

National Library Week is a good time to check out your library

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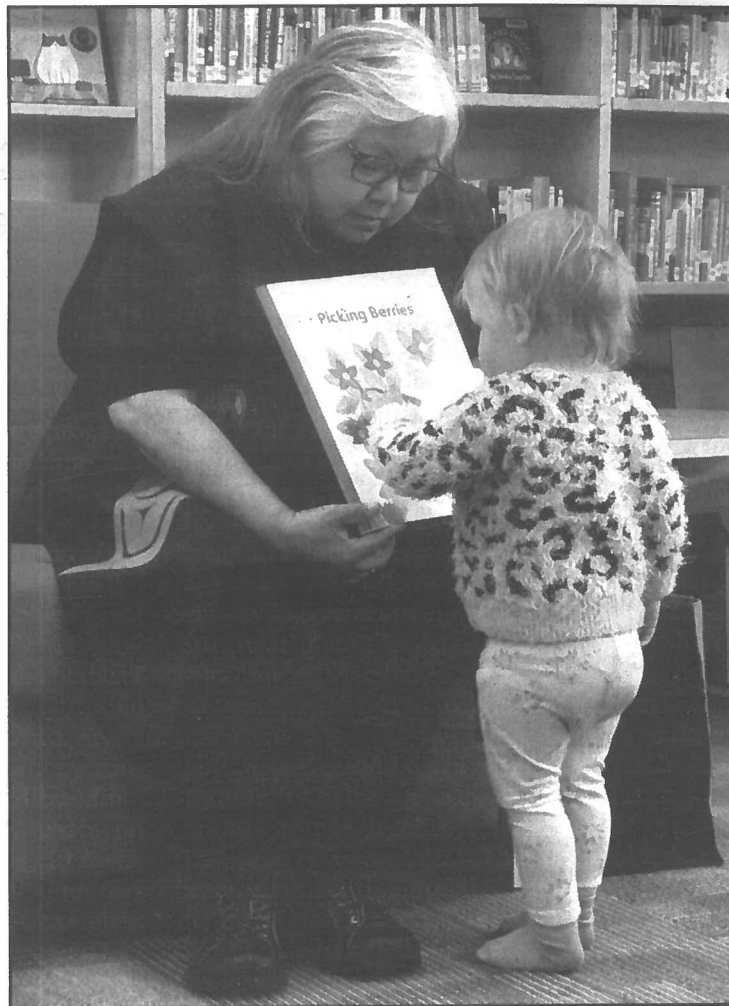
With its comprehensive slate of services and robust programming, the Petersburg Public Library is a shining example of this year's National Library Week theme, "There's More to the Story." From April 23rd through the 29th Americans are encouraged to support libraries, library workers' contributions, and the fact that today's libraries offer much more than books.

The things available for check-out from the Petersburg Public Library may surprise even frequent library patrons. Game lovers can explore a wide range of games for people of all ages, many that are new to the market and, while some are competitive, others require players to work together to win. Nestled in with the gardening books, is a new "Seed Library," where patrons may help themselves to packets of flower and vegetable seeds. Children can

take home "Discovery Kits" that come in large plastic tubs filled with hands-on learning experiences based in science, technology, engineering, art and math. One kit contains two types of play dough — one conducts electricity and one acts as an insulator. Working with them to get included lights to illuminate develops an understanding of how electrical circuits work. The popular "Code and Go Robots" kit teaches kids how to program a robot to solve a problem, providing an introduction to computer programming.

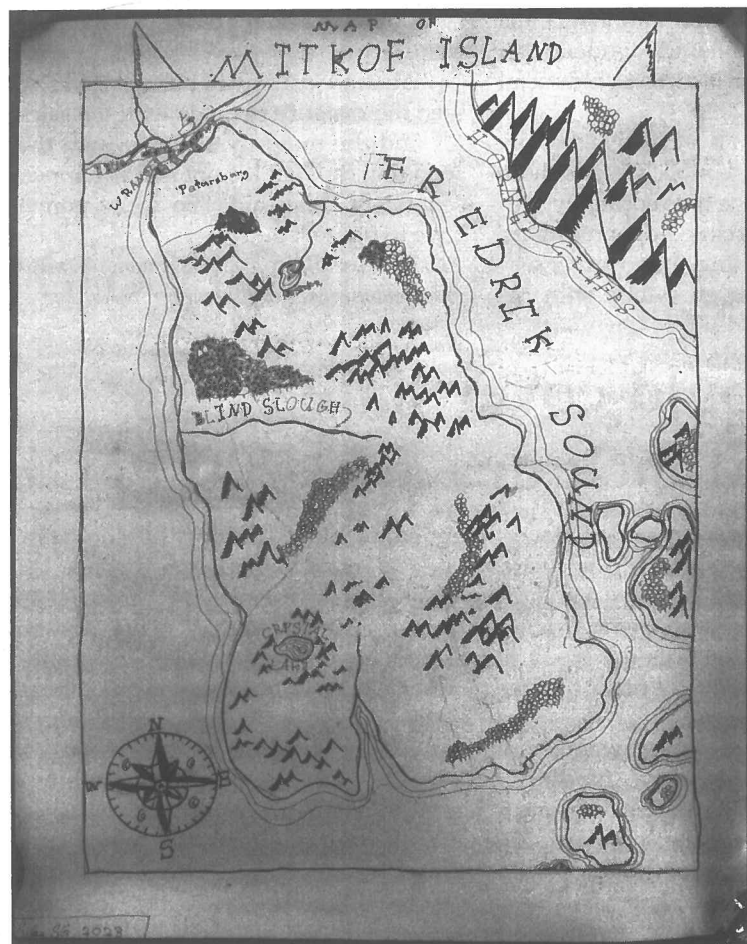
Local musician Dan Sullivan donated eight guitars to the library's collection. He feels, "Having quality musical instruments to check out at the library is a wonderful opportunity to learn a new skill without having to invest anything more than your time."

There are also five ukuleles available and both instruments come with a packet of information and links to free on-line



Courtesy of Kari Petersen

Tephra Clemens learns from Cultural Specialist Jeanette Ness during a special library program in partnership with Sealaska Heritage Institute called Baby Raven Reads.



Courtesy of Lea Stanton-Gregor

Silas Stanton-Gregor, 11, often takes advantage of Petersburg Library programming and recently participated in Fantasy Map Making, a workshop taught by Nicholas Larsen and Dan Sullivan. He says, "I love the unique aspect of drawing your own fantasy maps, but I also made Mitkof Island and some other cool fantasy maps. So did the other children there."

classes.

The library's exciting programming schedule is funded by an arts endowment donated by library supporter John McCabe and through grants like the Petersburg Community Foundation's Healthy Communities grant. Opportunities have included folk art painting with Pia Reilly, basket weaving with Kathryn Rouso, baby massage with Jessica Toth, writing workshops led by Orin Pierson, fantasy map making with Nicholas Larson, as well as knitting and art lessons with Lisa Schramek, to name just a few.

Schramek has several upcoming classes and says, "The library is a wonderful place to teach and I really enjoy working with [Program Director] Kari Petersen. I feel that art is an important thing for people to have in their lives. For me, it's a stress relief — something I can do to explore my inner landscape. I think it's nice to see [participants] question their limiting beliefs and to maybe laugh a bit at themselves. Making art is really a series of choices, and only the artist is in control of them. These classes are a great opportunity for people with differing levels of ability to share what they know and to find answers to their questions."

Eleven year old Silas Stanton-Gregor has participated in programs that "range from gui-

tar classes all the way to fun art projects," he says. "I feel like the library has a lot of fun things and it's good for kids."

The library also offers travelers the opportunity to book an appointment with a licensed passport agent and those struggling with a technological challenge can make an appointment with an information technology librarian.

Surrounded by landscaped gardens, the beautiful, light-filled facility houses a collection of local artists' works. An LCD screen adjacent to the front desk displays slideshows by local photographers, and in the lobby, patrons will find interesting displays in large glass cases. Next to the wide-ranging collection of periodicals is a gas fireplace and comfortable seating. Throughout the library, remarkably large and thriving indoor plants are well cared for by volunteers Beverly Richardson and Julianne Thompson. Many of them belonged to the late Father Thomas and were donated by the Catholic Church.

Petersen is planning a new public art-project that will connect local biologists, painter Pia Reilly and artists from age 10 and up. Participants will paint wooden cutouts shaped like salmon that will eventually be attached to a metal structure that will wrap around a portion

of the garden along Haugen Drive.

On Thursday mornings, from 11 am to 12 pm, Petersen hosts "Stories in Motion," a toddler story time in the children's room. "I don't want parents to think that story time is something that their kids have to be quiet and sit through. From what we know about the development of reading skills, you really do want it to be interactive, to have the kids talk with you about what is going on in a story. So we allow interruptions and a lot of movement, because kids are wiggly. It's more kinesthetic learning — we have a lot of fun songs and dances that are related to the story," Petersen explains. "After the story, the kids all line up and let me know what they want me to take out of the toy closet."

The Children's Room is also a popular venue for playdates. Separated from the main library, it allows kids to be kids and the comfortable seating gives caregivers a place to visit while their kids explore the impressive selection of games and toys, like the little kitchen and the small scale, but very realistic grocery store, complete with cart, a cash filled register, and a working credit card scanner.

Local teens also enjoy their own room. Its ceiling is decorated with an art installation of their own making and the shelves, set up like a welcoming bookstore, include a new non-fiction collection. There are computers, a large screen TV and a cozy booth where G.O.A.T., the Group of Advisory Teens, meet. "It should be 'Greatest of all Time,' because that's what we are," says Junior Logan Haley. "Typically we have a bit of a party, with pizza, and talk about things we want to work on and things we want to change about our weekly radio show. We go to the radio station to play music, read PSAs and give the weather for the week. We have some fun and listen to music."

This year the popular summer reading challenge is being expanded to include all ages. "We've created a baby program for ages 0-3," Peterson says, "The babies who complete the challenge will receive a gift certificate to Sing Lee Alley Bookstore and their caregiver will be entered in a drawing for a massage."

The age to participate in the Summer Stream Reading Program is being lowered to age three. "We've had so many preschoolers who want to participate," Peterson explains. "So there will be prizes that appeal to three year olds, prizes that appeal to thirteen year olds and prizes for all the ages in between. And, of course, there will be a teen to adult program as well — so, all ages!"

Library Director Tara Alcock and her staff have repeatedly earned the Library Journal's four star rating, a testament to their outstanding work. As the Friends of Petersburg's Libraries would say, "You should check it out! Check it out!"

2023 Circle of Life
Petersburg Medical Center Foundation's
Cabin Creek 5K/3.1mile Run/Walk Race
proceeds benefit Beat the Odds

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Registration from 8-8:45a
Run/Walk starts @ 9:00a
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