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Volume XXXII, Issue IV -December 2024

What's new at HQ?

Welcome to our December 2024 edition of Shortgrass Clippings! Read on to hear about what Shortgrass staff & libraries have been up to this quarter.



Upcoming Events

December 24: Closing at noon. Last day Shortgrass office is open until 2025.

January 2: Shortgrass office reopens for 2025 and deliveries resume.

January 13: Library Managers Meeting at Shortgrass headquarters

January 15: SLS Board Meeting

February 17: Family Day - Shortgrass office closed. Missed deliveries will be made up on the following business day.

February 19: SLS Board Meeting

February 28: Deadline to submit [annual report and survey to PLSB](#)

March 17: Library Managers Meeting at Shortgrass headquarters

March 19: SLS Board Meeting

Celebrating Creativity: Shortgrass Art Contest and the New Delivery Van Unveiling

A heartfelt thank-you to all the libraries that promoted our summer art contest to their patrons! We received an amazing 35 artwork submissions from talented children aged 0-18. After much deliberation, we were pleased to select 13 winning pieces from six Shortgrass libraries: Graham Community Library, Bow Island Municipal Library, Irvine Community Library, Bassano Memorial Library, Redcliff Public Library, and Medicine Hat Public Library.



The winning artworks now proudly decorate the new Shortgrass delivery van, which was unveiled during multiple events held at some participating libraries as well as Shortgrass headquarters. These celebrations offered a wonderful opportunity to connect with our communities and showcase the creativity of young artists. None of this would have been possible without the support of our wonderful member libraries. Thank you for helping make this initiative a success!

Congratulations to the Winners of the Shortgrass Art Contest!



The Irvine library winner thought it was just a regular visit to the library. A huge surprise awaited her as she received a certificate of achievement, prizes, and was interviewed by Chat News! All family members attended the event and were thrilled to see the van.

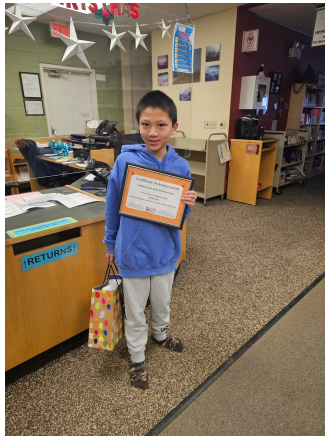


In Bow Island, Pinto Macbean himself joined us at the library to congratulate the little winner!





The young artist from Bassano had no idea that he was one of the contest winners and was very excited to see his art featured on the hood.



An entire class, along with their teacher and the winner's family came to Graham Community Library to celebrate the winner!



Redcliff Library and MHPL winners and their families were invited to an event held at Shortgrass, where the CEO presented the winners with certificates of achievement and prizes. Attendees took home books from the little library and had their photos taken with their artwork on the van. Redcliff Public Library Manager joined us too!





Successful Author Tour: Jen Ferguson



This September, Shortgrass was pleased to partner with some of the member libraries hosting an author tour. Jen Ferguson, indigenous YA author, visited multiple libraries, including Medicine Hat, Redcliff, Bassano, and Brooks for Q&A sessions. She also led creative writing workshops at MHPL attended by teens and adults. Special thanks to Stephanie Kuhn, MHPL Youth and Community Librarian, for coordinating the tour's logistics!

Jen called it "the most well-organized, thoughtful, kind, and effective visit" she'd been on and that she would be happy to recommend visiting us to any author.

Five Fun Facts about our new Cataloguer, Griffin!



- I am a martial artist, and am currently training to test for my black belt in Kung Fu.
- I am a fibre artist, I've recently committed myself to knitting all my christmas presents. I've completed a coaster, headband, and towel so far, working on a toque currently.
- I love camping and hiking, so I'm spending the winter planning some trips to the mountains. If anyone has any hikes they recommend let me know!
- I had to leave my family dog Zoey (golden doodle) back in Ontario (see picture above), so I'm looking forward to visiting her over Christmas.
- I am a huge fan of Dungeons and Dragons - I am currently playing as a Owlin Wizard.

Griffin Heaney is the new Cataloguer / Technical Services Assistant at Shortgrass Library System. They are one of the staff who get library books ready for the shelves!

CEO Update



Petra Mauerhoff, CEO

As always, the fall was a very busy season at Shortgrass. We kicked off the season with our "away" library managers and Shortgrass Board meetings, both held at the beautiful new Irvine Resource Centre. Both meetings had full agendas that included a lot of discussion on budgets for the next few years as well as some changes to policies and procedures. Thank you again to the folks at the Irvine library for hosting us!

On November 4th, we welcomed Griffin Heaney, who joined our team as the new cataloguer, taking over the position left vacant by Sadaf. Scroll back up to the Shortgrass Updates section of this newsletter to learn Five Fun Facts about Griffin. We revealed the new look for our main delivery van. The art contest was held this summer, which by now seems like a very long time ago, and I am very pleased to see the winning entries displayed on the van!

We are so excited about the launch of Reading for Everyone: Assistive Technology initiative. Thanks to the generous support of the Community Foundation of Southeastern Alberta, scanning pens: C-Pen Reader2s are now available at the fourteen member libraries of the Shortgrass Library System enhancing accessibility for community members across the region.

As we get ready to wrap up 2024 and look forward into 2025 I want to express my excitement for the coming year. Wishing you all a peaceful and joyous holiday season and all the best for 2025!

Petra

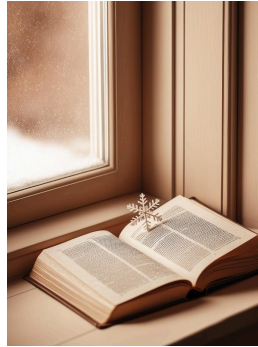
Library Development Services Update

Sadaf Hakimzadeh, Librarian, Library Development Services

Shortgrass had an active season with an author tour, van unveiling events, staffing changes, and more. One of the highlights was the art contest events, which have now wrapped up. These events were a great success, filled with joy, community spirit, and excitement. The enthusiasm we saw have left us inspired, and we're eager to organize more contests in the future. Stay tuned!

Although winter hasn't officially begun, planning for the summer reading program has already started. I've been gathering input from libraries about prizes and this year's performer. Thanks to all who have shared their feedback! Your suggestions are shaping what promises to be another fantastic summer.

Wishing you and your loved ones a joyful holiday season and a happy New Year. Looking forward to a bright and successful 2025!



Systems and Technical Services Update

Lauralee Gilmour, Manager, Systems and Technical Services

Cats vs Dogs vs Reindeer

Now for the collection report you've all been waiting for...how do cats, dogs, and reindeer stack up against each other within the Shortgrass region?



There are:

- 389 items with "cats" in the title, with 7192 lifetime circs. (Average: 18.5 circs per item)
- 584 items with "dogs" in the title, with 9930 lifetime circs. (Average: 17 circs per item)
- 121 items with "reindeer" in the title, with 1782 lifetime circs. (Average: 14.7 circs per item)

Conclusions:

- Staff at Shortgrass libraries like dogs more than cats and buy more dog books.
- Dog-loving patrons also outnumber cat-loving patrons, but a strong contingent of cat-loving patrons fights back by checking out the cat books at a slightly higher rate.
- Who is the winner? Official considered opinion of Systems & Technical Services: Objectively speaking, reindeer can fly and bring presents, so are the most superior of the three, despite the fact this is not (yet) reflected in the collection or usage numbers. A promotional campaign is clearly needed to boost the popularity of reindeer among patrons. Libraries that wish to help address this injustice are free to use the image provided in this article for their promotional materials (credit to Canva's AI for the image - want a free Canva account to make images like this for your library? Contact [Sadaf!](#))

Want a report like this on the materials at your library? Perhaps you'd like to see how unicorns stack up against dragons within your collection? Contact reports@shortgrass.ca.

What's New at Shortgrass Member Libraries?

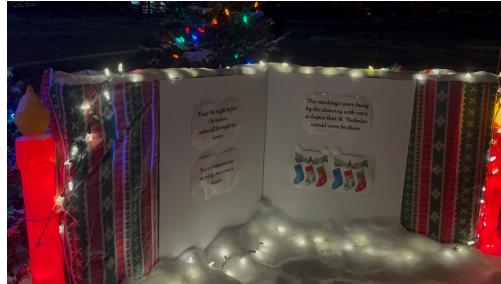
Halloween at Irvine Community Library



This Halloween, Irvine Library welcomed a group of visitors dressed in creative costumes! Children explored, participated in activities, and enjoyed the spooky decorations, particularly the one at the entrance. A special spider helped with that one! Another fun day at the library engaging kids with books and more.

Light Up the Campground in Bassano

Bassano Memorial Library participated in Light Up the Campground this year. Each winter, organizations and businesses can "purchase" a campsite at the small campground in town and decorate it as they wish. All proceeds benefit the local food hampers. On the last Wednesday of November, there is a big light-up ceremony with the town council, the community, and Santa Claus himself. The campground lights are turned on all at once, and there are campfires, hot chocolate, caroling, and more. It's one of the biggest local events of the year. The pictures below show Bassano Library's giant book (made out of wood pallets, plastic poster board, and tablecloths), with candles and artificial trees.



Bassano Memorial Library awarded Funding to help with teen programs



Bassano library was awarded \$1000 through the Intact Better Communities Program, supported by Intact Insurance and Western Financial. This generous funding will help the library enhance their monthly Teen Night programs by providing snacks and supplies. The library is very grateful for this support and excited to expand their offerings for teens in the community!

In Library News...

A Single Canadian Library Challenges Database

The Center for Free Expression (CFE) and the Canadian Federation of Library Associations (CFLA-FCAB) have announced the successful integration of their previously separate Library Challenges Databases into a single, streamlined repository of challenges. The CFE and the CFLA's Intellectual Freedom Committee are providing Canadian libraries and librarians a one-stop place to report and track library challenges across the country.

What is the Canadian Library Challenges Database?

The Canadian Library Challenges Database, developed by CFE-CFLA/FCAB, serves as a resource documenting instances where libraries have faced challenges related to items in their collections, as well as displays, programs, room usage, and computer access. For each case, the database includes details such as: a) the item in question, the nature of the objection, and the requested action; b) (when available) a record of the library's review of the challenged material; c) the library's response to the challenge.

Who can contribute to the Database?

Libraries across Canada are encouraged to share their challenges in the database. The database becomes increasingly valuable for librarians, researchers, and the library and archives community as it provides a more comprehensive record of challenges faced.

How can a challenge be reported?

Reporting a challenge is straightforward. Fill out the CFE-CFLA Challenge Report Form, which is available in both English and French. This form is always accessible on the Canadian Library Challenges Database webpage for convenience.

[Click here to access the challenges database](#)

Libraries as Social Infrastructure: CFLA-FCAB National Advocacy Campaign

Libraries are the only sector within GLAM (galleries, libraries, archives, and museums) that does not receive direct federal funding, despite the significant social and economic benefits they offer to their communities. A new national advocacy campaign has been launched to help libraries share their important story and provide them with the resources needed to advocate for their work.

During the spring and summer, the CFLA-FCAB board collaborated with Impact Public Affairs to create a campaign that emphasizes libraries' essential role in the social infrastructure of communities. The campaign also advocates for greater federal funding for libraries.

In the fall and winter, the CFLA-FCAB executive team began the first phase of the national advocacy effort, engaging with federal policy leaders and key members of parliament.

In the new year, the campaign will move into its second phase, with the CFLA-FCAB Board partnering with member associations to launch a grassroots advocacy initiative designed to reach members of parliament across the country.

Professional Development & Training



Crisis Communications for Library Leaders

A crisis, by its very nature, is unpredictable and often unanticipated. But preparation is key to effective communication in times of crisis. In this session, offered by ALA eLearning, you will learn tools and tactics for responding to a crisis that may never happen in your library.

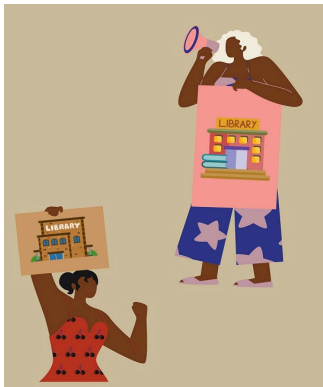
Available any time on demand

Follow this link to register and watch

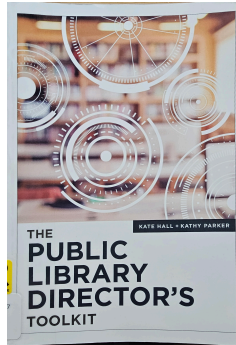
Advocacy in a polarized world

How can you effectively communicate with all decision-makers, and stakeholders about the important work happening at the library regardless of their political beliefs? Learn the principles of “The Three Languages” of politics, and how to apply them when communicating with people from across the political spectrum. We will build upon these principles and learn how to effectively use data, stories, and research to craft compelling, resonant messages.

Free Webinar on demand



Follow this link to access



Shortgrass Professional Development Collection

Shortgrass has a Professional Development collection, which staff from our 14 member libraries can borrow from.

The latest addition to our collection is *The Public Library Director's Toolkit* by Kate Hall and Kathy Parker. Whether you've just started your Library management journey or are a seasoned library champion, this book has so much to offer for you to brush up your skills.

These books can be reserved through WorkFlows, but won't show up in Bibliocommons, as they are only available to staff. [Visit our website](#) to browse the full list, and head to WorkFlows to place a hold!

[Browse the full list of books here!](#)

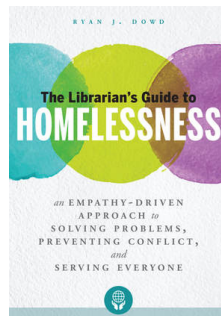
The Librarian's Guide to Homelessness

Exciting news: our subscription to The Librarian's Guide to Homelessness has been renewed for 2025!

Until December 2025, Shortgrass Library System is providing member libraries with The Librarian's Guide to Homelessness. This is an empathy-based training program aimed at providing frontline library staff with the tools to help them manage problem situations.

Learn to deal with patrons who are under the influence, use the right tone of voice and body language, handle problematic behavior, respond to inappropriate comments, and more.

To access the training, please get in touch with [Sadaf](#). This training is available until mid-December, 2025.



zoom

Don't forget that our virtual meeting software, Zoom, is available to all Shortgrass member libraries.

Please contact [Lauralee](#) if you would like to book Zoom to host your next virtual program or Library Board Meeting.

Share Your Stories!

Anything new to share? Send us your photos, stories, and updates!

- Screenshots of a popular online event
- Photos of what's going on at your library- displays, programs, renovations, weeding projects
- News about your library

Submit updates to newsletter@shortgrass.ca

Shortgrass Library System
Resourceful by Nature

shortgrass.ca

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Shortgrass Library System honours and acknowledges that we are situated on Treaty 7 and Treaty 4 territory, traditional lands of the Siksika, Kainai, Piikani, Stoney-Nakoda, and Tsuut'ina as well as the Cree, Sioux, and the Saulteaux bands of the Ojibwa peoples. We also acknowledge and honour that we are on the homelands of the Metis people.

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