a rite of passage for area preschool children.



Teddy Bear's Picnics throughout the years pictured above. Sometimes it rained as shown in the bottom right photo!

Into the Age of Technology

The decade from 1984 through 1994 was marked by the influx of new technologies and the ever-pressing need for the Library to automate its systems to accommodate the growing collection and increasing circulation. These factors also made space a premium. The new 5,000 square foot addition soon filled up with computers, display furniture, and other related items, including equipment for the blind.

Automation began in earnest in 1985 when a grant was received for a new computer to connect with the combined catalog collection of the thirty-two libraries comprising the Southwest Michigan Library Cooperative. Building this database enabled the Library to access the collections of other libraries and to begin building an electronic database of its own, and marked the beginning of an electronic Inter-library Loan (ILL) program.

Expanded Activity

Pat Steenbergh and Ruthe Bomberger introduced students in the local elementary schools to the latest children's books through a program titled, Books Alive. Junior High students helped with summer reading programs as "Junior Friends," and a book discussion group for adults was started.



Children wear hats for a story-hour occupation theme.

Leadership and Staff Changes

During this period, the Library saw changes in leadership. Paul Cochran submitted his resignation in December 1984, Rosetta Myers was appointed as Interim Director, and Ruthe Bomberger retired.



Rosetta Myers conducts a story-hour.



Celebrating Ruthe Bomberger's retirement, left to right around the table, Jan Gorham, Pat Steenbergh, Ann Wilkinson, Lou Goff, Carolyn Hosbach, Jan Koebel, Ruthe Bomberger, Nancy Harper, Rosetta Myers, Sandy Andert, JoAnn VanderMolen, and Jeannice Banks.

In May 1985, Linda Keith was hired as Director. Linda Keith's tenure was short and in January 1986, Virginia Bedunah, Cataloger and Children's Librarian, assumed the position of Director, a position she held until her retirement in March 2004. Virginia Bedunah initiated many opportunities for staff training and new programs for public enjoyment and education.

As a result of staff reorganization, in January 1986, Pat Steenbergh became Children's Librarian, and in December 1986, Sandy Andert started as Cataloger. Jan Gorham filled the newly created position of Reference Librarian. Nancy Harper was made head of circulation. Virginia Bedunah continued to visit schools with a story-telling program for several years.



Jan Koebel conducts a story-hour program
For three-year olds.



Virginia Bedunah visits a school.

Helicopter Visit

Summer reading programs have been an important part of library service to children since the beginning. The kick-off for the 1988 reading program, "Passport to Adventure," was especially impressive as it began with a visit by the United States Coast Guard rescue helicopter which landed on the Library lawn on June 28. The 400 youths who came to see the helicopter were able to also view and climb on a 22-foot Boston Whaler, a Coast Guard boat. United States Coast Guard Chief Marc Phillips arranged the helicopter's appearance with the assistance of Lt. Gabe from the Coast Guard Air Station in Chicago.



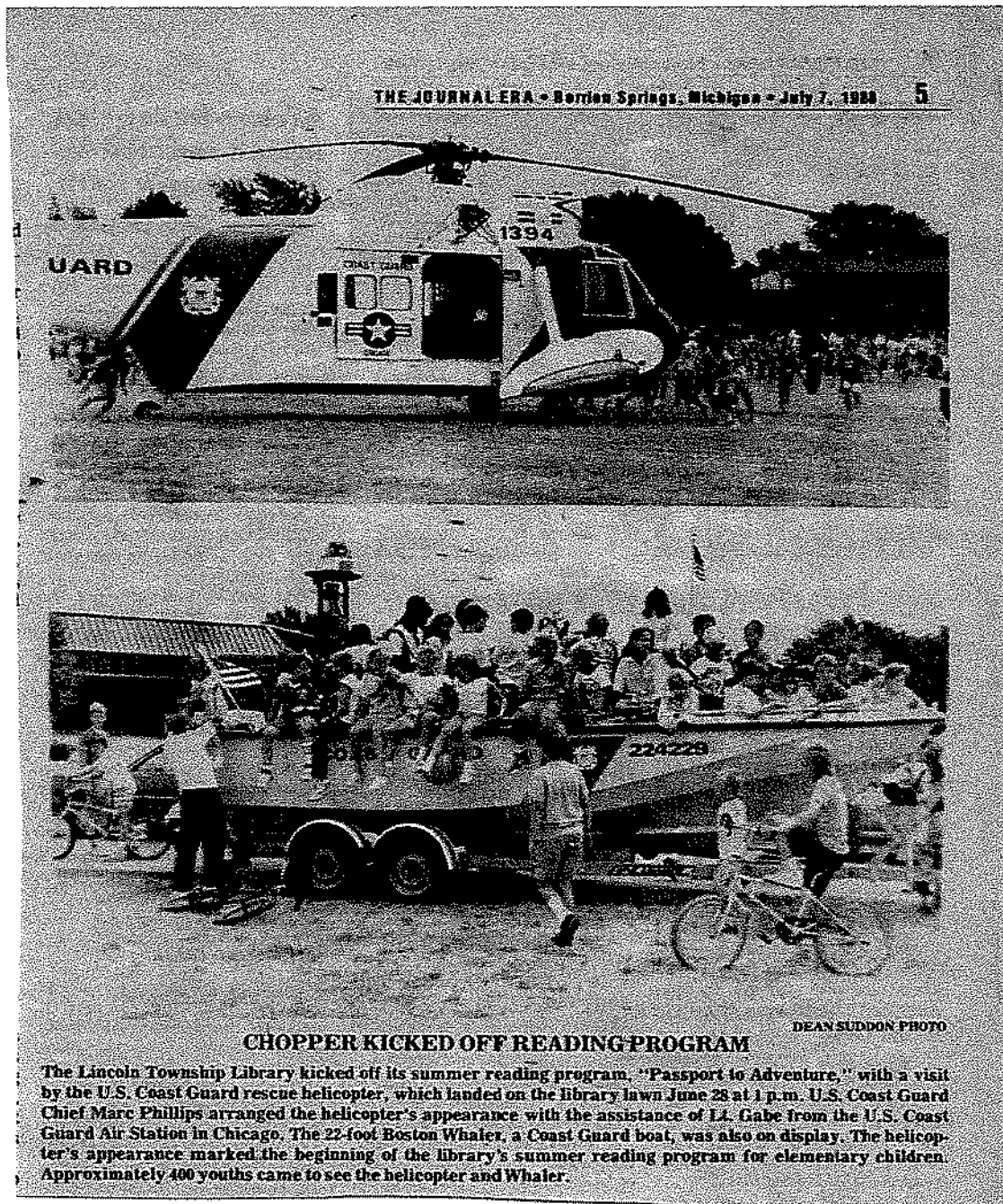
Rescue helicopter lands on the grounds of the Library on June 28, 1988.

Area libraries list activities

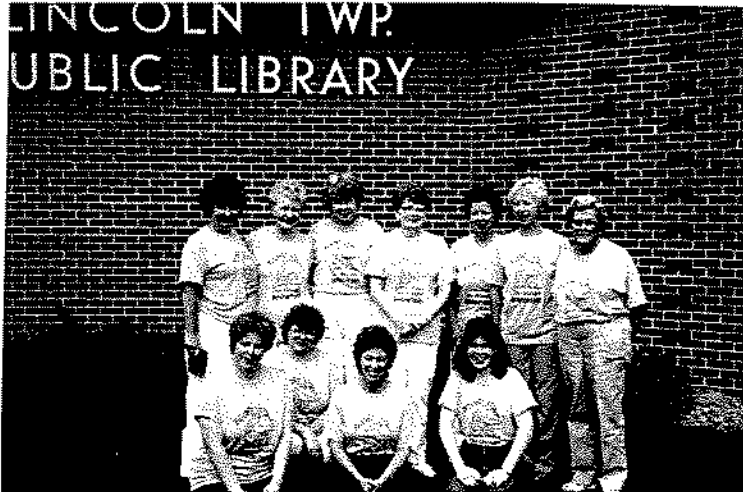


PASSPORT TO ADVENTURE: Lincoln Township Library opened its summer reading program, "Passport to Adventure," with a visit from a U.S. Coast Guard Rescue Helicopter Tuesday. Visitors also were able to view and climb in a 22-foot Boston Whaler, a Coast Guard boat, which was also on display. U.S. Coast Guard Chief Marc Phillips made arrangements for the helicopter with Lt. Gabe of the United States Coast Guard in Chicago. The arrival of the helicopter was preceded by a potluck picnic lunch. (Staff photo by John Madill)

Newspaper clipping from the Herald-Palladium. Coast Guard Chief Marc Phillips made arrangements for the helicopter with Lt. Gabe of the United States Coast Guard in Chicago.



Newspaper clipping from the Journal Era. In addition to the helicopter, Coast Guard Chief Marc Phillips and Lt. Gabe displayed a 22-foot Boston Whaler (bottom photo).

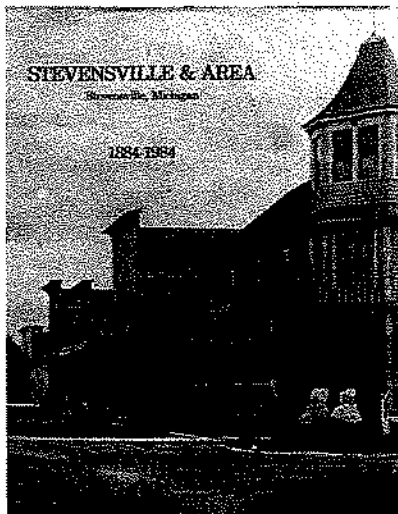


Staff wearing 1988 Summer Reading program T-shirts. Front row, left to right, Sandy Andert, Pat Steenbergh, Roberta Whittaker, Shelley Griffith; back row, Virginia Bedunah, Alice Wilkins, Sue Vandermolen, Ruthe Bomberger, Jeannice Banks, Jan Koebel, and Nancy Harper.

Expansion of Services

An annual "Writing for Publication" program was initiated for the community. This program included author Rosanne Bittner, a historical fiction writer, and Ralph McInery author of the Father Dowling Mysteries. Public service was expanded in 1990, when the Library joined in the statewide Michicard System allowing patrons from any participating library to borrow books.

A literacy grant was received from the state to purchase books for adults just learning to read. This collection was housed in the reference area of the Library.

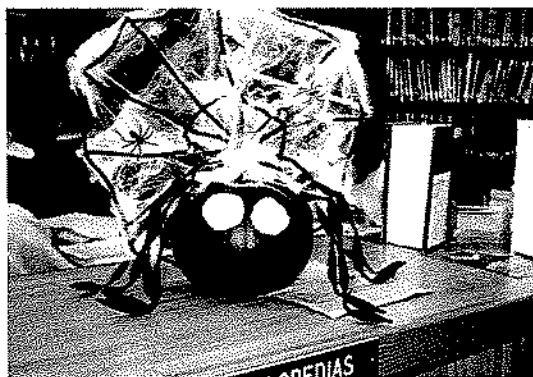
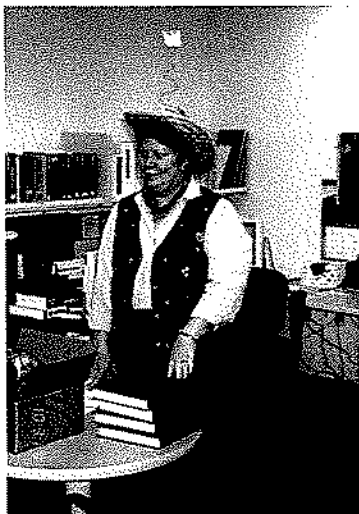


The Library acted as a distribution center for the Stevensville Centennial Book, and displayed Centennial Committee materials at the Library.

Issues of the *Lakeshore Courier*, a local weekly newspaper published from 1970 to 1982, were microfilmed with a grant received from the Berrien Community Foundation.

Halloween

Pumpkin decorating contests and Halloween parties have been held annually since the 1970's.



Photos from top left: Sandy Andert dressed as a cowgirl, pumpkin contestants, Virginia Bedunah and Rosetta Myers in costume during story hour, and a princess selecting a book.

Newsletter

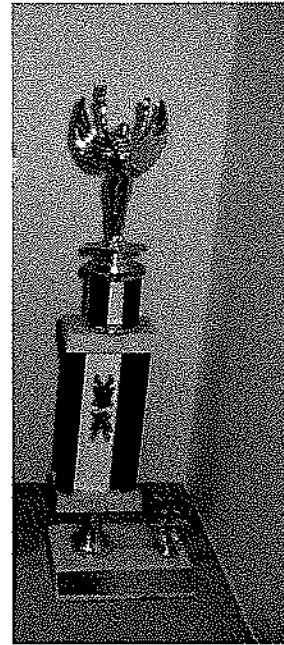
To increase public awareness of the programs and services available, in addition to articles in the local newspapers, a quarterly newsletter was prepared for patrons to pick up at the circulation desk. To obtain wider readership, a bulk mailing permit was approved by the Library Board in 1987, and since then the Library newsletter has been mailed to every household in the service area.

Discover Stevensville Days

The Library staff participated in the Discover Stevensville Days Parade from 1991 to 2003 in order to increase residents' awareness of the Library. In 1991 the Library won the Best Place Trophy for costume design. Ruthe Bomberger appeared as Mary in Mary Had a Little Lamb, Virginia Bedunah was Mother Goose, and Debra Fischman was Humpty Dumpty.



1991 award winners for costume design.



Award winning trophy!

District Library Considered

The idea of changing the Lincoln Township Library to a District Library to include Baroda and Royalton Townships was investigated. Plans for a District Library designation had to be abandoned since the other townships decided not to participate, but to continue the contractual relationship. The new contract included all of Royalton Township.

Automation and Expansion

During this time, the impending needs of automation did not escape attention. An automation strategy committee was appointed by the Library Board to plan the steps needed to further the process and get the collection on-line and bar coded.

The ever-expanding collection and the need to protect the new compact discs from potential theft led to the installation of a materials security system. Staff and volunteers spent many hours of time installing magnetic security strips on each item in the collection.

Staff members were offered opportunities through workshops by the Library of Michigan and others for further training and information. In-service days were held at regular intervals in which staff members could increase efficiency, and learn new ways to better serve patrons.

As 1994 came to a close, the Library was in sound financial condition. All numbers were up; the collection was growing, circulation and in-house use were on the upswing and services and programs were expanding. The need for a new building wing was obvious. As a preliminary step toward that goal, arrangements were made with Lincoln Township to acquire additional property north of the Library. The Library Board, Director Virginia Bedunah, and her staff were poised and ready to meet the challenges of automation and expansion.

Memorials

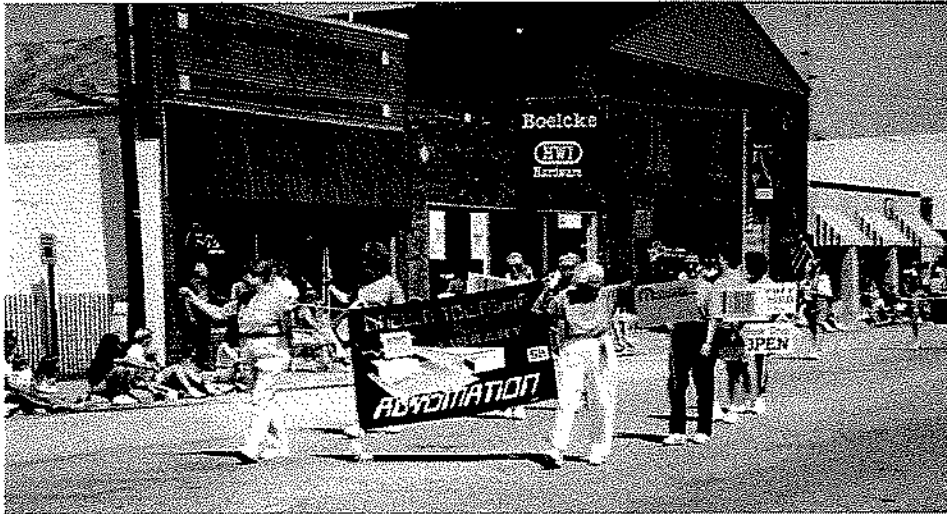
The Library received memorials and other gifts. At the death of Verna Bartz, one of the first Board members, a special poetry collection was dedicated and a flowering crab tree planted on the grounds in her memory.

In May 1994, an endowment fund was established with an initial donation in memory of Thomas Turcotte, former Board member. Local Girl Scout Troops prepared and planted perennial flower-beds with plants donated by Sam and Shirley Somora of Sunshine Perennial Gardens.

More Technological Advances

Significant technological advances occurred in 1996. The Library entered the information super highway when the state provided grant money for the purchase of the first Internet computer. The demand for the Internet computer was so great that three more computers were added. Significant automation also occurred in 1996 when the circulation system and card cataloging were computerized. The Library was closed for one week while the staff and many volunteers bar coded the entire collection.

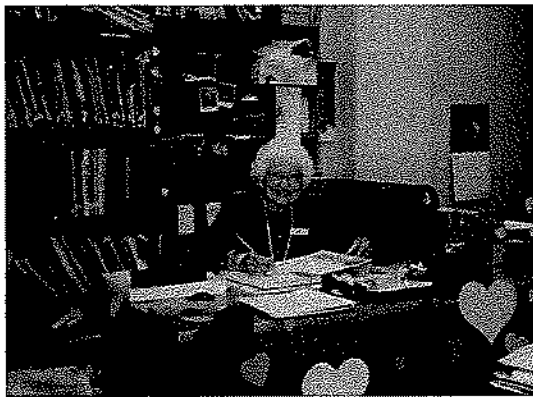
Rosetta Myers, Virginia Bedunah and Pat Steenbergh carried a large banner announcing the inauguration of the new automated circulation system in the Discover Stevensville Days parade.



Library staff shown promoting automation during the Discover Stevensville Days parade.

Rosetta Myers

In 1997, Rosetta Myers, Children's Librarian, retired after thirty-five years of service to the Library. A reception was held in her honor on April 28, 1997. Rosetta worked in many capacities at the Library and several times served as Interim Director. She is especially remembered for her work with children and story-telling. A portrait of her by Robert Williams hangs in the Library. Director Virginia Bedunah remarked, "Rosetta personified all that a library should be." Co-worker Ruthe Bomberger said Rosetta made the Library a warm and welcoming place for children.



Rosetta Myers at her desk.



Jack Greendonner unveils the portrait of Rosetta Myers at her retirement reception.



Staff retirement party for Rosetta Myers. Front row, left to right, Heather Ogonowski, Tarah Ranke, Deb Christensen, Sue Vandermolen, Jan Koebel; back row, left to right, Pat Steenbergh, Sandy Andert, Ann Wilkinson, Audrey Weihrauch, Carolyn Hosbach, Rosetta Myers, Virginia Bedunah, Deb Kramp, Josephine Henke, JoAnn VanderMolen, and Barb Stoub.

Need For Second Expansion

As the decade drew to a close, the use of the Library's collection and services increased. Long-playing records had become obsolete, replaced by audiocassettes and compact discs. The Lawrence Room was not large enough for the programs being planned, shelving was inadequate, and there was no more room for computers. By 1997, the annual circulation had increased to 183,669 items.



LIMITED ROOM: Sue Vandermolten, reference librarian at the Lincoln Township Library, returns books to the shelves in the library. Because of a growing book collection and increasing use, the library is planning an expansion.

H-P photo by John Madill

Sue Vandermolten makes room for another book on a crowded shelf in this Herald Palladium Newspaper clipping.

Lincoln Library needs more space

By MICHELLE CRANDALL
H-P Staff Writer

The Lincoln Township Library seems to be a victim of its own popularity.

For the second time in less than 18 years, the library has outgrown its building and is considering expansion.

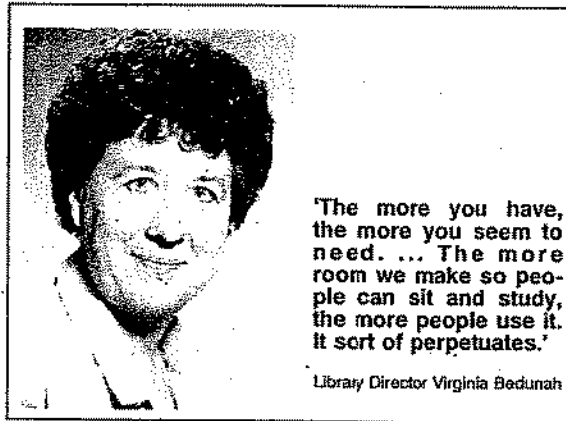
Not only has the amount of people who use the library increased, but the use has also changed, making it necessary to expand, said Virginia Bedunah, library director.

"More people are using the library in-house," said Bedunah. "They come in and work on high school papers, do some research or read a magazine. During the school year the tables are jam-packed. Every time we put up shelves it takes away table space and they have to be placed even closer together."

The extent of the expansion project has not been determined yet.

In 1982, the library added 5,000 square feet to the original 7,000-square-foot structure.

"The more you have, the more you seem to need," Bedunah said. "In 1974 when we built the original portion, there was very little room to sit and study. And the more room we make so people can sit



Library Director Virginia Bedunah

and study, the more people use it. It sort of perpetuates. And of course, the collection has grown."

A study showed that based on the current usage and the size of the collection, the library needs an additional 4,000 square feet, bringing the total up to 16,000 square feet.

"But if we are building, it is wisest to look ahead," Bedunah said. "If we plan for 20 years we would need 10,000 square feet so

we don't have to keep adding space later."

During special programs the community room has been so crowded library personnel have had to turn people away "simply because we couldn't seat anymore," Bedunah said.

"We would always hope the use will increase, although at some point it will probably plateau," she said. "But one never reaches everybody in a community, so theoret-

ically there will always be potential patrons in the community."

In addition to the lack of space inside, sometimes there isn't enough parking space available, particularly when there is a special program, Bedunah said. She said the library is fortunate because the township hall parking lot is next door and patrons can use that. But sometimes it still isn't enough.

The library board has consulted four architects, and the next step, according to Bedunah, is to select one to draw up plans for an expansion.

She said the library owns about 30 feet of property north of its building and will probably talk to township officials about acquiring some of the property the township owns just north of that.

Until plans are drawn and the extent of the project is established, the cost remains unknown. Bedunah said the board has saved \$100,000 over the last four years in its building fund.

The remaining cost could be raised in several ways, but it is still to early to decide how it will be done, she said.

Money could be raised through possible grants from the Library of Michigan, a fund-raising campaign, or a bond issue.

Newspaper clipping from the Herald Palladium featuring interview with Library Director Virginia Bedunah.

In May 1998, the Library Board selected local architect, Roderic Thomson, to design an expansion with the stipulation that when finished it would appear to be one building. Public forums were held in June 1998 for the community to meet with the architect; review space needs; and share ideas.

Funding for the expansion was placed before the electors on November 3, 1998. The voters approved a bond proposal for 2.65 million dollars and a .3 operational mill for 15 years. Pearson Construction Company was awarded the building contract.

Float in Discover Stevensville Days Parade

In 1998, the Library entered a full scale float in the Discover Stevensville Days Parade proclaiming, "Celebrate Lifelong Literacy" thanks to the efforts of Ann and Bill Wilkinson. The float celebrated story hours, computer use, the annual book sale, magazines, and information available at the Library.



Library's float in the Discover Stevensville Days parade in 1998.



Groundbreaking in May 1999. Pictured from left to right: Jack Greendonner, Library Board; Burt Pearson Jr., Contractor; Roderic Thomson, Architect; Connie Sanders, Township Treasurer; Beth Kenagy, Ann Dosch and Lee VanGinhoven, Library Board; Kevin Gillette, Township Supervisor; Virginia Bedunah, Library Director; Marti Harris, Stevensville Village Council President; and Carol Styburski, Old Kent Bank.

2000 Expansion, aka "The Second Addition"

Planning, purchasing of equipment and furniture, and landscaping required many hours of work by the Library Board, Director, staff, and volunteers. The response from the community was enthusiastic and generous. The Library Board received both monetary and material donations. Many of these are commemorated by plaques and memorials throughout the Library and garden. The Friends of the Library commissioned William Cooper to create the garden sculpture, "Column from Elsewhere."



The 11½ foot tall "Column From Elsewhere" was carved from variegated ancient granite from Minnesota and weighs two tons.

Two years from the date of hiring the architect, the new expansion was dedicated on May 7, 2000. It consisted of 13,000 square feet. The original building was 7,000 square feet; the 1983 addition was 5,000 square feet; and the new expansion more than doubled the size for a total of 25,000 square feet. This new expansion meets the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

In November 2001, an outdoor sign with changeable lettering was constructed by Hicks Sign Company making it possible to promote upcoming events and programs to those not coming into the Library.

Second Expansion Offered Much More

The expansion included a quiet reading room, two small meeting rooms, a courtyard and garden area, space for community meetings, expansion of computer services, additional staff workspace, special restrooms for children and people needing assistance, a drive-up book drop, heated sidewalk to prevent freezing, additional parking, and a snack room.

Rosetta's House

A special children's house within the Library was named Rosetta's House to recognize Rosetta Myers' devotion and contribution to children. Rosetta's portrait was moved to Rosetta's House. The interior was designed to be large enough to accommodate children's programs. A special "tree" near Rosetta's House features leaves which are changed seasonally.



Rosetta's house located in the children's area of the Library.

“Atomic” Teleidoscope

This interactive steel kaleidoscope sculpture by Bob Anderson welcomes patrons to the Library. Viewing the display in the rotating steel bowl through one or two scopes gives the viewer, young or old, a constantly changing magical color show. The sculpture was donated by Carolyn Evans Dorgelo and her sister Elizabeth Evans Borysko in honor of their parents.



Installation of “Atomic” teleidoscope by sculptor by Bob Anderson.

The New Lawrence Room

The new Lawrence Room now comfortably seats 82 people. The room is an ideal showcase for exhibits, films, concerts, book discussions, lectures, and receptions. The Lawrence Room also serves as a meeting place for many local organizations.

Continuing a Parade Tradition

In 2002, a Library marching unit titled, "The Book Cart Drill Team" won the Mayors Award trophy in the Discover Stevensville Days parade. This trophy is on display in the Library.



The "Book Cart Drill Team" performs precision drills at the Discover Stevensville Days parade in 2002.



Stevensville Mayor's 2002 award trophy.



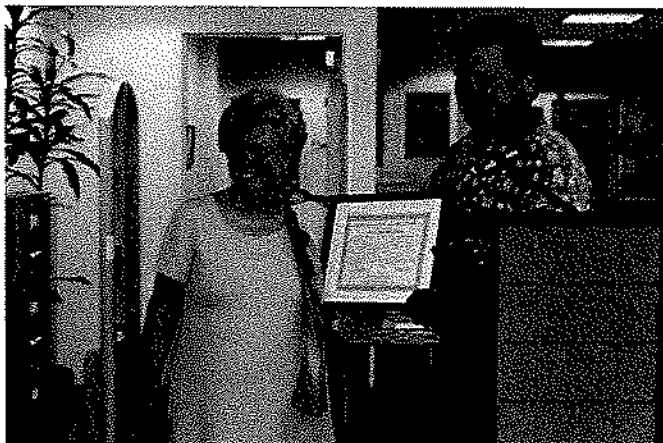
A children's tea celebrating Peter Rabbit's 100th birthday in 2002 included carrot cake cupcakes.

Virginia Bedunah Retires

Four years after the expansion, Library Director Virginia Bedunah retired. She had faithfully served the Library for over thirty-one years. A special open house was held on April 18, 2004. In her honor the quiet reading room was named for her, and her portrait placed there.

At Virginia Bedunah's retirement reception, she stated that she had been very fortunate to have worked with so many dedicated people. She acknowledged the efforts of the Library Board members for striving to provide the best possible service with the funds available. She commended staff members for their commitment to service and willingness to adopt ever-changing technological advances, and the community for its understanding and support.

Virginia Bedunah was a part of the many internal and external changes in the growth of the Library. The circulation increased and in some years was the highest in Berrien County while she was the director. Sandy Andert served as the Interim Director until a new director was hired.



Lincoln Township Supervisor Kevin Gillette makes presentation to Virginia Bedunah at her retirement reception.

Dina Reilly Hired

Current Director Dina Reilly assumed the position on September 29, 2004. She was impressed by the progress of the Library and community participation. She brought administrative and technical experience to forge ahead in the 21st century and continue the mission of the Library.



Dina Reilly, Director, pictured in 2004.

High Circulation Figures

The circulation for 2005-2006 reached 243,041 items which was the highest for Berrien County and the third highest in Michigan for the 79 libraries in its class. In 2007-2008 the circulation reached 244,317 items with the Library's total collection consisting of 86,924 items.

Teen Advisory Board

The Teen Advisory Board (TAB) was established in August, 2004 with 23 members in grades 6-12. Under the guidance of Teen Librarian Hollie Ayres, teen programming increased with monthly TAB meetings during the school year and programs throughout the entire year. The teen banner and logo, "Break Ground @ your library," were designed by TAB member Mandy Thiele in 2005.

The TAB launched book release parties, mystery plays, Teen Tech Week, an Anime festival, book jeopardy, and a video gaming tournament. Teen programs included book discussions, cooking demonstrations, a chocolate party, scavenger hunt, jewelry-making, crafts, chess and euchre tournaments, and movies. TAB lock-ins with after-hours fun became an annual event. Interactive video gaming events such as Guitar Hero, Dance Dance Revolution, Mario Kart Double Dash, and Super Smash Bros. Melee were offered. Wii was added in 2009.

Friends of the Library sponsor TAB activities and purchase TAB T-shirts, food and drinks for monthly meetings, and pizza for the National Pizza Day Party. Additionally, as the collection of materials expanded, the Friends purchased shelving for the teen collection.



Members of the Teen Advisory Board (TAB). Systems Coordinator Vicki Rausch, left, and Teen Librarian Hollie Ayres, second from right, are the Library's coordinators of the program.

Evans School Bell

The Evans School Bell was donated to the Library by the children of Anna and Stepan Sacha to honor their parents. The bell, now installed in the Library's courtyard, once rang in the local one-room Evans school house (1866-1957) at the corner of Washington and Marquette Woods Road. A reception on April 16, 2005, was attended by former students, board members, teachers, and their descendants.

Let Music Ring

The Library's free concert series began with a performance by Great Lakes folklorist Lee Murdock in June 2005. Other performers in 2005 included: Kelly Jones, Fiddle Fire, Larry & Sandy Feldman; Dynabones, and Shoreline Sounds Barbershoppers. John Kennedy, Acorn Island String Quartet, The Useful Sound, Lee Murdock, Jim Malosh, Wood'n Nickel, Soul Collective performed in 2006. Some of the other groups performing in the concert series included the Van Dyke Revue, All God's Children, Lee La Vanway, Uphill Climb, Round Oaks Cornet Band, Fine Tunings, Lake Effect Winds, and Harpist Devon Haupt. Attendance at Library concerts in 2005 was 345 and increased to over 600 in 2008. The Friends of the Library were able to fund some of the concerts.

Summer Reading—Not Just For Children

In 2005, the Summer Reading program for adults, "Summer Days and Knights," paralleled the children's program, "Dragons, Dreams, and Daring Deeds," and the teen's, "Joust Read." Over 10,000 books were read! Summer reading for all ages continued to be huge draw at the Library with support from area businesses and the Friends of the Library. The 2006 Summer Reading program led to 840 participants reading over 10,000 books. Summer reading often involves visits from authors, jugglers, magicians or storytellers. Notre Dame's Shakespeare Festival group provided amazing outdoor theater. Lake Effect Jazz drew over a hundred listeners to outdoor concerts to start the summer fun.

Remembrance Writing

Ruthe Bomberger, as a volunteer, led a popular program on remembrance writing for several years, encouraging participants to write short "stories" about events in their lives. In May-August 2006, Librarian Paul Roy conducted a Veterans Remembrance Writing program for area veterans, with seminars on formatting and creating memoirs for the Southwest Michigan Lest We Forget Foundation and the Library of Congress. The program was offered to area libraries to help their staffs establish veterans remembrance writing programs. With the release of the book, World War II Memoirs from Southwest Michigan Veterans, a program featuring the authors filled the Lawrence Room and adjoining hallways as over 30 veterans told their stories and autographed the book, edited by Librarian Denise Perry Donavin.

Abraham Lincoln "Forever Free" Exhibit

The Library was one of two in the state, and one of 63 libraries throughout the United States to schedule the exhibit and program: "Forever Free: Abraham Lincoln's Journey to Emancipation." The exhibit was organized by the Huntington Library and the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History with the cooperation of the American Library Association and Lincoln Bicentennial Commission.

This community program opened on December 15, 2007, and lasted for six weeks. A "Civil War Christmas" opening celebration brought many to the Library as did subsequent programs. There were docent-guided tours and performances by the 5th Michigan Regiment Civil War Band and All God's Children Community Choir. Over 1,220 attended the book discussions and Civil War-related programs including, Letters from a Copperhead by Bob Myers, curator of the History Center at Berrien Springs; Search for Underground Railroad activities by Dr. Michael Nasseny of Western Michigan University; and Sojourner Truth portrayed by Mary Butler, of the Sojourner Truth Institute. Over 630 students attended the Forever Free exhibit, and the Sojourner Truth educational program sponsored by the Lakeshore Excellence Foundation.



"Celebrate a Civil War Christmas" featured the 5th Michigan Soldiers, the 5th Michigan Regiment Band, and women in Civil War period attire.

The Friends of the Library and the Berrien County Historical Center sponsored a three-day Life of Lincoln Tour to Springfield, Illinois led by Bob Myers in the spring of 2008.

Grants

The Forever Free exhibit was made possible by a grant from the American Library Association. In September 2008, the Library was awarded the Picturing America Grant and received for the permanent collection, 40 high-quality, laminated reproductions of classic American art, along with a teaching resource guide that provides an engaging way to teach American history, culture, and other subjects through the use of artistic images.

The Library received 21 audio guides from the Big Read program of the National Endowment of the Arts to promote and enhance book discussions. The Library was awarded the "Let's Talk About: Love, Forgiveness, and Wisdom" grant from the American Library Association and Fetzer Institute. This 2009 spring book discussion program was led by Andrews University professor Becky DeOliveira.

High Tech Times

Led by Library Director Dina Reilly, the Library computer system began the transition to Innovative Interfaces in September 2007 and went live in February 2008. With Innovative, Vicki Rausch, Systems Coordinator, explained that everything is integrated: from purchasing through cataloging of items to the online catalog. Patrons now know if an item is on order or already available at the Library.

The Library added wireless services in 2008. Patrons may bring their laptops to the Library and connect to the Internet. The Library joined the Michigan Electronic Library (MEL) interlibrary loan system in 2009. Now, patrons looking for a book that the Library does not own may search the entire state collection and place an interlibrary loan request for the book themselves.

In 2009, the Library launched a new website with Hollie Ayres as the on-site web manager. Patrons may sign up for Library Elf services to compile a personal reading history and receive Email alerts when materials are due and items on hold are ready. Donations may be made and fines above \$5.00 paid online. Separate web pages are available for children, teens, and adults.

Picture Book Pandemonium

Two additional ways to locate children's picture books were added in 2009, making book selection easier for young readers, parents, and educators. A Junior Picture Book section featuring picture books with content and text appropriate for school age children was created by separating these books from the preschool area. A Holiday Book section was developed to house titles sorted by holidays such as Easter, Halloween, Christmas, and Hanukkah.

Friends of the Library

The Library has been fortunate to have many volunteers. Persons interested in the support and development of a library became known as "Friends of the Library".

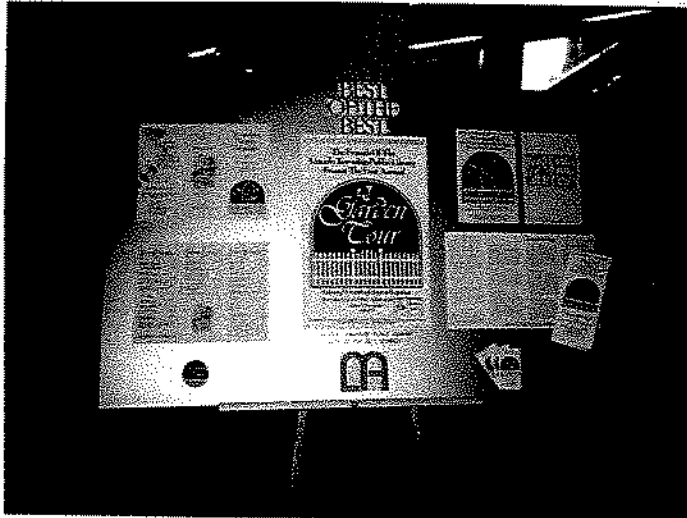
From the inception of the Library, they assisted with activities to promote and support a permanent library. They helped at dedications; were involved with the Bicentennial Celebration, "Armchair America"; held a Recycle Day, which was the forerunner of the book sales; gave special teas featuring international desserts; and helped with the Stevensville Kiddies Parade and Liberty Days. "Red Stockings," a variety show using local talent, was very successful in 1973 with widespread community support in raising funds for furnishings in the new building.

Annual garden tours were started under the leadership of Lauren Strach, Ann Wilkinson and Carol Bernson. The first tour in 1994 raised \$4,207.25. The publicity for the event won the Michigan Library Association's (MLA) Marketing and Public Relations "Best of the Best" award. Beth Kenagy, Peg McCann, and Heather Catania have carried on the tradition of producing fabulous garden tours for the community's enjoyment. The Library has purchased many beautiful gardening books from the proceeds as well as other needed items.

The Friends of the Library participated in a reorganization process from 2000 through 2002. Bernice Tretheway, who was instrumental in the development of

the Library in 1958, and served on the Library Board from 1960-1963, lent her experience to the reorganization committee. As a result of the effort, The Friends received tax exempt status as a charitable organization under the 501 c (3) IRS Tax Code and officially became, *Friends of the Lincoln Township Public Library*.

Carol Reigle developed a quarterly newsletter for members assisted by Michelle Coberley, who maintains an active membership list ensuring that all members receive the newsletter. Carolyn Dorgelo, Suellen Klein, and E. Jane Knickerbocker, chaired many book sales and have passed their leadership roles to Judy Fogarty, Debby Luongo, and Nancy Wolff.



“Best of the Best” award winning Garden Tour display at the Library.



Signs directing people to the gardens purchased by the Friends.

As membership grew, and book sales and garden tours increased in popularity, the Friends were able to supply more funds for Library furnishings, materials,

special events, programs, and the Teen Advisory Board (TAB). As the Summer Reading Program expanded to include teens, and adults, the Friends continued to fund most of the cost and supplied \$15,000.00 to the summer programs from 2007 to 2009. The Friends also supplied funds for the purchase of items on the "Library Wish List." None of this would be possible without the active support and volunteer efforts of the members.



A line forms as people eagerly await the opening of the book sale!



People look through thousands of books to find a treasure at the annual book sale.

Friends Origami "Box Class" Drew Record Crowd

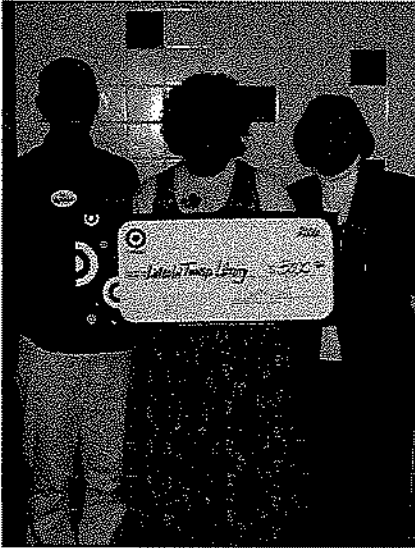
On January 21, 2003, a program was sponsored by the Friends of the Library which drew persons from the neighboring counties and created quite a gathering of cars parked for blocks around the Library. Mary Ann LaPrad presented an origami program whereby used greeting cards were converted into small gift boxes. The response was mostly the result of publicity in the Leisure section of the Herald Palladium on January 10, featuring the creation of these boxes by Mary Ann LaPrad. The enthusiastic crafters spilled over from the Lawrence Room into any available space in the Library. The program brought many first time visitors to the Library. By popular request, the origami program was repeated in March and offered additional times.



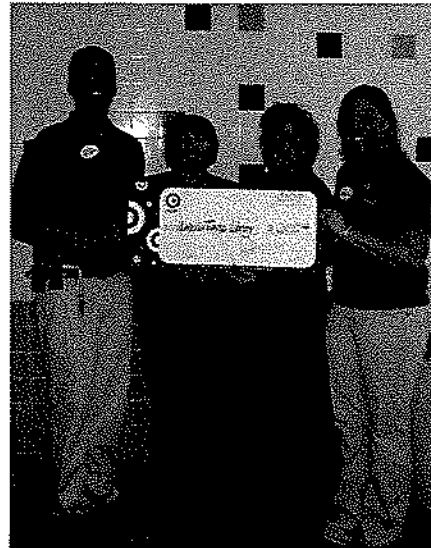
Mary Ann LaPrad, center, shows how to convert greeting cards into origami gift boxes.

Friends Receive Target Grants

The Friends obtained a \$3,000.00 grant from the Target stores for an early literacy program called, "Every Child Ready to Read @ your library" in 2006 and a \$2000.00 grant for the program in 2007.



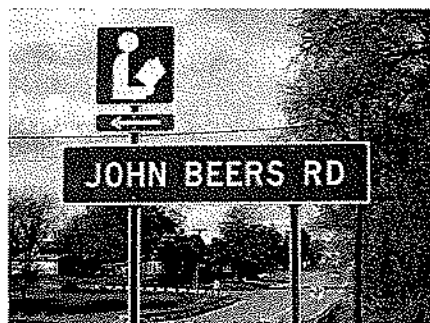
Benton Harbor Target manager, Kim Godfrey, left, presents a \$3000.00 grant to the Friends in 2006. Lila Toney, Librarian, center, and Carol Reigle, Friends President, will use the Grant for the program, Every Child Ready to Read @ your library.



Friends receive a \$2000.00 grant from Target in 2007. Pictured left to right, Ronnie Allen, Target Manager, Carol Reigle, Friends President, Lila Toney, Librarian, and Jen Qualls, Target Volunteer Coordinator.

Friends Request Highway Sign

The Friends requested the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) to place a sign along highway M-139 at John Beers Road. Installed in the fall of 2008, it serves as a guide for people coming to the Library for its many programs and Friends garden tours and book sales.



Sign guides people to the Library.

Summary

The Lincoln Township Public Library has been a unique achievement. From the humble beginnings of a summer reading program, the Library is now a gateway to a world of information and knowledge with stimulating programs and events for children, teens, and adults. The Library has become a cultural center serving the needs of the community, and is continuing to fulfill its mission.

Mission Statement

The purpose of the Lincoln Township Public Library is to meet informational, educational, cultural and recreational needs of the community by acquiring and maintaining a wide variety of materials, providing service to all members of the community in appropriate diverse forms and providing access to those materials and services and to materials beyond the Library's own collection.

Looking Ahead

Undoubtedly, under excellent leadership and community support, the Library will continue to expand its service to the community and the next fifty years will bring it to a centennial celebration in 2059.

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