

# Van Buren District Library News



a joint publication of Van Buren District Library and the Friends of Van Buren District Library

## New Covert Branch Library Scores High on the 'Wow' Scale

COVERT, MICHIGAN - - - On the gray, drizzly morning of December 14, a group of Covert elementary students brightened the day by hand-delivering the last 100 books from the former Covert Branch Library to the new facility at 33680 M-140. After serving 59 years as the Covert Library and then the Covert branch of Van Buren District Library, the former Packard Hall is now the sole home of the Covert Historical Museum.

Before the doors of the new facility were opened officially, Library Director David Tate and Covert Township Supervisor Barbara Rose commended the many supporters whose efforts made the project a reality. Rose said the new library is a significant event for Covert as it is the first new building downtown since 1978.

According to Tate, the Covert library is the seventh building or renovation project the library has undertaken since the county library reorganized as a stand alone library district in 1990.

Once the ribbon was cut, the students filed in and the library was open for business. "It's too big. We'll never find anything!" a few patrons were heard exclaiming. However, any fears quickly turned to joy when they discovered that browsing the shelves could be done without doing "the bump" with other patrons.

Matt Weston, interim branch librarian, is excited about the opportunities in Covert.

"There is so much available for all ages in the new branch. Our job at this point is to make the library a destination, while trying to ascertain what types of materials and services the patrons want, so we can meet their needs well into the future."

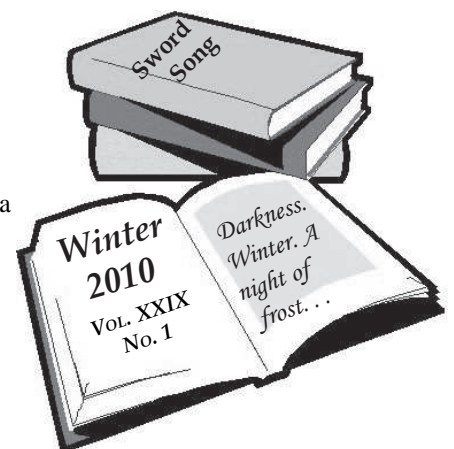
Weston joined VBDL in the fall of 2008 as Adult Services Librarian. He will serve as the interim branch librarian through most of this year until a permanent replacement is recruited.



A ribbon-cutting ceremony marked the official opening of the new Covert Branch library in December. Library Director David Tate (with scissors) is assisted by Covert Township Supervisor Barbara Rose. Looking on are (left to right) Mark Reile, TMP Associates, Carolyn Stuckum, Covert Twp. Treasurer, Dennis Palgen, Clerk, and Raleigh Wilson, Trustee.

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## News and Notes from Around the District

**Antwerp** - Toddler and Story Times begin at the Antwerp Sunshine Branch in February. Mrs. Nancy hosts Toddler Time Monday and Wednesday mornings at 10:30, and Mrs. Pat hosts Story Time for pre-schoolers on Tuesday mornings at 10:30 and Wednesday afternoon at 2:00 p.m. Make and Take Craft workshops, sponsored by the Friends of the Antwerp Sunshine Library, feature holiday and seasonal activities beginning in February and continuing through May. All members of the Junior Friends are encouraged to attend the group's next meeting on Tuesday, March 30, at 4:30 p.m. The public is invited to the Friends annual meeting on Tuesday, April 20, 7:00 p.m. (See the story below for more information.)

**Bangor** - Students are invited to join us for some Valentine's Day fun on Saturday, February 13, at the Bangor branch, between 11:00 a.m and 1:00 p.m. Activities include games, crafts and sweet treats. On Monday, March 1, author and Bangor High School graduate Thomas Funke will present an evening program on his book *50 Hikes in Michigan's Upper Peninsula*. Funke will have books available for purchase. In April, the branch is celebrating National Poetry Month with a display of books and poetry handouts.

**Bloomingtondale** - Pan pipes and a didgeridoo will be on display with other musical instruments at the Bloomingtondale branch in February. An electronic keyboard will be available so patrons may "tickle the ivories" or serenade others. In March, *Adam and the Goldfish*, will highlight the month's emphasis on pets and lead us into April's celebration of wild animals.

**Bloomingtondale cont'd** - In May, the branch explores the world's oceans in anticipation of the summer reading program. Any patrons who have photographs and artifacts that relate to pets, wild animals, or the oceans, and are willing to loan them to the branch for display purposes, are encouraged to bring them in during regular business hours.

**Covert** - The Covert Branch is compiling a list of patrons who are interested in computer training. If enough patrons express interest, the library can schedule workshop dates. The Prime Time Reading program, which encourages parents and children to read, will be held on Monday, February 1 and 8, from 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.

**Gobles** - The district library said farewell to longtime board member Pam Potts in December. The Gobles representative resigned her position after serving for 16 years. The city will soon name a replacement. Plans are being made to celebrate Earth Day on April 17 with a craft workshop. The emphasis will be on water, which will lead into the summer theme of "Make a Splash."

**Lawrence** - The public is invited to attend special programs in February and April. The first features Bob Myers from the Berrien County Historical Association. He will present *Lost on the Lakes: Shipwrecks on Lake Michigan*, on Tuesday, February 23, at 6:30 p.m. On Thursday, April 1, at 7:00 p.m., the Celtic Roots band will perform at the Van Buren Conference Center in Lawrence. The programs are free to the public thanks to support from the Friends of the Van Buren District Library and the Friends of the Lawrence Branch Library.

The Lawrence Friends are also sponsoring a teen photo challenge in February, and all patrons are invited to help us celebrate National Library Week, April 11 - 17.

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### Great Lakes Shipwreck Researcher to visit Antwerp Sunshine Branch



Great Lakes shipwreck  
researcher Ric Mixer

The Big Blow. White Hurricane. Freshwater Fury. Or simply, "The Storm." No matter the moniker, the fall storm of November 7 - 12, 1913, is thought to be the greatest storm ever to hit the Great Lakes.

Noted shipwreck researcher Ric Mixer explores the "King of Storms" and others during his program for the Friends of the Antwerp Sunshine Library in Mattawan. On Tuesday, April 20, Mixer presents *Final Run: Storms of the Century*. Using rare footage, eyewitness testimony and commentary, Mixer's presentation recalls the worst storms ever to hit the lakes.

Mixer will be recognized by fans of the Discovery and History channels, PBS, and the Outdoor Channel where he has been a featured resource speaker.

The program begins at 7:00 p.m. in the Antwerp Township meeting room adjacent to the library at 24823 Front Avenue in Mattawan. The program is free and open to the public as a benefit to the community by the Friends of the Antwerp Sunshine Library.

For more information, visit the library in Mattawan or call 269-668-2534.

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## 2009 VBDL Employees of the Year

The staff of the Covert Branch Library has been named Van Buren District Library Employees of 2009.

Library Director David Tate says the reason behind the group award is simple.

“This group of employees pulled together last year, sometimes under considerable stress, to serve the public and make Van Buren District Library a great place to work.”

Pauline McGuire, Miriam Bryant, LaDonna Golden, Alice Reissmann, and Cristina Ayla each received a certificate of appreciation and monetary award from the Friends of the Van Buren District Library.

According to Tate, the Covert staff faced many challenges during the year including planning the new branch library, while keeping the older, overcrowded facility open to the public, dealing with challenging patron requests, and finally, moving from the old library and opening the new branch all in one week.

“Every group has a leader,” Tate says, “and many thanks go to branch librarian Pauline McGuire for her tremendous leadership. Pauline is a team player. She exemplifies this by maintaining a great sense of humor, and by meeting every request from me and others in a professional and timely manner.”

The new branch in Covert opened officially in December (see related story on page 1). An open house is being planned for this spring.



**Van Buren District Library’s Employees of the Year 2009: (left to right) Pauline McGuire, Cristina Ayla, LaDonna Golden, Alice Reissmann, and Miriam Bryant.**

## TOP BOOKS of 2009

Without a doubt, Dan Brown, Sarah Palin, and Edward Kennedy joined Stephenie Meyer and Charlaine Harris as some of the most popular authors of 2009. The not-too-surprising list also included Cornwell, Patterson, Kellerman, Evanovich, Koontz, Sandford, Woods and other prolific favorites. But who was a surprise?

According to Adult Services Librarian Matt Weston, zombies were caught creeping up on vampires’ popularity with the release of *Pride, Prejudice and Zombies*. The novel by Seth Grahame-Smith (and Jane Austen!) was a wonderfully entertaining combination of the Austen classic and the living dead. Weston also points to Kathryn Stockett’s *The Help* as another pleasant surprise, along with Stieg Larsson’s *The Girl Who Played with Fire*.

Which author will be the big winner in 2010 is too difficult to predict. Memoirs by Laura Bush and Sarah Palin are due this year as are new titles from the Higgins Clarks, Iris Johansen, John Sandford and many others. Who knows? Maybe Grahame-Smith will slay us again with *Abraham Lincoln: Vampire Hunter*.

**WEBSTER NOTES** - “Genealogy 101” is the first in a series of events celebrating Webster Memorial Library’s 50th anniversary this year. The free workshop is Saturday, March 6, from 10:00 a.m. until noon, in Decatur. Pre-registration is requested, but not required. To register, phone (269) 423-4771.

The Van Buren Regional Genealogical Society’s calendar of events for 2010 is available. For a free copy, send an email to vbrgsgenealogy@gmail.com or call Webster Memorial Library in Decatur.

## ★ Join the Friends of the Van Buren District Library ★

Senior Citizen (60 & over)	\$ 5.00
Senior Couple	\$ 10.00
Individual	\$ 10.00
Family	\$ 15.00
Contributing	\$ 25.00
Benefactor	\$ 50.00
Sustaining	\$100.00
Donation	\$ _____

Send your name, address, and check for membership to  
**Friends of the Library** 200 N. Phelps Street, Decatur MI 49045

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ANTWERP SUNSHINE  
24823 Front Ave, Mattawan

BANGOR  
420 DIVISION STREET

BLOOMINGDALE  
109 E. Kalamazoo Street

COVERT  
33680 M-140 HWY

GOBLES  
105 East Main Street

LAWRENCE COMMUNITY  
212 North Paw Paw Street

**CONGRATULATIONS VBDL!**

VAN BUREN DISTRICT LIBRARY IS CELEBRATING  
ITS 20TH ANNIVERSARY IN 2010.

ON JANUARY 1, 1990, VAN BUREN DISTRICT LIBRARY  
WAS THE FIRST LIBRARY SYSTEM IN MICHIGAN  
TO BE ESTABLISHED UNDER THE DISTRICT LIBRARY ACT OF 1989.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE  
DISTRICT'S MANY  
ACHIEVEMENTS OVER THE PAST  
20 YEARS WILL BE FEATURED  
IN THE SUMMER EDITION OF  
THIS NEWSLETTER.

WEBSTER MEMORIAL LIBRARY  
IS CELEBRATING ITS 50TH  
ANNIVERSARY THIS FALL.  
MORE DETAILS WILL BE  
AVAILABLE THIS SUMMER.

**Please note!  
Van Buren  
District Library  
will be closed on the  
following date:**  
Monday, February 15, 2010  
for Presidents' Day



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<http://www.vbdl.org>

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