



A COMMUNITY THAT LOVES TO READ

HOW THE LIBRARY KEEPS
UP WITH ANCHORAGE'S
VORACIOUS READING
HABITS & ECCLECTIC TASTE

LIBRARY IMPACT REPORT
SUMMER 2019

An interview with the Library's Collection Management Coordinator Laura Baldwin

How do you decide which materials to order?

We strive to have a collection that represents the scope of views in our community, so we put our own reading and personal preferences aside when making selections. We review professional journals, NYT bestseller and award lists, look at what's going on at the PAC, the Museum and local theaters, include titles that support APL's Strategic Plan, and order extra copies of items that have long holds lists. The selectors also love to fulfill patron requests from Suggest a Purchase on our website.

Fun fact: *Have you been pleasantly surprised to learn about a new must-read book and find that the Library already has it? That's because the Library keeps up with industry news through e-newsletters such as Shelf Awareness to figure out what's going to trend next.*

Logistically, how does the ordering process work?

Eight librarians on staff serve as selectors and they each oversee different areas of the collection, such as digital, romance or young adult. Additionally, branch managers select the new leased books for their collections to match their community's interests.



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Your Investment at Work

Library Highlights – You made this possible!

- **Summer Discovery** – almost entirely funded by Friends of the Library donations – helps children and youth fight the "summer slide" loss of academic progress during the summer break. It also connects parents to enriching, educational activities that give families opportunities to spend quality time together.
- **New furniture at Loussac Library!** Thanks to Friends and Foundation donors, and the Rasmuson Foundation, for new info desks and computer tables for Loussac.
- **APL recently ran campaigns to promote electronic resources**, using a Library Foundation grant, which resulted in check-out increases of 35% in Listen Alaska, 46% in e-Audiobooks, and 28% in eBooks, as well as database usage increases of 302% in Ancestry.com, 156% in Heritage Quest, and 91% in World Book.
- **Materials purchases** – your donations help the Library fill gaps in the collection. Most recently the Library worked to fill a need for new digital format entrepreneurship books requested by patrons – it appeared that 85-90% of the titles were checked out within the first 48 hours of being available!
- Wells Fargo gave \$5,000 to **Mountain View Library for cafe seating for the lobby**, to create a community gathering place.



Photos: astronomy day with the Anchorage Museum (left), the New Old Time Chautauqua Circus, sponsored by the Friends of the Library (center), and Library Community Resource Coordinator Rebecca Barker.

Library Community Resource Coordinator

A grant-funded pilot project through the Library Foundation, the Resource Coordinator provides outreach, information and assistance services for patrons at Loussac and Mountain View libraries. A collaboration between the Anchorage Health Department, the Library and UAA's School of Social Work, the project taps into the Library's extensive community networks to deliver resources to people who might not otherwise have access. We thank our funders: Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority, Recover Alaska, and Alaska Community Foundation Social Justice Fund. In the first six-months, the CRC served over 200 people, including:

- Mental health referrals: 12 referrals to mental health services, with a wide range of presenting issues from severe mental illness to PTSD, anxiety and stress management.
- Job search assistance: 24 individuals assisted with resumes & job applications.
- Substance misuse referrals: 8 individuals referred to recovery services.
- Seniors: 40+ referred to the Health Department's Aging and Disability Resource Center.
- Launched a Veteran Information Center at Loussac Library.

A Community that Loves to Read, cont.

The Library orders new materials monthly and once orders have been placed, the Technical Services Librarian Stacy downloads the records into the catalog, which makes the materials available for holds within a day or two after they've been ordered.

Fun fact: *the Library "leases" popular new books so they can have lots of copies of new and trending books and keep holds lists short, without being stuck with the extras when interest wears out.*

How does your budget work? How do you allocate between print books, digital, and everything else?

It's a struggle. When I first arrived twelve years ago, there was fat to cut: obsolete reference titles and expensive, unused databases. As the years have passed and the budget has remained flat or has decreased, we just do the best we can to keep our public happy and keep up with a community that has a wide variety of interests. I also work to allocate as much as possible to our youth collections to make sure we are investing in our kids' futures.

Not so fun fact: *back in the day, a Library could buy a single book and keep circulating it until it wore out. Now, with the same budget, the Library has to supply that book in multiple formats, such as eAudiobook, Book on CD (which are surprisingly popular!), eBook, and Large Type. While the Library negotiates lower rates for print books, it's charged more than retail for digital items. For instance, Tara Westover's *Educated* cost \$15 for a print book, \$95 for an eAudiobook, and \$55 for an eBook (with a license that expires after two years!).*

When you get extra money from the Friends and Foundation, how are you able to put that to use?

These donations are critical and are used for: Book Club Bags, the annual Battle of the Books order, extra copies of hot titles for youth for Summer Discovery, and expensive DVDs, such as Alaskan titles or the sought after documentary *Resilience*. If there's any money left, we put it toward digital content, which we always need more of.

Detach and mail to: Anchorage Library Foundation/Friends of the Library: PO Box 244714, Anchorage, AK 99524

YES! I want to help the Anchorage Public Library build community.

Name: _____ City: _____

Address: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

☐ I'd like this gift to go to a specific library (please list):

☐ Please keep my name anonymous in recognition materials.



I'd like to support the Library's immediate needs for materials and programs with a gift in the amount of
\$_____.

Make check payable to: **Friends of the Library**



I'd like to support the long-term growth of the Library and new library initiatives with a gift in the amount of
\$_____.

Make check payable to: **Anchorage Library Foundation**



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Did you know?

- 8 in 10 Americans believe public libraries can help them find *reliable* and *trustworthy* information.
- 70% of voters visited their library in the past year, with Millennials being the most frequent patrons.
- In Anchorage, a recent survey found that 86% of library patrons (and 70% of non-users) believe that APL provides good value for the tax dollars invested.

National statistics from *A History of the American Public Library*, City Lab, Feb. 19, 2019,
www.citylab.com/design/2019/02/american-public-library-history-cities-visual-journalism/582991/

Pay it forward

Consider a planned gift to the Library Foundation

You can provide a legacy of learning and exploration for future generations by making a planned gift to the Anchorage Library Foundation. Planned gifts are easy to make by setting up or making a simple adjustment to your will, or naming the Foundation as a beneficiary to an insurance or retirement plan. Consult your financial advisor or attorney to find the gift that best fits your situation.

Please contact Clare at info@librarychampion.com or 907-343-2944 if you have further questions or are ready to make a planned gift.

