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message from the ceo

news in brief

london calling: meet the new intern

When southern Ontario meets southern Alberta, good things happen! Meet our new intern, Jordan DeSousa, and see what he has to say about the position, his background, and interests outside of work. Departing intern Kris Samraj reflects on his experience. Read more on **page 4**.

ebook shelf card initiative

Take a look at our eBook place holders, the latest thing to hit library shelves near you. Check it out on **page 5**.

go! summer reading program roundup

If time flies when you're having fun, it's no wonder this summer went by so quickly! We take a look at summer reading programs from around the system on **page 6-7**.

summer reading performer

Catch up with Alicia McDonald, this year's summer reading performer. Putting on shows at libraries across the system, she's got plenty to share. Read all about her experience on **page 8**.

birds of north america

Read about our newest database, Birds of North America Online. With in-depth articles on over 700 species of birds, this resource is a bountiful *nest* of knowledge. Learn more on **page 11**.

It's that "Back-to-School" time of year again! Where did the summer go?!

At Shortgrass, we look back fondly on our 25th anniversary celebration in June. We were honored by the wonderful turnout. It was great to see our guests enjoy the displays and the entertainment and catch up with old and new colleagues and friends. Thank you all for celebrating with us.

In addition to the anniversary celebration, June brought more excitement with the rising waters of the South Saskatchewan River. Usually Medicine Hat Public Library's location along the river is considered a good thing, but the flood made extra work for staff and friends, as they moved library materials and computer equipment from the lower level to upstairs. Thankfully, MHPL was spared any damage during the flood.

The Village of Tilley completed its dissolution process and will give up its 'village' designation as of August 31st, 2013. Tilley will fall under County of Newell management and will be

considered a hamlet. The County of Newell Municipal Library Board will take over management of the Tilley & District Public Library. Unfortunately, until this arrangement can be formalized, the Tilley library will have to remain closed. Patrons from the Tilley library will be able to pick up their holds at the Brooks Public Library, which has generously agreed to help out – just another great benefit of being part of a library system. Even if you are closed, your patrons will continue to receive service!

In July, we welcomed our new Shared Intern Librarian, Jordan DeSousa, to Shortgrass. You can learn more about Jordan on page 4. We are happy to have him on board and look forward to keeping him busy throughout the next year.

I hope you enjoy this newsletter and I look forward to reconnecting with all of you as we get back into the swing of regular meetings with colleagues.

Petra

shortgrass library system // w: shortgrass.ca // p: 403.529.0550 // f: 403.528.2473

- Bassano Memorial Library
- Bow Island Municipal Library
- Brooks Public Library
- Duchess & District Public Library
- Foremost Municipal Library
- Medicine Hat Public Library
- Alcoma Community Library
- Tilley & District Public Library
- Graham Community Library
- Redcliff Public Library
- Rolling Hills Public Library
- Rosemary Community Library

Shortgrass Library System



What a great turnout! We had over 100 guests. Thanks again to all that joined us in celebrating this milestone.



Nice photo of the SLS Board. (From Left to Right)
Back: Craig Widmer (*County of 40 Mile*), Doug Henderson (*Cypress County*),
Martin Shields (*Brooks*), Dwight Kilpatrick (*Redcliff*), Kevin Jones (*Bassano*).
Front: Petra Mauerhoff (*SLS CEO*), Kathi Herman (*Chair*), Jennifer Coombs (*Tilley*)



Our musical entertainment for the evening, Betty and Bill.

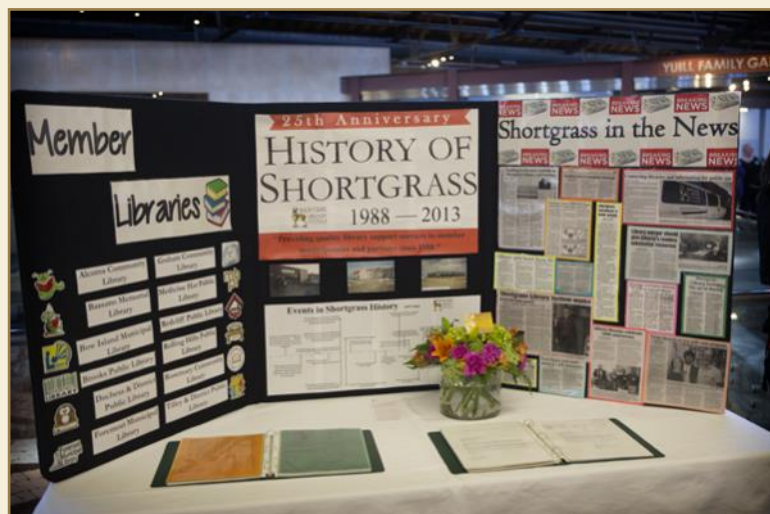
Though it emerged from humble beginnings, with only five founding members, Shortgrass has established itself as one of Alberta's most innovative and collaborative regional library systems. Over the past twenty-five years, SLS has grown to serve twelve member libraries, a population of 103,378, across an area that spans 26,590 km².

To commemorate the 25th Anniversary, SLS HQ staff, library managers, board members, and their family members gathered at the Medalta Historic Clay District to celebrate. A big thanks to everyone who came out to celebrate. Let's look forward to what we can accomplish together over the next twenty-five years!



Guests help themselves to a bountiful buffet table. After all, what's a party without food?

Twenty-Fifth Anniversary



Shortgrass showed-off its creativity with these two 25th Anniversary projects. Above is the “History of Shortgrass” display created by summer students Caitlin & Megan. It detailed the formation of SLS and highlighted some of our most memorable events with newspaper clippings. On the right is an innovative take on the traditional *guestbook*. Though the tree started bare, it was quickly decorated with leaves. Guests recorded their name and a favourite Shortgrass memory on a leaf before affixing it to the tree. This keepsake is now displayed at SLS HQ.



News from...

Government of Alberta ■
Municipal Affairs
Public Library Services Branch



the alberta library



alberta public library
electronic network

During the Results-Based Budgeting process, Municipal Affairs (MA) has decided to take a larger role in supporting public library technology. For many years, The Alberta Library consortium (TAL) has managed the Alberta Public Library Electronic Network (APLEN) on behalf of Government. As of January 2014, the Public Library Services Branch in Municipal Affairs will take over management of electronic network programs once done by TAL/APLEN.

Over the past few years, Municipal Affairs has been working closely with stakeholders to meet recommendations of the MLA Committee Report, Framework For the Future and in the development of a Public Library Technology Plan. Managing electronic resources on a Provincial level, in consultation with key library stakeholders, will enable better efficiencies and effectiveness for Albertans using their public libraries. The amount to be invested in e-resources remains stable.

Municipal Affairs will work closely with TAL/APLEN to ensure a smooth and seamless transition over the next few months. Municipal Affairs will continue to provide an operating grant to TAL to support the membership organization's cross-sectoral library work. Also, this decision does not affect MA recently providing nearly \$1 million to TAL to link all public libraries and TAL member libraries to a WorldCat union catalogue to provide seamless access to provincial library collections.

Thank you to TAL administration for all the work it has done in managing APLEN over the years.

We look forward to the future.



Unique position enters second year...

Shortgrass, meet Jordan DeSousa, Southeastern Alberta's new shared intern librarian. For the second year now, SLS has partnered with Medicine Hat College and Medicine Hat Public Library to offer this innovative and one-of-a-kind opportunity. As a recent graduate of Western University's Library & Information Science program, Jordan is eager to put theory into practice and experience three distinct library environments: academic, public, and regional.

Q&A with the new guy...

What attracted you to this position? What most interested me most about this position was the opportunity to experience three different workplaces – it's like three jobs in one! This was important to me because, as a recent graduate, I'm still in the process of figuring out which branch of librarianship best suits me.

What do you bring to this position? I think I bring a positive attitude, fresh ideas, and, as a newcomer, an objective outlook. With some recent experience teaching technology classes for older adults, I also feel that I have a lot to offer in terms of instructional services and strategies.

How was the move from London, Ontario? It was great! I packed my car with as much as it could fit and drove out over four days. I took the Canadian route and it was well worth the extra driving time – the beautiful and varied landscapes made me proud to call this country home. All the friendly and welcoming people have made for an easy adjustment.

What are some of your interests outside of work? Let's see, I love to read, watch hockey, and play around with gadgets and technology. The last book I read was Thomas Pynchon's *Inherent Vice* – a quirky detective mystery that takes place at the tail-end of the psychedelic 60s in L.A. It was intriguing and laugh-out-loud funny. I've also started to learn the bass guitar. Having never played an instrument before, it's been a slow process but being able to play even the simplest riff is so satisfying!



Internship Wrap-up by Kris Samraj



Participating in the shared internship program here in Medicine Hat was such a great experience for me. Everyone at the three libraries in Medicine Hat and the 11 other libraries of Shortgrass Library System were so welcoming. I can't recall how many times I've called Tracy or Susan or Joan or Bonnie...

...and everyone always took time to answer my many questions and to tell me about their libraries.

I learned many things during my two years of library school, but that pales in comparison to the knowledge I gained this past year -- my first year in the real world. I learned the real world is a lot messier than the neat and tidy theories present-

ed in school. Thankfully there were experienced staff at every library that taught me how to apply library theories in a complex world. Keith, Shelley and Petra have extensive experience between academic, public and regional libraries. They also have experience working with other libraries and umbrella organizations at provincial and national levels. That knowledge was really useful to tap into.

The shared internship program represents a conscious effort to invest the next generation of librarians and I tried to make the most of the opportunity. I am grateful for the investment this internship made in me. I am also thankful I have the chance to stick around South East Alberta for another year as the 'Acting Head of Non-Fiction Services' at MHPL. It's another chance to continue learning about libraries and to serve our local community.

physical meets digital

New initiative hopes to link print and electronic collections in a tangible way by Jordan DeSousa

With over 2,500 titles available through the “library-to-go” platform, Shortgrass patrons have 24-hour access to an extensive (and continually growing!) collection of ebooks. For the tech-savvy user, browsing the catalogue for ebooks is second nature—but what about the patron who prefers discovering new books by browsing through the stacks? For them, the physical and electronic collections are two very disconnected things. In an attempt to create a tangible link between the two, and increase general awareness of SLS’s ebook offerings, we have developed “shelf cards.”



Each shelf card represents an ebook title available through library-to-go. The cards are intended to be shelved where the title’s print equivalent would typically reside. As the photograph below illustrates, the cards are designed to extend beyond the typical width of a print book and, as a result, the title’s cover image should be immediately visible to patrons.



On one side of the shelf card are a few sentences informing the patron that the title in question is available electronically. It is suggested that they visit librarytogo.shortgrass.ca or bring the card to a staff member for assistance.



On the reverse side, we provide a brief record for the title, its genre or subject, and a QR code. If the patron has a smartphone or other capable device, they can scan the QR code to check the title’s availability right from the stacks.



In order to gauge feedback, we have decided to start this project with only twelve titles. If patrons and library staff feel they are successful, additional titles may be easily added. We believe the shelf cards could help bridge the gap between physical and digital and hope to see them on member library shelves in the very near future.

We look forward to receiving your feedback on this initiative.

Go! Summer Reading Programs 2013



Making cowboy cupcakes and teepees; part of the "Go! Back in Time" activity day at the Brooks Public Library.



Kids show off the balloon figures they made as part of the "Superheroes, Go!" event at the Brooks Public Library.



A group of kids learn different and fun ways to make music at the Duchess & District Public Library.



Duchess & District Public Library got a special visit from mayor Tony Steidel who read a story and helped build balloon animals.

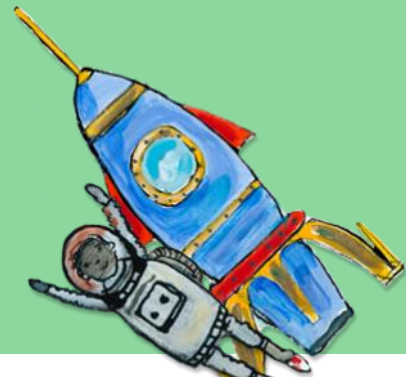


This impressive LEGO structure was built by the kids in Redcliff Public Library's SRP, with the help of Cst. Stephenson.



Constable Stephenson of the RCMP leads story time for a group of attentive kids at the Redcliff Public Library.

A World of Imagination & Adventure



Summer Reading Program a Foremost Success!

by Jayme Wong, Program Coordinator

With record-breaking attendance numbers, reaching as high as 29 participants per activity, the annual Summer Reading Program at Foremost Municipal Library was a great success.

We believe the increased participation was the result of several factors. First, we introduced split age groups for craft time. Using our “around the world” interpretation of the “Go!” theme, we planned two crafts each week that focused on different geographical regions.



Group of younger participants enjoying their completed lava-lamps.

For the younger kids, the crafts were relatively quick and easy to make; however, the older kids were challenged with much more difficult crafts. By increasing the difficulty and incorporating fun science experiments (e.g. baking soda and vinegar volcanoes), we increased interest among the older age group. There were some roadblocks, such as short attention spans which meant many half-finished crafts. Fortunately, we can use this experience to make improvements for next year.

We also made changes to our weekly story-time, adding small activities to break-up the “sit-down-and-read” portion. Activities like puppet theatre, drawing with sidewalk chalk, and going outside to play tag were instant hits with the kids. With the increased variety, we had an average of 20 kids per story time this year.



Kids attentively watch a performance by summer entertainer, Alicia.

Finally, we updated our reading challenge for older kids (9 to 12 years old). After receiving feedback from parents in the community, we increased the reading time required to qualify for a prize from 2 hours to 3 hours. Though this was initially met reluctantly by the participants, we also increased the quantity and quality of prizes which turned out to be a great incentive.



Kids stop for a photo during a treasure hunt. What a great turnout!

Overall, the community reception to this year's Summer Reading Program was fantastic! The kids came in abundance, were well-behaved, and showed great enthusiasm.

We are already looking forward to next year and will use this year's experience to improve upon certain activities and dream up new and exciting ways to keep our kids coming back to the library!

CLOUD BURST

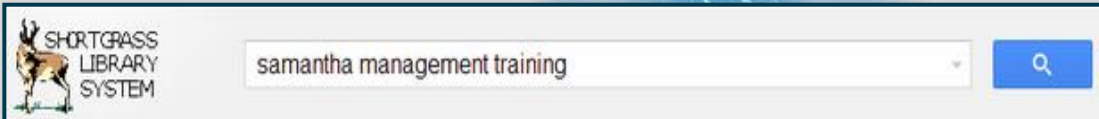


Find your stuff in Google...

Have you ever needed to look up an old email, or try to find an old document you created? You could end up spending a lot of time browsing through hundreds of emails, or clicking through folder after folder on your computer. Good news though; Google can save you tons of time! If you are looking for *anything* in your Gmail or your Google Drive, you can use the search bar at the top of your email. This search bar is universal; You can use it to search for emails, attachments, contacts, files, or even just to search the internet!

HARNESS THE POWER OF THE CLOUD

Levi Millington
SLS System
Administrator



For example: Your colleague, we'll call her Samantha, sent you an email a few months ago about a management

training course. Suddenly, you now need some information from that email message. Click in the search box at the top of your email, and type "samantha management training" in the search box, and voila! Google finds that email instantly, saving you several minutes of poring through pages of emails trying to find a needle in a haystack. The best way to search is to use as many keywords as you can remember and type them into the search bar. Try it out—it can be a real time saver!

When I was asked to be the summer program entertainer for the Shortgrass member libraries I wasn't sure what to expect. I mostly worked behind a desk and was relatively new to doing children's programming in a library setting. I like to try new things though, so I agreed to take the position and started my planning. Oh how naive I was! I thought I could use the exact same program in each place! As the summer progressed however, I quickly discovered that



Alicia enthralls the kids at Brooks Public Library with a fun dance

each library was going to be different – different ages, experiences and even languages – and all of my planning and carefully plotted programming turned into a rough guideline. This turned into a great lesson for me, because as I entertained each group of kids I learned to adapt and go with the flow instead of panicking when things didn't necessarily go according to plan. Overall everyone had a blast, including myself! I received hugs from little kids in cowboy boots and high-fives from tweens on their way out the door with their friends, all humming the songs we'd sung under their breath. After 14 performances, over 40 stories and 200 songs and 1900 km of driving, I can honestly say that getting out from behind my desk was a wonderful experience and I will never forget my time at each library - thank you to all who welcomed me! —Alicia McDonald, MHPL

Alicia McDonald
Summer Reading Performer

This + That



There's still time to register for Netspeed 2013!

Looking for new ways to ensure your library remains vibrant and relevant in the digital age? Consider attending the Netspeed Conference from October 23rd to 25th in Calgary! Developed by The Alberta Library, Netspeed is one of the leading library technology conferences in Canada. For more information, including an up-to-date session program and accommodation details, or to register online, visit <http://bit.ly/opW8Tv>

PressDisplay

In order to promote our PressDisplay database, two of the Shortgrass vans were outfitted with some attention-grabbing decals. If you haven't used PressDisplay yet, it allows you access to over 2000 local, national, and

international newspapers which can be viewed on your computer, tablet, or other mobile device. Papers are full-colour, full-format, and available on the same day (or before!) the print copy hits newsstands. With papers from 97 countries in 54 different languages, PressDisplay is also a great resource for new Canadians. Encourage your patrons to give it a try!



Changes in Tilley

On August 31st, Tilley underwent the process of dissolution, officially dropping its *village* status and merging into the County of Newell. With this change in governance, some administrative details regarding the way Tilley and District Library functions will also change. As a result, the library will temporarily close its doors until all details and changes are finalized.



Patrons will be encouraged to pick up their holds in Brooks.



That's one big Gruffalo...

In April, the Graham Community Library had the pleasure of hosting the Little Gophers and kindergarten kids for a story time and craft session. The Gruffalo is a widely recognized and much liked story book character with little kids. The author, Julia Donaldson, is serving as the current British Children's Laureate. In celebration of her reign, we invited the kids to hear some of her books read by the fabulous story telling Jill Foster. Afterwards, the kids participated in creating a giant Gruffalo. —Stefanie Schranz, GRA Library Manager



Around Shortgrass...



Brooks Public Library patron wins an iPad Mini!

The winner of the iPad Mini draw held between March 1st and June 15th, 2013 was chosen at the Shortgrass Library System anniversary celebration on June 19th.

There were almost 4500 entries in total. Larissa Blaquiere from Brooks, who signed up for her new library card at the Brooks Public Library on March 28th, was the lucky winner. Larissa got her library card during a Brooks Public Library visit to local high schools, during which students could sign up for free library memberships.

The contest kicked off at the Medicine Hat & District Chamber of Commerce's Home & Garden Trade Show at the beginning of March. The contest was announced via the 12 member libraries' social media accounts and through posters at the libraries, as well as by advertisements placed on the Shortgrass vehicles, which travel all over the south-east Alberta region.

Larissa Blaquiere accepts her iPad Mini from Jill Clark

"We consider the initiative a success in getting patrons signed up for library cards", says Shortgrass CEO Petra Mauerhoff. "Our hope is, of course, that even if someone signed up only for a chance to win the iPad Mini, they may still discover that they enjoy taking advantage of even just one of the many resources our libraries have to offer, whether it is online or in person."

Look for more chances to enter draws at your local public library throughout southeast Alberta later in the year.



Good job, Ross Glen!

Congratulations to our Alberta Provincial Champions at Ross Glen School! They competed against kids from schools across Canada in the WOW Reading Challenge. As the Gold Winners, they were presented with a banner and certificate (pictured left) which are now proudly displayed in their school library. A special thank-you to Ms. Jolene Foster for championing this challenge among the kids.



Better safe than sorry...

With flood waters threatening, MHPL staff, SLS HQ staff, and their families worked diligently to move materials from the lower floor of the library to higher ground. Thankfully, the library and its materials remained dry. A big thanks to all those (many pictured above) who worked so hard to protect the collection!

The Nature of Things



SLS Headquarters Landscaping Project

Top left: Petra and Anton started removing the cedars in August 2012—**Middle:** Dennis Herman and Craig Widmer work on removing the cedars' deep roots by wrapping chains around the roots and pulling them out with a truck—**Right:** Garry James, Craig Widmer, Kathi & Dennis Herman, Dyan and Petra planted sedums and native grasses—**Bottom left:** The project was completed in August 2013 with the application of mulch to prevent weeds.

Database Feature: Birds of North America Online

Need help identifying a bird? Trying to attract specific species to your backyard feeder? Curious what could be making that unfamiliar call? Check out our newest database, Birds of North America Online!

With articles on North America's 700+ species of birds, BNA is the quintessential source for everything avian. With both concise overviews and in-depth analysis, BNA will satisfy a wide range of information needs.



Distinguishing characteristics, migration patterns, and food habits are only a few of the areas covered in each entry.

A robust multimedia section accompanies each article, providing

photo galleries, video clips, data tables, and audio samples of bird calls. This outstanding resource is available now—fly in and try it out!

CAT CORNER



FEATURING KLAUS



SHORTGRASS COMPETES IN LOCAL PARADES

The SLS van participated in the Brooks, Medicine Hat, and Tilley parades this summer. The van looked great and drew big cheers from every crowd! What a great way to show our community spirit. A big thanks to the parade teams and to Megan Grimm and Caitlin Sharpe for decorating the van.



Medicine Hat Parade, July 25th. Parade team: Petra Mauerhoff & Danielle Cochrane



SLS wins 2nd Prize in the Tilley Parade! Pictured: Anton Chuppin & Brenda Arnold



1st Place win in Brooks! Pictured: Kayley Skriver & Kris Samraj

September

Monday, **2nd**: Labour Day, SLS Office Closed

Wednesday, **18th**: SLS Board Meeting

Monday, **23rd**: Library Managers' Meeting

October

Friday, **11th**: APLEN Nodes Meeting

Monday, **14th**: Thanksgiving, SLS Office Closed

Wednesday, **16th**: SLS Board Committee Meeting

Wednesday, **23rd** to Friday, **25th**: Netspeed Conference

Monday, **28th**: SLS Professional Development Day

November

Monday, **11th**: Remembrance Day, SLS Office Closed

Monday, **18th**: SLS Library Managers' Meeting

Wednesday, **20th**: SLS Board Meeting (Elections)

Friday, **22nd**: AUMA Tradeshow

Friday, **29th**: Order Cut-Off Date

December

Wednesday, **11th**: Christmas Dinner & Social

SHORTGRASS FALL CALENDAR

