

Resourceful by Nature



SHORTGRASS CLIPPINGS

Volume IX, Issue I - March 2021

What's new at HQ?

There are a lot of exciting things happening at Shortgrass! We have a new Client Services Librarian, a new Bookkeeper / Executive Assistant, *and* a new look for our newsletter. Encourage your staff, volunteers, and board members to [subscribe on our website!](#)



Five Fun Facts about our new Client Services Librarian, Kait!



1. I really enjoy painting, but I'm not very good at it.
2. I love Taylor Swift! If you ever hear the sound of her latest album echoing across the office... my apologies.
3. My nephew is 3 years old and he is the best thing since sliced bread. If you haven't heard me talk about how cute he is yet- it's just a matter of time!
4. My favourite method of reading is audiobooks, and I always listen on at least 1.5x speed!
5. I absolutely cannot dance- I have two left feet!

Five Fun Facts about our new Executive Assistant, Bernadette!

1. I have a daughter named Adeline, she will be two in June.
2. I have a 8 year old rescue dog named Dexter...I have had him since he was 3 months old.
3. I love to bake - I've enjoyed it my whole life but since the lockdowns started I have found myself getting a lot better, as I have a lot more time at home!
4. I was born in England but moved to Medicine Hat 20 years ago this August!

5. I am a huge Harry Potter Fan! My husband even proposed to me at Harry Potter World in Universal Studios in front of Hogwarts Castle!!!



New Look for Shortgrass Clippings!



2375 10th Ave SW
Medicine Hat, Alberta T1A 8G2
Mon - Fri | 8:15 am - 4:30 pm
No Public Access

How do you like the new look for our newsletter? Given that we are still so much impacted by COVID, a digital version of our newsletter just makes sense. This way, managers, staff, volunteers, and board members across the system can stay up to date with Shortgrass no matter what. Please note that we can still print copies for interested libraries- just let [Kait](#) know if you would like some sent to you.

Invite your teams to subscribe by visiting our website or following the link below!

[Subscribe to Shortgrass Clippings](#)

Reminder: Single-Use Masks Available

Contact [Shortgrass HQ](#) if you are in need of more masks for your staff, volunteers, or patrons, and we can send more your way.

Non-Medical Face Masks Available for Free at your Library!

Masks are provided by the Government of Alberta and available while supplies last.

Alberta Government | SHORTGRASS LIBRARY SYSTEM

COLLECTION SPOTLIGHT

Check out these upcoming releases, coming out in March and April 2021!

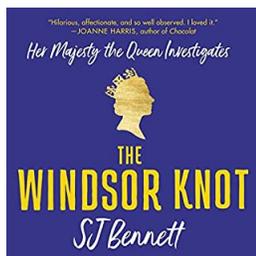


Accidentally Engaged, by Farah Heron

March 2nd, 2021

A delightful romantic comedy featuring a woman who fakes an engagement to the boy next door in the hopes of winning a couples cooking contest- and getting her meddling family off her back.

add to ULS cart

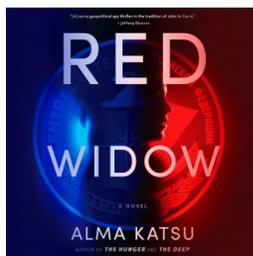


The Windsor Knot, by SJ Bennet

March 9th, 2021

The first book in a highly original and delightfully clever crime series in which Queen Elizabeth II secretly solves crimes while carrying out her royal duties, perfect for fans of The Crown.

add to ULS cart

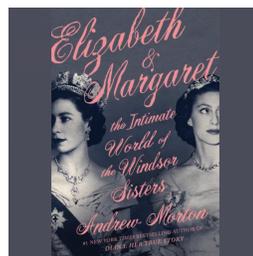


Red Widow, by Alma Katsu

March 23rd, 2021

An exhilarating spy thriller written by an intelligence veteran about two CIA agents whose paths become intertwined around a threat to the Russia Division- one that's coming from inside the agency.

add to ULS cart

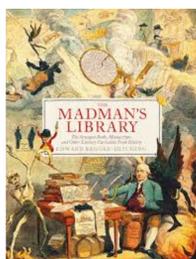


Elizabeth and Margaret: The Intimate World of the Windsor Sisters, by Andrew Morton

March 30th, 2021

Fans of The Crown will enjoy this captivating biography about Queen Elizabeth II and her sister Margaret as they navigate life in the royal spotlight.

add to ULS cart



The Madman's Library, by Edward Brooke-Hitching.

April 6th, 2021

Filled with entertaining facts and stories to discover, *The Madman's Library* is a captivating compendium perfect for bibliophiles, literature enthusiasts, and collectors intrigued by bizarre oddities, obscure history, and the macabre.

add to ULS cart

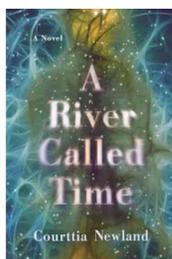


The Last Bookshop in London, by Madeline Martin

April 6th, 2021

Inspired by the true story of the bookshops to survive the Blitz, this is a timeless tale of loss, love and literature. As the Blitz rages in London, a young woman discovers the power of storytelling—a force that triumphs over even the darkest nights of the war.

add to ULS cart

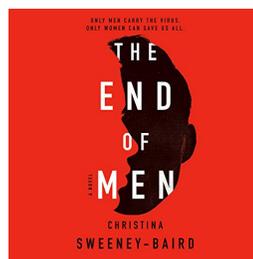


A River Called Time, by Courttia Newland

April 16th, 2021

A monumental speculative fiction story of love, loyalty, politics, and conscience, set in parallel Londons. When Markriss Denny has a chance to escape to the safety of the Ark, he is determined to prove his worth, which means keeping a secret that could spell danger for everyone.

add to ULS cart



The End of Men, by Christina Sweeney-Baird

April 27th, 2021

It's 2025, and a mysterious virus has broken out in Scotland. Affecting only men, it becomes a global pandemic. How would our world look without men, from the loss of husbands and sons, to the changes in the workforce, fertility and the meaning of family?

add to ULS cart

Upcoming Events

March 1-5: Southern Alberta Library Conference

April 1: National Poetry Month

March 8: International Women's Day

March 14: Daylight Saving Time starts

March 15: Virtual Manager's Meeting, 10am

March 17: St. Patrick's Day

March 31 - April 19: SuperNet Upgrades- confirm your library's dates

April 2 - 5: Easter weekend (Shortgrass offices closed, no deliveries)

April 12 - 16 PLSB Symposium

April 22: Earth Day

CEO Update

Petra Mauerhoff, CEO

Welcome back to the Shortgrass Clippings! It has been a while since our last newsletter was published and I am very excited about the new format. I am excited about 2021 in general. We are finally seeing a light at the end of the pandemic tunnel, thanks to the vaccine rollout, a couple of new staff members have arrived at Shortgrass since the beginning of the year (welcome Kait and Bernadette!) and we are at the tail end of a relatively mild winter.

I was happy to see that libraries continued to play an important role for many Albertans as they took advantage of the various services available throughout this challenging time, including virtual programming options and contactless pickup services. Shortgrass member libraries rose to the occasion and supported their communities in many creative ways and in turn, the Shortgrass team did its best to support the libraries. I am proud and encouraged by the strong community spirit I have observed over the past 12 months. I can't wait to see what this year brings and am looking forward to working with our team on providing the best library support services possible for all of you.



Client Services Update

Kait McClary, Client Services Librarian

Library Technician Practicum Student and Virtual Resource Training

Shortgrass Library System is looking forward to hosting a Library Technician Practicum Student from MacEwan University for the month of April. Brandon will be virtually joining us for the month to learn about our system and work on some special projects with Kait.

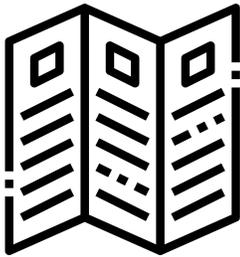
One project we are especially excited about is our virtual resource training! Brandon and Kait will be creating short videos explaining how to use our different digital resources. Staff across the system will benefit from these quick refreshers, and patrons can perfect their skills in navigating our resources. Watch out for these videos to be released in the next couple of months!

Programming Kits

Guess what- our Programming Kits are back! Kait has evaluated and COVID-proofed our programming kits. There are several that aren't available as they cannot be safely used at this time, but there are quite a few you will now be able to book again. Please check your emails for information on which kits are available, our recommendations for use, and book procedures.

We're also excited to announce that we will soon be offering some brand-new, physical distancing-friendly kits, including StoryWalks, tie-dyed masks, and more! Keep an eye on your emails for details.





Brochures

In need of new brochures for your library? This is a really great time to be promoting our eResources, after all! If you're in need of brochures for any particular resources, please email [Kait](#) and she will arrange to have those sent to you. We can also create new brochure for you! Maybe a brochure on our accessibility resources like NNELS, which you could leave at the local eye doctor? Let [Kait](#) know!

Happy to meet you all!

In other news- it's been a delight to meet you and hear about your libraries! I cannot wait to work with you and, hopefully, one day visit you in person. Even if we haven't had a chance to have our meet-and-greet yet, don't hesitate to get in touch with me if there's anything I can support you in. I'm excited to get to know you all and support you in offering amazing services to your communities!



Systems and Technical Services Update

Alberta SuperNet Upgrade

Chris Field, Manager - Systems & Technical Services

Service Alberta and Bell Canada are coordinating an upgrade of the SuperNet connection at over 4,200 schools, hospitals, libraries, government and municipal offices across the province over the next several years. For Shortgrass member libraries, these upgrades are scheduled to occur at the end of March and throughout the month of April 2021.



The upgrade will include a significant boost in network speed for those Shortgrass libraries serving populations of 5,000 or less: from the current 5 mbps to a new speed of 20 mbps. Since increased speeds at member libraries will translate into greater demand on the Shortgrass network as a whole, we have purchased additional Internet Gateway bandwidth to ensure there is enough capacity to serve our entire library system.

If you have questions about the SuperNet upgrade, please get in touch with [Chris](#).

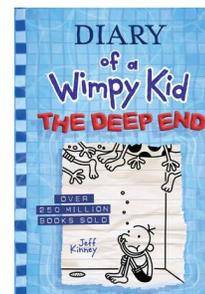
Standing Orders

Keltie Turner, Technical Services Assistant - Acquisitions

Have you ever realized that you missed the newest book released in a popular children's series? Did you know that there is a way to ensure that you get these books very soon after they are published? ULS, our most popular vendor, has an easy to use standing order system set up for just this situation. All you have to do is let me, Keltie, know what series that you are interested in and they will be automatically ordered for your library and get to you as soon as they are released.

You can find out what series are available by checking the ULS website. The can be found under the Selection Lists heading, near the bottom of the Children's and Young Adult section, under Standing Orders Children's and YA. From there you can browse the five categories offered. If you see any series that you are interested in simply email acquisitions@shortgrass.ca with the series name that the category you found it in.

Please feel free to [email me](#) with any questions, I can also let you know if you already have any series currently on order. I hope to hear from you soon.

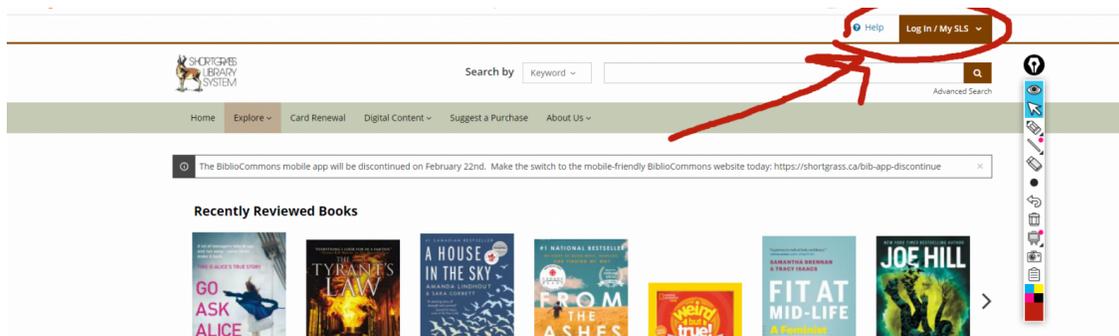


Epic Pen

Aaron Dalla-Longa, Systems Administrator

Hello everyone! Today I would like to introduce a fun tool that I found while browsing around the internet, called Epic Pen.

Epic pen allows you to draw right on your screen, which is especially useful for tutorial purposes, as well as other applications. For instance, maybe a patron is asking how to log into bibliocommons on their PC:



This screenshot was done with 3 simple steps:

I drew an arrow and a circle with epic pen directly on the website, then I took a snip of the screen with the windows snipping tool (Windows key+Shift+S), and finally I pasted the screenshot here (Ctrl+V).

Very useful and very quick to either show a patron in person on your screen, or e-mail them a screenshot.

Try Epic Pen for yourself at this website: epic-pen.com

What's New in Shortgrass Libraries?

Redcliff Public Library has been putting smiles on patrons' faces!

Redcliff staff were hard at work in February putting together little treats for their curbside customers. Some of the packages include a hot beverage and treats; a Yahtzee game kit for Family Day weekend; or a National Days Calendar package (for example, peppermint patties to celebrate National Peppermint Patty Day !). Kudos to Redcliff for brightening their patrons' days.



Check out what Redcliff Library is offering!



MHPL's subscription boxes have been wildly popular!

MHPL is offering their patrons a brand new service- subscription boxes! These boxes will be released four times a year, with each box containing exclusive MHPL merchandise and locally sourced items as well as two personally selected library books. The February boxes were announced on the 7th, and sold out within four days!

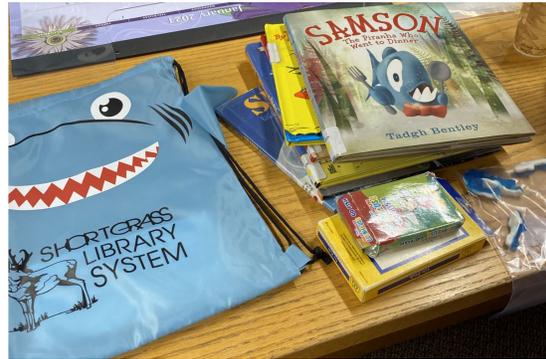
Teen patrons at MHPL are especially lucky- there's a version for them called Lit Loot, and it's free!

Visit MHPL's website for more information!

Irvine Library is making lockdown a little more fun...

Irvine Community Library is keeping their patrons entertained during lockdown with their Pandemic Survival Kits! With everything from a Go Fish pack (pictured) to a Pasta Making kit, there is something for everyone. What a lovely way to beat the pandemic blues!

See the kits the Irvine Library has developed!



Programming Ideas

Passive Programming: Graffiti Books

Here's a cool idea for your library patrons: [graffiti books](#)!

I'm sure it has happened to us all- a book meets your criteria for deselection, and it has to go, but maybe you don't want it to *completely* disappear. A school library in Ohio figured out a fun solution to this problem: graffiti books!

It is exactly what it sounds like. You take a weeded book, give it to a patron, and encourage them to write their thoughts, add commentary, and doodle in the margins as they read. The next borrower, writing in a different colour, can respond to these comments and add their own. The end result is a visual history of the people who read this book.

Make sure the books in your graffiti collection are weeded first, so they don't accidentally trap for other branches. As far as statistics go, this is more of a passive program rather than a circulation count. But it might increase the latter too- maybe while patrons are borrowing a book to graffiti, they'll also borrow from your collection!

Professional Development & Training

The Dangerous Myth About Libraries

We all know why libraries are incredible. Check out this TedTalk by Laurinda Thomas, who breaks down the myth that libraries are nothing but books, highlighting the value that libraries provide to their communities.





Middle Grade Magic

Find it hard to keep up with your young patrons? Never sure which books to recommend to middle-grade readers? You're in luck! March 9th 2021 is Middle Grade Madness- a full day of talks from authors of middle-grade stories about their writing and connecting with kids.

[Visit the website to learn more and register!](#)

French Programming

Do you offer French programming, or are you interested in starting? There's a new resource that may help you! The [Library Lexique](#) is a new platform with tools to support Canadian libraries in offering French services.

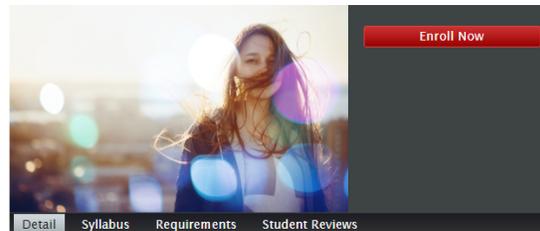
- Discover [French songs, nursery rhymes, and finger plays](#), to help you take your French storytimes to the next level- or introduce a bilingual element to your English storytime!
- Learn the French translations for common library terminology with the [lexicon](#).
- Utilize their [toolkit](#) for bilingual display ideas, signage, and more!

The website's interface is entirely in English, which makes it very easy to navigate for anyone who isn't *quite* fluent. Check it out!

Gale Course: Mindfulness

This is a very difficult time. You may find that engaging in mindfulness can help. [Mindfulness](#) is a state of active, open attention on the present moment. [Find out more about this Gale Course here.](#)

Certificate in Mindfulness



Don't forget! Our neighbours to the north, the Marigold Library System, release a monthly email newsletter full of excellent professional development opportunities- webinars and articles from all around the world!

Marigold Professional Development Newsletter



Don't forget that our virtual meeting software, GoToMeeting, is available for all Shortgrass libraries to use.

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

Share Your Stories!

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

- Info about all this amazing COVID-safe initiatives you are offering!
- 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

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

Tel. (403) 529-0550 ext 101 Toll Free Number 1-866-529-0550 ext 101

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 honor and acknowledge that we are on the homelands of the Metis Nation within Region III.

