

Library Director Report

Dermott O'Toole Memorial Library

Tenakee Springs, Alaska

December 19th, 2025 Board Meeting– Happy Holidays!

We had a great month at our library. A special note that our library Christmas Cactus is in decadent bloom and looking absolutely festive on top of the card catalogue. Check it out! This month kept us occupied with the award notice of a \$1000 Book Hook Grant for children's nonfiction books (hurray!), children and adult events, new additions to the collection, continued thinning project progress mostly involving coordinating shipments out of Tenakee on the ferry and bus stop donations as well as shelf rearrangements, most volunteer shifts covered, holiday and seasonal decorations all over our space, and solutions to printer challenges. Thanks as always to our wonderful volunteer team.

This month we appreciate the generous volunteer assistance of Pete, Dave, Anke, Nancy, Burl, Ella, Laura, Konah, Joanie and also extra help from Anne (cataloguing), Heather (book donation hauling) and Julie (filling in the gap with bookkeeping, book hauling and shopping!) as always!

Thanks so much for holiday donations and everyone who helped us create a festive atmosphere in our library for the season.

1. Events: (a) This month we enjoyed a second monthly book club all about 'A Christmas Carol'. We read an excerpt from Dicken's original story while using shadow puppets on the large projector screen. A volunteer assisted with puppets and then children attending were able to use puppets too. We played a holiday advent game, discussed other holidays from cultures and peoples who may not celebrate Christmas, had a brief holiday dance party for 30 seconds and made holiday decoration crafts including two giant paper chains! We also watched the Muppets version of 'A

Christmas Carol' while enjoying holiday snacks. (b) We attempted a Second Saturday book chat, but no adults were in attendance for the second time. (c) We hosted a documentary viewing lead by Burl with just one person in attendance. (d) Discarded books from book thinning were available to patrons for an entire month to pick up for free.

2. Additions to the Collection: We received much of our large book order and these items have almost all been processed and placed on display. We have also started receiving new DVDs. An additional speed bump in this process has been very low temperatures that have allowed only one flight during most of December, delaying shipments, but we expect to get even more books and DVDs soon!

3. The Shelf Thinning Project: (a) This was started in September and continues. (b) Thanks to a generous large transport of books by Ken and Shawna in the store trailer, prior transports by Heather and Chip as well as Todd and Julie and Ella, we have almost all the discarded books now moved out of Tenakee. (c) We have even heard from one patron who purchased a Tenakee Library book in Juneau last month! So, our discards are becoming others' treasures! (d) The bus stop has taken as many books as possible to redistribute here in Tenakee. Thanks to Pete for that and for our first haul of books to the ferry! (e) We now have eight shelves free and many more partial shelves. This has been a huge coordinated and persistent effort. We should feel proud of this progress which allows us to keep bringing in new items and to better display our current items. (f) Next steps include: rearranging books with the open shelf space to make the children's area 100% YA, juvenile and children's books, rearranging the fiction section to allow for more display within the section and visually appealing even book spacing on shelves, rearranging the nonfiction sections to allow for more display within the section and visually appealing even book spacing on shelves, claiming some nonfiction space for Alaskan collection and continuing to discuss more shelving for Alaskana, creating a more accessible and appealing juvenile nonfiction section for our current collection and the upcoming Book Hook grant addition of \$1000.00 more worth of books that are juvenile nonfiction, creating a memoir section within

our nonfiction section, taking this opportunity to order according to any obvious gaps in our collection (atlas etc), dreaming up shelf lighting possibilities and more display/engagement opportunities!

4. Volunteers. 1. We will need volunteers in January and especially on Friday or Saturday. 2. Tuesdays and Thursdays are steadily covered. 3. We do have help on Fridays quite often and sometimes Saturday! 4. We continue to encourage volunteer ease with computer use, shelving, patron assistance with resources, tidying library, enjoying refreshments during their shift with use of tea cart. 5. We continue to work to shelf items properly and ensure cards are replaced in books that are shelves. 6. Special thanks to Anke who dusted all our shelves when the thinning process made the need for dusting glaringly obvious. This required lifting thousands of books! 7. We are working to create steady communication with the volunteer team. A goal for 2026 is to send out a monthly newsletter. **8. Volunteers are encouraged to charge for printing services every time. This seems to have not been occurring and is important as we pay about \$150.00 to replace print cartridges and will be purchasing a new printer due to wear and tear on current printer in past two years.**

5. Printer: Julie is sending a new printer to us in the next week or as soon as shipment challenges allow. We are so grateful! We are currently using a fragile older printer gifted to Ruth with a new cartridge which cost \$90.00, donated by Ruth for use during this time.

6. Book Hook Grant and other fundes: We are the grateful recipients of a \$1000 Book Hook Grant to be used for children's nonfiction books! We are also the grateful recipients of a \$200 holiday donation.

7. Holidays at the Library: The library has a holiday tree made out of discarded books and decorated in tinsel etc. We have three strands of holiday lights around window and bookshelves. Paper garlands are also up along with displays of holiday DVDs and books. The entire holiday books selections was moved to the central round

table for perusal. We hope this encourages patrons to find them and check them out.

Thanks so much to our community, volunteers and the Library Board for making this library so effective and vibrant. It's a privilege to help foster learning, connection and community in Tenakee.

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