Provincial Library Grants Report 2018

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Mission statement:

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, inclusivity, accessibility.

VISION: To become the heart of the community through social activity, distribution of information and creative inspiration.

GOALS: The Nakusp Public Library has identified the following professional goals that will be our focus:

- Goal A: Become a resource center of Nakusp and area
- Goal B: Enhance strong community connections
- Goal C: Ensure long-term sustainability

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Education, Information, Recreation

Introduction

The Nakusp Public Library holds a vital role in its community. As a well-loved establishment reaching a wide range of demographics, it operates with a mandate of inclusivity. The Library is centrally located in the “Centennial Building,” one of the oldest original buildings in the village core. Built in 1912, it was the village’s third school house. In 1957 it was sold to the Centennial Committee becoming the Centennial Building & Library in June 1958. Today the Centennial Building not only houses the Nakusp Public Library, but also the Arrow Lakes Historical Society Archives, and Nakusp and District Museum. The Centennial Building is not the first home of Nakusp’s Library. The Nakusp Public Library Association was registered with the BC Government in Victoria in 1920, officially opening in 1921. Between that time and 1958 the Library was located in numerous building around the Village, including various churches, the Co-operative Hall, the General Store, and the courthouse.

Today the Nakusp Public Library not only aims to fulfil the educational, informational, cultural, and recreational needs of the people of Nakusp, but also provides services to seasonal visitors and patrons in many of the outlying areas which do not have their own Library, namely Burton, Edgewood, Fauquier, New Denver, Silverton, and Trout Lake. Many of our patrons live rurally and often do not have computers or internet at home. In fact, much of the outlying regions are black areas for cell reception, and our computers are well used by locals in these situations.
Nineteenth century devoted Library philanthropist, Andrew Carnegie, stated that “a library outranks any other one thing a community can do to benefit its people. It is a never-failing spring in the desert.” He believed in the importance of free public Libraries that gave people the chance to educate and lift themselves, no matter what their origins. This continues to be true today, even more so than ever. Libraries fill gaps in formal education systems, especially in places such as Nakusp that are remote without easy access to continuing education or which have a population not able to financially endure the large burden of formal education. The Nakusp Public Library’s motto is “Education, Information, Recreation” and we are dedicated to giving our patrons a chance to educate and better themselves no matter their origins or interests.

The community of Nakusp and surrounding area is growing and changing. Lumber and tourism are the main economies but it is the natural beauty of the lake and 360-degree mountain views that really make Nakusp stand out. Many young families and new retirees are moving to the area, drawn by the quality of life provided in the Kootenays. The Nakusp Public Library is a microcosm of the community as a whole, as we see the direct impact of all these new people who, more often than not, sign up for a Library card shortly after relocating. In 2018 the Library added 191 new patrons, and this increase is certainly evident in our well attended programming for children, such as Mother Goose singalongs. These newcomers are all bringing with them new ideas and vibrancy and it is the Library’s job to adapt along with them. Going forward the Library has a strong commitment to meeting the ever-changing needs of our ever-changing community, through education, information, and recreation.

The Nakusp Public Library itself experienced much change in 2018, particularly in regards to staffing. A new Director, Jackie Barber, arrived in the last quarter of the year, making her the 16th Director in the Library's 98 years of operation. While some staff left to pursue other careers, there remained important consistencies. Specifically, the former Director, Susan Rogers, transitioned to part-time Librarian and many of the long-standing board members, volunteers, and substitute staff continue to be involved with the Library. Regardless of any changes, the Nakusp Public Library remains a steadfast force in the community.

**Library Priority 1: Fostering equitable access to information services: connected communities**

The Nakusp Public Library is committed to connecting communities and providing equitable accessible service. Our building is physically accessible to all with an elevator servicing the Centennial Building, and we strive to maintain a diverse collection. We keep up to date on purchasing a variety of books, DVDs, audio books, and large print. We offer a number of online subscriptions, including Zinio and Overdrive for e-books. Ancestry.com is a popular tool and we even have a Genealogy group helping people understand how to get started. The Library provides seven computer workstations and two iPads to patrons, even for those without a Library membership, as well as free barrier free WiFi.

The Library keeps people in the community connected and aware of programming and events in a multitude of ways. We hang posters around the Village and a monthly calendar of events goes up on a well frequented bulletin board in the post office. We maintain a Facebook page and this year we launched an Instagram account to target a different demographic from those on Facebook. There were several
articles written about the Library in the two local newspapers, including a semi-regular “Look Who’s Reading” column and two interviews with the new Director. These articles were well read and generated a lot of feedback.

After considerable planning, we partnered with Little Free Library and installed a box located on the Village’s main street. Locals and visitors are now able to borrow and share books even when the Library is closed.

**Library Priority 2: Developing skills and knowledge: building capacity**

The Library’s motto of “Education, Information, Recreation” is central to what we stand for in our commitment to community development and developing the skills and knowledge of our patrons and staff. We provide programming to encourage personal development, we purchase non-fiction and information material, and help patrons access all this information. Regularly, Library staff sit with patrons and assist them in using the computers; logging on, using the catalogue, creating email addresses, and doing various kinds of research. In 2018 the Director and board decided to purchase online Gale Courses for 2019 for the purpose of fostering skills and knowledge in our community. Not only do we focus on the development and bettering of our patron base, the staff and board members of the Nakusp Public Library are also committed to both personal and professional development. Staff members regularly sign up for webinars to learn new skills related to Librarianship, and all new trustees complete the Trustee Orientation Program.

**Library Priority 3: Working together**

Collaborating with as many other organizations in Nakusp as possible is a priority for the Nakusp Public Library. Living in a small community it is imperative to encourage communication and partnerships. The Library has a relationship with both local newspapers, and often collaborates on articles and promotion. The Library Director attends as many meetings as possible, such as those for Stepping Stone, Columbia Basin Alliance for Literacy, the RDCK and the Village, and Selkirk College. The Library also collaborated with the Rotary, High School and Elementary School, and the Youth Center in 2018. The Nakusp Public Library shares its building with both the Arrow Lakes Historical Society Archives, and Nakusp and District Museum. In this way, close collaboration between these three GLAM organizations is strong.

We have seen much positive outcomes with our dedication to working together and collaboration. The most significant change in the 2018 statistics compared to 2017 is the increase in juvenile circulation, by 45%. This increase is due in part to the increase in new local families with young children. But more specifically, there has been collaboration with some of the teachers from Nakusp Elementary School who regularly bring their classes to the Library. Looking to 2019, the Library intends to reach out to even more teachers to encourage them to bring their classes to the Library on a regular basis.

**Library Priority 4: Enhancing governance: sustaining our success**

The Nakusp Public Library is very lucky in being overseen by such a dedicated and supportive board. Many of the members are long standing and all are enthusiastic in making sure Nakusp has the best Library possible. They are involved and proactive in creating and reviewing policy and the strategic plan, and encouraging fundraising. They are involved with annual events such as the Book Sale and Silent Auction,
and shelf reading parties. All board members sit on multiple active committees, including the Walton Bequest Committee, Centennial Building Committee, Fund Raising Committee, Finance Committee, Governance Committee, and Friends of the Library. The Board members are involved in applying for grants. In 2018 they applied for and received a Columbia Basin Trust Grant of $1500 to promote and create the first Annual Centennial Building Open House event. In many ways, the Board of the Nakusp Public Library is committed and proactive in sustaining the Library’s success.

**Highlights and Successes**

In 2018 the Nakusp Public Library had many successes. The Library hosted 112 events in 2018 with a total attendance of 667 adults and 447 children. The programming catered to a wide and diverse patron base, from the well-attended Summer Reading Club, to weekly Mother Goose sing-alongs, monthly Genealogy meetings and Book Discussions, and even an ongoing collaboration with a local band that uses the Library’s venue for weekly jam practices! Going forward, we are dedicated to continuing with such community connections.

The Village of Nakusp has seen an increase in young families recently, every month more and more children are attending the Mother Goose weekly singalongs, held in collaboration with CBAL. The Summer Reading Program increased by 85% from the participation numbers in 2017. This was led by a Summer Student who is hoping to come back again this summer, and we look forward to increasing our numbers even more!

There were four local author readings spread throughout the year. Arthur Joyce released his novel *Mountain Blues*, Barbara Brown presented an art show and launched her book *Sylvan Reflection*, Sinixt storytellers and authors Marilyn James and Taress Alexis read from *Not Extinct: keeping the Sinixt way*; and finally, author Deryn Collier gave a talk on her research and writing process.

In November the Library held their first Poetry Night since 2015. With 15 presenters (including the brand-new Director) and 53 attendees it was a great success! The Library’s second wine raffle fundraiser culminated at the event and raised over $500 for the Library.
Summary

In summary, the Nakusp Public Library had a successful year in 2018. We saw an increase in patrons, especially new young families moving to the area, with 191 new patrons registered. There was a focus on programming and events, which will continue in 2019. With the arrival of the new Director in October there are many changes on the horizon for 2019. While the Director is committed to sustaining the traditional feel and values of the Library, especially as the historic and beautiful Centennial Building is so inspiring in this way, she is committed to innovation as long as it supports the needs of the community. The focus on connecting with the community of Nakusp is her number one priority as her personal values align with a strong commitment to public service and bettering a community through education, information, and recreation. She comes from working abroad in the developing world and experienced first-hand the importance of community institutions, such as public Libraries, by the very lack of such a support system in many cultures. Without access to education or public institutions such as a public Library, individuals will forever be trapped in their station of life as there are no accessible services to allow for personal advancement. In this way, she knows from experience the truth that accessible public libraries are essential to a community. Going forward, the Nakusp Public Library plans to increase accessibility to technology, while keeping loyal to the motto of “Education, Information, and Recreation.” So far at the start of 2019 we have subscribed to online Gale courses and this has generated a large amount of interest in the community. Daily, we have been registering new patrons (adults who have lived in the Village their entire lives!) solely because of their interest in signing up for one of these courses. This is exactly the types of connections the Nakusp Public Library aims to encourage in the next years.

“This is the most beautiful library I have ever had the pleasure of visiting, really! Staff is so helpful and friendly. The setting is calm and bright on any day of weather. What a treasure. Thank you!”
– Nicole, newly of Nakusp.

“You provide a great service for your community + us visitors. Thank you.”– Claudette, Lethbridge, AB

“Ancient stories, knowledge all at fingertips. Reminders at hand. Thank God for Libraries” – John Stendy

“PB+J Jam Session. Inspiring. LOUD. Fun. Thank you for opening the Library for an out-of-the-box collaborative. Community spirit shining ♥” – anonymous