

COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEGACIES

Libraries as Legacy

When donors want to benefit the broadest swath of people, libraries are a natural choice. They are free to all; they are safe and comfortable, they are welcoming to young and old; they are packed with information, tools, and adventure, and they have proven to be adaptable to enormous cultural change. Libraries are egalitarian portals to the world.

Established libraries evolve to become community centers. Their steps are among the most heavily trafficked real estate in our counties. Seekers and curious minds of all ages, from toddlers to seniors, meander through the stacks. No one is turned away and no one leaves empty-handed or disappointed. Libraries currently offer e-books, videos, audiobooks, meeting and study rooms, outdoor event pavilions, books by mail services, podcasts, personalized basic tech training, and even musical instrument rental.

Many of our Endless Mountains rural libraries have interesting philanthropic histories. They can be as small and quaint as a Little Free Library, or as large and modern as the Montrose and Tunkhannock facilities. Over the centuries, their champions maintained and supported them. Some cared enough to endow them as their legacy to the whole community, and their efforts have been appreciated! At the Community Foundation, we are pleased to play our role in the survival and financial support of our libraries large and small, old and new. We are currently stewards of six funds that benefit public libraries in Susquehanna and Wyoming Counties, as well as the two school libraries in Mountain View School District. We offer many ways you can be a modern-day champion of cherished local libraries, contact us to learn more.





TUNKHANNOCK & WYOMING COUNTY LIBRARY FUNDS

We currently manage five funds that benefit Tunkhannock Public Library and all Wyoming County libraries. Below we highlight two historic examples:

■ **Asheld Memorial Wyoming County Library Fund:** This fund was placed in our trust in 2013. Its records were incomplete, but Foundation research indicates its likely founder was Homer B. Asheld. Homer was from a prominent Tunkhannock business and political family of the late 1800s. The fund arrived valued at \$41,000. Today its value exceeds \$60,500, flourishing to support local libraries.

■ **Frances E. Kennard Memorial Wyoming County Library Fund:** This fund is named after an early librarian of Wyoming County's Meshoppen Library, which was founded in 1900. Ms. Kennard spent her life directing library activities. Historians tell us in the 1930's she put together "a little bit of money," (in fact \$1,000) to support the Meshoppen Library, which for three decades had been housed at shifting sites. That amount was actually a significant bequest for the Depression era in which it was established. Over nearly a century, the fund has grown to its current value of \$136,047. Today it is managed by the Wyoming County Library Board to provide support to the various public libraries throughout Wyoming County.

LITERACY PROGRAMS & LIBRARIES

United Way of Susquehanna County (UWSC) has focused its donor dollars on programs that "Help Children Do Well". This includes several children's literacy programs:

- See to Succeed brings a licensed optometrist to six county school districts making good vision affordable and convenient.
- The Dolly Parton Imagination Library provides free, quality, age-appropriate books each month to all Susquehanna County children under age five.
- Literacy Kits kick-start children's learning activities with books and creative supplies.
- Real Men Read brings male volunteers to read to grades K-3, as literacy role models.
- 13 Little Free Libraries allow handy access to books in hard-to-reach locations.



SUSAN OLSZEWSKI STONE HONORARY LIBRARY ENDOWMENT TO BENEFIT THE SUSQUEHANNA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY AND FREE LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

An anonymous donor partnered with the Foundation for two years to raise a \$1.75 million matching fund endowment dedicated to creating a perpetual and reliable source of income for operating expenses and future growth. The endowment honors Susan Stone, a beloved administrator and librarian who devoted more than 40 years of service to the library.

Some popular features of this library system:

- Mobile outreach options
- Headquartered in Montrose, with three branch locations serving the County
- Operates the Historical Society museum with its own expert staff
- Renowned Genealogy Research Center
- Offers Student Field Trips to teach local history
- Kid's programs
- Summer reading program
- Local author series
- August Blueberry Festival that attracts thousands

