



2025 **annual** **report**

ANTWERP/MATTAWAN
BANGOR
BLOOMINGDALE
COVERT
GOBLES
LAWRENCE
WEBSTER/DECATUR



From the Director

Access to reliable, affordable Internet is no longer a luxury; it is essential for education, employment, healthcare, and community participation. For many residents of Van Buren County, however, Internet access remains limited or entirely unavailable. Geographic

challenges, affordability barriers, and uneven broadband infrastructure continue to shape daily life for thousands of Van Buren County households. In 2025, Van Buren District Library remained focused on addressing this reality through one of its most impactful and widely used services, mobile Internet hotspot lending.

What began in 2022 as a modest initiative intended to help bridge the digital divide has evolved into a core library service with national significance. After beginning with an initial collection of 210 devices, or 30 per VBDL branch, Van Buren District Library expanded this service to 420 mobile Internet hotspots, providing high-speed Internet access to residents who might otherwise go without. These devices support students completing homework and participating in online learning, adults searching for employment or accessing workforce training, families connecting to telehealth providers, and residents staying engaged with government services, news, and community resources.

Demand for mobile hotspots remains consistently high, a clear indication that the digital divide persists across our service area. In rural and semi-rural communities especially, broadband options can be limited or prohibitively expensive. Even where service exists, availability is not guaranteed. For many households, the library's hotspot program offers not just convenience, but a lifeline. The ability to take Internet access home, rather than relying solely on public Wi-Fi, allows patrons to meet critical needs regardless of their commitments or where they might live.

In early July 2025, Van Buren District Library received a surprising phone call from its mobile Internet hotspot service provider, Mobile Beacon. Mobile Beacon informed the library that during the first six months of 2025 alone, VBDL patrons had used approximately 312 terabytes (TB) of cellular Internet data through the library's hotspot lending program, more than any other public library in Mobile Beacon's nationwide network of 1,801 library clients at that time. Later that summer, Mobile Beacon further confirmed that VBDL continued to hold that position through August 2025. When the library first launched the service in 2022, I never imagined such an achievement was possible; we were simply trying to provide a service we believed our patrons genuinely needed.

As Mobile Beacon completed its full-year analysis of 2025, the scale of the program became even clearer. According to the

organization's final year-end data, 425 unique VBDL hotspot devices generated approximately 648,764 gigabytes (GB), or roughly 633.6 terabytes (TB), of Internet connectivity during 2025 alone.

Equally significant was how VBDL's program compared nationally within Mobile Beacon's broader public library network. Mobile Beacon reported that its 1,835 participating library systems distributed approximately 25,438 terabytes of data during 2025. Van Buren District Library alone accounted for approximately 634 terabytes of that total, meaning roughly one out of every forty gigabytes of hotspot data distributed across Mobile Beacon's entire public library portfolio nationwide originated from VBDL.

These figures are striking, but they are best understood as evidence of real community need rather than a triumph for the library to boast about. Behind every terabyte of data is a household completing school assignments, attending virtual appointments, submitting applications, or simply staying connected in an increasingly online world. The program's scale reflects the trust patrons place in their library to provide meaningful, practical support.

This success has been made possible through strong partnerships and a commitment to responsible stewardship. The mobile Internet lending program was started with \$53,000 in FCC Emergency Connectivity Fund support. By leveraging external funding sources and working collaboratively with national providers, VBDL has been able to expand access while protecting local taxpayer resources. The hotspot program has grown thoughtfully, guided by data, patron feedback, and a clear understanding of community priorities. This approach ensures that innovation does not come at the expense of sustainability.

Equally important is the human impact of this service. Library staff regularly hear from patrons who describe how hotspot access has changed their circumstances, sometimes in small but meaningful ways, and sometimes profoundly. A student shares that consistent Internet access allowed them to keep pace with classmates. A job seeker describes completing applications and interviews online for the first time. A family explains how telehealth access reduced missed appointments and travel challenges. These stories reinforce the library's long-standing role as a place of opportunity, equity, and support.

The mobile hotspot program also reflects a broader shift in how public libraries serve their communities. While traditional collections and in-building services remain essential, libraries today extend well beyond physical walls. By lending connectivity itself, VBDL ensures that access to information follows patrons into their homes, workplaces, and daily lives.

This flexibility is particularly important in a county as geographically and demographically diverse as Van Buren, where transportation and distance can be significant barriers.

Looking ahead, the library recognizes that the technology and funding landscapes will continue to evolve. Grant programs change, market conditions shift, and community needs grow more complex. Through it all, VBDL remains committed to listening carefully, adapting responsibly, and continuing to deliver services that matter. The mobile Internet hotspot lending program will remain a vital part of that mission, helping ensure that all residents, regardless of location, income, or background, have the tools they need to succeed.

On behalf of the Library Board, staff, and partners, thank you for your continued support of Van Buren District Library. Your investment makes it possible for the library to respond to critical needs, innovate thoughtfully, and remain a trusted resource for the communities we serve. Together, we are helping Van Buren County stay connected, informed, and resilient, today and into the future.

With appreciation,
Dan Hutchins
Executive Director
Van Buren District Library

(Re)Discovering Lost Skills

In 2025, we put our phones down and focused on lost and endangered skills, from fiber arts to tincture making and everything in between. There were classes on gold leaf, carving, basket weaving, and even cheese making! Patrons went home from each program with a little more knowledge from our past and something that they made with their own two hands.

VBDL has continued into 2026 with classes and events that promote old hobbies and crafts. Lawrence routinely offers sewing classes, Webster Memorial hosts gardening and canning series, and Bloomingdale gives out many take home kits that let patrons continue to learn outside the library. Check out your local branch to see what classes are offered!



2025 VBDL By-the-Numbers

EVENTS & CLASSES

EVENTS & CLASSES: 1,857
OVERALL ATTENDANCE: 20,685

SUMMER READING PROGRAM ATTENDANCE: 2,989
PASSIVE PROGRAMS: 1,829

PEOPLE

SERVICE POPULATION: 44,230
NUMBER OF VISITORS: 134,987
TOTAL REGISTERED CARDHOLDERS: 12,952

NEW CARDHOLDERS IN 2025: 1,656
PUBLIC MEETING ROOM USES: 484

ITEMS

ITEMS LOANED TO BORROWERS: 329,600
ITEMS LOANED TO OTHER MICHIGAN LIBRARIES: 10,343
ITEMS BORROWED FROM OTHER MICHIGAN LIBRARIES FOR VBDL PATRONS: 13,719

COMPUTERS

NUMBER OF PUBLIC COMPUTER USES: 10,769
NUMBER OF WIFI USES: 45,589
EBOOKS, FILMS, TELEVISION, AND MUSIC
STREAMED OR DOWNLOADED: 62,104

ONLINE RESOURCE USES (TUTOR.COM,
TRANSPARENT LANGUAGES, ANCESTRY.COM,
FOLD3, ETC.): 81,206
CELLULAR INTERNET HOTSPOT LOANS: 6,761

COLLECTION SIZE BY FORMAT

TOTAL COLLECTION SIZE: 176,647
BOOKS: 105,473 OR 60%
DIGITAL (EBOOKS, E-AUDIOBOOKS, STREAMING
FILMS, ETC.): 42,891 OR 24%
DVDS: 13,475 OR 8%

AUDIOBOOKS: 3,127 OR 2%
CELLULAR INTERNET HOTSPOTS:
420 OR LESS THAN 2%
MAGAZINES: 2,387 OR 1%

CIRCULATION BY COLLECTION

CHILDREN'S BOOKS: 137,929 OR 42%
ADULT BOOKS: 70,328 OR 21%
DIGITAL BOOKS, AUDIO BOOKS, FILMS, ETC.:
62,104 OR 19%
ADULT DVDS & AUDIOBOOKS: 26,991 OR 8%

SPECIAL COLLECTIONS: 15,084 OR 5%
CHILDREN'S DVDS & AUDIOBOOKS:
10,403 OR 3%
CELLULAR INTERNET HOTSPOTS: 6,761 OR 1%

COMPARATIVE BRANCH CIRCULATION

TOTAL ITEMS CIRCULATED = 329,600
ANTWERP: 89,628 OR 29%
WEBSTER: 78,707 OR 26%
BANGOR: 41,863 OR 14%
LAWRENCE: 36,152 OR 12%

DIGITAL ITEMS NOT ASSOCIATED WITH A SPECIFIC
BRANCH (HOOPLA): 37,490 OR 12%
GOBLES: 20,949 OR 7%
BLOOMINGDALE: 16,254 OR 5%
COVERT: 8,557 OR 3%

Introducing Kanopy!

Award-Winning, Educational Films, and Entertaining Films and TV Shows Available at No Cost Courtesy of The Van Buren District Library



As the cost of video streaming services skyrockets, people are discovering one of the best resources for streaming content is their local public library. Those who live or work in Van Buren District Library's service area can now access more than 33,000 popular, entertaining, fun, and educational films and TV shows at no cost, without ads, courtesy of VBDL. With a valid library card, members of the community can enjoy thousands of hours of quality content with Kanopy, the streaming platform from Libby/Overdrive, by downloading the app or accessing via browser at <https://vbdl.kanopy.com/>.

With their library cards, VBDL's Kanopy users can enjoy entertaining films,

documentaries, foreign films, classic cinema, independent films, bingeable TV series and educational videos. Films currently available include *Molli and Max in the Future*, *The Beauty of Blackness*, *The Dawn Wall* as well as TV shows such as *Luther*, *Alone: Frozen* and *Blackshore*. Families can also watch Kanopy Kids content, a curated collection of movies and shows for children. Check out the many programs from BBC, PBS, and many more!

At the beginning of each month, community members with a valid library card will automatically receive 30 digital tickets on their account. Each title shows the number of tickets required to view the movie or TV show, Kanopy

Kids does not require any tickets and viewing is unlimited.

Featuring zero ads, Kanopy's platform is available via web browser, as well as on iOS, Android and all major streaming devices including Roku and smart TVs such as Apple TV and Samsung Smart TV. To get started enjoying thousands of films and TV shows, download Kanopy or visit <https://vbdl.kanopy.com/>.

Library patrons can also access a wide selection of popular digital ebooks, audiobooks, comics, and digital magazines at no cost, through the Libby and Hoopla apps.



2025 Library Donors

Bloomington Communications
Bronson Healthcare Group
Chia Cheng Kao
Covert Community Foundation
Doug Olsen Memorial
Jan Roeder

Justice for All Commission
of the Michigan Supreme Court
Lucinda Boven
Marion Foster
Mary Louise Myrkle
Midwest Energy

Pamela Mayer
Sandra Cochrane
Southwest Michigan
Library Cooperative
VFW Auxiliary 6248

Statements of activities for the year ended December 31, 2025

	INDIVIDUAL LIBRARY MAJOR FUNDS		TOTAL-MODIFIED ACCRUAL BASIS	GASB NO. 34 ADJUSTMENTS	LIBRARY AS A WHOLE STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES-FULL ACCRUAL BASIS
	GENERAL FUND	ENDOWMENT FUND			
REVENUES:					
TAXES	\$3,196,934	-	\$3,196,934	-	\$3,196,934
STATE SOURCES	47,477	-	47,477	-	47,477
PENAL FINES	155,838	-	155,838	-	155,838
FEES AND BOOK FINES	34,920	-	34,920	-	34,920
INVESTMENT INCOME	159,653	924	160,577	-	160,577
LOCAL CONTRIBUTIONS AND OTHER	237,569	-	237,569	-	237,569
TOTAL REVENUES	\$3,832,391	\$924	\$3,833,315	-	\$3,833,315



2025 VBDL Volunteers

Janet Abshagen
 Lisa Adams
 Sherryl Arno-Bosker
 Tyler Augst
 Lisa Baker
 Lucinda Boven
 Rose Boyan
 Sal & Denise Campagna
 Janet Cathcart
 Carla Chase
 Kristen Colgren
 Crista Cornejo
 Joan Cox
 Anne Cox
 Lori Dillenbeck
 Katie Dragan
 Wendy Estrada
 Rachel Ferrell
 Gail Gailbreath

Bette Glindmeyer
 Julie and Joe Glista
 John Gritter
 Christine Hartzell
 Anne Hawkinson
 Theresa and Jeff Heaton
 Debbie Hurst
 Carol Iverson
 Karen Jensen
 Niki Juriga
 Steve Kaszar
 Ann Kaufman
 Paul Kolon
 Matt Kusmack
 Joe Leary
 Bob & Diane Lewis
 Geri Lima
 Kris Locke
 Susan Marks

Linda Marshall
 Matthew May
 Pamela Mayer
 Evie Mead
 Phyllis Moore
 Diane Neumeier
 Mark Oldham
 Denny Olsen
 Natalie Pausch
 Jan Petersen
 Ted Petersen
 Jean Porath
 Ike & Joy Porter
 Linda Read
 Mary and Tim Redmon
 Jan Roeder
 Carolyn Rusk
 John Schoon
 Denise Schultz

Jim Sebree
 Vera Sebree
 Edward Sichterman
 Kelsey Smith
 Bonita Suter
 Marlene Suter
 Betty Usrey
 Kellie Vandermeer
 Natalie Weintraub
 VBISD Cosmetology Program
 Students
 Lawrence Royalty
 Lawrence Garden Club
 Lois Boeskool and Therapy Dog
 SiSi
 Karol Buckner and Therapy Dog
 Emmie
 Tami Young and Therapy Dog
 Lebowski

Statements of revenues, expenditures and changes in fund balance/ statements of activities for the year ended December 31, 2025

					LIBRARY AS A WHOLE STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES-
EXPENDITURES/ EXPENSES:	GENERAL FUND	ENDOWMENT FUND	TOTAL-MODIFIED ACCRUAL BASIS	GASB NO. 34 ADJUSTMENTS	FULL ACCRUAL BASIS
SALARIES	\$1,571,771	-	\$1,571,771	\$6,815	\$1,578,586
PAYROLL TAXES	118,167	-	118,167	-	118,167
INSURANCE (HEALTH, LIFE, DISABILITY, W/C)	127,987	-	127,987	-	127,987
PENSION	47,420	-	47,420	56,492	47,420
OFFICE AND LIBRARY SUPPLIES	10,425	-	10,425	-	10,425
POSTAGE, PRINTING, COPYING	5,796	-	5,796	-	5,796
GAS AND OIL	2,806	-	2,806	-	2,806
JANITOR SUPPLIES	4,862	-	4,862	-	4,862
PROFESSIONAL FEES	145,585	-	145,585	-	145,585
CONTRACTUAL SERVICES	29,940	-	29,940	-	29,940
UTILITIES	78,540	-	78,540	-	78,540
TELEPHONE	33,928	-	33,928	-	33,928
TRAVEL	12,860	-	12,860	-	12,860
PROMOTIONAL AND READING PROGRAMS	78,762	-	78,762	-	78,762
GENERAL AND VEHICLE INSURANCE	7,002	-	7,002	-	7,002
MAINTENANCE	85,641	-	85,641	-	85,641
CONTINUING EDUCATION	6,532	-	6,532	-	6,532
CAPITAL OUTLAY	52,899	-	52,899	(40,174)	52,899
AUDIOVISUAL, BOOKS, PERIODICALS	328,315	-	328,315	218,538)	328,315
INTERNET FEES	62,453	-	62,453	-	62,453
DEPRECIATION	-	-	-	233,090	233,090
TOTAL EXPENDITURES/EXPENSES	\$2,811,691	-	\$2,811,691	\$37,685	\$2,849,376
NET CHANGE IN FUND BALANCES/NET POSITION	\$1,020,700	\$924	\$1,020,700	\$ (37,685)	\$983,939
FUND BALANCE/NET POSITION-BEGINNING OF YEAR	2,747,377	233,575	2,747,377	1,173,843	\$4,154,795
FUND BALANCE/ NET POSITION-END OF YEAR	\$3,768,077	\$234,499	\$3,768,077	\$1,136,158	\$5,138,734



Covert



Bloomingdale



Decatur



Lawrence

Library Locations & Hours

WEBSTER MEMORIAL LIBRARY DECATUR

District Administrative Offices
200 North Phelps Street, Decatur, MI 49045
Phone: 269.423.4771 | Fax: 269.423.8373
www.facebook.com/VBDLWebsterMemorial
Monday - Thursday: 9:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.
Friday: 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Saturday: 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

ANTWERP SUNSHINE LIBRARY MATTAWAN

24823 Front Avenue, Mattawan, MI 49071
Phone: 269.668.2534 | Fax: 269.668.5332
www.facebook.com/VBDLAntwerp
Monday - Wednesday: 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.
Thursday & Friday: 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Saturday: 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

BANGOR BRANCH LIBRARY

420 Division Street, Bangor, MI 49013
Phone: 269.427.8810 | Fax: 269.427.0588
www.facebook.com/bangorbranch
Monday-Wednesday: 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.
Thursday-Friday: 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Saturday: 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

BLOOMINGDALE BRANCH LIBRARY

109 East Kalamazoo, Bloomingdale, MI 49026
Phone: 269.521.7601 | Fax: 269.521.7614
www.facebook.com/VBDLBloomingdale
Monday-Wednesday: 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.
Thursday-Friday: 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Saturday: 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

2026 BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Denise Campagna - Lawrence Township
Bruce Cutting - Antwerp Township
Pam Dickerson - Village of Bloomingdale
Sandy Hanson - Van Buren County,
Secretary/Treasurer
Betty Markel - City of Bangor
Wayne Rendell - Covert Township, Chairperson
David Vliek - Decatur Township,
Vice-Chairperson

*Download or Stream eBooks, Audiobooks,
Films, and Television Series from the
Libby, Hoopla, and Kanopy apps.*

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

www.vbdl.org

COVERT BRANCH LIBRARY

33680 M-140 Hwy, Covert, MI 49043
Phone: 269.764.1298 | Fax: 269.764.0433
www.facebook.com/covertbranch
Monday-Wednesday: 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.
Thursday-Friday: 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Saturday: 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

GOBLES BRANCH LIBRARY

105 East Main Street, Gobles, MI 49055
Phone: 269.628.4537 | Fax: 269.628.0362
www.facebook.com/GoblesBranchVBDL
Monday-Wednesday: 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.
Thursday-Friday: 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Saturday: 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

LAWRENCE BRANCH LIBRARY

212 North Paw Paw Street, Lawrence, MI 49064
Phone: 269.674.3200 | Fax: 269.674.3704
www.facebook.com/lawrencecommunitybranch
Monday-Wednesday: 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.
Thursday-Friday: 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Saturday: 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.