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Volume XXXIII, Issue III - September 2025

## What's new at HQ?

Welcome to our September 2025 edition of Shortgrass Clippings! Read on to hear about what Shortgrass staff & member libraries have been up to this quarter.



## Upcoming Events

**September 15:** Library Managers Meeting, at Graham Community Library.

**September 17:** SLS Board Meeting, at Brooks Public Library.

**September 27:** Board Leadership - SE Alberta board governance training event.

**September 30:** National Day for Truth and Reconciliation - Shortgrass office closed. Missed deliveries will be made up on the following business day.

**October 13:** Thanksgiving - Shortgrass office closed. Missed deliveries will be made up on the following business day.

**October 15:** SLS Board Meeting

**November 11:** Remembrance Day - Shortgrass office closed. Missed deliveries will be made up on the following business day.

**November 17:** Library Managers Meeting

**November 19:** SLS Board Meeting

**December 24:** Last day Shortgrass office is open until 2026.

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## Future-proofing Library Technology Infrastructure in SE Alberta

Shortgrass is incredibly grateful for a substantial Project Based CIP grant from the Government of Alberta that has initiated a major technology upgrade project. This generous funding matches SLS's investment in this project, ensuring that member libraries remain vital hubs for digital access and learning.



By providing new computers across the region and a server replacement at headquarters, this project lays the groundwork for better, more modern technology services for library users in SE Alberta for years to come.



SLS IT Specialist intern, Ali Jedimoghadam, has been busy setting up the new computers, delivering them to libraries, and getting them ready for use at each location. He also reconfigured many of the existing computers to prepare them for the Windows 11 installation, so that they'll be able to run the latest software and security updates.

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## Air Matters: Indoor Air Quality Awareness Program

Shortgrass was pleased to launch a new lending program, Air Matters: Indoor Air Quality Awareness, in July. The initiative provides portable Aranet4 CO2 monitors for patrons of all Shortgrass member libraries to borrow.

These devices display real-time CO2 levels, temperature, and humidity, allowing users to assess indoor ventilation and take measures to reduce exposure to high CO2 levels.



Funding for the program was made possible through a generous grant from the Community Foundation of Southeastern Alberta (CFSEA), a notable donation from the Community Access to Ventilation Information (CAVI) program, and complementary funding from Shortgrass.

Alongside the devices, new ebooks on the topic have been added to the shared collection.



### September Library Managers Meeting

The September Library Managers Meeting was held in Graham Community Library. Everyone enjoyed a tour of the library and learning about its history.

Thanks to Graham Community Library for hosting the meeting!

## CEO Update



*Petra Mauerhoff, CEO*

Welcome to the fall edition of the Shortgrass Clippings!

The Board Leadership SE Alberta training event will take place on Saturday, September 27th, 2025 at Medicine Hat College, and Shortgrass Library System is part of the planning and coordinating committee. It's a dynamic day of learning, networking, and skill-building designed to help boards thrive.

We are very grateful for the project based CIP grant of \$75,000 we received from the Government of Alberta, which allows us to support the technology needs in 14 libraries and carry out a major technology "refresh", with the purchases of new computers, critical software updates as well as overdue server upgrades that will provide enhanced IT system security and reliability for the whole region.

Unfortunately, this summer the Shortgrass facility experienced an increase in vandalism, and as a result we are currently looking into enhanced security measures to ensure that Shortgrass property and staff are safe.

The upcoming municipal election will likely result in significant turnover on the Shortgrass Board of Trustees, which is comprised of councillors from our 11 member municipalities. I am personally grateful for the support we have received from the current board over the past 4 years and look forward to building relationships with new Trustees after the election.

Petra

## Library Development Services Update

*Sadaf Hakimzadeh, Librarian, Library Development Services*

## Summer 2026

It was an amazing summer in the Shortgrass Library System!

Shortgrass' summer student, Irelyn, and I visited 11 libraries this year, offering two different fun summer programs:

In Summer Science, we learned how to make balloons self-inflate using science; we made our own lava lamps; and finished off with an explosion of Coke and Mentos! We learned about CO<sub>2</sub>, density, and nucleation.



In 2025 Shortgrass Tournaments, children of different ages competed playing the Giant Bowling, Ring Toss, and Cliff Hanger to win a trophy and a prize bag.





The magician, Christopher Cool, returned this year for our children's summer performer tour. He visited thirteen libraries this summer, entertaining more than 600 kids with his magic.



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## New Programming Kit

We have a new programming kit, available for booking!

**Tetris Tumble:**

Strategically place each piece, and try not to let it all collapse!

Including all the iconic shapes, the game combines the classic fun of Tetris with the challenge of a physics-based stacking game.

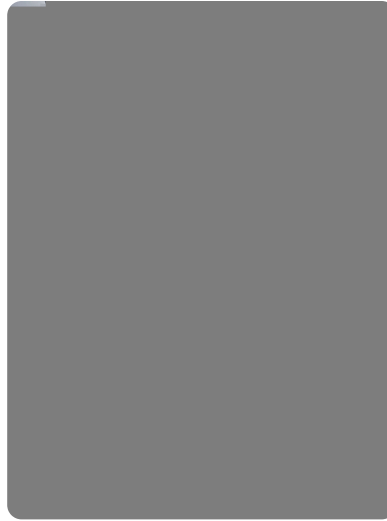
Email [programmingkits@shortgrass.ca](mailto:programmingkits@shortgrass.ca) to request this kit.



[View all programming kits here](#)

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## Programming Kit Spotlight: Nerf Games



After receiving feedback from different libraries about the Nerf Games programming kit, it was clear a makeover was needed!

The old, broken electronic target was replaced with a new one that has five targets, an upgrade from the previous four.

A few guns were replaced, and some new ones were added to the kit.

Also, the kit now includes a new zombie target, which is perfect for practice!



If your library has never hosted a Nerf war before, now is the perfect time!

[View all programming kits here](#)

## Systems and Technical Services Update

*Lauralee Gilmour, Manager, Systems and Technical Services*

**From Anywhere to Here: How ILL Keeps Small Libraries Big**

Shelf space and budgets are limited everywhere, but especially so for most small libraries. Sharing our resources makes our dollars go so much farther, from our online subscriptions to services like Overdrive, to bulk buying power for physical equipment, and this is particularly apparent with interlibrary loan (ILL) services.

In-system "interlibrary loans" are a big part of patron borrowing - overall, in 2024, 17% of in-system checkouts involved patrons borrowing items belonging to Shortgrass libraries other than their home library. That's a huge boost to local collections!



And when it comes to more obscure titles, patrons have access to a whole world of library collections within and outside Alberta, which can be conveniently shipped to their home library, typically at no cost. If there are no copies within Shortgrass, we encourage everyone to place requests via the provincial interlibrary loans site, by logging in with their Shortgrass library account [here](#).

Beyond that, all public library patrons in Alberta have the freedom to roam around the province and borrow items in person from any other public library, using their home library card. Just sign up at [melibraries.ca](https://melibraries.ca), send your library card info to your destination library, and in a flash - you're in their system! And borrowed items can always easily be returned at any Alberta public library to be sent home.

Small or large - ILL makes us all bigger than we are!

## What's New at Shortgrass Member Libraries?

### **Five Fun Facts about MHPL's Adult and Community Librarian, Miranda Leduc**



1. I studied abroad at Charles Sturt University in Australia for six months.
2. I love going to Anime conventions and try to go to both Otafest in Calgary and Animethon in Edmonton each year.
3. When the Olympics are on I become obsessed with sports. I'm the person who has three screens going at once so I can watch as many Canadian teams as possible.
4. I love to write. I'm often in coffee shops working on my novels.
5. I drove from Eganville, Ontario to Medicine Hat when I got my job here. It was January and I got stranded at a hotel on New Year's Eve during a snowstorm along the way.

*Miranda Leduc oversees adult programs at MHPL.*

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## Tilley Parade

Tilley and District Public Library had a busy summer starting off with the Eras Parade, and Shortgrass was proud to be part of the experience.

Tilley Library Manager, Joan, and a dedicated board member were joined by SLS Librarian, Sadaf, driving the Shortgrass van in the parade, happily tossing freezies to the crowd.



This was a wonderful opportunity to connect with the community and highlight the collaboration that makes our libraries so special.

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## Summer Fun at Rosemary School and Public Library



Rosemary School and Public Library had a wonderful summer filled with fun, creativity, laughter, and learning.

Take a look at a few joyful moments captured at the library this summer.



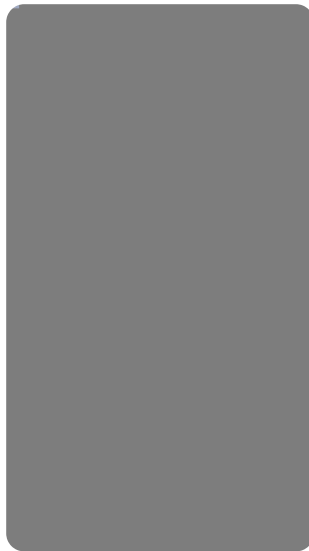


**Summer Programs at Irvine Community Library**



Irvine Community Library offered a variety of popular programs this summer:

The kids had a blast with 'Mistake Art' and 'Potato Printmaking', and they brought their creativity to the outdoors with 'Sidewalk Paintings'. Everyone had a great time joining the 'Nerf Wars' and 'Parachute Play'. Other fun activities included 'Lemon Tasting' and 'Mask Making'.





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## Graham Community Library Ran a Read Across Canada Challenge

This summer Graham Community Library tried something new and offered a Read Across Canada Challenge, and it was a terrific success!

Kids got their very own Reading Passport and read books set in Canada, about Canada, or by Canadian authors to earn stamps in their reading passport and win prizes!



## MHPL's Big Truck Day

Medicine Hat Public Library hosted its inaugural Big Truck Day event on July 5. Despite the rainy and gloomy day, close to 700 kids and kids at heart came to the Big Marble Go Centre to see, learn about and in some cases climb aboard the mighty machines.

The City of Medicine Hat came with a bulldozer, street sweeper grader and more, and the fantastic first responders were there with fire trucks, an ambulance and the police armoured response vehicle. Even the Shortgrass Library System van was there, and food trucks kept people fueled up.

The day was a huge success and the library is already planning for a bigger and better Big Truck Day in 2026.



## In Library News...

### Volunteer Alberta

Volunteer Alberta (VA) is focused on nurturing community well-being through civic engagement. They are exploring the future of volunteerism, including motivations and challenges, and empowering youth to contribute their ideas. For libraries, this could be a valuable resource for developing new programs or partnerships.

Additionally, VA provides support for volunteer screening, which could be useful for libraries that rely on volunteers for various activities. They also offer a research project on the evolving roles of volunteer centers, which could provide you insights to refine your own volunteer programs.



Libraries can become a member of VA to benefit from access to free webinars, discounted learning events, and the opportunity to network with other organizations. This membership could be a great way to access resources and connect with peers to improve your services.

[Click here to learn more](#)

## Professional Development & Training

### 2025 Stronger Together Conference



The 2025 Stronger Together Conference will take place on October 8 and 9 in Edmonton. The conference will welcome 500 attendees from across Alberta exploring key issues that shape the future of libraries and librarianship.

Today, libraries are vibrant and innovative community hubs. Despite facing global challenges, they remain a steadfast, safe space for diverse opinions. By embracing new technologies, libraries are inspiring communities, sparking imagination, and empowering Albertans to explore the future.

[Click here to register](#)

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## Fundraising Basics for Small Nonprofits

Learn how to make your grant search more effective.

Finding grants to fund your initiatives can be challenging, particularly for small organizations. This free recorded webinar discusses strategies that will help you find grant programs that will maximize your success!



[Follow this link to watch](#)

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## Maximizing the Impact of Your Library of Things



A Library of Things (LOT) is now common in many libraries. Yet, how do you choose what to add to your collection, decide how big to grow it, and make sure the items you add meet the needs of your community?

Watch this on-demand webinar to learn how LOTs have improved programs and services for diverse patrons.

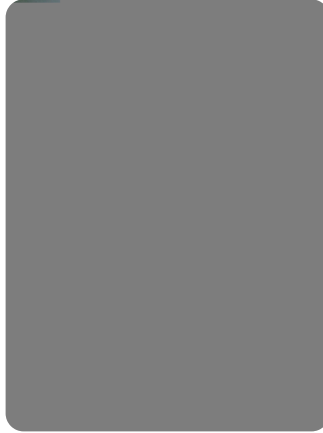
The presenters discuss some of the benefits created in a large and distributed system, as well as a team's experience lending from a smaller library in a more rural setting.

This webinar is intended for anyone interested in creating or working with a library of things and programming.

[Follow this link to register](#)

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## Shortgrass Professional Development Collection



Do you wish to improve satisfaction, health, and well-being of your staff? Are you feeling burnt out? Check out the latest addition to the collection, *Well-Being in the Library Workplace: A Handbook for Managers*, edited by Bobbi L. Newman, to learn concrete steps for creating and maintaining a supportive, productive work environment that enhances well-being among library staff.

Staff from 14 Shortgrass member libraries can borrow from the Professional Development collection. 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!](#)

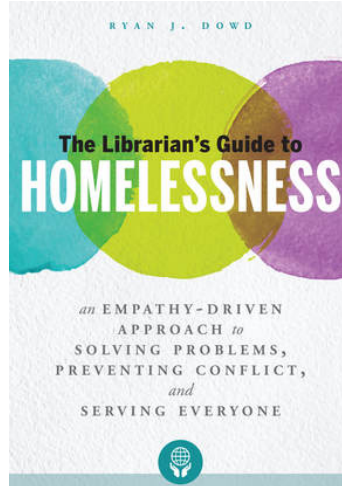
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## The Librarian's Guide to Homelessness

Until December 2025, Shortgrass Library System continues to provide member libraries with The Librarian's Guide to Homelessness. As in past years, Shortgrass intends to renew this resource, as member libraries find it useful.

This is an empathy-based training program aimed at providing frontline library staff with the tools to help them manage problem situations.

Consisting of a three-hour Core Training session and 30+ additional one-hour modules, this training is available to all member library staff/volunteers.



Register to dive into issues such as dealing with unsupervised children and teenagers; handling sensitive subjects such as body odour; de-escalating fights before they happen; and more.

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

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# 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](mailto: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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