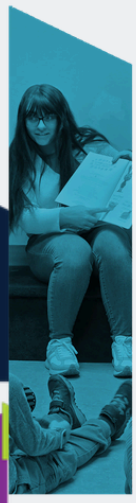
ANNUAL REPORT

2025

CASS DISTRICT LIBRARY

www.cassdistrictlibrary.org









Building for the Future: Strengthening Library Services Through Strategic Investment.

2025 was a transformative year for the Cass District Library as we continued our focus on construction of the new Edwardsburg Branch, advanced fundraising efforts to support this significant investment in the Edwardsburg community, and welcomed Christopher Korenowsky as our new Library Director.

Christopher brings strong leadership, a commitment to exceptional patron service, and a strategic vision for strengthening library services across our district to CDL. The progress achieved this year reflects the dedication of our staff, trustees, donors, and community partners who share a commitment to lifelong learning and community engagement.



Together, we positioned the library for future growth while remaining focused on meeting the needs of our patrons today. I am proud of all we accomplished in 2025 and excited about the opportunities ahead.

Eileen Toney
President, Cass District Library Board of Trustees

Excellence. Commitment. Dedication.

These are more than words. They are the defining attributes that guide the Cass District Library (CDL) in its commitment to public service and the communities we are privileged to serve. At CDL, we recognize that a public library's true value extends far beyond the books on its shelves. Our libraries are places of discovery, opportunity, and connection. As we look toward the future, our responsibility is not simply to maintain the high standards our patrons have come to expect, but to continually enhance the experiences and resources that bring value to their lives.

It was an honor to join the CDL team in August 2025, during an exciting period of growth and transformation. Construction of the new Edwardsburg Branch was well underway, another successful Summer Reading Program had just concluded, and our dedicated staff was preparing for a busy fall season. I was immediately impressed by the unwavering commitment of the individuals who make this organization exceptional.



Our greatest opportunities remain ahead, and I am privileged to help shape the next chapter of Cass District Library's story.

Christopher Korenowsky
Director, Cass District Library

Community Partners

Bergman Small Animal Veterinary
Berrien Resa
Better World Books
Bolt Laserworks
Calvin Township
Cass County 4-H Extension Office
Cass County Board of Commissioners
Cass County Council On Aging
Cass County Courts
Cass County Emergency Management
Cass County Office of Sheriff
Cass County Road Commission
Cass Family Clinic
Cassopolis Family Clinic Network
Cassopolis Public Schools
Circle Federal Credit Union
City of Niles, MI
Culver's Elkhart, IN
Dussels
Edwardsburg Chamber of Commerce
Edwardsburg Public Schools
Flowers Early Learning
Four Winds Casino
Girl Scouts of Northern Indiana-Michiana
Hardings
Howard Township
Invenergy
Jefferson Township
LaGrange Township
Mason Township Board
Michigan Gateway Community Foundation
Midwest Energy and Communications (MEC)
Milton Township
Miss Cassopolis Court
Mosier Well Drilling
MSU 4-H Extension Office
MSU Kinship Care Resource Center
Newburg Township
Ontwa Township
Ontwa Township Edwardsburg Police Dept.
PBS Michiana-WNIT
Penn Township
Penn Township Volunteer Fire Department
Pokagon Township
Porter Township
Possibilities Network
The Marcellus News
True's Towing
Underground Railroad Society of Cass County
United Way of Southwest Michigan
Village of Edwardsburg
Volinia Township

Celebrating Our Carnegie Legacy: A $10,000 Gift

In November 2025, Cass District Library (CDL) was selected to receive a $10,000 gift from the Carnegie Corporation of New York as part of Carnegie Libraries 250, a national initiative celebrating the upcoming 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. This gift recognized the enduring contributions of Carnegie libraries throughout the United States.

Originally opened in 1909 as the LaGrange Township Library, CDL's historic Local History Branch in the center of Cassopolis is one of 53 Carnegie libraries constructed in Michigan through Andrew Carnegie's philanthropic efforts. The building remains an important architectural and cultural landmark, reflecting more than a century of commitment to public education and community enrichment.

Following a major restoration in 2020–2021, the Local History Branch continues to serve as a center for historical preservation, genealogical research, and a celebration of the past.

The generous $10,000 gift will help CDL further celebrate this remarkable legacy, with a portion of the funding supporting public programming focused on the rich history of Cass County, the surrounding region, and the state of Michigan. This recognition honors not only the historical significance of the Carnegie building, but also CDL's continued commitment to preserving the past while engaging the future.

























Edwardsburg Branch: A Year of Progress and Transformation

Throughout 2025, Cass District Library (CDL) made significant strides toward completing its new Edwardsburg Branch, one of the most ambitious capital improvement projects in its history. The approximately 9,500-square-foot facility represents a transformative investment in public library services, designed to provide expanded hours, modern technology, flexible meeting spaces, and new opportunities for community engagement.

Construction advanced steadily throughout the year, and working collaboratively with Cornerstone Construction Management, Abonmarche, The Barton Group, and other project partners, CDL continued moving forward with building construction and interior design.

A tornado on March 30, 2025, caused extensive tree damage at the construction site. Fortunately, the building structure was not damaged. The library worked with its construction partners to address the fallen trees and associated cleanup. As with any large-scale construction project, unexpected occurrences are the norm as opposed to the exception. By May 2025, the project had reached approximately 43% completion, according to a report presented to the CDL Board of Trustees by The Barton Group.

Beyond the physical construction, considerable attention was devoted to creating a facility that would serve generations of library patrons. From flexible gathering spaces, enhanced technology, thoughtfully designed collections, furnishings, and outdoor amenities, every element reflected a commitment to accessibility and intentionality.

The year also brought continued progress in fundraising and donor engagement, reflecting the generosity and commitment of local businesses, organizations and community members. As 2025 drew to a close, attention increasingly turned toward completing the facility and preparing for the transition into a new era of library service in the Village of Edwardsburg.

In 2025, CDL and the community did more than construct a new building, The foundation for the next generation of learning, discovery, and community connection in Edwardsburg was laid.

PICTURES WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS

Cass District Library (CDL) brings our district together all year long to learn, create, and share throughout life. Through these moments, our branches serve as a welcoming home for lifelong discovery, creativity, and community connection.



2025 SUMMER READING PROGRAM







Our 2025 *Color Our World* summer reading events built reading confidence and kept young minds sharp, giving local kids a fun, colorful reason to stay connected to books and discovery all season long.

2025 HOLIDAY EVENT PROGRAMS







Seasonal events throughout the district open our doors to local families looking to gather, connect, and spend quality time together with activities that make local tradition even more meaningful.





2025 ADULT PROGRAMS







Designed to enrich everyday life, public programs for adults across our district invite community members to explore personal passions, gain useful knowledge, and build lasting friendships with friends and neighbors who share their interests.

SOME OF THE PEOPLE BEHIND OUR LIBRARIES

Behind every successful public library is a dedicated team of individuals whose knowledge and commitment to service make a meaningful difference in the communities they serve.

Throughout 2025, the employees of Cass District Library (CDL) demonstrated these qualities each and every day. Across our five library locations, staff continued to provide exceptional public service, connect patrons with valuable resources, and delivered engaging educational and cultural programming for all ages.

The year also presented significant opportunities for growth and change. From the ongoing construction of the new Edwardsburg Branch, to a transition in organizational leadership, CDL employees demonstrated flexibility, teamwork, and an unwavering commitment to the mission. Their ability to embrace change while maintaining the high standards of public service our communities have come to expect reflects the strength of this organization.

The CDL Team is more than custodians of books and information. They are educators, problem-solvers, and community ambassadors who help make our libraries essential institutions in the lives of those we serve. As CDL looks toward the future, our continued success will depend upon the talents and collective contributions of these exceptional individuals. To every member of the Cass District Library team, thank you for your service and the commitment you bring to the public library every single day.



Howard Branch Manager*
Kayla Bambrick



Interlibrary Loan Coordinator
Morgan Dull



Programming & Outreach Manager
Stephanie Knepple



Circulation Assistant
Marie Koenigshof



Mason/Union Branch Manager
Holly Nelson



Circulation Assistant
Sarah Payton



Circulation Manager
Gabby Porter



Business and Operations Manager
Brandi Roberts



Circulation Assistant
Kamryn Smith



Edwardsburg Branch Manager*
Molly Welsch



Local History Branch Manager
Jon Wuepper

* Reflects current title as of publication

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHT

GENERAL FUND

	Amount	Overall Percentage
Taxes	$1,744,582.00	83.1%
State Sources	$45,110.00	2.1%
USF Grant	$61,503.00	2.9%
Penal Fines	$113,484.00	5.4%
Patron Service Fees	$20,503.00	1%
Investment Income	$47,108.00	2.2%
Local Contributions and Other	$68,035.00	3.2%
Total Revenues	**$2,100,325.00**	

EXPENDITURES & GENERAL FUND

Salaries	$643,779.00	43.6%
Payroll Taxes	$46,915.00	3.2%
Employee Benefits	$165,849.00	11.2%
Library Materials/Processing	$145,356.00	9.8%
Contractual/Professional Services	$97,259.00	6.6%
Insurance	$19,582.00	1.3%
Public Programs	$21,268.00	1.4%
Utilities	$82,205.00	5.6%
Internet Services	35,333.00	2.4%
Repairs and Maintenance	$64,835.00	4.4%
Capital Expenditures	$87,233.00	5.9%
Automation	$48,000.00	3.2%
Supplies	$20,194.00	1.4%
Total Expenditures/Expenses	$1,477,808.00	
Fund Balance/ Net Position - End of Year	**$622,517**	

Annual audit conducted by Kruggel Lawton CPAs.

LIBRARY VALUE CALCULATOR

Figures indicate how much patrons would pay out-of-pocket if these services and resources were not freely available through the library.

ADULT BOOKS BORROWED
$373,320.00

YOUNG ADULT BOOKS BORROWED
$30,852.00

CHILDREN'S BOOKS BORROWED
$441,949.00

AUDIOBOOKS BORROWED
$7,429.00

INTERLIBRARY LOAN MATERIALS
$145,775.00

DOWNLOADED MATERIALS
$680,820.00

MOVIES & CDS BORROWED
$37,000.00

HOURS OF COMPUTER USE
$75,408.00

ADULT PROGRAMS
$40,680.00

TEEN PROGRAMS
$1908.00

CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS
$23,394.00

TOTAL $1,858,535.00

Figures calculated through ilovelibraries.org/what-libraries-do/calculator

2025 BY THE NUMBERS

65,355
TOTAL USER VISITS

28,716
MAIN BRANCH

7,772
HOWARD BRANCH

21,996
EDWARDSBURG BRANCH

6,426
MASON/UNION BRANCH

445
LOCAL HISTORY BRANCH

6,132
COMPUTER USERS

25,545
WIFI SESSIONS

3,438
REFERENCE QUESTIONS ANSWERED

52,338
WEBSITE USERS

967
LIBRARY CARDS ISSUED

5,831
LENT

7,770
BORROWED

110,710
TOTAL ITEMS CIRCULATED

20,699
ITEMS BORRWED

65,322
ITEMS CIRCULATED

24,689
WEBSITE USERS

38,238
TOTAL DATABASE USAGE

306
USERS

35,959
USERS

32
USERS

1,941
USERS

2025 SUMMER READING PROGRAM

91
PROGRAMS

2,071
PARTICIPANTS

STORYTIME

196
PROGRAMS

2,695
PARTICIPANTS

TEEN PROGRAMS

23
PROGRAMS

540
PARTICIPANTS

ADULT PROGRAMS

175
PROGRAMS

1,786
PARTICIPANTS

CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS

74
PROGRAMS

2,294
PARTICIPANTS

LOCATIONS

EDWARDSBURG BRANCH
26964 Main Street
Edwardsburg, MI 49112
(269) 487-9215

HOWARD BRANCH
2341 Yankee Street
Niles, MI 49120
(269) 487-9214

LOCAL HISTORY BRANCH
145 N Broadway
Cassopolis, MI 49031
(269) 357-7823

MAIN BRANCH
319 M-62
Cassopolis, MI 49031
(269) 357-8722

MASON/UNION BRANCH
17049 US-12
Edwardsburg, MI 49112
(269) 357-7821

LIBRARY BOARD

EILEEN TONEY, PRESIDENT
Representing Howard Township

RONALD McADAM, VICE PRESIDENT
Representing Volinia, Penn & Newburg Townships

ANDREW CHURCHILL, TREASURER
Representing LaGrange Township

SANDRA ASMUS
Representing Pokagon, Milton & Jefferson Townships

JOSEPH GROSS
Representing Calvin, Ontwa & Porter Townships

LAURA HUGHES
Representing the Village of Edwardsburg

REBECCA CROCKER
Representing Mason Township

TABITHA SCHAFER
Representing At Large

Christopher Korenowsky
Board of Trustees, Secretary









