



Chapters

Kitsap Regional Library's Community Story



Celebrating 80 Years

Kitsap Regional Library marks 80 years of service as a community-wide system with a look back and an exciting year ahead.

Game On

From tabletop game kits to video game book clubs, library staff find new ways to empower all ages to connect, collaborate, and adventure together.

Issue 004 | Winter-Spring 2025

Table of Contents

- 04 80 Years of Service
- 08 Tammy Jeffries, Library Legend
- 09 Grumpy-Sunshine Romance
- 10 Passport to Explore
- 12 Unlock Adventure
- 14 Kids & Teens
- 18 Bookmarked

4



8



14



12



letter from the Director

Dear Kitsap Community,

As winter settles across Kitsap, it's my pleasure to welcome you to the latest edition of Chapters. With 2025 upon us, we have much to celebrate and even more to anticipate in the year ahead.

Looking back, 2024 was transformative. We launched our 2024–2029 Strategic Direction, deepening our commitment to equity, curiosity, and service. We also celebrated a milestone by renaming our downtown Bremerton branch to honor Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., reflecting our values and diverse community. And our libraries continued to provide stellar service while breaking records. Summer Learning participation soared to new heights, engaging thousands of children and teens in meaningful educational adventures. This success reinforces the Library's role in fostering lifelong learning and connection for all ages.

As we begin 2025, we commemorate a historic milestone—80 years of library service countywide! Since 1945, Kitsap Regional Library has evolved alongside our community, from operating in surplus buildings and chicken coops to becoming a hub for innovation, creativity, and learning. This legacy of resilience and partnership reflects the strength of our neighbors, partners, and staff, who work together to ensure free access to resources, learning, and opportunities for all.



In this edition of Chapters, we celebrate this legacy with stories from our past, highlighting the ingenuity of early library staff and the vibrant communities they served. You'll also find details on our 80th-anniversary celebration, including the Passport to Explore program and branch-specific designs honoring local histories.

While this letter offers a glimpse into 2024's successes, we'll share a full reflection in April when we release our Annual Report. Thank you for being part of our story—here's to another inspiring year ahead!

With gratitude,

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

Jason Driver

Library Director
Kitsap Regional Library

Cover: Collage of Kitsap libraries throughout the years. Table of Contents, clockwise from top: Front entrance of previous Bremerton library location. Executive Assistant Tammy Jeffries at the 2005 Library Staff Training Day. A selection of dice from a new turn-based storytelling game kit awaits a roll. Two teens are all smiles at Poulsbo's Teen Space.

A LIBRARY FOR ALL

Kitsap Regional Library Celebrates 80 Years

It's July 1944, and in a strong show of approval, Kitsap County voters overwhelmingly decide to create a rural library district, carrying the decision 3,297 to 616. An article in the Kitsap Sun (formerly the Bremerton Sun) briefly explains a board will likely be appointed later that following week and that "one mobile library unit and a number of branches are expected to be in operation in the near future." Though the story runs on the front page, it's situated midway down, overwhelmed by the blaring top headline: "GERMANS FLEE BALTIC LINE."

The 80-year history of Kitsap's public library system is one that naturally reflects and amplifies the lives and voices of the communities it serves. It's a story of resilience, in making do with what's available even while working toward ambitious dreams of encouraging and supporting remarkable achievements. It's a story of partnerships between educators, public services, parents, and local professionals working to inspire new generations while bringing communities together.



Branch Beginnings

- 1863** ●
Bainbridge Island
Joined system in 1947
- 1908** ●
Bremerton (Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.)
Joined system in 1945
- 1918** ●
Poulsbo
Joined system in 1989
- 1924** ●
Port Orchard
Joined system in 1964
- 1945** ●
Kingston
- 1945** ●
Silverdale
- 1947** ●
Manchester
- 1974** ●
Little Boston
- 1978** ●
Bremerton (Sylvan Way)



Communities Come Together

The newly formed system brought longstanding community libraries into alliance and worked quickly to link together more of the county. Doors to the original branches opened into Bremerton's iconic downtown art-deco hall, while in Kingston, a small cafeteria room was quickly transformed into the city's new library just a year before a 16'x16' Army surplus building was remodeled for Silverdale's use. In 1947, a Library trustee board member set aside a corner of her small shopping mall to serve as the Manchester branch, which then grew and moved into, of all things, a renovated chicken coop.

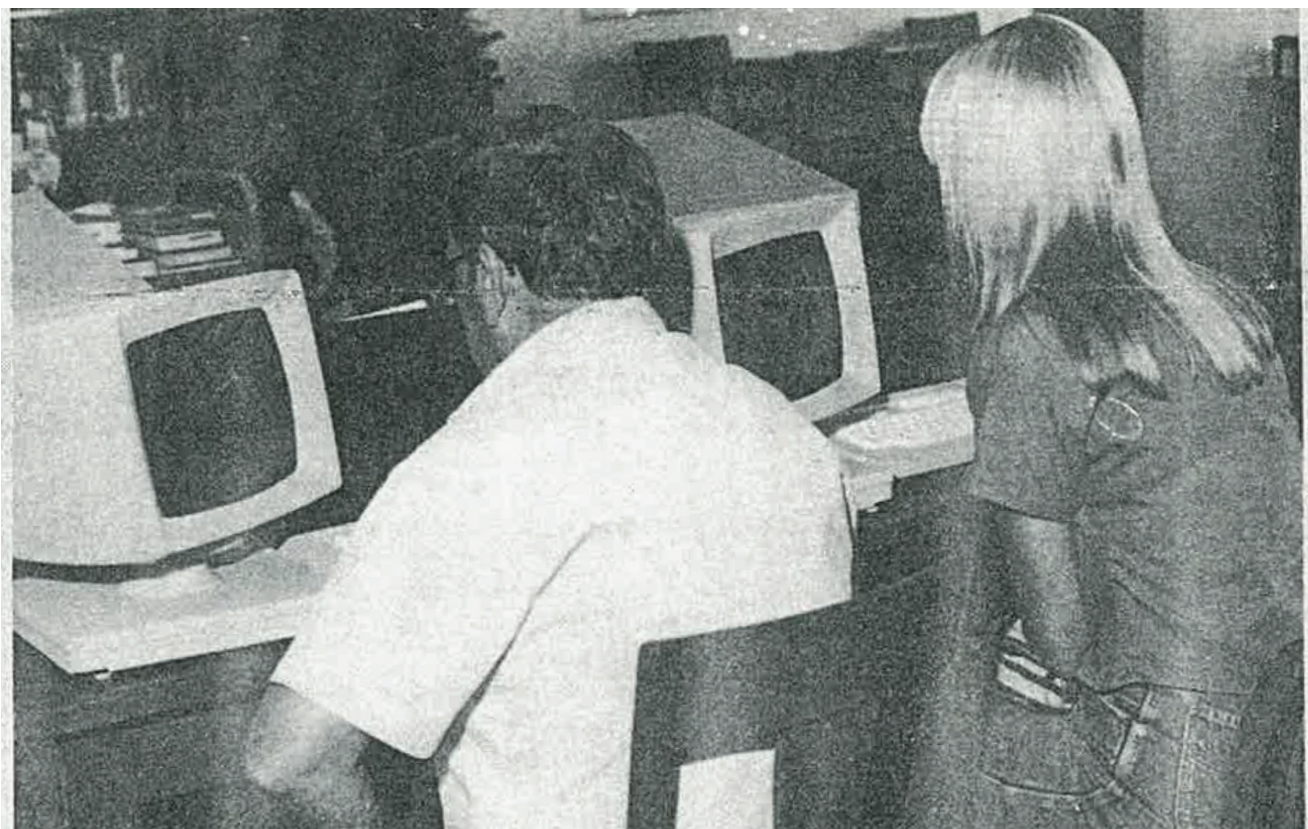
Yes, those beginning days days were scrappy, but those first staff members listened closely to what their neighbors needed and sought solutions, developing a resourceful trademark style that today's Library staff still emulate. Those initial efforts revealed vibrant communities, passionate about literacy, technology, and making a positive impact on their cities and towns.

A History of Library Love

Kitsap citizens sought out libraries early—when Bainbridge opened in 1863, it was the second public library in all of Puget Sound. Bremerton's own library was built over the literal fire department—a visual metaphor for the urgent, service-oriented nature of the work and the increased need for spaces that offered a connection to the larger world, a shelter from harsh weather, and access to historical records, information, breaking news, and immersive stories.

As the county grew and the face of information changed, so did the system. In 1955, the system was renamed to reflect such changes, shifting from "Kitsap County Rural Library" to "Kitsap Regional Library." Port Orchard joined the regional system in 1964, followed a decade later by the Little Boston branch opening in partnership with the Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe on the reservation, where it was first housed in a small A-frame cabin. Funds were raised to open the Sylvan Way location by the end of the '70s. Staff soon embraced a new microfiche catalog system, in the process freeing up space previously occupied by bulky card catalog cabinets.

From left to right: Library staff Phil Guarin and Patti Allen share a smile in 1994. Library staff member Mildred Bynes leads a program for kids at the downtown Bremerton library in 1972.



Logging Into a New Age

If the '70s saw expansion, the '80s saw complete transformation, beginning with two words: library cards. The advent of a digital circulation and management system assigned each library patron a unique barcode printed on a plastic card, allowing patrons to use the library more freely. In 1986, Kitsap Regional Library launched Washington's second online public library catalog, installing terminals (essentially computer portals) to the world wide web in every branch. The City of Poulsbo soon voted to join Kitsap Regional Library, and as the system expanded, so did its influence.

A look at the Library's first website is a snapshot into the unique and even quirky persona of the library system at the time. Many staff members are referred to on a first-name basis, showing how well the patrons of the time knew their local library staff.

That website was in many ways practical,

utilizing a real-time, scrolling news ticker that counted how many patrons had logged in (nearly a million in 1997) and the number of questions staff had answered (over 10,000 that same year.) The system also offered all county library cardholders a free email account and provided access to early online educational resources.

As technology evolved, the Library's services did too, frequently leading the way. At the turn of the millennium, Kitsap Regional Library secured grant funding to develop a program that allowed patrons who were visually impaired to access the internet and digital catalog and read physical books from the collection. The following year, the Little Boston branch received the esteemed "Excellence in Small and/or Rural Public Library Service Award," a sure sign that the library system was only getting better and better at anticipating and responding to needs across the county.



The Library Cat

As an example of its less practical but fun-loving side, the Kitsap Regional Library's website also featured Dui, the Library Cat—a short blog-style page written from the perspective of an actual cat that lived at Sylvan Way. There Dui shared anecdotes from his experiences (featuring a mind-boggling amount of cat puns) links to his favorite internet cat spots, and even a staff email address where patrons could correspond with him.

Checking Out the 21st Century

The decades following show the Library continuing to reinvent its services to meet modern challenges. The launch of an online tutor program that connected Kitsap students with professional tutors over instant messaging was just a shadow of what free homework help would become (with online resources like live-video tutoring from Brainfuse and in-person programming at branches.) Yet, even at the time, students raved about the program and staff saw it exceed usage expectations by nearly 75%. Similar trends brought the advent of the Community Learning Internship in the 2010s, a program that connects young adults with paid employment opportunities to explore career paths and develop professional skill sets. Participants in the program excelled,

supporting new initiatives like the 2015 “Make Do Share” project, where interns partnered with youth librarians to bring STEM lessons and projects to young children, learning to create valuable children’s programming while themselves teaching the librarians more strategic ways to engage and challenge children intellectually.

In 2018, Kitsap Regional Library finally realized a long-time goal: going fine free. Removing fines ensured the library better served taxpayers and encouraged community members to feel comfortable borrowing materials without risk of incurring costs.

A Future Where People & Libraries Thrive

This year, as the Library looks back on 80 years of community service, it also looks forward to the near future. While taking the time to recognize this 80-year milestone—honoring and celebrating each branch and community in the region—the Library continues to pursue its long-term priorities of early learning; making and interest-based learning; workforce readiness and development; STEM; and community and social connectedness. The focus is clear: to continue fostering welcoming and belonging while building collective impact, Kitsap Regional Library must thrive ahead.

Kitsap communities will continue to change, and the Library will continue to support present and future generations. To facilitate a collaborative community that offers all people the opportunity to grow, belong, and thrive, the Library intends to focus on its mission—inspiring curiosity and connection—this year and every year to come.



Staff Spotlight Tammy Jeffries

As Kitsap Regional Library celebrates its 80th anniversary, it's hard to imagine the Library without Tammy Jeffries—a cornerstone of its story for over four decades. Tammy began her chapter with the Library on September 1, 1982, as a receptionist and has since grown into her role as executive assistant, witnessing, supporting, and contributing to big and little changes along the way.

From the evolution of payroll systems and database software to adapting to the digital age with the introduction of computers, and a shift to the fine-free model, she's seen branches expand, undergo renovations, and even change names.

So, what first drew Tammy to the Library? "I was taking a certification course to become a school secretary so I could align my schedule with my children's," she recalls. "One day, a carpool friend who had recently been

hired at the Library mentioned a receptionist position that fit my skills. I applied, got the job, and here I am 42 years later!"

When asked what has kept her coming back all these years, Tammy's answer is: "The people. The staff I get to support, the community members we serve, and the joy of learning something new every day."

For Tammy, the Library is more than just a workplace. "My children grew up here," she says. "Some of my favorite memories are of them attending programs, then later volunteering to help younger kids experience the same magic they once did."

Tammy Jeffries' story is one of dedication, adaptability, and a deep connection to the Library's mission to inspire curiosity and connection—a legacy that reflects the heart of Kitsap Regional Library's 80-year history.

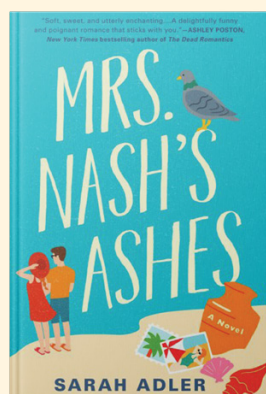
Grumpy-Sunshine Romance Reads

They say opposites attract, and within the romance genre, these pairings are foundational.

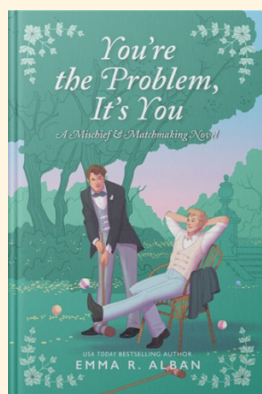
The grumpy-sunshine relationship trope focuses on the relationship between a person who generally has a sour, pessimistic, and cynical attitude

and a person who has a positive, sweet, and hopeful way of existing in the world. Not limited to just the romance genre, the grumpy-sunshine trope requires personal growth from both characters as they interact and learn from one another.

Explore more at KRL.org/grumpysunshine.



Mrs. Nash's Ashes
by Sarah Adler



You're the Problem,
It's You by Emma Alban



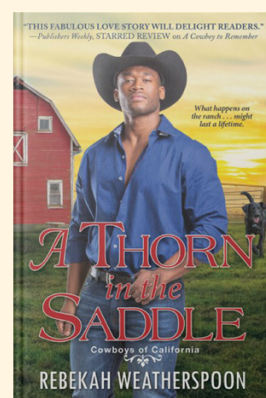
Sunshine and Spice
by Aurora Palit



To Sir Phillip, with
Love by Julia Quinn

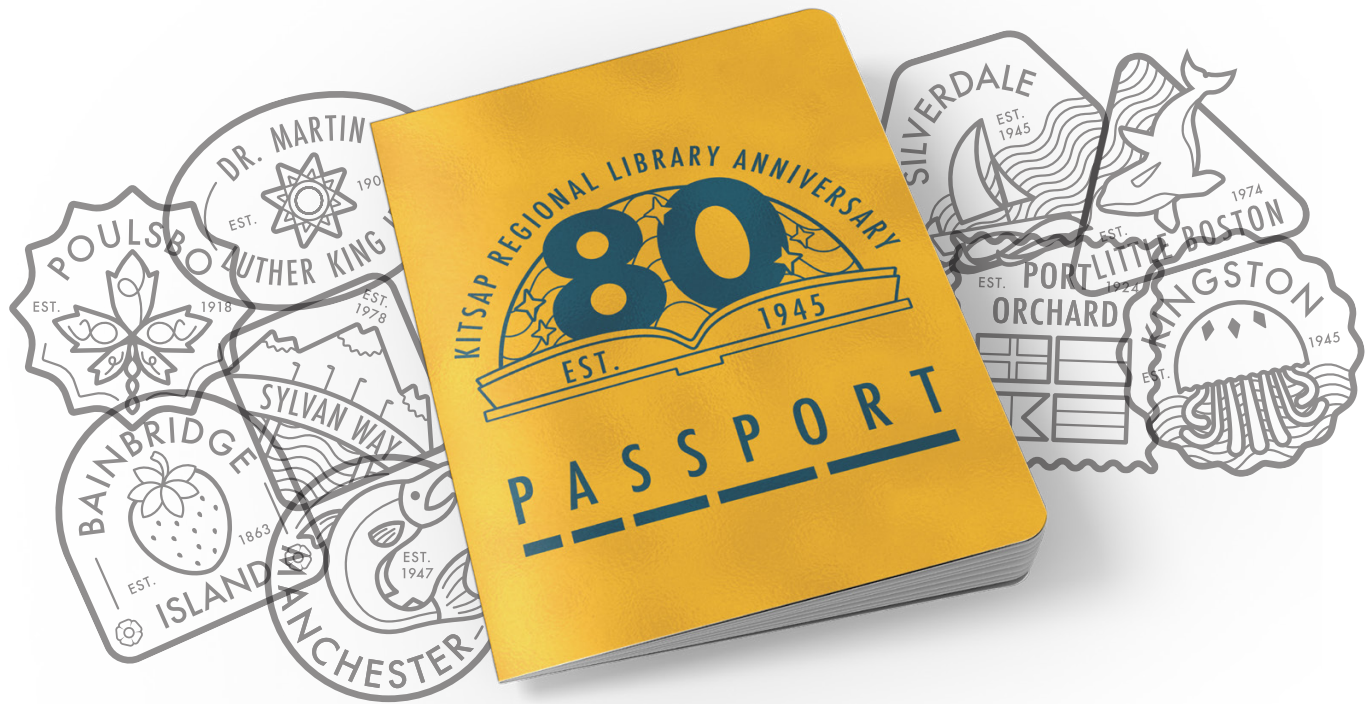


When Grumpy met Sunshine
by Charlotte Stein



A Thorn in the Saddle
by Rebekah
Weatherspoon

Celebrate 80 Years With A Passport To Explore



In 1944, Kitsap County residents made history by voting to create a county-wide library system, sparking a legacy of learning and community. By January 1, 1945, the Kitsap Rural County Library District was officially in operation, and ten years later, it adopted the name Kitsap Regional Library, becoming a vital resource for the entire county.

Eighty years later, we're celebrating this remarkable milestone with a year-long journey through our shared story.

Kicking off in February, we're launching Passport to Explore! The passports invite you to visit each library branch, uncover fascinating facts from our 80-year history, and dive into the unique stories that make each location special. In addition to passports, limited-edition library cards, with a unique design for each branch, will be available for community members to collect along with other fun giveaways!

Join us in honoring 80 years of Kitsap Regional Library while looking ahead to a future of curiosity and connection. The adventure will continue with a scavenger prize hunt in April, encouraging exploration and discovery. And on May 9, you're invited to a grand anniversary celebration at Silverdale.

Learn more at KRL.org/80years.

Participating in Passport to Explore is easy!

- 1** Pick up a passport from your nearest branch beginning in February.
- 2** Visit all nine Kitsap Regional Library branches and get your book stamped at each location.
- 3** Show us your completed stamp collection and receive a prize, while supplies last.

Limited Edition Library Cards

Bainbridge



Strawberries hold a special place in Bainbridge history as the Japanese Americans who planted and owned the first island farms were largely responsible for jumpstarting the region's fruit-growing industry.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.



Paying tribute to the branch's military ties and art deco architecture, the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. card design highlights the USS Nimitz and the sunburst accents from its 1938 building.

Sylvan Way



Connected to Bremerton via the Warren Avenue bridge, a trip to Sylvan Way is often a journey over the saltwater and past iconic mountains.

Kingston



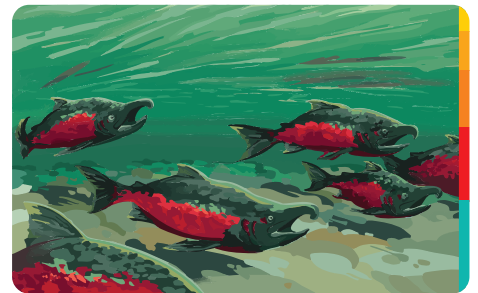
Capturing a classic Kitsap adventure, the Kingston branch card design showcases the ferry and the jellyfish moving through Puget Sound waters.

Little Boston



In celebration of the Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe, the orca represents both the vitality of this keystone species to our region as well as the essential nature of our partnership with the Tribe.

Manchester



Manchester's time-honored Salmon Bake comes to life with native coho salmon, featured inside a vibrant underwater scene.

Port Orchard



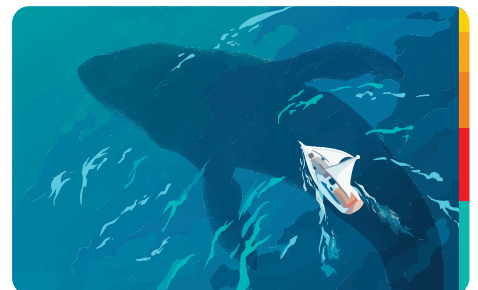
The branch's nautical flags spell "READ" while the seagull recognizes another Port Orchard icon.

Poulsbo



Poulsbo was built on the ancestral lands of the Suquamish People, who originally named the area "č'u?č'ułac," which means "Maple Trees" in Lushootseed. The veins of the leaves form knots, a nod to the Norwegian heritage of Poulsbo's founders.

Silverdale



Recognizing Whaling Days and Silverdale's nautical roots, the branch card design showcases Dyes Inlet and the life it sustains.

Passport to Explore and the Library's 80th Anniversary Celebration are funded in large part by generous donors of Kitsap Regional Library Foundation.





Unlock Adventure with New Gaming-Focused Programs & Kits

With a mission to inspire curiosity and connection, library staff are constantly seeking out strategic ways to expand and enhance collections and programs that appeal to all ages.

In 2023, Seattle-based education research organization foundry10 published findings on COVID-19's impact on youth, noting heightened stress levels and fewer social opportunities. Their white paper, "How Youth Can Build Social and Emotional Skills with Tabletop Role-Playing Games," highlights how Tabletop role-playing games (TTRPGs) like Dungeons & Dragons (D&D) provide young people with a safe space to practice and build social and emotional skills like regulation, collaboration, perspective-taking, and imaginative play.

In mid-2024, the Library's Collections and Technical Services team launched a new TTRPG kit, funded by a \$400 Washington State Library grant. This kit introduces kids ages 9-12 to turn-based storytelling games like Questlings, providing a safe space for

collaboration, creativity, and social-emotional growth. Within two months, the kits were checked out over 20 times.

At the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. branch, Adult Services Librarian Tyler Kassten (pictured above) is leveling up programming with offerings like Video Game Book Club and young adult D&D groups.

Since joining in April 2024, Tyler has created a space for community members to discover new games, explore genres, and connect through shared interests. "I think it's important for people to have a way to discover new things while also having a safe place to talk and learn about what's out there," Tyler said.

Whether exploring Questlings, battling dragons, or discussing video game design, Kitsap Regional Library is empowering community members of all ages to engage their imaginations and build connections.

[Read more at KRL.org/unlockadventure.](https://krl.org/unlockadventure)



Thank You, Stephanie

After appointment by the Kitsap County Commissioners on March 23, 2020, and over four years of service to the Kitsap Regional Library Board of Trustees, Stephanie George, representing Bremerton/Central Kitsap, concludes her term on Dec. 31, 2024. Thank you, Stephanie, for your dedication to Kitsap Regional Library.



Help with Taxes

It's tax season and the Library is here to help you get ready and file correctly by the deadline on April 15, 2025. Find resources, forms, and free, confidential tax-help events at [KRL.org/taxes](https://www.krl.org/taxes).



Apply for Financial Aid

The Library hosts drop-in sessions to help you successfully complete FAFSA and WASFA forms for college and job training financial assistance. Visit [KRL.org/financialaid](https://www.krl.org/financialaid) to find upcoming sessions and information on what to bring so you can efficiently apply.



For Little Kids & Kids

Explore recurring programs, resources, and events available for little kids (ages 0-5) and kids (ages 6-11.)

MP3 Readalongs - Practice your reading skills as you read along with an audio recording of the book, available in picture books and chapter books.

Little Explorers - Each month, little ones ages 3-5 will explore different STEM concepts through hands-on activities with the help of their caregiver.

BookFlix - Develop early reading skills and vocabulary through read-aloud experiences in fiction and nonfiction, animated stories, and literacy games. Spanish versions are available for some titles.

NoveList K-8 Plus - Discover book recommendations, discussion guides, and award-winning titles for young K-8 readers to add to their reading list.

Read to a Dog - Choose a story to share with a dog and practice reading. In partnership with Therapy Dogs International Kitsap.

OverDrive for Kids - Search ebook and audiobook collections for kids and early readers with materials ranging from picture books to chapter stories. Download up to ten at a time for a checkout period of 1-3 weeks.

Get started at [KRL.org/littlekids](https://krl.org/littlekids) and [KRL.org/kids](https://krl.org/kids).





For Teens

Teen Book Lists – Explore curated booklists just for teen readers! From fantasy world recommendations to dark academia titles and true crime award winners, our team has put together reading lists just for you.

Teen Kits – Draw like a pro, play Dungeons & Dragons, make manga, write a story, and more. Check out a kit to learn new skills and explore hobbies. Enjoy solo or in a group!

Teen Advisory Board – Help shape the library and design the programs you want to see! Support the planning and implementation of events, provide feedback and suggestions, and earn volunteer credit. Snacks provided. Grades 6-12.

Teen Dungeons & Dragons – Join other teens, either virtually or in-person, to discover the action and intrigue that awaits in fantasy worlds of mystery.

Teen Space – Find your space at the Library! Study, read, kick back with games, watch a movie, or join in a tabletop game.

OverDrive for Teens – Check out an extensive ebook and audiobook collection of popular titles for teens. Download up to ten at a time for a checkout period of 1-3 weeks.

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

Support Your Library through Kitsap Great Give!



Get ready to join a remarkable community effort! This year marks the twelfth anniversary of the **Kitsap Great Give**, an annual event hosted by the Kitsap Community Foundation. From **March 1 to March 11**, you can be part of something extraordinary, helping local nonprofits—like Kitsap Regional Library—thrive.

The **Kitsap Great Give** is one of **Kitsap Regional Library Foundation's largest fundraising efforts**. The donations we receive are essential to ensuring the Library's vital work continues across the county. Your support makes it possible to sustain system-wide programs like **Summer Learning**, where kids and teens engage in educational fun during the summer months, and **To the Library**, which brings library services to children across Kitsap.

This year, we've set an exciting goal: to inspire **400 donors** to contribute to the **Kitsap Regional Library Foundation**. Every gift, big or small, brings us one step closer to enriching the lives of thousands in our community.

Pick up a Kitsap Great Give handout available March 1 at each of our library branches and make your gift. Share it with friends, family, and anyone who believes in the power of libraries to inspire curiosity, connection, and lifelong learning.

Don't want to wait until March 1 to support Kitsap Regional Library? Give a gift that inspires our community today at supportKRL.org.

Thank you for your continued support of the Library!
Together, we can ensure a brighter future for Kitsap County.

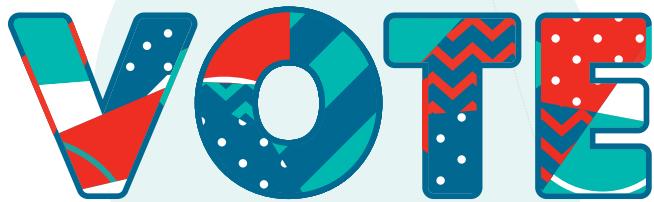
Give a gift that inspires at supportKRL.org/kgg or scan me!



Kitsap Regional Library Foundation is honored to acknowledge and recognize its generous sponsors who believe in the mission and vision of Kitsap Regional Library:

Gesa Credit Union, Haselwood Auto Group, Puget Sound Energy, Sanchez Mitchell Eastman & Cure, PSC, and Virginia Mason Franciscan Health.





Vote with Confidence

Special Elections are on the calendar for February 11 and April 22. Make sure you're ready! Double-check your voter registration status, get voter updates, and find a voting center or ballot drop box near you at [KRL.org/election](https://www.krl.org/election).

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.



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://www.krl.org/friends).

BOOKMA



MARKED



A STEM and Learning Supervisor Megan Burton celebrates with the 2024 Community Learning Interns Noah Clauss, A'Laynah-Renee Redwine, and Lynne Tabone, and STEM and Learning Assistant Shelby Barnes at the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. branch.

B Maintenance Specialist Terry Lee shares a smile at the Library's annual staff picnic.

C The Mobile Services team gets a group photo at Sylvan Way.



D Manchester's Baby Band attendees took to the streets for a Halloween Parade.

E Local artist J. Louis King leads learners through the art of origami.

Bainbridge (206) 451-5050
1270 Madison Ave. N, 98110
Mon.-Thu. 10-7 | Fri., Sat. 10-5 | Sun. 1-5

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.-Thu. 10-7 | Fri., Sat. 10-5 | Sun. 1-5

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.-Thu. 10-7 | Fri., Sat. 10-5 | Sun. 1-5

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

Silverdale (360) 447-5470
3650 NW Anderson Hill Rd., Suite 101, 98383
Mon.-Thu. 10-7 | 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](https://www.krl.org/mobileservices).

