



# Library Report

Compiled by Ian White



## Board profile

**Elizabeth Arenburg**

For the Western Counties Regional Library's newest board member, the library has always been a part of her life and she would like it to be part of everyone's lives.

"The library is one of the best things we've got going in Yarmouth," Elizabeth Arenburg says. She is the Yarmouth Public Library and Museum representative on the board, stepping into the position after Audrey Kenney retired in the fall of 2006.

Her father Dr. Bob Caldwell was an avid supporter and reader and this trait was passed on to his youngest daughter.

After growing up in Yarmouth and leaving, Elizabeth returned to Yarmouth with her family in tow to make it her home again, joining the board of the YPL. More than 15 years later, she is still an active board member and has taken on the additional task of being part of the team guiding the Western Counties Regional Library.

Since joining the regional board of directors, she has been surprised by the scope of the regional library after meeting and working with her colleagues from Digby, Shelburne and Yarmouth counties.

"It's more far-reaching than you realize, the whole system is really well organized," she says. The board's focus has been on the funding crisis facing the regional library, and she hopes that sustained pressure by the region on the province will result in a new funding formula. She is working toward ensuring the regional library is well used and recognized for its importance by the community.

One of her main objectives as a board member is to work towards getting the Department of Education and the community as a whole to recognize what an asset the regional library is.

"It's a great facility and really should be showcased," she says.



Pat Dempsey photo/Transcontinental Media Inc.

**Shelley Collings, Sales Manager, Fundy Division, Transcontinental Media and Ian White of Western Counties Regional Library present Burnley Atkinson, patron of the Barrington Municipal Library, with his brand new Toshiba laptop from NovaNewsNow.com. Burnley Atkinson won the draw for the laptop after signing up for a library card during Library Card Month in October. Other prize winners were Justin Doucette, six-month subscription to Digby Courier; Jade Nickerson, six-month subscription to Shelburne Coast Guard; and Angel Stark, a six-month subscription to Yarmouth Vanguard.**

## Library Card Month a huge success

Thanks to the support of Transcontinental Media, CJLS, Tusk Sales and Service, the students of the Nova Scotia Community College and many others, Western Counties Regional Library had a hugely successful library card month registering 765 new card holders in October. The regional library has 21,600 members in Digby, Shelburne and Yarmouth counties and that means 36 per cent of the population has a library card.

Transcontinental Media provided sponsorship valued at over \$8,000 which included a grand prize of a laptop computer and secondary prizes of three six-month subscriptions to one of the local newspapers. Transcontinental also printed a special supplement that went to every home in Digby, Shelburne and Yarmouth counties in addition to four full-page ads in all three of its regional newspapers. CJLS and Tusk Sales and Service provided airtime on the local radio station and students from NSCC voluntarily spent a day registering more than 110 card holders.

# Surveys show genealogy tourists have staying power

Surveys conducted by members of the South West Nova Scotia Genealogy Circuit are showing that genealogy tourists spend more time and money in the area than the average tourist.

“The user surveys submitted by our members show that over half of the users were from Nova Scotia and New England,” says Trudy Amirault, Western Counties Regional Library Director. The surveys were issued to visitors at the circuit locations.

The surveys revealed that 25 per cent of these visitors were coming to the province for the first time, 69 per cent stayed in hotels, motels or bed and breakfasts, and the average length of stay was just under seven days. More than half of the respondents planned to visit more than one genealogical research centre.

“The user survey shows that there is a definite economic

impact from genealogy tourists, both in terms of accommodations used and length of stay,” Amirault says.

Early feedback from visitors reinforces the fact that the deep roots of the region are a huge asset, says Bernice d’Entremont of the Musée acadien et Archives de Pubnico-Ouest.

Many visitors to the museum were from New England and very interested in their Acadian roots, she says.

“They are in a world with limited knowledge of their roots, but we know their roots,” d’Entremont explains.

A surprise to circuit members was the high percentage of respondents who had heard of the genealogy circuit before their trip – 43 per cent.

“We were pleased with the exposure we did get,” says Wally Buchanan of the Shelburne County Archives and Genealogical Society. “It helps make the public aware of what

## Task force news greeted with cautious optimism

The chairman of the Western Counties Regional Library Board believes the announcement of a task force to look into a new funding formula for libraries is a step in the right direction. But, he hopes the province understands the need to provide adequate funding while the task force completes its work.

Gary Archibald said he is pleased to hear that the Minister of Education has the support of the Cabinet to form a task force to review the operational funding of public libraries in Nova Scotia. He adds library funding over the past couple of years has not kept pace with expenses so a study of the funding formula and base amount the province contributes offers optimism for the future.

While happy to hear the task force is moving forward, Archibald hopes the minister reviews the funding offered this year and looks at increasing the provincial share for the coming year to cover the interim period.

## Staffing Updates

Leanne Mullen left her four-hour-per-position at the Weymouth Branch Library after two years. She has agreed to stay on as Reserve.

Evan Lawson began as Student Assistant in the Yarmouth branch on Nov. 14, replacing Laura Duncanson.

## Read to Me



Ian White photo  
**RCMP Const. Mark Connell reads to the young participants at the Read to Me Jamboree provincial launch at Burridge Campus, NSCC in Yarmouth on Oct. 1. All 10 branches held jamborees designed to help families enrich their child’s early years with books and reading. It is a practical and effective response to the province’s high incidence of child poverty and low literacy levels.**

we had available.”

The South West Nova Scotia Genealogy Circuit is one of the first serious marketing initiatives designed to promote the wealth of genealogical resources in this part of Nova Scotia.

It promotes the services and

materials available at 15 research facilities from Annapolis Royal to Lockeport. The circuit was made possible through funding from the Strategic Development Initiative program of the Nova Scotia Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage.

## Mariners sign up



Ian White photo  
**Yarmouth Mariner Lynden Proctor, centre, looks over his new library card as Sam White, left, looks on while Matt Duff, right, enters a prize draw. The Mariners players and staff signed up for new library cards on Monday, Oct. 22 at the Yarmouth library.**