

White Lake Township Library

The 1960's and 1970's were decades that built the foundation of what is now the White Lake Township Library. Due to the efforts of a group of concerned citizens and involved politicians, the dream of a library in White Lake was realized. The Friendly Report, July 1994, Sue Hendershot

September 15, 1967: White Lake Twp. contracted with Highland Twp. to allow White Lake residents use of the Highland Twp. Library. An agreement continued with Highland Twp. through January of 1969.

June 5, 1973: A Library Service agreement with Waterford was approved. It was reported that in 1975 there were 758 White Lake residents registered. This contract remained in place until June 1981.

June 3, 1975: A Resolution was written by White Lake Twp. Clerk Ferdinand C. Vetter based on the Regular Meeting of the White Lake Township Board held on May 20, 1975. This resolution stated in part that "a majority of the qualified electors present and voting at said Annual Meeting authorized the levy of 3/10 of 1 mill for such purpose". The question of the tax for a free public library had been put to the electors of the Township at the Annual Meeting held on April 5, 1975. A Provisional Library Board was also approved until the Permanent Library Board was elected and consisted of Thomas E. Dangerfield, Janet M. Dobrin, Jane D. Edson, Joyce D. Kennedy, Richard B. Lonteen and Patricia A. Pfenning.

June 15, 1976: Ballot wording for proposition providing for a free public library to be placed on the August 3, 1976 election was approved and when put to the voters it passed.

November 1976: The following were elected to the Library Board - Jane Edson, Gloria Klein, Lawrence Phaneuf, Joseph Deinek, Edwin Dowd, Rebecca Ballard.

The remainder of the 1970's was spent setting up the parameters of the board as well as investigating, evaluating and reviewing various possibilities and alternatives for a Library facility.

March 17, 1981: The White Lake Community Hall was leased by the library board for a temporary library and used while plans were in motion to erect a permanent building. This is where the Grand Opening was held. A sizable number of volunteers made it all possible. Cicely Baker was hired as the Head Librarian. The library consisted of about 4,000 donated books; approximately 50% fiction and 50% nonfiction with a multitude of subjects. The books were shelved but not yet cataloged.

June 15, 1981: The Library begins lending books!

In a President's Report by Patricia A. Lewellen, it was stated that a membership in WOLF (Wayne Oakland Library Federation) tied White Lake into 70 other libraries. Another 1981 Activity report states that the library averaged 700 patrons per month and that since opening in June, approximately 1,050 library cards were issued.

As the Township hall space became inadequate, the library was moved to Brooks Elementary School.

Spring 1985: Construction of the new library building at 7527 Highland Road began and the Grand Opening was held that same year.

September 22, 2001: The reopening ceremony of the newly constructed and renovated library was held. The addition and renovations were the results of a November 1998 voter approved millage and included an addition to the upper floor and the addition of a lower floor.

May 4, 2019: New White Lake Library Sneak Peek - Kentucky Derby Day

Groundbreaking took place on May 2, 2018; site work began on May 23.

Library statistics moving into the new building early June 2019: 72,000 collection; online resource usage 28,000; circulation 217,000 and 67,000 visitors. Program attendance is 12,000.

White Lake Twp. resident and past library volunteer and employee Carol Burkhard recollects:

In the early years of our library, we who worked there felt great pride in the work we did. We were part of the beginning of the Information Age, going from card catalogs to computers. We wore the badge of public servants with pride and humility to be surrounded by all this knowledge and to know we played a part in bringing that knowledge through our township library to the township residents.