

Dermott O'Tool Memorial Library
Tenakee Springs, Alaska
Librarian's Report November 2025

We had a great month at our community library! 11/19/2025

1. **Volunteers** stepped up to fill all but a few of our library shifts this month. The Library Director was able to fill in the gaps. Volunteers are encouraged to use the volunteer text chat when they need to fill a shift. Teamwork makes the dream work! Folks are often available and eager to step in if asked in advance.
2. **A large order has been placed with Bookshop.org and Wild Books to catch up on grant spending for our collection.** A large order is ready to send out for DVDs through Amazon as well. This will be placed 11/01 to space out the spending. This order is about half of our yearly grant spending because the grant year started in July but we delayed orders related to political fiscal uncertainties and then had more delays related to change of debit card. So, this will catch up our additions to the library collection and put us back on track with spending toward a larger collection. It was fun to collect patron requests and make an order so many patrons will be happy to see in our library!
3. **Healthcare.gov health insurance sign up started 11/01 and information has been printed and is available in the library. A poster with QR code is posted on the library door to help empower patrons to access healthcare.**
4. **The children's area has been rearranged to accommodate both our old and our new AWE learning stations.** More than once children have been using both our learning stations at the same time. This is exciting! The smaller table which had the single AWE learning station on it is now a reading table and our two bean bags can also be used for reading. Our large display of children's books is now in the children's section window. The led lit birch tree turns on and lights up when the AWE learning station is turned on.
5. **OWL has been renewed.**
6. We are updating payment information related to our new debit card.
7. No use of our new ipads has been noted. This may increase during winter months.
8. No use of microscope after our wonderful learning series has been noted although it has been offered by librarian to patrons.

9. The bathroom remains a needed project. We hope to move all storage out of the bathroom as soon as alternate space can be made, primarily for hygiene reasons.
10. **Our Alaskan Section has been TEMPORARILY thinned to demonstrate a more open shelving format for the library.** All our Alaskan Books have been retained but we will need more shelving space to put the full collection out again. This will either be accomplished by thinning of our larger collection and creating shelving space or through new shelving; built or purchased. Inquiries have been made of volunteers and patrons about their preferences and ideas for more shelving; locations, type of shelving. Some inquiries have been made with the community about building shelves as well to find out what might be possible. If shelves are built, it would be wonderful to use the same lumber used with original Alaskan shelves.
11. **The children's books were thinned by the Library Director this month.** The top and bottom bins now have sufficient space for children to engage with the books, reshelve them and to keep the space looking attractive, helping patrons want to engage more with these books. All thinned books were offered to all families in town and to the school. Families all made physical visits to the library and took books they were interested in or specifically stated they did not want any more books in their home space. Families chose to take ten books or less even though they could have taken dozens of books home if they desired. Families were all content with the thinning process and denied concerns with loss of books in exchange for better access, tidier space. Precedence was given to retaining classic children's books and books in good shape or hard cover, especially considering the rainy climate we live in paperback children's books become damaged quickly. Juvenile, young adult and nonfiction books have not been thinned yet. This will be attended to at the thinning work party.
12. **Volunteer scheduling** continues to be primarily accomplished on our paper schedule in the volunteer binder. We did have one double coverage related to a volunteer using the gmail volunteer calendar, and we will keep moving towards setting all our volunteers up with the skills to rely on our online volunteer calendar. Having multiple systems creates potential for confusion, but electronic systems will help more volunteers have access to sign ups and assisting our schedule needs. We welcome ideas about how to make this work. An online calendar will help connect volunteers who wish to help but are not in town as often, etc. We do have many slots open for December and look forward to seeing new volunteers step in as they are interested and able. Our seasonal population

changes mean we often have new slots open and it is fun to see new people enjoy helping in our community library space!

13. **Our new ILL system is working well!** Ebb Tides reminds our patrons to email domltke@gmail.com and our volunteers are comfortable with this process now too. Volunteers can use paper forms in the binder still but are comfortable emailing ILL requests on behalf of patrons also if needed. The ILL spreadsheet tracks our ILL loans in one place and volunteers are primarily responsible for noting dates of ILL book pickups and returns at the library. The Library Director currently manages the rest of the spreadsheet and welcomes volunteers stepping up to help with this processing as well.
14. **We had a successful Halloween fun afternoon at the library at the end of October with crafts, story time, face painting and snacks! Over ten children attended.**
15. **We participated in Children's Book Week as well by placing six clipboards on the library desk with stickers, book marks, writing and coloring activity pages and poems or short stories with illustrations for our children patrons to engage with during their library visit or take home.** It was a lovely kit provided for free through a national library program and we had fun offering it to the community! All the pages were used by children over two weeks this month which encouraged them to read, write and color on pages full of words and stories! Volunteers are encouraged to note how many children participate in these types of activities for our grant report; on daily log sheets.
16. **Daily Log sheets will become a computer spread sheet in 2026.** Volunteers are encouraged to touch base with the library director if turning on the computer and accessing a document on the computer desktop is daunting. We are here for you to help you gain these skills! Making this a computer document will remove the task of physically tallying numbers each month for the librarian and help us to be more accurate with our records for our Public Library Assistance grant which is our main source of funding outside city funding.
17. The Volunteer Binder and email to domltke@gmail.com or texting in the library volunteer group chat are our **main volunteer communication channels**. Volunteers are encouraged to text the Library Director with urgent needs. The Library Director has been able to attend to urgent print and other needs at the library in real time a few times this week due to close lodging. So, volunteers are always encouraged to reach out with questions, needs. We also have a common communication section in the volunteer binder. The library director leaves updates in note form. Volunteers are encouraged to engage with this

communication process as well and to read these updates each volunteer shift to stay up to date.

18. **November 21st there will be a thinning work party.** The entire community was invited through Ebb Tides. Assistance is welcome for thinning, processing “deletes” in Resource Mate, removing cards from our physical card catalogue and feeding volunteers. We will also need more help transporting books to donate out of Tenakee. Pete who manages the “Bus Stop” in town says mysteries move well through the Bus Stop. So mysteries not being read at the library can be moved through the Bus Stop in small amounts. * A huge thankyou to Julie Hamilton for helping us transport books to donation sites in Juneau by ferry and car!
19. **Children will be attending the first of a series of monthly book/movie club events** this month. This month we will watch a portion of Anne of Green Gables to celebrate this classic book by L.M. Montgomery which celebrates imagination, writing and community. Cocoa and popcorn will be provided.
20. **Second Saturday Book Chats for adults have also started.** We did not have any attendance for the first book chat, but will try again in early December! Adults are invited to bring a book they are reading or have recently read and share about it during our chat. Coffee and light refreshments provided. Second Saturday each month. Announcements are in Ebb Tides.
21. Thanksgiving weekend the library director will work with community volunteers to decorate our library for the holidays. All are welcome. Cocoa and cookies will be provided. This will involve hanging garlands, making a new type of book holiday tree, putting out holiday books and DVDs on our shelves, hanging some more twinkly lights etc! It will also involve the opportunity to make some holiday crafts to decorate your own home or to leave for decoration at the library; drift wood and twig holiday trees, egg carton tree and mushroom garlands etc.
22. Author talks continue to be shared. We have one patron engaging with this service and hope to boost involvement by printing posters about these events and posting on town bulletin boards. Ebb Tides has requested we stop sharing posters in our announcements.
23. Thank you EVERYONE for your support and love of our library.

EVENTS

1. Work Party Invite Thursday November 21th from 3-5 PM.
E-mail domltke@gmail.com or text 309.310.8572 to join.
Help Your Library make space for new books and displays!
2. Children's Book Club
Thursday November 20th 3PM-5PM excerpt reading and book club chat & movie watch party with popcorn & hot cocoa! RSVP: Text Librarian at 309.310.8572 to let us know you plan to attend!
Anne of Green Gables by L.M. Montgomery is our November Book Choice
3. Holiday Market Weekend Crafts at the Library
Friday November 28th, 1-3PM, All Ages Welcome!
Make Holiday Trees with drift wood or twigs from our forests and beaches.
& Enjoy Hot Cocoa with Popcorn!
Help us put up holiday decorations if you have time. 😊
4. Book Chat, Second Saturdays, December 13th 1-2PM
Adults, bring your own mug and a book you've recently read.
We will enjoy warm beverages and conversation about literature at the library round table.
5. Children's Book Club
Thursday December 18th 3PM-5PM shadow puppet show with book club chat & a fun movie watch party with popcorn and hot cocoa!
A Christmas Carol is our December Book Choice
6. Enjoy Reading!

