

# Reset and Reconnect

## Burnaby Public Library

ANNUAL REPORT 2020





**Burnaby Public Library is located on the ancestral and unceded homelands of the hən̓q̓əmin̓əm̓ and Skwxwú7mesh speaking peoples. We are grateful for the opportunity to be on this territory.**





# Message from the Chair

## Where to start in a look back at the unprecedented year that was 2020?

The COVID-19 pandemic turned our lives upside down, but it also sharpened our focus on the things that really matter. As the pandemic hit in March, we closed our libraries, a difficult decision that we know negatively impacted so many community members. And then, we did what everyone did in 2020. We pivoted. We shifted resources from print books to e-books, we answered questions online and by phone, and we worked with community partners to address the needs of our most vulnerable citizens.

Burnaby Public Library is more determined than ever to continue work on the goals in our 2019-2022 Strategic Plan and our dream of a welcoming community where all people can explore, learn and connect.

This year more than any other, I would like to thank our dedicated library staff and trustees who have done extraordinary work in adapting to meet the community's changing needs. Kay Manifold, Arlene Walker and Doris Wong retired from the library in 2020, and past Board Chair Lorraine Shore's term on the Board ended. My thanks to all of them for their years of dedication to the citizens of Burnaby. I would also like to acknowledge the City of Burnaby, our main funder, for its ongoing commitment to public library service.



Jeffrey Yu, Chair  
Burnaby Public Library Board

## 2021 Library Board



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# Pandemic Pivoting

The COVID-19 pandemic has focused Board and staff on what's really important to our community, and staff have done extraordinary work in adapting to meet the community's changing needs.

We extended **due dates** until August for any items borrowed before we closed.

We made **digital materials** a priority so that patrons could continue using the library remotely.

We enabled phone registration for **library cards** so new patrons could access our digital library.

We increased **borrowing** and **holds** limits for e-books and downloadable audiobooks.

We consulted with organizations to create a **community resources guide and map** to support people during the pandemic.

We held online **train-the-trainer sessions** to help organizations learn technology skills to assist their clients during closures.

**January**  
Library is open.

**March 11**  
WHO declares the COVID-19 outbreak a **pandemic**.

**March 17**  
Provincial Health Minister, Dr. Bonnie Henry, declares a public health emergency in BC. We **close our locations** to the public.



**June 1**  
We provided no contact **paper bag pick-up**.



We provided **30-minute phone appointments** with a subject expert for in-depth help.

We moved the  
**Summer Reading Club**  
online to help children and  
families stay engaged  
with reading.

**July 13**

We reopened our locations with  
**limited in-person services** including  
browsing, information help, indoor  
Wi-Fi and computer access.



We stopped charging for  
**overdue items** and eliminated  
existing **late fines**.



To safely and  
quickly  
accommodate  
high demand for  
internet access,  
we increased our  
**Wi-Fi** range  
beyond our  
buildings and  
for longer hours.

We engaged teens with a  
**virtual art contest,**  
**QuaranTEEN, Teen**  
**Advisory Group**  
and more.

We resumed **home deliveries**  
in June. Contactless delivery ensured that  
homebound patrons could continue to  
access library materials.

We provided  
Burnaby residents  
with more **digital content**  
when we introduced Kanopy,  
a streaming video service with 20,000  
movies, documentaries, foreign films,  
classic cinemas, independent films  
and educational videos.

We collaborated with Burnaby  
Village Museum to host the annual  
**Neighbourhood History Series,**  
moving the program online  
and opening access to the events.

**... And in  
December**

We launched our  
**new website** to welcome  
existing and new library  
users alike!



To be continued...

**2020  
brought  
unexpected  
challenges and  
accomplishments.**

**Thank you to our staff,  
especially front-line and  
building service workers, for pivoting  
throughout an unprecedented year.**

# Community Work

In March 2020, when closing our doors to the public limited our options, the library connected with service providers, attended community meetings, and created collaborative projects with key agencies following an approach based on equity and inclusion. These important connections led us to urgent needs in the community around technology and digital access, food security, and social isolation. For the rest of the year, staff created and adapted services to address these community needs, including visits to local food banks with Wi-Fi hotspots to provide connectivity, a community guide on our website with services available in

Burnaby during the pandemic, online train-the-trainer sessions for service providers on digital solutions to serve their clients, and targeted literacy programs for vulnerable residents. As a result, we were able to expand our partnerships, redefine and be redefined by the audiences we serve, train staff on community development goals and techniques, create targeted content, and update and enhance BPL's community profile.





# Community Partners

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2MetisWomen • Adoptive Families Association of BC • African Children's Homework Club • Artists Helping Artists • Big Brothers of Greater Vancouver • Boys and Girls Club of South Coast BC - Odyssey I • Brentwood Language Centre • British Columbia Institute of Technology • Burnaby Access Advisory Committee • Burnaby Arts Council • Burnaby Association for Community Inclusion • Burnaby Community Action Team • Burnaby Community & Continuing Education LINC Program • Burnaby Community Services • Burnaby Early Childhood Development Community Table • Burnaby Entrepreneurs Toastmasters • Burnaby Family Life • Burnaby Family Place • Burnaby Fellowship Centre Society • Burnaby Intercultural Planning Table • Burnaby Neighbourhood House • Burnaby Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services • Burnaby Pride Community Advisory Network • Burnaby Primary Care Network • Burnaby School District SD41 • Burnaby Seniors Outreach Services Society • Burnaby Together • Burnaby Youth Custody Services Centre • Burnaby Youth Hub • Cameray Child & Family Services • CAVE Youth Employment Program • Cliff Avenue United Church • CoMakeDo • Dixon Transition Society • Down Syndrome Resource Foundation • Family Services of Greater Vancouver • Fraser Health Authority • Greater Vancouver Foodbank • Greater Vancouver Homelearners • Here and Now Community Society • Immigrant Services Society of BC • Information Children • Journey Home Community • Kudoz • Literacy Now Burnaby • Lower Mainland Purpose Society • Ministry of Children and Family Development • MOSAIC • Neil Squire Society • Nicola Valley Institute of Technology • Nikkei National Museum & Cultural Centre • North Fraser Métis Association • Pacific Immigrant Resources Society • Parent Support Services Society of BC • Progressive Housing Society • Provincial Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services • Ryan's Rainbow Emergency Food Outreach • S.U.C.C.E.S.S. • Simon Fraser Student Society • Simon Fraser University • Spirit of the Children Society • St. John Ambulance • St. Leonards Youth and Family Services • The Society to End Homelessness in Burnaby • United Way of the Lower Mainland • Vancouver & Lower Mainland Multicultural Family Support Services Society • Volunteer Burnaby • Watari - Latin American Outreach • WhyteCliff Agile Learning Centre • Wildlife Rescue Association • Work BC • YMCA Child Care Resource & Referral

**Goodbye late fines.**

**Hello inspiration.**

**movies.**

**romance.**

**tech toys.**

**unlearning.**

**self-care.**

**recipes.**

**memoirs.**

**stories.**

**curiosity.**

**ideas.**

**library!**





# Fine Free

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**Your library membership is freedom to explore, learn and connect. Late fines shouldn't get in your way.**

Burnaby is a stronger community when everyone can freely access resources and information, at every stage of life. In July, BPL stopped charging for overdue items and eliminated existing late fines. The BPL Board made the initial decision to eliminate late fines in July 2019, and Burnaby City Council supported the initiative by providing an additional \$165,000 in revenue in BPL's annual budget from 2020 onwards.

We knew from the work of our librarians in the community, and from stories that staff heard in the library, that fines present a significant barrier to library use. Vulnerable populations are disproportionately impacted by overdue fines and in many cases simply stop using the library.

Our patrons were very appreciative that BPL eliminated late fines. Here's what some of them had to say:

"We stopped using the Library for years because of fines."

"Oh – wow! Well, that is exciting news."

"I just wanted to say thank you BPL for initiating the 'no late fines' policy."

"Getting rid of fines was a relief and one less thing to worry about in a time of constant worries."

"Great idea about no fines on overdue books. I will certainly be using BPL more often now. (although I always try to return books on time.)"

**"Eliminating fines is a very important step in reducing barriers to library services and empowering residents on their path to lifelong learning."**

*Mayor Mike Hurley*

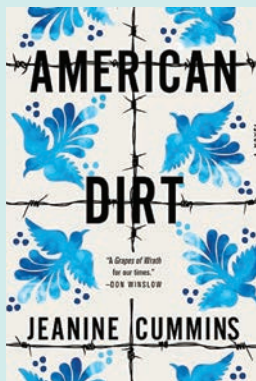


# Top Reads

January – March

April – May

adult fiction



## **American Dirt** by Jeanine Cummins

A bookstore manager is forced to flee Mexico in the wake of her journalist husband's tell-all profile and finds her family among thousands of migrants seeking hope in America.



## **Little Fires Everywhere** by Celeste Ng

A straitlaced family woman who is seeking to adopt a baby becomes obsessed with exposing her tenant's past, only to trigger devastating consequences for both of their families.

adult non-fiction



## **Becoming** by Michelle Obama

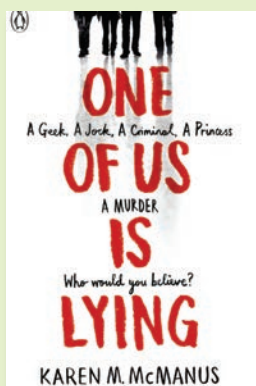
An intimate memoir by the former First Lady chronicles the experiences that have shaped her remarkable life, from her childhood in Chicago through her setbacks and achievements in the White House.



## **White Fragility** by Robin Diangelo

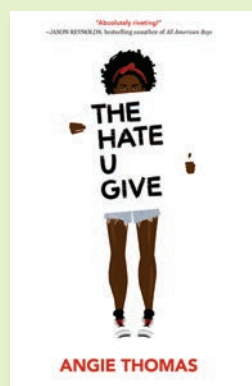
Groundbreaking book exploring the counterproductive reactions white people have when discussing racism that serve to protect their positions and maintain racial inequality.

teen



## **One of us is Lying** by Karen M. McManus

When one of five students in detention is found dead, his high-profile classmates are investigated and revealed to be the subjects of the victim's latest gossip postings.



## **The Hate U Give** by Angie Thomas

After witnessing her friend's death at the hands of a police officer, Starr Carter's life is complicated when the police and a local drug lord try to intimidate her to learn what happened that night.

children



## **Fetch-22** by Dav Pilkey

Petey the Cat is out of jail, and he has a brand-new lease on life. Can Petey and Dog Man stop fighting long enough to put their paws together and work as a team? Li'l Petey (and the world) is counting on them!



## **Dragonslayer** by Tui T. Sutherland

In a world of dragons, the humans who scramble around underfoot are easy to overlook. But Ivy, Leaf, and Wren will each cross paths with dragons in ways that could shape the destiny of both species.



In 2020, we focused on lending digital titles so that patrons could continue to engage with stories, ideas and information during the pandemic. Our most requested books reflected our community's interests throughout an extraordinary and eventful year.

## July – September

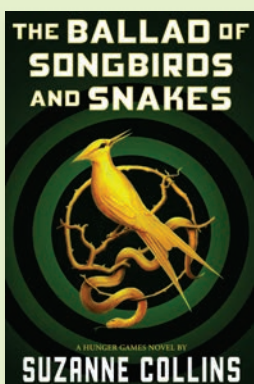


*Little Fires Everywhere* was the most requested fiction title in June and August.



*Untamed* by Glennon Doyle

An activist, speaker and philanthropist offers a memoir wrapped in a wake-up call that reveals how women can reclaim their true, untamed selves.



*The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes* by Suzanne Collins

Coriolanus Snow prepares to mentor the female tribute from District 12 in the tenth Hunger Games, with the fate of his family hanging on the slim chance that he can help her win the Games.



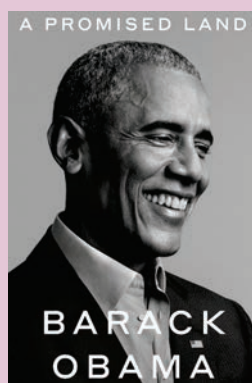
*Fetch-22* was again the top requested children's title. It received the most requests in January, February, March and August.

## October – December



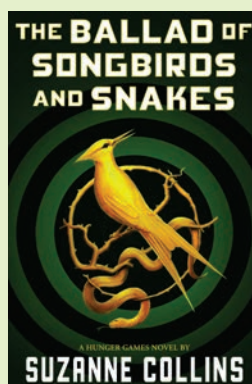
*The Vanishing Half* by Brit Bennett

Twin sisters, inseparable as children, ultimately choose to live in two very different worlds, one black and one white.



*A Promised Land* by Barack Obama

A deeply personal account of history in the making – from the president who inspired us to believe in the power of democracy.



*The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes* was the most requested teen title in July, September, November and December.



*Grime and Punishment* by Dav Pilkey

Dog Man overcomes the Supa Buddies only to be confronted by a new problem that tests the limits of the entire pack to avoid barking up the wrong tree.

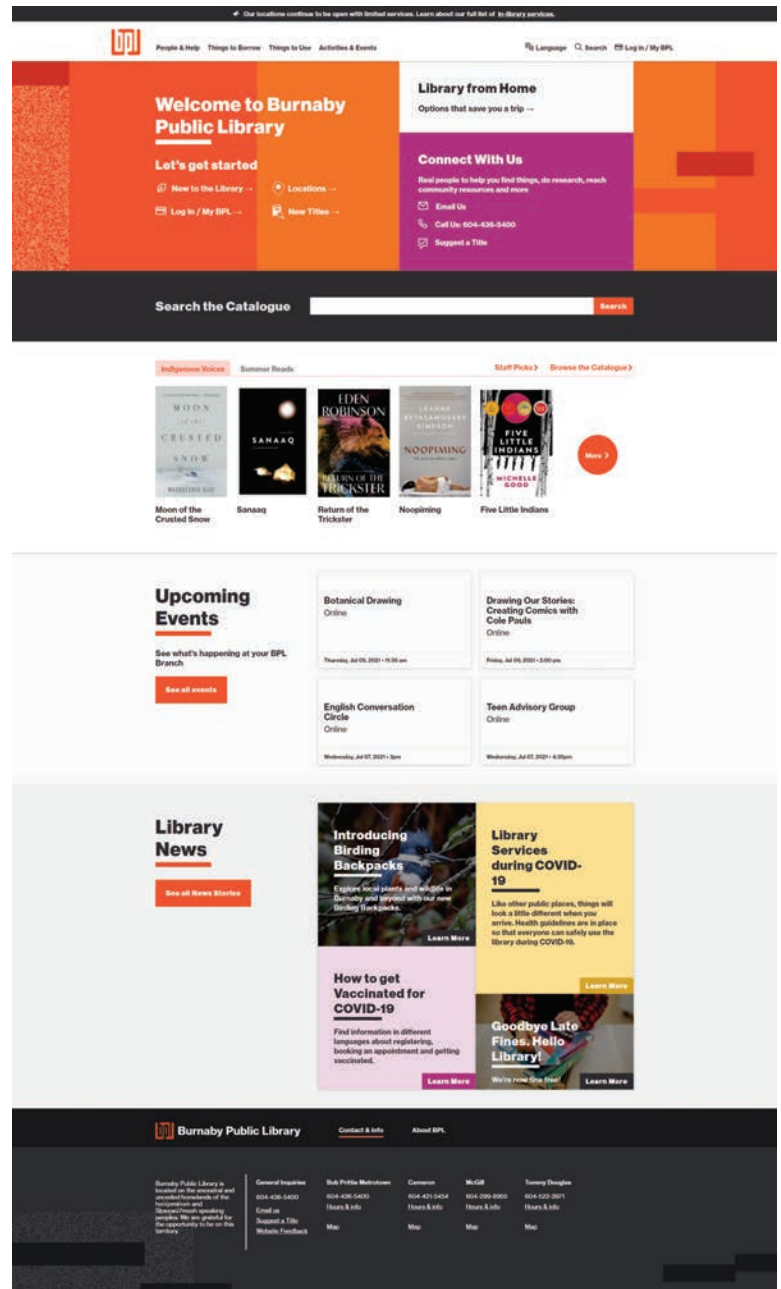
# New Website

BPL launched a new website in December 2020. Our main goal was to create a virtual space that would continue helping longtime patrons while finding ways to welcome communities that we had not traditionally reached.

We worked with a local agency, Denim & Steel, who kicked off the project by conducting library user, non-user and staff interviews and research. From their findings, they developed personas according to people's relationship to the library and how they used it. This opened up a flexible design approach that helped us to think beyond designing for demographics (too many!) or how the library was internally organized.

What resulted was a welcoming, refreshed website that emphasizes the friendly people and help that is the trademark of BPL. The website also uses plain language to describe our services and collections, includes integration with our library catalogue, and aims to make everything the library does more accessible. It also includes faster search and improvements for people who use mobile devices.

While our new website is live, improvements are never-ending. We know that our website may be the first experience of the library for many members of the community, and we'll continue to adapt our online presence to help bring new library members onboard.



The homepage of our new website.



# Transgender Inclusion Working Group

In August 2019, BPL formed a Transgender Inclusion Working Group to identify barriers trans and nonbinary staff and patrons face in the library and to make recommendations to remove these barriers. The group was successful in:

- installing "trans people welcome" signage on washrooms
- removing deadnames from patron records and
- delivering professional gender diversity training for 170 staff.

Some of the changes to make the library more trans inclusive have had the added benefit of increasing equity, diversity and inclusion for other vulnerable groups, such as a new policy that anyone can get a library card without showing legal identification.

Along with these cultural changes came many challenges and organizational obstacles, including:

- assessing staff understanding
- supporting staff in explaining trans inclusive signage to patrons
- handling internal criticism of the working group's existence
- accessing the community with outreach and
- examining our room booking policies.

The group consisted entirely of non-supervisory staff, which gave the group a unique perspective as well as some valuable learning opportunities.



# Financial Highlights

## REVENUE

2020

2019

City Contribution	\$14,676,758	\$14,137,829
Library Fees and Fines	31,759	268,188
Provincial Grants	512,359	470,080
InterLINK	105,377	175,481
Transfer from Reserves	154,416	126,692
Other	95,314	151,951

### Total

\$15,575,983

\$15,330,221

## EXPENDITURES

2020

2019

Salaries and Benefits	\$10,550,427	\$11,039,664
Library Materials and Electronic Databases	2,330,329	1,942,401
Operations and Maintenance	2,297,115	1,613,523
Other	398,112	734,633

### Total

\$15,575,983

\$15,330,221



# Donors

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**THANK YOU  
TO OUR DONORS!**

**You gave us much to  
be grateful for in 2020.**

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