

# Library Report

Season's



Greetings!

Compiled by  
Ian White
**Staff  
profile**
**Shannon  
Raynard**

Joining Western Counties Regional Library in May, automation trainer Shannon Raynard has settled into her position, bringing an upbeat, positive outlook to the library.

"I went to university to be a teacher because I like children and I highly value education, but once I got into the classroom I realized that it wasn't for me," Raynard says. "Being an avid reader and a library patron, as well as having worked for a short time as a reserve clerk in the past, I thought it might be a good fit – and I think I was right!"

She relishes her role as trainer and helping the library clerks provide the best service they can to their patrons. "Where else can anyone and everyone depend on as a safe, warm, and dry place to go without being asked for anything in return?" She says.

Going from a library patron to an employee opened her eyes to the many things offered by the library.

"I had no idea about all of the programs and services offered by the library. Anything from radon detectors to autism kits can be borrowed free of charge."

She believes some of the challenges facing the library are implementing many of the wonderful ideas because of financial limitations and human resources. But she remains optimistic for the future of libraries because of their role in the community.

"As demands from the clients shift more toward technology and instant-access becomes the expectation, libraries must keep pace, but we will never cease to be relevant if we continue to be a safe haven and community space," she says.

## Fundraiser pushes Literacy Legacy Fund over \$100,000



**Dr. Shelagh Leahey, right, is serenaded by the trio of Freddy Mujica, Michael Carbonell and Nick Jackson during Dining Among the Stacks on Nov. 2.**

Dining Among the Stack raised \$11,000 for the Literacy Legacy Fund on Saturday, Nov. 2, pushing the fund past the \$100,000 mark.

"It was nice to see everyone having such a good time," says Western Counties Regional Library director Erin Comeau. "We couldn't have asked for a better combination of food, entertainment and company. And to top it all off, we reached our fundraising goal for the evening!"

An important fundraiser for Western Counties Regional Library, the sold-out event offered people fine dining, live music, humorous readings of Nova Scotia author Lesley Crewe and a silent auction at Izaak Walton Killam Memorial Library in Yarmouth.

The music was performed by the trio of Freddy Mujica, Michael Carbonell and Nick Jackson. The trio wowed the crowd with its mix of Latin and soft rock music, making for splendid evening, says Comeau.

"Many people left that evening asking to reserve tickets for next year," says Comeau. "If that is any indication of interest, then we would expect to be able to bring the event back to the library in two years."

The event runs on alternate years to the library's Adopt-A-Book campaign, and both are critical pieces of mandatory library fundraising.

"Regional library boards in Nova Scotia are

required to raise three per cent of their operating budgets," she explains. "With a budget of over \$1.6 million, fundraisers such as Dining Among the Stacks are necessary to be able to meet our commitments while also continuing to provide quality service."

The silent auction brought in \$1,875 and the book bonanza raised \$1,400 toward the total. During the book bonanza, the person who purchases the book containing the golden bookmark takes home the reading nook. This year it consisted of a chair from Leon's, side table from Canadian Tire, reading lamp from Kent Building Supplies, and a baby blanket, all donated by those businesses.

Sponsorship is critical to the evening's success, says Ian White, Public Relations Manager at the library.

"Scotiabank was our presenting sponsor for the third time," White explains. "Having such levels of sponsorship help make the event such a success."

Other sponsors included White Perkins Associates Chartered Professional Accountants, Tri-Star Industries, RBC Royal Bank, Coastal Financial Credit Union, United Library Services, Atlantic Superstore, and Penguin Random House Canada in addition to the donation of furnishings for the book nook by the three local businesses.

# Library celebrates 50 years of positive change

Western Counties Regional Library celebrated its 50th anniversary on Oct. 29, 2019 with sharing of cake, refreshments and memories. It was also a time to reflect on the changes that have taken place at the library over the last half century.

"It gives us all an opportunity to remember how we've made it to where we are and to acknowledge the hard work of library personnel and supporters throughout the years," says Regional Library Director Erin Comeau. "Without the dedication of the people before us who laid the foundation for regional libraries, I do not believe we would be in such a strong position to offer library services today."

With 30 years of service at the regional library, Deputy Library Director Joanne Head has watched it grow.

"Some of the physical buildings have changed," she says. "We had an expansion of the Yarmouth branch. We had a completely new building for our Weymouth branch. The first year I started at Western Counties was the year we opened the Shelburne branch which has just had a facelift and a small expansion. Barrington has an entire new library as does Clark's Harbour, and, currently, Digby is looking at a refresh."

There have been changes in the services provided by the library, she says.

"When I first started here there were no computers. That means that every little



**A 50th anniversary display at McKay Memorial Library in Shelburne.**

process was done by hand."

The library was also a vital resource for students, Head says. A lot of students came after school to do their homework because the Internet and the ability to search for answers online did not exist.

The library has 10 branches serving communities in Digby, Shelburne and Yarmouth counties. However, in the first decade of its existence, the library relied on bookmobiles to reach many communities.

The bookmobiles are gone, but the library continues to provide services outside the physical buildings, providing visits to seniors residences and book deposits at schools and other institutions.

With all of the changes over the years, libraries are still an important part of the community, Comeau says.

"Libraries still hold great value for their communities," she says. "That we are still striving in a digital world and we've evolved

to be more than books while still keeping with our traditions, that is something to celebrate."

## Top Tree



**Weymouth library clerk Marguerite Thibault stands next to the library's Candy Cane Lane Christmas tree entry in the annual Festival of Trees at Sissiboo Landing. The tree was awarded first place by the judges.**

## AROUND THE BRANCHES

### Headquarters



From left, board chair Jimmy MacAlpine, board member Jean Brittain, union representatives Karen Comeau, Bonnie Doucette and Shannon Raynard signed the latest contract in September which runs until March 31, 2021.



Staff toured the library branches along the south shore during the September in-service. Left, staff posed for a photo during the visit to Clark's Harbour library.

### Clark's Harbour

Pre-teen and teenagers enjoy catching up with each other while playing games on the computer or just sitting and chatting.

### Digby

The branch has set up its temporary location in the Visitor Information Centre, 110 Montague Row, Digby. It opened in the new location on Dec. 3.



The Clark's Harbour Play Group is popular with lots of little ones stopping in for crafts and play time with friends.

### Lockeport

Lockeport received a \$500 donation from the Holy Cross Anglican Church in Lockeport. It will be used to help the library in areas of need.

### Pubnico

New full-time library clerk Mahala Sears has been busy preparing Christmas programming and decorating the branch for the holiday season.

### Shelburne

Shelburne Friends have their annual Christmas bake sale, Christmas table and silent auction.

### Westport

The branch has been trying to maintain regular hours despite the challenges posed by the ferry schedule changes associated with slip repairs.

### Weymouth

New slat walls are being installed at the branch to display art by the library entrance.

### Yarmouth

Public parking is now two hours maximum in the lot adjacent to the branch.



Shelburne library staff created a cozy fireside setting with red books from its book sale stash.