



Library Board

Meeting Date: March 24, 2015
Submitted by: Lindsay Brock, Acting County Librarian/CEO
Subject: County Librarian Update March 2015

BACKGROUND:

As directed by the Library Board, every month the County Librarian will pass on to the community and the Library Board an account of accomplishments and highlights of the library over the past month and information about upcoming library events and programs.

Preparations for the opening of the new Lucan Library facility continue. Construction appears to be on schedule, with project completion being in May 2015.

ANALYSIS:

Area Report for North Middlesex and Lucan-Biddulph

Submitted by Beverly Sweezie, Systems and Area Librarian

In Ailsa Craig 14 adults had fun trying blind dates with books. Thirty one people participated in Family Day activities. Teens and Tweens relished blind book dates, a candy naming quiz, along with making paint chip bookmarks. Eight people got help with e-readers, tablets and e-resources.

In Lucan more than 50 patrons appreciated Family Day activities including a Storytime at 10:30, giant Jenga and Kerplunk games, crafts for adults and children, a photo booth, face painting, draws, and refreshments. Six tactile activity aprons completed by the Fidget Makers group will soon be presented to Prince George Retirement Residence in Lucan and Craigwiel Gardens in Ailsa Craig.

In Parkhill families enjoyed giant games, fun literacy activities, mini-golf, and puzzles on Family Day. Button tree art made by Chartwell Parkhill Long term Care residents is on display. Young families enjoyed our February storytime themes of Valentine's Day, Hibernation, and Penguins.

Area Report for Thames Centre

Submitted by Chris Harrington, Reference and Area Librarian

Thorndale - February was Black History Month and in honour of this the Thorndale Library hosted a number of related activities. To kick things off, on Wednesday, February 4th, local author Bryan Prince debuted his new book *My Brother's Keeper: African Canadians and the American Civil War* and discussed his other works. The program was very well attended. For the entire month, Thorndale Library had on loan from the Buxton National Historic Site a collection of artifacts.

On Valentine's Day, we had a children's program encouraging patrons to bring someone that they love to the library from 10:00 – 11:00 am for Valentine's stories, a make and take craft and a special treat! Then on Family Day, the library had special open hours from 10:00 am – 2:00 pm. There was a variety of family friendly activities as well as a Storytime at 10:30. Many community members visited the library on this holiday to warm up with a snack and to partake in the special library programming!

Chess Club is held on the first and third Wednesday from 6:30 – 7:30 pm. Chess players of all ages and abilities learn how to play or hone their skills with volunteer Robert Kavelman. Brush-up! Art Club took place on Wednesday, February 11th. Several amateur artists came to the library to work on their current art project or to start a new project.

Free Family Movie Night was held on Friday, February 20th at 7:00 pm. The NFB Film Club showing of *Pink Ribbons Inc.* was held on Wednesday, February 25th at 3:00 pm. This feature documentary discussed the devastating reality of breast cancer, which marketing experts have labeled a "dream cause" and has been hijacked by a shiny, pink story of success. The program attendees had a lively group discussion following the film.

Stitch 'n Chat is the name of the program for knitters and crocheters that was held on Wednesday, February 25th at 7:00 pm. Participants worked on their projects while enjoying a conversation and light refreshments. Evening Book Club met on the last Thursday of the month and they discussed the book *Sisters in the Wilderness* by Charlotte Gray.

Dorchester - The 21 Days of Family Fun that began on Family Literacy Day in January culminated in February with the system wide Family Day celebrations. The Storytime on Family Day was well attended. The group stayed to participate in literacy activities, a scavenger hunt, and to enjoy a snack and drink. Once the Storytime crowd left at noon, the library was very quiet during the two open hours in the afternoon.

Family Day saw the launch of Thames Centre Reads with the announcement of the title, Call of the Wild by Jack London. It is hoped that many residents of Thames Centre, young and old, will read this classic in one of a variety of formats and report back or send a "selfie photo" of themselves reading the book. A collage of pictures and reviews from readers will be on display.

Despite a display and promotion by staff, the Share Some Book Love program did not attract a lot of interest. This month saw the start of our rotating shelf displays. Each Branch Assistant chooses a theme and creates a display using all genres and materials as appropriate. Every two weeks, two of the four displays are changed.

The February Book Club discussion of The Orenda by Joseph Boyden was well attended. On the other hand, severe cold winter weather resulted in a very small attendance at the Bedtime Storytime featuring pigs.

Newly hired Branch Assistant Courtney Joris began her training towards the end of the month in preparation to begin regularly scheduled shifts in March. Courtney will take over responsibility for the daytime Storytime programs beginning in April.

Area Report for Strathroy-Caradoc and Newbury

Submitted by Jean Moir, Strathroy and Area Librarian

Mount Brydges - For February the Mount Brydges Library kept busy in addition to wonderful regular programming like Storytime, Lego Club, Tea Time, Techie Thursday, and Book Club there were several special programs offered during the month. For adults Blind Date with a Book was a big hit and allowed adults to be introduced to new authors without judging a book by its cover. Movie Matinee continues to be popular and patrons have commented on how comfy the new chairs are. The Mount Brydges Library ran a Valentine Card Making program this month for all ages. The cards turned out beautifully and the patrons had a great time making them. The community continues to enjoy coming to the library to participate in the Ontario Early Years programming. The teens stopped in to participate in the many challenges and obstacles that accompanied the Amazing Race program. Family Day was one of the best attended program this month with 21 children and 21 adults in attendance who enjoyed songs, rhymes, and books together.

Newbury - At the Newbury Library families enjoyed picking up the 21 Days of Family Fun calendars and looked forward to the various activities to participate in as a family. The winner of the 21 Days of Family Fun draw was very happy with the game and treat that they got to take home. There have been fifteen I Love My Library sheets submitted at the library. Storytime continues to draw families to the library with usually nine in attendance. Diana Watson, Newbury Supervisor, is beginning to plan for March Break and seeking out a fun reading nook, and planning crafts and other fun activities for children to do when they visit during March Break.

Strathroy - At the Strathroy Library, beginning Tuesday, January 27 to Monday, February 16 we handed out approximately seventy 21 Days of Family Fun calendars. Over the three weeks we offered various drop-in activities for young families including scavenger hunts, counting activities, and displayed various types of books we have available for them to check out. It was a busy Family Day at the library with 38 participants (18 adults and 20 children) for our 10:30am storytime. We had 220 patrons visit our branch on Family Day taking part in literacy activities, using the computers, and checking out materials. Over the past few weeks we've also included early literacy tips in our storytimes while promoting the 21 Days of Family Fun calendars, and introduced families to various areas of the print and electronic collection such as poetry and nursery rhymes, non-fiction, eBooks and audiobooks, and Tumblebooks. At the Strathroy Library a monthly Tween Titans program began in the fall and is continuing to grow with new members each month. This month the tweens joined together for a games night. This month, Jean Moir, Branch Supervisor, enjoyed visiting a Senior Kindergarten/Grade 1 class at Adelaide-W.G. MacDonald Public School as part of their people and places in the community unit to talk about the library's role in the community.

Area Report for Southwest Middlesex

Submitted by Liz Adema, Information Navigator and Area Librarian

Glencoe - February was cold and snowy month in Glencoe and Family Day was a highlight for the month. 15 kids and caregivers attended the story time program. We had a very challenging scavenger hunt where they needed to find as many coins hidden in the library and then add up their guess. This tricky hunt got kids and adults working together to see how much "money" they could find. After School Stories and Friday morning story times offered a warm place to get out and socialize and both programs were well attended all month. The Glencoe Reads Book club members are now challenged to come up with one word that best describes each book. Some of the words for Mistress of Nothing were: complex, bittersweet, pompous, pretentious, confusing, snotty, and boring. For the Book Club for Grownups, members are now sent an email with some teaser questions a couple of days before the meeting and that has really helped to jump start the discussion.

Melbourne - February was a quieter month here in Melbourne. I think the lovely weather had something to do with it for sure! The YA book club was cancelled due to participant's illness. The MB adult book club had 11 patrons come out to discuss 419 by Will Ferguson. About two thirds of the group loved it but others found it confusing and a difficult read. It's always more interesting when we disagree – there is a much livelier discussion. Lego Club and Scavenger Hunts are still a big hit and going strong. This month our interactive bulletin board was valentines with 8 children participating. Also this month, I ran Magazine Art for the teens and tweens with eight children making beautiful creations. I also ran a JF covered book program entitled "Never Judge a Book By Its Cover." This was not as well received as I had hoped but seven ladies took out books and enjoyed finding new authors and genres. I might try this again later in the year. For the February literacy activities, 13 "I Love My Library" sheets were returned with lovely positive comments. Six families took out the February Calendars but only one was returned. I also had games and cards set out for the kids and four families participated in the challenges.

Wardsville - Wardsville had many extra fun activities set up through February. We had a puppet station and the felt board was out with many story felt sets out so the children and their parents could create their own tales. The Lego was left out all month for creative play. We also had prints of letter sheets, word searches and other language building activity sheets. A scavenger hunt was out and is always popular. I only received 2 ballots back from the calendars handed out. *Fifty Shades of Grey* was the book club recommended read, but no one was brave enough to take it. This month we have *The 100 year Old Man Who Climbed Out the Window and Disappeared* out for patrons to take for book club...it's already more popular.

Area Report for Middlesex Centre

Submitted by Aimee Sparzynski, Komoka and Area Librarian

Ilderton - This month Ilderton Library continued to offer various literacy activities for the 21 Days of Family Fun program. Altogether 62 patrons participated in this program over the 21 days, 45 children and 17 adults. Family Day at Ilderton Library was also a great success. They had a total of 21 attendees for storytime and many were new families. There were also 5 new card registrations on Family Day. For the first time, the Ilderton Library tried a Blind Date with a Book program with the goal of encouraging patrons to step outside their comfort zone and try reading something new. Both adults and children had fun with this program and enjoyed the element of surprise. This month Ilderton staff tried to attract the tween age group by offering a program with giant board games every Tuesday from 4:30-5:30pm. The games were left out all evening and were thoroughly enjoyed by tweens and children who were in the library.

Delaware - This month the Delaware Library was excited to be the first branch in the Middlesex County Library system to receive a children's literacy station with iPads. The limited space at Delaware posed a challenge for housing the larger literacy stations at many branches; and this colourful crayon with two iPads has been a great solution. They have been busy every day! Regular monthly programs like colouring pages, story time and scavenger hunt have been a great success. Creative craft night had a great turn out; the children enjoyed making cute little alligators. A new adult program began this month "Delaware Reads". This is a book club without meetings and so far 3 copies of "Her Fearful Symmetry" have gone out. Staff is hoping that this program will prove a success.

Coldstream - It has been a quiet, snowy and cold February but dedicated patrons have still made it to the Coldstream Library. The Read 4 Fun program began this month after a break over the holidays but due to inclement weather and participant illness have only been able to read together on one Wednesday. They are looking forward to meeting more often in March. Builder Club has a different weekly theme and alternates between creating with Lego and K'nex construction toys every Wednesday evening. 21 Days of Family Fun saw repeat visits from area families to engage in literacy based activities together. The Family Literacy Prize pack winners were thrilled with their prize!

Komoka - The highlight in Komoka this month was most definitely our Family Day celebrations. Staff in Komoka partnered with the YMCA, Municipality of Middlesex Centre and the Kilworth-Komoka Optimist Club to host a facility wide Family Day event. That day 75 children and caregivers attended our storytime, 98 families entered our prize draw and 118 kids completed the scavenger hunts. Staff estimates that around 500 people came through the library doors that day. Wow! Despite the poor weather, the Komoka Library's regular programs continued to have steady attendance this month and we registered 43 new card holders.