



Information. Ideas. *Excitement!*

2011 KENT DISTRICT LIBRARY
Annual Report

KDL
Kent District Library
www.kdl.org

KENT DISTRICT LIBRARY

KDL Service Center
814 West River Center Drive NE
Comstock Park, MI 49321-8955
Phone: 616-784-2007
Fax: 616-647-3828

Kent District Library is a millage-supported system encompassing 18 branch libraries in 26 governmental units throughout Kent County, Michigan. KDL serves 395,660 people in all areas of Kent County except the cities of Grand Rapids and Cedar Springs, village of Sparta, and Solon and Sparta townships.



A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

As director of Kent District Library, I would like to accelerate the evolution of public library service by making it convenient, informative and sustainable. I believe we can influence the entire library world through our actions at KDL. To achieve this vision, KDL will:

1. Embrace and foster a culture of excellence by continually improving our services to meet the emerging needs of our communities and thereby transform our communities for the better.
2. Measure our success and share best practices with our peers locally, statewide and nationally.
3. Encourage and promote an organizational culture of innovation, where anyone can see their good ideas become reality.
4. Responsibly steward taxpayer funds by providing the highest return on investment possible and make every effort to report our efforts to taxpayers.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James M. ...". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

KENT DISTRICT LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES



Charles R. Myers,
Chair



Vickie Hoekstra,
Vice Chair



Scott E. Petersen,
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Carol Simpson,
Secretary



Shirley Bruursema,
Trustee



Charles Fry,
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Scott Garrison,
Trustee
Term started January 2012



C. Frances Gilcrest,
Trustee
Term ended August 2011



Penny Weller,
Trustee

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LEADERSHIP TEAM

Lance Werner – Director

Michelle Boisvenue Fox – Assistant Director, Public Services

Cheryl Garrison – Assistant Director, Central Services

Michael Carpenter – IT Director

Sherry Bava – Finance Director

Brian Mortimore – Human Resources Director

COMMITMENT TO QUALITY SERVICE

In recognition of our commitment to quality service, *Library Journal* named KDL a “Star Library” in 2011 for the second consecutive year. This honor signifies that KDL is one of the top libraries in the nation when compared to other libraries serving a similar-sized population.



Kent District Library was one of only three libraries in the state of Michigan to be designated a Star Library.

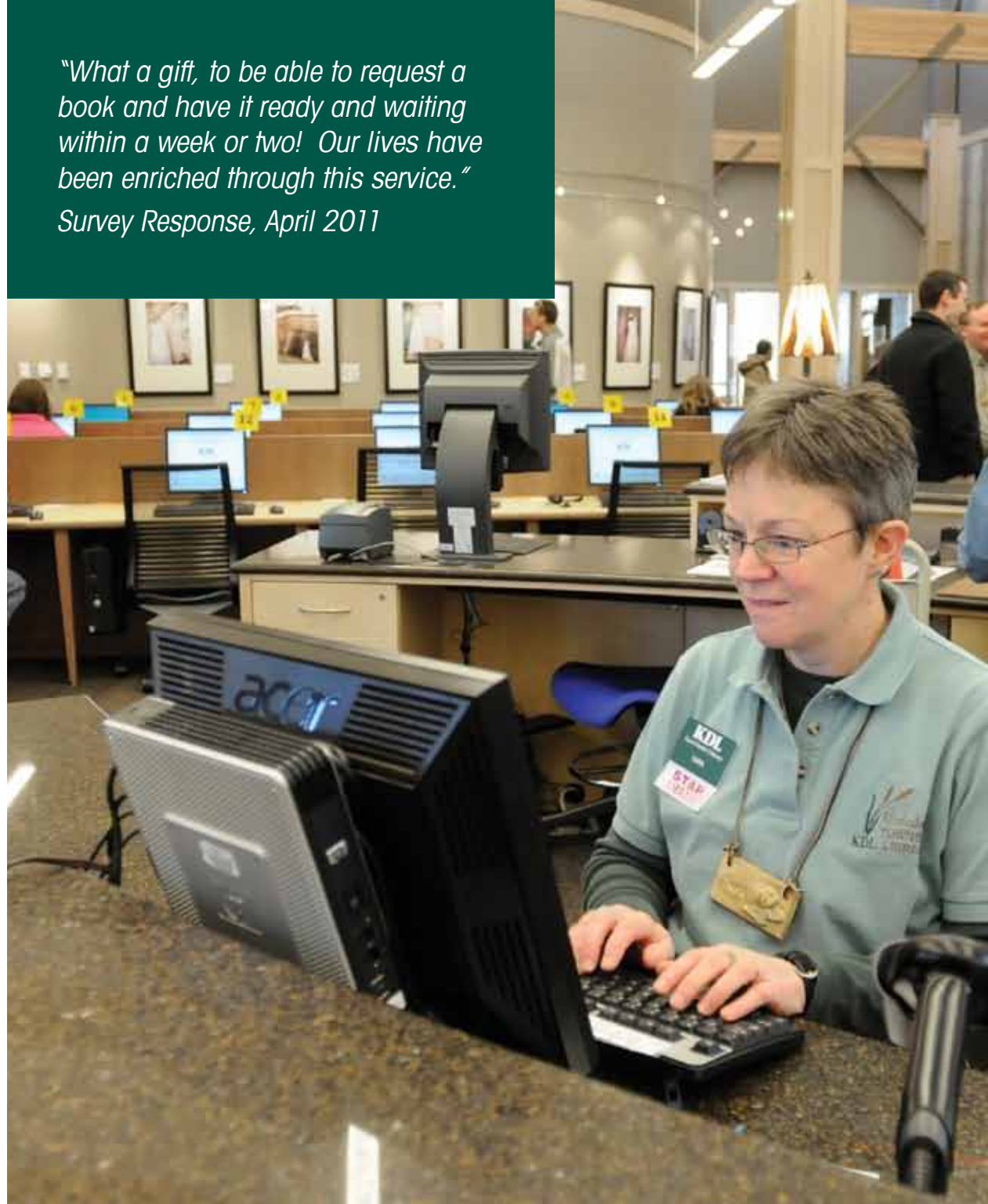
Additionally in 2011, KDL achieved the Excellent Level in library services as recognized by the Library of Michigan’s Quality Services Standards (QSAC).



KDL is one of only three Michigan libraries to reach the highest level of achievement since the establishment of the QSAC standards in 2004.

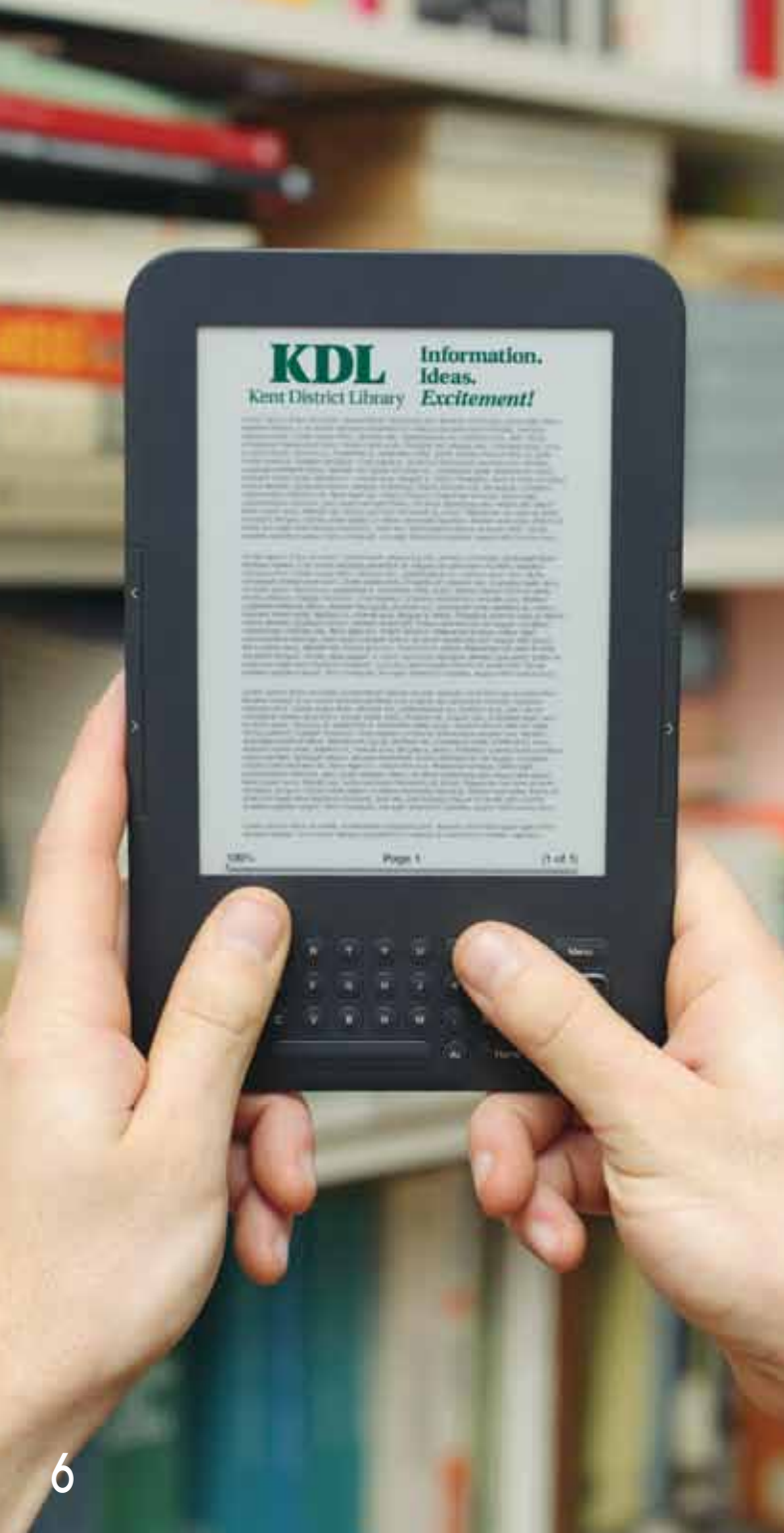
Even as KDL celebrates these recognitions of our excellence, we are most proud of our climbing materials circulation rate, which reached 6.8 million items in 2011. More than any award, this figure points to the success of KDL. All technological enhancements, policy decisions and staff and Board efforts finally lead to this exciting truth—more than ever in KDL’s history, our patrons are finding materials that enrich their lives.

“What a gift, to be able to request a book and have it ready and waiting within a week or two! Our lives have been enriched through this service.”
Survey Response, April 2011



CIRCULATION STATISTICS

	2010	2011	Change
Alpine Township Branch	68,629	72,292	5.3%
Alto Branch	45,577	45,203	-0.8%
Byron Township Branch	359,508	387,445	7.8%
Caledonia Township Branch	134,573	223,260	65.9%
Cascade Township Branch	715,317	715,570	0.0%
Comstock Park Branch	167,965	180,804	7.6%
e-Circulation (eBooks/eAudiobooks/eMusic)	63,943	190,203	197.5%
East Grand Rapids Branch	567,185	534,490	-5.8%
Englehardt Branch	215,174	212,519	-1.2%
Gaines Township Branch	323,812	340,324	5.1%
Grandville Branch	656,562	700,844	6.7%
Kentwood Branch	615,299	681,772	10.8%
Krause Memorial Branch	423,325	463,608	9.5%
Library for the Blind & Physically Handicapped (LBPH)	31,930	35,281	10.5%
Plainfield Township Branch	721,319	736,516	2.1%
Sand Lake/Nelson Township Branch	141,399	122,301	-13.5%
Service Center	39,658	43,300	9.2%
Spencer Township Branch	47,392	53,127	12.1%
Tyrone Township Branch	56,790	57,373	1.0%
Walker Branch	365,773	365,782	0.0%
Wyoming Branch	673,765	720,728	7.0%
TOTAL	6,434,895	6,882,742	7.0%



ADAPTING COLLECTIONS AND SERVICES TO FIT PATRON PREFERENCES

Kent District Library has consistently evolved to meet the changing needs of local citizens. Recognizing the demand for more digital materials in the wake of the 2010 eReader revolution, KDL launched its own *OverDrive* eBook/eAudiobook site in August 2011, giving KDL cardholders improved access to these high-demand materials.

Purchasing over 10,000 digital items for this collection in the first five months alone, KDL now offers the largest digital collection owned by a single library in Michigan. While patrons continue to checkout more physical materials than ever before in our history (6,692,539 in 2011), KDL's eBook/eAudiobook collection is rapidly growing in popularity. In fact, use of this collection has grown over 250% since the new site was launched!

To publicize the new digital collection, KDL launched an innovative marketing campaign—*Download the Library*. The campaign involved a social media contest, billboards, radio advertising, window

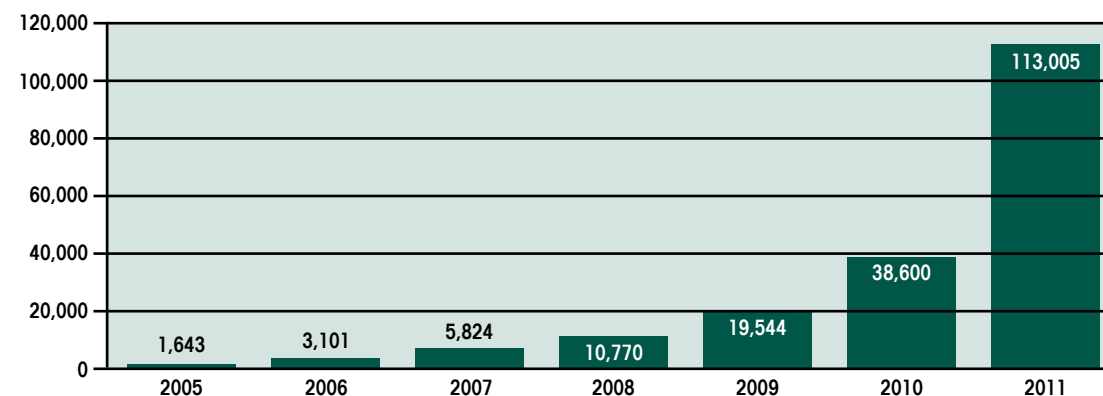


clings, gadget petting zoos and a visit from the *OverDrive* Digital Bookmobile. In addition to this publicity effort, KDL also established a training program for staff to provide all front-line employees with hands-on experience with a variety of eReaders. This training prepared staff to help patrons navigate both this technology and KDL's new digital collection.

KDL also launched our new mobile website in January 2011 allowing patrons to take KDL with them wherever they go. The site allows smartphone users to access their patron account, the library catalog and information about our branches and events. More patrons than ever are discovering the convenience of visiting KDL online. Online visits now account for almost one-third (32%) of total library visits!

"Staff were very helpful in explaining eBooks for Kindle. Very refreshing to receive such cheerful and patient help!"
Survey Response, October 2011

KDL eBook & eAUDIOBOOK CIRCULATION



MEETING THE GROWING DEMAND FOR LIBRARY SERVICES

Over the past three years as the economy struggled, so have the personal financial situations of many local residents. As a result, residents have turned to KDL in record numbers to access library materials, utilize our Internet service and attend our computer training programs.

Promoting the joy of reading has been a core service for public libraries for decades. To assist staff in helping patrons find books they may want to read, Kent District Library undertook a new training initiative in 2011. The CORE (Customer Oriented Reading Excellence) initiative invites Information Services staff members to improve their knowledge of popular fiction genres so they can help patrons find books they might enjoy.

The Library also met the needs of thousands of unemployed and underemployed residents, many of whom used the library's high-speed Internet access to search and apply for jobs online. More than 2,000 library patrons took advantage of free computer classes offered by KDL in 2011, which help build valuable technology skills that make them more employable.



"I have enjoyed all the computer classes that are being offered. It has been a great help in my job search. We need to spread the word about ALL the endless options people can access using their library card, WOW! A wonderful help to get back on my feet again."

Patron response via email

GROWING THE NEXT GENERATION OF READERS

Research shows that birth through age 5 is the most important time for the development of a child's brain and attitude toward reading and learning. Based on the American Library Association's *Every Child Ready to Read* program, KDL has embedded the five early literacy practices (i.e., talking, writing, reading, playing and singing) into all programs for young children. KDL's *Play-Grow-Read!* webpage, Early Lit Bits eNewsletter and Early Childhood Essentials workshops give parents and caregivers information and fun ideas to help prepare children for school and encourage a lifelong love of reading.

KDLville early literacy play spaces are interactive learning centers in our branches where young children and their caregivers can play, grow and read together. These spaces contain a variety of fun, developmentally appropriate activities that focus on different skills that will help children get ready to read. In 2011, KDLville play spaces were added at nine branches, making KDL the No. 1 destination for the "under 5" crowd.

"The library is one of, if not the best tool a parent can use to help their children grow."

Survey Response, April 2011



STIMULATING CURIOSITY THROUGH CREATIVE PROGRAMS

Collaborating with partners helps KDL offer programs to the public that we could not otherwise afford. KDL provided over 4,500 programs for our patrons in 2011 and many were undertaken in partnership with organizations such as Friends groups, local non-profit organizations and community businesses. Thanks to these partnerships, more than 150,000 people were able to attend free programs at KDL in 2011 at a cost to the library of just 77 cents per attendee.

Especially for older kids and teens, the summer has always been a great time to enjoy reading for pleasure and attending free family-friendly programs. The 2011 Summer Reading Club had 26,147 participants, a new record for KDL! This year also saw the launch of KDL's Adult Summer Reading Club, where more than 3,200 adults joined the summer reading fun.



PROGRAM ATTENDANCE

	2010	2011	Change
Alpine Township Branch	2,996	3,331	11.2%
Alto Branch	1,265	1,198	-5.3%
Byron Township Branch	8,423	8,044	-4.5%
Caledonia Township Branch	4,069	6,546	60.9%
Cascade Township Branch	18,631	15,884	-14.7%
Comstock Park Branch	4,283	7,740	80.7%
East Grand Rapids Branch	19,467	18,324	-5.9%
Englehardt Branch	3,938	3,447	-12.5%
Gaines Township Branch	3,475	3,317	-4.5%
Grandville Branch	17,341	17,325	-0.1%
Kentwood Branch	11,202	10,377	-7.4%
Krause Memorial Branch	5,544	7,697	38.8%
Plainfield Township Branch	8,284	7,308	-11.8%
Sand Lake/Nelson Township	6,615	5,211	-21.2%
Service Center	13,106	15,194	15.9%
Spencer Township Branch	1,295	1,057	-18.4%
Tyrone Township Branch	2,371	2,134	-10.0%
Walker Branch	8,838	7,190	-18.6%
Wyoming Branch	12,437	10,403	-16.4%
TOTAL	153,580	151,727	-1.2%

PARTNERING TO ADD VALUE TO THE COMMUNITY

Kent District Library strives to add value to our local communities by providing inviting branch facilities and services that our patrons enjoy. Partnerships with community organizations, businesses and agencies not only link KDL to local resources that help us meet this goal, they also provide a practical way to discern the specific needs of individuals and groups in our communities. In 2011, KDL collaborated with almost 70 organizations and businesses on a wide variety of projects and programs that allowed us to better serve our patrons and add value to our communities.

Another way KDL partners with local organizations is through library building and expansion projects. KDL was pleased to partner with Caledonia Township, the Caledonia Township Building Committee and local organizations to help design and build a new library facility in that community. In February 2011, Caledonia Township opened a beautiful, state-of-the-art library building. Local community funds paid for the bricks and mortar for the new facility, while KDL proudly supplied the additional staff, technology and resources necessary for a successful transition to this new space.



BRANCH HIGHLIGHTS

JANUARY

The Grandville branch, in association with Grandville Public Schools and a number of local sponsors, kicks off *Grandville Reads*. Community read programs like this are designed to unify the community and start discussions around a centralized topic and/or book.



FEBRUARY

The new Caledonia Township branch opens on February 1. The branch is the first to be organized under KDL's "DeweyFree" initiative in which words are used instead of numbers to categorize the nonfiction books.



MARCH

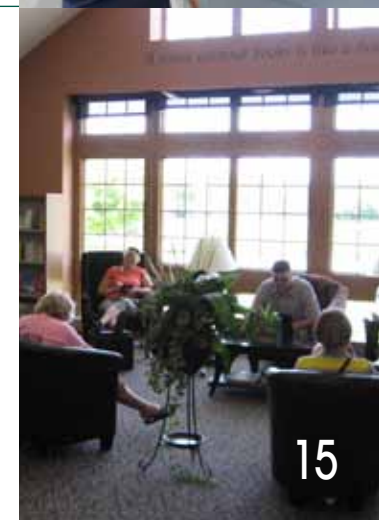
Self check-in bookdrops are introduced at the Cascade Township branch, automating the check-in process so that books can be returned to the shelves faster. Additional units are later installed in KDL's five other large branches.



APRIL

The Englehardt branch in Lowell is renovated with new carpet, a mobile laptop lab and other facility improvements, thanks to a grant received from the Lowell Area Community Fund.

The Byron Township branch offers Early Childhood Education classes. These classes end up having waiting lists, and became the most popular program for adults at the branch in 2011.





MAY

The Alpine Township branch celebrates the opening of their new KDLville early literacy play space. By the end of the year, all but four KDL branches have KDLville spaces.

The Alto branch ends a year-long collaboration with the local school district, helping with the spelling bee, spring carnival, 5-K run and offering classroom visits.



JUNE

KDL incorporates an adult component to our Summer Reading Club for the first time. Based on a model created by East Grand Rapids branch staff, the Adult Summer Reading Club attracts over 3,200 participants.

The Walker branch collaborates with the city of Walker on the annual WalkerFest by sponsoring a family-friendly program—The Flying Aces Professional Frisbee Team.



JULY

Summer offers many opportunities for community partnerships. Krause Memorial branch staff participate in the Rockford Start of Summer Celebration. Gaines Township branch staff participate in Cutlerville Days. A Fiesta is held in Alpine Township, the result of a partnership between the Alpine Township branch, Alpine Township and the Sparta Area Migrant Resource Center.



AUGUST

The Krause Memorial branch is the site of several fun events including a storybook character parade during the Rockford Reading Festival.

The Children's Garden officially opens at the Caledonia Township branch. Harder and Warner, a local landscaping company, donates all the materials and labor for this project, which includes a hedge maze, life-size checkerboard and a turtle sculpture.

Plainfield Township branch staff rearrange their facility to create a "living room" browsing area and a "conservatory" complete with live plants, laptop tables and comfortable chairs.



SEPTEMBER

Robin Darling, Spencer Township branch staff member, is the staff winner of the "Share Your Library Story" project. She described how she aided a young mother in finding materials to help her children cope with both the loss of the beloved family dog and the departure of their father for an upcoming tour of duty in Afghanistan.

A volunteer business counselor offers weekly sessions in the Small Business Resource Center housed at the Kentwood branch. The computer and materials in the Center were provided through a grant from the Kentwood Economic Development Corp. The branch is also one of four KDL branches to offer weekly job and career information programs provided through a partnership with Career Transitions Center West Michigan.



OCTOBER

Marcia DeMeester retires after 23 years as branch manager of the Tyrone Township branch. Eric DeHaan, KDL Communications Manager, is promoted to fill the position.



NOVEMBER

The Sand Lake/Nelson Township branch is one of five KDL branches awarded a KDL "Wi-Fi Friendly Facilities" grant, which enables the branches to purchase new laptop tables and tablet arm chairs.



DECEMBER

KDL's IT Department completes a project to double the bandwidth at several branches including the Comstock Park branch.

The Wyoming branch is the first of KDL's large branches to complete the reorganization of its nonfiction collection to a "DeweyFree" model based on words instead of Dewey decimal numbers.



TIGHTENING THE BELT TO ENSURE FINANCIAL STABILITY

Kent District Library depends on state and local funding to cover its operating expenses. Public libraries in Michigan have experienced a steady decline in state funding since 2009. Coupled with this loss of revenue, property values have fallen sharply due to the economic downturn resulting in a decreased amount of funding available through KDL's millage. Over the past three years, the Library has suffered a loss of more than \$1.6 million due to state funding cuts, tax refunds and captures, and a decline in property tax revenues. Revenues decreased by 5.6% from 2010 to 2011.

Despite these challenges, KDL has a history of good stewardship and sound fiscal management. Making budget adjustments early in the year and continuing to reduce expenses made it possible for the Library to stretch local tax dollars. Despite KDL's reduced budget, careful management has enabled the library to weather the current financial crisis without cutting programs, closing branches, laying off staff or abandoning KDL's mission to provide high-quality service to our patrons.



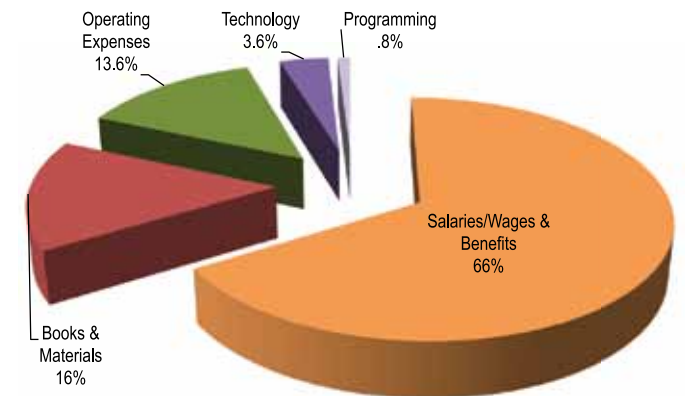
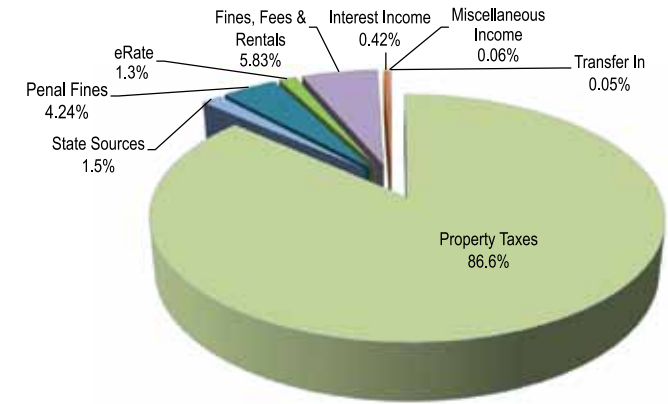
REVENUE	
Property Taxes - Millage (.88mills)	13,677,064
State Sources	237,507
Penal Fines	668,974
Universal Service Fund - eRate	200,982
Fines, Fees & Rentals	919,814
Interest Income	66,368
Miscellaneous Income	10,079
Transfer In - Donation - AGF Fund	7,500
TOTAL REVENUES	\$15,788,288

OTHER FINANCING SOURCES	
Proceeds from IPA - Cisco Upgrade	\$69,166

EXPENDITURES	
Salaries/Wages	8,102,319
Benefits	2,143,430
Books & Materials	2,478,743
Operating Expenses	2,117,701
Technology (includes ILS & Internet)	558,144
Programming	127,984
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$15,528,321

Fund Balance, Beginning of Year	3,239,355
Excess Revenues over Expenditures	329,133
TOTAL FUND BALANCE, End of Year	\$3,568,488

The above numbers have been derived from the 2011 Financial Statements. Complete audited Annual Financial Statements will be available after June 2012.



CREATIVE FUND RAISING

Donations, grants, sponsorships and special events made several new projects possible in 2011. The KDL Fund raised \$44,083 to support several early literacy projects including Welcome Home Baby packets, children's book/CD kits and Imagination Stations. Imagination Stations are simple structures that transform into stores, markets, restaurants, hospitals, etc. with a few toys, props and a child's fertile imagination.

On October 18, over 150 people attended the *KDL Celebrates: Dewey to Digital in 75* event in celebration of the 75th anniversary of the founding of Kent District Library. The event raised over \$13,000 for the KDL Fund.

Many of our branches have Friends of the Library groups that sell donated and discarded books, movies and music. Proceeds from the sales go back to the branch to purchase materials, furnishings and equipment to enhance the branch's collection and services.



CREATING A LEGACY FOR THE NEXT 75 YEARS

Kent District Library was proud to celebrate its 75th anniversary in 2011. KDL's longevity is a testament to the many leaders who have wisely guided this organization in the past and present as well as to their proactive choices to further the mission and vision of this institution. Along with these leaders stand the many staff members who have worked diligently to carry forward the bold and innovative ideas that continue to make KDL great. Perhaps the highest honor is due the hundreds of thousands of citizens who have supported KDL over the last 75 years by regularly using their local library and discovering the *Information, Ideas, and Excitement!* found there.



BRANCH LOCATIONS

**ALPINE
TOWNSHIP BRANCH**
5255 Alpine Ave. NW
Comstock Park, MI 49321

**EAST GRAND
RAPIDS BRANCH**
746 Lakeside Dr. SE
East Grand Rapids, MI 49506

**PLAINFIELD
TOWNSHIP BRANCH**
2650 5-Mile Rd. NE
Grand Rapids, MI 49525

ALTO BRANCH
6071 Linfield Ave.
Alto, MI 49302

ENGLEHARDT BRANCH
200 N. Monroe St.
Lowell, MI 49331

**SAND LAKE/NELSON
TOWNSHIP BRANCH**
88 Eighth St.
Sand Lake, MI 49343

**BYRON
TOWNSHIP BRANCH**
8191 Byron Center Ave. SW
Byron Center, MI 49315

**GAINES
TOWNSHIP BRANCH**
421 68th St. SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49548

**SPENCER
TOWNSHIP BRANCH**
14960 Meddler Ave.
Gowen, MI 49326

**CALEDONIA
TOWNSHIP BRANCH**
6260 92nd St. SE
Caledonia, MI 49316

GRANDVILLE BRANCH
4055 Maple St. SW
Grandville, MI 49418

**TYRONE
TOWNSHIP BRANCH**
43 S. Main St.
Kent City, MI 49330

**CASCADE
TOWNSHIP BRANCH**
2870 Jacksmith Ave. SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49546

KENTWOOD BRANCH
4950 Breton SE
Kentwood, MI 49508

WALKER BRANCH
4293 Remembrance Rd. NW
Walker, MI 49534

**COMSTOCK
PARK BRANCH**
3943 W. River Dr. NE
Comstock Park, MI 49321

**KRAUSE
MEMORIAL BRANCH**
140 E. Bridge St.
Rockford, MI 49341

WYOMING BRANCH
and the Library for the Blind and
Physically Handicapped
3350 Michael Ave. SW
Wyoming, MI 49509

KDL Information.
Kent District Library Ideas.
Excitement!

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