

Library Report



Board profile

Kathy Bourque

Representing the Municipality of the District of Argyle on the Western Counties Regional Library Board, Kathy Bourque brings a wealth of volunteer and work experience to the board.

"I volunteer my time with the East Side Community Centre, Pubnico Light Monument Society, Immaculate Conception Catholic Church, Conseil acadien de Par-en-Bas, West Pubnico Funeral Home, and any other organizations that I can help out," Bourque says. She was first elected to Argyle council in 2008.

The resident of Middle East Pubnico worked for Desjardins Credit Unions for 12 years in Quebec while her husband Gilles served in the military, moving back to Pubnico in 2001. She worked for RBC locally for 13 years before becoming the bookkeeper at Paroisse Notre-Dame de l'Assomption.

"I have chosen to serve on the board of Western Counties Regional Library because it is my duty and have gladly accepted to help in any way," she says. "Libraries are like keys, they unlock information, learning, development, and they are part of the community."

She believes that working with other board members, the board can help the library overcome roadblocks and continue to change to meet the needs of the community.

"Libraries are here to stay," she says. "They will grow and adapt to new ways of educating the public."

Library offers basic skills workshop, training for phones, tablets and more



Pictured left, Manager of Programs and Services Mahala Sears will be one of the instructors helping people learn the basics about their phone, tablet or laptop. Pictured right, Nicholas Cook will provide older adults with one-on-one training.

Western Counties Regional Library is offering free workshops and one-on-one training to help people get more comfortable using their electronic devices.

"The library staff see people coming in who need help with their phones, tablets and other devices," says Mahala Sears, manager of programs and services.

The Discover Your Device workshop is two 1.5- to two-hour sessions. The first session will teach participants the basics, including how to set up and use key features, and how to search the Internet, and download useful applications. The one-on-one training is available through appointments. Details about the programs are available at westerncounties.ca or by calling your branch library.

"People will need to bring their own devices to the workshop," Sears says.

She says people will leave the workshop session with basic skills and can get support by calling or emailing the instructors.

The second workshop session will dig a little deeper into what their device can do, reinforcing what participants learned in the first session. The session will also teach people how to be safe online, video chat, and attach files and photos to emails and texts.

There will be time for the instructors to help participants troubleshoot any issues

they have encountered.

There will be workshops at the Barrington, Digby, Clare, Shelburne and Yarmouth libraries.

Over the next four months, older adults can work with a one-on-one trainer to enhance their skills on mobile phones, tablets, computers and other Internet connected devices.

Nicholas Cook provides training material and information to help older adults find their way in the digital world. He is available for one-on-one sessions mainly at the Yarmouth library, but also monthly sessions at Digby and Shelburne libraries.

"The training sessions are usually about an hour," Cook says. "But, I will give as much time as needed if the time is available."

His role is to be patient and work with people to overcome any difficulties they may be having with digital technology, he says.

"Everybody can struggle if they haven't had the experience," he says.

He says people need to practice on the devices. He provides handouts to help people work through challenges once they leave a session.

"The handouts address various subjects related to using technology," he says.

The program ends on May 31. Both projects are funded by @NS.

New mobile hotspot units boost Internet access

The library's 10 new mobile Wi-Fi hotspot units will allow more people to have free access to the Internet.

All 10 Western Counties Regional Library branches have a unit to borrow, offering unlimited data through its connection to a Bell Mobility cellular tower. The units are in the library's online catalogue.

"The borrower needs a device, a computer, tablet, phone or Smart TV," says Shannon Raynard, the library's training and development manager.

She says a charged, mobile hotspot unit is easy to use. Users press the menu button once to turn it on, and once more to see the Wi-Fi network and password information. Enter that information into your device and start accessing the Internet.

The mobile hotspot unit is small and portable, roughly 10 centimetres by 5 centimetres (4 inches by two inches).

Raynard believes there are all kinds of uses for it. It is ideal for those who cannot afford Internet access or people who don't have immediate access to the Internet because of circumstances such as a recent move.

Borrowers have to be 18 years or older and have a Western Counties Regional Library card. They can borrow a unit for up to four weeks with three renewals if there are no holds on the unit by other people.

"For those who forget to return the device, the library can



Shannon Raynard of Western Counties Regional Library with a Kajeet mobile Wi-Fi hotspot unit, which gives people free access to the Internet.

turn it off," Raynard says.

The units were provided through a partnership between @ NS and Nova Scotia regional libraries. The devices use servers in the United States, and some Canadian content may not be available to users.

AROUND THE BRANCHES

Headquarters

Manager of Programs and Services Mahala Sears organized a library team (Mahala Sears, Karen Comeau, Joanna Jarvis, Lydia Hunsberger, Jennifer and Ian White) to enter Coldest Night of the Year fundraising walk on Feb. 25. The team raised \$2,530 for SHYFT Youth Services Society.

Barrington

A white sign with black text listing the hours of operation for the Barrington Municipal Library. The sign is titled "Barrington Municipal Library Hours of Operation" and lists days from Tuesday to Monday with their respective hours.

Day	Hours
Tuesday	12:30 to 8 p.m.
Wednesday	12:30 to 8 p.m.
Thursday	10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Friday	10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Saturday	10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Sunday	Closed
Monday	Closed

Barrington library's new hours kicked in on March 7, and the new library hours sign is up outside the branch.

Clark's Harbour

The library had its first school visit in February in a long time. More classes are planning visits.

Digby

The library has new blinds to stop the sun from shining on the patron and staff computer screens.

The library's puzzle exchange has been very popular as well as a "community puzzle" that all the patrons work on. One child, who is a regular patron, told his mother he wanted to go to the library for "puzzle time." They stop in regularly to do this.



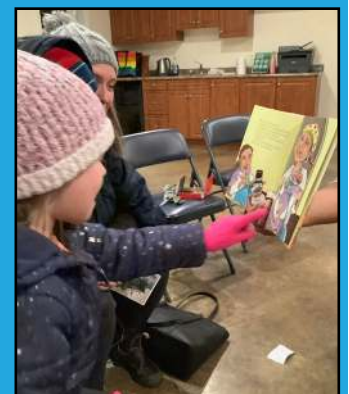
Digby library clerk Joanna Jarvis, left, receives her 15-year work certificate (as of Jan. 21) from branch manager Shannon Raynard.

Lockeport

The library received a cheque for \$500 from Holy Cross Anglican Church in Lockeport. The funds will be used to buy a colourful carpet for the children's area.

Weymouth

Both Digby and Weymouth libraries hosted an *African Nova Scotia Stories* program that was organized and presented by staff from Turning the Tide. Hosted by Carmelita Johnson and Shawnalynn Cromwell, this celebration of African Heritage Month featured Carmelita Johnson reading from the works of Shauntay Grant.



Carmelita Johnson, left, reads from the works of Shauntay Grant at Weymouth library on Feb. 14. Right, a family participates in the reading.