

The Year in Review: 2014/2015:

Report from the Chair: Marilyn King

There have been a few new faces on the library board this year and I want to express my thanks to the outgoing members Hash Vara, GB Singh, Jasper Cheung-Lau and Dave Beninger for their time, hard work and support. The new members got right down to work and have already shown their commitment by their involvement library events. Outside of regular board meetings, there have been numerous activities that have called for everyone to go the extra mile, and as a result this board has gone through numerous stages of growth. My thanks to all board members: Shawna Biddles, Brenda Boghean, Lennox Gomes, Steve King, Jennifer Massig, Patricia Matthews, Judy Tidlund and Noelle Trung.

~The Governance committee continued to meet regularly updating policies.

~The Growth committee had many meetings, exploring different options for enhancing the library and how it can best serve the public.

~Debbi Weber, our Library Director liaised monthly with the Finance committee and worked on the budget. Debbi and Sheri-Dawn have done an excellent job and I have full confidence in this aspect of the library organisation as was conveyed by Erin Gregory when the annual audit was carried out in March by Gregory, Harriman and Associates and presented to the board. A copy of the audit is available in the library.

~The “Loop around the Lake” committee has met monthly with organiser, Bernie Maillet and Cathy Burness (library staff). It is set to take place on Fathers’ Day this year.

Calendar of events

In June 2014, Debbi Weber and I attended the Vitalise Conference. We recommend others attend this valuable conference when it is in Calgary again in 2016.

In September, we hosted the Public Library Service Branch “Library Board Basics Workshop” in the then Town Hall council chambers. This was a great success with 35 people attending from numerous libraries.

November: Alberta-wide borrowing brought the opportunity for cardholders to access almost every library in Alberta, including Calgary and Edmonton.

January 2015: Chestermere became a city and we became the City of Chestermere Public Library Board. Apart from the name change, Chestermere still maintains that close community spirit and the library enjoys partnerships with many of the community groups. As part of the City celebrations and Winterfest, the library provided a “Cozy Cabin” as the base for the evening.

February brought three new critters to the library prompting a naming competition, drop-in board game sessions and a grand birthday celebration in Dr Seuss’ honour, hosted by the Library Foundation (the library’s fundraising arm). The connection with the “City” is an important partnership for the library. Councillors Corner is a regular event.

March/April: Noelle Trung, Vice-Chair, took over the reins for a month when I was back in England and I thank her for her constant support in all matters and the common-sense that she brings to the group.

April: The Library received charity status which now allows us to give tax receipts for donations amongst other benefits.

After seven years, on the Marigold Board, I stepped down and Lennox Gomes took over as Chestermere's representative. As the alternate for the past two years he is more than qualified for the role.

May: The Strategic Plan Survey was launched. With over 200 results now being analysed, this will give the committee a good starting point for the next 5 year plan.

June: Debbi and Noelle attended the Marigold Library Leaders meeting in Strathmore.

Partnerships

~City Council and staff: We are very appreciative of the financial and personal support of the City Council and staff in different departments. The financial support provided being so vital to the successful running of the library. Councillors Corner provides a regular opportunity for members of the public to meet councillors and discuss their concerns.

~Regular program favourites at the library have continued to do well: these include book clubs- Novel, Awesome, Super Duper, Story time, Family films as well as those organised through partnerships and non-library groups Listening Tails, Community Services, Parent Link, The Running Room, Formative Five and the Chestermere Historical Foundation.

~Lunch 'n Learn which is in partnership with Community Services has included subjects on how to build an emergency 72-hour kit, Seven steps to happiness and Essential oils, Nutrition and behaviour, gardening, food restrictions, money matters, green cleaning tips,

~Marigold Library Services:

Through TRACpac and Marigold, the library has been able to offer many new services to customers: Zinio, Library Press Display, Hoopla and Tumblebooks and my personal favourite, Overdrive, plus many, many more, all of which can be found through the enhanced website.

The value of service received from Marigold is higher than the levies paid because, as a collaborative of Alberta-wide Borrowing (ME Libraries), we are pooling our revenue, sharing our resources and capitalizing on bulk purchases and contracts. Plus we benefit from networking our collective expertise and ideas. During this year, Marigold consultants have provided back-up and support on a number of issues. Training sessions have been provided to our staff, both in-house and by video-conference and through the Marigold network invaluable inter-library connections have been made.

We now have the new-style plastic library cards, which cost less to produce than the old paper version and holder.

Fundraising:

The Loop Around the Lake and founder, Bernie Maillet, was a major contributor again this year with a donation of \$9,000. The library has held book sales which made \$3,736 and in May took part in the Parade of Garage Sales bringing in \$300. Chestermere Bottle Depot presented a cheque for \$1,000.00. Bruce McAllister donated the grand prize for the Summer Reading program and the Library Foundation made significant donations for equipment in the library as well as continuing to run their "Books for Babies" program.

Annual report

The Annual report is submitted by the director to Alberta Public Library Services Branch in February and pinpoints important facts and figures that show that the library is on track with the strategic plan.

The recent customer satisfaction survey highlighted public feelings about the library. 196 surveys were completed.

Scoring averages out of 5: 4.82 were satisfied with the staff, 4.26 were satisfied with the collection, 4.77 were satisfied with the facilities, 4.40 were satisfied with e-resources, 4.57 were satisfied with hours.

Comments included:

- Amazing Library
- I would love a bigger library and a larger adult graphic novel section.
- Like display of new books.
- Professionally operated & knowledgeable and friendly staff. Keep up the good work
- Very helpful staff. - They are awesome, I'm satisfied!
- Great staff! Thanks!
- Love this library is the Best! Staff Rocks
- Would like a library with more space.
- Wonderful job! Kids loved summer programs too!
- We love it here. Always a treat for the kids and something to read about. I order recipe books and am always amazed how fast they arrive.
- Kids love Chestermere Library. They always ask to come here after school.
- Have enjoyed using your library & will continue to do so.
- Great facilities & excellent staff. Now I have recently retired I am using the library much more
- Very helpful staff
- Loved the full tour we got when we first arrived!
- Very happy and satisfied, thank you for having a public library!

Staff

Debbi Weber, our Library Director, is a terrific asset to Chestermere Library: as one member of the board said recently, she is hard-working, knowledgeable and passionate about her work. Debbi has implemented a number of changes this year in order to benefit the library operations and heads up a great team of 12 full and part-time staff.

Look to the Future: One of the things that is constantly on the agenda is a future move. Long term we may expect to move the library into a larger multi-purpose building, mid-term plans are looking at more affordable options.