Amidst a year that turned life inside out, the Library focused on ways to reach outside to you—our patrons, our community.

In early 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic turned life inside out and upside down. Amidst the challenges of the year, we were reminded that the Library is so much more than what’s inside our walls. To continue serving you—our patrons, our community—we focused on ways of reaching outside, extending our service far beyond the walls of our physical locations.
Throughout 2020, patrons were continuously able to borrow, stream, research, and learn online.

With the safety of visiting libraries in person in question, patrons still had access to a full array of library services in 2020.

As always, they can borrow and stream ebooks, audiobooks, movies, and music; or research and learn online with sites like Ancestry, LinkedIn Learning, O’Reilly, Newsbank, and others.
One of the most important services we provide—access to reliable online information—is also sometimes the hardest to quantify. Your library card lets you access dozens of online resources for research and learning (we like to call them databases). To see the full list of resources currently available, search “databases a-z” at www.knoxlib.org.
More users than ever discovered the joys of e-media.

Patron demand for e-media like ebooks, audiobooks, magazines, movies, and music (that can be streamed or downloaded online) has been consistently on the rise, but we saw an unprecedented surge in use during 2020. For example, patrons checked out 141,894 more ebooks and downloadable audiobooks than fiscal year 2019! Explore our e-media collection at www.knoxFLib.org.
In fiscal year 2020, we issued **9,276 library cards**, allowing many new patrons to discover Knox County Public Library as the essential connection for lifelong learning and information.

Thousands discovered Knox County Public Library for the first time.
We issued 5,516 digital access cards from March to December.

For many patrons sheltering or quarantined at home, the Library was a **lifeline of resources**. The launch of digital access cards in March 2020 meant patrons new-to-library service could now apply for a card and enjoy our resources without ever having to come inside the library.
We answered one question about every two minutes in 2020.

We love it when you ask us questions. In fiscal year 2020 we fielded a staggering 236,813 reference inquiries! We know you have access to a lot of information, but librarians can help you find the most reliable, reputable sources. Click on the question mark (?) at the top of any page at www.knoxlib.org to connect to a reference librarian by chat, email, phone, or text.
We helped prepare 5,059 children for kindergarten.

In 2020 we graduated 5,059 children from Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library of Knox County. By mailing one book each month to every registered child under the age of 5 in Knox County, we help ensure that these children have access to books in the home—which research identifies as a key factor in greater literacy skills and success in school.
We went on the **readtrip** of a lifetime together!

In 2020, we read **663,000 hours together**, exceeding Mayor Jacobs’ Read Around the World 500,000-hour challenge! By demonstrating as a community that we value literacy, we are helping Knox County’s children succeed. You can learn more about Mayor Jacobs’ initiative at readycityusa.com.
The **Friends of the Knox County Public Library** turned fifty in 2020. Unable to celebrate in person, we paid video tribute to our Friends—who have tirelessly supported our Library, our mission, our staff, and our community for the last half century with generosity, enthusiasm, and dedication.
We found new (touchless) ways to reach you.

- wireless printing
- digital cards
- curbside pickup
- online trivia
- virtual stories
- drive-in movies

In 2020, we introduced wireless printing, curbside pickup, and digital access library cards. We launched virtual storytimes, a takeaway craft series, and online trivia; and Movies went to the drive-in (with our partner, City of Knoxville).
In August 2020, staff member Sara Hurst introduced a make-and-take craft and storytime series at the South Knoxville Branch Library that patrons could check out, take home, read, and create together. **Story Fun on the Run** is now offered at 13 Knox County Public Library locations. What a wonderful alternative to in-person storytimes!
A place for you.
Though we hope everyone can safely come inside soon, we won’t stop reaching out.

We counted 939,122 patron visits in fiscal year 2020. Before the pandemic altered library service, patrons enjoyed compelling, creative programs at all of our locations, participated in storytimes, shopped at used book sales and the Rothrock book store, visited with beloved staff, and so much more. We look forward to continuing to serve you in many ways in the years ahead.