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Volume XXXIV, Issue I - March 2026

## What's New at HQ?

Welcome to our Spring 2026 edition of Shortgrass Clippings! Read on to hear about what Shortgrass staff & libraries have been up to this quarter.



## Upcoming Events

**April 3:** Good Friday - Shortgrass office closed. Missed deliveries will be made up on the following business day.

**April 6:** Easter Monday - Shortgrass office closed. Missed deliveries will be made up on the following business day.

**April 15:** SLS Board Meeting

**April 27:** Shortgrass PD Day @ Brooks Public Library

**April 30:** End of Radon Screening Kit lending period

**May 1:** Recommended deadline to make your summer programming kit bookings!

**May 18:** Victoria Day - Shortgrass office closed. Missed deliveries will be made up the following business day.

**May 20:** SLS Board Meeting

**June 15:** Library Managers Meeting

**June 17:** SLS Board Meeting with Library Board Chairs and Library Managers

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## 2026 Shorty Awards!

**Nominations are open for the 2026 Edition of the Shorty Awards!**

Categories include Innovative Program, Creative Fundraising, Advocacy Initiative, Library Manager/Staff Member and more! Winning staff members and libraries will receive a trophy AND a \$250 prize!



Submit your nominations here!

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## Shortgrass Bin Weight Limit

**Shortgrass' New Bin Limit is a Positive Change**

Library staff across Shortgrass member libraries love the new 25 pound bin limit! Easy for libraries, and easy for drivers.

Always remember to check your bin weight before sending them out for deliveries.



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## Five Fun Facts about Meghan



My name is Meghan! I'm the new Librarian, Library Development Services at Shortgrass Library System. Here are some fun facts about me.

### **1. I Grew Up in Southern Ontario!**

About 45 minutes outside of Toronto, in a town with lots of vacant farmland. I've never lived outside of Ontario before!

### **2. I Go To the Movies...A Lot**

My boyfriend and I went to the movies 86 times in 2025.

### **3. I Love All Things Scary**

Horror books, horror movies, horror video games, whatever is scary! I've played games from the Resident Evil series more times than I can count.

### **4. My Favourite Animal is a Chinchilla**

Maybe I'm biased because I have one at home, but what's not to love? They're fluffy, cute, and easy to care for (mostly).

### **5. If I Wasn't a Librarian...**

I'd probably be working in a museum, or at a field dig site. Dinosaurs are my special interest and I would love to educate more people about them!



This is Sabrina! She is 7 years old, and loves treats!

## CEO Update



*Petra Mauerhoff, CEO*

Spring has sprung about 47 times so far this year, but maybe this time it will stick around.

It has been a very busy 2026 at Shortgrass so far, with the financial audit in January, the former Manager of Systems & Technical Services Lauralee moving on to sunnier destinations and Sadaf taking over the position, and our new Librarian, Library Development Services Meghan joining the team in February.

Shortgrass continues to be a partner in the Board Leadership SE Alberta governance training initiative. [A Board Leadership training event is happening in Brooks on May 2nd](#), a perfect opportunity for new and experienced library board members to enhance their skills and knowledge.

We are also busy planning a system wide Professional Development Day, which is scheduled to take place on Monday, April 27th, 2026 at the Brooks Public Library. If you haven't registered for the event, you can do so [here](#). We have a great selection of speakers lined up, providing sessions for both library board and staff members. We will also be giving out Shorty Awards again this year; if you would like to nominate a library staff member or program that deserves recognition, you can do so via [this form](#).

This is also the time of year when library boards submit their applications for the provincial operating grant. Keep an eye on this website for the 2026 application documents: <https://www.alberta.ca/public-library-board-operating-grants>

The Shortgrass team looks forward to providing great library services with you in southeast Alberta again this year!

Petra

## Development Services Update

*Meghan Stewart, Librarian, Library Development Services*

## New Programming Kits



### Code Jumper @ Shortgrass!

Originally designed to help children with vision loss learn how to code, Code Jumper takes digital concepts and puts them in the real world!

Using music and sound, kids can create and experiment with their own special strings using a variety of play and function pods.



### Turn Your Library Into a Bright Battleground!

Laser Tag is making its way to Shortgrass member libraries! Borrow the laser tag kit to run your own games, or pair it with glow in the dark mini golf to emulate an arcade!

(There are no harmful lasers with this kit)

**Remember to book your preferred programming kits by May 1st to ensure availability!**

[View all programming kits here](#)

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## Ideas for Your TD Summer Reading Club!

Summer is closer than you think! Check out some of the ideas below that you can use in your library to advertise and promote the TD Summer Reading Club!



### Try a 'Dive In' Themed Book Display!

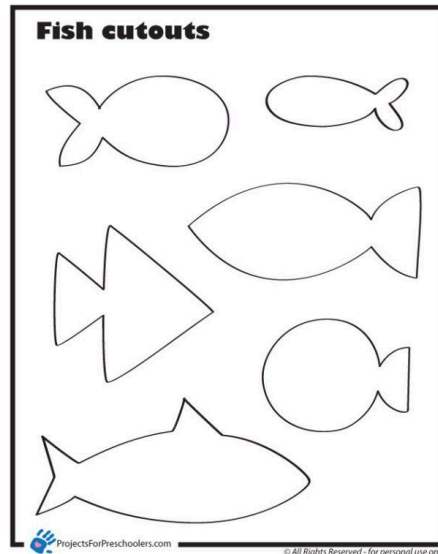
Pick out some ocean and water themed books to create innovative displays that will entice your readers!

Feel free to choose your own books, or use a booklist for [middle grade](#) or [young readers!](#)

### Run a Water Themed Storytime!

Borrow the 'Splash' STEAM kit to run a fun and entertaining SRC Storytime program.





### Create an Interactive Participation Art Piece!

Show your summer readers their progress every time they report their reading! Cut fish out of coloured construction paper and find a blank space in your library, like a wall, board, or even the checkout desk. Each time a reading report is made, allow the child to write their name on a fish and stick it to the wall with painters tape.

By the end of the summer, you'll have a fun art piece to show off to your community!

**Need ideas for your Summer Reading Club? Feel free to send me an email!**

## Systems and Technical Services Update

*Sadaf Hakimzadeh, Systems and Technical Services*

### Knowledge is Power: Get Insights Into your Library!

Would you like to know the top 10 books checked out of your library last year to post on social media? Curious to know the top 50 all-time favourites from your collection? Shortgrass can send you a report with that information.

How long has it been since you weeded your collection? Do you really want to take on weeding this year but don't know where to start? Shortgrass can send you a list of all adult non-fiction items 5 years or older that haven't been checked out in the past 2 years. That can be a good starting point. How about multiple automatic yearly reports for different home locations arriving in your inbox? We can do that! The screenshot below displays a portion of a weeding report for the YA collection.

Home Loc	Current Loc	Item Call #	Title	Pub Date	Item Barcode	Item Type	Item Created	Last Checkout	Last Inventoried	Lifetime Circs
YA	YA	ARM	The awakening /	2009	35021009087912	SGBK	3/4/2010	3/3/2011	NEVER	4
YA	YA	ARM	The reckoning /	2010	35021009580122	SGBK	6/9/2011	6/10/2016	NEVER	15
YA	YA	ARM	The summoning /	2008	35021009082020	SGBK	2/11/2010	7/31/2014	5/13/2014	7
YA	YA	AUS	All good children /	2016	35021011412306	SGBK	9/11/2017	12/1/2017	NEVER	1
YA	YA	AVI	City of orphans /	2011	35021010046469	SGBK	11/2/2012	1/28/2014	NEVER	2
YA	YA	BAR	Scrambled eggs at midnight /	2007	35021009199832	SGBK	6/10/2010	10/10/2017	NEVER	7
YA	YA	BAX	Broken Trail /	2011	35021009485736	SGBK	10/24/2011	12/2/2015	NEVER	1
YA	YA	BEN	Shapeshifter /	2010	35021009869798	SGBK	6/25/2012	NEVER	NEVER	0
YA	YA	BER	Find me /	2013	35021010352016	SGBK	12/30/2013	9/14/2016	NEVER	6
YA	YA	BET	The justice project /	2019	35021012835778	SGBK	3/29/2022	NEVER	NEVER	0
YA	YA	BLA	Three dark crowns /	2016	35021012535113	SGBK	1/28/2021	NEVER	NEVER	0
YA	YA	BOB	An inheritance of ashes : a novel /	2016	35021011971749	SGBK	4/25/2019	NEVER	NEVER	0
YA	YA	BOU	Survival of the goodest /	2024	35021013348953	SGBK	12/17/2024	NEVER	NEVER	0
YA	YA	BOW	Plain Kate /	2010	35021009353439	SGBK	12/14/2010	10/28/2014	NEVER	2
YA	YA	BRA	3 willows : the sisterhood grows /	2009	35021008782638	SGBK	8/25/2009	8/25/2009	NEVER	0

Have you completed an inventory and want to check which items were missed? We can send you inventory reports.

Strategic growth also starts with the right numbers. Tracking monthly new patron registrations at your library helps you find the most effective times for marketing campaigns and membership drives to boost your stats. Shortgrass is happy to support you!

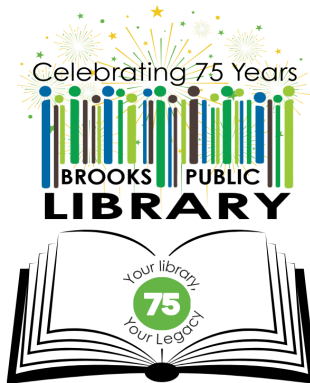
If there are any other data insights that would help your library thrive, send your requests to [reports@shortgrass.ca](mailto:reports@shortgrass.ca).

### What's New at Shortgrass Member Libraries?

#### Brooks Public Library Celebrates 75th Anniversary

Brooks Public Library is proud to announce that 2026 marks its 75th Anniversary. Since first opening its doors on March 10, 1951, in the basement of the Ladies Community Rest Room, the library has grown from a modest collection of 2,000 books to a vibrant community hub serving the City of Brooks and the County of Newell.

To honour this milestone and thank the community for seven and a half decades



of support, the Library Board is pleased to announce that all library memberships will be free for the duration of 2026. The standard \$10 annual fee for adult memberships is waived for all residents within the Shortgrass Library System until December 31, 2026. Patrons with current memberships expiring in 2026 have already had their memberships automatically extended by one year.

Also, a series of historical displays and community gatherings are planned to celebrate the library's evolution.

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## Fun Times at Redcliff Public Library



Redcliff spent their December decorating cookies and getting a special visit from Santa -  
- carrying on a community tradition!

January gave patrons the opportunity to swap out their board games and puzzles for  
brand new ones!

Redcliff also planned out their PD days, with the first one being centered around the  
Bloxels programming kit! Redcliff staff look forward to seeing young patrons participate  
in other exciting activities!

Thank you to Raya Jacobs at Redcliff Public Library for these amazing photos and stories!

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## Not Just For Kids! Reconnecting to Play at MHPL

Ask the participants at any given Reconnecting to Play night what they like most about the program and the answers are usually the same.

"It's really community oriented," says Alexa Wallis.

"We're not dismissed. We have such an environment here that is super kind and super fun to be in." says Theresa Perrault.

That's precisely what MHPL social worker Krystal Eirich hoped for when she created the program for a mental health class during her social work education at Medicine Hat College. She saw a need in the community for a substance free alternative for adults to make new friends, engage in social connection, and get reconnected with their community.

She developed the program for the library alongside MHPL's former adult community librarian Miranda Leduc, about two years ago. From humble beginnings and small numbers two years ago, the adult Reconnecting to Play program has grown to double the monthly sessions and a waitlist for nearly each one. Nerf Night is the most popular of the Reconnecting to Play nights, and other themes include Giant Human Games, Giant Parachute, and Fort Building.

"It continues to be everything I hope for and I just hope it keeps growing within social circles and more and more adults realize that there's benefits to coming out and taking care of our bodies and our mental health in a new way," says Eirich.



Thank you so much to Chris Brown at Medicine Hat Public Library for this awesome blog post!

In Library News...

### House of Commons Adopts Amendment to Bill C-15



The House of Commons has announced that Bill C-15 was amended to include protections for materials for those with vision loss, and reduced postal rates for libraries.

[Learn about Clause 196 here!](#)

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### CULC Releases National Study on Impact of Urban Libraries

The Canadian Urban Libraries Council/Conseil des bibliothèques urbaines du Canada (CULC/CBUC) has published their study showing the impact of libraries on urban populations throughout Canada.



[Read the study here!](#)

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## Province Orders Removal of Graphic Novels From Shelves



At least 166 books, mostly graphic novels, have been forcibly removed from school shelves following an order from the Minister of Education.

[Read the article here!](#)

## Professional Development & Training

### Southern Alberta Library Conference 2026



The 2026 Southern Alberta Library Conference is taking place on April 17, 2026, in Lethbridge, Alberta. Follow the link below for more information!

[Register here!](#)

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## Accessibility Assessment Tool



BC Libraries Co-op (BCLC), together with the Public Library Accessibility Working Group (PLAWG), have launched the Accessibility Assessment Framework for Libraries —a new set of practical resources created to help libraries strengthen accessibility across their spaces and services. The framework includes an Accessibility assessment tool and an activity book. Check it out!

[Click here to view the framework!](#)

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## 2026 Shortgrass PD Day!



Join us in 'Cultivating Community' among peers, colleagues and board members at our 2026 PD Day! We have an amazing lineup of speakers, networking opportunities, and hands-on programming kit demos!

Register here!

## Brooks Board Leadership Training Event



# Board Leadership Training Event

**BOARD LEADERSHIP**  
SOUTHEAST ALBERTA



Effective Boards.  
Thriving Organizations.

**▶ REGISTER**

**Early Bird Tickets: \$50**  
*until March 31*

**Regular Tickets: \$75**  
*until April 24*

If you or your organization face financial obstacles that prevent attendance, please reach out to the Community Foundation at 403.527.9038 or via email at [admin@cfsea.ca](mailto:admin@cfsea.ca).

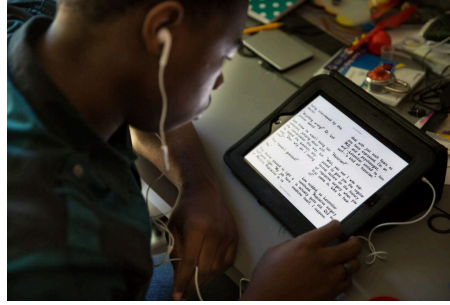
Date & Time:  
**May 2, 2026**  
8:00 am - 3:30 pm

Location:  
**Medicine Hat College  
Brooks Campus**  
200 Horticultural Stn Rd E, Brooks

Event funding provided by:  **fcss**  
Financial Community Support System

Register here!

## NNELS Training and Toolkit



NNELS has developed a new resource designed to help libraries promote and deliver accessible services for patrons with print disabilities. The NNELS Library Toolkit provides practical, ready-to-use materials for library staff, including:

- A quick reference and short script for frontline staff.
- An overview of NNELS and how your patrons can access the collection.
- Video demonstrations about NNELS and how to access the collection.
- Social media posts and templates that you can modify for your audience.
- Marketing materials to raise awareness of accessible formats and services.

[Access the tool kit here!](#)

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## Training on the Protection of Privacy Act (POPA) and the Access to Information Act (ATIA)

Public Services Library Branch is planning to offer two virtual sessions on POPA and ATIA as they pertain to public libraries. These are the new pieces of legislation that replaced the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIP) last year. Dates have yet to be confirmed, but PLSB is aiming for some time in May. A formal email with dates and registration links will be sent once they have finalized things.

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

Please contact [Sadaf](#) 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](http://shortgrass.ca)

2375 10th Ave SW, Medicine Hat, AB T1A 8G2

Tel. (403) 529-0550 – Toll Free Number 1-866-529-0550

*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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