

Library Report

Compiled by Ian White



Library management has given out thousands of COVID-19 rapid test kits across the Tri-Counties over the past three months.

Library helps deliver rapid test kits

With help from its municipal partners, Western Counties Regional Library has delivered thousands of COVID-19 rapid test kits to rural communities in the Tri-Counties.

“We have been working hard to help Nova Scotia Health to deliver this important pandemic response tool to our communities,” says Library Executive Director Erin Comeau.

Starting in December, the library made the kits available at its branches, but supply was limited. When the omicron variant took hold in January, the province began providing more test kits to the libraries to distribute.

Because of restrictions imposed on libraries in response to the omicron variant and the irregularity of kit deliveries, the library worked with municipal partners to distribute kits outside of libraries as it received them.

“Our municipal partners and community organizations stepped up to help us find venues such as fire halls, arenas, Royal Canadian Legions, and church parking lots to use as distribution points,” Comeau says.

This enabled library management staff to provide kits in Freeport, Digby, St. Bernard, Saulnierville, Yarmouth, Pubnico, Barrington, Shelburne and Lockeport through late January, February and early March.

“People seemed very pleased to be able to get these kits for

free close to home,” says Public Relations Manager Ian White. “We even had people buy us coffee on very cold days handing out kits in parking lots.”

Systems Administrator Ryan McKenzie says people were thankful, but there was also a sense of relief when people received kits.

“It was a service,” he says. “The library was able to step in and fill the gap.”

With restrictions easing, the delivery of kits to the public shifted back to the library branches in the second week of March. On March 8, library branches in Digby, Weymouth, Meteghan, Yarmouth, Pubnico, Barrington, Clark’s Harbour and Shelburne had kits available near the library entrance. Westport library began offering the service on March 10 and Lockeport library on March 11.

The shift back to providing kits at the library branches is possible because the province is providing regular deliveries of the kits, the omicron variant wave has passed its peak, and the demand for kits by the public has leveled off, says Comeau.

“This combination of factors allows us to continue to support public health in the distribution of rapid test kits more widely in rural areas,” she says.

Library's rebranding journey begins

On Monday, Jan. 17, Western Counties Regional Library launched a new look and website, part of a rebranding process after nearly 50 years with the same look.

District Design Co. is the creative team for the rebrand, and RockFort Media designed the new accessible website.

"Since the design of the original logo nearly 50 years ago, our communities and our library have undergone a lot of growth and change," says Library Executive Director Erin Comeau.

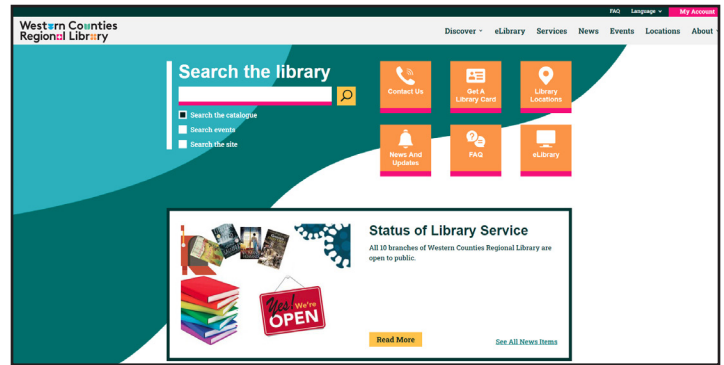
She says the rebranding better reflects today's public libraries, what they stand for, and how they are used.

"District Design did an extensive community survey in which we asked our communities what key words come to mind when they think of their library," Comeau says.

The four dominant words coming out of the survey were connection, learning, create and empower.

District attached a symbol and a colour to each word and incorporated them into the new logo. The colour palette is a balance of warm and cool tones representing optimism, vibrancy, ocean and earth.

This was integrated into the new website which is vibrant,



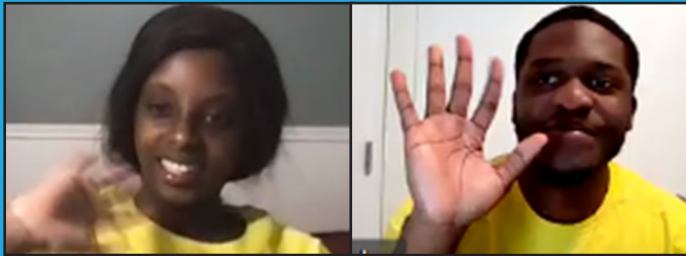
The library unveiled its new look, logo and website on Jan. 17.

simple and user friendly, Comeau says.

"We are excited about these changes and believe library users will enjoy the new look and the user-friendly website," Comeau says. "Just visit www.westerncounties.ca to see for yourself."

AROUND THE BRANCHES

Headquarters



Brenda Muthoni and Josh Ayuba of the Maritime Centre for African Dance presented a Zoom workshop featuring African dance, drumming, Afrobeats and storytelling on Feb. 16.

As part of African Heritage Month, the library offered a Zoom workshop on Feb. 16 by the Maritime Centre for African Dance, featuring African dance, drumming, Afrobeats and storytelling. It attracted a large number of school classes from across the region. "The students had a lot of fun dancing," says Jennifer Whittaker, a Grade Primary teacher at Meadowfields Community School in Yarmouth. "They made the connection that there is an African drum in the music room, and we are going to see if we can borrow it to try out the three drumming techniques."

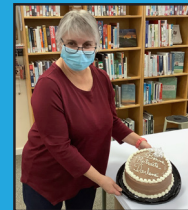


Right, Acquisitions Clerk Karen Doucet receives her 15-year work certificate from Lydia Hunsberger, Manager of Collections and Digital Services on Feb. 13.



Automation trainer Mahala Sears, second from left, organized a library team to enter Coldest Night of the Year fundraising walk on Feb. 26. The team raised \$1,295 for SHYFT Youth Services Society and Tri-County Women's Centre.

Clare



Library clerk Darlene Gaudet enjoys a retirement cake made by library patron Margaret Jeddry on March 3. Darlene officially retires on March 31.

Digby

The library created a passive program to accompany a February Grab-&-Go in which children had to follow polar bear tracks in the library to find the polar bear.

Lockeport

Library clerk Danielle MacAuley-Williams retired March 12 after 14 years with the library.

Pubnico



Above right, library clerk Bobbiann Markle receives her 5-year work certificate from branch manager Lydia Hunsberger on Feb. 1.

Westport



Westport library has a new accessible front door.