

# Library Report



Compiled by  
Ian White



## Staff profile

### Shannon Raynard

Shannon Raynard, Western Counties Regional Library's new Training and Development Manager, says her time as the library's automation trainer helps her in her new position.

"Being the automation trainer prepared me for my new role in so many ways," she says. "It gave me a strong foundation of libraries, in general, and our library's structure and services, specifically."

"It gave me a working knowledge of each of our 10 branches and their uniqueness, as well as the staff who work in them. It helped me to see where our strengths are and also where we can improve what we do to suit the needs of the public even better."

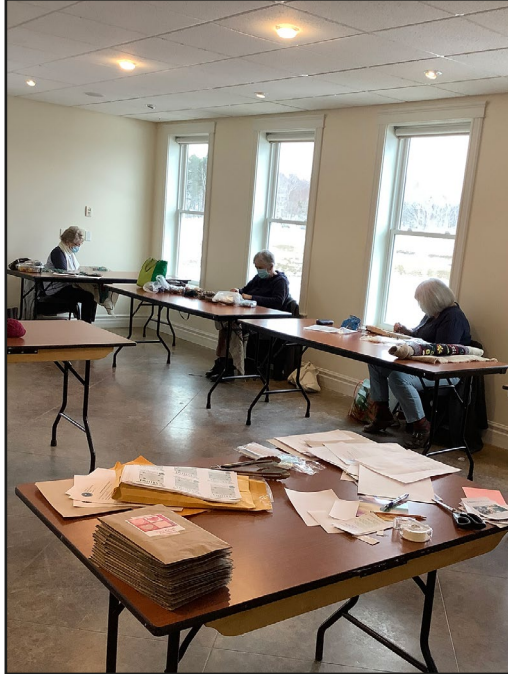
One of those needs, she says, is making the branch staff more comfortable with the available technology and online services offered by the library.

"Over the past year we have introduced several new online platforms which have so much amazing content, but with everything going on it has been hard to make sure everyone is capable and comfortable not only using them but introducing our patrons to them as well," she says.

With a lot on her plate, Raynard says one of her greatest challenges is prioritizing her tasks in an effective and efficient manner.

Although new to the role, she has found some of the little moments rewarding such as when her fellow staff thank her or appreciate her efforts. As she settles into her position, Raynard enjoys the work, the staff and the chance to learn.

"I know that what the library does is so valuable, so it feels great to get to be a part of that."



Left, participants in Weymouth Waterfront Library's A Needlecraft Afternoon work on their projects while enjoying each other's company. Right, a participant in the Digby library's Adult Paint Night shows off her completed work. Each person had their own supply tray to help keep everyone safe during the program.

## Patrons happy to see return of in-person programming

In-person programming has returned to all 10 branches of Western Counties Regional Library, and people are appreciative of being able to participate in the library.

"So far, the people who are coming for the program are very pleased to be able to participate," says Darlene Gaudet, senior library clerk at Senator Ambrose H. Comeau Memorial Library in Meteghan. "The majority are OK with all the restrictions imposed as masks, distancing and sanitizing hands makes them feel safe."

The library is following the health protocols and guidelines set out by the Province of Nova Scotia.

"It was nice for the patrons to be able to come out to a program and they are all thrilled to be able to do this," says Joanna Jarvis, senior library clerk at Isaiah W. Wilson Memorial Library in Digby. "Teaching art to a group scattered around the room is hard because I have to repeat myself many times to be

sure they are all getting it. I have to keep my distance, so it is hard to help them when they get stuck or need more paint. We still have fun, and they are still glad they are able to come."

To be safe, the library is limiting capacity to its in-person programming and no food or drink is allowed. Participants are required to wear masks and pre-registration for programs is encouraged, as space is limited.

"The Lockeport Library Book Club is very happy to be back at the Library," says Lockeport library senior clerk Danielle MacAulay-Williams. "We have had only one meeting in-person, but all agreed that they felt much more at ease discussing the book, when the meeting was in-person. The online platform is not conducive to a free-wheeling and lively discussion. It feels a bit like being in school!"

She adds the book club members had no trouble with social distancing or mask-wearing. All were very used to these kinds of

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# Benefits outweigh challenges

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requirements for other types of meetings in the community.

Weymouth Waterfront Library has now hosted three in-person needlecraft programs since the end of January, attended by the maximum 10 people allowed.

"Everyone is happy to get out and see other people and knit, rug hook, crochet, and chat," says senior Weymouth library clerk Marguerite Thibault. "It is a pleasing atmosphere here at the Weymouth Waterfront Library program room. All in all, it is great."

As for the Digby library's story time, the dynamics are very different from pre-pandemic times, says Jarvis.

"One of the challenges is not being able to see the smiles of the children or have them see ours. It's more restrictive and harder to connect with the children because of all the rules," she says, adding, "but all is good."

Gaudet says the biggest challenge is space, limiting the number of participants, but adds people are happy to attend.

"The rewards are that people feel it shows a light at the end of the COVID tunnel and in some way helps them feel less isolated," she says.

There have been location advantages, says Jarvis. The Digby branch is co-located with a daycare.

"We have also been able to take story time to the daycare in the building downstairs," she says. "Since they are their own bubble, as long as we socially distance from them we can read stories to them and they are thrilled to have us come."

Virtual programs are also continuing, making some online celebrities in the process.

Although the Lockeport library puppet shows are virtual still, MacAuley-Williams says the children who watch the puppet shows often look up behind the circulation desk to see if she has left any of those crazy characters from *The Pond* out on the shelf.

"If they spot one, they let me know right away," she says.

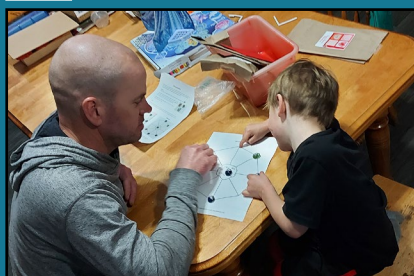
## Happy Retirement!



**Deputy Director Joanne Head, who started as a librarian on Sept. 1, 1989, retired effective Jan. 1, 2021 following 31 years of service to the library. Clockwise from left, Joanne, left, providing help during a Friends of the Library Christmas decorating program at Clark's Harbour library in 2012; distributing prizes during the April Fools Trivia Challenge in 2008; reading during a story time at Yarmouth library in 1997; and, leading little ones in the singing of *Itsy Bitsy Spider* in 2007 at Burrigade Campus, NSCC.**

## AROUND THE BRANCHES

### Clare



Shane, left, and Tyberius Hatt enjoy a game of Shisima at home after picking up the February Grab-&Go kit from the Clare library.



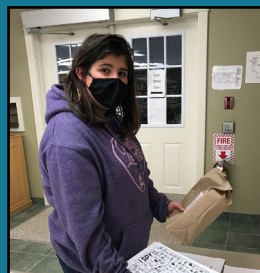
Clare's newest library clerk Louise Doucet does some shelving at the branch in February.



Clare reserve library clerk Faith Dugas McNeill receives her 5-year certificate on Dec. 17, 2020.

### Clark's Harbour

Families are excited to see what each Grab-&Go activity contains, including grandparents who take them to have

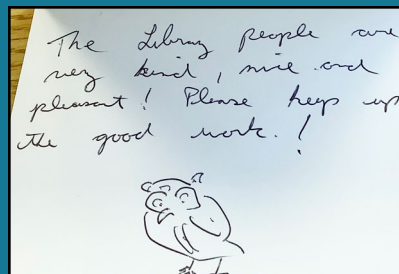


Addison Swaine picks up a Grab-&Go kit from Clark's Harbour library.

### Clark's Harbour (continued)

on-hand for their grandchildren. Kits such as the *I Spy* and others prove popular with all ages, including older adults wanting to keep their minds sharp.

### Digby



A pleased visitor left a kind note for the Digby library staff.

### Weymouth

More patrons are seeking assistance to learn how to access the library's digital services after receiving mobile devices.

Weymouth library clerk Tammy Sabine received her five-year certificate on Feb. 25.

