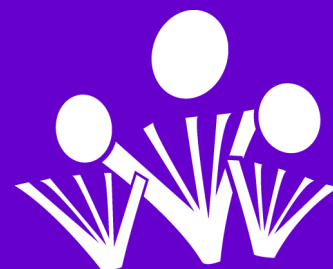




SAULT STE. MARIE PUBLIC LIBRARY

2025 ANNUAL REPORT



Sault Ste. Marie
Public Library

www.ssmpl.ca

"One stop....endless possibilities"

Our Mission

The Sault Ste. Marie Public Library provides opportunities to discover, learn, and grow. We serve as a community partner offering spaces, resources and connections which contribute to quality of life.

Our Vision

A diverse and welcoming community hub, the Sault Ste. Marie Public Library fuels innovation, demonstrates leadership, and promotes literacy aligned with our growing community. We strive to deliver library service for all, driven by knowledge sharing, partnerships and new opportunities.

2025

Library Board

Paolo Bruni

Hannah Caicco (Jan.-Sept.)

Lisa Dobrovnik

Wayne Greco (Chair)

Erin Ferlaino

Jami van Haften

Kevin Harrison

Steve Murray

David Nanchin (Dec.-)

Mike Olejnik (Vice Chair)

**Matthew MacDonald
(CEO/Secretary-Treasurer)**

Chairman's Message



Wayne Greco, Board Chair

This past year has been one of meaningful progress, steady change, and continued growth for the Sault Ste. Marie Public Library. As Chair of the Board, I am proud to reflect on a year defined by both accomplishment and adaptability, as we worked together to ensure the library remains responsive, relevant, and deeply connected to the needs of our community.

Libraries today must continually evolve, and this year we embraced that responsibility. From expanding digital access through resources such as HOOPLA, to implementing our new Integrated Library System (ILS) that strengthens service delivery and improves the user experience, the organization has demonstrated its commitment to modernization and innovation. These investments are not simply technological upgrades — they are strategic decisions that ensure equitable access to information, learning, and cultural enrichment for all.

Our success is rooted in collaboration. It reflects the strength of sound governance provided by a dedicated Board, the strategic leadership of a high-functioning management team, the professionalism and expertise of our staff, and the invaluable contributions of our volunteers. In particular, the Friends of the Library continue to enhance community engagement in ways that truly make a difference.

Together, we have met challenges thoughtfully, aligned our efforts toward common goals, and remained focused on delivering strong value to the taxpayers of Sault Ste. Marie. When we are all rowing in the same direction, we become more resilient, more effective, and better positioned to serve our community.

On behalf of the Board, I extend a sincere thank you to everyone who contributed to this year's accomplishments. Your commitment ensures that our library continues to thrive as a vital public institution — one that supports learning, connection, and opportunity for all.

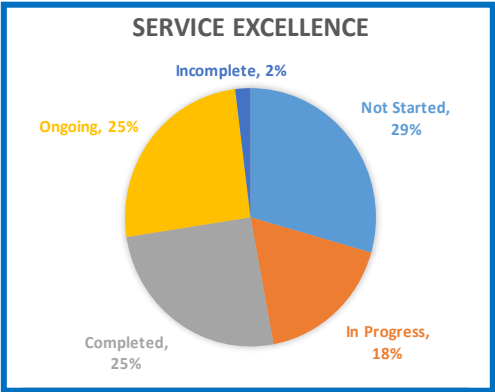
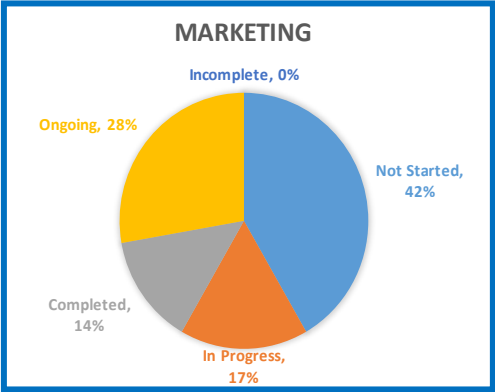
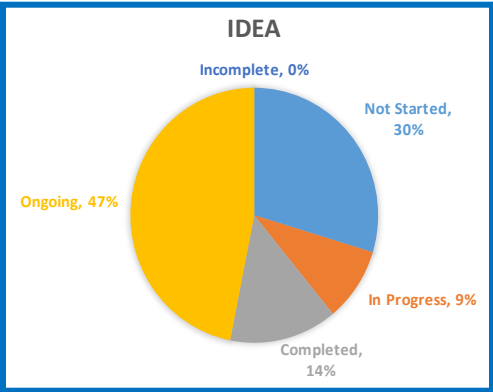
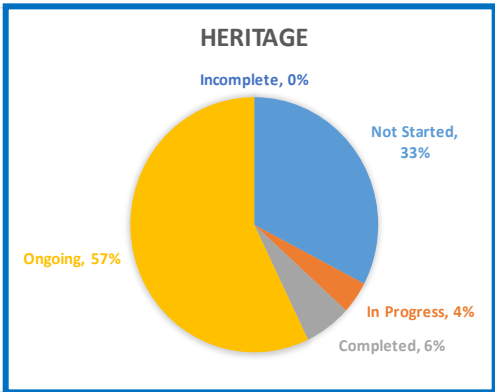
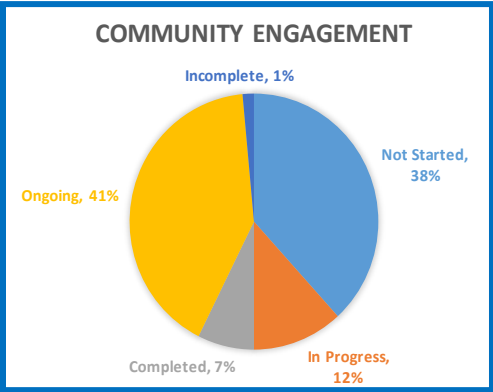
As we look ahead, we remain confident that by working together, we will continue to strengthen and grow this essential community resource.

"Libraries are so important and you are doing great!"

Strategic Plan

In 2025, Library staff continued making strong progress on the strategic plan launched in 2024. The plan's key priorities are Community Engagement, Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility, Marketing and Communication, Heritage and Culture, and Service Excellence. These priorities guided staff in shaping programs, services, and initiatives that reflect the evolving needs of our diverse community.

Over the year, library staff completed or are working toward **175** action items, advancing the Library's mission and ensuring it remains a welcoming, inclusive, and innovative resource for all.



To read the full strategic plan please visit our website at **SSMPL.CA** or scan the QR code



“I think you are doing just fine. In a digital world full of such vast interests, reading desires, and cultures, you can’t please everybody.”

Staff Changes

Congratulations Marlene Haidy

In February 2025, Marlene moved into the role of Manager of Community Engagement at the Sault Ste. Marie Public Library, transitioning from her previous position as Senior Circulation and Branch Technician.

In spring 2026, she will mark three years with the library, bringing with her extensive management experience. Prior to joining the library, Marlene completed a 31-year career with Air Canada, where she held a variety of roles, including several management positions.

Before leaving Air Canada, she received the Award of Excellence—a prestigious recognition reflecting her strong commitment to both the company and the community—commitment she continues to demonstrate in her work in Sault Ste. Marie and at the library.



Congratulations Kaitlyn Watson

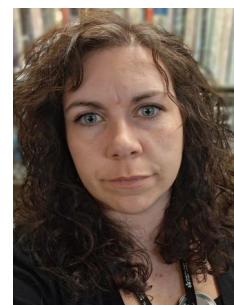
In November 2024, Kaitlyn was appointed Acting Manager of Public Services. After a successful 12-month term, she accepted the role permanently and looks forward to continuing to support and enhance library services for the community.

Congratulations Rebekah Verdone

In June 2025, Rebekah stepped into the role of Acting Business Administrator to cover a maternity leave. She transitioned from her permanent role as Administrative Clerk with the Sault Ste. Marie Public Library.

She has a Bachelor's of English (Honours) from Laurentian University and an Office Administration (Executive) Diploma from Sault College. In Fall 2025 she completed the Municipal Administration Program's Unit 3: Municipal Financial Management. Prior to joining the Library Administration Team in 2023, Rebekah previously worked as a Law Clerk.

Rebekah has been a dedicated patron of the library for more than 25 years and can often be found wandering the stacks (or the bookstore) during her breaks.



Welcome Abby Engel

In June 2025, the Sault Ste Marie Public Library welcomed Abbey Engel as the Acting Administration Clerk. She holds a Diploma in Business (Honours) from Sault College and a Bachelor of Business Administration (Honours) from Algoma University.

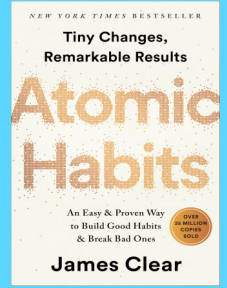
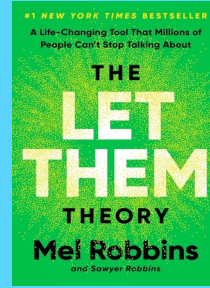
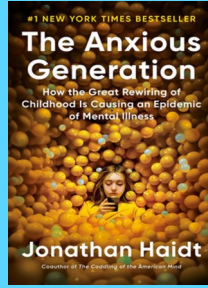
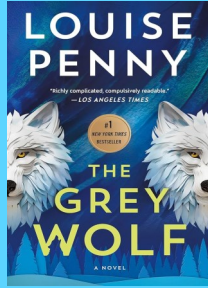
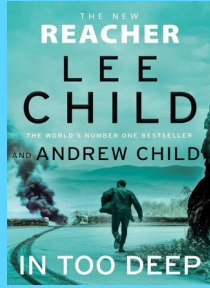
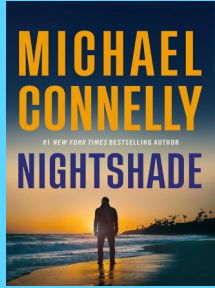
Abbey has experience as an Accounting Intern at BDO (2024) and as a Research Assistant at Algoma University (2025). Currently she is also employed as a Program Coordinator with Destiny Christian Centre where she focuses on youth services.

Abbey is also a junior officer (Second Lieutenant- Logistics) with the Canadian Armed Forces, where she is developing her leadership and technical skills. She brings the same dedication and passion to her work here at the library.

"The librarians deserve a huge KUDOS for their work in fulfilling book holds. I've really appreciated how much time I save by being able to place holds and simply pick up my selections from the desk. I know this can be a time-consuming task, so I hope the librarians know how thankful many of us are that they offer this service."

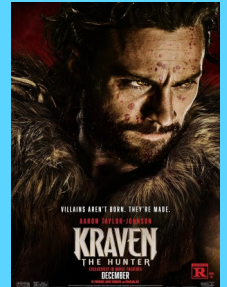
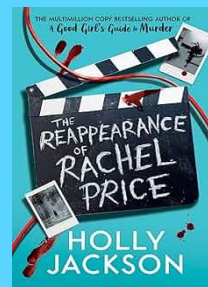
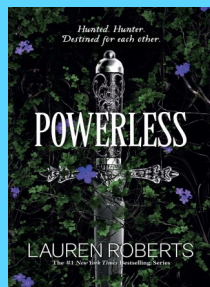
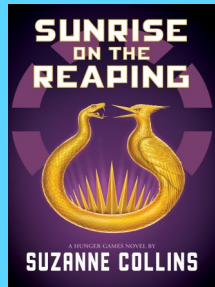
Your Favourites

Our community's love for bestsellers and blockbusters was evident in 2025. Here are the most borrowed titles in various categories.



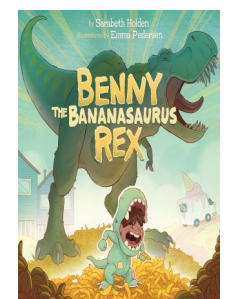
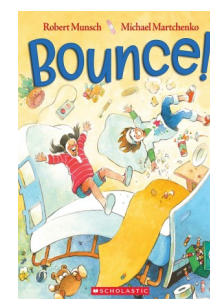
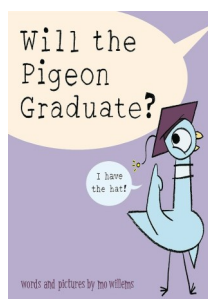
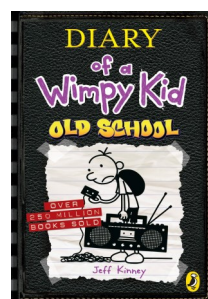
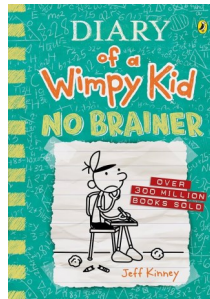
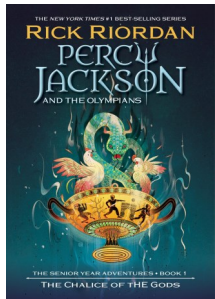
Fiction

Non-Fiction



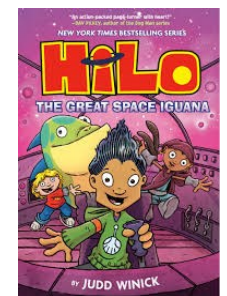
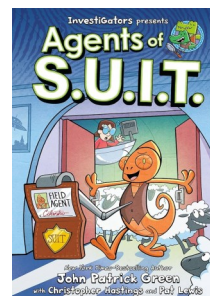
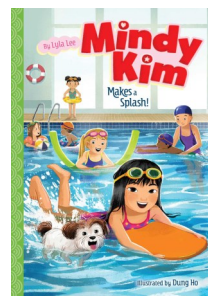
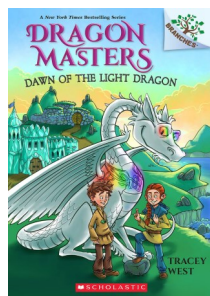
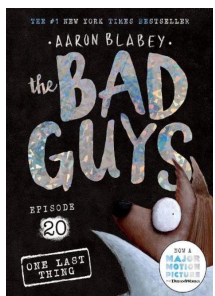
Young Adult

DVDs



Juvenile Fiction

Juvenile Picture Books



Easy Reader

Juvenile Graphic Novel

"I think the Soo library locations are great. Keep up the good work!"

By the Numbers

You came, you browsed, you borrowed - a lot! Demand for library services in Sault Ste. Marie is strong and growing. Thank you for using the library!

29,156
card holders

11.65
items borrowed
per active
member

2,471
new borrowers

Library Visits

James L. McIntyre
Centennial Library

213,598

North Branch

55,745

39,588

Total questions
asked

2,716
inter-library
loans
handled

114,846

Libby items
borrowed

7,596

Hoopla items
borrowed

196,740
website page views

11,997
website database
usage

854,444

online
catalogue
views

34,817
wifi visitors

242,152
social media
hits

"I love the computer and printer service. It saves me from having to have a home printer.
Thank you!"

Programs and Outreach

The library takes great pride in providing not just fun and entertaining programs and services, but also those which are impactful and educational. They support the community and change lives by providing community connections, engagement and inclusivity.



28,831 people attended **965** programs

398

in-house adult &
senior programs

4,185

participants

77

adult & senior
passive programs

5,965

participants

40

virtual programs

700

participants

357

in-house child &
teen programs

8,876

participants

80

child & teen
passive programs

8,135

participants

970

residents met with
us at 15 community
events

"I absolutely love visiting the library and the programming for the littles. Took my girls when they were small and now looking forward to bringing my grandchildren there."

Archives

Number of
material
requested
450

Donations

In 2025, one collection was donated to the Sault Ste. Marie Public Library Archives by Jennifer Coggon. The donation included the DVD set *Watch and Warn Canada's Home Front Aircraft Detection Corp* as well as the CD *Return from Mandalay: A Pilot's Post-War Adventures*.

Number of
copies
made
160

Archive Digitization

In 2025, scanning continued on the *Sault Star* negatives, with 1,101 negatives digitized. In addition, the archives continued digitizing the VHS collection, resulting in 42 VHS tapes being converted to digital format.

Online
Archive
questions
36

Archive Programs and Oral Histories

Programs offered in 2025 included *Preserving Photographs and Papers*, *Archive Show and Tell*, *Your Personal Archives*, an Oral History Review, and three archive tours, including participation in Doors Open.

Living History Algoma contributed three new oral histories to the archive collection in 2025. One oral history, part of the *Life in the Arts Collection*, features Duncan Walter Fremlin. The remaining two oral histories document the lives and experiences of James Vincent Greco and Nilo Sesto Fabbro.

"The staff at SSMPL are amazing!"

Celebrating our Staff



Matthew MacDonald, CEO,
Kathy D., Circulation Clerk

Kathy, the 2025 CEO's award recipient, is a thoughtful and dedicated library team member who consistently goes out of her way to support colleagues and the community. She is organized, proactive, and full of great ideas that improve library services. Caring, collaborative, and with a wonderful sense of humor, she fosters a positive, welcoming environment and is genuinely invested in both her work and her coworkers.



Matthew MacDonald, CEO,
Kaylee H., Children's Clerk

Kaylee, the 2025 Rookie of the Year award recipient, is an energetic and imaginative Children's Services team member whose creativity brings every program to life. She is eager to develop exciting new programs and services, constantly looking for ways to engage young learners. Her enthusiasm and energy make her a bright new addition to the team.

"The staff at the library are unparalleled. They're engaging with my pre-teen, honest and knowledgeable. Always quick to have an answer, or better yet, find out an answer for our questions and requests."

2025 Highlights



Doors Open Ontario - Author Reading & Tours

On October 4, as part of Doors Open Ontario, the James L. McIntyre Centennial Library welcomed visitors for a special morning of discovery. Guests enjoyed a reading by Dr. Frank Sarlo and guided tours showcasing the library's architecture, history, and behind-the-scenes areas, offering a deeper appreciation of the library's role in the community.



Jane Austen at 250

The Sault Ste. Marie Public Library celebrated literary icon Jane Austen's 250th birthday on December 14 at the James L. McIntyre Centennial Library. Attendees enjoyed a screening of *Love & Friendship*, tea and scones, and a Regency-era costume contest that brought Austen's witty, timeless characters to life.



Halloween Costume Swap

On October 4, the Children's Department brought spooky season to life with its annual Halloween Costume Swap at the James L. McIntyre Centennial Library. Families browsed creative, gently used costumes and discovered exciting "new-to-them" looks, with 315 people joining the fun.



Drag Storytime at North Branch with Lana Von Archer and Luke Gore Shadow

What is Drag Storytime? It's just what it sounds like—drag artists using the art of storytelling to read popular children's books aloud. These events celebrate literacy, creativity, self-expression, and inclusion, while creating a welcoming and engaging environment for families and young readers.



Culture Days Family Fun Day

On September 26, the Centennial Library hosted a Cultural Family Fun Day along the walkway of Clergue Park. This outdoor event provided an opportunity for the community to discover, experience, and celebrate arts and culture together. Families enjoyed a welcoming atmosphere that highlighted creativity, cultural expression, and community connection.



Author Event - Adam Shoalts

On November 5, the North Branch Library partnered with the team at SooToday to host an evening with Adam Shoalts. Adam is a Canadian explorer, historian, archaeologist, geographer, and bestselling author. During the event, he showcased his latest book, *Vanished Beyond the Map*, sharing insights into his research and adventures with attendees.



Congratulations to Nadine, President of the Friends of the Library, on receiving the Volunteer of the Year Award. The award was presented by Matthew MacDonald, CEO of the Sault Ste. Marie Public Library at our volunteer reception.



Nadine gives 110% to the Friends store and its continued success. In 2025, she strengthened community partnerships, including launching a new initiative to bring books into the local Remand Centre. She also applied for and successfully secured a \$4,000 grant from Entente (RTO) in support of the Friends' work.

Her dedication and leadership are deeply appreciated. Volunteers at the store describe her as caring and kind, qualities that shine through in everything she does for the library and the community.

The Friends of the Sault Ste. Marie Public Library is comprised of 45 dedicated volunteers who worked over 6,500 hours in 2025, supporting our vibrant library, and contributing to the social well-being of our community.

In 2025, sales from the bookstore raised just over \$41,000 for the library, and we sent a huge number of nearly new books, DVDs, and books on CD to add to the library collection.

In addition to bringing our pop-up bookstore to community events, we expanded outreach this year, focusing on places where seniors live and gather, including Bay Street Active Living Centre, Van Daele Manor, and Maple View. We also continued supporting Little Free Libraries and donated books to Sault Area Hospital, the Soup Kitchen, Algoma Treatment and Remand Centre, Northland Adult Learning Centre, Christmas Cheer, and other community organizations.

None of this would be possible without the generosity of Sault Ste. Marie's book lovers. Thank you for making a difference!

Volunteers & Program Sponsors



Jessica C.
Library courier

Volunteers and sponsors play a vital role in supporting and strengthening the library. Our volunteers generously give their time and talents to enhance services and assist staff, while our sponsors provide essential funding for Children's programs that promote learning and creativity. Together, their dedication and support help create a vibrant, welcoming space where the entire community can learn, connect, and grow.

Circulation
5 Couriers
211 Hours

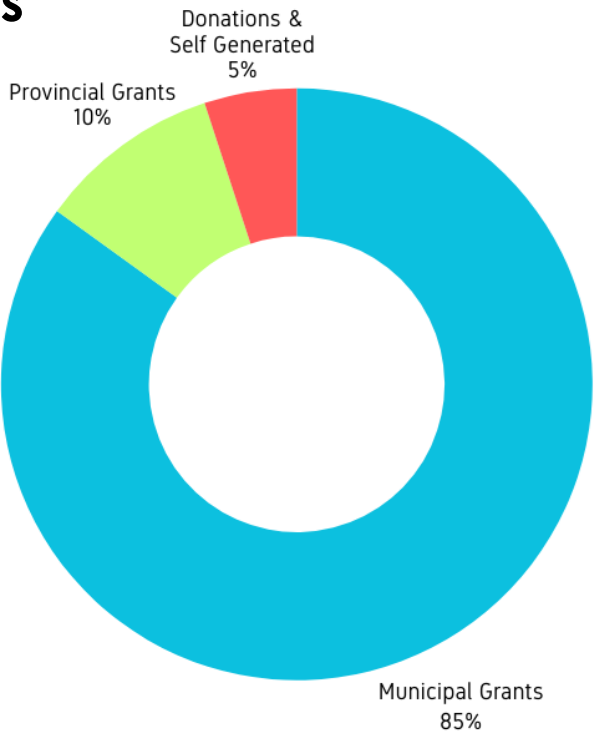
VLS Courier
26.5 Hours

Number of
VLS Deliveries
104

**"I really appreciate the different books, especially those in the children's section.
They are great, love the indigenous children's books."**

2025 Financial

Revenues

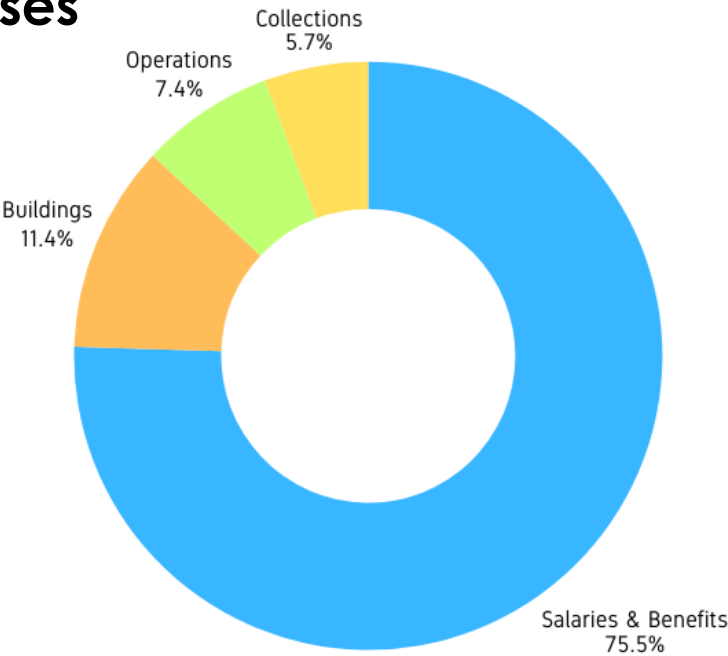


MUNICIPAL GRANTS
\$3,280,506

PROVINCIAL GRANTS
\$385,850

**DONATIONS & SELF
GENERATED**
\$194,880

Expenses



SALARIES & BENEFITS
\$2,880,424

BUILDINGS
\$436,205

OPERATIONS
\$281,096

COLLECTIONS
\$218,063

“When in the library I see different displays promoting different subjects (parenting, indigenous, neuro diversity) and I think that’s great.”

Thank you, Donors!

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to our generous donors. Whether it is a donation of gently used books or dvds to our Friends of the Library bookstore, or a financial donation to the library in general - supporting the library means investing in the future of our community.

A special thank you to: Howard Bennett
Kiwanis Club of Sault Ste. Marie
Len Scramstad
Kiwanis Club of Lakesore
Dawn Ann McClure
Zonta Club of Sault Ste. Marie

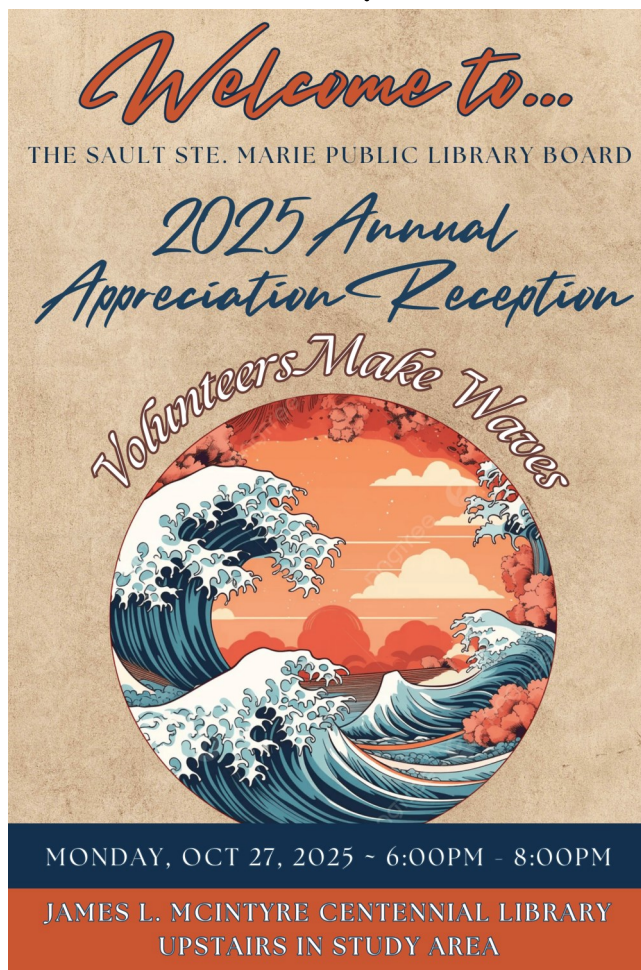
FMI Elliott Foundation
Clyde & Gura Healey
Dr. Roberta Bondar
Friends of the Library
Mary Coventry

And the dozens of individuals who also supported SSMPL in 2025

Volunteer Reception 2025



"We, as volunteers, are proud to contribute to the mission of the library and support the community it serves."



"There's nothing more rewarding than putting books into the hands of our community members."



James L. McIntyre Centennial Library
50 East Street
Sault Ste. Marie, ON P6A 3C3
705-759-5242 admin@cityssm.on.ca

North Branch
232C Northern Avenue
Sault Ste. Marie, ON P6B 4H6
705-759-5248