## Chapters

Kitsap Regional Library's Community Story



#### **Annual Report**

Dive into Kitsap Regional Library's 2024 accomplishments.

#### **Library Levy**

Kitsap Regional Library has a levy proposition on the Aug. 5 ballot.

## Table of Contents

**04** Lynne's Library Journey

08 2024 Annual Report

14 August Levy

16 Little Kids & Kids

17 Teens

18 Summer Learning

20 Sea Adventuring









## letter from the **Director**

Dear Kitsap Community,

At Kitsap Regional Library, we believe learning should be open to everyone, at every stage of life. Guided by curiosity and connection, we create spaces where all Kitsap residents can explore ideas, access information, and connect with their community. With publicly funded, free access to books, technology, and engaging programs, the Library belongs to all of us—and opens doors to opportunity for every age.

In early 2024, we launched our five-year strategic direction, shaped by nearly two years of community input. This plan focuses on enhancing our services and spaces to create welcoming environments while strengthening partnerships that expand access to vital resources. By partnering with schools and other community organizations, we're reaching more people and providing greater support where it's most needed. In this edition of Chapters, we share our 2024 Annual Report, highlighting the foundational progress we've made on this journey.



Looking ahead, the Library faces an important milestone: our levy request on August 5. If approved by voters, this funding will continue to sustain the Library's services, technology, and spaces, ensuring continued open access to books, digital resources, and programs that support early learning, student success, and lifelong education for all ages.

We're also excited to continue to celebrate 80 years of service to our communities throughout 2025 (see page 19)!

Thank you for being a part of the Library's story. Together, we're building a stronger, more connected Kitsap and a future where every person has the opportunity to thrive.

In service and connection,

**Jason Driver** 

Library Director Kitsap Regional Library

Cover: Kitsap Regional Library team during all-staff learning day at Suquamish Canoe Event Center by Erinn J Hale Photography. Table of Contents, clockwise from the top: Director of Public Services Shannon Peterson smiles with 2024 Community Learning Intern Lynne Tabone. Kitsap County Park volunteer leads an exploration of Wynn-Jones Preserve. Library patrons Mei Ling, Katarina, and Kyoko read a book on the ferry. A creation from Port Orchard's Frosting Wars event.

## Lynne's Library Journey

Every chapter of Lynne
Tabone's life—from her first
board book to building
a library of her own—
has been shaped by
Kitsap Regional Library.





#### It Starts with Storytime

As a toddler, Lynne attended Baby Storytime at the Port Orchard branch with her mother, Min. Shannon Peterson, Deputy Director of Public Services and former Youth Services Librarian, remembers her well.

"I first met Lynne in 2008. Her mother was one of our core attendees, showing up every week without fail," Shannon recalls. "It was such a pleasure to get to know them and see friendships form between caregivers in the group. I can perfectly picture toddler Lynne taking it all in with her observant eyes."

Storytime—and Baby Band and Tiny Tunes, which are musical iterations of Storytime—are foundational programs at Kitsap Regional Library, welcoming parents, caregivers, babies, and toddlers for more than 24,000 visits in 2024 alone. Offered in many formats—from baby and toddler to preschool, family, and pajama Storytimes—these programs nurture early literacy and support social-emotional growth.

For Lynne and her family, the program—and moreover the community built—were integral.

"It's where I first learned to read, to use a computer, and to run a scientific experiment. If I have free time, I'll hang out at the Library, or just stop in to chat with the librarians."

"Baby Storytime was an opportunity to practice taking a step back and watching Lynne grow," says Min. "It introduced activities and books we weren't familiar with, making our world bigger. As a person who didn't grow up in the States, it provided a bridge between my culture and the local culture.

#### Growing with the Library

As Lynne grew and her needs changed, the Library continued to meet her where she was.

After some time away, Lynne and her family moved back to Kitsap County—and reconnected with familiar faces.

"Life—and libraries—have a funny way of reconnecting people," says former librarian Lisa Lechuga. "I was working at the Sylvan Way branch—and one day, there Lynne and Min were! Lynne was in sixth grade by then, full of opinions, quick wit, and a much louder voice than I remembered. The quiet little girl from Storytime had become a hilarious, insightful teen who was still enthusiastic about the library and the books she was reading."

"Kitsap Regional Library is like another home to me," Lynne says. "I've been coming here all my life and developed close relationships with the staff.

It's where I first learned to read, to use a computer, and to run a scientific experiment. If I have free time, I'll hang out at the Library, or just stop in to chat with the librarians."

#### A Place to Belong

Through the blur of a pandemic, closures, and reopenings, Lisa later spotted Lynne again—this time at the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. branch.

"One day, high schooler Lynne walks up to the desk and asks for an obscure, scholarly book through interlibrary loan. She began visiting regularly again, and our conversations surprised me, made me laugh, and made me wonder about the world."

Shannon adds, "We are so lucky to work in community libraries where it's possible to follow families through their entire school career."

As quintessential third places, libraries are a vital space beyond home, work, and school, which foster community, connection, and belonging. That role has never been more important than now, as young people face the lingering impacts of COVID-19 and what the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has labeled a national "loneliness epidemic." Kitsap Regional Library's 2024–2029 Strategic Direction addresses this reality, emphasizing early learning, interest-based learning, and social connection.

#### From Patron to Intern

One way the Library brings this mission to life is through its Community Learning Internship.

First launched in 2016, the program led by STEM and Learning Supervisor Megan Burton and STEM and Learning Assistant Shelby Barnes—one of the first two interns to graduate from the program—supports youth ages 16–25 through job shadowing, hands-on projects, and paid learning experiences, preparing them for higher education and careers.

"I knew Lynne would be a perfect fit," Lisa says.
"I encouraged her to apply. She did, and she got it!"

Lynne was one of three interns in the class of 2024. Over eight months, she observed the varied work of library staff, met one-on-one with mentors, developed a professional project, and presented her experience during a graduation ceremony at the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. branch.

"I was so excited to learn more about how the Library works," Lynne says. For her project, she decided to create a functioning library for her school—which didn't have one. She mapped a timeline, sourced donated materials, created a card catalog that adhered to the school's no-internet policy, and recruited volunteers to sustain the library beyond her own graduation.

"Megan and Shelby are like rays of sunshine," Lynne adds. "They helped me complete my project but also supported me while I searched for colleges and scholarships."

"It's beautiful and overwhelming to see our services and relationships evolve as kids grow through their lives," Shannon says.

For Lynne, the library has always been more than books—it's been a bridge, a home, and a launchpad. And now, her story is part of something even bigger: a community of young people building a future, together.



Megan Burton, 2024 Interns Noah Clauss, A'Laynah-Renee Redwine, and Lynne Tabone, and Shelby Barnes.

For Lynne, the library has always been more than books —it's been a bridge, a home, and a launchpad.

# ALL TOGETHER NOV

2024 Annual Report







### A Welcoming & Supportive Library

#### **Teen Field Trip Adventures**

Teen summer field trips returned with outings to Tracyton Movie House, SkyZone, Clear Creek Trail, and the Seattle Aquarium. More than 30 teens joined together at the Seattle Aquarium—many meeting for the first time—and left with new friendships blooming. Explore more for teens **KRL.org/teens**.

#### Early Learning Starts with Storytime

The Library hosted 800+ classes and events—storytimes, baby bands, and more—for more than 24,000 visits from parents, caregivers, babies, and toddlers. These programs provide foundational learning and social development for early school success. Get a head start KRL.org/littlekids.

#### More Hours, More Access

In June, we restored library hours to pre-pandemic levels while adjusting to better meet community needs. Some branches now stay open later into the evening, and we've added new Sunday hours to three locations, making our libraries more accessible to everyone. Visit a branch KRL.org/locations.





#### Your Library Anytime, Anywhere

#### Free Access Strengthens Everyone

We added 45,000+ physical and 36,000+ digital items to our collection, reflecting the diverse interests of our community. Adult print fiction use is growing, and adult graphic novel circulation has nearly doubled since 2019. Grab a great read krl.bibliocommons.com.

#### Meeting You Where You Are

The Library continues to expand digital offerings to meet demand, allowing patrons the flexibility to access resources on their terms. In 2024, over 880,000 digital items were borrowed through Libby—our free app providing easy access to more than 40,000 ebooks, audiobooks, and digital magazines. In June, we launched Creativebug, a digital learning resource for sewing, painting, and more, allowing patrons to expand their skills from home. Access anytime

krl.overdrive.com.

"I love the sense of community I feel when I go [to the library]! And, all the books of course!" - Melia, **Facebook Commenter** 



#### Some of 2024's Top Digital Checkouts





From left to right: First Lie Wins, Funny Story, The Women, Wandering Stars, The Secret History of Bigfoot, Supercommunicators, The Anxious Generation, The Amish Wife.





#### **Shared Success**

#### Teen Volunteers Are Back & Making a Difference

After a pause due to the pandemic, the teen volunteer program relaunched in the summer. Providing opportunities to learn and develop future job skills, the program enables teens to contribute meaningfully to the community and build a network of caring adults invested in their future. Teen volunteers can get started at KRL.org/volunteer.

#### In Community With You

The Library engaged with our community at over 500 festivals, events, and local programs across Kitsap. From the Armed Forces Day Festival to the Kitsap County Islander Festival, Kitsap County Fair and Stampede, and beyond, the Library was there to celebrate and support with access to youth education and resources for all ages.



#### **Third Graders Discover Library Love**

The shift from learning to read to reading to learn is a key milestone for third graders. The Library helps this transition with a field trip. Over 1,500 students visited their local public library, enjoying storytime, a tour, and receiving—for many—their first library card. The "To the Library" program builds connections and supports kids on their path to graduation. KRL.org/tothelibrary.

#### Summer Is More Fun at the Library

Thousands of kids, teens, and adults chose to "Wade into Wonder" taking on the Library's annual summer reading and learning challenges. For this year's Pacific Northwest water-themed program, we teamed up with the Seattle Storm to offer free tickets to a local game as part of the 10-hour prize, with more than 1,400 participants attending a game. Visit KRL.org/summer to dive into this year's program.

## "I will miss this internship, but I'm thankful for the opportunity to explore myself and form connections with the people it has led me to... To gain foresight, you need to be open to new experiences." - A'Laynah-Renee Redwine



2024 Community Learning Intern A'Laynah-Renee Redwine shares her project during graduation.

#### **Fueling Kids with Free Summer Meals**

Partnering with the Bremerton and South Kitsap School Districts, the Sylvan Way and Port Orchard branches once again provided free meals to kids throughout the summer, ensuring that kids have access to nutritious meals during months when school meal programs are unavailable—helping them stay powered up for learning and play.



#### Community Internships

#### **Building Futures**

Since 2016, the Community Learning Internship has helped young adults gain work experience through a paid internship. Interns receive professional development through mentorship from library staff and professional partnerships with local school districts and organizations, including Worksource Pathways to Success, Ballast Bookstore, Kitsap Strong, and Voices of the Pacific Island Nations. Interns spent eight months supporting library work while developing a professional project, culminating in a presentation at a fall graduation.



## Future-Ready, Universally Accessible Spaces

#### After-Hours Access Opens More Doors For Community

The Poulsbo branch began offering after-hours access to its community room in June 2024, and the reservations poured in. Gaming groups, exercise classes, homeowners' associations, and many others quickly booked for evening events and meetings, showing a strong demand for service. Find a free space at your library KRL.org/meetingrooms.

#### A Fresh Look at Sylvan Way

The Sylvan Way branch unveiled a more welcoming entry with comfortable new seating, added outlets, and an upgraded front desk, aiming to create a more approachable space, enhance functionality, and better serve visitors.



### A Library Legacy for Generations to Come

#### **Celebrating Milestones**

The Library celebrated two significant milestones: 100 years since the library in Port Orchard opened its doors and 50 years of service in Little Boston. The Port Orchard branch marked the occasion with a community party, including cake and an opportunity to reflect and share its rich history. Meanwhile, the Little Boston branch enjoyed making bubbles, engraved bookmarks, and slime along with cupcakes and memories shared beneath a festive balloon arch.

#### Partnerships Make Libraries Possible

#### **Together We Create Connection**

Volunteers, resources, and sometimes spaces that support Library services and programs are provided through collaboration with community organizations, building owners, and fundraising partners, fostering a Kitsap community of curiosity and connection beyond what public funding alone can provide.

#### **Building Owners**

The cities of Bremerton and Port Orchard, Bainbridge Public Library, Inc., Central Kitsap School District, Friends of the Manchester Library, Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe, and the Village Green Metropolitan Parks District.

#### **Fundraising Partners**

Kitsap Regional Library Foundation and Friends of the Library organizations of Bainbridge Island, East Bremerton, Kingston, Manchester, Port Orchard, Poulsbo, and Silverdale.

The [Port Orchard]
library has always been
key to the vitality
of downtown."
- Kathleen Wilson,
South Kitsap Regional
Branch Manager

#### 2024 at a Glance



**55,000+** kids, teens, and adults attended nearly **3,000** classes and events



800 Storytimes, Baby Bands, and more, served 24,000+ visits from babies, toddlers, and caregivers



**4,127** 100-hour Summer Learning Reading Finishers (up 21% from 2023)



1,400+ participants attended Seattle Storm games thanks to new partnership for 10-hour readers



131 public computers provided more than 59,000 hours of access and training



More than 1,500 third-graders took a field trip To the Library

#### Publicly Funded, Free Access for All

Kitsap Regional Library is primarily funded by the community, with more than 96% of its operating budget coming from local funding. In 2024, nearly \$18 million in annual property tax revenue sustained daily operations. However, with property tax revenue capped at a 1% annual increase and costs rising faster, a regular adjustment in funding is needed to maintain current services, collections, and welcoming spaces. Learn more about the Library's 2025 Levy Proposition on page 14 or at KRL.org/levy.



Read the Full Annual Report KRL.org/annualreport

## Learn More About Our Strategic Direction



krl.org/thriveahead

#### **Library Levy Proposition**

#### Why is funding needed now?

State law limits the Library's annual property tax revenue growth to 1% per year, which has not kept up with rising costs. Since voters last approved a levy in 2017, the Library has worked within these limits while continuing to meet community needs. The 2025 levy provides vital funding to maintain hours, collections, and programs. Without it, essential services—like early literacy resources, collections, and technology access—will be reduced, and delayed maintenance could lead to limited access and may not reflect the evolving needs or expectations of community members, starting as early as next year.

## If YES

The Proposition Passes

- Expanding Early Literacy Resources
- Sustaining After-School & Summer Programs
- Ensuring Reliable & Up-to-Date Technology Access
- Enhancing Library Spaces & Collections

### If NO

The Proposition Does Not Pass

- Reducing Books, Programs & Resources
- ∠ Limiting Critical Technology Updates
- Delaying Essential Maintenance & Improvements

#### Kitsap Regional Library Community Forums

Ask questions and share comments with Library leadership.

Jun. 2, 5:30-6:30 pm, Silverdale

Jun. 5, 5:30-6:30 pm, Port Orchard

Jun. 10, 5:30-6:30 pm, Poulsbo

Jun. 17, 5:30-6:30 pm, Virtual

Jun. 24, 11 am-noon, Virtual

Vote Aug. 5

More on voting: **Kitsap.gov/auditor** 

#### If YES:

#### Library Plans for Levy Funds

This levy maintains essential library services, spaces, and collections at current levels, allowing the Library to continue to support Kitsap's priorities by ensuring information and learning access for all residents.

#### **Expand Learning for Babies, Kids & Teens**

- Broaden early learning support for parents, babies, and toddlers to build a strong foundation for success in school.
- Enhance after-school and summer programs for kids to bridge educational gaps.
- Increase career development opportunities for teens, providing hands-on learning experiences.

#### Improve Access to Technology

- Update computers, internet services, and printing resources.
- Expand digital learning resources for all ages.

#### **Enhance Library Spaces & Collections**

- Improve library buildings to continue to provide functional, accessible spaces for learning and meeting.
- Maintain a broad collection, including books, ebooks, magazines, audiobooks, and learning kits.

#### How much will it cost?

Kitsap Regional Library is funded primarily through property taxes, currently set at \$0.27 for every \$1,000 of assessed property value. If approved, the tax rate will increase to \$0.39 per \$1,000 of assessed value for 2026. For a property valued at \$500,000, this would mean an annual increase of approximately \$60.

The levy will not fund new construction, such as a library in Port Orchard, which is being built with private fundraising and grants.



#### In 2024



9 libraries & a
Home Delivery team



86,856 active cardholders



Serving 107,000 Kitsap households



2.6 million books, ebooks, audiobooks & more, borrowed & renewed



#### Early Learning Starts at the Library

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

**Storytime** – With more than 40 offerings per month across nine libraries, build early literacy skills and encourage social and emotional development with stories, songs, rhymes, and full-body movements.

**Baby Band & Tiny Tunes** - Kids and caregivers are invited to enjoy musical experiences that build STEM and early literacy skills as well as encourage social and emotional development.

**Early Learning Kits** - Support school readiness with a fun and engaging Early Learning Kit. With over 35 kits to choose from, enjoy uniquely-themed books, educational toys, and activities to help spur learning.

Get started at KRL.org/littlekids.

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

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

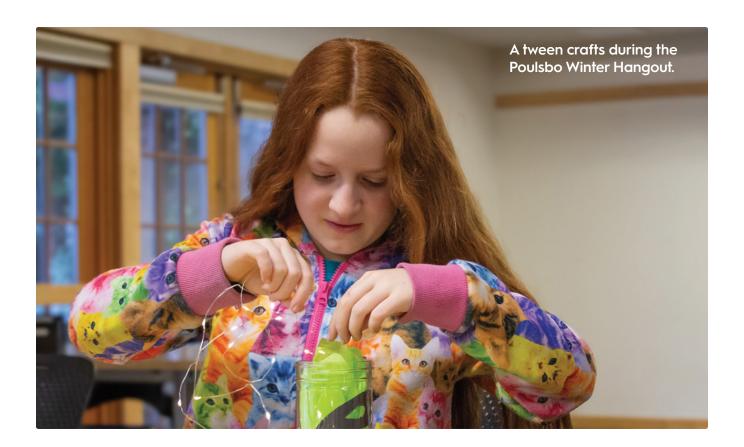
**All Things LEGOs** – Join other LEGO enthusiasts with a variety of monthly programming occurring with your favorite building bricks.

**Afternoon Gaming** – Connect with other gamers to play with our Infinity Games table and other gaming consoles at Sylvan Way!

**Book Clubs** - Join a book club at Kingston or Bainbridge Island just for kids! Read and discuss a book together based on monthly themes.

Find events for kids at KRL.org/kids.





#### **Connect to Community**

Explore programs, resources, and events available for Teens (ages 11-18.)

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

**Teen Gaming** - Explore Magic: The Gathering, join a Dungeons & Dragons campaign, or try out our collection of board games and video games across the system. We've got a space for you!

**Level Up** - From Switch to Xbox to PlayStation, check out video games for free and press play on your next adventure.

**Teen Kits** - Check out a kit specifically made for teens! Make manga, explore the outdoors, write a story, draw like a pro, or play Dungeons & Dragons.

Learn more at KRL.org/teens.

**Teen Volunteers** - Teen volunteering is possible at our Bainbridge Island, Sylvan Way, Port Orchard, Poulsbo, and Silverdale locations. Learn and practice job skills you can use in the future as well as gain community and network with teens and caring adults.

#### Learn more at KRL.org/volunteer.

**Creativebug** - Access thousands of free video art classes taught by award-winning designers and artists.

Start creating at KRL.org/creativebug.





Dive deep for Summer Learning 2025! June 1 through August 31, participate in our annual summertime program by attending live concerts and shows, joining cool events, crushing challenges, and winning awesome prizes.

**Read Something Challenge** - Curl up with a good book (or audiobook)! Read 10 hours to earn a book or journal, 50 hours for a bag, and 100 hours to choose from a T-shirt or pin.

**Do Something Challenge** - Set a learning goal, then write your story in the notes of the Summer Learning guide. Turn in your story to be entered into the end-of-summer drawing for one of the swell Do Something challenge prizes!

**Live Performances** - Get grooving this summer with live music, dance, and performances for all ages.

Summer Learning is funded in part by generous donors of Kitsap Regional Library Foundation and Friends of the Library groups. Thank you, donors!



Swim into your nearest branch on June 1 to pick up a Summer Learning guide!



Keep an eye on KRL.org/summer for more information.



### Building Community, One Monthly Gift at a Time.

Libraries are essential spaces for learning, connection, and opportunity. While public funding supports the core operations of Kitsap Regional Library, philanthropy through the Foundation makes it possible to do even more. Donors provide steady support, ensuring resources like early literacy programs, technology access, and safe gathering spaces remain available. Ongoing contributions create reliable funding, allowing the Library to plan thoughtfully and respond to evolving needs.

Monthly donors help expand the Library's reach and sustain its impact, ensuring the Library continues to inspire and connect future generations.



The Kitsap Regional Library Foundation is honored to acknowledge and recognize its generous sponsors, Gesa Credit Union, Haselwood Auto Group, Sanchez, Mitchell, Eastman & Cure, PSC, and Virginia Mason Franciscan Health, who believe in the mission and vision of Kitsap Regional Library.



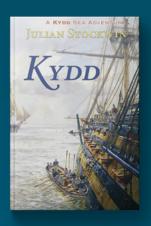




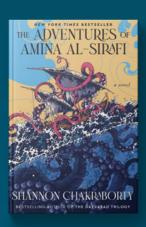
#### Sea Adventuring

Adventure novels are action-packed mission or quest-based stories of daring deeds achieved. They span many genres. Whether fantasy or science fiction, historical or contemporary, set in teeming cities or primeval forests, they're full of risk and excitement.

Perhaps not surprisingly, given our proximity to the sea, Kitsap Regional Library patrons are often looking for books that feature adventures set on, in, or near the ocean depths. If you're interested in discovering watery tales of adventure, check out these reads and more at KRL.org/SeaAdventuring.



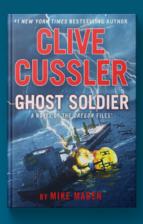
Kydd by Julian Stockwin



The Adventures of Amina al-Sirafi by Shannon Chakraborty



Whalefall by Daniel Kraus



Ghost Soldier by Mike Maden



Before the Wind by Jim Lynch



The Girl Beneath the Sea by Andrew Mayne





## Celebrating 80 Years of Library Love

All year long, we're celebrating eight decades of Kitsap Regional Library! Pick up a Passport to Explore at your local library, visit all nine branches for a stamp, and receive a prize! But the fun doesn't stop there. Participate in side quests, grab your favorite limited-edition library card design, and stay tuned for more ways to celebrate at KRL.org/80years.

#### 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 housed in the Sylvan Way branch.

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.

## BOOKMA







## RKED



- A Little Explorers at Bainbridge journeyed to Halls Hill Lookout & Labyrinth in January.
- B Library Assistant Andrew S. is all smiles during all-staff training at Suquamish Canoe Event Center in March.







- C Collections & Technical Services Specialist Rebekah S. holds up a coloring sheet at all-staff training at Suquamish Canoe Event Center in March.
- Two Passport to Explore participants get their passports stamped at Little Boston on Valentine's Day.
- E A display of mugs from April's Mug Hunt as part of the 80-year celebration.
- F Three artists enjoy the art of orizomegami at Kingston in January.



#### Discover more at KRL.org

The Library will be closed May 26, June 19, and July 4. For more information, visit KRL.org/closures.

**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**.

