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Volunteers with the Lansing Community Library Center listen as facilities and construction management volunteer Richard Darfler explains procedures for opening up the newly renovated library. Listening, from left to right, are Suzanne Hinderliter, Harriet London, Marlaire Darfler, Maureen Dean, Pat Angerer and Barbara Bills. Among the library's new features are a new children's reading room, circulation area, main entrance and an expanded area for library holdings.

Lansing library readies for re-opening

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LANSING — More than 50 volunteers' work and time will soon pay off for town residents who wanted to make the public library an integral part of the community.

At 6 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 28 library staff members will host a grand re-opening of the two-story Lansing Community Library Center. The library has been closed for approximately the past six months.

After several renovations and a near 25 percent increase in the size of the building, the library will feature new attractions including a children's reading room, an art exhibition room and an expanded material holding area. The library will also be entirely wheelchair accessible.

A total of \$385,000 in contributions from local individuals and businesses owners, and a \$100,000 grant earmarked for the renovation from state Sen. Michael Nozzolio, R-54th Dist., helped to drive this effort, said Bobbi Wasenko a member of the library's board of directors. Included in the \$385,000 was a \$50,000 grant from the state Dormitory Authority, co-sponsored by former state Assemblyman Martin A. Luster and his successor, Barbara Lifton.

"I think it's an amazing state-



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The renovated and expanded Lansing Community Library Center will have a grand re-opening event from 6 p.m.-8 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 28, 2007

ment of this community," said Marlaire Darfler, chair of the library's board of directors. "The amount of work is hard to even put into numbers, but it has taken over 50 people and six to eight months of work."

The library, which opened in July of 2000, was much anticipated, Darfler said, largely because it was the first library in town. Built in 1929, the building was initially used as a schoolhouse and later converted to the town hall. In 2000, when a new town hall was built, residents debated whether the aging structure should be torn down.

Later that year, those hoping to open a library in the facility were given final approval

from the town. Since then, public interest has grown as has the number of donated library materials, fueling the need for a larger library. Now, the library contains about 13,000 items, Wasenko said, including books and DVDs acquired through a combination of donations, fundraising and grants.

Town Supervisor Steve Farkas, who in 1948 attended first grade in the building that now houses the library, commended the library's volunteers.

"When building it, I told the contractor to be gentle with it because I went to first grade there," he said. "(It's) proven to be a real asset in the town. The folks on the library board have just done a fantastic job.

It's just amazing."

The library's renovations won't require raising local taxes, Darfler said.

"It was just a dream of a small group of people who went out and made this happen," she said.

As part of the renovations, the Lansing Community Library Center will offer free adult programming in coming months. The events are:

► 7 p.m. Thursday, March 15 the library will host Jim Bell, Lansing resident and author of "Postcards from Mars." Bell is an associate professor in the department of astronomy at Cornell University and is a participating scientist in the Mars Odyssey Mission.

► 7 p.m. Wednesday, April 4 the library will host Paul Hamill, Tompkins County poet laureate and former Lansing resident. Hamill's poetry publications include a chapbook, "Winter Mind," and the book "The Year of Blue Snow: Northern Poems." Hamill is a graduate of Boston College and Stanford. He lives in Ithaca with his wife Kris and works as an administrator at Ithaca College.

► 7 p.m. Wednesday, May 9 the library will host Tess Gerritsen, a novelist and author of medical thrillers including "Life Support," "Bloodstream," "Gravity," "The Surgeon," "The Apprentice," "The Sinner," "Body Double" and "Vanish."