

Director's Report

Sechelt Public Library

November 28, 2020 – January 29, 2021

By Leianne Emery

Introduction

December 2020 and January 2021. Wow. Busy as a beaver. Maxed out. Not enough time in the day. True, true and true – for all of us! Patron count is up, time needed to spend with patrons is up, cataloguing time is up, business activity behind the public doors is up. But, our staff are resilient and continue to push through their workloads. Chocolate helps. Extra hours by our regular staff and many hours from our casual staff are contributing greatly to our physical and mental ability to still serve the public and continue the business of being a library.

This Director's Report will be the shortest in my history – some of you may be happy about that!

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1. Transit Tickets

We continue to sell transit tickets (adult monthly pass, seniors/children monthly pass, books of ten) from the library. Sales are up. We had wanted to only accept cash so that we could generate 100% revenue from sales – but that proved frustrating to many patrons who, these days, don't carry cash. We now take cash and debit. A cash transaction is 100% revenue to us and a debit transaction is made through a "square" and the fees are \$0.10 per transaction. We don't take Credit cards as the transaction cost is 3.5% of the entire transaction.

2. Donations to Shorncliff, Totem Lodge and Sechelt Hospital 2S

Our second donation of books (regular print and LARGE print) and audiobooks was made in December. These three facilities are very happy to have them. Donated items are personally selected from our weeded collection by Janette, who also manages the packaging and deliveries .

3. Live Interactive Storytime

December 22 was our first "Live (on Zoom) Interactive Storytime" with Talia as the host and "Sheepy", the cohost. Not mentioning any names as to who Sheepy is, but Claire is usually busy during that filming hour as well... As we cannot put a copy of the live zoom video onto YouTube, as there are children participating, we also film in private on Fridays so we can put that version onto YouTube. Live Interactive ZOOM Storytime is every Tuesday at 10:30am and children love it.

4. Opening Hours:

We are now open on Saturdays! Staffing is a stretch and takes a lot of Casual hours to accommodate.

5. Volunteers:

The good news is that, because we have just 4 staff here on a Saturday, we can also accommodate two volunteers in our staff space. As we are so crammed into our workspace, kitchen and washroom area, it was not possible to have any volunteers back here with us as we normally would have during the week. Most of the previous group of volunteers are not ready to return for personal and health reasons. We will hopefully have two in total working on Saturdays from now on. Last Saturday Rose trained the first one on our new COVID safety protocol – a very necessary step in Worksafe BC compliance. Cleaning of CD's and processing and laminating book covers will be the focus.

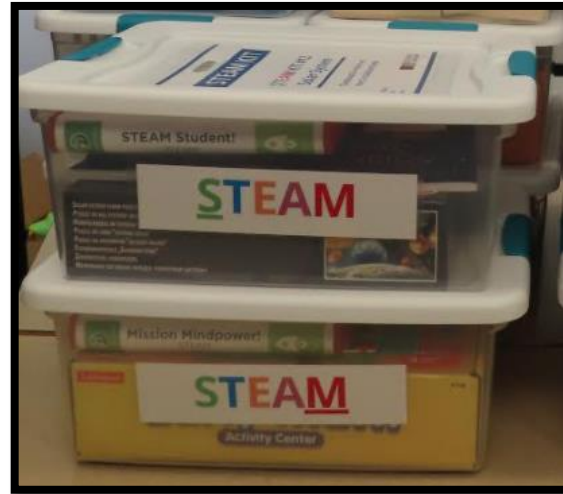
6. SD 46 Partnerships for Technology

Partnerships with SD 46 in Technology Training for Elementary Students has Talia busy a couple of times per month. She has been giving ZOOM talks to 100's of students on STEAM kits, coding and related items of interest we have in the library. Students are interactive and very interested and Talia is doing a great job. This is great exposure for the library and opens another audience to what we can offer them.

7. STEAM kits

STEAM = Science, technology, engineering, art and math. We allocated \$3600 of our technology grant toward the development of STEAM kits. We felt it was important to challenge young children with intrigue towards future forward opportunities and possibilities. 24 kits have been developed in total and they are amazing! They took Talia an enormous amount of time to research, design, purchase and

package – and now, they are in the process of being catalogued – another few hundred hours between Rose, Janette and Teresa. We will have instructional videos and a catalogue of all kits on the website eventually. The first two STEAM kits fully catalogued are already out with two eager young patrons and have holds placed by other young patrons.



8. Sunshine Coast Community Foundation

We recently completed a lengthy Grant Report for the Sunshine Cost Community Foundation's \$5000 COVID grant to the Sechelt Library last year. We are grateful for their decision to support us last year.

9. Sunshine Coast Regional District Board Appointments

In a letter just received from the SCRd, they officially advised the Dec 10, 2020 appointments of the following representatives to the Sechelt Public Library Board for 2021:

SCRd Board Representative - Chair Lori Pratt

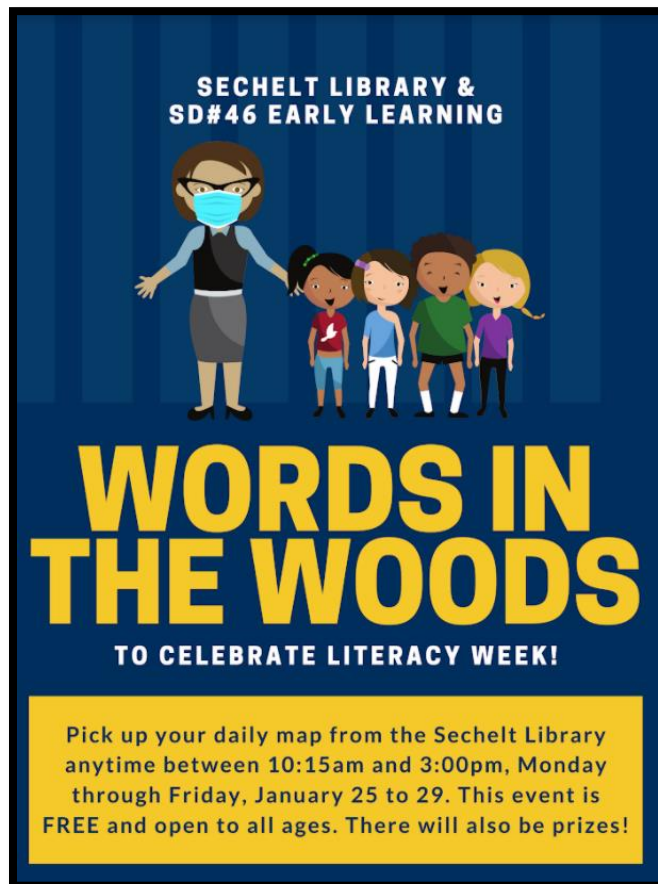
SCRd Alternative Representative – Director Leonard Lee

We welcome both of them to our Library Board for 2021.

10. Literacy Week (January 25-29)

Literacy week was a smashing success this year! As part of the Sunshine Coast Literacy Coalition, we partnered with SD46 early learning and put together 5 different Story Walks for each day of Literacy week. Specific books were chosen, purchased (in two's), taken apart, laminated, hole punched, and put up on trees, branches, posts and fences (through sleet and rain) to create an in-motion walking tour of a book to be read in an outdoor setting. Every day this week, early in the morning, a new story was put up outdoors much to the delight of many children. Question sheets for each walk were also created and a different prize for each day was available to everyone. Here are some families coming into the library to

pick up their question sheets and prizes and then heading out for the Story Walks. Great partnership with SD46!



11. Programs

As difficult as it is to have programs under such strict provincial health guidelines and provincial orders, we still manage to create some great programming for our patrons. In December we had an amazing production of “A Dickens Christmas” which was filmed in our library by the beautifully decorated-for-the-occasion custom shelving (great job Gillian). In addition, we held card making classes for adults and for younger children and their families. These classes are very popular and a big thank-you to Ruth Moore for contributing to their success.

Our Program calendar is getting full for the month of February and information is available on our website in the “Events Calendar “ button on the Home Page.



Here is a glimpse of our physical Program Board.



12. Social Media

I encourage you to get your phones, tablets or computers set up to receive one of our social media (Facebook, Twitter and Instagram). The content is professionally presented and will help keep you apprised of some of the great content we provide. Remember...we do have free tech assistance...

13. Book Displays

We have been experimenting with book displays throughout the library. Example: Our cookbook collection is extraordinary (thanks Beth) but they are all on a shelf. As cookbooks are very visual, we set up two tables full of cookbooks near the reference desk before Christmas to see what would happen and they literally fly off the tables. A rewarding location experiment! We also have two other current displays which will change continually – a music display (thanks Lorinda and Claire) and “Launch into Space” (thanks Jeff and Beth).

14. SCRD Budget Round 1 Budget Presentation

Our revised 5-year budget was sent to the SCRD on January 11th as well as to the funders. SCRD Budget Round 1 presentations will take place on Monday Feb 1, Tuesday Feb 2 and Friday Feb 5. We will be presenting on Monday Feb 1 at 9:30am. The Funders (SCRD, DOS and SIGD) are also reviewing our new numbers at the same time.

Here are the Speaking Notes I will deliver at Budget Round 1:

SCRD Budget Round 1 Monday February 1, 2021, 9:30am, via zoom

1. Good morning everyone
2. Thank-you
 - a. Funders - the District of Sechelt, the Sechelt Indian Government District, and you, the Sunshine Coast Regional District areas A, B and D. As a group, you are the largest funder of the Sechelt Public Library
 - b. Our patrons listening in from Egmont, Pender Harbour, Halfmoon Bay, Sechelt and Roberts Creek. Hopefully we have affected your life in a positive way – especially through 2020 and COVID 19
3. 11 months ago, I was hired - not for my library background - but for my business background.
 - a. Although I am usually all about the numbers and the business model – and the library certainly functions as a business - I now also understand this about libraries:
 - i. If you want to go from “good” to “great”, as a library, you must be so much more than numbers or books on a shelf – you must be actively

involved in affecting the well-being of your patrons and in building your community

4. If I look at 2020 and measure our library and our staff on being “great” in effecting the lives of our patrons, here is what I know.
 - i. We made a difference to the patron who could not find anywhere to fax his organ donor documents but the library
 - ii. We made a difference to the patron who had Dementia and could not remember how to get home but he knew our library staff could help him
 - iii. We made a difference to the woman, who, after years of searching on her own, we were able to help find her family’s birth records in Italy
 - iv. We made a difference to the patron in Pender Harbour who was struggling with the technology of her new phone and could not connect to her family and to the gentleman in Halfmoon Bay who ALMOST got scammed
 - v. We made a difference to a very financially stressed couple who we helped connect to government benefits
 - vi. We made a difference to the 100’s of patrons who do not have a computer at home but could come to the library and use ours – and get help.
 - vii. We made a difference to the 100’s of patrons we taught to use ZOOM this year
 - viii. We made a difference to a lovely older patron, who leaned over and whispered in my ear, “I think you have saved lives by just being open”.

5. If I look at 2020 and measure our library on being “great” in being a builder of the community, we didn’t do it alone. We partnered with many organizations to implement the best of ideas for our community members:
 - i. The Pender Harbour Reading Centre (where we contribute almost \$3000 per year towards internet costs and couriers bringing books back and forth between Sechelt Library and Pender Harbour). A vital link to our library for some patrons.
 - ii. The District of Sechelt in the COVID 19 Emergency Preparedness Task Force. Thank God we didn’t have to go the last step in that plan.
 - iii. Elder College in supporting adult learning and in supporting many of their seniors with almost 300 private one-on-one technology assistance sessions
 - iv. SD46 in showing 100’s of elementary students that they can be excited about science, technology, engineering, arts and math
 - v. Literacy Coalition and SD46 Strong Start in supporting literacy and learning for younger children and their families.
 - vi. Volunteer Income Tax Programs where we offer a safe space for volunteers who do taxes - for free - to qualifying patrons.
 - vii. Shorncliff, Totem Lodge and Sechelt Hospital 2 South where we supply and donate specially selected materials on an ongoing basis

6. Behind every “great” library, there is team that make this integral hub of the community possible – equalized and free for all.

Part of that team is the staff (the largest line item in the budget):

- During our three months of Takeout Service, our staff personally chose and filled almost 4500 bags full of books and other library items for our patrons.
- To comply with current health regulations, our staff wear masks up to 7 hours a day to physically assist over 350 patrons per day. The demands on our staff time have increased significantly but it is balanced with the knowledge that, for some, the library staff are the only human connection many patrons have all week.

The other part of that team is our Funders:

- This is a Budget Meeting – so let’s discuss MONEY.
- Financiers will usually balance value with money
 - Even if you personally do not frequent the library, there is much value to your family, friends or neighbors – whether it is with physical or online materials, technology assistance or just a human connection.
 - The supply of money, for some, has been hit. We’ve all risen to challenges during COVID 19. In 2020, Sechelt Library spent as responsibly as possible - and we applied for as many grants as possible.
 - In this respect,
 - we have been able to secure capital fund reserve for the first time ever to buy new computers and other capital costs not funded by our funders
 - we have revised the 5-year budget to reduce expenditures as much as possible while still providing the essential services the community deserves.
 - 2021 ask is very low to recognize any financial stresses you may have but also because the Sechelt Library is able, because of grants we applied for, to contribute almost \$45k of 2020 surplus to 2021 revenues

So, in conclusion, thank-you for making libraries and reading centers on the Coast possible. We are, and will continue to be, the best stewards of your financial contributions.

On behalf of myself, our staff and our Board, we thank you for your continued partnership with the Sechelt Public Library.

END.