



Cape Breton Regional Library Board

Highlights

Meeting held September 14, 2020

All CBRL Library branches have been opened to the public since July 14th. Both patrons and staff have adapted to our new procedures positively.

E-Book Usage

Despite the closure in March we still continued to register and renew library memberships. We did this through an online library card application. Staff working from home processed the applications. We provided telephone assistance to patrons who were new to downloading e-books. As a result we have seen a 25% increase in the use of our e-book collection.

The Library has subscribed to an online periodical resource called Press Reader. It gives library card users access to publications from more than 120 countries around the world, including our local Cape Breton content. It was purchased to bridge the gap for patrons while the library was closed, for those patrons who rely on the periodicals in the library and is meant to be a supplement to the physical content in the libraries. In addition the service can translate into 60 languages which adds a multi-lingual level to the library that may be especially welcoming for new comers.

Mask Distribution

Since mandatory masking, The Government of Nova Scotia asked NS libraries and museums to act as a distribution point for free reusable face masks for individuals and small businesses. Masks are available at all 12 locations. The CBRL has given out over 33, 800 face masks.

Food Literacy in Libraries

Literacy comes in many forms. Food security initiatives are becoming more and more important to the health and well-being of communities. Libraries in our region have been playing a role in some of these initiatives through programs like Slow Cook Dreams, meal planning and budget exercises with nutritionists from Sobey's or Public Health. Sharing healthy snacks and refreshments during library programs are all examples of food security initiatives at CBRL. The CBRL will be facilitating a grant through the Food Smart Program, administered by

Community, Cultures and Heritage. Planning is in the beginning stages for a variety of programs and services that will be offered.

Pop-Up Libraries

Since re-opening library staff have brought the library outside. Over the summer Pop-Up Libraries were set up at Petersfield Park and the Sydney Boardwalk.

Newcomer Conversation Circles

Libraries are community, cultural, and intellectual spaces that connect people. They are inclusive and welcoming spaces for people with different skill sets, ages, gender, ethnicities, languages, and religions. The CBRL is a member of the Cape Breton Local Immigration Partnership (CBLIP), a collaborative initiative designed to foster welcoming communities that support the full participation of newcomers. Through the work with CBLIP and other partner organizations, the Central Library offers Newcomer Conversation Circles. Since the closure, this service was put on hold. Virtual platforms to host this program are being investigated and a coordinator will be hired to facilitate these upcoming sessions.

Library Awareness Campaigns

CBRL will be part of a campaign beginning Sept. 14th called Libraries are for Life. This initiative brings together representatives from public and academic libraries to communicate the impact of libraries in our communities. The five key messages are:

- Libraries are for learning
- Libraries are for health and wellness
- Libraries are for fun
- Libraries are for communities
- Libraries are for democracy

Each week a simple, social media-ready message will be posted for sharing. The social media posts will refer Nova Scotians to a webpage where people will find additional information and other resources.

Programs

Since re-opening our library branches in July we've tried to get creative with outdoor activities; on-line contests; grab & go crafts. Outdoor activities included a Knit-a-Thon in Petersfield Park; two Pop-up Libraries (Petersfield Park and the Sydney Boardwalk); Fibre Lunch at Wentworth Park and also Munro Park in North Sydney; and a few Book Clubs have met on zoom, or outdoors near the Library. We still have a few weeks of lovely weather in September and have scheduled a 4-week chair yoga series at the Bandshell in Wentworth Park.