Staff Picks | The Best Book I Read in 2020, pg. 4
KDL Lab | Winter Wonder Lab, pg. 8
Countdown to Happy Noon Year, pg. 10
Winter Online Calendar, pg. 12
Welcome to winter.

2020 certainly threw us all some curveballs, didn’t it? Through all the change and uncertainty, we did our best to continue providing you high-quality programs, a variety of useful resources and excellent customer service, while keeping you and our staff safe and healthy. Thank you for your support and understanding through this wild ride.

With falling temperatures and limited daylight, this is a great season to cuddle up on the couch in front of your fireplace and enjoy a good book. We have plenty of books and also a fun opportunity to earn prizes for reading. Sign up for our Let It Snow Reading Club for adults and teens. Learn more on the back cover.

Wishing you a happy and healthy 2021. We are here for you.

Lance Werner
Executive Director
Each KDL branch now has a ScanEZ Station, an easy-to-use touch screen scanning solution that can scan, save, fax and send your documents or photos practically anywhere. The new system provides users high-speed scanning and copying via a patron-friendly interface. Patrons can even restore old, faded photos and documents and translate copy to text or audio in over 100 languages.

The new website is here! Check out the new features including better browsing, increased compatibility on any device and the ability to suggest a purchase and see status updates in your account.

More than 30 Career Online High School scholarships are available. Adults can earn an accredited high school diploma in an online environment while gaining real-world career skills — at no cost to them! Learn more at kdl.org/cohs.

Great progress is taking place on the new Amy Van Andel Library and Community Center in Ada, which will open in January 2021. See the photos and videos at kdl.org/countdown-to-ada.
Staff Picks
The Best Book I Read in 2020

An Irish Country Welcome by Patrick Taylor, audiobook read by John Keating

"As always, this series is a real gem. Truly a 'feel good' story that makes me want to live in Ballybucklebo with the characters. Unlike some authors' titles that are coming out every month, release day of a Patrick Taylor's Irish Country (doctor) book is like Christmas to me!"

Yuko | Service Center

The Summer that Melted Everything by Tiffany McDaniel

"2020. The year that has melted everything into uncertainty, fear and so much anger. That isn’t to say there haven’t been moments where I have noticed bits of dappled sunlight that sneak their way through the trees and attempt to warm my cheeks. But you guys! This book. Oh my. This book. This is the book that melted everything. I feel as if I need to be pulled back together after reading it, but I am afraid that some pieces of me that melted will never be found again. For better or worse, this is the best book I have ever read. It seems fitting that it would come to me this year, like the Devil in the summer of 1984. One could argue the Devil came this summer too in a world of no apostrophes... a world with seemingly no hope. Disclaimer: do not read this book if you have strong trauma triggers."

Abby | Wyoming Branch

The Other Side of the Sky by Aimee Kaufman and Meagan Spooner

"Nimh is of the earth, living goddess to guide her people. North is of the sky, a prince in a tech-based world. When North falls from the sky, Nimh is there and what they discover together about their two worlds will change everything."

Beth | Gaines Township Branch

Here’s to You, Jesusa! by Elena Poniatowska

"Based on a series of interviews conducted over several years by Elena Poniatowska, Here’s to You, Jesusa! is the story of an extremely poor and illiterate woman whose remarkable life coincided with some of the most important events in Mexican history. Overlooked and shunned by society, Jesusa’s true spirit lies buried beneath her rough manner and appearance. Poniatowska’s affection for her friend radiates through this fine work, and gives a voice not only to Jesusa, but to everyone who’s been marginalized and cast aside. This classic of Mexican literature deserves wider recognition here in the States."

Mark | Krause Memorial Branch
Happy: A Beginner's Book of Mindfulness
by Nicola Edwards
"This beautiful book is a great conversation starter! I loved the pictures and the memories they invoked... In hard times, this book is warm and deep and just what we need."
Ashley | Cascade Township Branch

Red at the Bone
by Jacqueline Woodson
"A beautifully written story of three generations of a middle-class black family in Brooklyn. I learned more about the underlying sorrow present at all the occasions of joy, and how hard it is for a black family to hold on to what they have to fight so hard to achieve."
Penni | Cascade Township Branch

Let's Make Ramen!: A Comic Book Cookbook
by Hugh Amano
"During quarantine, I found myself drawn to cooking more at home and reading graphic novels. Let’s Make Ramen is the perfect marriage of the two. Not only are there tasty ramen recipes and great shopping guides, there are also beautiful illustrations and even the history of ramen all thrown in one beautifully designed book. If you’ve always wanted to cook ramen at home but didn’t know where to start or just want to look at gorgeous illustrations of food, then this is a great book for you."
Hannah | Wyoming Branch

Stuck in Manistique by Dennis Cuesta
"Stuck in Manistique takes place in the Upper Peninsula. It is a story that contains quirky but likable characters set in a small town. This book is both playful and heart-tugging, and is full of twists and turns. The troubled lives of the two main characters intersect in a novel that is a delightful read. For anyone who loves the U.P., this book is for you."
Barb | Substitute Information Staff

The Sun Down Motel by Simone St. James
"You don’t run into a ghost story/serial killer murder mystery very often. The Sun Down Motel read like a multigenerational, paranormal episode of 'Dateline.' It was everything I could hope for!"
Tricia | Cascade Township Branch

Untamed by Glennon Doyle
"This was by far my favorite book this year. I read it during quarantine thinking it would take me awhile. I was so wrong! I read it in one sitting! This book was a page-turner with short chapters that made me laugh, cry and sometimes both in the same chapter. All of us have an inner-cheetah that is looking to be unleashed, and this book inspired me look at all the things in life that makes me feel caged. Such a good book (I even bought it!)."
Ashten | Wyoming Branch
From a Fellow Parent in the Trenches

I am writing to you from a very specific vantage point of parenting, which is to say, the five-and-under crowd. I am one of those parents who could appreciate the silver linings of spring 2020, but if you asked me if I miss that season, my answer would be a resounding ABSOLUTELY NOT. In March, when public life ground to a halt, my two boys were three-years-old and nine-months-old, and my husband and I began the exhausting task of spinning the various plates of our roles as parents, partners and employees. We dropped a lot of plates. Like, every day. The ones that kept spinning were sometimes wobbling and barely staying aloft, held up only by another takeout order or another 23 minutes of screen time or a pre-dinner walk around the block to stomp in every rain puddle we could find.

Like a lot of parents, I worry about any long-term effects that might linger after we all go back to normal (whatever that means). I hope my youngest child, who is fifteen months now, doesn’t miss out on language development because his caregivers have to wear masks. I hope my three-year-old doesn’t fall behind socially because he was stuck with two grumpy adults and a baby for months on end. I can go down a pretty dark path when I listen to the pessimistic part of my brain, but while I think it’s okay to grieve the loss of balance we all used to rely on, I try not to rest there for too long.

As a library patron, I’m grateful for the ways that our library still brightened our days. The many virtual storytimes gave us some structure and something to look forward to, and my toddler grew to love some favorites (shout out to Miss Holly and Fred the Dog, and Miss Shannon!). Once curbside pickup became available, refreshing our library book collection was on the same level of excitement as a birthday morning. It eased the monotony and gave me some desperately needed bargaining chips to bribe my child into his room for nap time.

I’m also deeply grateful for my mother-in-law, who has dedicated a slice of her Sunday morning to a storytime with my toddler, every single week since this all began. It’s a gift I would not have anticipated when I first mourned the loss of face-to-face time with loved ones. I kind of hope my kids don’t remember much from this time in our lives, but if they do remember anything, I hope the love shining through those virtual storytimes sticks with them for years to come. Just because it was distant and remote doesn’t make it any less real.
From One Collection to Another

A faithful patron donated her complete collection of Let It Snow prizes to our Kentwood Branch when she passed away. We are so grateful for this treasured gift!

It’s that time of year again! Check out the back cover for details about this popular winter reading program.
It’s that time of year where the sunshine is fleeting and you’re ready for bed by 6:00 PM, or at least your parents are. You may be spending more time inside, and what better way to spend that time than curled up with a good book recommended by your friendly KDL Librarians? Or maybe you prefer to put on your lab coat and explore new ideas in your science lab (or kitchen). Either way, we have got you covered for those moments when the winter blues kick in.

**Winter Wonder Lab**

The words may be hidden in any direction: horizontally, vertically, diagonally, forwards and backwards.

**Wintertime Word Find**

Related titles:

A.

B.

C.

Related titles:

- **ANIMAL**
- **BEAR**
- **BINOCULARS**
- **BLIZZARD**
- **BOOTS**
- **CARDINAL**
- **CLOUDS**
- **COLD**
- **CONIFEROUS**
- **DECEMBER**
- **DRIFT**
- **FEBRUARY**
- **FEEDER**
- **FREEZE**
- **FROST**
- **HIBERNATE**
- **ICICLE**
- **JANUARY**
- **MELT**
- **MIGRATE**
- **MITTENS**
- **POLAR**
- **SCARF**
- **SCATTER**
- **SLEET**
- **SNOW**
- **SNOWFLAKE**
- **SQUALL**
- **TEMPERATURE**
- **THERMOMETER**
- **TRACKS**
- **VORTEX**
- **WEATHER**
- **WILDLIFE**
- **WIND**
- **WINTER**
Winter Magic
Milk Experiment

Supplies:

- Whole or full-fat milk
- Blue food coloring
- Dawn dish soap
- Cotton swabs
- Winter-themed cookie cutters
- Plate or pie dish
- Glitter if you have some

Directions:

1. Pour a thin layer of milk onto your plate or pie dish. Just enough so you can't see the bottom.
2. Place your cookie cutter – go ahead and pick your favorite wintery one – in the center of the plate or dish.
3. Drop some food coloring drops in the milk outside of your cookie cutter (if you have glitter, now’s the time for that).
4. Pour a little bit of dish soap into a cup or bowl. Place just the tip of your q-tip into the soap.
5. Using your cotton swab with a little bit of soap, gently swab or touch the top of the milk.
6. What happens?

A. Stupendous Science. 70 Super Cool Experiments You Can Do at Home by Rob Beattie
B. Science Is Magic. Amaze Your Friends with Spectacular Science Experiments by Steve Mould
C. Slimy Science and Awesome Experiments by Susan Martineau
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 31
11:30 AM

Find the livestream at:
facebook.com/kentdistrictlibrary or youtube.com/kentdistrictlibrary

Celebrate the New Year in a unique way with crafts, projects and a livestream! Try some of these projects at home and join a special KDL broadcast featuring Wimee and your favorite librarians ringing in 2021 at noon.

Use what you have to celebrate at noon with:
- CONFETTI
- POTS AND PANS
- A NOISEMAKER

MAKE YOUR OWN BALL DROP COUNTDOWN

When the time comes to count down at noon, everyone gets to have their own personal ball drop by sliding their “ball” down the paper countdown.

SUPPLIES
- Small paper plates (any color)
- Cardstock cut into one-inch strips (any color)
- Writing utensils
- Craft supplies for decorating, such as glitter star stickers, glitter glue, paint, etc.

INSTRUCTIONS
1. Cut two small slits into the middle of the paper plate.
2. Cut the cardstock into one-inch strips and vertically write numbers 1 through 10.
3. Decorate the plate.
4. Slip the cardstock into the slits and pull through.
5. Count down from 10 and celebrate the New Year!
**NOISE MAKERS**
When noon arrives after the countdown, everyone can shake their noise makers to celebrate!

**SUPPLIES**
- Paper plates
- Ribbon/streamers
- Paint, markers or crayons
- Dried beans, pasta or pony beads
- Tape
- Glue or stapler

**INSTRUCTIONS**
1. Tape the curled ribbon to the plate so that when folded in half, the ribbon will stick out.
2. Add a handful of beans to the plate and fold in half.
3. Secure the plate closed with glue or a stapler.

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**NEW YEAR’S POPPERS**
Get ready for the ball drop and pop your own popper!

**SUPPLIES**
- Tissue paper
- Toilet paper rolls
- Washi tape or string/ribbon
- Candy and confetti

**INSTRUCTIONS**
1. Measure your tissue paper to be about 10-12 inches wide. Toilet paper rolls are about 4 inches long.
2. Lay your roll onto the tissue paper at one end and begin rolling.
3. Gather the end on one side and twist.
4. Secure with washi tape or string and fill the other end with the treats or confetti.
5. Small treats such as candies, confetti, printed messages & jokes and trinkets are all things that would fit.
6. Secure the second end with washi tape and you are done.
7. When it is time to open them, grab both ends and pull hard!
December

All programs stream online | Calendar begins Wednesday, December 2

ALL BOOK CLUBS REQUIRE PRE-REGISTRATION
An email address is required for registration and instructions for how to join us on Zoom. This program will be moderated by KDL staff and you will have the option of participating with or without video. Parents are encouraged to read book reviews of each week’s chosen title in advance to determine if the book is one their child will enjoy.

MONDAYS
More than Superheroes: A Graphic Novel Series for Teens and Adults
December 21, 4:00 PM
Learn about graphic novels that may be new to you! For teens and adults.

Elementary Book Talks
December 7 & 21, 6:30 PM
Looking for your next great read? Tune in for expert recommendations from KDL youth staff. We’ll tell you all about our favorite new books, including graphic novels, nonfiction, picture books, chapter books and more! For school age children.

TUESDAYS
Storytime
December 8 & 15, 10:00 AM
Enjoy stories, music, movement and rhymes that develop early literacy skills and encourage everyone in the family to share their love of reading. For families with children.

WEDNESDAYS
Teen Graphic Novel Book Club
December 16, 4:30 PM
Join Monica and Katie for our Teen Graphic Novel Book Club. We will be discussing Twins by Varian Johnson. We guarantee you’ll have a blast! For teens.

What We’re Learning
December 2 & 9, 7:00 PM
Tune in to these local presenters from the comfort of your home. For adults.

December 2: Home Repair Services - Keeping the Cold Out
December 9: Drawing Animals with John Ball Zoo - brought to you by Lions & Rabbits

Anti-Racism Book Club
Dec. 16, 7:00 PM,
Between the World and Me by Ta-Nehisi Coates
This monthly virtual book club will discuss books across genres that explore issues of race in America as a means of better understanding ourselves, our history and our community. For adults.

THURSDAYS
Storytime
December 3, 10 & 17, 10:00 AM
Enjoy stories, music, movement and rhymes that develop early literacy skills and encourage everyone in the family to share their love of reading. For families with children.

FRIDAYS
Author Chats
December 4, 11 & 18, 7:00 PM
Author interviews and conversations from West Michigan, as well as winners of the Library of Michigan’s 2020 Michigan Notable Books award. For adults.

Streaming in a Spooky Wonderland
December 11, 10:00 PM
Teen librarians Hannah and Monica go on a nighttime winter walk through the woods, with plenty of scary stories and possible screams! For teens.

WINTER BREAK SPECIALS
Coding Class with Coders4Tomorrow
Monday, Dec. 28 - Thursday, Dec. 31, 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM
Pre-registration with email is required for this week-long Zoom program.

Coders4Tomorrow will teach the basics of Python coding in a fun way! Along with instruction from experienced undergraduate and high school coders in the essentials of Python 3, a real coding language used in industry, guest speakers and creative final projects are included to spark prolonged interest in coding. No prior coding experience is needed. For grades 7-10.

Basic computer and internet skills and an internet connection are required for this remote class. It is recommended that all participants have basic typing ability and math proficiency in order of operations and exponents. Participants are asked to attend each day, since the material builds on the previous day.

Cool Jams with Wendy & DB!
Wednesday, Dec. 30, 10:00 AM
Enjoy a special jam session with musical guests, Wendy & DB.
For families with children. Find out more on page 15.

Wimmee’s Words | Weekdays at 1:00 PM in December and 4:00 PM in January and February (see page 14 for additional information).
## January | February

### All programs stream online | Begins Monday, January 4

#### MONDAYS

**10:00 AM, Family Storytime**  
Enjoy stories, music, movement and rhymes that develop early literacy skills and encourage everyone in the family to share their love of reading.  
*For families with children.*

**More than Superheroes: A Graphic Novel Series for Teens and Adults**  
**January 18 and February 15, 4:30 PM**  
Learn about graphic novels that may be new to you!  
*For teens and adults.*

#### TUESDAYS

**10:00 AM, Rhyme Time**  
Enjoy stories, music, movement and rhymes that develop early literacy skills and encourage everyone in the family to share their love of reading.  
*For families with children.*

**6:00 PM, Teen Tuesdays @ Home**  
Check out kdl.org/events for instructions to log in to participate in these exciting programs provided by your favorite KDL Teen Librarians.  
*For teens.*

**January 5 and February 2**  
**Animal Crossing**

**January 12 and February 9**  
**Dungeons and Dragons**

**January 19 and February 16**  
**Among Us**

**6:30 PM, What We’re Reading**  
Catch up on what your favorite KDL Librarians and special guests are currently reading.  
*For adults.*

#### WEDNESDAYS

**10:00 AM, Storytime with Mr. Dave**  
Traditional stories, music and more for the whole family.  
*For families with children.*

**4:00 PM, Teen Graphic Novel Book Club**  
**January 27:**  
**Snapdragon** by Kat Leyh  
**February 24:**  
**They Called Us Enemy** by George Takei

Join Monica and Katie for our Teen Graphic Novel Book Club. We guarantee you’ll have a blast!  
*For teens.*

#### WEDNESDAYS (Continued)

**7:00 PM, What We’re Learning**  
Join a local presenter as they share an assortment of information, ideas and excitement, all from the comfort of your home.  
*For adults.*

**January 13:**  
**Swords, Myth vs Reality**

**January 27:**  
**Michigan’s Polar Bear Soldiers of WWI**

**February 10:**  
**Grand Rapids African American Museum & Archives - Riot Race and Reconciliation; 1967 Grand Rapids Uprising**

**February 24:**  
**Home Repair Services**

**7:00 PM, Anti-Racism Book Club**  
This monthly virtual book club will discuss books across genres that explore issues of race in America as a means of better understanding ourselves, our history and our community.  
*For adults.*

**January 20:**  
**Stamped from the Beginning: The Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America** by Ibram X. Kendi

**February 17:**  
**Riot Baby** by Tochi Onyebuchi

#### THURSDAYS

**4:30 PM, Hodgepodge: A Teen Librarian Talk Show**  
Join Miss Monica and Miss Clare as they talk books, games, teen happenings and more with special guests.  
*For teens.*

**7:00 PM, Anti-Racism Book Club**

**7:00 PM, Evening Storytime**  
Enjoy stories, music, movement and rhymes that develop early literacy skills and encourage everyone in the family to share their love of reading.  
*For families with children.*

#### FRIDAYS

**9:30 AM, Babytime**  
Delight and engage your baby with songs and a story that help your baby develop listening and language skills.  
*For young children.*

**10:00 AM, Celebrating Your Community!**

**1:00 PM, KDL Curiosity Lab Online | Ask the Expert**  
Meet in the KDL Curiosity Lab as we ask local STEAM experts some curious questions from kiddos just like you!  
*For school age children.*

#### SATURDAYS

**11:00 AM, Celebrating Your Community! (Encore of Friday’s program)**

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KDL Kaleidoscope | 13
**THEN**

In the 70s, a woman by the name of Bernie Houseward worked for what was then called Kent County Library. Last year, she replied to the KDL eNews to comment on one of our new initiatives, and we ended up messaging back and forth trading KDL history. Recently, she called to tell us that she had unearthed files from her time at KDL and offered to give them to us. We accepted and, after finding no shortage of gems in the lot, are glad that we did. Thanks, Bernie, for your service to KDL all those years ago!

**NOW**

**Wimee’s Words**

Weekdays at 1:00 PM in December
Weekdays at 4:00 PM starting Jan. 4

No programs Dec. 14 - 18 or Dec. 24 and 25.
kdl.org/livestream

Wimee’s Words sparks imagination and inspires creative thinking with interactive wordplay, songs, and stories, celebrates the diversity of languages and cultures, showcases technology that invites creativity and much more!

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**Wimee’s Words**

Weekdays at 1:00 PM in December
Weekdays at 4:00 PM starting Jan. 4

No programs Dec. 14 - 18 or Dec. 24 and 25.
kdl.org/livestream

Wimee’s Words sparks imagination and inspires creative thinking with interactive wordplay, songs, and stories, celebrates the diversity of languages and cultures, showcases technology that invites creativity and much more!
The award-winning children’s music duo, **Wendy & DB**, created a special program for libraries that KDL will stream during winter break. One of KDL’s most popular performers, Wendy & DB entertain with their unique style of songs about science, nature, diversity, safety and the arts.

“We have enjoyed translating our live show to an interactive virtual format because of the pandemic. We have had the chance to ask children and families to make use of ordinary things found in their household like a dishtowel, a bucket and spoons from the kitchen to use those items to bring our show to life at home. It has been a joy for us to stay connected by watching the children show us their favorite stuffy, sing, dance and jump and go on a journey around the world in the safety of their home.”

– Wendy Morgan of Wendy & DB

**Cool Jams with Wendy & DB!**

*KDL Kaleidoscope | 15*
Fall Teen Photo Contest Winners

To learn more about the contest and view all the submissions, visit kdl.org/teenphotowinners.
The (Kent County) Teen Film Festival has been an amazing opportunity for me and it is such an incredible way to expand my videography skills. It has allowed me to put my creativity to work to produce an original video. It was very inspiring to see my films shown at Celebration Cinema. I've always loved film and making videos, and the Teen Film Festival was a wonderful way to use this hobby of mine. I have been in four film festivals and I appreciate every experience.

I think teens should participate in the Teen Film Festival because it is a great way to use the film skills you have and to put your creativity to the test. It is exciting, and a really fun way to create a video or movie.
The average KDL user has saved $951 by checking out physical items from the library.

Most popular physical item checkouts

- Dog Man: For Whom the Ball Rolls by Dav Pilkey, 639 checkouts
- The Giver of Stars by Jojo Moyes, 691 checkouts
- Camino Winds by John Grisham, 693 checkouts
- Dog Man: Lord of the Fleas by Dav Pilkey, 701 checkouts
- The Guardians by John Grisham, 709 checkouts
- Dog Man: Fetch-22 by Dav Pilkey, 941 checkouts
- Guts by Raina Telgemeier, 948 checkouts
- Where the Crawdads Sing by Delia Owens, 1,277 checkouts
- KDL WiFi Mobile Hotspot, 2,222 checkouts

Curbside pickup service: 270,000+ items checked out at 80,000+ visits
Most popular digital (OverDrive) checkouts

- *Where the Crawdads Sing* by Delia Owens: 1,719 checkouts
- *All the Ways We Said Goodbye* by Beatriz Williams: 1,804 checkouts
- *Where the Crawdads Sing* by Delia Owens: 1,719 checkouts
- *The Giver of Stars* by Jojo Moyes: 1,400 checkouts
- *Untamed* by Glennon Doyle: 1,421 checkouts
- *The Vanishing Half* by Brit Bennett: 1,001 checkouts
- *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone* by J.K. Rowling: 1,098 checkouts
- *The Glass Hotel* by Emily St. John Mandel: 960 checkouts
- *The Splendid Vile* by Erik Larson: 966 checkouts
- *White Fragility* by Robin DiAngelo: 983 checkouts
- *Little Fires Everywhere* by Celeste Ng: 999 checkouts
- *The Vanishing Half* by Brit Bennett: 1,001 checkouts
- *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone* by J.K. Rowling: 1,098 checkouts
- *The Splendid Vile* by Erik Larson: 966 checkouts
- *White Fragility* by Robin DiAngelo: 983 checkouts
- *Little Fires Everywhere* by Celeste Ng: 999 checkouts

Livestreaming:
1,100+ online programs
140,000+ attendees watching live
400,000+ recorded viewings

Digital collection usage increased 71% and database usage increased 107% during the first full month of the COVID-19 stay-at-home order.

3,666 library cards issued online while the branches were closed due to COVID-19, allowing immediate access to digital resources.

1,000+ mobile WiFi hotspots available for checkout (700 were purchased in response to COVID-19)
Digital Dinner: Socially-Distanced Donors Show Up & Support Literacy
By David Specht, Digital Marketing Strategist

At the 2019 Literary Libations gala, one of the presenting authors experienced a fairly lengthy flight delay the morning of the event and therefore was not able to make it to Grand Rapids in time to speak to our guests at dinner that evening. Throughout the day, we worked with the author’s publicist and the author to record his remarks and fortunately were able to play them back at dinner. Our video looked fine, the guests were pleased and all was well; crisis averted. Little did we know that just six months later we would be finalizing plans to transition the entire 2020 gala to a virtual format. Boy were we in for a treat.

Lucky for us, we KDL folk are pretty good at pivoting. Throughout the spring season, we had worked to transition our hundreds of in-branch programs to an online platform, designed and launched a curbside pickup service for patrons to access items from our collection, and reworked our entire summer reading program (Summer Wonder) so that participants could reap all of the benefits without ever setting foot in a branch. We had the experience, the equipment and the know-how. And while producing a gala is certainly more robust and complex than producing a Family Storytime program, we were ready to make it happen.

Little did we know that just six months later we would be finalizing plans to transition the entire 2020 gala to a virtual format.

Sure – we could’ve cancelled Literary Libations. Our guests would’ve understood, the authors could make the trip next time around and life would carry on. But for the last five years, our donors, staff, volunteers and friends have come together to make this one fall evening so special. And in a time when everything is so uncertain and gatherings with loved ones are few and far between, it became clear to us that sharing this experience with our family – the KDL family – was more important than ever.

For the most part, the run-of-show resembled that of years past: intro from our emcee, highlights from the last 12 months, shout-out to sponsors, a main video highlighting the program for which we are hoping to improve funding, talks from our authors and closing remarks from our executive director, Lance Werner. And while initially we had to work through connectivity issues, confusion due to differing time zones and everything else that comes with hosting a virtual program, ultimately the event went off without a hitch.

For a full recap of the event, visit kdl.org/gala

Catherine Behrendt, gala emcee, thanks the presenting authors before KDL Executive Director Lance Werner gives closing remarks.
We had spent the days leading up to the gala testing out internet connections of authors, familiarizing everyone with the livestream platform, figuring out which conference room in the KDL Service & Meeting Center made for the best makeshift “stage” and chatting on the phone with our ticketholders as they navigated the sometimes-complicated process of accessing the secret gala livestream landing page on their televisions – and all of the preparation paid off. We had a lovely evening.

What was special about that night, September 16, 2020, wasn’t the production quality of the livestream, or the tasty takeout meals that our partner restaurants provided our guests, or even the intimate talks from our authors. What made that night special was the nearly 300 people who, even though we were in the midst of a pandemic, decided to show up and support their library. That night, we raised nearly as much in donations as we did the previous year when we all gathered in person. And just as our regular gala attendees would’ve understood had we not held a gala due to the circumstances, we would’ve understood if our regular attendees decided against attending the gala and contributing donations. But they did attend, and they did contribute. Throughout the evening, we received photos from our guests, sharing with us their livestream gala viewing setups, their families dressed for the occasion and their dinner tables set with their plated takeout meals, complete with printed programs for the evening.

Even though we were spread out across the county, this year’s gala somehow felt more intimate than ever before. And while all of us – staff, volunteers, gala planning committee and guests – certainly look forward to coming together for an in-person event next year, I think that the first (and hopefully only, let’s be honest) Literary Libations Virtual Gala will always hold a special place in our hearts.
Your support helps kids learn at home at a time when they need it most.

Donate now to support KDL programming and outreach.

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**Answer Key From Page 8**

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DRUESDMELTNFHRCC
REFERNDEARTIREY
AHUOEJNCTETBTRIN
ZTBTWITTEFEAAACI
ZARADDLEZRMUCLIF
IEURDNEOHNPSOCE
LWAESUPMADJEDLR
BCRPITRJRWDRO
OFYMIMEKALFWONSU
ORVHEBINOCULARS
TOLTWILDLIFETTK
SSBLAMINASCARFC
ETARGINMVORTEXIA
LLAUQSCLOUDSDRR
LUWINTEREDDEEPFDT
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**About the Cover**

To discover other ways you can help, contact:

Christine Mwangi
Development Manager
cmwangi@kdl.org | 616.784.2092

So we can cheer you on as you learn at home, post your cool photos on social media and use:

#LearningAtHomeKDL

Find out more about this cover and the artwork you see at kdl.org/WinterCover.
Welcome to KDL

Christine Mwangi | Development Manager
One of her favorite books is *Becoming* by Michelle Obama.

Elvia Myers | Executive Assistant
One of her favorite books is *My Stroke of Insight* by Jill Bolte Taylor.

Remington Steed | Webmaster
One of his favorite books is *The Sacred Diary of Adrian Plass, Aged 37¾* by Adrian Plass.

Anna Lauber | Shelver, Cascade Twp. Branch
One of her favorite books is *An Elderly Lady Is Up To No Good* by Helene Tursten.

Yasmeen Shatawi | Shelver, Cascade Twp. Branch
One of her favorite books is *I’ll Be Watching You* by Andrea Kane.

Sean Wojtczak | IT Administrative Assistant

Rachel Williamson | Programming Specialist
One of her favorite books of all time is *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen.

Grace Miguel Cipriano | Outreach Specialist
One of her favorite books is *La Sombra del Viento* (The Shadow of the Wind) by Carlos Ruiz Zafón.

Branch Locations

For KDL Branch hours and the latest information, visit the new kdl.org!

616-784-2007
Toll-free: 1-877-243-2466
Kent District Library is pleased to present Let It Snow for adults and teens.

Read a minimum of six books between January 2 and March 31 to receive a Let It Snow 2021 ceramic 15 oz. mug. Read an additional four books to be entered into a drawing for a winter cap or an iPad.

Participate online at kdl.org/snow or pick up a printed form at any KDL branch.