



SHORTGRASS CLIPPINGS

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SHORTGRASS EXECUTIVE MEETS THE MINISTER

Wednesday, April 22, was the date set for a meeting with Dennis Anderson, the Minister of Culture. John Vandenburg, Wanda White and Vilma Brost met with the minister in Calgary to express concerns regarding establishment of the Shortgrass System. The members were informed by the Minister that funding for new systems cannot be guaranteed for some time as the balancing of the provincial budget could take more than one year. Our start-up date is still set for January 1988, and an establishment grant is essential.

The Shortgrass executive will be discussing what steps to take next and present their recommendations to the Steering Committee members at the Steering Committee meeting on May 30th in Foremost.

FOREMOST COUNCIL TO CONSIDER JOINING SHORTGRASS

The Village of Foremost met with the Foremost library board and Shortgrass on April 20th to consider the Shortgrass proposal. After much discussion, it was suggested that the Village council approve the System in principle in order for it to have representation on the interim board. This would allow the council to have input in some very important decision-making this year.

It is expected that the Village council will make a decision at its meeting in May.

FORTY MILE COUNCIL MEETS SHORTGRASS

Members of the Shortgrass Steering Committee held the attention of the County of 40 Mile council as they made their presentation to council members. Nanko Dubbleboer of the Bow Island area made the presentation on behalf of the County of 40 Mile library board and Cliff Dacre, Development Officer for Shortgrass was in attendance to speak on behalf of the Shortgrass Steering Committee.

The council was asked to approve the proposal in principle, enabling the council to appoint a representative to the Shortgrass interim board which will include members from Brooks, Redcliff, Medicine Hat, and Bow Island.

AUTHOR TOUR A SUCCESS

Well known author and historian, Grant MacEwan took two days from his busy schedule to talk to citizens of Medicine Hat, Irvine, Redcliff and Ralston/Suffield during the Spring Shortgrass Author Tour.

While at the Medicine Hat Library and the Irvine Seniors Hall, Mr. MacEwan stressed the importance of libraries in the community. He also spoke to Redcliff on the role of women in the west during the pioneering years. His main topic at all of the communities was the rise and fall in the popularity of the heavy horse in Canada, a majestic beast that was brought to the brink of extinction in this century.

Grant MacEwan was presented with an Altaglass hand-crafted antelope in appreciation of his presentations to the residents of southern Alberta.

AUTHOR TOUR A SUCCESS

Don Lemna, Medicine Hat author and humourist participated in the Shortgrass Author Tour in Brooks, Foremost and Bow Island. At each of his presentations, Mr. Lemna related the problems he encountered while attempting to become the great novelist and author. After many years of struggle he discovered that he wasn't cut out to become a successful novelist but instead, his talents were geared to the short story and play writing. At present he is working on a play to be presented locally later in the year.

Mr. Lemna was also presented with an Altaglass antelope at the conclusion of his presentations.

The libraries and board members who assisted in the author tour are to be congratulated on their efforts and the publicity for the tour.

WORKSHOP WELL ATTENDED

Three topics of interest to librarians were featured at the Librarian's Workshop in the Medicine Hat Library April 13th.

Networking in Alberta: Levels of Service

"Networking in Alberta", the document distributed by Alberta Culture, Library Services was the subject of the Workshop session on Levels of Service. Donna Holowaychuk of Alberta Culture reviewed the regulations and the Libraries Act in relation to the development of this policy. It was developed to encourage library staff and trustees to provide strong collections at the local level. She advised the librarians in attendance that they should take advantage of continuing education on programs whether they are paid or volunteers. Donna advocated that librarians should attempt to build collections to meet the needs of all of the patrons of the local library - the first level of service.

The second level of service is the resource centre. Marlene Balser of the Medicine Hat public library reviewed the reference material available at the Medicine Hat library which is our resource centre. She also displayed publications like telephone directories, postal code books that should be up to date and in every public library. She advised the libra-

rians that the telephone books for Alberta are free of charge from AGI and should be obtained on a yearly basis. As the Medicine Hat Public Library is the Resource Centre for southeast Alberta, the use of the Zenith line was explained and reviewed. She advised those in attendance that the librarian or volunteer should advise the patron to use other sources if the library is unable to help, such as the Health Unit for health and medical questions, the travel bureau, city hall, school board, etc. It is quicker than having the Resource Centre go through the same sources or going to other larger libraries.

As the local patrons of the Resource Centre, in this case Medicine Hat, have priority over the ILL requests, Marlene advised that best sellers should be supplied by the local library. As an example, Steven King's newest book, "It" has a long list of patrons requesting it from Medicine Hat, therefore the local library should consider purchasing a paperback of some of the best sellers.

Summer Reading Program - I Spy

This year, the Shortgrass Project will be conducting a Summer Reading Programme in co-operation with the Marigold Library System. With this in mind, Rowena Lunn and Carlee Pilikowski of the Marigold System explained this year's theme - "I Spy Something With My Little Eye, Something That Is Read". It's an opportunity to ensure that children will be using the library during the summer months. Librarians were invited to order the kit from the Shortgrass office. The kit contains poster, stickers, book-marks, certificates, colouring posters and buttons. Along with this, the booklet entitled "Super Sleuth" will also be distributed to the libraries. This kit is available free of charge to those libraries participating in the Shortgrass Library System and will be available well in advance of the summer holidays, enabling the library staff to approach the local schools with information on the Summer Reading Programme.

Advice given to the librarians was not to plan too much the first year as it could become a burden on the staff. A gradual increase in activities through the years to a complete programme is much better for everyone. There should be something in the programme for children from 2 to 12, and it was advised that the competition aspect of the programme should be eliminated to encourage the fun of summer reading.

Summer Reading Program - I Spy

Some interesting ideas were brought forward such as having the local police or RCMP in attendance to explain and demonstrate finger-printing, writing your own mystery, following a friend for a day without being detected, or making up your own ending to a mystery. The suggestions are endless and varied.

National Film Board Videocassettes

The National Film Board will be distributing video cassettes to the libraries in Alberta, and with this in mind, the NFB is contracting with the Shortgrass Project office to distribute and purchase selected programmes for member libraries. Gary Reading and Doris Ostergaard of the NFB office in Calgary advised that restraints are affecting all cultural agencies including the NFB. As a result, the Film Board distributing system is being reduced dramatically in Alberta. The future will see the reduction of marketing offices in Calgary and Edmonton. The NFB is striving to see to it that productions are made available to the intended audience and libraries will be major distributors.

With the Shortgrass office distributing video programmes to the member libraries, the NFB will assist in the programming, support materials, promotion and screening to enable everyone to take advantage of the more than 400 titles available. Compilation reels are now being considered whereby two or three short titles will be linked together to make up a 30 or 60 minute theme programme.

The librarians at this session were asked to select about 50 titles from the catalogues and present them to Shortgrass for selection and ordering. The Shortgrass Steering Committee is at present making arrangements to purchase the first 100 titles in the near future with an additional 50 to be purchased at a later date.

NEW SECRETARY FOR SHORTGRASS

Toni Gross, a resident of the Bow Island area, is replacing Sandra Macdonell who left Medicine Hat to take up residence and a new job in Calgary. Sandra will be missed by all who are associated with the Shortgrass Project as she had been employed for eighteen months as secretary for the Project.

The executive of the Shortgrass Project welcomes Toni to the Project and invites all those associated with Shortgrass to drop in to the Provincial Building and make their acquaintance.

IRVINE COUNCIL NOT READY FOR SHORTGRASS

The economic downturn was the reason given by the Irvine Town Council in turning down the Shortgrass System at its last regular meeting in April. Due to the cut backs in Municipal funding and the Culture and Recreation Department, the council could not see its way to providing additional funding for the Shortgrass System.

The Irvine library board will probably approach the council at a later date for reconsideration when the economy looks rosier.



"MEETING THE CHALLENGE - LIBRARIES FOR THE 90'S"

One of the largest attended conferences was held in Jasper at the annual libraries conference April 30th to May 3rd. This annual convention, consisting of members from the Alberta Library Trustees Association, the Library Association of Alberta and the Learning Resources Council had a wide variety of sessions and topics that members could choose from.

Those attending from the Shortgrass region were from Brooks, Ralston, Redcliff, Medicine Hat, Bow Island and Foremost.

At the annual meeting of ALTA, a new executive was elected and of particular interest to Shortgrass members, two member communities will be represented at future meetings. Terry Wilson of Duchess was elected to the position of vice-president, and Ken Reeder of Medicine Hat was elected as Director for the Shortgrass region.

The sessions were quite informative and helpful and those who attended returned to their respective communities with some valuable information about libraries and the future of libraries in Alberta.

SHORTGRASS STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

The members of the Steering Committee are reminded that the next meeting is to be held on May 30th at 9:30 am in Foremost. Progress reports, future plans and the latest news about the RECON and services will be reported. Members are reminded to attend this important meeting as it deals with some very important items and your input is required.



Member libraries of the Shortgrass Project have agreed to take part in the Summer Reading Programme. This service is offered to the libraries at no cost and it will

"I SPY"

give the librarians and their staff the opportunity

to distribute the reading kits to the local participants. The kit consists of posters, certificates, book marks, buttons, stickers, and an idea package.

Compiled and packaged by the Marigold System, the Summer Reading Programme entitled "I Spy" is distributed by the Shortgrass Library Project. It is anticipated that an entertainment package may also be made available to participating libraries.

The Summer Reading Programme is another service that is included in the System's Plan of Service. Other services are the Author Tours, workshops, video cassette distribution and large print book exchange.

By joining the System, libraries can take advantage of many more services available now and in the future.

SHORTGRASS PARTICIPATES IN S.T.E.P.

This summer the Shortgrass office will be employing a STEP person to carry out the cataloguing of the expected video collection from N.F.B. and the large print books from Alberta Culture, Library Services. In addition, the new employee will be gathering data on all of the libraries in the Shortgrass region and will also be participating in the planning and promotion of the Summer Reading Programme.

Partial funding for the hiring of the STEP person is provided by the S.E.E.D. Programme.

Shortgrass Clippings is published by the Shortgrass Library Project six times annually --February, April, June, August, October and December.

"Shortgrass Clippings" purpose is to keep library trustees, libraries and all interested parties informed of the development within the boundaries of south-east Alberta. The opinions expressed are not necessarily endorsed by the Shortgrass Library Project.

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