

Library Report

Compiled by
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Board profile

Kent Balish

One of the newest members of the Western Counties Regional Library board, Town of Lockeport Coun. Kent Balish is a retired educator, coach and fan of libraries.

"I joined our library board because of my keen interest in community development and its impact on 'the quality of lifestyle' in our communities," he says.

Born in a farm house in Central Argyle, Yarmouth County, Coun. Balish has lived in Lockeport most of his life, retiring there after a 37-year career. He brings a wealth of experience to the board, working in school libraries in Fort Simpson, in Canada's north, to Dubai, UAE.

He worked in education, supporting and renewing libraries from Canada to Texas to the Middle East. He developed his passion for education and libraries over this time, receiving the Prime Minister's Awards for Teaching Excellence and the Hugh A. Noble Distinguished Service Award from Nova Scotia Education and Early Childhood Development.

"I fondly remember the warmth and smiles of the librarians of Lockeport Elementary (School) and Lockeport Regional High School, Teachers College of Truro and at Acadia University," he says.

He would like libraries to evolve and modernize to meet the needs of everyone.

"Hopefully, our libraries will become a significant part of our future 'community development centres,'" he says. "Future libraries will be centres that will be built to inspire our citizens, excite our passions and develop and enhance our creativity."



Students from Lockeport Elementary School read some of the new books won by their school for having the highest percentage of library card holders among students and staff in October 2017. Schools will have the chance to win one of two boxes of books, French and English, again this October during Library Card Month.

It's Library Card Month

October is Library Card Month and Canadian Library Month, a time to celebrate, visit and use your public library.

"With the shortening of days, it is an ideal time to make use of your free library card and the services that come with it," says Western Counties Regional Library Director Erin Comeau. "During the month of October, there is the added bonus of winning some wonderful books."

The celebration is tied to Canadian Library Month with its theme *A Visit Will Get You Thinking*. Libraries serve as community cultural centres, hosting authors, art exhibits, book clubs, story hours and a variety of programs for all ages.

Branches offer wireless and wired Internet access, computers, books, magazines, movies, music, historical documents, online databases, and trained personnel to help you find what you seek.

Card holders can borrow and download eBooks, audiobooks and magazines anytime and from anywhere. This is a convenient option, especially for those who are unable to visit their library on a regular basis," says Comeau. "With a computer or mobile device, the library is available 24/7."

During the month of October, anyone who becomes a library member, or who is already a member, and uses their card to borrow an item can have their name entered into a draw for a collection of signed books by Nova Scotia authors provided by Coles Yarmouth.

The library is also challenging schools throughout the Tri-Counties to register 100 per cent of staff and students for library cards. Parents should be looking for registration forms arriving from school. The French and English schools with the highest registration percentage will win a box of new books from Scholastic Canada for its school library.

Library conference a resounding success

There was an enthusiastic response from library staff and board members who attended the 2018 Library Boards Association of Nova Scotia (LBANS)/Nova Scotia Library Association (NSLA) annual conference, Sept. 28-30, at the Rodd Grand Hotel and Conference Centre in Yarmouth.

"The conference went superbly," says Western Counties Regional Library Director Erin Comeau. "Library personnel and board members from across the province gathered in Yarmouth for a weekend of learning, inspiration and fun."

Western Counties Regional Library hosted the conference, and its team worked with NSLA and LBANS members to construct a diverse, interesting program with its theme *Be Bold!*

"We couldn't have asked for better; people were impressed with the variety of workshops and the selection of presenters," says Comeau.

The conference featured a keynote speech by Peace by Chocolate's Tareq Hadhad. Hadhad is a Syrian refugee, longtime peacekeeping advocate and living his new life with his entrepreneurial family in Antigonish, N.S. He is the founder of Peace by Chocolate and a medical researcher, and he is passionate about peace and entrepreneurship.

The program consisted of workshops



Syrian refugee, entrepreneur and conference keynote speaker Tareq Hadhad, right, shared his family's incredible journey as owners of a successful chocolate business in Syria to the total loss of their business and homes and life as refugees and rebirth thanks to Canadian kindness.

and presentations to encourage library employees and board members to think outside the box and work through their reservations and fears as they move towards a stronger future for libraries. From the pre-conference sessions on re-envisioning library service and cultural humility to conference sessions covering queering your library or managing small spaces, the conference offered guidance, ideas and insight into being bold as an institution.

"There is great value in bringing people together face-to-face to share related

experiences, thoughts and stories," says Comeau. "It is often in such settings where innovative ideas start to seed."

"If the excitement that was felt over the weekend is any indication, I believe many left on Sunday re-invigorated and inspired to shake things up a little in the world of library service."

Beyond the conference, people also enjoyed visiting the region, Comeau says.

"They really enjoyed shopping and discovering new restaurants in a refreshed downtown," she says.

AROUND THE BRANCHES

All Branches

The 2018 Adopt-A-Book campaign ended on June 30, 2018, raising \$35,954 and adopting 1,324 books. The financial total was the second highest in the history of the fundraiser that began in 1996 and runs every two years. Since its inception, Adopt-A-Book has raised \$345,527 and added 15,850 new books to library shelves. The next campaign will run from April 1 to June 30, 2020.

Barrington

Yumiko Vaughan was hired as Library Clerk I on July 18, 2018.

Clare

Marie Virginie Nyela is the new Library Clerk I - Reserve as of July 23, 2018.

Digby

Lockeport

Brittany Williams was hired as Library Clerk I - Reserve on July 9, 2018.

Pubnico

Eileen d'Eon left her Library Clerk III position on Sept. 15, 2018 for employment elsewhere.



One Book Nova Scotia author Kathleen Winter, left, chats after her reading of *Annabel* at the Yarmouth library on Saturday, Sept. 29.

Westport

Emily Carman was hired as Library Clerk I - Reserve on July 20, 2018.

Weymouth

Weymouth branch is gearing up for its annual Halloween bash on Oct. 25 which draws a huge crowd of young people, including youth volunteers.

Yarmouth

Leane Sweeney retired as Library Clerk I - Reserve on Sept. 30, 2018.