

Director's Report for Board Meeting January 21, 2026

Vision: *Welcoming, Inspiring and Connecting our Community.*

Mission: *We serve as a community hub by connecting our patrons to all forms of literacy, lifelong, learning and growth.*

[RCL Monthly Calendar](#)



Robust Collections

- ★ Provide barrier-free access to resources for the community that are most in demand.
 - The library continues updating OPAC lists to drive placed reserves and increase circulation. The “Coming Soon” list generates excitement among patrons, and Mary will continue updates while we more intentionally guide readers to these lists to boost readership.
 - On January 28, the library will celebrate National Shelfie Day by inviting patrons to participate in a staff-led guessing game. Patrons are encouraged to match bookshelf photos with staff members, offering a lighthearted way to highlight staff personalities, and strengthen community connection with the library and its team.
 - Thanks to the millage, the library has added Kanopy and Comics Plus to its digital offerings. Kanopy provides streaming access to movies, documentaries, and educational videos, while Comics Plus allows patrons to read a wide range of digital comics and graphic novels.
 - The library’s displays are thoughtfully designed, featuring a prompt to read a short book to achieve reading goals, a community driven favorites shelf, and MeL signage that encourages patrons to borrow items we don’t have. Well designed displays can be a conversion multiplier, acting as a readers’ advisory tool, and inviting patron engagement.
 - To celebrate last year’s record breaking programs and circulation, the library hosted a patron appreciation event on January 7. Surpassing 100,000 items circulated was an internal benchmark and places the library in the top 5 percent of Michigan libraries of similar size.



Enriching Programs

- ★ Provide opportunities to create, learn, be entertained and come together.
 - Children’s Librarian Carrie Dunn’s Tuesday morning workshop program continues to demonstrate consistent quality and thoughtful planning each week. The program reflects strong instructional design and intentional use of space and materials. Carrie’s ability to clearly explain the planning behind the program supports shared learning for staff through observation.

- Program Snapshots continue to be a useful tool for highlighting library offerings and supporting program marketing. Within the first 18 hours, a recent Cookbook Club social media post received 2,300 views, including 1,474 unique viewers, and helped attract new social media followers to our library’s Facebook page. Meanwhile the program had 18 in-person attendees.
- This month featured the first program in the Winter “Never Too Old” series, demonstrating that offering daytime programs reaches adult patrons who may be unavailable during evening hours, thanks to Desiree and Jason for helping Anna with kicking off this new series.
- Teen programming in December saw participation with over 20 teens attending the International Winter Holiday Taste Test and over 20 teens participated in a Make Your Own Snowglove program.
- Anna presented a virtual webinar on adult programming for the Mid-America Library Alliance, sharing expertise and best practices with library professionals.
- Way to go Heidi, the first staff member to complete the 50 Books Adult Year-Long Reading Challenge. Her participation helps model a staff reading culture, while enhancing her ability to provide informed book recommendations to patrons.

Broad Outreach

- ★ Expand meaningful partnerships with local organizations to strengthen community inclusion.

- Planning has already begun and our library will once again participate in Library Hop, an annual event with Southwest Michigan libraries that encourages patrons to visit neighboring libraries.
- Mary was promoted to the new part-time Library Outreach Coordinator position and has already revamped the library’s reading challenges and scheduled Storytime visits at Richland Elementary and Ryan Intermediate. This is a targeted effort to increase the library’s visibility in schools and the community.
- Partnered with local organization, Rise Therapy & Wellness, to present *You’re Never Too Old*, an adult education session on stress management
- Collaborating with Kalamazoo business, Mason Jar Plant Shop, to offer a workshop on *Keeping Your Houseplants Alive*, providing practical tips and care techniques for plant enthusiasts.
- Partnering with MSU Extension’s Finance Educator to offer *Prepare for a Financial Disaster*, providing practical strategies for residents to safeguard their finances in emergencies.



Strong Operations

- ★ Ensure sustainable funding sources for operating hours, collections, services, programs and staff.
 - The annual State Aid Report was successfully submitted to the Library of Michigan by Anna and Jack, ensuring continued compliance and eligibility

for state funding.

- The library announced new hours beginning in March, with Monday open 10–6 and Saturday 10–3. These expanded hours are made possible by the passing of the recently passed millage.
- The Director researched paid parental leave policies at other Michigan libraries, gathering examples and discussing the value of offering this employee benefit to library staff when a library has the means to do so.
- BC Lawn Maintenance, our landscaping service, will provide snow removal this winter.
- Staff have been requested to submit their Friends of the Library grant requests in preparation for the Spring FoL meeting. This process supports staff-led initiatives and programs while fostering collaboration with our volunteer Friends group.



Additional Information outside the scope of the RCL Strategic Plan.

- Strength in numbers. Last week showed the library team’s flexibility and collaboration, ensuring programs and services continued smoothly. Ann W. stepped in to assist with MeL for Anna, Jason covered the children’s desk while Erica was out last week, Desiree ran Anna’s Cooking Club, and Anne led Friday morning Storytime.
- The library welcomes new bookkeeper, Kelly Scott, who has quickly demonstrated capability and efficiency through initial meetings and onboarding. Longtime bookkeeper Dan Carl has retired, leaving a significant wealth of institutional knowledge, and we thank him for his many years of help.
- The upcoming March Newsletter will highlight the successful implementation and outcomes of the library’s 2022–2025 Strategic Plan.
- Quarterly preventive maintenance by Kalamazoo Mechanical was completed on January 7, supporting safe and reliable building operations.
- A recent mailed feedback letter received from Vicksburg Library Board members highlighted the positive impact of us matching staff members’ individual strengths with the right roles. The recognition reflects the value of intentional staff support and the contributions of the three team members who were acknowledged for representing the library well.
- In early February, the library will implement Phase 1 of the technology upgrade five-year plan with our IT support vendor. This 5-year plan, noted in the millage FAQ, begins the process of modernizing systems to better serve staff and patrons.