INTRODUCTION

The Greenwood & District Public Library serves the City of Greenwood and a portion of Area E of the Regional District of Kootenay Boundary (RDKB), with a total population served of about 945 people. The library is used as a community hub for locals as it is a warm and welcoming place on a cold day or a cool place to be in the summer. Some may browse the shelves, read for a bit, use the wifi, or even just visit the washroom. Being on the main highway, we often get tourists coming in to use our services. In winter some stores and coffee shops close for the season and people have the library to come to instead.

The Greenwood & District Public Library provides access to computers, printing, copying, scanning, and fax services as well as free wifi with outlets for charging devices and sitting areas for people with laptops or tablets; it’s the perfect place to work or check emails. With a collection of award-winning books, new releases, classics, large print books, magazines and newspapers, there are plenty of print materials to choose from. In addition the library has a collection of audiobooks and DVDs as well as a variety of online databases, e-books, e-audiobooks, online magazines and independent films available via our website that make us a virtual hub as well.

The community of Greenwood and area consists mainly of retirees, working adults, and some families with children. Quite a few are on income assistance or disability pensions, as rental units are less expensive here than in many other communities. Although there is no major industry in Greenwood, some residents work in forestry industries in neighbouring communities or at our local ski hill. Others are involved with tourism, retail businesses, ranching, market farming, mining, service industries and municipal government.

The main challenge faced by the community is lack of a large tax base. The City of Greenwood is very limited in the support it can provide to our library; as such, the library is hard-pressed to expand programs and services with many other costs rising each year. That said, the board, staff and volunteers work hard to raise funds and to provide library services to the community with what resources they do have.

Our last Strategic Plan ran from 2014 – 2018 and we achieved all but two goals during the duration of the plan. The main achievements in 2018 include more consistent information sharing through Facebook and our website, a smooth transition for new staff after retirements; and providing more
varied children and adult programs throughout the year. We will be working on creating a new plan this spring.

The biggest change in 2018 was the hiring of new staff after the retirement of the library director and assistant librarian, the library's only employees. However some things such as staff time, wages and open hours have remained the same and we are taking steps to adapt the front entrance for better wheelchair accessibility. Circulation did have a slight decrease from last year 1.5%; however, we did see a slight increase in the use of Interlibrary Connect, both as lender and borrower. Interlibrary Loans has increased in items borrowed by 33%, but we did see a 13% decrease in items loaned to other libraries. We have had a huge increase in the use of our online services; ebooks, audiobooks, digital magazines and independent films.

LIBRARY PRIORITY 1
Fostering equitable access to information and services

The Greenwood & District Public Library has been working on creating clearer signage for drivers as well as pedestrians. We have a new sandwich board sign in simple lettering with our logo on a white background for the sidewalk in front of the building and a digital “Open” sign with our hours of operation. Both have made the library much more visible.

Another goal we have is to adapt the front entrance for better wheelchair accessibility, which would improve physical access to our library. In December 2018 we received our Rick Hansen Foundation accessibility assessment, and we scored very low at 59%. We are located in a heritage building which makes changes challenging and costly. Our hope is to be able to access funding from the Foundation to adapt our front entrance to meet wheelchair accessibility requirements.

One of our goals was to develop and maintain a Facebook page to share programs and other library-related information. This fall we saw a huge increase in page reaches and engagements due to making an effort to post more frequently and to include photos as much as possible. This has helped us grow our fundraising events and increase the number of people attending our programs.

The Greenwood and Area Home School Group have been meeting at the library once a month to work on a craft and play board games. This has been a great way for local home schooling families to get to know each other, discuss curriculum options and support each other in a fun learning environment.

We have been expanding our collection of books by indigenous and Canadian authors as well as our law resources with funds from the Law Matters grant to help foster cultural and informative materials for all.

Every year the library attends community events such as Founders Day and the Winter Market with an information table. The library also hosts the annual Christmas Market and sidewalk book sales, to raise awareness of our library and the services it provides.

In 2018, we applied to the West Boundary Community Forest to fund new programs for children. The first, a STEAM program (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math), ran in the summer of 2018 and we had a full slate of children attending and learning about coding, electrical circuits, and principles of pattern and architecture and engineering through constructing projects in Lego. Based on the most popular part of that pilot project, we applied for and received funds, again from the West Boundary Community Forest, to run a Lego club in the fall. That program, too, was fully subscribed and very
successful. We are planning a third program for the spring, perhaps even two, one for the primary school aged children and a new one for older children. We are thrilled to be bringing more young patrons into the library with these programs.

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The Greenwood & District Public Library is run by two part-time staff, nine volunteers as of this date and up to nine board trustees. Training of staff and volunteers and updating procedures is an ongoing priority. In 2018 we were able to send one of our volunteers to a STEAM training session before starting the program to ensure that she was prepared to run the program. Regular check-ins with staff and volunteers and monthly board meetings help to keep everyone up to date on anything new. We also have an annual volunteer appreciation dinner to thank volunteers for their time and for sharing their valuable and varied skills. We would like to continue to find ways to develop the skills of our staff and volunteers through webinars, online courses and workshops.

Patrons are encouraged to ask for help with the computers or with downloading e-books or audio books. We would like to start a technology drop-in time for the public to be able to come in and get help with personal computers and devices.

In November the Greenwood Library was a registered drop in space for NaNoWri Mo (National Novel Writing Month) group. We look forward to continuing to be involved in the National Novel Writing Month and to bring in local authors for workshops and readings.

This year we had 11 children registered for the Summer Reading Club and we were able to hire a local student and she did an excellent job of planning and presenting 13 programs over seven weeks. This gave her valuable work experience and she learned many new skills such as facilitating small groups, interacting with parents, working with others, planning and making use of available resources. This job opportunity also gave her an insight into library work and she was assigned some library-related tasks when time permitted.

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For the ninth year, we partnered with Midway Public Library, Fraser Valley Regional Library, Kootenay Library Federation (KLF), and local schools including, Greenwood Elementary, West Boundary Elementary and Hutton Elementary to put on the Reading Link Challenge. Grade 4/5 students from each school read six books, formed teams of six, and then competed for prizes and a trophy, based on their knowledge of the books. By working together specifically to promote the RLC, we have seen an increase in participation amongst the schools.
In Preschool Storytime children and their parents enjoyed participating in this early literacy program through listening to stories, singing songs, participating in action rhymes, felt stories, finger plays and making simple crafts. The Kootenay Library Federation and Grand Forks & District Public Library have lent us their Storytime boxes and other resources such as felt stories and special books, to help make planning this program easier.

We continue to attend the Community Literacy Planning Committee meetings facilitated by CBAL (Columbia Basin Alliance for Literacy), and to strengthen our relationships with other stakeholders in the Boundary region.

We will be partnering with CBAL (Columbia Basin Alliance for Literacy) in the future to run both family and adult programs at the Greenwood Library. We will be starting with a STEAM program for young children and their parents this spring.

LIBRARY PRIORITY 4
Enhancing governance

This year the Greenwood & District Public Library will be reviewing and creating a new strategic plan after conducting a community needs assessment. Staff and board members have been exploring ways to form partnerships with other organizations, and to increase revenue in order to be able to offer more programs and services in the future. As we move forward, our focus will be to put the library on a more viable, stable financial footing.

NEW---OPTIONAL SECTION: LIBRARIES IN ACTION – SUCCESS STORIES FROM BC’S PUBLIC LIBRARIES

SUMMARY

The Greenwood & District Public Library has had many changes in the past year with the retirement of two staff and the hiring of the new Library Director and Assistant Librarian. This next year will be focused on our new strategic plan, improving staff work spaces, updating equipment and expanding programming for all ages. We are looking forward to continuing to provide an inviting and functional space for community engagement and to work on maintaining a healthy vibrant organization.