



**NAKUSP
PUBLIC
LIBRARY**

Annual Report

2020



The mission of the Nakusp Public Library is to provide quality materials, resources, programs, and services, which help fulfill the educational, informational, cultural, and recreational needs of the community in an environment that is attractive, respectful, non-judgmental, and welcoming.

VALUES:

Community enhancement, literacy, accountability, inclusion, accessibility.

VISION:

To become the heart of the community through social activity, distribution of information & creative inspiration.

GOALS:

Become a resource center of Nakusp and area
Enhance strong community connections
Ensure long-term sustainability

INTRODUCTION

Nakusp is a scenic Kootenay village perched on a south-facing shore of Upper Arrow Reservoir, a lake created by the damming of the Columbia River in the 1960s for flood control and hydroelectric power generation. The Nakusp Public Library first opened in 1921, and like many rural libraries has made its home in many locations throughout town including churches, the Co-operative Hall, the General Store, and the courthouse. This year, we are celebrating the centenary of the library, with modifications to accommodate COVID-19 precautions.

Housed in the Centennial Building which was built in 1912 and is now owned by the Village of Nakusp, the Nakusp Public Library is a beautiful, welcoming, inclusive, and cozy space accessible by both the stairs in the front and an electric lift in the back. Centrally located downtown near many core services, it is part of the heart of the community. Many people from the surrounding area and communities of Burton, Edgewood, Fauquier, Hills, New Denver, Silverton, Galena and Trout Lake enjoy visiting the library. Local people come to access the collection, programming, public computers and wi-fi, printing and scanning services, as well as to ask the staff for general information; community members appreciate being able to meet and socialize in one of the few staffed non-profit public spaces in the area. Many out-of-area visitors also access the library as it shares the same building as the Nakusp & District Museum and Arrow Lakes Historical Society Archives and is adjacent to the Visitor Centre, which is open during summer months.

Although a local hub for smaller communities, it is not a stretch to say that Nakusp is itself off the beaten track. It can be a challenge for residents to access resources like education, training, medical services, or specialized goods. Even reliable internet and cellular service can be difficult or impossible to access for some inhabitants.

Former Library Director Jackie Barber gave her notice at the beginning of 2020, giving the Nakusp Public Library Board an abundance of notice to begin the search for a new Library Director. In the end, former board member Claire Paradis was hired as the Board judged her extensive knowledge of and roots in the local communities would give her a solid foundation as Nakusp's new Library Director.

The past year has seen a resurgence in forestry sector employment due to an increase in the price of lumber, and this has bolstered this long-standing area industry. Tourism is also a major economic contributor, and 2020 was no different. Although many people were projecting a catastrophic year for tourism, the reverse proved to be true. New families and individuals continued to move to the area, impacting the housing and rental markets as well as bringing 92 new patrons into the library. Home-based businesses are a significant part of the local economy, and owner-operators access the library's online resources and physical collection in support of their businesses.

Even with reduced hours, the library was challenged to provide services at the same levels as they were pre-COVID-19 as there were no volunteers providing support for staff during open hours. Volunteer hours supplemented paid staffing before COVID-19, however neither the Library Director nor the Board want volunteers to work with the public until they feel safe to do so, which they currently do not. The volunteer Board of Trustees continued to show tremendous support for staff throughout the pandemic.

Fortunately, we were able to hire a full-time intern for six months thanks to funding from Young Canada Works (Heritage and Libraries) who has focused on putting programming and library information online, such as crafts, author readings, and expanded opening hours. Although content was initially posted only on social media channels such as Facebook, Instagram and Tik Tok, the library continues to broaden access to the content by moving it to channels such as YouTube and its own website that do not require an account.

PRIORITY 1 - IMPROVING ACCESS FOR BRITISH COLUMBIANS

The Nakusp Public Library is committed to improving access to resources for the public, and the range of access to materials amplified through Interlibrary Loans enables Nakusp

to be part of a provincial collection. Access to these materials not only enables our patrons to choose from a much larger collective catalogue, it also builds relationships between libraries.

The library's collection and services are used by many people who do not and sometimes cannot have internet access at home. New computers and monitors for patrons and staff thanks to a grant from Columbia Basin Trust will enable more people to access reliable internet, as will an upgraded internet plan from our local provider.

Nakusp Public Library supports learners pursuing formal education locally or online, as well as learners pursuing their own self-education. Online resources such as Gale courses as well as online databases in our collection which can be accessed from home have been very important during the period when the library was closed and to people who do not want to enter public buildings.

In partnership with our local chapter of Columbia Basin Alliance for Literacy (CBAL), the Nakusp Public Library launched a pilot project attempting to connect isolated community members with their loved ones via technology. Thanks to a Democracy Sparks micro-grant, the library was able to lend out three tablets and donate a refurbished computer to people in need. The project gave a good measure of the need in the community for devices, internet, and cellular access for everyday tasks and mental health needs.

As one of very few staffed public buildings in the surrounding area, the library offers a rare and welcoming space for all people to enjoy without the requirement of spending money. We are fortunate to have a powered lift in the Centennial building, improving physical access for people challenged by the prospect of getting up the stairs at the front of the building. We serve as a safe, warm place for people during the winter months. Patrons often tell staff that trips to the library are the only outing where they feel they can safely enjoy a bit of social contact during the pandemic. We frequently hear from patrons how grateful they are that the library is open.

"Attended the Excel workshop and loved it! Thank you for hosting such a great and free event!" - February 2020

PRIORITY 2 – BUILDING CAPACITY

With the introduction of a new Library Director at Nakusp Public Library has come an emphasis on building capacity for both staff and the public. Staff frequently attend webinars they have determined would be helpful in their work, such as refreshers about cataloguing, privacy, supporting mental health, or learning new ways to engage people through social media or video conferencing. An unexpected side effect of the pandemic has been the creation of new and wonderful online learning opportunities which can be accessed by rural library staff.

Staff frequently provide support for patrons who encounter problems or are connecting for the first time with online resources, so staff themselves are continually learning in order to provide help. New Board members complete the Trustee Orientation Program and sign up for webinars offered through BCLTA for further training.

The Nakusp Public Library Director's participation in the local Community Literacy Planning Committee, the inter-sector Greater Access to Providers (GAP) Committee, the regional KLF LDAG and provincial ABCPLD meetings has contributed directly and indirectly to an increase in professional capacity. Access to different educational opportunities as well as to the real-life learnings of other library directors and community leaders has been invaluable, especially to a new library director.

PRIORITY 3 – ENHANCING CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT

In 2020 the ability to offer in-person programming was drastically reduced, so Nakusp Public Library promoted different ways of engaging. We have grown the number of social media and online platforms we use to engage the public online, we publish articles in local newspapers, and increase our visibility with posters which are highly effective ways to engage in our local communities.

The year began with some excellent in-person programming such as a series of low-waste workshops funded by a Democracy Sparks micro-grant which showed people how they could make their own homemade body products. There was a very popular presentation by Vikings as part of a Heritage Week celebration in addition to the popular Mother Goose and Storytime sessions.



In response to COVID-19 during March, most programming was quickly moved online. Safe

access to the collection began with Library Takeaway and Curbside Service. The Summer Student moved Summer Reading Club online, organized story walks along the Nakusp waterfront, and ran a successful fundraiser via social media.

Snowshoes, radon detectors, moisture readers, GPS – these are some of the items found in Nakusp Public Library's diverse collection reflecting the diverse needs and interests in our community. Increasing public awareness of the diversity of our collection enables people who may not have considered themselves "library people" to come and explore the library and discover that, in fact, it is theirs too.

Our library partners with a number of local organizations such as CBAL, Arrow and Slocan Lakes Community Services, Nakusp Visitor Centre, Nakusp and District Museum and the Arrow Lakes Historical Society. Unfortunately, our regular visits from Nakusp Elementary and High School classes were unable to take place this year due to COVID-19, but we are in communication about our online youth programming with them and with Nakusp and Area Youth Society and look forward to more collaboration in future.

"I just wanted to say how impressed and happy I am with the welcoming of out of towners in your beautiful village. We have two young daughters and...this year the girls have been obsessed with the Goldilocks and the three bears story book [walk]. Your efforts have definitely not gone unnoticed." - Summer 2020

PRIORITY 4 - ENHANCING GOVERNANCE

The Nakusp Public Library continues to benefit from an enthusiastic and committed Board of Trustees. Trustees work to create and approve policy, organize fundraisers, coordinate volunteers, and even help with "chores" like taking out the recycling or repairing books. Board members take on a variety of duties by sitting on various committees such as the Finance Committee, Walton Bequest Committee, Centennial Building Committee, Fund Raising Committee, Governance Committee, Strategic Planning Committee, Safety Committee, Policy and Constitution Committee, Public Relations and Advocacy Committee, and Friends of the Library.

In their monthly meetings, Trustees periodically have the opportunity to discuss important topics such as Freedom of Information as well as the regular business of the month. Opportunities for learning have expanded for rural citizens, including for Trustees, as many educational resources and webinars are now being made available online in response to the pandemic. Trustees are able to access the webinars organized by BCLTA.

ADDITIONAL REPORTING FOR 2020 TECHNOLOGY GRANT – FINAL REPORT

In response to the findings of the Democracy Sparks project connecting isolated community members via technology, the proposed project to acquire portable hotspots was found to be unworkable at Nakusp Public Library. Unfortunately, the process to get the hot spots, distribute and maintain them is beyond our staff resources, so we have shifted budget from the Provincial Technology Grant allocated for that project to other digital initiatives.

Our patrons are keen to engage with online resources that have real-world impact, so we are planning a series of online workshops and videos which dovetail with a tangible collection. Borrowers will check out musical instruments, nature identification cards, or crafting supplies in order to engage with digital programming that introduces them to various topics such as bird watching, animal track identification, basic musical skills, knitting and crocheting. We are also excited to introduce full-spectrum sun lamps into our collection, as they perfectly complement an increase in digital living by supporting mental health during periods of social isolation and winter weather.

Changes to our 2020 Technology Grant Final Report can be found attached as Appendix 1 of this report.

"Best place ever! They even have Hamlet, the movie! Totally awesome!"
- September 2020

SUMMARY

COVID-19 was the main challenge in 2020, in particular, responding quickly to changing safety requirements including installing a plexiglass barrier, increasing cleaning protocols, and arranging public spaces to preserve appropriate distancing.

Staff saw a reduction in the volunteer support they can depend on, and faced the added stress of a few aggrieved community members unhappy with mask restrictions. Fortunately, the extremely positive response of many patrons who love visiting the library has been encouraging. A leaner workforce also presented an opportunity to re-evaluate library priorities and to seek new funding opportunities to increase paid staffing.

The major upside of the pandemic definitely has been the proliferation of online learning and networking opportunities. Finding educational or mental health resources for staff, for example, has never been easier. Time spent learning is definitely a worthwhile investment in these fluctuating times.



Best wishes from Claire, Susan, Melissa and Sandy at Nakusp Public Library



Sept. 25, 2020

Dear Adrienne Wass and Mari Martin,

Nakusp Public Library is very pleased to be receiving funding from Libraries Branch in support of technology improvements for our organization and community.

Our immediate need is for frontline equipment, namely wireless barcode scanners. We currently have two scanners that take convincing in order to work, to the detriment of staff wrist joints as well as staff and patron patience. I'm hoping we'll be able to find a better price buying with other KLF members.

In response to COVID-necessitated changes, we want to start producing video programming that can be uploaded for our patrons to access. Once we have our computer stations in the library open again, we will have this content available there as well. An intern we are planning to hire thanks to a Young Canada Works grant will be instrumental in this process.

We would like to connect seniors and isolated people with family and friends via wifi devices, and I am currently in discussion with local Columbia Basin Alliance for Literacy and Community Services individuals about a program to get wifi, tablets, and technical help to people who need it. This accounts for three items in our interim report grid.

If we are unable to get sufficient data from our local Telecom for this program, we will use donated phones and donated and new tablets as teaching materials in our programming, as well as lending them out to patrons. We would also consider buying a digital projector for the library instead if this connectivity project isn't feasible.

Patron requests to print materials have gone up since the pandemic began, as fewer places locally will do printing. We would like to offer a wifi printing option to them.

Finally, returning to the ergonomic wellbeing of our staff, an adjustable standing desk would be a welcome addition to the office.

Many thanks,

Claire Paradis
Library Director
Nakusp Public Library
director@nakusplibrary.ca
250-265-3363

Nakusp Public Library

92 6th Ave. NW
Nakusp, BC V0G 1R0

2020 LIBRARY TECHNOLOGY GRANT REPORTING FORM: NAKUSP PUBLIC LIBRARY

Total Technology Grant Amount: \$8566

Area of Need	Outcome	Metrics	Strategic Links	Actions	Collaborative Links	Timeframe	Project Budget	In-Kind/Leveraged funds	Comments
Staff hardware upgrades Wireless barcode scanners	Less physical and mental stress for staff using working scanners; greater efficiency, building capacity	If scanners work more than 40%, then there will be a definite improvement; fewer complaints, less stress on mind and body	Responsive to patron and staff needs (quick, painless service), esp. in time of a pandemic	Buy 2 wireless barcode scanners	Gathering research from other libraries; would like to make group purchase with other KLF libraries	Immediate: Winter/Spring 2021	2 x \$500 = \$1000	Possible group purchase with other KLF libraries	
Digital programming Digital video camera, ring light, tripod, microphone	More online programming and communications	Count engagement with online programming	Providing access to programming online during pandemic and otherwise	Buy 1 digital video camera, ring light, tripod, microphone	Columbia Basin Alliance for Literacy (CBAL)	Immediate: Winter/Spring 2021	\$1200	Programming developed and delivered by intern/staff	
Patron hardware upgrades (public computers, printers, etc.) Tablets + cases	Enable seniors and other isolated people to connect with friends and family and access e-resources	Count checkout of devices	Enable access to online collections and include & connect vulnerable populations	Buy 1 tablet + protective cases	Arrow and Slocan Lakes Community Services (ASLCS), CBAL	Immediate: Winter/Spring 2021	\$800	In-kind staff time for in-library tech support	One tablet was purchased with a Democracy Sparks grant.
Other, please specify Digital literacy training for staff and patrons	Enable staff and volunteers to help patrons access e-resources	Count hours of help offered.	Enable access to online collections and include & connect vulnerable populations	Digital self-education via online resources, as well as training via CBAL Selkirk College	CBAL, Selkirk College	ASAP; will depend on other resources becoming available	\$1300	Possible partnership with CBAL	
Patron hardware upgrades (public computers, printers, etc.) Wifi printer	Touchless printing made publicly available for people without printers	Count usage	Enable public access via their own phone or computer to printing	Buy wireless printer		Spring 2021	\$600		
Staff hardware upgrades Adjustable standing desk						Spring 2021	\$300		

[illegible]