



2002 ANNUAL REPORT

**“Celebrating 14 years of Library
and Information Partnership
in Southeastern Alberta”**

Mission Statement

The purpose of the Shortgrass Library System is to provide the services and support to member municipalities in the provision of comprehensive and cost-effective library service through the local library boards of autonomous libraries. The provision of services will include resource sharing with other libraries of the province, the country, and the world.

The Shortgrass Library System Board will continue to encourage nonmember municipalities to join with those already participating in the system.

Board of Trustees

The Shortgrass Library System is governed by a Board of Trustees composed of appointed representatives of each member municipality plus three Ministerial appointments. During 2002 the Trustees were:

Corinna Roth-Beacome.....	Chair
Rudy Esau.....	Vice-Chair
Anne Bernhardt.....	Chair, Program & Services Committee
Rosalie Stromsmoe.....	Chair, Finance & Personnel Committee
Eugene Adamson.....	Trustee
Leif Andersen.....	Trustee
Kerry Crapo.....	Trustee
Kent Pickett.....	Trustee
Harv Speers.....	Trustee
Della Marie Woodruff.....	Trustee

Leadership Team

The implementation of the Board of Trustees Plan of Service and the Board's policies, which establishes the direction and goals for SLS, is the responsibility of the leadership team composed of:

Dr. Harold Storlien.....CEO/Director
Mr. Bob Batchelder.....Assistant Director and Technical Services Coordinator

This team was supported by a capable staff of regular (7 FTE) and temporary (3 FTE) staff members.

Government Goals

The Shortgrass Library System implements the Government Goals:

- To assist in securing for all Albertans, regardless of place of residence, social or economic circumstances, equitable access to public library services which will meet informational, cultural and recreational needs
- To assist libraries to engage in resource sharing because no single library can meet all of the needs of its community. Libraries need access to the larger range of information available through networks
- Regional Library Systems are formed under and are governed by the Alberta Library Act and Regulations

“Sharing” as a Focus

The Shortgrass Library System works for its member municipalities to:

- Improve resources available to municipal residents through sharing
- Make cost-effective use of Community resources by sharing
- Reduce duplication of services by sharing
- Help rural municipalities have access to information services equal to their large urban counterparts by sharing
- Support individuals, communities and economic growth, and quality of life, by sharing

Shortgrass Is an Agreement

- An accord - a pact - among the eight current member municipalities - to make each library's books, audio and video tapes, and other library resources accessible to each other..."What's ours is yours and what's yours is ours". Access is more important than ownership
- An agreement to pool financial resources with which to purchase and process resources (books, cassettes, videos) on behalf of each member library
- An agreement to automate access to the total resources of all of the members' libraries

Who Do We Serve?

Member municipalities:

- Town of Bow Island, Town of Brooks, Village of Foremost, City of Medicine Hat, Town of Redcliff, County of Forty Mile, County of Newell, Town of Bassano

Other contracted partners:

- Graham Community Library in Ralston
- Medicine Hat School District #76

Population served:

- 90% of the population in the SLS region now served by Shortgrass Library System

Plan of Service - 2001 – 2003

The Plan of Service for 2001 - 2003 details the Key Directions for Shortgrass Library System. The key directions define the most important actions the System must accomplish in order to be successful in fulfilling its Mission. Key Directions focus the resources of the Shortgrass Library System on **doing the right things, doing them well, and at the right time.**

- **Leadership and Governance**
- **Member Services**
- **Service Expansion**
- **Promotion/Awareness/Public Relations/Advocacy**
- **Staff Development and Morale**

Progress and Achievements During 2002

Key Direction 1: Leadership and Governance

- Ensure that the Shortgrass Library System governance, leadership, and management structures take assertive roles in fulfilling the Mission Statement by proactive planning and implementation of the Plan of Service.

Key Expected Results/Outcomes

- < Strong and proactive leadership by the Board, CEO and staff will be driven by and aligned with the Mission Statement, System Beliefs, and the Plan of Service. The Shortgrass Library System will demonstrate this commitment and alignment in all its work.
- < New and continuing Board members will understand and commit themselves to the Mission, System Beliefs, and Plan of Service.
- < The member libraries, municipalities and contract partners will be satisfied with the level and process of consultation, and the overall direction and services of the Shortgrass Library System.
- < Shortgrass Library System will attract and retain skilled and competent staff.
- < Shortgrass Library System management and staff will be organized to provide the most effective and efficient service possible.

Progress:

- < The time, energy, and attention of the Board, leadership team, and staff was focussed on the implementation of the Plan of Service.
- < Stronger connections built between Trustees and SLS
- < Board meetings concentrate on SLS direction and policy
- < Orientation program for new trustees
- < Consultative and evaluative processes are in operation between SLS and its member municipalities and library boards
- < High satisfaction level with overall SLS direction and services
- < Maintaining skilled and competent staff
- < Reduced administrative staff to provide most efficient service possible

Key Direction 2: Member Services

- ' Ensure high quality, cost-effective services to our member libraries and contracted groups.

Key Expected Results/Outcomes

- < The Shortgrass Library System will provide services that are desired and needed by our member libraries, within the available resource base. Shortgrass Library System will help the member libraries to work together through its leadership roles of communicator, facilitator, and cooperation encourager.
- < The Shortgrass Library System will provide contracted services to organizations desiring assistance on a full cost-recovery basis.

Progress:

- < Full attention was focussed on our Core Business Activities.
- < Defined clear responsibility roles for SLS and the local libraries re. areas of independent responsibility and areas of cooperation. (i.e., equipment maintenance and public relations/advocacy.)
- < Drafted plans and budget to provide more technical services assistance in 2003.
- < Provided workshops in computer training/upgrading, networking and electronic databases.
- < Enhanced communications systems to ensure local library boards and librarians were kept informed of SLS directions and decisions.
- < Re-established the newsletter "Shortgrass Clippings" to assist with the above activity.
- < Established full-cost recovery plans with our contracted organizations.
- < Made strong representation about equitable funding from APLEN Capacity grants - resulted in grant increase of \$20,000 (from \$13,000 to \$33,000).
- < Participated in planning for a shared ILS, however because the SLS server could no longer be maintained, a Board decision was made to replace the server in early 2003.
- < Applied for a Community Initiative Program (CIP) Grant to help support replacement of our delivery van.

Key Direction 3: Service Expansion

- ' Ensure that carefully planned efforts are directed towards expanding membership and contract services in the Shortgrass Library System.

Key Expected Results/Outcomes

- < Additional municipalities, public libraries and other libraries will become members of the Shortgrass Library System.
- < Shortgrass Library System services will be expanded to other school systems and to other appropriate organizations/groups.

Progress:

- < Prepared and presented information sessions to the non-member municipalities re. SLS services.
- < Two municipalities joined the SLS (Town of Bassano and the County of Newell) which resulted in three additional libraries (Bassano Memorial Library, Alcoma Community Library in Rainier, and Rolling Hills Public Library)

Note: This was the most significant action in 2002.

- < Conducted a review of our non-resident fees to ensure they reflect the cost of providing library services to residents of non-member municipalities.
- < Increased non-resident fees from \$45 to \$60 for individuals and from \$60 to \$80 for families.
- < Initiated discussions with Prairie Rose School Division and Grassland School Division re. SLS services.

Key Direction 4: Promotion/Awareness/Public Relations/Advocacy

- ' Ensure there is a significant increase in member/public awareness and understanding of the Shortgrass Library System and in our advocacy role.

Key Expected Results/Outcomes

- < The Shortgrass Library System will have a positive, well-known public profile as a leader and advocate for public access to information and the sharing of all information contained in our libraries and other sources.

- < The Shortgrass Library System and the services it provides will be recognized as a vital source of information for all people in southeast Alberta.

Progress:

- < Strengthened our public relations and awareness programs by attendance at community activities, presentations about SLS services and participation in community parades.
- < Increased attention on our advocacy programs by meeting with our MLA's and participating in policy-setting meetings with other library systems and our Government department.
- < Meetings with our member library boards to ensure good understandings of the SLS Mission and services.

Key Direction 5: Staff Development and Morale

- ' Ensure that a collaboratively planned program will be implemented to maintain and enhance staff development and morale.

Key Expected Results/Outcomes

- < The Shortgrass Library System will engage in staff development programs, both individually and on a group basis, which will result in an increase in knowledge and ability to provide greater service to the Shortgrass Library System.
- < The Shortgrass Library staff have pride in the Shortgrass Library System and in working for the Shortgrass Library System, plus the level of staff satisfaction and morale will be high.

Progress:

- < Staff development activities were organized on a group and individual basis, however more attention needs to be directed to this area next year.
- < The Board and CEO focussed attention on ensuring that each staff member was appreciated and recognized for their personal value and contributions to SLS.

- < Increased communication occurred to ensure all staff members knew what was going on in SLS.
- < Staff members indicated a higher level of job satisfaction with respect to working at SLS.

Key Statistics

- Items purchased for libraries.....15,157
- Items catalogued and processed for libraries (includes donated items).....20,183
- Items re-catalogued (recon of libraries joining the system).....20,407

- Total items in system catalogue.....578,415
- Annual per capita materials allotment.....\$3.55
- Total items circulated to patrons.....742,315

- Total items moved among all member libraries.....41,912

- Total visits to SLS website.....88,863
- Total visits to SLS catalogue.....33,092
- Total virtual visits to SLS.....121,955
- Total holds placed on items (from home and library computers).....52,395

Key Sayings (to be distributed throughout the Report)

- , *Libraries are the same size when connected*
- , *Libraries build communities*
- , *You are not alone – partnership of libraries*
- , *Access is more important than ownership*
- , *“This regional library system (SLS) is one of the best example of municipalities sharing their resources that I know.” (Former Municipal Council Member)*
- , *“I cannot imagine operating our library as a stand alone library again.” (Bow Island Librarian)*

“We greatly value the services that our citizens receive as a result of our library being a member of the regional library system. We definitely want and need to be a member of SLS.” (Redcliff Library Board)

“The access to the horticulture books and materials that are in other libraries is a great service and is very important to me.” (Medicine Hat Library Patron)

“Being a member of Shortgrass improves the quality of small libraries.” (County Councillor)

“I have been a Councillor for the past 7 years, and have never heard negative comments about the money budgeted for Shortgrass – it is a small percentage of the County’s total budget.” (County Councillor)

“When the County decided to join, some councillors were more than concerned that it was an undue waste of money, and, in fact, it just barely passed with approval. After a couple of years with community promotion, the scepticism was gone...It is still surprising to hear of just how many residents of the County use and enjoy the ability to access the Shortgrass Library System.” (County Reeve)

Financial Summary
How Are We Funded?

<	Provincial Grants.....	25.13%	\$232,532
<	Municipalities/Member Libraries.....	55.33%	\$511,886
<	Non Resident Fees.....	0.94%	\$ 8,722
<	Contract Revenue.....	7.92%	\$ 73,263
<	Special Grants.....	0.33%	\$ 3,056
<	ILS/Datacomm Reimbursement.....	3.04%	\$ 28,089
<	Other Revenue.....	4.09%	\$ 37,864
<	Deficiency.....	3.22%	<u>\$ 29,800</u>
<	TOTAL.....	100%	\$925,212

How Do We Direct Our Funds?

<	Purchase of Library Materials.....	28.19%	\$260,851
<	SLS Services to Member Libraries	50.58%	\$467,953
<	Resource Sharing Payment/Rural Services Payment.....	2.27%	\$ 21,093
<	Advertising/Promotion.....	1.16%	\$ 10,768
<	Board Services.....	1.45%	\$ 13,461
<	Special Grants Expense.....	0.22%	\$ 2,056
<	Contract Expenses.....	7.58%	\$ 70,100
<	Building Expenses.....	4.97%	\$ 45,806
<	Capital Expenditures.....	0.78%	\$ 7,174
<	Other.....	2.80%	<u>\$ 25,950</u>
<	TOTAL.....	100%	\$925,212