I am happy to report the Van Buren District Library had a banner year in 2014 serving its local communities! VBDL focused on increasing its program offerings, providing new technology and digital collections, and ensuring excellence in customer service.

We continue to recognize our responsibility to maintain a library environment where traditional and expected resources are available, but also one where VBDL proactively and creatively designs and implements innovative ideas, programs, technology and digital collections.

A variety of helpful technology education classes available across the district has become the norm, story times can be found at all branches on a regular basis, and a variety of children’s and adult educational and recreational programs are conveniently scheduled on the calendar.

One of the library’s core values – as reported in VBDL’s recent strategic plan—is the credo that reading is a foundation for learning for all age groups. As a result, literacy is constantly on our minds as we plan programs and collaborate with schools and families. The “1,000 Books before Kindergarten” program was introduced in 2014 and has become a hit at each branch as more families continue to sign up and participate. Another preschool age program, “Wiggles Time,” is a new music and movement activity that has brought loud noises and happy faces to our children’s sections.

VBDL is recognized for its comprehensive print and non-print collections available for lending, yet we’re also pleased to begin providing more copies of popular titles in an effort to fulfill patron’s expectations and expend the materials budget more efficiently. Activities designed to engage our communities abounded last year! From the student photo contest at Lawrence and the dedication of the Toni Benson Local History & Genealogy Room in Decatur, to Bloomingdale’s Summer Reading finale and the Gobles Santa Claus event, our branches offered positive programming throughout the year.

Unfortunately not all is quite so rosy. Over the past several years, the library has contended with rising operational costs, a relatively flat tax-base growth, and a significant revenue hit due to the New Covert Generating tax tribunal case. As a result, VBDL is seeking a millage increase of .2 mills in May 2015. The library currently levies .89 mills, and this will be its first tax increase request since 1991. The current millage is one of the lowest amounts for libraries in southwest Michigan and if the additional amount is approved, VBDL’s millage would still be lower than several area district libraries.

VBDL is committed to providing a quality public library for its residents, and looks forward to offering a positive library experience every day.

Thank you,
Ryan Wieber
DIRECTOR
2014 Highlights

Librarians of the Year: Kay McAdam, Antwerp; and Emily Burns, Webster
Customer Service Award: Bloomingdale Branch Staff
Genius Idea Award: R.J. Werden
25-Year Service Award to Jennifer Youker
Installation of district-wide VOIP phone system
Implementation of biannual staff training days
Staff Development Day at KPL
Schlitz Creek Bluegrass Concert
Dedication of the Toni I. Benson Local History & Genealogy Room
Early literacy computer stations at Covert and Antwerp
1,000 Books before Kindergarten

2014 Highlights

Strategic Planning for 2014-2017
Wiggle’s Time Music and Movement
Kindles and Nooks available at every branch
Jewelry and craft classes
Regularly scheduled technology classes
Bangor Historic Newspapers Digitization Project
Fizz, Boom, Read Summer Reading Program
One Book, One County Community Read
New Friends of the Library group in Gobles
Family Fun Night, Webster Memorial
Cirque Amongus at Antwerp Sunshine
Student Photography Contest, Lawrence
Friends of the Library Chicago Architecture Tour
All Crafters Club at Covert Branch

2014 Highlights

Goal 1: Provide Financial Stability, Allowing the Library to Meet Its Mission
Objectives:
1. Implement a Capital Improvement Plan
2. Maintain communication with local communities to strengthen relationships, resulting in cooperation for future support.
3. Seek grant opportunities and alternative funding

Goal 2: Offer Necessary Technology and Support to Staff and Patrons
Objectives:
1. Proactively plan for future technology needs
2. Improve staff training and building/location support
3. Offer innovative technology to patrons
4. Offer enrichment training for patrons

Goal 3: Provide Innovative Customer Service and Programming
Objectives:
1. Assess and provide a wide range of programs for the public. Anticipate and respond to public program needs.
2. Improve communications and partnering opportunities with outside organizations
3. Strive to provide more community outreach with increased hours, services to homebound patrons, after-hours activities.

Goal 4: Maximize Staff Resources
Objectives:
1. Implement regular staff development workshops on customer service, safety, time saving ideas, etc.
2. Rotate the location for monthly branch meetings
3. Implement opportunities for more branch visits by headquarters staff, and branch to branch staff visits

Goal 5: Create a Persistent and Consistent Library Image in all Marketing Efforts
Objectives:
1. Establish a PR staff workgroup
2. Refine current PR process and staffing to ensure consistency
3. Prepare future PR budget for upcoming needs
4. Create a new logo and transition to a new website

2014 Highlights

Mission
To provide equitable access to a world of resources, reading, and lifelong learning.

Vision
We will be an innovative gateway to information, culture and enrichment

Core Values
To support the library’s mission, we value:
• Reading as a foundation for learning for all age groups
• Offering professional service in a welcoming, inviting environment
• Providing valued library services to our communities in a fiscally responsible manner

2014 Highlights

Strategic Plan 2014-2017
The library undertook a strategic planning program in late 2013 – early 2014 in an effort to develop a roadmap for the future. The process began with a system-wide staff gathering in August 2013, followed by local public focus group meetings in each of our seven library locations. It concluded with staff and board workshops in early 2014 where the outcomes resulted in a revised mission and vision, newly established core values, and five overriding goals for 2014-2017.

The 2014-2017 plan puts into motion a rational attitude (mission, vision, core values) that is driven forward by a series of goals and objectives. The impetus is to improve the library environment and provide a more valuable public library for the taxpayers and residents of the district.

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Tom Greiffendorf
Tom Greiffendorf is a regular visitor at the Bloomingdale Branch. The retired teacher stops in at least once a week to check-out books and DVDs.

“I love our public library system,” Tom says. “To me, it’s the one thing I don’t mind paying taxes for!”

Tom hopes everyone in the area realizes how easy it is for the library to find and request books from just about anywhere in the United States.

“Our library system,” he says, “is the best kept secret!”

Julie Collard
Julie Collard enjoys sharing her love of reading with the community. As President of the Friends of the Gobles Library, Julie hopes to inspire a love for reading in young people and encourage parents to read aloud to their children while using the library as a resource.

“I love the 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten program our district library offers,” Julie says. “At six months old, my son, Angus, already loves picking out prizes for reaching his reading milestones. The smile on his face when he picked out his tiger finger-puppet was priceless.

“Reading with your children, even infants, is a great way to help with brain development and build literacy skills,” Julie adds. “And if you get your books from the library, it’s free!”

All Crafters’ Club
Crafters are welcome at the Covert Branch Library thanks to the recently formed All Crafters’ Club. May Herring, Ann Brown and Joyce Smith are some of the area crafters who have found the library to be a great place to meet, work, socialize and learn together. Each member brings a unique interest to the group whether it’s crochet, sewing, quilting or jewelry making.

The library has plenty of space for crafting: large work tables and a storage area for materials, so new members and their crafts are always welcome! The All Crafters’ Club meets twice a week on Tuesday evenings and Saturday mornings.

McCaw Family
Visiting the Lawrence Community Branch Library is a family affair! Just ask Joe, Noel, Ben and Colleen McCaw who are long-time library patrons.

The McCaws participate in many programs throughout the year, but especially appreciate being able to borrow DVDs the whole family can enjoy. The collection is a great resource for the McCaws and other patrons who are not able to stream or rent online movies due to insufficient availability of high speed internet in their rural communities.

“Our family enjoys many of the services, programs and media available at the Lawrence Branch Library,” Noel says. “We have benefited from Story Hour, Lego Club, Christmas community celebrations, the summer reading program and special guests. Most importantly we appreciate the strong community connection the library fosters and the tremendously helpful staff.”

Reading with your children, even infants, is a great way to help with brain development and build literacy skills...And if you get your books from the library, it’s free!
**Statements of revenues, expenditures and changes in fund balance/statements of activities for the year ended December 31, 2014.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REVENUES:</th>
<th>GENERAL FUND</th>
<th>ENDOWMENT FUND</th>
<th>TOTAL-MODIFIED ACCRUAL BASIS</th>
<th>GASP NO. 34 ADJUSTMENTS</th>
<th>LIBRARY AS A WHOLE STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES-FULL ACCRUAL BASIS</th>
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<tr>
<td>TAXES</td>
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<th>GENERAL FUND</th>
<th>ENDOWMENT FUND</th>
<th>TOTAL-MODIFIED ACCRUAL BASIS</th>
<th>GASP NO. 34 ADJUSTMENTS</th>
<th>GASB NO. 34</th>
<th>LIBRARY AS A WHOLE STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES-FULL ACCRUAL BASIS</th>
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<td>73,147</td>
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<td>PENSION CONTRIBUTIONS</td>
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<td>44,134</td>
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<td>6,020</td>
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<td>POSTAGE, PRINTING, COPYING</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>13,377</td>
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<td>GAS AND OIL</td>
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<td>15,641</td>
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<td>CONTINUING EDUCATION</td>
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<td>3,134</td>
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<td>CAPITAL OUTLAY</td>
<td>101,733</td>
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<td>101,733</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>(79,713)</td>
<td>22,020</td>
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<tr>
<td>AUDIOVISUAL, BOOKS, AND PERIODICALS</td>
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<td>154,845</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>(138,218)</td>
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<td>INTERNET FEES</td>
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<td>22,329</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL EXPENDITURES/EXPENSES</td>
<td>$1,721,794</td>
<td>$-</td>
<td>$1,721,794</td>
<td>$-</td>
<td>$1,721,794</td>
<td>$1,670,705</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| EXCESS OF REVENUES OVER EXPENDITURES/EXPENSES (USES) | $441,108 | $6,274 | $50,382 | $51,089 | $1,011,471 |
| OTHER FINANCING SOURCES (USES) | - | - | - | - | - |
| OPERATING TRANSFERS IN/OUT | 1,899 | (1,899) | - | - | - |
| NET CHANGE IN FUND BALANCES/NET POSITION | $46,007 | $43,756 | $50,382 | $51,089 | $1,011,471 |
| FUND BALANCE/NET POSITION-BEGINNING OF YEAR | 1,399,484 | 151,694 | $1,551,178 | 624,410 | 2,175,588 |
| FUND BALANCE/NET POSITION-END OF YEAR | $1,445,491 | $156,069 | $1,601,560 | $675,499 | $2,277,059 |
2014 Van Buren District Library Statistics

**293,519 TOTAL ITEMS BORROWED**

- **37,945** items loaned between Van Buren District Library Branches
- **9,743** items loaned to other Michigan library patrons
- **12,209** items borrowed from other Michigan libraries for VBDL patrons

**2014 Donors**

- Ann Allen
- Antwerp Friends of the Library
- Bangor Friends of the Library
- Bangor Historical Society
- Clarence Bohn
- Allan B. Copley Foundation
- G. Dean Copping
- Covert Friends of the Library
- Deborah Dunstone
- Bob Emmert
- Wendy Estrada
- Barbara Farris
- Bill Fox
- Gobles Friends of the Library
- Jeanne Grubb
- Beverly Haas
- Dr. Judith Halseth
- Maureen Hutchinson
- Barbara Knickerbocker
- Don Larson
- Lawrence Friends of the Library
- Susan McClure
- Penny Popp
- Linda Reynnells
- Barbara Reynolds
- Judy Saros
- Katie Schoenholz
- Judith Sherrod
- David Snyder
- John Snyder
- Norma Stancati
- Bonita Suter
- Steve & Connie Talsma
- David Tate
- Van Buren Friends of the Library
- John & Patricia Wilson
- Women’s Club of Palisades Park

**2014 Programs**

- **647 PROGRAMS**
- **12,780 PROGRAM ATTENDEES**
- **3,615 SUMMER READING PROGRAM ATTENDANCE**

**Programs & Collections**

- Books: 85.5%
- Ebooks: 4.1%
- Audiobooks: 2.5%
- Magazines: 2.2%
- Adult: 46.3%
- Children: 31.8%
- Audiovisual: 12.4%
- Magazines & Special Collections: 9.5%

**Public Access Computers**

- **70** computers
- **39,606** NO. OF PUBLIC COMPUTER SESSIONS
- **29,454** COMPUTER SESSION HOURS
- **16,297** WIFI INTERNET LOGINS
- **147%** WIFI % INCREASE

**2014 Statistics**

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- **12,209** items borrowed from other Michigan libraries for VBDL patrons

**Computer Session Hours**

- **29,454** hours

**WIFI Logins**

- **16,297** logins

**WIFI % Increase**

- **147%**

**Volunteer Hours**

- **2,563** volunteer hours

**Local History Room Users**

- **537** users
Board of Trustees

MARIANNE ABBOTT 
BRUCE CUTTING
SANDRA HANSON
CATHERINE HULIN
BETTY MARKEL
PHILLIP MARSHALL
JOE MILLER
WAYNE RENDELL

Bloomingdale
Antwerp
Van Buren County, Vice-Chair
Gobles
Bangor
Lawrence
Decatur
Covert, Chair

Van Buren District Library Locations

Bangor Branch
420 Division Street
Bangor, MI 49013
269.427.8810
Bobbi Martindale,
Branch Librarian

Gobles Branch
105 East Main Street
Gobles, MI 49055
269.628.4537
Barbara Insidioso,
Branch Librarian

Antwerp Sunshine Branch
24823 Front Avenue
Mattawan, MI 49071
269.668.2534
Kay McAdam,
Branch Librarian

Lawrence Community Branch
212 North Paw Paw Street
Lawrence, MI 49064
269.674.3200
Denise Campagna,
Branch Librarian

Webster Memorial Library
Van Buren District Library Headquarters
200 North Phelps Street
Decatur, MI 49045
269.423.4771
Ryan Wieber,
VBDL Director

Covert Branch
33680 M-140 Hwy
Covert, MI 49043
269.764.1298
Lois Brigham,
Branch Librarian

DOWNLOAD BOOKS & MUSIC DIRECTLY FROM OUR WEBSITE

VISIT US ONLINE
www.vbdl.org

It’s easy to access downloadable content from your phone, tablet or eReader.