

Our exciting new website FSJPL.ca soft-launched on December 19th and was officially announced to the public January 5th. Library staff has thus far received plenty of positive feedback from patrons who have used the site. If you haven't had a chance to explore, I invite you to do so! The FSJPL catalogue and calendar of events take center stage on the home page, making it simple for patrons to find what they are looking for. There are three form submissions for patrons: Suggest a Purchase, Contact Us, and Volunteer Opportunities. Several secure online donation options were added and an extensive FAQ on the site contains valuable information for patrons and potential patrons. We also have a blog and a page to feature employment opportunities; however, those are currently unpublished until we have developed more content. They should be up and visible within the next few weeks. I am still working with Ben, Robert and Roy at Custom Fit Online to fine tune any alterations as needed.

Next up, we will be working with the BC Library Cooperative to have Bibliocommons installed over our public access catalogue. This modern library application will improve search functions and, as identified as a priority in our Strategic Plan and Initiatives goals, will provide an interactive experience for library users.

The DVD Shift project experienced delays in December but has now resumed. Record cleanup and reordering of damaged but well-circulating DVD titles is ongoing. Once these tasks are complete and all needed materials arrive, we will be able to begin processing and re-cataloguing. Patrons will be able to enjoy a new, simpler method of browsing for DVDs by the end of February.

While we were unsuccessful in receiving a requested \$10,000 increase from the City of Fort St John for the purposes of maintaining a second Program Coordinator, we are grateful to be receiving a \$380,000 grant for 2015. November 31, 2014 brought the end of our Temporary Program Coordinator's term, as well as the discontinuation of the adult, senior and newcomer programs the additional position created, with the exception of two book clubs held in-library which do not require staff facilitation. At this time FSJPL remains committed to providing a full schedule of children & family programs to the public.

I have been working with Karen Spence, a Public Administration Master's student who is currently tasked with developing new policy documents for FSJPL. Karen is hopeful to provide us with completed policy documents by the end of March, at which time they will be presented to the Board for adoption. In just a few short weeks, I've seen extremely thorough research and drafts from Karen. I am grateful to see FSJPL's policy development in such capable hands, and I am confident in the governing documents Karen's education and expertise will provide us.

All agenda packages and adopted minutes will be posted to www.fsjpl.ca/about-us/board-of-trustees/ moving forward. Agendas will be posted one week prior to the date of board meetings. Trustees will still receive these documents monthly via email; the online posting simply provides transparency to our stakeholders and also functions as a quick reference resource for Trustees and staff.

FSJPL's current Policies, Strategic Plan and Annual Reports may also be found online at www.fsjpl.ca/about-us/policies

Kerry France
Director of Library Services, FSJPL

Another busy month at FSJPL!

Library technical staff has been making several preparations for a staff work-bee which will take place next week in order to reprocess and relocate all DVDs to their new home in a portion of the paperback bookshelves. Be sure to stop by this new section on your way into the meeting to see just how this new format has transformed the level of ease with which patrons can now browse and select DVDs by genre. This method also decreases staff time in both processing and check out, and will allow patrons to include DVDs in their choices when using the future self-check machine.

Federal grant applications have been submitted to both *Canada Summer Jobs* and *Young Canada Works* seeking support of this year's Summer Reading Club (SRC) by way of wages for two Summer Literacy Project Coordinators. Also in support of this year's SRC, Andy Ackerman has begun submitting grant applications to specific companies (Telus, Alliance, Shell, etc). Morgan and I will be speaking with last year's sponsor, the North Peace Savings and Credit Union early in March.

I attended the Friends of the Library Society board meeting this month, where I learned the resulting revenue of their January book sale; \$1,017. I have submitted a formal request of the Friends for their maximum possible contribution in support of this year's Summer Reading Club. At this time, their contribution amount is just over \$2,000 but continues to grow monthly with in-library book sales.

We are increasing our public call-outs for volunteers via fsjpl.ca and our social media accounts. Currently, the request is for volunteers with specific interest in fundraising/Friends of the Library as well as FSJPLA Board Executives and Trustees.

Plans for our Spring Break programming are well under way. FSJPL has successfully partnered with the NPCC for the use of the centre for the live-action Hunger Games teens activity, and with SD 60/SWIS for the Library and Beyond program. As in previous years, we continue to actively seek sponsorship for the Spring Break season and are optimistic in this regard.

Another partnership and funding endeavor underway at this time include discussions with the United Way for an after-school Creative Kids Lego program.

The Ministry of Education's Libraries Branch Provincial Grant Expenditure Reports are due in March. One of our major funders, the Libraries Branch emphasizes less on numbered statistics and more on outcome based results and community partnerships. FSJPL was showcased in the Branch's 2012 annual report for our innovative partnership with School District 60 and Settlement Workers in Schools to provide our popular Library and Beyond summer and spring program. Throughout the remainder of February, and through the entirety of March, I will be compiling measurable outcomes and creating this detailed report highlighting the successes of FSJPL in 2014.

Kerry France
Director of Library Services, FSJPL

Spring! Or FSJ's version of it, at least.

Spring means Spring Break programs at FSJPL and this year will be another fantastic lineup. The North Peace Cultural Centre and Spectra Energy will be sponsoring the live-action Hunger Games Adventure for teens on March 30th - that's where we give a bunch of 12 to 18 year olds plastic weapons, turn off all the NPCC lights and let mayhem ensue! Spectra Energy will also be sponsoring a Super-Kids event (ages 2 – 6) and a Minecraft Survival party (ages 6 – 12) on March 31st, alas, both events will be fully lit and weapon-free. In partnership with SD 60 and Settlement Workers in Schools, we are also offering a Spring Break Library & Beyond program March 30th and April 1st.

Morgan, Gord and I will be attending this year's BC Library Association Library Conference in Vancouver this May. We look forward to returning with inspiration and ideas aplenty to share with staff and board. Hopefully, a combination of luck and writing skills will permit me to attend this year's Spark Women's Leadership Conference in May as well; I have applied for an Angel Registration, where sponsors provide full fees for those who may not otherwise be able to attend.

Our transition to ADP's TeamPay service will begin April 10th, with the Time and Labour Management portion to follow soon after setup and training has completed.

I have been in contact with the Public Health Nurse Manager to discuss partnership opportunities. It has recently been announced that some printed resources promoting immunization and other such topics the health unit previously carried will no longer be provided to them for free distribution, instead providing one copy per health unit. The library is hoping to purchase copies of these resources for client reference. I am in the process of applying for implementation funding through the Family Friendly Coalition/Success by 6/Children First Initiative to support this goal.

We should know the results of our fundraising efforts with MegaLottery by next week. We can expect lower revenue than in previous years, however, we were fortunate enough to have the members of the Friends of the Library occupy the ticket booth in the mall for most of our schedule, with the exception of the month of December. A big thank you to the ladies for their time and dedication in raising funds for FSJPL!

In increasing our public call-outs for Board Trustees, we have attracted the interest of a few people. Those interested have been invited to attend our March meeting, with no obligation. I hope to see some new faces there Wednesday evening!

Kerry France
Director of Library Services, FSJPL

Earlier this month, FSJPL experienced a fantastic turnout for our Spring Break programs. Over the course of four (very busy) days, our Superhero Kids event, Minecraft Survival event, Hunger Games Teen Adventure and two days of Library and Beyond's day-camp experience saw a total of 243 participants! A BIG thank you to Spectra Energy MacMahon Plant for their generous sponsorship, and to School District 60/Settlement Workers in Schools (SWIS) for their valuable support and partnership for the Library and Beyond program.

This year's partnership with SD60/SWIS for our popular summer installment of the Library and Beyond program (LAB) includes a full-time summer employee! This student will work alongside two other students FSJPL will hire and task with the creation and implementation of both LAB and our Summer Reading Club. This additional employee will enable us to continue the high level of summer programming we have offered the community in past years, while addressing the challenge of having received severely diminished federal wage grants in recent years.

Our Program Coordinator, Morgan, has qualified as an Angel Sponsored Applicant for the Spark Women's Leadership Conference, and will be able to join me in attending next month. We are both grateful to the corporate sponsors who made this possible. We are both looking forward to applying the value this conference will provide to our respective roles at FSJPL.

Our 2014 MegaLottery fundraising efforts have garnered just over \$1700. We will need to apply increased efforts to this program in the coming year, as this is considerably less than what we have been able to raise in recent years. The proceeds were affected by our lack of volunteers for the month of December, which historically has been a high ticket selling month.

In putting together our annual statistics for our upcoming AGM, I thought I would share a more detailed view here of the residency of this year's newest library cardholders.

	Adult	Youth	Total
City of FSJ	625	189	814 new cardholders
Area B	51	17	68 new cardholders
Area C	60	37	97 new cardholders
Unknown Rural	43	14	57 new cardholders
BCOne	11	0	11 new cardholders
Total			1,047 new cardholders*

*total includes only cardholders who registered in 2014, not overall cardholders

The annual report will have many more statistics for the year of 2014, I'm looking forward to sharing them with the Board, the staff, our volunteers and the public!

Kerry France
Director of Library Services, FSJPL

Welcome to the Conference Edition of the Director's Report!

Earlier this month, I had the privilege of attending the two-day Spark! Women's Leadership Conference held here in Fort St John, thanks to the Angel Sponsorship. It was a tremendously inspiring conference which demonstrated the abundance of strong, innovative women leaders in the north. The most memorable session I experienced, which aligns with my Director's goals this year towards increased networking, was entitled "*Out with Schmooze; Networking with Authenticity*" presented by [Rhonda Victoor](#). By implementing her simple but effective tips on initiating authentic conversations with strangers, I found myself engaging with others quite easily throughout the conference and then made efforts to use these same techniques the very next week at another conference in order to initiate conversations with those in the library industry.

Other highlights of the Spark! Conference included *Bending, Breaking and Ignoring the Invisible Rules of Business* presented by keynote speakers [Nancy Vonk and Janet Kestin](#), authors of the book [Darling, You Can't Do Both \(And Other Noise To Ignore On Your Way Up\)](#), as well as sessions on the allure of stress, communication in the workplace, a Women in Energy panel discussion and more.

Next up for me was BCLA's annual BC Library Conference in Richmond. This year many sessions aligned with my Director's goals toward community engagement, library advocacy, and developing and improving communication to stakeholders.

Among my experiences there, I attended a discussion led by Vancouver's City Manager Penny Ballem, MSc, MD, FRCP, on the importance of strengthening our individual library's relationship with its municipality to support healthy and sustainable communities. Emphasis was placed on becoming thoroughly familiar with the city's goals by being at the table – attending discussions with the community's decision makers in order to leverage this partnership; examining how the library as a member of the "city family" can contribute to pushing along the city's complex community agendas; modelling a healthy organization and maintaining our steady focus on the public interest. I found this discussion especially inspiring.

I also attended a discussion with [MLA David Eby](#) who spoke about community engagement. David emphasized the importance of taking direction from the community, and trying something different while also preparing to be challenged. He shared his experiences in rethinking his community space to create the opportunities he was looking for – so relevant to libraries today. "*You can fail but still have created many positives on the road to engaging your community!*" David also stressed that people are our greatest asset; community members, advocates, achievers, super-connectors. While this can be the most difficult to acquire in terms of the amount of work it takes to find and build advocates, it is also by far the most valuable tool we have when looking to engage the community.

Another session I attended, *Supporting Business Development Goals*, created discussions among the attendees about how libraries can listen, act and connect with decision makers within our community as well as funders and other stakeholders. The question posed was: **Are we poorly aligned with organizational goals or are we just not communicating how we align?** The closer libraries are to supporting economic development, quality of life and

infrastructure, the less likely they are to be seen as overhead. Also discussed was the way in which we present our successes to our funders – rather than measuring success by a barrage of statistics on circulation, libraries could be showcasing how we help our parent organizations achieve their strategic goals, in turn demonstrating our value and achieving our own.

I had the opportunity in this session to share FSJPL's experiences with efforts we have made in recent years to transform the way we present to our funders and stakeholders, furthering a discussion around how libraries benefit by aligning their strategic plans with those of their municipality, regional districts and provincial government. As FSJPL will be developing a new strategic plan for 2016 and beyond, this topic was of special interest.

Yet another conference, the Beyond Hope Library Conference, will be held in Prince George June 1st and 2nd. Held every other year, sessions for 2015 will focus primarily on programming and soft skills. I will be sitting this one out, however, two of our staff members will be attending and we look forward to hearing of their experiences and inspirations.

Kerry France
Director of Library Services, FSJPL

FSJPL is getting ready for summer and that means Summer Reading Club! Shayla, Grace and Esther, our Summer Literacy Project Coordinators are well into their preparations. The SRC Superstars are currently visiting all elementary schools in the area to spread the word about this year's theme: *Build it!* Word has it that Minecraft's Steve and Ghast have been tagging along with them.



Thanks to both *Young Canada Works* and *Canada Summer Jobs*, we will receive federal grants totaling \$8,550 to help cover a portion of Shayla and Esther's wages. Grace's position is provided by Settlement Workers in Schools (SWIS), a division of School District 60.

The library will be saying farewell to a long-time employee at the end of this month; Judy Mahood, a part-time Technical Clerk responsible for cataloguing, database statistics, and collection culling has been employed at FSJPL since January of 2001. We will all miss seeing Judy in the back office – whose smiling face was seemingly always partially obscured by the tall stack of newly catalogued books on her desk!

FSJPL has hired a temporary Bookkeeper, Carmen, who has a detailed accounting and payroll background. Carmen is providing relief while Jane is on leave.

More FSJPL employee additions include two Casual/On-Call Circulation Clerks; Jessica, hailing from Eastern Canada with an extensive background in records management and analysis, and Christy, a local published and award winning author of four non-fiction children's books chronicling her mother-in-law's residential school experiences as a child.

It is with great pleasure that I announce FSJPL's approval for a United Way grant of \$5,000 for the *Creative Kids: Lego Builders* program. This exciting program is funded until June of 2016 with one after-school session a week, as well as two Saturday afternoon sessions per month. Many thanks to our Program Coordinator, Morgan Peltier, for her creation which will feature partnerships with Urban Systems and School District 60 in providing a positive, diverse and inclusive STEM oriented program.

Director's reports will cease for the months of July and August but will resume again in the fall. I look forward to reporting on the many successes of the Summer Reading Program, as well as other library events and developments.

Have a fantastic summer!

Kerry France
Director of Library Services, FSJPL

Another successful summer at FSJPL! Our Summer Reading Club had a record enrollment this year of over 550 children. Our Summer Program Coordinators visited 11 schools, presenting to over 3,500 students. 43 separate program sessions were held, as well as two parties and a final carnival, totaling a participation of over 1,500 children. FSJPL extends our gratitude to our funding partners Young Canada Works, Canada Summer Jobs, Settlement Workers in Schools (SWIS)/ School District 60, Friends of the Library Society, Urban Systems, Progress Energy, Spectra Energy, Encana, Shell Canada and BC Hydro. The summer reading program would not be the community asset that it has grown to be without this support!

Sadly, FSJPL was unsuccessful in its request of a \$20,000 Farm Credit Canada (FCC) grant for the purchase of a self-check unit. However, I was invited to meet with Heather Desarmia this week, North Peace Savings & Credit Union's public relations specialist, to discuss potential NPSCU support for the self-check after Heather presented information about the fundraising campaign to her team. I will have more information to share with the FSJPL board of trustees at the upcoming meeting.

Mega Lottery sales have begun once again, and we are off to a great start! The Friends of the Library are contributing their support by volunteering at the Totem Mall ticket booth, and by selling mega lottery tickets on their own time. This year, there is an added option of a \$10 50/50 ticket and appears to be a fast selling hit with the public so far.

I remain in close contact with the BC Library Cooperative's Laurie Davidson regarding the consortium negotiations with Bibliocommons for the coming year. Unfortunately, these negotiations have delayed FSJPL's ability to begin the process of integrating Bibliocommons with our public access catalogue this year. While it is still a priority that this software is implemented before the end of 2015, the Cooperative is unable to provide an estimated installation date as of yet.

Much progress has been made on FSJPL's new policy and procedures manual over the summer. I anticipate drafts to be available for review by the Board of Trustees over the next couple months so that these policies may take effect before the new year.

Kerry France
Director of Library Services, FSJPL

Ongoing fundraising continues with the sales of Mega Lottery tickets both in and out of the library. A special thank you to our Friends of the Library Society for moonlighting as ticket salespeople! A reminder to Trustees, contact me if you would like to try your hand at selling Mega Lottery tickets to friends, coworkers and family in support of the library.

In human resources news, we have a new Casual Circulation Clerk named Trevor Johnston. Trevor is eagerly receiving training this month and is enjoying helping patrons. Trevor demonstrates strong skills in computer knowledge, as well as an outgoing and friendly disposition towards the public. Trevor is also a volunteer facilitator for our QSA @ FSJPL program, our student-led activity program for LGBTQ youths.

The North Peace Savings and Credit Union will partner with FSJPL to launch a donor-matching fundraising campaign for the purchase of a self-checkout unit which will provide patrons a private, no-fuss, little-to-no-wait checkout option. The first leg of the campaign will begin next month, with the announcement to local businesses of the donor-matching campaign and our goal of \$20,000. This is an exciting opportunity to be able to partner with the NPSCU to raise funds for this large purchase - we are grateful for their engagement and support, as well as their commitment to community.

October is a busy month for fall programs:

Celebrated October 10th, **Star Wars Day**, brought themes throughout our regular Saturday programming. Crafternoon drew 60 kids and 25 adults who found four different craft areas at which they could construct buttons, lightsabers, bookmarks and more, before moving on to receive Jedi Training (Tai Chi from Tammy Bilodeau of Willow Moon Internal Arts).

Make It Ugly; Craft Night for Adults attracted the participation of 16 adults ready to create and craft! This month's theme was ugly monsters. And indeed, they were (and by ugly, we mean cute!).

3rd Annual Family Lego Challenge! 34 kids and 27 adults comprising 18 families accepted the challenge of building various items out of nothing but Lego; headphones which could stay on after five headbangs; the longest string of lego "beads" strung on a necklace; and the longest lightsaber! Prizes were generously sponsored by Peace Country Rentals, for the third consecutive year.

Goosebumps; Locked in the Library! 16 children between the ages of 9 and 13 agreed to lock themselves in a darkened library for a night of spooky thrills and fun to celebrate the release of the movie named for the wildly successful 1990s children's book series *Goosebumps* by R. L. Stine. Our Program Coordinator, Morgan, reports that all 16 kids managed to white-knuckle their way through to the program's end at midnight, though she could have sworn she saw an extra kid leaving.....

Our **Afterschool Lego Program**, sponsored by the United Way, drew 35 children at each of the three sessions thus far, our largest participation in any afterschool program we've offered in the past.

Sprouting from that Lego program, also sponsored by the United Way, is our **Everyone is Awesome Program**. Free Lego play during school hours allows for an ideal, quiet timeslot for teachers and caregivers of youths with challenges or exceptionalities to bring these students to the library. The inaugural session brought the participation of 15 youths between the ages of 14 and 18 years.

Coming up next week will be an **Ever After High** event, which will provide themed activities for up to 20 children based on the popular book series about an enchanted boarding school for the children of fairy tale characters, destined to follow in their parents' footsteps, whether they want to or not. Failure to realize their destiny means their story will end and they will disappear forever.

Kerry France
Director of Library Services, FSJPL

The Friends of the Library AGM was held November 17th. The meeting carried significant weight, as all of the current executive officers chose not to let their names stand for re-election moving forward. New executives have been elected and will continue to operate the society under its constitution and bylaws. President Carol Wolford is joined by Theresa Mucci Rodgers as Treasurer; Jenny Dodd as Secretary; Lana Gay Elliott and Peggy Sweeney as Directors. I look forward to working with the new executives and directors!

Please save the date of December 13th for our Staff, Board & Volunteer Appreciation Brunch! More details will be announced shortly.

The North East, North Central and Kootenay Library Federations and Royal Roads University (RRU) – Continuing Studies have formed a learning partnership to offer a leading-edge applied and professional management certificate designed to cultivate the competencies and confidence required for library staff to better lead in a super-complex world. The Libraries Branch, Ministry of Education, is providing substantial financial support for this initiative. This co-branded Leadership Certificate course is designed for library directors, supervisors and managers with experience supervising staff in their libraries. There are also two courses open to library staff on time, priorities and stress management. Both of these programs are available to BC Libraries at a 60% reduction in regular RRU fees. NELF will offer a training subsidy to member libraries whose employees and/or directors can show proof of completion. I have registered for this certificated course and am looking forward to building skills with which to lead FSJPL more effectively. Interest is currently being gathered for the library staff courses. Both programs begin in January of next year.

Kerry France
Director of Library Services, FSJPL