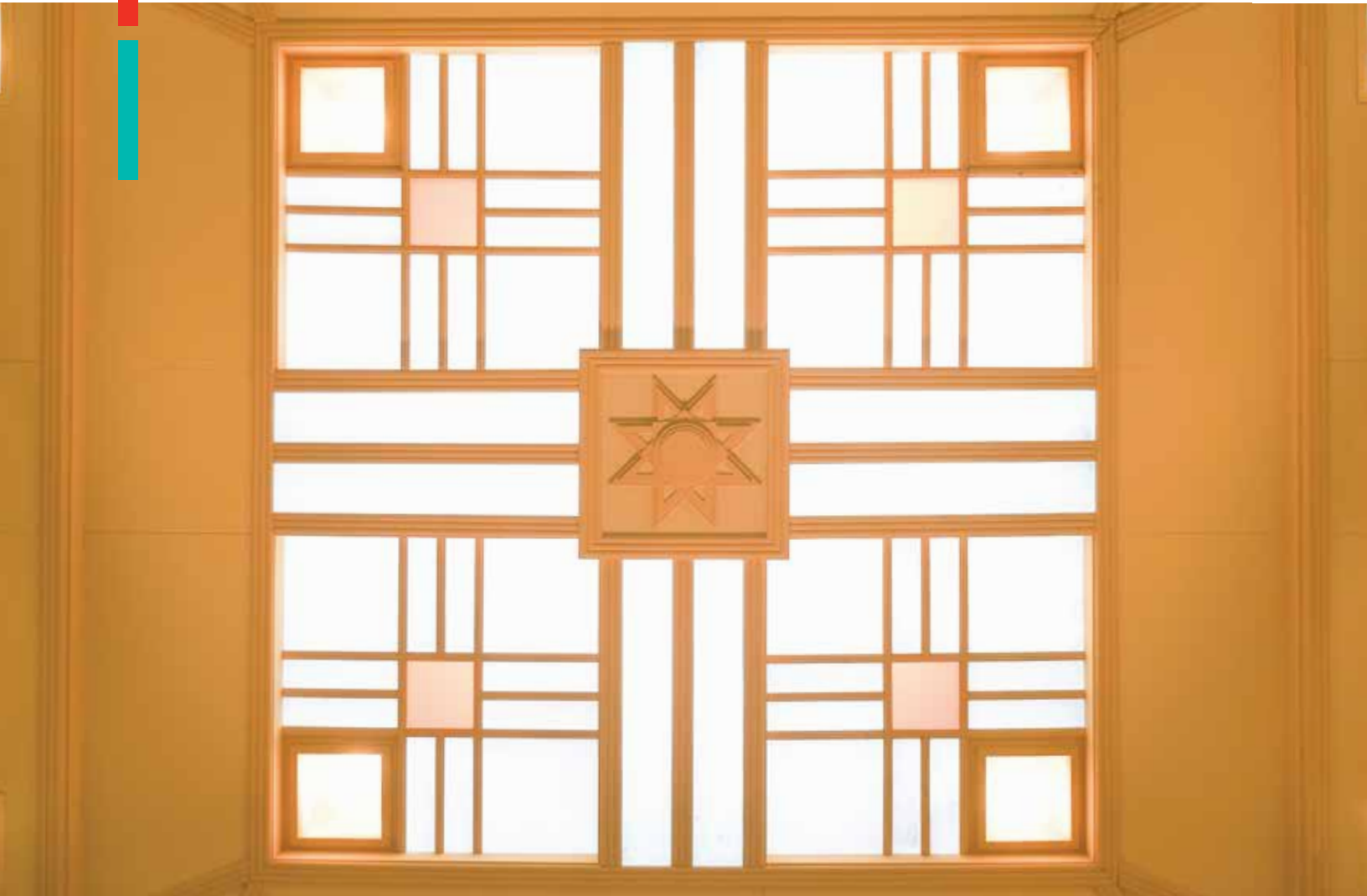




Chapters

Kitsap Regional Library's Community Story



Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Branch

Refreshed and renamed, the Bremerton - Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. branch is ready for you to visit and enjoy.

Community Interns

After a pause due to the pandemic, the Community Internship program has made a triumphant return, welcoming three interns last year.

Issue 001 | Winter 2024

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letter from the Director

Dear Library Patrons and Friends,

In the heart of Kitsap Regional Library, exciting stories unfold as we proudly introduce our inaugural publication, Chapters. I am genuinely thrilled to offer this new pathway for sharing remarkable narratives that shape our vibrant community.

In this edition, we spotlight the triumphant return of our Community Internship program, which is focused on empowering young adults through project-based learning. Additionally, the historic Downtown Bremerton branch reopens with vital upgrades and a new name, now known as the Martin Luther King Jr. branch, honoring Dr. King's legacy. We also invite you to explore our multi-sensory learning kits, designed to promote accessibility and inclusion for people of all ages.

But there's more exciting news to share! We've embarked on a bold new journey with the launch of our 2024-2029 Strategic Direction. This visionary plan isn't just a road map; it's our commitment to inspiring community and connection. It will guide our Library's growth, innovation, and community impact, ensuring that Kitsap Regional Library remains a vital and transformative resource for years to come. Learn more about our plans for the future at KRL.org/ThriveAhead.



Libraries are at the heart of Kitsap County, serving as vibrant community hubs where knowledge is shared, connections are forged, and dreams are nurtured. As we move forward, we recognize the profound importance of libraries in Kitsap, not only as repositories of information but as catalysts for growth, education, and inclusivity.

Our mission, "Inspiring curiosity and connection," embodies the pivotal role we play in fostering a sense of belonging and empowerment for everyone in our diverse, dynamic community.

Warmest regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jason Driver".

Jason Driver

Library Director
Kitsap Regional Library

Cover: Sun design on the ceiling of the renamed Bremerton - Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. branch. Table of Contents, clockwise from top: Main entrance of the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. branch. The Library's 2023 interns. Mobile and Adult Services Librarian Liz Ochoa (left) and patron Errika (right) play with Errika's grandkids and a new, tactile Early Learning Kit. The shelves in the Silverdale branch, photographed by Logan Westom.

Downtown Bremerton is Back

Built in the heart of Bremerton in 1938 and Kitsap Regional Library's first headquarters from 1955 to 1978, the 7,000 square-foot Downtown Bremerton branch is beloved by many, serving as a cornerstone of its community.

Step back in time when you enter the library and immerse yourself in its art deco interior. The building was funded by a grant from the Works Progress Administration (WPA), part of the national New Deal program that sought to create jobs and combat the effects of the Great Depression and unemployment.

Up until 2023, come one unusually warm or extremely cold day, the branch was nearly unusable due to the lack of a modern heating and cooling system.

On July 17, the Downtown Bremerton branch closed and the Kitsap Regional Library worked collaboratively with the building owner, the City of Bremerton, to complete essential upgrades to the branch. This project's primary focus was installing a much-needed heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) system, addressing the challenge of maintaining a comfortable environment for library visitors.

The historic and unique construction of this WPA-era building presented significant challenges, but the City's dedication to this project was unwavering.

After closing for several months, the Downtown Bremerton branch reopened, featuring a new heating and cooling system and more to offer an eager and excited community.

Previously remodeled in 2005 thanks to a huge fundraising effort that involved federal grants and private donations, including \$100,000 from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the \$400,000 project sealed a leaky roof and helped to restore the classic library to its original glory.

"As the oldest library building in Kitsap County, I've met people that identify this branch as the library of their childhood," Branch Manager Lisa Lechuga says.

Today, you can still enjoy much of the library's refurbished oak furniture, which has been with the branch since it opened 85 years ago. A glass dome, which was once dank and dark, lined with cracked glass, was also overhauled during the 2005 remodel.

In 2019, new carpet, shelving, and furniture was installed throughout the branch. Along with a fresh coat of paint and new workstations, Public Services team members who support branch staff moved into the downstairs space.

In addition to the new heating and cooling system, a comprehensive upgrade of the network cabling to support the growing demand for technology, as well as updated and accessible wayfinding signage, were installed to ensure an easier and more enjoyable visit to the beloved branch.

"Many of our patrons are pedestrians," Lisa shares. "Many depend on access to our computers, printing and fax services, phone charging, study spaces, restrooms, and support navigating technology and local services. I'm ready to connect with and support our community. No other place in downtown Bremerton offers what the library does."

Beyond books, the Downtown Bremerton branch serves as a "safe haven and resource to the community," Lisa says.

In partnership with the City of Bremerton, the NAACP, and many other community supporters, the building was formally dedicated as the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Library Building on January 15, 1999.

“The Downtown Bremerton library has historic significance to Bremerton. It also honors the memory and legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr., champion of equal opportunity and of the underserved,” Lisa explains.

On January 12, 2024, the Library further cemented and celebrated Dr. King’s legacy and the name of the library building, 25 years after its formal dedication, by renaming the Downtown Bremerton location, now the Bremerton - Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. branch.

Lisa says, “We will celebrate the advocacy and investment of the Bremerton community to maintain the Bremerton - Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. branch and its services for years to come.”





Welcoming Community Interns

Though the Community Internship program was forced to pause during the pandemic, the program has made an exciting comeback, welcoming three interns last year.

Launched in 2016, the internship helps prepare young adults entering the workforce to find rewarding careers and access higher education. Essential to the program is a project-based learning component that encourages interns to learn, explore, and get inspired, all while creating SMART—specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound—goals to help them complete their projects.

Following the three-year pause, 2023's interns include Andrew Parry and Imogen Pederson,

recruited from the Washington Youth Academy, and Alejandro Monterrey, a teen patron of the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. branch.

When reflecting on the program's impact, Megan Burton, STEM & Learning Supervisor, says, "In many ways, the internship program has become my life's work and my hope is to help every intern I can until the day I retire. This was exactly the kind of work I was dreaming about doing when I was in library school, and to be working for the same library where I attended Storytime as a child is a dream come true."

[Learn more at KRL.org/internship.](https://krl.org/internship)

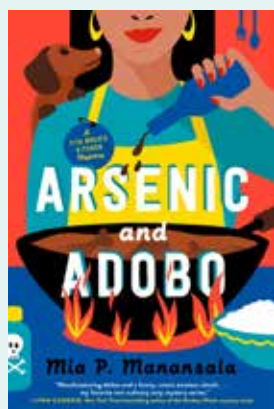
[Read the rest of the story at KRL.org/blog.](https://krl.org/blog)

Gentle Reads

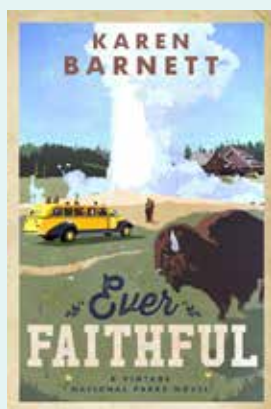
One of the most requested kinds of books are “gentle reads.” These books can offer refuge from stress and tend to have fewer adult themes. They are books that inspire a feeling of hope and end happily (or at least come to a satisfying conclusion.) “Gentle Reads” appeal to our emotions. They tug on heartstrings, present peaceful perspectives, and are often set in small communities.

These books have been described by fans as, “warm milk”—satisfying, calming, and comforting stories; they may include tragedy and struggle, but the key is that characters overcome these challenges through positivity, kindness, love, strength, and compassion.

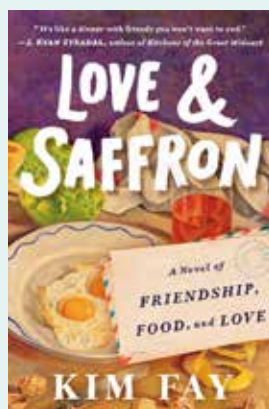
[Explore more at KRL.org/blog/gentle-reads.](https://www.krl.org/blog/gentle-reads)



Arsenic and Adobo
by Mia P. Manansala



Ever Faithful
by Karen Barnett



Love & Saffron
by Kim Fay



The Travelling Cat Chronicles
by Hiro Arikawa



Book Groups

Come for the books and stay for the discussion! Spanning multiple genres and locations, join monthly group conversations with your fellow literary lovers.

[Learn more at KRL.org/bookgroups.](https://www.krl.org/bookgroups)



For Little Kids & Kids

Explore reoccurring programs, resources, and events available for Little Kids (ages 0-5.)

Baby Band – Babies and their caregivers enjoy musical experiences that build early literacy skills and encourage social and emotional development.

Storytime – Enjoy Baby, Toddler, Preschool, and Family Storytimes that include stories, songs, rhymes, and full-body movements designed to build early literacy skills and emotional development.

Early Learning Kits – Support school readiness with a fun and engaging Early Learning Kit. Our 36 kits are uniquely themed and come with books, educational toys, and activities to help spur learning. Borrow one for up to 21 days.

Explore now at [KRL.org/littlekids](https://www.krl.org/littlekids).

Join in the fun with reoccurring programs, resources, and events for Kids (ages 6-11.)

Homework Help – Daily tutoring is available 1-10 p.m. with Brainfuse! Engage in digital study support, test prep, video lessons, and more.

Read to a Dog – Choose a story to share with a dog and practice reading. In partnership with Therapy Dogs International Kitsap at participating branches.

STEM Learning Kits – Kids (grades 3-5) can try a STEM Learning Kit and experiment with science, technology, engineering, and math. Each kit is uniquely themed with a hands-on maker activity to help spur learning. Borrow one for up to 21 days.

Check it out at [KRL.org/kids](https://www.krl.org/kids).

Stay in the loop on upcoming events by visiting [KRL.org/events](https://www.krl.org/events) or by subscribing to our email newsletter at [KRL.org/subscribe](https://www.krl.org/subscribe).





Celebrating 30 years of Library love and counting!

As the philanthropic arm of Kitsap Regional Library, we've proudly supported our community through the Library for the past 30 years by facilitating charitable gifts that advance our Library's mission and vision.

As a valued member of the Library family, when you make a gift to the Foundation you inspire the future of the Library and your generosity has a profound impact on the communities we serve.

Donor gifts support the Library's efforts to bring exciting classes, engaging events, and the tools and resources to promote reading and interest-based learning for kids, teens and adults: helping our community learn, grow and thrive.

Make a gift at supportKRL.org/donate.





Beyond Books:

Exploring New Multi-Sensory Kits in Collection

There are more than books available at the library. In addition to Discover Passes, ukeleles, and telescopes, Kitsap Regional Library has learning kits ready for you to check out.

These kits are developed by the Library's Collections & Technical Services team (CTS) who select and purchase everything, from books to video games, for every Library branch. Each learning kit includes a backpack, books, educational toys, and activities.

Specially curated by age groups for babies, kids, teens, and adults, each kit is designed to spur learning and allow users to explore diverse topics, including astronomy, manga, drawing, baby sign language, and more.

Late last year, 16 new kits were introduced to our collection. Patron Errika Schneider and her six grandkids were the first to check out the Farm Animal Sounds kit.

This first concepts kit for babies and toddlers introduces babies to animals and animal sounds. It provides an accessible experience with braille board books, tactile soft animal puppets, and a baby-friendly tactile animal sounds toy.

As a person who is blind, Errika, who babysits her grandkids throughout the week, was thrilled to share the multi-sensory learning and reading experience with her loved ones.

"My grandkids loved the interaction. It was fun because we could all read and play together. The Farm Animal Sounds kit will be borrowed multiple times. My youngest grandkid didn't want to see the kit go back to the library!" says Errika.

"It's more common to find material for blind children with sighted parents than for sighted children with blind parents," she adds. "So, finding something at our local library that meets all our needs is unique and fun!"

Working alongside Errika to ensure she has the materials she wants and needs is Mobile and Adult Services Librarian Liz Ochoa.

The Mobile Services team delivers library materials to healthcare facilities, group homes, and individual residences, supplying personalized services to those who cannot visit our branches. Errika shares, "Liz is always so helpful and is a voice for me and my needs. I really appreciate it."

Liz says, "Errika is an amazing human and it's been wonderful working with her. I've learned so much about accessibility issues through listening to her and doing my best to find library materials and resources that work for her and her family.

I've also learned a lot about resources available for people with visual impairments and am so grateful to be able to share those resources with others. Those connections are what being a librarian is about!"

Youth Selector Librarian Rosie Bromberg, who cultivates the new kits, explains, "With these new learning kits, we're hoping to offer meaningful interactive learning experiences for patrons of all ages, allowing them to explore a variety of topics and interests.

Incorporating accessibility into these kits allows us not only to share this learning experience with more people in our community, but also to help create connections."

Open to all, fostering a sense of welcoming and belonging is essential to the Library's work.



**Check out a learning kit
at [KRL.org/borrowmore](https://www.krl.org/borrowmore).**



For Teens

Teen Space - Find your space at the Library! Hang out, do homework, play games, or make your voice heard about what you want the space to become. (Grades 6-12)

[Find events for teens at KRL.org/events.](https://www.krl.org/events)

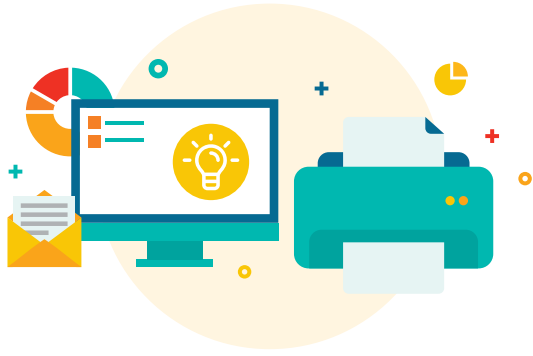
New Kits - Check out a kit made specifically for teens! Make manga, explore the outdoors, write a story, draw like a pro, or play Dungeons & Dragons – all for free with your library card. Borrow one for up to 21 days.

[Take a look at KRL.org/teens.](https://www.krl.org/teens)

Dungeons & Dragons - If you've ever wanted to try out your dice-rolling, role-playing, or adventure-building skills, Dungeons & Dragons may be for you! With virtual and in-person monthly events, join fellow gamers for this tabletop role-playing game meet-up however works best for you.

[Bring on epic storytelling at KRL.org/tabletop.](https://www.krl.org/tabletop)





Remote Printing

You can now print on-the-go with remote printing! We're excited to offer more convenient options like these to patrons. Available at all branches.

[Learn more at KRL.org/copyprint.](https://krl.org/copyprint)

Puget Sound Genealogical Society



Puget Sound Genealogical Society hosts monthly events on genealogical research and resources. Discover your family roots by attending classes, and explore your heritage, locate missing ancestors, and review local records at the Genealogy Center.

[Explore now at psgsociety.org.](https://psgsociety.org)



OF KITSAP REGIONAL LIBRARY

Friends of the Library groups are organized at most Kitsap Regional Library locations. Through fundraising events such as book sales, Friends groups raise money for items not in the library's budget. Joining a Friends of the Library group is a wonderful way to support your Library. Looking for a way to get involved? If so, your Friends group needs you!

[Learn more at KRL.org/friends.](https://krl.org/friends)

BOOKMA



MARKED



A Sylvan Way youth learn the basics of letterpress thanks to Bainbridge Island Museum of Art, Education and DEI Advancement Manager Becky Johnston (pictured), and Youth Services Librarian Kathleen Kondek.

B Summer Learning Grand Prize Winner, Augustus, chose the Nintendo Switch Life. He shared that he'd been doing extra chores and diligently saving for two years to buy one himself, making this win extra special.



F

C Silverdale Youth Services Librarian Aleah Jurneka high-fives a Summer Finale attendee in a sea of bubbles.

D A Kitsap Pride attendee holds up a special edition "Open to All" Library card.

E Port Orchard Library Associate Ollie-Lee Regan helps kids pick prizes during the Waterfront Wednesdays Youth Talent Show Bonanza.

F Custodian Specialist James Anderson hugs a therapy dog during the Library's annual Staff Day, an all-day staff training event that took place at the Marvin Williams Center in Bremerton.

G A father reads to his daughter during Family Storytime at the Little Boston branch.

The Library will be closed Feb. 19, Mar. 4, and May 27. For more information, visit KRL.org/closures.

Bainbridge (206) 451-5050
1270 Madison Ave. N, 98110
Mon. 10-6 | Tues., Wed. 10-7 | Thu. 10-6 | Fri., Sat. 10-5

Bremerton - Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.
(360) 447-5420
612 5th St., 98337
Mon.-Thu. 10-6 | Fri. 10-5 | Sat. 10-2

Bremerton - Sylvan Way (360) 447-5480
1301 Sylvan Way, Bremerton, 98310
Mon. 10-6 | Tues., Wed. 10-7 | Thu. 10-6 | Fri., Sat. 10-5

Kingston (360) 860-5070
26159 Dulay Rd. NE, 98346
Mon.-Thu. 10-6 | Fri., Sat. 10-5

Little Boston (360) 860-5080
31980 Little Boston Rd. NE, 98346
Mon.-Thu. 10-6 | Fri. 10-5 | Sat. 10-2

Manchester (360) 447-5430
8067 E Main St., Port Orchard, 98366
Mon.-Thu. 10-6 | Fri. 10-5 | Sat. 10-2

Port Orchard (360) 447-5440
87 Sidney Ave., 98366
Mon. 10-6 | Tues., Wed. 10-7 | Thu. 10-6 | Fri., Sat. 10-5

Poulsbo (360) 447-5450
700 NE Lincoln Rd., 98370
Mon. 10-6 | Tues., Wed. 10-7 | Thu. 10-6 | Fri., Sat. 10-5

Silverdale (360) 447-5470
3650 NW Anderson Hill Rd., Suite 101, 98383
Mon. 10-6 | Tues., Wed. 10-7 | Thu. 10-6 | Fri., Sat. 10-5

Mobile Services (360) 447-5505
Offering services for individuals who have challenges visiting our library branches, Mobile Services delivers library materials to those that qualify.
Learn more at KRL.org/mobileservices.

