

CEO Report

March 17th, 2021

From: Tammy Robinson, CEO

Facilities

The new curbside pick-up door was installed in the Rotary Room window on February 16th. Town staff also installed a doorbell for us to alert staff when a patron is requesting a pick-up. The old window, screen and parts are being stored in the upstairs electrical room until needed.

A few other issues that Town Staff have completed or are currently working on include:

- Replaced 6 broken light switches throughout the building
- Added new timer to the main washroom exhaust fan and set to run from 8am to 9pm
- Replaced out all but 4 bollard light bulbs. 4 still have issues that need to be corrected not bulb related. Lighting much better now along walking paths
- New 2nd floor accessible washroom exhaust fan installed. Whisper quiet Panasonic unit is extremely quiet.
- Also working on solutions for main stair lighting replacement sconces and hanging lighting fixtures especially security lighting over Circ and Ref desk.
- Installation of “whisper quiet” fan in tech office ceiling – March 9th

Library in the Media

Today's Northumberland, March 2nd, 2021. *Cobourg Public Library is Now a Distribution Point for Period Promise Northumberland.* <https://todaysnorthumberland.ca/2021/03/02/cobourg-public-library-is-now-a-distribution-point-for-period-promise-northumberland/>

Training: Library Journal Summit

The free, day-long virtual summit was held on Tuesday February 23rd. The theme was “Building the Next Normal” and discussed lessons learned during COVID-19 and actionable ideas on how we can incorporate them into our post-COVID strategy. It focused on library services, policies, workforce flexibility, and patron-facing issues. I've shared what I learned with the Leadership Team, and we will be moving forward on a few of the ideas.

Administrators of Medium Public Libraries of Ontario (AMPLO)

This day-long meeting was held virtually on Friday March 5th. Lawyer, Laura William's from HR Law was our guest speaker in the morning. She covered a variety of topics such as remote work, workplace investigations, COVID vaccinations, staff travelling out of province, staff termination, and much more. The afternoon focused on other general topics such as Broadband in public libraries, Ontario libraries going fine free, Development Charges, quarantine timeline for library items, hybrid programs, advocacy efforts during COVID, and many others.

New Virtual Programs Recording Room

It had been noted by staff that trying to find space in the library to do recordings for virtual programs was difficult due to several factors (lighting, space, noise, WiFi, etc.). To alleviate these issues, we have transformed our small meeting room on the first floor into a recording studio. We have moved all the recording technology into this space, set up the green screen, and installed sound absorbing tiles.

Radio Interview

On March 3rd I was interviewed by reporter Rebecca Bartlett about the Library's Partnership with local bookstore, Let Talk Books. We've had several partnerships over the past year with this bookstore, but this interview focused on our most recent partnership – our “Book Wishlist”. You can read more details about this partnership in both Kate and Rachel's report.

Fine Free

Jocelyn and I are reviewing the latest information from Ontario public libraries. We are hopeful to bring a proposal forward to the Board later this year regarding library fines.

Tri-County Meeting

On March 10th I attended the Tri-County Meeting hosted by SOLS. In this meeting there were some updates shared regarding COVID (quarantine, programs, collections, etc.). The agenda focused on items such as library insurance, the Annual Survey of Public Libraries for the province, guidelines for re-opening, plus changes to FOPL, and concluded with the Roundtable Discussion where all CEO's shared information regarding their individual libraries

Strategic Directions – Workplan

Strategic Direction #2 – Community Services – Goal #1 – Collections – Action #1 – Collections

- Explore new funding for resources (Let's Talk Books Partnership – "Library WishList")

Strategic Direction #2 – Community Services – Goal #2 – Programs – Action #2 – Programs

- Examine what our competition is doing (AMPLO & Tri-Counties Meeting Discussions)

From: Kate Davis, Manager of Public Services

Programming:

February featured more genealogy/local history programming for adults than we usually see. In addition to several passive online craft programs, we held two video information sessions on genealogy, which were quite well received.

Unfortunately, due to staff absences, we weren't able to put out the same number of children's programs that we typically see and this past month's numbers reflect that.

Overall in February we hosted 20 programs with a total of 401 attendees, although much of our programming time was spent ramping up for March – when we'll be featuring our Paper Bag Princess event as well as bringing back some virtual story times and beginning a live, virtual Mother Goose session for parents/caregivers.

Statistics for online programs continue to be based on program interaction – so an individual who takes a moment to click on/view/download the program material. These statistics are gathered through Facebook's analytics, which allows us to track unique users by Facebook profile, making sure we aren't counting individual interactions more than once.

Adult Programs

In February, we held 4 adult programs, 4 virtual book clubs, two genealogy programs and our online genealogy/local history group. We saw a total 280 participants. Our most popular programs this month, unsurprisingly, were the genealogy tutorials. We also hosted a Chocolate Trivia contest and featured a number of valentines-themed crafts.

Our online book club had 50 participants again this month. This program is currently on hiatus, however, as the workload involved in preparing and running it was simply not sustainable now that our staff have returned to their front desk hours. We'll be looking at the possibility of resetting this program for the Fall. Beth also continues to work with Community Living Northumberland to continue to provide a weekly virtual book club for adults who use their services.

Our monthly Genealogy Resource group – the Genealogy Gurus – is up to 44 active members and will also continue for the foreseeable future, although with a slightly different posting schedule as, once again, it was proving difficult to maintain the content necessary to run this program while all of our staffing hours are required to man the public service desks. This group is largely run by one of our Public Service Associates along with Heather, although we're planning to get more staff involved moving forward.

Upcoming in March, we're hosting a visit with author Jennifer Robson as well as a selection of Spring-oriented crafts.

Youth & Teen Programs

In February we held 8 online programs for children and an additional 1 for teens. These drew a total 121 participants/engagements.

Unfortunately, due to staff absence, we were unable to put together our usual selection of Book Bites features for February. These will return in March.

Also upcoming in March, we're partnering with EarlyON to offer a live virtual Mother Goose program, beginning March 9th. We'll also be featuring a visit with children's author and illustrator Barbara McClintock and will be bringing back an online story time. While this won't be a live program, we will be able to offer recorded readings and activities for families.

Finally, we were also able to participate in Paper Bag Princess Day – a week of activities celebrating the anniversary of the classic children's book "The Paper Bag Princess." Staff worked with Rachel to put together a variety of family activities throughout the week, culminating in a visual storytelling session on March 6th.

Collections:

Collection numbers here in Cobourg are actually up over January in a number of collections, including adult fiction, paperbacks and Quick Reads. The increase in Quick Read usage does prove that this really is a browsing collection, as its draw drops dramatically while we're closed to the public.

Bewdley is beginning to see its fiction usage climb back up over January, and Gores Landing patrons seem to really love the movie Binge Bundles that Heather has been putting together.

We've continued putting two collection features up each week on our social media. Since patrons aren't currently able to physically view new items as they come in, this is a way for us to feature new things as different collections for people who would normally have chosen to browse for reading material. Since these features have gone quite well, we're hoping to add children/YA ones to the regular lineup as well.

We've also started planning for the re-opening of the Seed library at the end of March and have been adding seeds to the collection for circulation this year. Seeds will be available both traditionally (by coming in and browsing the catalogue) and to order for curbside pick-up using last year's request form model. The seed library will once again be available at all three Library branches.

Partnerships:

Starting at the beginning of March, we've been able to partner with local bookseller Let's Talk Books to set up a donation wish list of book titles that we'd like, but that our budget prevents us from purchasing this year. The book store is hosting our list on their site and offering a discount to members of the community who would like to purchase copies directly for donation to the library.

As I mentioned above, we've also been able to partner with EarlyON to offer a live Mother Goose program. Since their staff are also trained in the program, it allows us to run it with two instructors (necessary for live sessions in case of technical issues) without needing extra staff hours.

Branches:

Hamilton Township branches have now both re-opened entirely, just as we have in Cobourg.

Strategic Direction #2 – Community Services - Programs

- Virtual programming continues into March, featuring new author visits, tutorials and the return of Storytime
- We were able to participate in Paper Bag Princess Day, celebrating the anniversary of the classic story.

Strategic Direction #3- Community Collaboration - Partnerships

- Partnered with EarlyON to offer live mother Goose programming starting in March
 - Partnered with Let's Talk Books to share a purchasing wish list with the community and hopefully encourage donations of materials that the Library can desperately use.
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From: Heather Viscount, Manager of Access Services

Cobourg Contactless Pick-up Stats

- **1,481** curbside visits in February – over 23 days, 106 hours
- Curbside only February 1st to 16th ; Library open February 17th to 27th
- Average pick-ups per day in Cobourg:
 - **64 per day** in February (up 1 from January)
 - **14 per hour** in February (same as January)

Technology

- Our new App is live, and has received a positive response from staff and patrons
- Have begun installing new antivirus software (Bitdefender) for our staff computers from TechSoup
- Received and reviewing quotes for a new server
- Will be attending a webinar entitled “Best practices for Summer 2021” on March 16th to prepare for the Summer Reading Club on Beanstack

Special Collections

- **Seed Library**
 - Inventory of the seeds on-hand in process, to include newly ordered and sorted seeds
 - Plan to go “live” the week of Monday, March 29th at all three branches
 - Online ordering for Curbside pickup or mail delivery will also be available
 - Many thanks to all the volunteers who packaged seeds
- **Ontario Park Permits**
 - Kits began circulating on Tuesday, February 16th, and have already been checked over 4 times
- **Binge Bundles**
 - This collection is still proving popular – with over 40% checked out at the moment
 - 45 of the 75 bundles were borrowed in February
 - New themes will be added this month

Health & Safety

- We will be sending seven staff for CPR/First Aid Training this year
- Our newest Joint Health & Safety Team member, Connie, has begun the first part of her certification

The Cobourg and District Historical Society

- On Tuesday, March 23rd, I will be the guest speaker at the CDHS monthly meeting via Zoom.
- My topic will be the history of the Cobourg Public Library, from the early years as a Mechanic's Institute, to the present.

Technical Services

- Our Technical Services staff catalogued and processed **108** donated items in February
- **99** new items were added to the collection in February, and **959** items were deleted.
- Staff are currently working on a weeding project of the Adult Fiction

Marketing and Promotion

- Continuously updating our Library webpage, especially our main page with new highlighted content
- Added our March programs to the online calendar
- Posted lists of new items to the webpage
- Added PDFs of the great activities, recipes and book reviews staff have been creating for social media to the webpage for [Adults & Teens](#) and [Children & Families](#)
- The “March Programs and Events” [e-Newsletter](#) was delivered March 1st to **147** subscribers (up 3 from February)
– **Highlights included:**
 - Download our new App
 - Help build our collection with [Let's Talk Books](#)
 - Ancestry at home – extended to June 30th
- If you would like to receive these updates each month, [subscribe](#) to “Programs at the Cobourg Library” – and any of our other monthly e-newsletters!

Stat Highlights for February 2021

- **46** new members applied for cards
- Online Database use **up 88%** over last January
- **3,945** Requests were placed and **3,753** requested items were picked up
- **1,575** patrons used our Curbside service in Cobourg, **17** in Bewdley, and **48** in Gores Landing.

Genealogy Gurus

- We have updated the parameters of the group.
- Each week, our Gurus will post a new genealogical tidbit, historical resource, photo or database – and hope our members will respond with their thoughts or some interesting resources to share of their own. [Join the conversation!](#)
- Our Group currently has **44 members** (up 6 from the previous month)

Rotary Room, Work Room and Retirement Homes Stats

- No usage to report due to COVID

OverDrive Update

- **3,276** items borrowed in February, **increase of 20%**, and YTD **increase of 24%**
- These items were borrowed by 572 patrons (**up 21%**), including 22 new patrons (**up 30% YTD**)

Workplan Progress

Strategic Direction #2 – Community Services – Goal #1: Collections

- Seed Library underway for 2021
- Ontario Parking Pass Kits – released February 16th

Strategic Direction #2 – Community Services – Goal #2: Programs

- Continuing with updated Facebook program – Genealogy Gurus

Strategic Direction #2 – Community Services – Goal #5: Marketing and Promotion

- Created and delivered the Monthly Program Update Newsletter
- Added virtual program information to both our Adult & Teen and Children & Families webpages
- Added programming information to our online calendar

Strategic Direction #3 – Community Collaboration – Goal #3: Partnerships

- Speaking to the Cobourg and District Historical Society about the history of the Cobourg Library.
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From: Rachel Spence, Community Engagement Assistant

MARKETING & PROMOTIONS

Platform	Early February	Early March	Increase
Facebook Followers	2,152	2,166	+14
Instagram Followers	1,615	1,644	+29
Twitter Followers	1,764	1,770	+6
TikTok Followers	154	159	+5
TikTok Likes	2,540	2,613	+73
YouTube Subscribers	13	13	Same

→ **Virtual Book Club for Book Tasters (Facebook Group):**

- ◆ February and March will be our last 2 months running the VBC
- ◆ We'll be going on a hiatus until the Fall due to a lack of programming hours available to effectively plan and execute this program

→ **Social Media and Content Creation**

- ◆ Triaging posts created by our team and arranging to have them set up to be published by Buffer
- ◆ Ongoing tweets, re-tweets, reels, stories, shares, tags, posts, replies, engagement and more.
- ◆ March Break Teen Giveaway: Creation of "this or that" battle between games, books and video games for Instagram only
- ◆ The Paper Bag Princess Week: Began creating The Paper Bag Princess video series (filming, green screen, editing) with Rachael Purdy. Scheduled on Facebook and YouTube from March 1-6
- ◆ Ontario Park Pass: Campaign around the park pass
- ◆ Let's Talk Books Wishlist: Campaign around the wishlist going live
- ◆ Period Promise: Creation of program and content to share as well as media release
- ◆ Youth Knitting Program: Created content specifically for Instagram, to try and reach teen; Contacted CDCI East Guidance Department (Shannon Gilmour) and emailed her a poster and JPEG reflecting the details of the program so she can share with students
- ◆ Worked with Jocelyn, Dan and Tammy to create a Virtual Programming Room

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

✓ **Community Interviews and Promotions:**

- **89.7FM** - Radio interview with Kevin at Northumberland 89.7
- **Classical 103.1** – Advertisements are running until March 2021.

✓ **Partnerships:**

- **Just Brew It** – Continuing to support our spot on 89.7FM
- **Northumberland Humane Society** – Shelter Buddies Show and Tell had 2 participants sign up but neither attended. We believe it's because families were uninterested in virtual programming within that time period and when we try it again, it will have to be on a weekend and not during the week. I asked our partners if they would like to do a short interview instead, since they were there. I recorded, edited and posted it to our Facebook page. I tried

to focus on what the HS was able to do to help patrons who could not afford pet food right now.

- **Facebook: 396 views and 8 likes**

- **Period Promise (Thrive and United Way Northumberland)** – Launched Period Promise as of late February with products available for free in our women's washroom off the foyer. We're aiming to add another distribution point in our accessible washroom too.
- **Let's Talk Books** – Partnered with Let's Talk Books to create a virtual wish list of items that we're in need of. Already had one purchase.
- **JG Sports Media** - Held Zoom interview between Jeff Gard of JG Sports Media and Children's Author, Barbara McClintock to air in March (he set it up and I recorded/edited). It officially launches in March.
- **Ontario Parks Pass** - Created social media campaign around this and received amazing feedback from the community. We also had two local papers pick it up.

- ✓ **Community Support**

- Sharing posts from Watton Employment Agency and Northumberland New Canadian Centre (they now email me anything free that would benefit the community so I can share it)

ADMINISTRATIVE

- ✓ ZOOM Leadership Meetings
- ✓ Managing the book sale and sale item shelves
- ✓ Ryan Dowd "How to Deal with Unattended Children" webinar attended
- ✓ Attended Ontario Library Association Virtual Superconference
 - Virtual Volunteering presentation ignited the concept of doing a youth program where they can knit items for volunteer hours
 - Partnerships: How do I ensure they're a two way street? This was very useful in explaining how to effectively set up mutually beneficial partnerships
 - Visiting Library Service When You Cannot Visit. Began me thinking of how we could revitalize our Home Services program.

VOLUNTEERS

- ✓ **Virtual Coffee Chat** – Second virtual coffee chat happened and had 7 people attend. Received emails from a few attendees thanking me for putting it on (they've been lonely and bored).
- ✓ **Seed Library Volunteers** – Organized volunteers to access Ziploc bags full of seeds and materials to pack them in, with instructions, at our curbside window to avoid having to pay staff to do this task, which would take upwards of 10 hours.
- ✓ **Began Youth Knitting Project** – Specifically designed to appeal to teens interested in knitting/crocheting so that they can submit a hat, mittens, scarf or slippers and receive volunteer hours for them. We will then donate the items to a charity in need.
- ✓ **Home Services to Retirement Homes** – Began reaching out to retirement homes in the area that used to have deliveries made each month; Reached out to our driver (Ken McLeod-Beaver) and confirmed with him that he was willing to start the program again; The Golden Plough and Palisade Gardens and I worked together to form a safe way to deliver and retrieve materials; Updated schedule and pull-list for staff; Meetings with Tammy and Jocelyn to finalize plan and letters of understanding to both Ken and retirement homes involved. Program will re-start in March.

STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS HIT

Direction #2 (Community Service; Social Media, Volunteers)

- Our social media following has increased on each platform (YouTube is currently the same)
- We have started a virtual programming room to empower staff to create virtual programs with ease since this seems to be the wave of the future and to increase programming that is accessible due to COVID-19.
- Volunteer, Ken, will be running our Home Service to Retirement Homes (The Golden Plough and Palisade Gardens) starting in March. This would cost the Library approximately 1 hour of paid time/month plus gas)
- Seed Library is being set up by the Volunteers through our curbside system. They're helping us package all the seeds. If we had to pay staff to do this, it would cost upwards of 10 hours in paid time.

Direction #3 (Community Collaboration; Value Library Brings; Cost Centre to Value Creator)

- Radio interview to update people who may not have social media on what we're offering
- Sharing social media information about our community collaborators
- Collaboration with Northumberland Humane Society to do a virtual Shelter Buddies program that turned into an interview that the community engaged with
- Connected with United Way and Thrive to be a distribution point for The Period Promise providing those who cannot afford feminine products with free resources.

Direction #4 (Alternative Funding Sources)

- Began partnership with Let's Talk Books. They now have our wishlist on their website so that patrons can access it, support local and donate items to us.