



# RHINELANDER DISTRICT LIBRARY RENOVATION AND EXPANSION



## WHY THE LIBRARY NEEDS TO RENOVATE AND EXPAND

As the Rhineland District Library (RDL) celebrates its 127th year of service to our community, we are reflecting on the Library's history and how its services have grown to meet our community's needs. We are also looking forward to ensure the Library will be able to continue to provide the multitude of services so many of us, our families, friends and neighbors rely upon.

- The Library was founded in 1897, and opened its doors on March 1, 1898, in the original 1896 Merchants State Bank building (now the BMO Bank corner).
- Construction of the original Carnegie Library was completed in 1904.
- In 1983, the Friends of the Rhineland District Library sponsored an advisory referendum to build a new facility. Public sentiment to preserve the historic building at its significant location and the desire to keep construction costs economical led to the decision to construct an addition, which was completed in 1985.
- Updates to the building's interior layout, the HVAC system, wiring, and general maintenance have continued - **but the original 1904 building and the 1985 addition have remained unchanged all these years.**
- Our community values the Library. Our location is convenient to schools and welcomes many classroom visits. The Library also brings visitors and residents to Downtown Rhineland.
- Over the years, materials have greatly expanded to include audio books, DVDs, music CDs and much more. Services have grown to include an extensive genealogy and local history section, a business center and Notary services.

**The Library remains highly relevant to area residents for many reasons:**

- Free access to a variety of items beyond books, including technology;
- Programs and activities for residents of all ages;
- Community gatherings for all ages;
- Encouraging literacy, curiosity and exploration;
- Preservation of history – **and so much more!**

## ABOUT THE CONSTRUCTION PROJECT

Over the past several years, many Library patrons have shared the need for an updated facility that provides safe and easy access to the building, main floor restrooms, and additional space for work, study and community meetings.

Community surveys and interviews were held by the Library's Board of Trustees and staff. A needs assessment was conducted by J.H. Findorff & Son, Inc., the Library's construction manager. This resulted in plans for a \$7 million renovation and expansion that will include:

- Adding 7,650 square feet to the building;
- Replacing the existing elevator and reconfiguring the stairwell to the lower level;
- Enhancing and adding study, work and community meeting spaces;
- Improving and expanding the Children's area;
- Updating staff work areas;
- Enhancing outdoor spaces and adding a perennial garden;
- Parking – While the expansion will reduce the number of spaces on the north side, new parking will be added to the east side of the building. The Library hopes to sell and move the home that is currently the Re-Tale Store.
- Walk-up and drive-up book drops will be more easily accessible.

**The 1904 Carnegie building and the 1985 addition will receive critical updates including:**

- Adding restrooms on the main level;
- Long-needed building maintenance, including replacing leaking windows;
- Community Meeting Room that will seat 100 people and provide a separate entrance;
- New entrances that will be safer and more accessible, and will meet the current Americans with Disability Act standards.



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## HOW YOU CAN HELP

The Rhineland District Library Foundation, Inc., is fostering a capital campaign to raise funds for the renovation and expansion.

The Foundation and the Library are pursuing grant funds; however, funding for capital projects is limited, and entities typically judge a project's feasibility by the monetary support shown at the local level.

The Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. All gifts are tax-deductible as allowed by U.S. law.

**Your donation will only be used to fund this renovation and expansion.**

The Library's operational expenses will continue to be managed by the Library's Board of Trustees and staff through its annual budget.

**Donations of any amount will help reach the goal of \$7 million.**

The Foundation has a PayPal account so that you may safely and securely donate online. This option is available at [RDLfoundation.org](https://www.rdlfoundation.org).

Contributions may be mailed to  
The RDL Foundation,  
PO Box 1225, Rhineland, WI 54501.

## THE NUMBERS

In 1903 – 18,089 circulations were made to 1,072 cardholders from a collection of 2,500 items.

In 1984 – 140,724 items were circulated to 7,579 cardholders, from a collection of 58,435 items.

In 2023 –

- Staff welcomed 64,158 visits to the Library – an increase of 11% from 2022.
- 123,080 circulations were made to 10,522 cardholders from a collection of 81,570 items.
- Digital e-books and e-audio books experienced increased interest during the pandemic, and remains popular with 32,569 circulations.
- Children's Programming proved to be more popular than ever, welcoming 5,754 participants to 322 activities. In addition, 1,476 families enjoyed Take and Make bundles and other enrichment activities.
- Young Adult's Programming welcomed 312 participants to 29 programs.
- Adult and General Programming engaged 4,010 participants in 114 programs. Senior Outreach had 549 interactions, and provided 1,169 materials to homebound individuals. There were 720 Take and Make creative kits distributed.

## ABOUT THE CONSTRUCTION

The Capital Campaign will continue until \$7 million is raised. For construction to begin, 85% of the fundraising goal must be met. The goal is to complete fundraising by May 2025, with construction then beginning in June.

**Please Support and Preserve Our Library's Legacy for Today – and for the Future.**

