

shortgrass clippings

volume xiv, issue 1
january, february, march 2014



table of contents

cloudburst	4
this + that	8
news and events	10
cat corner	11
calendar	12



message from the ceo

news in brief

brick by brick

Redcliff Public Library, the Lego capital of the Shortgrass system, has made a significant addition to its collection. Find out how it came about and how they plan to build on their Lego popularity—**page 2**.

“hello, my name is...”

Meet our new Manager of Technology Services, Raj Sritharan. He’s young, enthusiastic, and excited to be part of the Shortgrass team. Check out his interview and get to know him better—**page 3**.

meet the board

There have been some changes to the Shortgrass Board of Trustees. Learn about the personnel changes, who’s representing your community, and the function of the board and its committees—**page 5**.

send a raven...

But don’t worry, it’s not the white walkers! We’ve just had some awesome programs running. Check out our two-page spread to find out what’s been going on and maybe even get some new ideas—**pages 6 + 7**.

guten tag!

In early March, Shortgrass welcomed an international employee to the team. Dörte Maasch, a library and information science student from Germany, will be with us until June. Read her interview and learn about this unique internship—**page 11**.

Spring is in the air and this year, in particular, seems busier than ever! March marked the arrival of two new staff members, Raj Sritharan, our new Manager of Technology Services, and Dörte Maasch, our Exchange Student Librarian from Germany. You can find out more about them on pages 3 and 9 in this newsletter.

Having two new staff members means that there will be several exciting initiatives to benefit our member libraries, so stay tuned to see what they come up with.

The Shortgrass Board of Trustees approved the 2014 budget at the February board meeting and we are now in the process of acquiring the required approval from 2/3 of member municipalities. On April 16th, our auditors will join the Board meeting to present the 2013 audited financial statements. Many thanks to Dyan Bryksa for providing all the necessary records during the audit process!

We are pleased to be part of the implementation of the Me Card, which will

provide seamless access to all Alberta public libraries, province-wide. A special thank you goes out to Anton Chuppin, our former Manager of Technology Services, for playing a big role in bridging the connection from our ILS to the other ILSs in the province.

The Shortgrass Board of Trustees saw a lot of turn-over after the municipal election in the fall. Six new board members are now part of the team that governs Shortgrass’ operations. The new Board Chair is Dwight Kilpatrick from the Town of Redcliff. Find out more about the board on page 5.

Planning for the 2014 Alberta Library Conference in Jasper is well underway. Shortgrass is hosting the Friday night regional systems reception, together with Marigold Library System. Be sure to stop by Outlook Cabin to say hello. If you need a ride to the conference, don’t forget to reserve your seat on the Shortgrass bus. Details are provided on page 10.

See you in Jasper!

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

BUILDING ON SUCCESS

In order for a library system to be successful, it needs a well-defined belief system to build upon. When the Shortgrass Board of Trustees met on February 19th, 2014, they agreed upon the following set of nine core beliefs:

1. We believe that libraries are vital contributors to the quality of life.
2. We believe in universal public library service and equal and open access to library collections.
3. We believe in the principles expressed in the Canadian Library Association's Statement on Intellectual Freedom.
4. We believe that the province-wide SuperNet results in a unified, provincial network among Alberta libraries.
5. We believe that a library system fosters collaboration, sharing, networking, and teamwork.
6. We believe that a library system enhances member libraries' programs and services without sacrificing local autonomy.
7. We believe that membership in a library system will enable member libraries to devote more time to developing creative and responsive public programs and services.
8. We believe that a library system results in more efficient and economical use of all available library resources: people, funds, materials.
9. We believe that a library system must advocate the benefits of system membership to non-member municipalities.

Redcliff receives large grant

In February, the Redcliff Friends of the Library received a generous \$5000 donation from Cenovus Energy. The Friends plan to put the money towards an outdoor storage unit, as well as new furniture for the young adult area.



Left: Look at all that Lego! Thanks to generous local funding, Redcliff has added several new Lego sets and books to its collection. More complex sets will appeal to older kids and expand an already sizeable user base.



Building on a highly successful program...

Thanks to generous funding from REDI Enterprises and Redcliff FCSS the Redcliff Public Library was able to make a large purchase of Lego and Lego-themed books for their collection.

The bricks will be used in the popular "Lego at the Library" program while the books [*pictured below*] will help promote literacy and reading amongst the dedicated Lego followers. An eye-catching Lego display shelf [*pictured right*] will certainly help with that goal. With the addition of more complex Lego sets, like those from the Architecture series, the library will also start running a Lego program specifically for teens.



HELLO
my name is

Raj



Shortgrass is very pleased to introduce Raj Sritharan, our new Manager of Technology Services. We asked Raj a few questions so you could learn more about the newest member of the SLS team.

Tell us a little about yourself—where are you from and where have you been?

I always have trouble answering the hometown question because my parents loved to move around. I was born in Sri Lanka, went to kindergarten in Germany, spent a year in Montreal, and ended up in Ontario, starting in Toronto and then moving to Delhi, a farming community of 12,000 in southwestern Ontario, which is the self-proclaimed tobacco capital of Canada, complete with a tobacco museum. After high school, I ran off to London, Ontario to attend the University of Western Ontario where I did both my undergraduate and MLIS degrees.

How long have you been working in the library world? What made you choose this line of work?

I will have been in the library world for four years this June. After finishing up library school, I packed my bags and flew up to Fort Frances, a small town in northwestern Ontario. They had just finished building a brand new library technology centre a couple of months before I started and it was a great opportunity to immediately sink my teeth into the newest library technology available. I joined Lethbridge Public Library two and half years ago and focused on revamping the digital content offerings and expanding digital literacy programs. I went to library school because I believe in the power of libraries to be the great information and content access equalizers in our society. Public libraries, especially, are of vital importance to communities in providing continual learning and enrichment opportunities to everyone. It's deeply rewarding to be involved in a profession that has such lofty, yet worthwhile goals.

What attracted you to this position? What part of the job are you most looking forward to?

Being able to work on the upcoming technology systems opportunities that libraries face was something I really wanted to be involved in and to do so with the great staff at Shortgrass is what really convinced me that this position would be a great fit. We are working on several large-scale initiatives that affect the province's library users, including the Me Card and keeping TAL Online updated to facilitate interlibrary loan services. I am really looking forward to helping our member libraries with their technology needs and assisting them in providing digital literacy services to patrons.

If you weren't a librarian, what else would you be doing?

I would probably be a (starving) PhD student in social psychology. I worked in a social cognition laboratory during the final year of my undergraduate degree and while I completed my MLIS and I really enjoyed pursuing new experimental research. I was fortunate enough to have a great adviser and had the opportunity to publish several papers and contribute to book chapters. It was a hard decision between pursuing librarianship and staying in academia, but definitely no regrets yet!

What are some of your interests outside of work?

I enjoy live music, reading (of course), taking road trips, hiking around in our beautiful province, really just traveling in general, and I'm a bit of a board game geek and film buff. I fenced in university, so I'm excited to potentially join Medicine Hat's club in the near future.

Who would win in a fight, Frodo Baggins (Lord of the Rings) or Tyrion Lannister (A Game of Thrones)?

Tyrion would fight dirty, but if Frodo still had the one ring, he'd be able to disappear. If we gave Tyrion a shield, he'd clearly be the winner against Frodo with no ring and missing a finger.

Cloud Burst

Announcing Shortgrass Help Desk

As part of our continuous effort to give you a better experience, Shortgrass Library System has implemented a dedicated Help Desk system to make it easier for you to get help, and easier for us to help you. We strive to take all steps necessary to give you a better support experience, which is why we're centralizing our support network. Anything you need help with can now be directed to one place. Submit a request through help.shortgrass.ca, or send an email to help@shortgrass.ca.



Levi Millington

How does this make a difference to you?

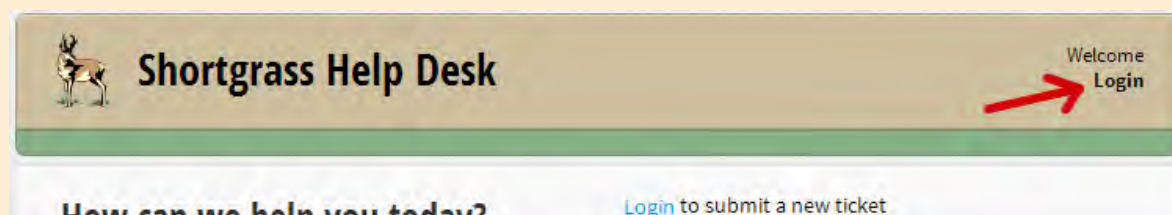
Instead of wondering who you should contact about certain issues, let us handle that and get you the help you need, faster. We can help you with problems related to Workflows, Symphony, email, computers, internet, printers, websites, etc. You can shoot us an email to help@shortgrass.ca, and our Help Desk system will automatically create a ticket on your behalf. You will also be notified of our responses and status changes to your tickets via email so you can track the progress of your request.

The first time you send us a support request, you will receive an email with activation instructions to login to our new support portal at help.shortgrass.ca. Going forward, you can check the status or add comments to your support requests here.

We are actively populating our support portal with FAQs and solutions in our knowledge base, so you can help yourself to how-tos and instructions. You can also discuss your ideas and share tips in our forums.

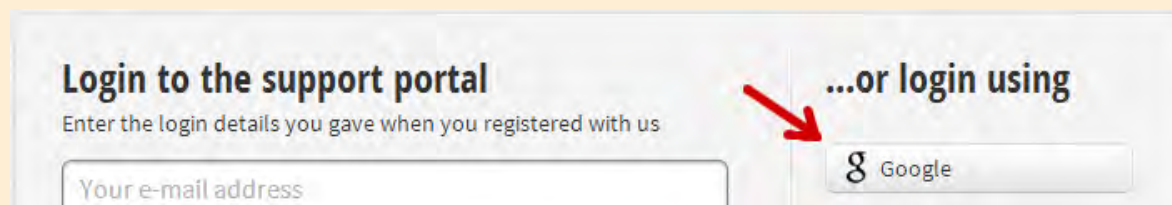
We love hearing from you

We strive to give you an awesome support experience with every request, and your feedback will help us get there faster. We will be sending out satisfaction surveys for you to rate your support experience with us periodically. If you have any doubts or questions regarding our new support tools and policies, drop us a line at help@shortgrass.ca, and we'll be glad to assist you.



How to Login

Logging into the new support portal is easy. Simply head to help.shortgrass.ca and click *Login* in the top-right. Then click the Google button on the right-hand side, and login using your Shortgrass email address and password.



IMPORTANT

After-Hours Support

We have recently made some changes to the way you will contact SLS support staff after-hours. The after-hours cell phone has been cancelled. From now on, after-hours support can be reached by calling our new toll-free phone number:

1.866.529.0550

Meet the Board

What is the function of the Board?

According to the *Alberta Libraries Act*, the board “has full management and control of the library system and shall...organize, promote, and maintain comprehensive and efficient library services.” (Section 1T17). Basically, their job is to make sure Shortgrass is providing the best possible service to its member libraries! They do this by determining fees for library service, reviewing and approving budgets, and developing guiding documents like the *Plan of Service*.



Shortgrass Library System Board of Trustees

Left to Right: Ernest Mundie (Cypress County), Craig Widmer (County of Forty Mile), Dwight Kilpatrick (Town of Redcliff), Kevin Jones (Town of Bassano), Norm Gerestein (City of Brooks), Celina Symmonds (City of Medicine Hat), Don Borrowman (MHPL), Shannyn Creary (Village of Duchess), Marjorie Moncrieff (Town of Bow Island, and Petra Mauerhoff (CEO).

Not Pictured: Kathi Herman (Ministerial Appointee), Kelly Christman (County of Newell), Yoko Fujimoto (Village of Rosemary), and Brent Burton (Village of Foremost).

Programs & Services Committee

Marjorie (Chair), Brent, Celina, Dwight, Kelly, Kevin, and Shannyn.

Finance & Personnel Committee

Craig (Chair), Don, Dwight, Ernest, Kathi, Norm, and Yoko.

What is the role of the committees?

The Shortgrass Board has organized its standing committees into the Programs & Services Committee and the Finance & Personnel Committee, which play a key role in advising the Board. The former provides recommendations on services, public relations, and advocacy while the latter provides leadership in areas of financial services and operations, as well as personnel issues, functions and decisions.

How are trustees chosen?

The Board consists of one member from each municipality served by Shortgrass. These appointees are chosen by their own municipality. MHPL, as the designated resource library for the system, appoints a second trustee. While a ministerial appointee currently sits on the Board, it is a term position that will expire in June, 2014.

Message from the Chair

I am pleased to have been elected Chair of the Shortgrass Library System Board during the December 4th, 2013 meeting. Having been involved with Shortgrass since 2010 and in municipal politics since 1989, I have become familiar with the many services and programs the regional system provides to its member municipalities. As the parent of an avid library user, it is easy to recognize the valuable role public libraries play in communities, and how our regional system benefits them by providing constructive programs and services through the municipal

collaboration of local libraries. To ensure Shortgrass provides services that are relevant to our members, and in order to enable them to provide excellent services to patrons, the Board developed a new Plan of Service in the fall of 2013. The Plan of Service will guide our operations until 2016 and, in that time, we hope to achieve many of the strategic goals set out in the plan, by working cooperatively with all member municipalities, ensuring libraries continue to deliver needed services throughout Southeastern Alberta.





There's always lots going on at the Brooks Public Library!

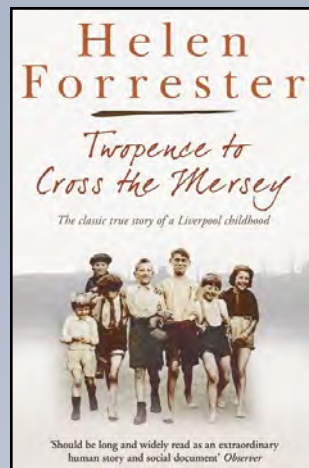
Have you seen the March 2014 edition of *Booked In*, the Brooks Public Library program booklet? They've had a lot going on, including a videoconference presentation for International Women's Day on March 7th, "Poker Night" in the library on March 12th, and "Scary Movie" night for teens on March 14th.

On April 12th there'll be a special event going on at the library: Spring Carnival! Along with carnival staples like popcorn and balloons, families will have the opportunity to enjoy various games (bean bag toss, mini-golf, etc.) and activities (face painting, egg hunt). And what's a carnival without prizes? Children will have a chance to win all kinds of loot like board games, candy, stuffed animals, and much more!

Duchess Winter Book Club

Nothing takes your mind off the cold weather like getting together to discuss a good book. At Duchess Municipal Library they've been doing just that! Every January, February, and March the library hosts "Winter Book Club." One title is chosen each month and the group, typically about 10 people, meets in the library at the end of the month to discuss. Some book club gatherings even feature a guest speaker to lead the conversation!

The program has been a success in 2014, with excellent attendance for the January and February discussions. The title for March is Helen Forrester's *Twopence to Cross the Mersey*, a harrowing tale of poverty-stricken life in 1930s Liverpool. The group will meet to discuss and visit on March 26th at 7pm. After that, the Winter Book Club concludes and we can only hope that it signals the beginning of spring!



Bow Island Municipal Library knows how to take advantage of the weather...



Now that's honest marketing! This sign was a big hit on Facebook with over 100 likes.

The library is a great place to hang out all-year round but it's especially nice in the winter! In Bow Island, they used the weather to their advantage, coming up with comical signs and programming that played into our natural instincts to stay warm and cozy.

In January, the library held a Teddy Bear Storytime with a twist—everyone was invited to come in their pajamas. What a great idea! Everyone loves to stay in their PJs when it's – 30°C outside (let's not even talk about the wind

chill...brrr!) Library staff had fun, too, bringing out the best items from their "big kid" wardrobes. Another reason why libraries are awesome places to work!

March is shaping up to be another busy month in Bow Island, highlighted by a series of video conference sessions. Topics covered include Beauvais Lake Provincial Park (March 7th) and the Wildlife of Waterton Park (March 18th). Stay tuned to see what's next!



Left: Susan and Katherine show off their stylish PJs.
Below: Great turnout for Teddy Bear Storytime!



PechaKucha...what's that?

PechaKucha is a fast-paced and informal presentation style where 20 slides are shown for 20 seconds each. While the concept originated in Japan (pecha kucha translates to *chit-chat*), it has become an international phenomenon that powers social gatherings called PechaKucha Nights (PKNs). Today PKNs are happening in communities all over the world and, as of February 2014, that list now includes Medicine Hat.



Above: The audience at Station Coffee Co. listens attentively to Reid Erb's presentation, "Archetypal myth cycles and how contemporary science fiction and comic books fit into them." Where else but a PechaKucha Night?

Below: The organizing team for PKN Medicine Hat. (Left to Right) Kris Samraj, Allie Penner, Shannon Bingeman, Safira Lachapelle, Rhonda Batiuk, and Tobie Laliberté. It looks like they knew this was going to be *big* from the start.



PechaKucha Night Medicine Hat, #PKNMH

PKN Medicine Hat is an official Medicine Hat Public Library event where members of the community gather to showcase their art, speak on issues they're passionate about, or just show off their best vacation pictures—all in PechaKucha 20x20 style. Whatever the topic, the goal remains the same: to strengthen community by bringing people together and showcasing local talent, creativity, and diversity.

Volume One of the presentation series took place on February 7th at the Station Coffee Co. in downtown Medicine Hat. Over 100 people gathered to hear twelve presentations on a wide variety of topics. Speakers included a woman who identified and documented new species of insects in Medicine Hat, a librarian who hiked the Appalachian Trail, and a self-proclaimed "recovering hippie" from the 60s.

With the success of Volume One, a larger venue was needed for the second PKN. On March 14th, Volume Two took place at the Esplanade Arts & Heritage Centre and attendance was nearly doubled. With those numbers, it's clear that Medicine Hat Public Library, and the local cultural community, are on to something special. Follow @PKNMedHat on Twitter, or check them out on Facebook, to get the latest on Volume Three and beyond.

Want to learn more about PKNs? Check out pechakucha.org It's a great way to bring people together! If you're interested in organizing a PKN in your community, contact Kris Samraj at MHPL—he'll help you get started.



winter is going

...eventually. In the meantime, check out the ways we've been fighting the cold weather.

This + That

You're Invited

Regional Library Systems Reception

Friday, April 25 @ 8:30pm



Outlook Cabin - Jasper Park Lodge

Hosted by Shortgrass and Marigold Library Systems

Mark your calendar

Are you attending the Alberta Library Conference in Jasper? Then clear your Friday evening schedule and make sure you check out the Regional Library Systems Reception. With Shortgrass co-hosting, it's sure to be a good time! Snacks and drinks will be provided. The fun starts at 8:30pm in Outlook Cabin—see you there!



Database training available for patrons and staff

Did you know that Shortgrass provides database training sessions for both library users and staff? With so many databases available, it can be challenging to learn the ins and outs of each one. To help with this, training sessions can be arranged for any one of our electronic resources.

In April, for example, some of our member libraries will be hosting Ancestry training for their patrons.

Sound like something your patrons or staff could benefit from? For more information, or to arrange a session, please contact Jordan at SLS HQ.



Upgrade time!

In January, Shortgrass acquired new workstations for HQ staff. They were purchased in pieces and assembled in-house by our own technical staff. These new workstations replaced aging units that had been in service since 2007. They are considerably faster and more energy efficient, which will save Shortgrass both time and money. This proactive measure also protects against hardware failure and allows greater flexibility for future upgrades.



Coming soon...the "Me Card"

Shortgrass is excited to be joining the Me Card initiative, which makes seamless borrowing a reality for Albertans. Adults with a public library card in good standing at their home library can use the melibraries.ca website to choose other public libraries they would like to borrow materials from. The Me Card website then communicates with their home library's ILS and the ILS of their selected libraries to create a membership for them by pulling their patron information directly from their home library.

The TAL card had some of the same goals of creating wider access as the Me Card and will continue to be valid, particularly for academic libraries who are not part of the Me Card. The advantage of the Me Card is that it allows patrons to use their home library card. The Me Card allows patrons to borrow from the physical collections of the participating libraries, but online resources are limited to only those provided by their home library, due to licensing restrictions.

Shortgrass is proud to be part of this innovative project.

me
join me . show me . free me

International Internship



Meet **Dörte Maasch**, a library and information science student from Germany, who will be serving as the Exchange Student Librarian at Shortgrass until June. During her time here, Dörte will be working on a number of marketing and advocacy projects. She answered some questions so that you could learn a little about her, what made this opportunity interesting, and how life in Germany compares to life in Southeastern Alberta.

Where in Germany are you from? How does it compare to Medicine Hat?

I am originally from Eberswalde, a town near Berlin, but right now I live in Darmstadt [pictured below] where I am studying at the University of Applied Sciences. It is very different from Medicine Hat, especially the landscape. The population is about the same, but in Darmstadt it is much more dense—most people live in flats instead of houses. Our cars are smaller, too. We do not have big trucks in Germany.

What will you miss most about home while you're here?

I think not being able to talk to my family whenever I want—because of the eight hour time difference—will be the hardest part for me.

How did you learn about this internship opportunity?

I have always been interested in getting international work experience so I asked one of my professors if he knew of any opportunities. He put me in contact with Petra, I sent her my resume, and then we emailed back and forth. When Petra was in Germany, we were able to meet in person and talked more about the position.

What do you bring to the position? What do you hope to gain from it?

I have some practical experience from working in a library back home which I think will be useful. I am also very motivated to learn new things. I think my dedication and capacity for team work are strong qualities, too.

I hope to gain new experience and exchange ideas. I am looking forward to the opportunity to work independently and practice the things I have learned in school.

Have you read any good books or seen any good movies recently?

One series I like is *Hunger Games*, both the books and movies, although I think the books are better. Another book I finished recently was *Mieses Karma* by David Safier.

What other kinds of things do you like to do in your free time?

I really like to talk and meet new people. I like shopping, going to the cinema, watching ballet and opera. Some TV shows I like to watch are *Grey's Anatomy* and *Big Bang Theory*.

Is there anything in particular you're looking forward to doing while you're in Alberta?

Definitely the Alberta Library Conference in Jasper! I'm so excited to see the mountains, trees, and lakes because that is what I imagine when I think about Canada. I also want to go see an ice hockey game and take in the Canadian culture. Everyone I have met has been very nice and friendly so I think I will enjoy my time here!



Around Shortgrass...



Alberta Library Conference 2014 Coach Bus

April 24 to April 27, 2014

Route

The bus leaves Medicine Hat at 6:30AM on Thursday, April 24; pick up locations along the Trans-Canada Highway can be arranged through Dyan Bryksa.

Bus pick-up in Calgary will be at approximately 10:30AM, then on to Canmore, followed by a stop in Banff for lunch (1 hour sharp), and finally arriving at Jasper Park Lodge at approximately 4:30PM. We will return on Sunday, April 27 at approximately 9:30AM.

Cost

Medicine Hat to Bassano pick-up — \$250 return

Strathmore to Canmore pick-up — \$175 return

Please Note: In order to hold a seat, a non-refundable payment in full will be required at the time of booking.

Receipts will be issued.

Cost includes: Coach, Parks Canada entrance fee, driver costs, refreshments and light snacks.

Booking Deadline

Tuesday, April 4, 2014 — Book early, seats will sell out quickly!

If a library or library system is paying your fare, please let Dyan know at the time of booking.

Booking and Paying

Dyan Bryksa

e: dyan@shortgrass.ca / p: 403.529.0550 x 100 / f: 403.528.2473

Cheques payable to: **Shortgrass Library System**
2375—10th Avenue SW
Medicine Hat, AB T1A 8G2



**FAREWELL
COMRADE!**

This January we had to say goodbye to our hardworking, highly efficient, and much loved Manager of Tech Services, Anton Chuppin. Although it's always hard to lose such a valuable team member, we know Anton will do nothing but great things in his new position with Calgary Public Library. If you're attending the Alberta Library Conference in Jasper, you'll have the chance to see Anton again! He will be presenting a session on eBook usage based on data that was gathered from Shortgrass libraries over the past three years.

Shortgrass can't thank you enough for all your hard work! We hate to see you go, but wish you all the best.

Refer-a-Friend contest returns!

After a highly successful campaign in November and December, the Refer-a-Friend contest began another run on March 1st. Just like before, both the new patron and their referring friend will be entered into a draw to win two Google Nexus 7 tablets. The contest closes June 13th and the winners will be drawn on June 18th.



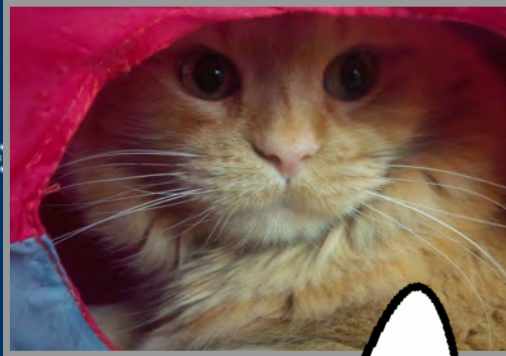
With 84 new memberships created during the last run, we will have to work especially hard to make this one an even greater success! We've sent out posters to all member libraries and have been spreading the word through our social media accounts. If you would like to place a banner on your website or Facebook page, please contact Levi at SLS HQ.

CAT CORNER

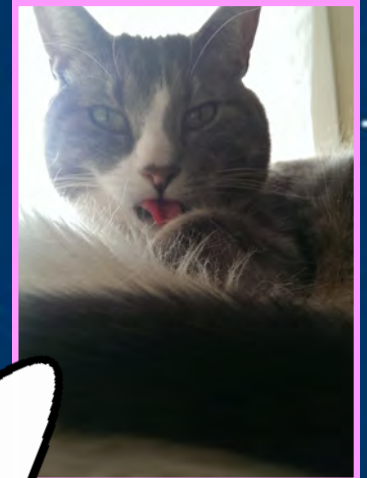
The cats are back and they brought numbers. No dog would dare show its face around here! They've marked their territory and are here to stay — so rejoice, cat lovers! To celebrate here are just a few of our feline friends from around the system. Meow!

"Between dogs and cats my degree of choice is so great that it would never occur to me to compare the two. I have no active dislike for dogs, any more than I have for monkeys, human beings, tradesmen, cows, sheep, or pterodactyls; but for the cat I have entertained a particular respect and affection ever since the earliest days of my infancy. In its flawless grace and superior self-sufficiency I have seen a symbol of the perfect beauty and bland impersonality of the universe itself, objectively considered, and in its air of silent mystery there resides for me all the wonder and fascination of the unknown. The dog appeals to cheap and facile emotions; the cat to the deepest founts of imagination and cosmic perception in the human mind. It is no accident that the contemplative Egyptians, together with such later poetic spirits as Poe, Gautier, Baudelaire and Swinburne, were all sincere worshippers of the supple grimalkin."

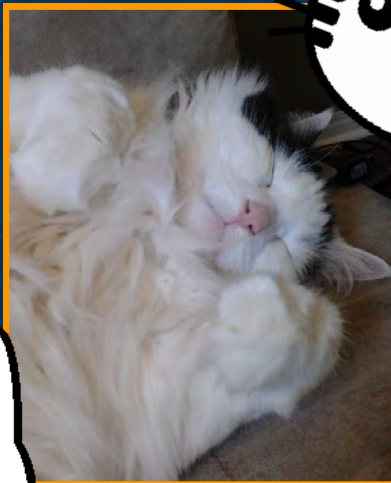
—H.P. Lovecraft, "Cats and Dogs" in *Something About Cats and Other Pieces*, 1949



Oz
Liz Alexander, SLS



Klaus
Petra Mauerhoff, SLS



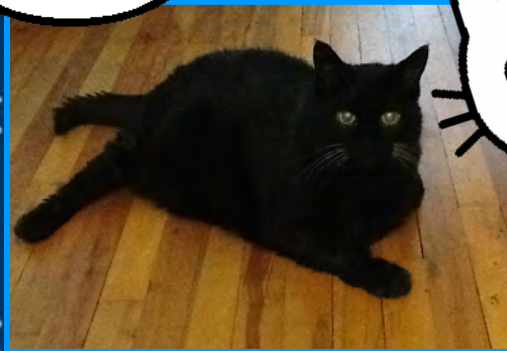
Hope
Dyan Bryksa, SLS



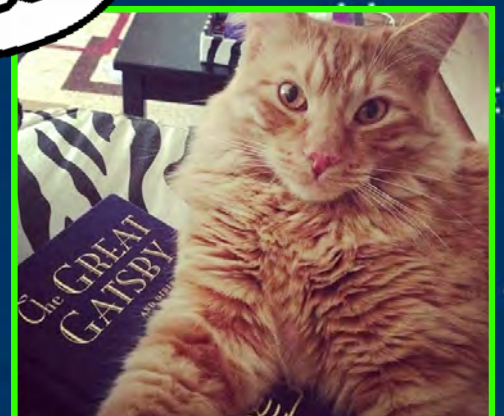
Bella & Donna
Valarie Westers, Redcliff Board



Kit, aka "Kitter"
Carol Ann Cross-Roen, MHPL



Max, aka "The Big Black Cat"
Peggy Curthoys, SLS



Gatsby
Andrea Meerstra, MHPL

Does your cat want to be famous? Send Jordan your best cat picture and it could be featured in the next issue of Clippings. [Warning: cats featured may begin to exhibit increased smugness]



Did you know that, as part of a collaborative project, MHPL and Medicine Hat College allow patrons to “borrow” *human books*? [Above] Human book Sam, aka the “Tattooed Lady,” speaks to a group of Medicine Hat College students about her experiences running her own tattoo parlour.



The human library initiative is over a year old now with new books being added all the time. With such a diverse range of topics there is something for everyone in the collection.



Books can be “borrowed” by patrons (i.e. a time is arranged for the book and borrower to meet) but many are also available to give presentations to small groups. MHPL has been doing just that, organizing a “Human Book of the Month” program series. [Above] On March 18th the featured book was “How to Save Money on Your Utility Bill.”

March

Friday, **7th**, and Saturday, **8th**: Southern Alberta Library Conference in Lethbridge

Thursday, **20th**: World Storytelling Day (Theme: Monsters & Dragons)

Monday, **24th**: Library Managers Meeting

April

National Poetry Month

Sunday, **6th**, to Saturday, **12th**: National Volunteer Appreciation Week

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

Friday, **18th**: Good Friday—SLS HQ closed

Monday, **21st**: Easter Monday—SLS HQ closed

Thursday, **24th**: SLS Coach Bus leaves Medicine Hat for Jasper, 6:30AM

Thursday, **24th**, to Sunday, **27th**, Alberta Library Conference in Jasper, AB

May

Sunday, **4th**, to Saturday, **10th**: Canadian Children’s Book Week

Wednesday, **21st**: SLS Board Committee Meetings

Thursday, **22nd**, to Sunday, **25th**: Alberta Association of Library Technicians Conference in Edmonton, AB

Monday, **26th**: Library Managers Meeting

Wednesday, **28th**, to Saturday, **31st**: Canadian Library Association Conference in Victoria, BC

June

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

