



Press Release

Medicine Hat, August 3rd, 2016

The Gem Jubilee Library is celebrating becoming a full member of Shortgrass Library System, with a special event on Saturday, August 13th, 2016 at 2:00 pm. With the addition of the Gem Library, the Shortgrass Library System collection of materials grew by 4,615 to a total of 439,965 for the whole region.

“The Gem Jubilee Library has officially become a fully-participating member in the Shortgrass Library System and we couldn’t be happier to welcome them on board!” says Petra Mauerhoff, CEO of Shortgrass.

Residents living in Newell County and around the community will be able to experience the advantages of the Gem Library joining Shortgrass Library System firsthand, with one of the main benefits being that any books requested by patrons from any library in southeastern Alberta can now be picked up at the library in Gem. Shortgrass has incorporated Gem into its delivery routes on Thursdays. Through the regional delivery system, newly purchased items, as well as items requested by local patrons, will make their way to the Gem Library for borrowing.

“The physical items belonging to the Gem Library are already in our catalogue and Gem now displays as a location option for picking up holds,” explains Mauerhoff. “We are hoping that for folks living in Division 9 of Newell County, this will be a great additional pick-up and drop-off location for library materials.”

Division 9 of the County of Newell has already been a member of the Shortgrass Library System since 2007, paying a portion of the membership levy for each Shortgrass member library on a per

capita basis. All county residents can use any of the Shortgrass member libraries in Southeastern Alberta.

“What’s most exciting is that now, anyone with a Gem Library card will receive the same valuable services as our other member libraries, including access to online resources such as eBooks, online magazines and newspapers. There is also digital content offered through a great, versatile resource called hoopla, which provides audiobooks, comics, TV shows, movies, and music,” adds Mauerhoff. "There is truly something for everyone!"

Kim Biette, Chair of the Gem Jubilee Library Society, is excited about becoming a member of Shortgrass. She adds, "We couldn't be more excited to expand the selection of library materials available to our patrons. Instead of just having access to the items contained in our building, patrons can now access hundreds of thousands of other library books, DVDs, etc. from any Shortgrass member library!"

Because the library in Gem is completely run by community volunteers, its hours of operation are limited. But, thanks to the library's new online presence and wide offering of digital resources, the limited open hours are no obstacle.

"Patrons can now access newspapers, magazines, eBooks, and all sorts of other items online, 24/7. We expect it to be a huge draw for our community," Biette adds.

The Gem Jubilee Library volunteers are grateful for the support that the Gem Library has received from Shortgrass staff and individuals within the County of Newell. Chair Biette hopes the celebration on August 13th will draw in new people who haven't been to the library before. "The library isn't just about physical books and DVDs anymore. I can't wait for people to see all we have to offer!"