

Library Report

Lovers of reading enjoy big savings

Avid readers have discovered the library has the books they need and can save them a bundle in the process.

"I have had a passion for reading since I first learned to read," says Kaitlin Smith. "I have always been a reader and been known as such to friends and family. I love fantasy and sci-fi (science fiction) especially, but will dip my toe into other genres on occasion."

She says she likes to try different types of books. The library's selection allows her to try something she may not like without spending money.

For Courtney Boudreau, her passion for reading started early, too.

"I have always loved to read even as a little kid," says Boudreau. "Growing up I used to read a children's chapter book to fall asleep. I was a big fan of the Babysitter's Club."

While Smith is a long-time library user, Boudreau only started using the library.

"I believe one of my aunts set up a library card for me as a child," says Smith. "If I had to guess I'd say five years old."

"I always knew the library existed, but I only started using it in May," says Boudreau.

"I was always hesitant to use the library for fear of not remembering to return a book



Avid reader Courtney Boudreau picks up her books she had requested from the Yarmouth library. She estimates she is saving \$230 a month by borrowing instead of buying.

and fear of damaging a book."

A New Year's resolution, money, and the advice of a friend guided Boudreau to the library and its many resources and services.

"I began reading more when I made a New Year's resolution to read 100 books in a year," she says, adding the money needed to meet that goal was out of reach.

"A dear friend who works at the library listened to my fears and addressed them," Boudreau says. "I had shared my goal with her and expressed how I was finding it very difficult to find the finances to continue to buy new books."

She learned there are no fines for late returns at the library.

Through her friend, Boudreau learned how to order books, track them, receive updates and notices, and renew her books.

Smith uses the library for two main reasons.

"The two biggest factors for using the library as my source of books have been saving money and supporting the library," says Smith. "It is so critical, now more than ever, that local libraries exist and be well funded. They are a pillar of the community and offer many important resources."

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Borrowing from the library pays dividends

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Both estimate they have saved hundreds to thousands of dollars by using the library.

“Over my lifetime I would say hundreds, if not thousands, of dollars easily,” says Smith. “In May alone, I read six books through the library via Libby. With some quick research that cost in eBooks would have been \$80 and physical hardcover copies would be \$185.”

‘Over my lifetime I would say (I’ve saved) hundreds, if not thousands, of dollars easily.’ — Kaitlin Smith

“I was averaging around 10 books a month,” says Boudreau. “At roughly \$23 a book, that saves me \$230 a month!”

“I have also discovered that a lot of the books have an

audiobook version as well,” she adds. “I plan to save even more money in the future by borrowing those and cancelling my monthly audiobook subscription.”

Boudreau has also passed on her love for the library to her four children.

“They do enjoy visiting (the library) often, and we always go to the events that the library puts on,” Boudreau says.

Wi-Fi units let users take the Internet with them

The library’s 10 new mobile Wi-Fi hotspot units will allow people to take free access to the Internet anywhere they go.

All 10 Western Counties Regional Library branches have a unit to borrow, offering 80 GB of data through its connection to an Eastlink 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. Each unit comes with a user guide to help people connect the device to the Internet. The connecting device does need to have a web browser such as Google, Safari, Opera or Firefox to accept the device’s terms and conditions.

The mobile hotspot unit is small and portable.

Raynard believes there are all kinds of uses for it. It is ideal for those who cannot afford Internet access or people who



Ryan McKenzie of Western Counties Regional Library holds one of the library’s new mobile Wi-Fi hotspot units.

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 three 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 turn it off,” Raynard says.

The units were provided through a partnership between @NS and Nova Scotia regional libraries. Unlike the library’s initial mobile Wi-Fi units, these devices can access all Canadian content.

AROUND THE BRANCHES

Headquarters



Western Counties Regional Library headquarters staff celebrated bookkeeper Carol Surette's, seated right, retirement. She received her 25-year work certificate from library director Erin Comeau, left, and her retirement cake on March 27 at library headquarters. She officially retired May 29.



Pictured left, Yarmouth MLA Nick Hilton, centre, receives a tour of library headquarters from library director Erin Comeau, right on April 30. Pictured right, Argyle MLA Colton LeBlanc, left, received a similar tour on Feb. 24. The tours were to provide local MLAs with a greater understanding of the challenges libraries are facing in Nova Scotia.



A new cement pad and bike rack was installed at library headquarters in Yarmouth in early June.

Barrington



Barrington library launched its seed library on April 9 with a seed swap. The seed library includes information on saving seeds for biodiversity and community self-sufficiency.

Clare



Grade 7 students from École secondaire de Clare stopped by the Clare library to view their exhibit on June 5.

The branch hosted an art exhibit highlighting the work of Grade 7 students from École secondaire de Clare. The exhibit, "Les coraux nous racontent", included drawings and sculptures inspired by corals. It was admired by patrons, young and old. Many remarked how bright and colourful the artwork was and how it brought life to the library. The project was led by local artist Jay LeBlanc as part of the GénieArts program by La fédération culturelle acadienne de la Nouvelle-Écosse (FéCANE).

Digby

The branch's plant swap was very well received by the patrons. They loved that it was a swap and not a sale. Pictured right, a patron is all smiles after swapping out one of her old plants for a new one.



AROUND THE BRANCHES

Lockeport



Despite some wet weather, a good crowd turned out for the Friends of the Lockeport Library plant and bake sale in May. The event raised \$702 for the group which supports the library.

Shelburne



New toys and a new art project arrived just in time for a busy week at McKay Memorial Library in Shelburne in late March. The staff enjoyed sharing the new activities with young patrons, a Sparks group, and its first ever Pre-Primary class visit.

Weymouth



Digby MLA Jill Balser, second from left, attended a program on using library apps and cybersecurity on May 16.



Programs and Services Manager Breanne Muise, standing, provides guidance during the All About Apps and Cybersecurity program at the Weymouth library on May 16. The program discussed how to safely download and use apps, and general cybersecurity while using your device or browsing the web.

- Weymouth library users are happy they can print from their own devices using the wireless printers and use the library photocopier.

Yarmouth



Systems Administrator Ryan McKenzie, right, discussed library services during the Seniors Expo at NSCC Burrigge Campus on May 21. The outreach opportunity allowed library staff to highlight the many services for older adults.



Students from Port Maitland Consolidated School try out the library's Sphero robots during a visit to Yarmouth library on May 28.