Introduction

The Kaslo and District Public Library (KDPL), located between the curved staircases of the 1898 City Hall building pictured left, was humming with activity in 2018 thanks to our new program coordinator, volunteers, and engaged community. Our small library was packed (35 children and 18 adults) when Curious George came for a visit in March. Youth actively helped create programs and also enjoyed the events. Andrew Kim, the Kootenay Library Federation Summer Reading Club ‘STEAM’ Performer, inspired 43 children and 31 adults with music played on homemade instruments such as a ‘violin-skateboard’. We also hosted a yarn-dying workshop, 2 Family STEAM series including a 3-D printer workshop, a storytelling event to celebrate the 125th anniversary of Kaslo, and much more. In 2018, there were 118 events with 1,137 in attendance.

According to the 2016 Census Data, we serve a population of 2,311 from the Village of Kaslo and the Central Kootenay Regional District Area D. Note: a small percentage of the population does not contribute to library services via taxation.

The population of Kaslo & Area D has been decreasing steadily since 2011 as shown in the graph.

At the same time, circulation of library materials has been increasing per capita. Could people be reading more than ever as neighbours move away? Do Kaslo & Area D people read more than the rest of the province? That’s what it looks like – however, the reality is that there has been a shift in the population due the increasing number of non-resident property owners (and they use their public library too).

According to the 2016 Census Data for our area, non-resident property owners own 31% of private dwellings. They are not counted as part of Kaslo & Area D population. It is difficult to determine what the actual service area population is based on this data since some may own more than one property, be out-of-town landlords, or there may be more than one non-resident person living part-time in Kaslo.
or Area D per property. I would estimate that our population is 20-40% higher during peak season (summer) or between 2,560-2,990. If this is averaged out, circulation/capita would be closer to the BC average.

Although most of the population lives close to the library, our vast service area (5,786 sq. km) also includes members who live over 50 km away in Johnson’s Landing. And, as noted above, our service population includes non-resident property owners from Alberta and other parts of BC.

Kaslo is a popular recreation and vacation area. A challenge for Kaslo & Area D continues to be a lack of affordable housing and full time jobs for young families due to, in part, the number of part-time residents. Work is often seasonal or part-time, and a rental unit usually has a long waiting list.

The main occupations in Kaslo according to the 2016 census data include: sales and service (23%); trades, transport & equipment operators (18%); management (18%); business finance and administration (11%); health (10%); and education (8%). However, seniors make up a large percentage of our community. In BC, 18% of the population is 65+ in age. In Kaslo the figure is 30%.

There is a deep love for arts, culture, recreation, and heritage in Kaslo & Area D and a large volunteer base that supports it. Volunteers have:

- Built and maintained the Kaslo River Trail (including construction of 2 spectacular bridges)
- Restored the oldest intact passenger sternwheeler (S.S. Moyie c.1898),
- Sustained the Concert Society, Arena, Curling Club and Tennis Club,
- Resurrected the 1896 Langham Cultural Centre for art shows, entertainment, offices,
- Hosted the popular Kaslo Jazz, Etc. Summer Music Festival for over two decades, and
- Developed a community fund that grew to over $1,000,000 in a decade.

The above list of volunteer accomplishments is far from complete. Our library also has a dedicated team of 30 volunteers helping with day-to-day operations, governance, and special projects. Some of our volunteers have donated their time for over a decade!

**Challenges at KDPL:**

**Lack of space:** Interior renovations and new furniture have really improved our library, but after 37 years in the same location, we face space challenges.

When comparing our library to other libraries serving similar populations in BC AND adjusting for population, our library operates from the smallest space. The library collection is small. We juggle with one shared office and very little storage space. Teamwork is a challenge with our staff of 2 only working together for 2 hours per week. There are no designated spaces for meetings or programs,

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so creating maker spaces, hosting programs, or holding meetings can only be done after hours with extra cost.

**Radon:** In 2017, we learned that the radon levels at the library are above the recommended levels of 200 Bq/m3, which is not safe for staff according to Health Canada. It is recommended that remediation take place within 2 years of the test period. The Village conducted a second test in 2018 to include the upper floors (because they were moving back into the newly renovated building), but the values were incorrect due to the air circulation system not functioning properly at the time. In November 2018, a 2-part plan was worked out with the Village for an in-house radon solution that included putting positive pressure on the air circulation system (completed January 25) and then installing a pipe to remove radon from the building (planned for after February 25). At the time of this writing, the long term average is 263 Bq/m3 using an AirThings home-testing device. Professional testing in 2017 (one month) found values ranging from 311-359 Bq/m3 using 8 detectors. Professional testing in 2018 (for the recommended 3 months) found values ranging from 357-404 Bq/m3 with 4 detectors (when the air circulation system was not working). The Village plans to do another formal test to find out if the in-house solution worked, but this may have to wait until fall 2019 as the window for testing (winter months) is closing.

**Local government funding:** Other than infrastructure issues, our long term strategic goal (challenge) has been to increase our financial support from local government to approach the BC public libraries average funding per capita in order to keep up with services and demands. Our local government has been very supportive with modest increases from 2010 to 2018 that have reduced the funding gap from 65% below average to 20% below average. This has made it possible to ‘catch-up’ in many areas such as staffing and other operating expenses; however, there is still work to be done.

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**COMMUNITY MISSION STATEMENT**

*The Kaslo & District Public Library is your community gateway to lifelong learning and enjoyment*

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Our library has completed the final year of the 2014-2018 strategic plan with a strong focus on seeking ways to update the facility during this past year. A new plan will be developed in 2019. The concise goals and desired outcomes of the plan are to:

1. Engage and support community members ➔ Satisfied membership
2. Cultivate partnerships and connections ➔ Healthy connections
3. Maintain a healthy, vibrant organization ➔ Great Team! Strong Core!
4. Update facility to meet the needs of the community ➔ User-friendly

The following report shows some of the progress made in 2018 with our strategic plan goals aligned.
with the Libraries Branch Strategic Plan and the provincial government’s key commitments.

**PROJECT: CBT TECHNOLOGY GRANT**

Aligns with:

Provincial Strategies of the Libraries Branch:
#1 Fostering Connected Communities ~advancing access to information and resources~

Provincial Government’s commitment to: *deliver services people can count on*

**Kaslo Library strategic goals to:**

- ENGAGE AND SUPPORT COMMUNITY MEMBERS
- UPDATE FACILITY TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY

**INTRODUCTION:** In early 2018, Columbia Basin Trust (CBT) offered the opportunity for non-profits to upgrade technology equipment used for operations.

**GOALS:**
1. To purchase new technology equipment as listed in the grant application.
2. To develop and implement a new 5-year Technology Replacement Plan for sustainability.

**OUTPUTS:**
- Staff time to review previous technology replacement plan and develop a new technology replacement plan with a 5 year rotation.
- Staff time to determine what items would be replaced in 2018 – research costs – apply for the grants (CBT-ttech grant and a small grant from the Village of Kaslo to demonstrate support for the project)

**OUTCOMES:**
- Our library was awarded the full grant, which was an opportunity to hit ‘reset’ by purchasing a list of new technology equipment AND implementing an improved 5-year technology replacement plan for sustainability.
- One replacement in particular was timely. Our outdated photocopier (2008) no longer had replacement parts and often took a long time to complete print jobs inconveniencing customers, staff, and volunteers daily. This was the most expensive item replaced in this project. The new touchpad copier offers more service and is easy to use. Revenue increased by 21% for 2018 for copies and stress levels dropped for all of us (especially staff).

**SUMMARY:** Technology has changed rapidly in the past decade and operational needs have increased. Keeping up to date with the latest technology equipment is both a challenge and a necessity for our small library. This project helped to improve efficiency and capacity with new equipment. With upgraded equipment, our library can better support community members and deliver services that are expected seamlessly. Community members use and appreciate technology resources at the library to meet their personal, educational, or business needs.
The new 5-year plan will be somewhat challenging to implement since we need from $985-$1,987 per year over and above the amount we have in our budget to make all the purchases. This project helped to make a plan and identify what we need (equipment & money) to stay current. For now, an undesignated 2018 donation will be used to make 2019 implementation a success.

Partnerships that supported this priority:
- Columbia Basin Trust Technology Grant
- Village of Kaslo Municipal Grant
- Libraries Branch: Operating Grant

PROJECT: Kaslo Infonet (KiN) Fibre Optic Broadband Installation

Aligns with:
- Provincial Strategies of the Libraries Branch:
  #1 Fostering Connected Communities ~advancing access to information and resources~
  #2 Building Capacity ~enabling inspiration and innovation~

Provincial Government’s commitment to:
make life more affordable AND deliver services people can count on

Kaslo Library strategic goals to:
ENGAGE AND SUPPORT COMMUNITY MEMBERS
UPDATE FACILITY TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY

INTRODUCTION: In 2014, we contacted the Village of Kaslo (building owner) to express interest in the new KiN internet service for the library. We received a letter of support and a temporary wired service was installed (since the building was being renovated). The library was second in line to get hooked up to this service. Since then, we’ve been using 2 service providers in order to function well. Otherwise, both WIFI use and Evergreen use were compromised (slow).

GOALS:
1. To upgrade from the temporary installment of KiN WIFI to KiN fibre optic broadband in order to improve internet service for operations, programs, and public use.
2. To reduce the cost of internet service by using only one service provider.

OUTPUTS:
- Met with KiN technical support in fall of 2018 to arrange for the installation of Fibre Optics broadband in the library.
- IT Volunteer set up our network.

OUTCOME:
- Installation was successful and the transition to one service provider was seamless.
- The library is able to support a local service via KiN.
- Operational and community Internet needs are met.
- Before the installation, we had 16 Megabits spread between two systems and 30 millisecond
ping times. Switching to fibre upgraded operations to 25 Megabits on one system with ping
time in the low teens. The lowering of ping times has improved the responsiveness to
circulation. The added bandwidth has meant fewer slow-downs for circulation and clients
using public computer services. It also makes computer maintenance and updates much
closer.

- The improved service is offered to the library at a discounted rate. Switching to one system, we
  save $385/year.

**SUMMARY:** A fast and reliable Internet connection advances access to information and resources
from front desk service to office use to public computer/WIFI use. Community use of Internet at our
library includes accessing continuing education online, conducting business, managing
finances/health/legal issues, planning holidays, communications, and more. Having free access to
Internet at our library makes life more affordable for locals and visitors. Public libraries help to bridge
the digital divide with this service.

**Partnerships that supported this priority:**
- Kaslo Infonet (KiN)
- Libraries Branch: Operating Grant

**PROGRAM: DROP DEAD BOOKCLUB**

**Aligns with:**
- Provincial Strategies of the Libraries Branch:
  #1 Fostering Connected Communities ~advancing access to information and resources~

- Provincial Government’s commitment to: *deliver services people can count on*

**Kaslo Library strategic goals to:**

**ENGAGE AND SUPPORT COMMUNITY MEMBERS**

**INTRODUCTION:** This is not a new program, and yet it is. It has evolved over time and events in 2018
are noteworthy. The program started in 2014 when 13 children between the ages of 10-12 wanted to
register for the new Teen Book and Movie Club. Our programmer ended up separating the group so
that age appropriate materials for reading and discussion could be chosen thus forming the 9-12 Book
and Movie club. This program was extremely popular for several years, even catching the attention of the school principal. The children read their library bookclub book during school reading times. The program eventually became somewhat passive with movies being the prime focus. Since our nearest movie theatre is 77 km away, this wasn’t a necessarily a bad thing; however, around that time, our programmer was running out of books to select that were made into movies. It was time to try something new......

The movie component ended and the focus shifted to an age 11+ Bookclub. There were some concerns about this transition, but the bookclub participants surprised us.

GOALS: To make the library a welcoming place for youth. To create a safe space for sharing ideas during bookclub when talking about books read and life in general. To encourage reading, critical thinking, and lifelong learning.

OUTPUT:

- Advertise monthly bookclub meetings with posters, Facebook, website, Instagram, and via local school.
- Select, order, and circulate monthly books.
- Plan activities/game/craft to keep meetings lively. (eg: snacking on Fairy Bread and Tim Tams because they come from Australia where a novel was set)
- Develop some discussion topics/questions
- Purchase and set out snacks. Clean up.

OUTCOME:

- The youth named themselves the ‘Drop Dead Bookclub’ because they love to read until they drop dead.
- A participant created a website for the Drop Dead Bookclub (pictured above)
- The group communicates via Instagram (account created in 2018) posting comments on books
they've read.

- When our programmer talked about starting a Teen Summer Reading Challenge, the bookclub enthusiastically came up with the challenges. (it ended up being a bit too challenging – the next one will be better)
- The drawing (pictured on page 6), further illustrates this enthusiasm for the Teen Summer Reading Challenge. This participant planned to draw in the titles she read as she read them over the summer.
- The group expressed interest in volunteering for library fundraising activities.
- Another youth-led initiative in 2018 was Youth Readers Advisory! The bookclub participants each ranked their favorite 10 books and put stickers on the covers to let others know it was a good read. They also made bookmarks that included their comments about favourite books to help promote them. People in our community loved this.
- At the final bookclub for the year, the group gave a wonderful homemade card to thank our programmer for bookclub.

SUMMARY:
The Provincial Resource sharing program via interlibrary loans and interlibrary connect helps make this bookclub (and others) possible. A popular program that seemed to be winding down evolved into something much different because our programmer helped to make the library a welcoming space for inspiration and innovation by incorporating a few fun activities. The participants engaged in several projects in 2018 that were above and beyond expectations of the program. They created a community with a website and Instagram. They shared creative ideas and their passion for reading with each other and the wider community of library users. They may even be helpers in future fundraising events! It is exciting to see this level of youth engagement.

Partnerships that supported this priority:
- Kaslo & Area D Community Initiatives Grant
- Community Fund of North Kootenay Lake (grant)
- Columbia Basin Alliance for Literacy (partnership – staffing)
- Libraries Branch: Resource Sharing Grant, Equity Grant, Outlook & ILC (for bookclub books)

PROJECT: Kaslo Commonspace Initiative
Aligns with:
- Provincial Strategies of the Libraries Branch:
  #1 Fostering Connected Communities ~advancing access to information and resources~
  #2 Building Capacity ~enabling inspiration and innovation~
  #3 Working Together ~creating lasting and sustainable partnerships~
  #4 Sustaining our Success ~enhancing governance and demonstrating impact~

Provincial Government's commitment to: deliver services people can count on

Kaslo Library strategic goals to:

CULTIVATE PARTNERSHIPS AND CONNECTIONS
UPDATE FACILITY TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY

INTRODUCTION: As noted in the 2017 report, the KDPL Board views our outdated and inadequate facility as the greatest challenge to long term sustainability and growth for the library. We have outgrown the facility after 37 years. Our library has no designated space for programs or expanded collections, one shared office that limits teamwork, flooding/drainage issues, and even a radon problem. The chart on page 2 of this report shows that KDPL is the smallest library when adjusting the area for population and making the comparison with similar rural libraries.

In August of 2017, we learned that North Kootenay Lake Community Services (NKLCSS) had also outgrown their space and we decided to work together to seek solutions and possibly share resources. Selkirk College, facing similar challenges, joined the conversation in the fall and the Commonspace Working Group (CWG) was formed.

GOALS:
1. To work in partnership with NKLCSS and Selkirk College to develop a Kaslo Commonspace concept that includes other potential partners, modern facilities and shared spaces to meet current and future needs of our community.
2. To explore the feasibility of a renovated Kemball Memorial Centre vs. a new build option.
3. To achieve the Kaslo Commonspace or find a way to build a new library

OUTPUTS:
- Worked with partners to develop a proposal for a feasibility study for the Commonspace Initiative and used this to request financial support from Columbia Basin Trust (CBT) to complete the study. (FEB)
- Developed an MOU with the Village of Kaslo to retain first right of refusal on the Kemball Memorial Centre (recently vacated by the Village and owned by the Village).
- Library took the lead on Project Management for this study signing a contract with CBT to accept and manage funds and submit a final report at the end of the project.(MAR)
- CWG developed an RFP that was advertised locally and posted on BC Bid. (LATE MAR)
- CWG hosted a Q&A session for interested proponents
- CWG hired Cover Architectural Collaborative, Inc. A contract was developed for deliverables.
- We participated in workshops to determine individual space needs, shared space needs and then followed up with a co-design workshop to establish relationships between spaces.
- CWG provided feedback on report and met with consultant for Q&A
- CWG accepted report (OCT 23) and followed up with a decision regarding Kemball to the Village of Kaslo (OCT 31)
- General: a Terms of Reference was developed when the CWG formed in late 2017 using a consensus model; a total of 215 staff hours and 220 board member hours were used by all 3 partners to carry out the feasibility study.

OUTCOMES:
1. Each group determined space needs – the library would need about 3,440 sf of usable space before gross up.
2. Shared spaces included: multipurpose room, breakout room, meeting room, staff room, commercial kitchen, community commons, data communication, and washrooms.
3. The study provided concept floor plans, conceptual designs, and engineering report (for Kemball) and a cost analysis for a renovated Kemball building/property vs. a theoretical new build.
4. We learned that the Kemball could not support the library load and that all the walls were structural.
5. The project was too big – too expensive. There were no cost savings to renovate the Kemball compared to a new build plus some risks to consider such as asbestos. The quoted costs included 30% in contingencies.
6. We learned that it takes a great deal of time for 3 organizations to make decisions together (each having to go back to decision making bodies) even when there is a high level of participation. We would need a phase 2 study to further our Commonspace vision.

7. In our correspondence to the Village, the CWG responded that we were not ready to enter into a lease or purchase agreement to secure the Kemball by the Nov 13, 2018 deadline.

SUMMARY:
The Commonspace vision is still important to the KDPL Planning committee and the work continues. The potential for collaboration still exists. Shared spaces and quality of construction may be reconsidered in a phase 2 study. We continue to work with the Village to seek support for a new Kaslo & District Public Library.

Partnerships that supported this priority:
- North Kootenay Lake Community Services – participant in the Commonspace Feasibility Study
- Selkirk College – participant in the Commonspace Feasibility Study
- Village of Kaslo—support for a feasibility study and first right of refusal in an MOU
- Columbia Basin Trust – provided funding for the feasibility study
- Libraries Branch – Consultants (to clarify legislation); for supporting the BCLA conference and collaborative projects in general to facilitate cost effective services in BC that connect public libraries and demonstrate the power of collaboration.
- BCLA conference – for offering workshops that highlight collaboration
- Hospice – letter of support for Commonspace Initiative

In closing
In the final year of our strategic plan, we continued to strive for library services that support lifelong learning and enjoyment through outlined goals. In 2019, we plan to develop a new 5-year strategic plan to support library services for Kaslo and Area D residents and plan for the future.

Thank you
We are grateful to the Province of British Columbia for the various supports in place that connect BC libraries and help to share resources. This includes the 4 provincial grants, the BC Library Cooperative, the Kootenay Library Federation, and the many other support organizations and provincial initiatives that exist to keep library services sustainable, accessible and relevant for the population. We use our Provincial Grants to carry on with programs & services that Kaslo & Area D library users enjoy and expect. We also use our Provincial Grants to find ways to improve what we do or introduce something new. The KDPL staff and board express thanks to the Libraries Branch for continued support.

Submitted by
Eva Kelemen, Library Director
Kaslo & District Public Library