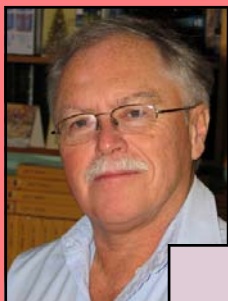


Library Report

Compiled by Ian White



Board profile

Ken Langille

One of the newest members of the board of Western Counties Regional Library is a book and library lover.

“I love books, especially old books,” says Ken Langille. “I absolutely thirst for knowledge.”

A teacher at Yarmouth Consolidated Memorial High School and one of the new members of the Town of Yarmouth Council, he has always wanted to be on the library’s board. Although he is new to the board, he is familiar with the regional library, having visited most of the library’s 10 branches.

He cites the quote “Knowledge is Power,” and he adds: “Libraries I see as the guardians of that knowledge.”

As he comes on the board, one of his goals is to increase the library’s profile in the community, particularly among young people and the teaching community.

He believes the love of books starts at a young age, and he hopes to help ensure that love of books is nurtured through outreach programs for young people.

“We have to educate the whole area about what’s available at the library,” he says, adding his hope is to start with area teachers.

He says that teachers are younger and may not be aware of the services available at the library. He would love to see the library promoted and have the library conduct in-services for the teachers to explain the role a public library can play in their lives and the lives of the students.

Library celebrates 40 years

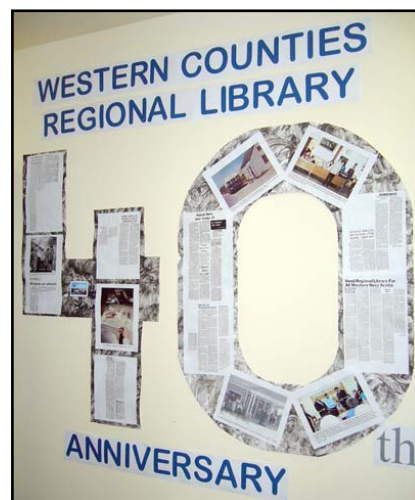
Western Counties Regional Library is celebrating its 40th anniversary in 2009 with displays, a contest and other events.

One of the youngest regional library systems in Nova Scotia, the formation of the regional library on Oct. 29, 1969 brought library services to an area that had never had it outside of communities such as Yarmouth, Digby and Shelburne.

“There wasn’t a strong tradition of public libraries in the region,” says Trudy Amirault, the library’s regional director who has been with the library for 34 years. “Forty years ago, we started from scratch.”

To mark the anniversary, displays containing old newspaper articles chronicling the struggles to bring the regional library into existence and its eventual launch, and a variety of photographs are on display at all 10 branches.

The library has set up a contest to find the oldest regional library card. People are asked to dig through their shoe boxes under the bed or other storage areas to see if they can come up with the oldest card. Initially the cards were paper stock and listed the branch along with a two or three digit card number – the lower the



The staff at the Shelburne branch of Western Counties Regional Library has set up this clever display of old newspaper articles and photographs to mark the regional library’s 40th anniversary.

number, the older the card.

“I’m looking forward to seeing some of the old cards,” says Amirault, adding there have been at least four or five versions of the card over the past 40 years.

Every branch will mark the official anniversary on Oct. 29 by serving cake, offering tours of the branches and showing a mini-documentary on the formation of the regional library.

Newest librarian seeking a name

Western Counties Regional Library needs help naming its newest librarian. The newest staff member is a puppet who will be introducing programs and making appearances at the library’s 10 branches.

The library is inviting children under 12 years of age to submit a name at any of the library’s branches. The child whose entry is chosen will be announced on March 3.

Corporate help ensures Library Card Month success

On Oct. 31, Western Counties Regional Library concluded a solid Library Card Month campaign that focused on attracting new patrons. The library welcomed 526 new members during Library Card Month, 26 patrons more than our goal of 500 new members.

The library maximized its publicity with blanket distribution of a special news insert in the Trading Post, weekly editorial and advertising coverage in newspapers and on radio, a strong Web presence and a series of special events. The library exceeded its goal of registering 500 new library cardholders and maintained its profile at regional elementary schools. As of Oct. 30, the library's membership stood at 19,904 or 33 per cent of residents of Digby, Shelburne and Yarmouth counties.

The library continued to expand its marketing approach, going into area elementary schools, setting up a one-day blitz at Wal-Mart in Yarmouth and working with the Yarmouth Mariners Junior A hockey team. The entire coaching staff and team arrived at the library to sign up for library cards on Oct. 2 to kick off the campaign. The month solidified the partnership between the two organizations throughout the hockey season.

Public response to Library Card Month was positive in large part due to the provision of a grand prize of a laptop computer. Scholastic Library Publishing provided the library with two large boxes of books, one French and one English, as prizes for the two schools that had the highest percentage of library card holders among students and staff by the end of the month. These books became part of the winning school's library (Weymouth Consolidated School and Digby Neck Consolidated).

Library staff works hard to promote the library and increase library card registrations during Library Card Month, but the sponsorship provided by Transcontinental Media in the form of printed materials was vital to get that message out to the public. Transcontinental Media provides the Library Card Month insert in its Trading Post weekend

publication delivered to every home, a Web banner ad on NovaNewsNow.com, contest prizes and advertising support. This support is complemented by radio public service announcements and weekly air time provided by CJLS and Tusk Sales and Service which helps drive the message home.



Paulette Sweeney-Goodwin, right, of the Yarmouth Toastmasters Club presents Western Counties Regional Library Director Trudy Amirault with a cheque for \$250 on Thursday, Dec. 4. The money was used to buy new books for the Yarmouth branch of the library.

Toastmasters mark seven-year anniversary with donation to library

Yarmouth Toastmasters Club marked the seventh anniversary of its charter by donating \$250 to the Izaak Walton Killam Memorial Library.

"We're pleased to be able to give back to the library," says Paulette Sweeney-Goodwin, a Toastmasters member who was part of the original charter group.

Specializing in helping people improve their public speaking and leadership skills, Toastmasters International Club 4653 received its charter status in December 2001 after a four-year effort by people such as Sweeney-Goodwin to attract the required 20 members.

The group approached regional library director Trudy Amirault about having the library host Toastmasters, a partnership that Sweeney-Goodwin said fit nicely with the vision of both organizations.

"There were so many links there," she says. "Trudy saw the benefits right away."

The group was placed under the umbrella of the Yarmouth library's regular programming, and the library provided its program room and publicity for the group's meetings.

"It was another program we could offer that would benefit the community," Amirault explains.

Staffing Updates

Kelly-Anne MacNeil, Headquarters Student Assistant, left Headquarters as of Oct. 11.

Sharlie Burnie, Yarmouth Student Assistant, left her position on Oct. 18 to take the Headquarters Student Assistant position.

Jane Roycroft was hired beginning Oct. 27 as the Yarmouth library 15-hour clerk.

Katie Trefry was hired as of Oct. 31 as Yarmouth Student Assistant.

Heather Gavel, a Yarmouth library 20-hour clerk, returned to work on Dec. 1 after being off on Long Term Disability for almost two years. Welcome back, Heather!