



LEIGHTON
TOWNSHIP
LIBRARY

LEIGHTON TOWNSHIP LIBRARY

4451 12TH ST, MOLINE, MI 49335 • 616-877-4143 • WWW.LEIGHTONLIBRARY.ORG

ANNUAL REPORT

APRIL 1, 2024 - MARCH 31, 2025

Education
Information
Recreation

1998

2024-2025

IT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE LEIGHTON TOWNSHIP LIBRARY TO PROVIDE SERVICE TO INDIVIDUALS AND GROUPS IN THE COMMUNITY BY MAKING AVAILABLE RECREATIONAL, EDUCATIONAL, INFORMATIONAL AND CULTURAL MATERIALS.

WHO WE ARE

The Leighton Township Library is located on the western edge of the township in Moline, Michigan. The library provides services to residents living within the entire Leighton Township boundaries. The library collection comprises 119,790 items including 29,106 print materials; 59,200 e-books; 18,150 e-audio books; 5,760 e-periodicals; 650 music CDs; 1,269 audio books; 330 Wii games, Switch games, board games, Launch Pads, Tonies, and kits; and 5,290 DVDs which are available for check-out. In total, over 99,976 items were checked out of the library during the fiscal year 2024-2025! There are also thousands of e-books available on Libby through Lakeland Library Cooperative and our partnering library systems! We have over 2,340 patrons with library cards, and thousands of people entered the library to utilize copying and printing services, faxing of documents, and to gain access to the internet through use of the desktop computers or the Wi-Fi signal.

The library provides many excellent programs to promote early literacy for young children, the love of creating and hands-on activities, community connections, as well as a gathering place for all ages!

LTL Board of Directors

Faith Miedema - President

Steve Martin - Vice-Chair

Susan Cotts - Treasurer

Kaylyn VanHarn - Secretary

Renee Baareman - Trustee

Lynn Gort - Trustee

Library Staff

Karen McKinnon
Director

Amy Schultz
Assistant Director

Linda Bouterse
Circulation

Justine Wiegers
Youth Services

Rhonda Burns
Circulation

Chris Stegink
Youth Services

Erin Peeple
Library Clerk

Katie Sankey
Library Clerk

Sydney Wyllys
Library Clerk

Erica Fennema
Library Page

Naomi Harms
Library Page

DIRECTOR REPORT

“Reading is an exercise in empathy, an exercise in walking in someone else’s shoes for a while.”
---Marjorie Blackman

As I reflect on the fiscal year that is from April 2024 to March of 2025, I realize that we have settled into our space. Instead of being the “old library”, and the “new addition”, visitors see it as one space. That means our planners and architects did it right! I hear comments on how beautiful the library looks and feels when entering the space. The Library Board approved an additional payment to be paid on the loan for the library addition, ensuring that the loan will be paid in advance of the ten- year term.

In May, a new Library Board Member was appointed. Thank you, Lynn Gort, for joining the Library Board. She filled the vacancy left when Michael Mulligan moved out of the area, and relocated to another State. She is a Leighton Township resident and is providing valuable input on the Board.

There is still maintenance to be done. In September of 2024, one of the original air conditioning units stopped running. It was leaking coolant. The AC unit and one furnace were replaced in November. These units were both over 25 years old. Vigilant quarterly maintenance by Hulst Heating and Cooling has paid off. This unit was even moved from the North side of the library building to the east side in preparation for the new Township Office building. A repair on a window frame on the east side of the building was also done to prevent exposure to the weather.

A new service was added to our catalog of offerings to patrons in the form of Hoopla, a digital media service by Midwest Tape. It “allows patrons to borrow and stream a wide variety of digital content-including audiobooks, e-books, music, movies, TV shows, and comics -instantly and 24/7 using their library card.” Access is available on web browsers, mobile apps on phones, tablets and smart TVs. Patrons had been requesting this service, especially those that had it from other library systems.

A staff member was added, working fifteen hours a week as a Library Clerk. This helps with all the tasks at the front desk and answering patron’s questions over the phone. This brings our staff total to ten, with an additional summer Library Page.

As we work together as a staff, or individually, our talents are used to benefit and serve our community. Please let your ideas, needs and wants be known so we can provide resources if possible. Please remember to tell a neighbor or friend to use the library, as we are here to serve YOU!

I hope to see you soon!

**Karen
McKinnon**
LIBRARY DIRECTOR



LIBRARY HISTORY

The Leighton Township Library began on March 4, 1974, as the Moline Public Library - a branch of the Dorr Township Library. It was initially located in a small 10x12 room in the basement of the Moline Town Hall, a historic building that had once served as a Christian Reformed Church (built in 1914) at 4410 Chappell Street. The library opened with 392 books. In 1982, after building renovations, it moved upstairs. By the early 1990s, the aging structure raised concerns and, in 1994, Dorr Township decided to end its funding of the Moline Branch. Moline residents rallied and, in September 1995, voters approved a 2-mill tax to establish their own library.

On April 1, 1996, the Leighton Township Library was officially established. Although it was now an independent entity, the library continued to operate in the same building, paying rent to Dorr Township, while planning for a new, dedicated library facility. A 10.79 acre property was secured on 12th Street and, on November 19, 1997, ground was broken for the new library. The project was completed and move-in began on October 8, 1998. Thus, the new Leighton Township Library officially opened its doors, marking a new chapter in the library's history and solidifying its place as a vital resource for the community. The bell from the old church where the library first began was brought to our new location, where it still sits today. A bell symbolizes peace and freedom and, as a communication symbol, it calls a community together. This symbol blends the past history with the future of the library.

A 2006 expansion added 665 square feet to the meeting room along with a kitchen area and built in cupboards, plus a 555 square foot children's room and a redesigned front entry with power-assisted door providing better weather protection. An open house celebrated this milestone on September 27, 2006.

In spring 2016, construction of the new Leighton Township Offices began on the north side of the library. The project was completed that October, with an open house held in December.

As the community continued to grow, the library soon needed more space. Groundbreaking for another addition took place on September 27, 2021, adding 2,850 square feet that included study rooms, a makerspace, and more shelving. The renovation open house was held on March 22, 2022, followed by a community celebration with crafts and activities on March 26.

In October 2023, the library received a grant for health and food literacy, resulting in a garden space and seed library which opened in the spring of 2024.

From just 392 books in 1974 to more than 42,000 items today, Leighton Township Library has grown with its community — and we're excited to see where the next chapter takes us.

**"You all do such a great job!
We're so grateful for this
library!" - Dani Helmholdt**