

Director's Report May 2024

1. Operational Highlights

Seed Libraries

All of our Seed Libraries have experienced strong use so far this year. Two new locations were added to the Bookmobile and Ripley Branch. Patrons have donated over 300 packages of seeds through our Wiarton and Kincardine Branches, demonstrating the support of our communities and ensuring the ongoing success of this program. In April, over 100 people took seeds to grow. The hydroponic unit at the Teeswater Branch is gaining in popularity as more people know about it. Twenty people picked up basil, parsley, and mustard greens in April.



Forest of Reading

Library staff had a very successful year offering the Forest of Reading (FoR) program. This is the largest recreational reading program in Canada, designed to encourage a love of reading among all ages. Children who read for fun have higher literacy scores, are more successful in science and math, and are more socially engaged ([2011-Reading-for-Joy.pdf \(accessola.com\)](#)).

Building relationships with students through regular classroom visits resulted in 419 children voting for their favourite Canadian title. Children reported enjoying the program and noted it made them want to read more and visit the library.

Forest of Reading Titles with most votes from Bruce County Students

Program	Grades	Title	Author
Blue Spruce	JK-Grade 2	Benny the Bananasaurus Rex	Sarabeth Holden
Silver Birch Express	Grades 3-4	The Skull: a Tyrolean Folktale	Jon Klassen
Silver Birch	Grades 3-6	The Big Sting	Rachelle Delaney
Yellow Cedar	Grades 4-8	Animal Eyes: How creatures see and how their eyes have adapted	Francoise Vulpé
Red Maple	Grades 7-8	The Last Saxon King	Andrew Varga

Canadian Children's Book Week

In honour of Canadian Children's Book Week, Owen Sound author Elly MacKay visited the After-School program at the Chesley Branch. She shared her stories and created dioramas with 20 children.

Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls

Last year, sewers from Saugeen First Nation donated 17 ribbon skirts to BCPL to highlight the ongoing crisis of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. These skirts will be on display in our branches for May and June.

Summer Reading Kick-Off

This year's Kick-Off event will take place on Saturday, June 15 from 10am - 3pm at the Walkerton Branch. This is our premier event to launch the TD Summer Reading Club and begin taking registrations. Wild Ontario Birds of Prey will have a show and display, and there will be a Star Warrior costumed character available for photos. A foaming bubble pit will be set up outside for families, weather permitting. The Bookmobile will be on-site along with several partners, including the Bluewater Astronomical Society, NPX, Bruce County Museum and Cultural Centre, the Nuclear Innovation Institute, and EarlyON.

Bookmobile Update

The Bookmobile has been on the road for six months and has become a very successful mobile library service point. As anticipated, staff report that social connections are developing amongst those who regularly use the Bookmobile. In Tobermory, their lobby visits have become a social gathering with residents stopping to say hello, sharing community events they are excited to attend, and sharing information on their families and hobbies. One resident mentioned she became a library patron during the pandemic and had been reading ebooks but is happy to have the chance to borrow physical books again.

In the first six months of operation, 2,073 people have visited the Bookmobile and borrowed 3,919 items. It has attended 10 special events including Christmas parades, a family Math Night at Northport Elementary School, the Paisley Bridge reopening and Paisley's 150th

Submitted by Brooke McLean, Library Director/CEO

Birthday event. While at these events, staff engaged with 481 participants. Bookmobile staff Alyssa Magilsen and Michael Englehardt have also provided 24 childrens programs attended by 323 people.

Staff from Trillium Court, Gateway, and Brucelea have shared the appreciation that residents and staff have for the Bookmobile visits. The daughter of a Trillium Court resident told staff “I just want to thank you! You are officially my mom’s favourite person.” A resident at Gateway Haven noted “It really makes my day when I see that Bookmobile pull in!” At the Andy Cormack Apartments, a resident said “the Bookmobile is as cool as the Batmobile!” We couldn’t agree more.



2. Personnel

Retirement

After 34 years with BCPL, Dan Blacklock has announced his retirement as Inter-Library Loan Coordinator effective July 26. Dan has held a variety of roles during his time at BCPL, and will be greatly missed by his colleagues.

Summer Student Grant

BCPL will receive a Summer Employment Opportunities grant of \$3,816 to hire a Summer Outreach Student. The successful candidate will assist with the Summer Reading Club, provide programming from the Bookmobile, and attend special events with other library staff.

3. Facilities

Southampton Accessible Entrance

The Southampton Branch has a new accessible entrance thanks to the Municipality of Saugeen Shores. The Branch closed from April 29 - May 2 for work to be completed on the entry. Community members have been thrilled with the wider door and push-button activator. The roomier entryway increases the amount of natural light into the building and creates a warm

and welcoming environment. Special thanks to Jesse Bedard at the Town of Saugeen Shores for coordinating this work.



Photocopiers

Coordinated by Bruce County's IT team, new photocopiers have been delivered to all branches. To streamline delivery services, IT has assumed responsibility for all corporate copiers. All branches now have copiers capable of scanning, improving service to library patrons. One patron exclaimed "you don't know how much stress you have relieved for me" when the library was able to scan and send documents for him; he didn't know how he was going to be able to submit them otherwise.

Walkerton Wi-Fi

A new wireless access point was installed in the Gallery Room at the Walkerton Branch. Reliable internet access will support library programming in the basement and will also be available for use by any other organizations using the Gallery Room.

4. Administration

Brochure Swap

Library Director Brooke McLean and Communications Coordinator Lindsay Moffat attended the Mazin'igan G'meshkwadoonmaadiwag Tourism Brochure Swap at the James Mason Memorial Culture and Recreation Centre at Saugeen First Nation. This was an excellent networking opportunity to highlight our free summer programs and library resources while connecting with businesses and organizations from across Bruce County. Attendees were also treated to a Regalia Fashion Show featuring many different styles and information on the significance of their design.



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Dementia-Friendly Community Partner

Bruce County Public Library branches, including the Bookmobile, are now recognized as Dementia-Friendly Community (DFC) supporters. It indicates BCPL's commitment to building spaces and providing services that are dementia-friendly. All staff have completed Dementia-Friendly Community Training and staff attended post-training reviews in each Home Service Area with Sandra Hong, Education Coordinator for the Alzheimer Society of Grey-Bruce. BCPL continues to focus on creating welcoming and inclusive spaces for everyone, including those living with dementia and their families.

Donations

The South Bruce Community Liaison Committee is providing up to \$6,000 in funding for new tables and chairs at the Mildmay Branch, including a table for preschoolers and flip-top tables for the meeting room. This furniture will support the outstanding programming staff provide and ensure seating for all participants.

The Walkerton Optimist Club is generously sponsoring the fee for the Birds of Prey show at Summer Reading Kick-off event in Walkerton on June 15. Bookmobile staff Alyssa Magilsen and Michael Englehardt received the cheque when they attended an Optimist meeting with our library on wheels.



RA in a Day

As Co-Chair of the OPLA Readers' Advisory Committee, Kincardine/Tiverton Branch Supervisor Michaela Posthumus facilitated the OLA "RA in a Day" virtual conference on April 30. This engaging day had over 150 attendees. Michaela led a session on the trigger warnings and censorship in readers' advisory and libraries with very positive feedback.



5. Financial Update

At the end of Q1, revenues are forecasting a \$10,000 surplus, however, this will be impacted when the library transitions to fine-free services on June 1. Salaries and vacancies are currently projecting a \$40,000 surplus due to vacancies and new staff placement on the salary grid. A variety of accounts are forecasting small surplus/deficits.