

2019 Parkland Community Library Update

Alliance Public Library:

Last Summer was our 100th year as a library, to celebrate on July 1st, we had a library open house.

Feb. 1 was the F.I.R.S.T. dinner and silent auction. The F.I.R.S.T is a county wide family emergency and response organization. The Library donated art work by a local artist to the silent auction and some members attended.

March 14 the community has a Meet Your Neighbor night with a spaghetti supper, silent auction and presentations by the clubs and organizations in the village. The library will have a display to invite new members and will also donate to the silent auction.

May 26 the Library Board will have their annual Strawberry Tea. This is a fund raiser as well as a community outreach event.

Big Valley Municipal Library:

In answer to your question: The best thing we did was hire our new Manager, Cordelle. She has brought a sense of order and just plain friendliness to our small library.

Bentley Municipal Library:

This fall was busy at the Bentley Library! We wrapped up our Mini-Libraries program and look forward to a successful summer in 2020. Our returning programs for 2019/20 include Early Literacy classes, Kids Art Club, Lego Club, Book Club, and Teen Night. We have added a new Virtual Reality and Gaming program that takes place on school PD days, and includes 2 Oculus headsets, an Xbox One and a Wii. Our monthly Facebook prizes, which are locally sourced as much as possible, have been a big hit! The physical literacy collection has been very active, especially the snowshoes, and we are collaborating with FCSS to utilize some of our items in their upcoming Family Night. A generous donation was made to our library which included 41 specialty Wilton cake pans, and 120 cookie cutters, which are now available to our patrons to borrow.

Carstairs Public Library:

At the Carstairs library we had many great successes this year. We created a Giving Tree. Our Giving Tree Fundraiser raised just over \$700 and we also collected about 30 books that were donated and added to the collection. How it works is that we created small book ornaments to go on our Christmas tree each book represented a classic book we wanted to add to the collection and the cost of that book. Donors then selected the book they wanted to donate and made either a cash donation or brought a new copy of the book into the library, they got to take the ornament home as a thank you. We plan on making this an annual Christmas time fundraiser and our next theme will be Travel and our ornaments will be little suitcases. We learned that keeping the cost of the donation in the \$20-30 range worked best.

Another great success was our outreach work. Outreach is how we are looking to connect with community members that might not have come into the library recently or may never have come into the library. We take something unexpected or flashy out to a community event. For example, I brought our new coding robot called Ozobot to the Parent Teacher night and we brought Freezies to the Christmas community event. That gets people to stop and talk with us and gives us a chance to invite them to join us at the library for future events, mention digital services we offer, and just remind them we exist. It is a great way to make us a vital part of the community, boost our visibility and build connections. So, this last year we began making outreach a priority and it'll be a part of our plans going forward.

We are very proud of our library!

Cremona Municipal Library:

The Cremona Municipal Library is a little library in a little village along the rolling foothills. This past year, the library has had many exciting things go on within its walls, but the one we will share with you is our Lego Club.

Our library runs a Lego Club program once a week – immediately after school – throughout the school year. This program is free of charge to children ages five and up. The Library Manager has been tracking attendance and there are, on average, around 18 participants each week.

This program is important to our library since it has increased foot traffic through the doors. It has been the most well attended weekly program that we offer. More parents and children have been introduced to what our library can offer them through attending the Lego Club. A greater number of children in the 5+ age group have been taking out books this year.

This program is important to our community because there are not very many other activities in this small village to send children to after school. The school grounds border the back of the library, so it is safe and easy for the group of children to walk to the library and it gives their parents another hour in the day to do what they need to do. Some parents stay in the building and use the opportunity to visit with the other adults. It is inspiring to see the excitement that the children have while taking part in challenges, expressing creativity, interacting positively with other children, and enjoying what our local library has to offer.

Didsbury Municipal Library:

In 2019 we focused on increasing program offerings and participation, particularly for youth in the community. Overall, we increased program participation by 38% with 4,393 participants in our programs. We also practically doubled our participation in the summer Reading Club from 329 visits in 2018 to 651 visits in 2019.

This is important for the community given that outside of school extracurricular activities there are not a lot of free activities available to school-aged children. The Didsbury Municipal Library was so

pleased to see a need being met by the community, and the incredible community response. We are very pleased to see so much engagement!

Eckville Municipal Library:

Many great things happened in our library in 2019. We had a hard time deciding the most notable. We chose our Summer Reading Club 2019, mainly because we were expecting 40-50 children to register, and ended up with an enthusiastic total of 81 kids who registered and participated in our 6 session Summer Reading Club programming. It was fantastic, as the kids were over the moon with the activities: which included a visit from a vet tech (Dani Harris) who brought her real dog to allow the kids to listen to his heart, and a stuffed dog for all the kids to practice operating. Medicine River Wildlife came for one session, and brought their new young owl to visit and talk our young readers. Fish and Wildlife out of Rocky Mountain House provided us with a variety of "teaching" furs, so the kids could guess what animals have what fur and why. The kids made insect houses, learned about recycling for art and engineering projects, and read stories about the natural world. F.C.S.S. and Neighborhood Place got involved and helped us to purchase a new book for every child at the end of program. We had ten amazing committed teen volunteers who were terrific with the kids. The participants read well over 1200 books in the 6 weeks, and played games and did projects relating to animals and to the environment. It was such a success that a number of adults, not directly related to the kids involved, heard the kids and parents talking about it around town, and came to visit the library. They even expressed how much fun it would have been to be an adult and do Summer Reading Club this year. All in all, it increased the profile of the library in the community, drew support, new memberships, and even donations. Best of all, it got kids and adults talking about the library to others in the community, and that is always wonderful.

Hay Lakes Municipal Library:

Our Library Manager created 14 Book Bags covering many topics. She can rotate the items in the bags to make 28 bags.



2 special topics are:

Around the World – With books about different countries, how they live, work and play plus 12 wooden figurines all hand painted showing the different nationalities.

Sensory Bag – a bag designed specifically for children with sensory processing disorders or ASD, there are books that explain why we are different, why someone has to move or talk rather than sit and listen. Sensory toys include those with different shapes, weight, size and colours.

Provost Municipal Library:

I think one of the highlights for our library was hosting a Multicultural Potluck and Talent Show. We partnered with the town and hosted this event during our annual Community Awareness Night. This event provided an opportunity for all community members to share their culture, foods, music and dance with each other. It is vital to include all people in activities, discussions and decisions within our community. To encourage this, all people need to feel included and valued within our community. This was a fun, light-hearted way to share our histories and embrace our differences. I am excited that our library brought everyone together to celebrate our multicultural town.

Stettler Public Library

New in 2019 was the partnership we formed with the Stettler Learning Centre to introduce and host a Conversation Café in Stettler. This program has resulted in a transformed library on Wednesday evenings (and to a lesser degree on Monday mornings). We are seeing so many more newcomers in the library during this program and afterwards too, signing out books, using the fitness passes, meeting individually at the library at other times with their tutors. We provide the space, and refreshments, the Stettler Learning Centre arranges for volunteer facilitators and we both promote the program.

Also new in late 2018 into 2019 is the Friends of the Library's Historic Ghost Walk. The walk highlights Stettler's more ghostly past and works well with community interest in the more grisly history of the area. Teamed with the ghost walks was the Robert Raymond Cook information evening which drew a crowd of approximately 374 people and resulted in sales of over 100 DVD recordings of that evening. It became a bit of a non-intentional successful fundraiser.

In 2019 the Stettler and District Early Child Development Coalition approached the library about rehoming the existing Toy Library at the Public Library. We have a number of toys that we have been circulating to members of the community and community groups. The Stettler Friends of the Library donated the proceeds from their 2019 Christmas Wine Survivor fundraiser to help grow our "library of things" with other equipment (cake pans, sporting equipment, etc.).

Sylvan Lake Municipal Library

We wanted to highlight two things that were important to us over the last 18 months:

XOX Valentines Ladies Night & Fundraiser. We held this event on February 1, 2020. It's a ladies pampering night and fundraiser. It is also an opportunity for local female entrepreneurs to set up their business booths to promote and sell products such as jewelry, bath salts, teas, psychic readings, adult only toys, etc. The best thing about this event is that it's a ladies only event. All the vendors are female entrepreneurs and all the guests are women. It's an amazing opportunity for networking and building connections. Vendors were invited to donate items for a silent auction. Almost \$1000 was raised for the library and friendships were ignited!

Discover Syria. The Sylvan Lake Municipal Library brought in guests from the Central Alberta Refugee Effort (C.A.R.E.), and had a couple of volunteers from the Sylvan Lake Refugee Project, who had sponsored 4 refugee families from Syria to come to Sylvan Lake. We brought in food from Addy's in Red Deer for people to sample Middle Eastern cuisine, had a few crafts for participants to do (some guided by C.A.R.E. volunteers, and some that we provided, such as a peace dove picture that they decorated with finger paints. We had a couple artists doing Henna tattoos, and C.A.R.E. did presentations in the program room showing what Syria looked like before and after the war, and showcasing information about schools, art, landscape, etc. In the main part of the library, by the food, C.A.R.E. had a game set up for people to learn things about different countries and help educate/combat misconceptions about Middle Eastern countries. Participants could also learn how to spell their name in Arabic. In 2018 we collaborated with Landmark Cinemas/Film Society, and brought in "My Name is Khan", which is a film that shows how Muslims were treated before and after 9/11, with a discussion about the film to follow - we had C.A.R.E. and the Sylvan Lake Refugee Project there for the Q&A afterwards. Some community members spoke about the subtle racism and Islamophobia they still face today in and outside our community. We were fortunate to have one of the refugee families that was new to Sylvan at the theatre for the film, and the attendees welcomed them to the community.