



Report to Library of Michigan Board of Trustees  
March 2025

Along with our daily work, the **Library Cooperatives of Michigan (LCM)** have been busy working on advocacy efforts this quarter. Our efforts are educational for our libraries and the public. Collectively and at individual cooperatives we have worked with statewide partners, including the Library of Michigan to:

- Provide information on LSTA and library funding to Michigan
- Provide libraries and the public with talking points about LSTA and Michigan eLibrary
- Provide a template press release for local libraries to share information with their communities
- Signed on to a Joint Statement on IMLS from Michigan Libraries, Museums, and Archives
- Participated in sharing information ourselves with legislators and the press

We will continue to advocate for the libraries of Michigan and the communities that we serve. Thank you to the Library of Michigan Board for your support.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "S. Bowers".

Steven K. Bowers  
President, Library Cooperatives of Michigan  
Executive Director, The Library Network

**Detroit Library Cooperative  
Library of Michigan  
March 17, 2025**

**City of Detroit Motor City Tech Bars**

The City of Detroit's Department of Innovation and Technology is working to help bridge the digital divide by partnering with libraries, recreation centers and educational institutions. As part of this effort, two branches, Redford and Douglass, are providing space for the Motor City Tech Bars. The public is invited to visit the Tech Bars for help with laptops, phones or other smart devices in need of repair. The service is being provided by the city's contractor, Human-IT, that has been contracted by the City of Detroit. This initiative is schedule to end on May 30, 2025.

**Tax Preparation Assistance**

The Accounting Aid Society is once again offering free tax preparation for households earning less than \$48,000 annually. This service is available at Main Library, and the Douglass and Duffield branches. The service began January 21 and runs through April 15, 2025.

**DPSCD Spelling Bee**

Main Library hosted the Detroit Public Schools Community District's annual spelling bee on Saturday, February 1, 2025. Kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade students displayed their spelling skills in front of an audience of approximately 300 encouraging family members, friends and teachers.

**Goal Line – Afterschool Program**

In October 2024, the Detroit Public Library began a partnership with *Goal Line*, an afterschool program. *Goal Line* works with designated Detroit schools to provide academic enrichment and social and emotional support to students in the program. The program is offered at the Edison, Hubbard, Sherwood Forest, and Redford branches.

**Jump Start – City of Detroit Program**

The Detroit Public Library entered a partnership with the City of Detroit's *Jump Start* program. *Jump Start* is a first of its kind adult basic education, workforce training and supportive services strategy for those who have been out of work/training for 6 months or more. The program offers a wide range of classes including computer literacy, Microsoft Word, internet training, resume writing, and employment assistance. *Jump Start* students have been participating in these classes offered at Main Library and the Bowen, Campbell, Douglass, Duffield, Elmwood Park, Franklin, Hubbard, and Sherwood Forest branches.



# LAKELAND LIBRARY COOPERATIVE

LEADING • LEARNING • LENDING

Report to the Board of the Library Michigan

March Madness had begun in a lot of different ways. I wish our Michigan basketball teams great success.

Like all of you, Lakeland, working with the LCM and MLA, is focused on doing all we can to understand and create proactive responses to the changes effecting funding from the federal Executive Orders that have been announced thus far and in the future.

We are grateful to work with all our partners during this unprecedented time.

Lakeland staff are also working on continuing education programs on challenging situations in the library, social media, accessibility and other topics. We are conducting an extensive evaluation of our shared integrated system and the options available with our current vendors and other vendors as well.

We are working with all 42 libraries on sharing more access through our patron discovery layer since we all use Bibliocore from BiblioCommons. Our new app and further functionality with our online registration service have both been well received.

I have finished working with 5 libraries on strategic plans and am starting or continuing the process with 6 others. I am scheduled to conduct board training at 7 libraries in the next few months.

We continue to deliver to all 42 libraries and catalog their collections as we share that role with 4 of our member libraries.

We look forward to being at advocacy and continuing to support public libraries in West Michigan.

Carol Dawe  
Director  
March 21, 2025

*Lakeland Library Cooperative*

*We strengthen libraries through expertise, services, and shared resources for the benefit of communities and individuals.*

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## LM Updates from MMLC

March 2025

- Lapeer District Library (LCL) is back in the news. Most of the Board are now from the Banning book group, including Chair and Vice-chair of the Board. One of the townships representatives was pressured off the board and then that township tried to put someone on the board for 5 years which is against the law. The County tried to put someone on the board who didn't live within the LDL area. And the Director Danielle Brigati has resigned after only being in the position since August 2024.
- Laingsburg Public Library's Director Sandra Chavez has announced her retirement effective 4/30/25. The Board is trying to determine whether they will join a district library near them or continue as a stand-alone library with very limited funds.
- Eric is working with Jennifer to plan the Library Cooperatives of Michigan (LCM) summer retreat. We are looking at the Mt Pleasant Area with the Saginaw Chippewa Tribal College hosting us. The dates we are planning the retreat will be August 20 to 22. We are looking into the possibility of staying at the casino.
- At the February Advisory Council meeting we had guest speakers Anne Heidemann and Winnay Wemiguase speak about the creation a new Indigenous classification system for the Saginaw Chippewa Tribal Libraries. They were awarded an IMLS National Leadership Grant in 2019 just before the covid shutdown, for the new classification.
- At our January Board Meeting we had Audit presented by Lewis & Knopf where MMLC received the highest rating for the audit.

**Cooperative Report to the Library of Michigan Board  
Mid-Michigan Library League – Jennifer Balcom, Director  
Spring 2025**

- The Cooperative successfully transitioned from Ploud to a WordPress-based website, addressing accessibility concerns during the redesign. A new logo is currently in development, expected to be completed by April 2025, further enhancing MMLL's branding efforts
- The MMLL Board has renewed the Cooperative's three-year lease on its current office space and updated personnel policies to reflect new ESTA legislation, including the implementation of a Work From Home policy. Additionally, the Plan of Service was revised to ensure compliance with OMA regulations between the MMLL Board and the Advisory Council.
- Wheatland Township Public Library in Remus, Michigan faced a narrow defeat in their .8 millage renewal vote last November, losing by just one vote. The library is preparing to reintroduce the millage on the ballot in May 2025. Meanwhile, the Friends of the Manton Library, a branch of the Cadillac-Wexford County Public Library, secured \$25,000 in grant funding to support the construction of a new Manton Branch Library, which is scheduled to open in late spring 2025. Leland Township Public Library is undergoing building renovations, and the Pentwater Township Library celebrated its 170th anniversary in February.
- Jennifer provided training and consultation to multiple libraries, including Wheatland Township Public Library, Falmouth Area Library, Seville Township Public Library, and met with Christy Trigg, the newly appointed Director of the Darcy Library of Beulah.



**Library of Michigan Report  
Northland Library Cooperative  
March 2025**

- Met with or called all 24 library directors to get updates and discuss current issues for their library.
- Completed **FY 23-24 Financial Audit**.
- **Two Virtual Northland Chats:**
  - Directors met to discuss and share marketing strategies
  - Circulation staff met to continue work on a common circulation practices document and plans for National Library Week.
- Working on best practices for materials delivery to Beaver Island District Library. RIDES does not service them. Currently a member library handles all requests for delivery, and returns are via USPS. Meetings with OCLC to establish a Worldshare account that would be paid for by NLC.
- **eRate Funding:** Six libraries participated in an eRate contract to upgrade their tech infrastructure. The hardware was installed this winter.
- Working with a strategic planning committee to create and send a member survey.
- 2025 Great Lakes Energy Grant: Provides \$15,000 to enhance digital literacy education at three libraries.
- Orientation of new library director at the Crooked Tree District Library
- Orientation of new branch manager at Crooked Tree District Library
- Libraries with PLOUD websites are in process of moving websites to My Web Maestro
- Researching new ILS options for the Wolverine Area Library. Their current antiquated system is not compatible with Melcat.
- Facilitated strategic planning sessions with board and staff for the Petoskey District Library
- Met with Up North Digital Steering committee to discuss mature content in Overdrive. No changes to the collection were made.
- Federal budget issues are a continued concerns for all libraries.
- Completed UM Cohort, attended MLA Advocacy and Connect sessions
- **Monthly eNewsletters** to all libraries
- **Providing consulting services** to directors and trustees: 81 contacts November - February. Example of consulting service: Understanding ESTA compliance. Support and networking continue to be a valued service of the cooperative.



# Suburban Library Cooperative

- The Suburban Library Cooperative has long been the host organized for MLibraryCard, an opt-in statewide reciprocal borrowing program. It hasn't been evaluated in some time, so SLC is working with a graduate student from the University of Michigan School of Information to evaluate and update the program.
- There are currently open Director positions at three SLC libraries: Harper Woods, Warren, and Armada. Harper Woods due to the director moving to another library, Warren due to retirement, and Armada due to the unexpected death of longtime director Margaret Smith.
- Two SLC libraries are preparing to close for renovation; Roseville will close this spring/summer, and St. Clair Shores will close this fall. Clinton-Macomb Main Library is also undergoing a renovation, but has stayed open with some restrictions.
- On April 3, SLC will host a training aimed at Trustees and Friends of the Library focused on advocacy. Larry Neal, director of the Clinton-Macomb Public Library, will be our speaker.

## Superiorland Library Cooperative

### Library of Michigan March 2025 Board Report

- The Spies Public Library has hired a new library director, Tarra Gamelin, and she started in January. Tarra and I met and I provided an overview of Superiorland and Upper Peninsula Region of Library Cooperation services.
- In February, Amanda Griggs of the Dickinson County Library and I participated in MLA's new podcast, *Chapter and Verse*. MLA Director Debbie Mikula and I interviewed Amanda about her career in libraries and the meaningful impact her work has on the community.
- On February 11 Superiorland hosted a training event at the Portage Lake District Library with a focus on frontline workers, circulation and technology. We are looking forward to hosting this as an annual event in the western U.P., open to all Superiorland member libraries.
- At Superiorland, we've been facilitating discussions with library directors and our board of directors regarding concerns with Hoopla, namely rising costs, sustainability and privacy with their product.
- For the first time, I'm working on an outline for a strategic planning process with one of the Superiorland member libraries.
- Our team at Superiorland has been working with our Erate consultant on the awarding of bids for FY25 Category 2 services and recently executed contract extensions for our two Erate internet consortiums.
- Our Reader Advisor at Great lakes Talking Books (GLTB) just published the GLTB winter newsletter. She also attended an outreach event in Escanaba where she presented to a support group of the visually impaired.
- Our IT team recently finished an email migration for one of our member libraries and they've been busy with equipment deliveries and installs after facilitating a discounted order of new computers for libraries in December.
- Many of our libraries are now using the recently launched myLIBRO app (purchased by Superiorland) to give their patrons mobile access to the library catalog and other features.
- Our annual UPRLC Annual Conference Committee is seeking session proposals through April 18. The call for vendors and sponsors is also now open. The conference will be hosted on September 17 and 18, 2025 on the campus of Bay College in Iron Mountain.
- Superiorland's programming committee has scheduled 33 events with 4 performers that will be visiting member libraries in June and July this year.



# Executive Director's Report

Steven K. Bowers  
March 2025

## **TLN Library Advocacy**

**Steven Bowers** attended the [COSLA](#) (Chief Officers of State Library Agencies) fly-in for library advocacy in Washington DC on 3/4 - 3/6/2025. The Michigan delegation of eight met with offices for our two Senators and for several House Rep. districts. You may download and distribute the following event materials as you see fit: [COSLA Priorities 2025](#) and [LM 2024 MI Libraries Snapshot One-Pagers for All MI and Districts](#)

Unfortunately, shortly after our visit, a [new executive order](#) from The White House was released, which aims to effectively eliminate several federal agencies including the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). TLN and other partners have released a [statement](#) in response. A week later and IMLS has already been greatly affected. If anyone wishes to contact their legislators via petition, please visit: [TLN.org/TakeAction](#)

For the most part TLN does not receive Federal funding but we are continuing to monitor the situation and to advocate for no loss in State funding, which is our primary source of income. TLN plans to participate in the [Michigan Library Advocacy Day](#) in April.

Everyone is invited to download and share the [TLN 2025](#) two-pager infographic showing all of the work we do with the funding that we receive. Shortcut to the doc at: [TLN.org/OurWork](#)

## **TLN RFID Project Update**

By end of summer TLN is on target to complete 1,000,000 tags out of the 2,000,000 we set out to tag in the shared system. Once we hit that milestone we are looking at moving forward on planning and an official request for proposals (RFP) for an Automated Materials Handling (AMH) system. Several libraries have completed their tagging and most others have a plan in place. TLN is also now offering RFID pads for sale for any library that would rather purchase through us, rather than a vendor. Keep up with the project at: [TLN.org/RFID](#)

## **Gleaners Food For Thought Campaign**

TLN is participating in the *Gleaners Food for Thought Campaign 2025*. From March 17 to April 11, visit your local participating library and donate non-perishable food items or money to help Gleaners feed people in your community and across Southeast Michigan. You can also make a monetary donation, online, by visiting: <https://tln.org/news/696073/>

## **TLN Shared System Releases Request for Quotes (RFQ)**

TLN has posted a Request for Quotes (RFQ) to look at pricing information for catalog systems on the market. Thanks to **Kelly Bennett** and **Celia Morse** for organizing TLN's first system RFQ! This will hopefully provide us some information to consider on the costs of systems, including our current vendor. We are not yet looking for a new system. The RFQ is posted online at: [TLN.org/bids](https://tln.org/bids)

## **Book and Author Society**

TLN's new Book and Author Society Committee held its first meeting this month. The group is planning for a large public event in 2025! Stay tuned for event info and forthcoming updates at: [bookandauthor.org](https://bookandauthor.org)

## **TLN Steering Committee Update**

The Steering Committee recently completed a review of their Bylaws and will be proposing changes to clarify language in the document and to align the document with current practices as well as the Board's Bylaws. Proposed changes will go out to the membership soon, for consideration and a vote.

Steering is also working on new goals and work based on the membership survey we had last fall. To summarize, the wants and priorities of the membership align with the work we are all doing. The committee will work on presenting this information in a format that everyone can have easy access to. **Thanks to everyone that completed the survey!**

To review the Steering Committee Agendas and Minutes login at: [TLN.org/group/Steering](https://tln.org/group/Steering)



## White Pine Library Cooperative

March 2025

- Working with UofM students to create a new framework for our OCLC/ILL Peabody system. The two-semester project will be completed in April. We then will look for website builders who use WordPress, understand library-based web interfaces, and also can provide hosting/tech support. This has been a great opportunity for our Cooperative and we have enjoyed working with library science students!
- Working with Clare Membiela on issues for a member library that is having some major board and staff issues.
- Working with a Library Director who feels they are being pushed out by their Board President. I have offered Board Training and provided other resources, but so far they have not responded.
- Met with a Trustee from a member library whom I will be helping with their director search.
- Provided Board Training at Caro Area District Library in January.
- Began accepting and sending ACH payments from/to members and vendors.
- Met with Trenton Smiley and Brown City District Library Director, Ruth Kulman, about the Marketing Makeover program with LCM and Midwest Tapes/hoopla.
- Hosted member directors, staff, and trustees on a bus trip to the MI State Capital and the Library of Michigan for a day of continuing education.
- Welcomed Melissa McCarthy, Thomas Township Library Director, and Sharona Rosnick, Millington Arebela District Library Director, to our Cooperative. Shared information about the services our Cooperative provides.
- Attended phone-in town hall with US Congresswoman Lisa McClain in March.
- Attended the grand re-opening of Briggs District Library in St. Johns. I was glad to meet a representative from Congressman Tom Barrett's office who also attended the event. Also met the general contractor of the building project and shared his contact information with a neighboring WPLC library that is looking at potential renovations.
- Visited Bad Axe Area District Library to learn about the renovations they are undergoing.
- Worked with staff at OverDrive to present a training session on Advantage Accounts to help with holds.
- Hosted a Patron Point demonstration for member libraries.
- Hosting a BiblioBoard demonstration for members in March.
- Hosting a Book Repair Workshop with Demco in April.
- I continue to provide information in weekly updates and virtual chats when needed.