



Chapters

Kitsap Regional Library's Community Story



Port Orchard Branch Turns 100

A century after Port Orchard's first library opened, the branch looks ahead with a new building on the horizon.

Creating a Third Place for Youth

From gaming meetups to creative clubs, libraries are creating welcoming spaces for Kitsap County kids and teens.

Issue 003 | Summer-Fall 2024

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letter from the Director

Dear Kitsap Regional Library Community,

As the summer sun sets, I want to extend my heartfelt gratitude for your incredible participation in another year of Summer Learning. Together, we transformed the summer into a season of reading, learning, and community spirit. From June 1 to August 31, thousands of folks showed up at library classes, events, and dynamic performances, and took on the summer reading challenges, reading 10 to 100 hours—an average of 65 minutes a day!

While these opportunities are undoubtedly fun, they also play a crucial role in supporting students and our school partners. By engaging young minds, we help prevent learning loss and set students up for success as they return to school.

As we anticipate the turn of leaves and a crispness fills the air, I am reminded of how special this season is in the Pacific Northwest. This marks my third fall here, and it has truly become a time I look forward to each year. As a parent of two school-age children, I share the excitement and anticipation that comes with the back-to-school season.

In this issue, we highlight our Port Orchard Friends of the Library, offer book recommendations for darker weather, showcase one person's unrivaled enthusiasm



for library cards, and explore the vital role free access to public libraries plays in our communities, including:

- **Spotlighting Back-to-School:** When the last school bell of the day rings, libraries become a “third place” for students, offering support, friendship, and a place to belong.
- **Celebrating a Century:** From Town Hall to the Post Office, Port Orchard reflects on 100 years of library service in the heart of the city and looks forward to the future.

Embarking on a new season, I am reminded of the Library’s unique role in fostering a collaborative community where curiosity and connection thrive. Whether you’re a student, a parent, or simply have a curiosity to learn, the Library is here for you.

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jason Driver". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Jason Driver

Library Director
Kitsap Regional Library

Cover: Nautical flags that spell “READ” wave in front of the Port Orchard branch. Table of Contents, clockwise from the top: Mayor Jay Weatherill cuts the ribbon on a new Port Orchard library location in Sept. 1984. A group of kids celebrate the end of summer with a foam party at Kingston. Two individuals celebrate a Sunny-Bration at Bainbridge Island. Teens gather to see their final print at the annual Wayzgoose Festival in downtown Bremerton.

The Heart of Port Orchard: Library Celebrates a Century in Downtown

One hundred years ago, Port Orchard citizens checked out books from their new library for the very first time. In October 1923, several members of the local Parent Teacher Association (PTA) petitioned the City Council for a library. The Council agreed a library was necessary for the community—but the City was unable to change the budget to accommodate library funding for 1924.

Undaunted, the PTA members asked for some allotted space in the Port Orchard Town Hall and assured the Council they would be able to start the library with donations and volunteers. The volunteer-run library soon opened, and was later written into the City budget in September of 1924.

The volunteers continued their efforts, staffing and managing the library and making resources available. Books were borrowed, relationships grew, and the next time library volunteers asked for funding, voters made sure the library kept its doors open and its shelves full.

“The library has always been key to the vitality of downtown,” said Kathleen Wilson.

Kathleen is the South Kitsap Regional Branch Manager who oversees the Port Orchard branch’s operation today. Those original volunteers and supportive community members could scarcely imagine what the library branch would become to their city.

Every month, the branch sees more and more patrons. It is always, Kathleen emphasizes, the branch where the most people sign up for new library accounts throughout the entire Kitsap Regional Library system.

The library has always been a force of momentum. Photos and newspapers from the decades paint a picture of a community hub continually pushing the bounds of what its walls could contain. Children fill storytimes, and new staff come aboard to further develop programs and partnerships.



PORT ORCHARD
LIBRARY



Librarian Peggy Hughes was the first to take advantage of the Polaroid camera which can be borrowed from the library for two weeks at a time.

On a cold day in early January 1964, the library officially became a part of Kitsap Regional Library. It moved to a municipal building on Prospect Street, where more than 29,000 items were circulated its first year—a number that would nearly double by the '70s and rise more than 50% by the end of the decade. The library moved again in 1976, and more patrons followed. Adults packed classes on everything from cooking techniques to using the newly-minted computer, and more items were introduced to the catalog—like a Polaroid camera that could be checked out for two weeks at a time.

When the library outgrew its walls again in 1984, volunteers lined the streets to pass books hand-to-hand down to the old post office building, where the library is currently based.

True to form, the Port Orchard branch today is “really busy, getting busier,” said Kathleen. Commuters can easily drop off holds as they go to work and stop by on their way home. The buses and ferries right outside branch doors make Port Orchard an especially high-traffic location.

At Waterfront Wednesdays, a longstanding library tradition, hundreds gather to watch free Summer Learning performances.

Practically bursting at the seams, the library once again needs to expand and reform to support its vibrant community. So, as the branch celebrates 100 years of history, plans are in motion to ensure the library thrives in the future by raising funds to build a new Port Orchard branch, as part of the Port Orchard Community Event Center.

The new building includes plans for an events space outside, with more area for teens and children inside, to better serve young families while providing access to extensive meeting rooms and covered outdoor spaces. “It’s going to really take advantage of the waterfront,” Kathleen said.

The new library will remain a downtown staple, moving just a few blocks from its present location. The vision is to provide more space and resources, and facilitate a gathering space the entire community can enjoy.

After 100 years of service, the library is looking to the future, said Kathleen. “So we will be able to serve our patrons as their needs evolve.”



From left to right: Front entrance of the Port Orchard library Prospect Street location from 1975-1984. A rendering of Port Orchard Community Event Center. Port Orchard librarian Peggy Hughes showcases a Polaroid camera available for check-out in 1984. Patrons use computers in 1987.



Meet the Port Orchard Friends of the Library

The Port Orchard Friends of the Library currently boasts 16 members. Some have volunteered for decades, while others joined recently, blooming the group from just two members a few years ago. They say the group expresses “a diversity of experience.” It shows.

Lisa volunteered to continue doing meaningful work in retirement, Bernie wanted to make friends after moving to the area, Leah sought entry-level bookselling experience, Sam loved spending time with fellow book lovers, and Maya was winding down a career in antique books and wanted to stick close, “it’s my jam!”

Friends say they joined because they care deeply about the work and stay because they care deeply about each other. “People honor each other,” said one member, while the others paused from their shelving to nod in agreement.

All money raised in fundraisers and sales from their in-library bookshop supports the branch—funding children’s programming, supporting library classes for adults, and purchasing items to support staff like a new refrigerator and a comfy recliner chair for the break room.

Rebecca Guthrie was a driving force behind the group for years, while Susan Rosapepe, the current President of Port Orchard Friends of the Library, says she wants others to know they are always welcome to join in whatever capacity and for whatever length of time works for them. For some, it’s a stepping stone in their life and career; for others, it’s a community they volunteer with every week for decades.

Friends of the Library groups are organized at most Kitsap Regional Library locations. The Friends are always looking for donations (especially gently-used fiction) and volunteers. Join in, your Friends group needs you!

Learn more at KRL.org/friends.



Swimming into a Successful Summer Learning

June through August, all are invited to participate in the annual Summer Learning program, designed to engage kids and prevent the summer slide in academic skills.

This year, participants were encouraged to 'wade into wonder,' with library branches decked out with creatures of the Puget Sound, including a jellyfish, crab, starfish, and heron.

In late 2023, youth and teen services librarians at Kitsap Regional Library began collaborating with school partners to prepare Kitsap County kids for Summer Learning 2024, ensuring they were ready to read deeply and explore widely.

By April and May, librarians gave engaging presentations to thousands of students that highlighted the program's prizes, such as the 100-Hour Reader T-shirt, Seattle Storm tickets, and the Nintendo Switch Lite.

These visits not only introduced students to the library's summer offerings but also helped build a personal connection with the librarians, making the library a recognizable and welcoming place for kids.

The enthusiasm was palpable, with students eagerly sharing their excitement about the program and recognizing librarians when they visited the library later. The outreach efforts paid off with lots of engagement from kids across Kitsap County all summer long.

[Read more at KRL.org/summer-reflections.](https://www.krl.org/summer-reflections)





Little Kids

Explore reoccurring programs, resources, and events available for little kids (ages 0-5)

OverDrive for Kids - Search ebook and audiobook collections for kids and early readers with materials ranging from picture books to chapter stories.

Storytime - Kickstart kindergarten skills with Baby, Toddler, Preschool, and Family Storytimes with stories, songs, rhymes, and full-body movements designed to build early literacy skills and emotional development.

Get started at KRL.org/littlekids.

Stay in the loop on upcoming events by visiting KRL.org/events or by subscribing to our email newsletter at KRL.org/subscribe.



Kids

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

Want help with homework and school projects? Explore school subjects and get help with assignments through online resources like **PowerKnowledge**, **CultureGrams**, and **Britannica**. All you need is a library card!

Find the school help you need at KRL.org/homework.

Teens

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

Start creating today at KRL.org/creativebug.

Brainfuse - Need homework help? Access virtual learning support through Brainfuse. Make flashcards, schedule a virtual study room session with friends, or access live tutoring daily from 11 am-10 pm.

Get started at KRL.org/research.



Inspire the Library's Next Chapter



Sometimes, it feels like our efforts to make a difference are just a tiny drop in the vast ocean. However, history is full of examples showing that **collective small acts can lead to monumental change**—like the ripples caused by a single pebble in a pond.

This universal truth propels the Foundation forward—every donation, no matter the size, helps advance the Library's mission to inspire curiosity and connection within our community.

Gifts made to Kitsap Regional Library through the Foundation, are crucial to ensuring a vibrant and thriving community.

We invite you to support the Library's mission by making a tax-deductible year-end donation by December 31.

Libraries are essential. They are places where countless patrons come to connect and learn. Your donation today will support exciting classes, engaging events, and essential tools and resources that promote reading and interest-based learning for kids, teens, and adults.

Together, we can ensure everyone has the opportunity to learn, grow, and thrive.

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



Kitsap Regional Library Foundation is proud to have been selected as a partner in Puget Sound Energy's Powerful Partnership Program. Puget Sound Energy (PSE) chose the Foundation because of the Library's established history of connecting patrons to the programs and resources PSE offers their customers. We are grateful for the opportunity to be a Powerful Partner and for PSE's commitment to creating a stronger, more equitable community.



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, Puget Sound Energy, Sanchez, Mitchell, Eastman, & Cure, PSC, and Virginia Mason Franciscan Health.





Celebrate Library Card Sign-Up Month

September is Library Card Sign-Up Month, and Kitsap Regional Library Custodian Specialist Keifer W. already has 205 reasons to celebrate!

An avid library lover, Keifer's adoration began young. As a kid, Keifer was limited geographically to the Kent branch of the King County Library System.

Still, his imagination ran wild when he observed stickers affixed to books with other branch locations listed. "I was curious about where those places were, but my parents said they were too far away to visit."

As he's gotten older, Keifer shared that he's been obsessed with visiting libraries, collecting library cards along the way, which he stores in a beloved binder. Boasting library cards from as far away as Florida and Canada, Keifer's favorite library card in his collection is a galaxy-themed card from Tacoma Public Library.

Library cards are your free passport to adventure! **Get your library card by visiting any branch or online at [KRL.org/cards](https://krl.org/cards).**

Read more about Keifer at [KRL.org/keifer-spotlight](https://krl.org/keifer-spotlight).



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.

Take a Bite out of Folk Horror

As a literary genre, horror creates a deep emotional sense of foreboding and menace, evoking terror in readers from start to finish.

Horror fiction usually features some type of monster (real or imaginary) and supernatural elements are often involved.

Within this framework, authors explore settings, style, and themes to create a universe of possibilities. Folk horror thrives in this space, blending rural landscapes, folklore, the clash of old and new, eerie group dynamics, and fraught relationships with the land.

Explore more at [KRL.org/folkhorror](https://www.krl.org/folkhorror).



Devil's Day by Andrew Michael Hurley



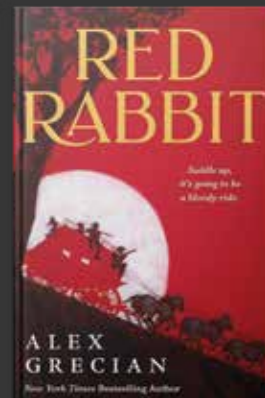
The Gathering Dark edited by Tori Bovalino



Hex by Thomas Olde Heuvelt



Midwestern Gothic by Scott Thomas



Red Rabbit by Alex Grecian



The Twisted Ones by T. Kingfisher



After-School Support at the Library: A Third Place for Students

In his 1989 book, “The Great Good Place,” urban sociologist Ray Oldenburg describes the “third place” as a vital space beyond home and work, fostering community, connection, and belonging. Libraries are quintessential third places, defined by attributes like neutrality, accessibility, and a welcoming atmosphere.

Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, the decline of third places was noted by the National Library of Medicine, leading to increased loneliness and isolation. The pandemic only exacerbated this, particularly among kids and teens.

Earlier this year, Kitsap Regional Library published its 2024-2029 Strategic Direction, with priority areas including early learning, making and interest-based learning, as well as community and social connectedness. As kids and teens get ready to return to school, youth and teen services librarians across all locations are eager to offer after-school support, encouraging curiosity and connection.

With such proximity to their respective schools, youth and teen service librarians at Bainbridge Island host programs like Read to a Dog, Builders’ Club, and Teen Space to provide after school engagement,



while dedicated areas like the playroom, computer stations, and teen room ensure that all age groups have a space to call their own. The library staff emphasizes the importance of making the library a safe and inclusive environment where youth can explore their interests, form friendships, and feel valued outside of school and home.

Bainbridge Island Teen Service Librarian Gem S. shares, “I want the library to continue to be a place where teens feel welcome and comfortable. I want to become a person that they know and trust outside of their normal ‘adult sphere.’ I’m not a parent or teacher, but I am an adult in this community who cares about them and their future.”

Similarly, at Silverdale, programs such as Teen Space and the D&D Meetup offer teens a chance to pursue their passions and build community, reinforcing the library’s role as a vital and supportive hub for youth.

Silverdale Youth Services Librarian Aleah J. says, “It’s rewarding to see youth navigate the space as if it were their own—independent, confident, helping each other, or showing first-timers where things are. I think it shows they feel comfortable and welcome at the library.”

Teen Services Librarian Kayla O. adds, “Our D&D Meetup has four to five regular players who met at the program and have

since become friends. Every month, when they come into the library to play, they are so excited to talk about not only what is happening in their D&D campaign but also the other creative projects it has inspired them to create together.

They’ve written a short book about the folklore of a summer camp, and they’ve designed and created their own card game that is a combination of D&D, Magic the Gathering, and Pokémon, all with original art and rules (and they used the library’s printer to help make them real). It is amazing to me that these teens, who didn’t know each other before, have forged such great bonds here at the library, and I cannot wait to see what else they create in the future.”

Librarians encourage suggestions for services and programs. Bainbridge Island Youth Services Librarian, Isla S. emphasizes, “Each branch caters to its community’s needs. Don’t hesitate to suggest new ideas.”

By offering these after-school programs, libraries reaffirm their role as essential third places, nurturing community, curiosity, and connection for kids and teens.

There’s more to the story at [KRL.org/third-place](https://www.krl.org/third-place).



BOOKMA



MARKED



A Kids brought science and storytelling to life alongside Science Heroes at Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in August.

B Kitsap County Park and Washington Trails Association volunteers lead an exploration of Wynn-Jones County Park during Manchester's uncovered series.



C Hillia the Hula Hoop Extraordinaire thrilled audiences at Little Boston in July.

D Adult Services Librarian Cindy G. enjoys shave ice with son, Dante, during Sylvan Way's summer celebration.

E Kitsap students and their families enjoy the Prime Time Reading series, a multilingual reading program, at Silverdale in May.



F Ringtaro Tateishi leads an exciting performance of Taiko drumming at Poulsbo.

The Library will be closed Sept. 2, Oct. 7, 14, and Nov. 11, 28, 29. For more information, visit KRL.org/closures.

Bainbridge Island (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.

