

## *January – December 2021*

The Ketchikan Public Library 2018-2022 Strategic Plan was implemented in January 2018. One objective of the plan is to keep the community informed of the plan's implementation; to this end, we submit the annual report for the period January – December 2021.

The COVID-19 pandemic affected the Library's operation throughout the year, but was less disruptive than 2020 as vaccines became available and CDC guidance evolved. This report is organized by the Library's four strategic plan goals.

***Goal 1: The Library is Ketchikan's Town Square:*** *The Ketchikan Public Library is a welcoming, beautiful, inviting place that is rooted in the community and allows people to be themselves – alone or with each other. The Library fosters a more cohesive, healthy and informed community.*



**Children's Community Garden:** Children's Library Assistant Rebecca Jackson organized the fourth year of the Children's Community Garden, from starting seeds to recruiting families to tend the garden, to conducting programs on garden maintenance. After Rebecca's departure in September, Outreach Librarian Rebecca Brown prepared the garden for winter.

**Pandemic Response:** Starting in January, the Library was one of the sites for eligible Ketchikan residents to schedule their COVID-19 vaccine appointments. Masks and hand sanitizer, provided by the Ketchikan EOC, were available at the Library as well (and continue to be), and late in the year the Library joined the Fire Department in distributing home COVID tests. Patrons used the Library's public computers to apply for housing and other support, and to schedule vaccine appointments.

**Karl Amylon Display:** After City Manager Karl Amylon's passing in August, his wife Pearl and son Peter placed on permanent loan with the Library a selection of his LEGO constructions, including the Taj Mahal and the Leaning Tower of Pisa. These are now on display in the lobby, and the Friends of the Library have funded Plexiglas boxes to display these securely throughout the Library.

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***Goal 2: The Library Serves the Ketchikan Community:*** *The Ketchikan Public Library promotes learning, growth and personal enrichment for people of all interests, abilities and needs, in every*

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*stage of life. The Library provides services both within the facility and throughout the Ketchikan Gateway Borough for a community of diverse backgrounds, cultures and languages. The Library delivers materials in a variety of formats, and provides updated equipment, Internet access and assistance using digital and online materials.*

The COVID-19 pandemic prevented the Library from holding most in-house programs in 2021, with the exception of drop-in events and a few outdoor Storytimes. However, Library staff found other ways to provide programming.

**Online Programs:** In 2021, Library staff continued to record programs to post on Facebook, Instagram and YouTube. Children's programs included Romps & Rhymes; Storytime, Babytime; Online Song Time; and Flannel Board Fridays. Several children's book publishers temporarily eased their license restrictions in response to the pandemic, and Children's Library staff posted readings of many popular books. The Adult program Reading Aloud consisted of classic stories, essays and poetry. Craft programs such as Simple Cooking With Lisa and DIY With Gayle were popular on Facebook and YouTube, with one DIY With Gayle program receiving over 2,800 views on YouTube since it was posted on April 24. The Ketchikan Public Library YouTube channel is the archive for the Library's online programs—those that do not feature in-copyright readings—and as of January 2022, 295 videos are available there.

**Reading the Classics:** Shortly after the pandemic began, KRBD Community Radio found a slot for a weekly half-hour Library show called Reading the Classics. Library staff take turns recording classic stories that are in the public domain, and the show is broadcast on Tuesdays at 6:30pm. KRBD provides links to past shows on its website.



*Children particularly liked creating Leprechaun Traps in March to help the Library with its pesky leprechaun infestation.*

**Maker / Craft / Experiment / Tasting Bags:** Maker bags contain all the materials and instructions needed to create a project, do an experiment, or try unusual foods at home. The Library provided these for children, teens, adults and seniors throughout the year. Children's Library staff prepared Little Learners' kits especially for children under 3 years. T.A.G. coordinator Kelly Johnson prepared two Teen maker bags each month—a craft bag and a tasting kit.

**Summer and Winter Reading Programs:** The 2021 Adult Winter Reading Challenge ran from January 2 through February 28, and 117 people participated. The Teen Summer Reading Challenge started June 3 with a drop-in Beach Party, and ran through August 26, with 55 active participants. The Children's Summer Reading Program

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began June 1 and ran through July 31, and the Read-On Program continued through August 26; 496 children participated. The Children's Winter Reading Challenge ran from December 1 and 31 and drew 87 participants.

**Other Programs:** Several times during the summer and fall, Children's Senior Librarian Amie Toepfer distributed Story Jars throughout the island and invited families to photograph themselves with the jar they found and post the photo on Facebook or Instagram. Children's fall drop-in events included the Fall Festival, Book 'n Treat, and Polar Express. The Children's Grow Your Heart Challenge in November gave 235 kids the opportunity to practice various acts of kindness throughout the month. In February adults could go on a Blind Date With a Book, checking out and reviewing a book cover-unseen, and in October they could join the Second Chance Book Club and check out little-known books that received good reviews.

**Other Items:** In April, Adult Services Librarian Lisa Pearson prepared two Hiking Explorer Kits, with equipment, supplies and local trail guides for those who want to enjoy Ketchikan's wild places. Patrons were encouraged to check these out with a Ketchikan Volunteer Rescue Squad SPOT Locator Beacon, also available from the Library. For those who prefer indoor activities, the Children's Library premiered six board games available for one-week checkouts. The Seed Library provided residents with a variety of seeds to try in their gardens. Adult Library Assistant Shawna Carter ordered and created displays of Federal tax and PFD forms in the spring of 2021.

**Displays:** In the fall, Outreach Librarian Rebecca Brown began a monthly Staff Picks display, featuring each staff member's favorite book or movie on a specific theme. Head of Adult Services Lisa Pearson created new monthly displays across from the circulation desk, as well as a variety of special displays, including one for National Novel Writing Month, and one for Indigenous Book Week in November. The Children's Library Banned Book Week display caused some social media controversy in late September, but no formal challenges were submitted objecting to specific books or other materials in the Library's collections.

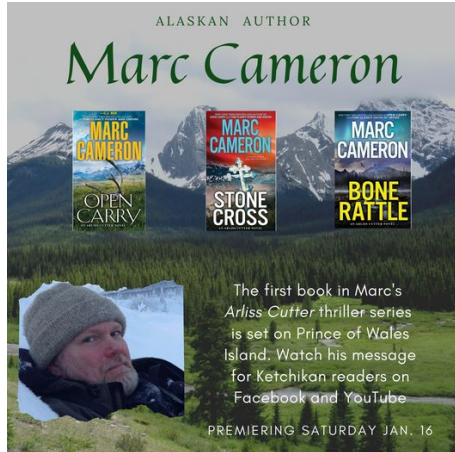
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***Goal 3: The Library Engages With the Community:*** *The Library effectively markets its services, programs and resources to the Ketchikan community. The Library invites community input and participation in its work, to meet the needs of both currently served and underserved constituencies. The Library works with other partners to pursue goals of community importance.*

**Friends of the Ketchikan Public Library:** In 2021 long-time Friends President June Dahl stepped down and Jodi Russell became President; Treasurer Jeannette Rosier stepped down as well and Lisa Scarborough became Treasurer. Many thanks to June and Jeannette for your work and dedication to the Friends and the Library!

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The Friends had the opportunity to move their extensive book donations from a storage locker to a space at 319 Dock Street, which doubles as a book sale space. Friends Board member Jeff Williams did yeoman's work moving the donations into the new space, sorting and shelving them, and working with the rest of the Board and volunteers to conduct regular book sales there. By the end of the year, the Friends were holding two book sales a month in the new location. In 2021, the Friends approved funding for adult, children's and teen reading program prizes and paid half the cost of the Alaska Digital Library.



**Interactive Programs:** Head of Children's Services Amie Toepfer began two educational programs with accompanying monthly videos and maker bags; S.T.E.A.M. (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Mathematics); and A.H.A. (Art History With Amie). She also started a Zoom book club for children between 9-12 years of age, called Bookin' It. Adult Zoom programs included sessions from the Social Security Administration, and financial tips from Ben Edwards of the local Edward Jones office. The Library held two virtual author talks: one in January with Alaskan author Marc Cameron, and the other in November with Ward

Serrill, whose book, *To Crack the World Open*, describes his time living in Ketchikan.

**Partnerships:** The Library teamed up with the Ketchikan Medical Center to provide Born to Read bags for newborns. Children's Services Librarian Amie Toepfer organized a Community Storywalk in October in collaboration with Ketchikan Museums, City Fire Department #1, Parnassus Books, and the Ketchikan Wellness Coalition. Lisa Pearson worked with organizers of the Filipino Book Festival in October, creating a display at the Plaza of the Library's materials in Tagalog. In November Adult Services offered the Kindness Challenge, providing people with stationary and art supplies to create holiday greetings and messages for residents of the Pioneer Home and Long-Term Care. In December, the Garden Club decorated the Library's holiday tree with beautiful hand-made ornaments. The Children's Library donated discarded children's books to the Ketchikan International Airport for their Read on the Fly program.

**Advisory Groups:** The Teen Advisory Group (T.A.G.) conducted two open houses in August to attract new teens, and met every other week starting in the fall.

The Library Advisory Board met quarterly throughout the year, and welcomed new Board members Deborah Simon, Jodi Russell, Nina Hopps, Jai Mahtani, and Grant Echohawk in addition to continuing members June Dahl, Sis Coenen, and Maureen Eldridge.

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**Congratulations Bags:** The Teen Advisory Group, Adult Services and Children's Services got together to prepare Congratulations bags for all students graduating from Revilla and Kayhi. Each bag contained treats and fun trinkets as well as information on applying for a permanent library account and tips on becoming an independent adult.

**Outreach Services:** Ketchikan Public Library is unusual in having services for Ketchikan residents who cannot come to the Library--people who are homebound, have transportation issues, or are incarcerated. This year Outreach Librarian Rebecca Brown began working with the KAR House and the Ketchikan Re-Entry Coalition, in addition to maintaining her activities with Rendezvous Senior Day Center, the Pioneer Home, the Saxman Senior Center, and the Ketchikan Correctional Center.

**Marketing:** The Library markets its services to the community in a variety of ways. Children's Library Assistant Ann Marie Meiresonne prepares and distributes the monthly event calendar in print and online. She and other staff members post notices on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter of Library meetings, programs and services. Outreach Librarian Rebecca Brown prepares a newsletter, Here's Some Good News, with information on Library services of particular interest to seniors. Staff members take turns announcing Library events on KRBD's twice-monthly Library Report and periodic public service announcements. Several staff members take turns writing a weekly Ad Lib column in the Ketchikan Daily News, and Rebecca Brown has a monthly column interviewing Ketchikan residents called What's On Your Shelf? We are very grateful to KRBD and the Daily News for providing the Library with these opportunities publicize Library services.

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***Goal 4: The Library is a Growing, Vibrant Organization:*** *The Ketchikan Public Library has a culture of outstanding customer service and a commitment to the concept of the Library as a community good. Library managers value and respect all staff members in their pursuit of excellence, and foster support through advocacy, professional development and an atmosphere of creativity and open-mindedness. The Ketchikan Public Library has a nimble organizational culture that adapts to changes in the community of Ketchikan.*

**Changes in First City Libraries:** In March, UAS-Ketchikan Campus announced its intention to withdraw from the First City Libraries Consortium and end its agreement with the City to share an online system and provide services to the Campus Library. In June, UAS-Ketchikan, the Ketchikan Gateway Borough School District, and the City of Ketchikan approved new partnership agreements. In the fall, the Campus Library migrated their patron, item and bibliographic records from the First City Libraries shared online system, to the Alaska Library Catalog that is used at other University of Alaska campuses. Although we no longer share a system with the Campus Library, we meet regularly with Campus Library staff to identify ways to serve the community.

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**Staff Changes:** Adult Library Assistant II Tammy Dinsmore retired at the end of September after 23 years of service; Children's Library Assistant I Rebecca Jackson resigned in September to pursue opportunities in Seattle. Due to City budget concerns, the City Council froze the Library's vacant Library Assistant II position for 2022. In December the Library hired Jayd Myers for the Children's Library Assistant I position. We very much miss Rebecca and Tammy, but are happy to welcome Jayd!



*Rebecca Jackson and snowman,  
Christmas 2020*

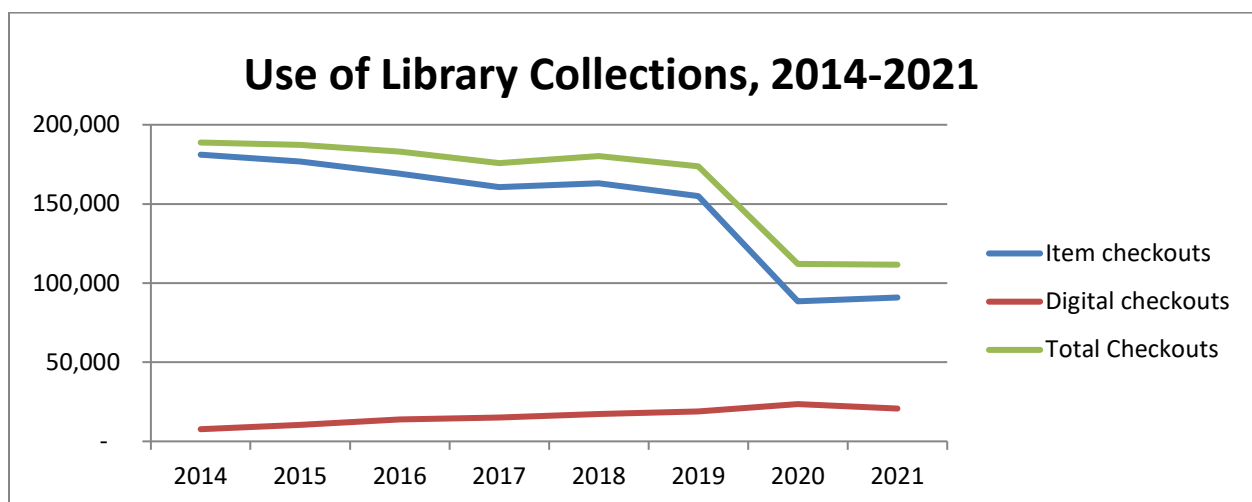


*Tammy Dinsmore and snowman,  
Christmas 2020*



*Children's Library Assistant I  
Jayd Myers*

**Pandemic Adaptations:** Due to Ketchikan's high COVID risk level, the Library was closed to the public from February 4-25, and May 12-28. While the Library was closed we offered curbside service to patrons on request, and in February we conducted our annual inventory of collections. On June 13 the Library moved into a new reopening phase, ending the week-long quarantine of returned items, putting newspapers and magazines on display and more chairs in public areas, and opening from 1-5pm on Sundays as well as 10am-6pm Monday-Saturday. The Library maintained this schedule through the end of December.



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**Library Collections:** The use of the Library's physical collections increased slightly, by 2.7%, in 2021 over 2020. This is in line with the 3.5% increase in 2021 Library visitors over 2020—only a third of the visitors the Library had in 2019. While the Library was open more in 2021 than in 2020, the continuing pandemic prevented us from opening our full 58 hours per week, and almost all the Library's programs were online. It seemed, too, that many of our pre-pandemic patrons have not yet returned, perhaps due to COVID concerns.

The use of downloadable electronic and audio books from the Alaska Digital Library decreased 12.2% compared to 2020, but was 10% higher than in 2019. During the periods in 2020 and 2021 when the Library was closed, more of our patrons have become comfortable reading or listening to downloadable books.

**Library Programs:** Because of the pandemic, the Library hosted very few in-person programs in 2021, and the few we did host were drop-in, to facilitate social distancing during the event. Online programs with the most views in 2021:

	<b>Video</b>	<b>Posted</b>	<b>Views &gt;3 seconds</b>
Adult	DIY with Gayle: Clay Pot Lighthouses	4/24/2021	2,814
Adult	Reading Aloud: Leaves of Grass preface	3/6/2021	872
Outreach	Happy National Library Week!	4/5/2021	540
Children	Storytime at City Park	4/15/2021	371
Outreach	Homeschooling Update	3/16/2021	298
Children	Amazing Leprechaun Traps	3/17/2021	263
Children	Join Miss Rebecca and Sing a Song	2/16/2021	259
Children	Storytime on the Library Porch	6/29/2021	239
Adult	Reading Aloud: The Other Two, part 1	9/14/2020	238
Children	Storytime in City Park	6/11/2021	198
Children	Summer Reading Grand Prize Drawing	8/31/2021	185
Children	Online Song Time with Ann Marie	2/26/2021	180
Children	Romps & Rhymes	2/2/2021	173
Children	Garden Update with Miss Rebecca	6/14/2021	169
Children	Singing with Miss Rebecca	3/16/2021	164
Children	Princess Book Highlight with Miss Amie	2/15/2021	148
Children	Exploding Soap	4/21/2021	143
Adult	Simple Cooking with Lisa: Crazy Cake	4/6/2020	143
Adult	Reading Aloud: Letters of Abigail & John Adams	7/3/2021	129

## **Conclusion**

In its own way, the second year of the pandemic was as challenging as the first. The Library was open to the public for much of the year, and staff continued to find innovative ways to serve the community. But measures to keep patrons and staff safe from COVID remained in place throughout the year, and we were not able to resume normal pre-pandemic operations.

We are very thankful for the ongoing support of the Ketchikan community, including City and Borough departments, KPU, members of the Teen Advisory Group, the Library Advisory Board, and our energetic and enthusiastic Friends of the Ketchikan Public Library. And our Library patrons are the best—all of those who visited us in person, or used the Alaska Digital Library, or attended a program online, or listened to us on KRBD, or picked up a maker bag to do at home. Thank you all for adapting to the many changes the Library has made over the past two years, and for doing your part to keep our community safe and healthy.



*Photo by Andy Donato, 2022*