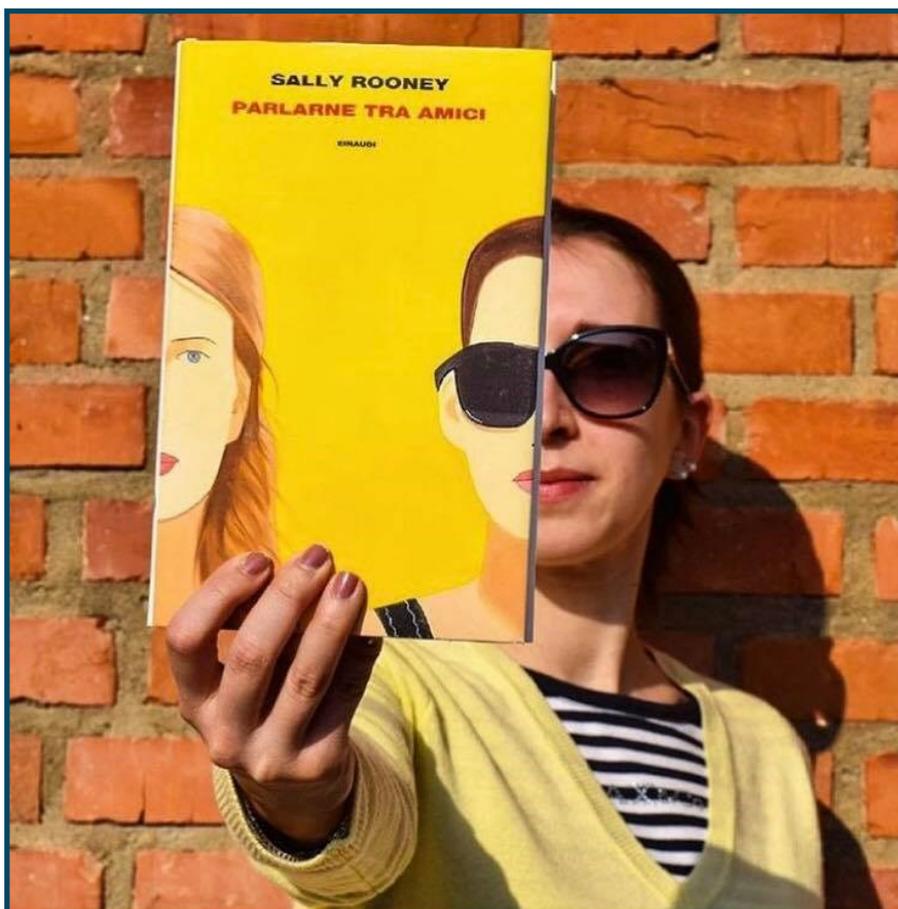
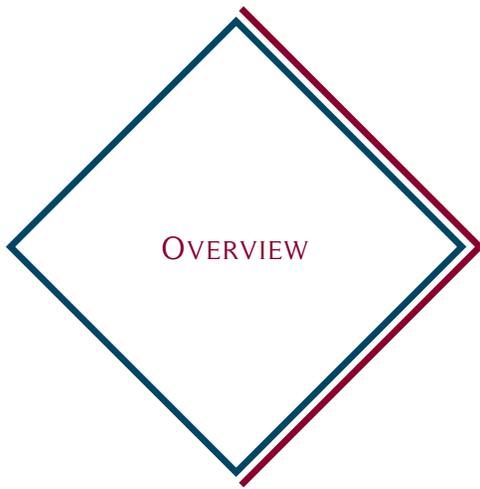


2018

Provincial Library Grants Report



Prepared by: Ursula Brigl, Chief Librarian
Submitted on: 21 February 2019



2018 saw the continued growth of the number and diversity of programs at the Cranbrook Public Library, particularly for youth. This report highlights some activities that directly supported the provincial government's strategic priorities for public libraries in British Columbia:

- ◆ Fostering Equitable Access to Information and Services – Revitalizing and Expanding Collections
- ◆ Developing Skills and Knowledge – Coding Workshops for Kids
- ◆ Working Together – Forging Connections with Artists
- ◆ Enhancing Governance – Strategic Plan Refresh

COMMUNITY PROFILE

Cranbrook is the largest community in the Kootenays, with a population of just over 20,000 in the city and approximately 6,000 in the surrounding Regional District of East Kootenay Area C. It serves as the commercial, educational, health care, service and transportation hub in the southeast corner of British Columbia.

There is little ethnic, cultural or linguistic diversity in the region.* Most residents are of European or Canadian ancestry and speak English. Immigrants, approximately 1.8% of the population, come mostly from the US, Europe and Australia. The Ktunaxa Nation's St. Mary's Band reservation is located just north of Cranbrook, and about 9.4% of the population identifies as First Nations or Metis.

High school completion rates are below the provincial average; 10% of residents do not possess a secondary school diploma. Affordable housing is less of a challenge for homeowners because the median value of a house is \$278,900. Affordable rental housing is a challenge as 42% of renters spend over 30% of their income on housing.

The City of Cranbrook and RDEK's Area C face a number of challenges, including:

- ◆ An aging municipal infrastructure that requires significant capital investment;
- ◆ The lack of a significant industrial tax-base;
- ◆ Unemployment rates that remain above the provincial average;
- ◆ An aging, stable population; projected growth over the next 20 years is only 3%.

LIBRARY PROFILE

The Cranbrook Public Library has served Cranbrook and the surrounding area since 4 July 1925. A key challenge faced by the library is its low per capita funding level, which hampers its ability to provide up-to-date collections in physical and digital formats. Despite this, it strives to offer high quality services by forging strategic relationships with organizations within the community and beyond.

Strategic Plan

In January 2019, a new 5-year strategic plan came into effect. The library will:

- ◆ Seek out innovative approaches for people to access information, learn and share their ideas with the world;
- ◆ Meet our community's diverse needs through collaboration to develop informative and relevant programs and services;
- ◆ Create a welcoming, comfortable and safe environment that will be the first place people think of coming to when they want to explore ideas, socialize or relax;
- ◆ Build strong relationships by telling the library's and the community's stories.

Library 2018 Snapshot

68
Hours Open per Week
131,858
In-Person Visits
190,170
Items Borrowed or Downloaded
761
Programs Held
11,504
Program Attendees
11,287
Questions Answered

The Cranbrook Public Library is the dynamic centre of our community. It welcomes everyone, inspires creativity, and enhances quality of life.



Diversify and expand collections of material in a variety of digital and print formats to meet the changing informational and recreational needs of people in our community.

REVITALIZING AND EXPANDING COLLECTIONS

In keeping with the historical purpose of the provincial per capita operating grant, each year the library allocates the majority of this grant to the acquisition of collection material in physical and digital formats. In 2018, the library undertook several activities to meet its goal of diversifying collections through the strategic use of provincial grant funds, supplemented by donations from the community.

- ◆ As the population ages, the demand for large print and audio books rises. With the support of community groups, the library acquired additional current and popular titles in these formats. While we acquired the material with the needs of our homebound patrons in mind, all library members can borrow it.
- ◆ The library acquired a new DAISY reader that visually impaired individuals can borrow. The reader has the capability of playing digital audiobooks as well as audiobooks on CD, increasing the accessibility of existing digital collections.
- ◆ The library identified the need for a digital language learning resource to supplement its print and audio material to support residents of Cranbrook and the surrounding area who travel throughout the world for work and pleasure. The Friends of the Library reached out to a local Rotary Club which donated the funds to allow the library to purchase a one-year license to such a product.
- ◆ The library refreshed and expanded its collection of material related to First Nations' peoples and indigenous issues in Canada.



Outcomes

Supplementing the core collections budget with donations and grants enabled the library to acquire more special-interest material to better meet the needs of specific groups of library users. Homebound members in particular appreciate the increased selection of large print and audio book titles, increasing their usage of the service over the course of 2018. The new DAISY reader led to conversations on how homebound members can use their own devices to download ebooks and digital audiobooks.

Pronunciator got accessed almost 100 times in the first month, confirming people's interest.

Updating material related to First Nations and indigenous peoples is the initial step towards forging a closer relationship with these members of our community so that we can serve them more effectively in the future.

Provincial Commitments

Making life more affordable.

Delivering services people can count on.

A commitment to true, lasting reconciliation with First Nations in British Columbia.



Meet our community's diverse needs through collaboration to develop informative and relevant programs and services.

CODING WORKSHOPS FOR KIDS

The library wanted to give children an informal, fun way to learn more about the fields of science, technology, engineering and math by using their creativity and artistic abilities.

- ◆ With a grant provided by the Kootenay Library Federation, the library acquired a set of robots, Lego sets, geometric shapes, prisms and more. Staff used this material to deliver a series of hands-on programs for children of all ages.
- ◆ Staff offered a series of coding workshops throughout the year using Dot and Dash robots. Children had fun creating programs that had Dot and Dash run courses, throw balls at targets, and play the xylophone.
- ◆ During the summer, the tech trainer worked with the Summer Reading Club Coordinator to create a series of coding workshops based around the Summer Reading Club's weekly themes.
- ◆ In the fall, public tech trainer shifted her focus from mainly offering one-on-one tech assistance to the public to holding regular coding workshops for children.
- ◆ In late 2018, the Kootenay Library Federation announced a tour of three robot kits, developed for children of different ages. Using the intermediate kit, the library offered two Ozobot workshops in December. The programs garnered so much positive feedback that the library subsequently purchased three pairs and now offers regular Ozobot workshops that are always full.



Outcomes

It is hard to say whether the coding workshops proved more popular with children or their parents. The children get so engaged that they regret when the hour-long programs come to an end and eagerly wait to sign up for the next sessions, which invariably have a waiting list. The parents use it as an opportunity to encourage their children to participate in other programs, borrow books, and use the educational apps on the tablets. Staff also noticed a marked increase in the number of boys coming to all the programs, a trend that started after coding workshops began being offered regularly.

Some homeschooled children participate in the coding workshops as part of their schooling, asking questions and coming up with ideas for future sessions that meet their learning needs. Through collaboration with children, the library will develop more educational and fun STEM related programs that engage and inspire children to explore these fields further.

Provincial Commitments

Secure a better future for families.

Delivering services people can count on.

Building a strong, sustainable economy that works for everyone.



Develop strong long-term relationships with literacy-based organizations, schools, long-term care facilities and cultural institutions.

ARTISTS IN THE LIBRARY

The library sought out opportunities to engage with local artists through programs as a way to contribute to the development of our community's cultural vibrancy, and to promote cultural literacy.

- ◆ With a grant received through the Friends of the Library, the library held a series of 'Connect to Art' workshops targeted at different ages and interests.
- ◆ Library staff reached out to the Cranbrook & District Arts Council to identify local artists who work in different media to present the Connect to Art and other hands-on workshops where participants learned techniques and created their own artwork.
- ◆ The library partnered with the Cranbrook & District Arts Council to deliver workshops beyond those planned by library staff.
- ◆ Crop and craft weekends grew from a one-time program that brought scrapbooking enthusiasts together to discover the library's crafting resources, learn techniques, work on projects, and make a page for the library's scrapbook, to regularly scheduled multi-disciplinary events where professional artists and hobbyists can work on their own pieces and support each other.



Outcomes

The programs were designed to encourage social interactions between artists, both professional and hobbyists, who would otherwise not have an opportunity to work together. Participants appreciated having a venue in which to share ideas, give each other tips and gain inspiration from what others are doing.

Professional artists found it inspiring produce their art away from their usual studio because they could focus on their work without being subject to everyday distractions.

Through the partnership with the Cranbrook & District Arts Council, both organizations afterwards identified other opportunities to work together to encourage residents to develop a greater appreciation for different forms of artistic expression and how art enhances the social fabric. In the upcoming year, the library plans to hold a series of workshops that challenge participants use STEM concepts to create art.

Provincial
Commitments

Delivering the services people can count on
Building a strong, sustainable economy that works for everyone



Encourage staff and trustees to envision new approaches for doing their work to focus on building relationships with the library’s users to better meet their information needs.

STRATEGIC PLAN REFRESH

In the autumn of 2018, with the expiration of the one-year extension of the library’s 2013-2017 strategic plan nearing its end, the Library Board turned its focus to creating a new plan that will guide the library’s development over the next five years.

- ◆ The Board held an evening retreat in early September to have informal and open conversations on a range of topics, including issues currently faced by the library, and broader societal trends that may impact the role libraries play within communities.
- ◆ When it reviewed the existing plan, the Board determined that the vision and goals still remained relevant and decided to focus on setting objectives that reflected issues identified during the retreat and observations provided by staff. Staff also conducted an environmental scan that focused on local and provincial government priorities, and a statistical analysis of local socio-economic conditions.
- ◆ The strategic plan committee, comprised of 4 trustees and 1 staff member, expanded the framework to support the activities laid out in the plan. These include greater detail about the library’s values and its principles, as well as specific steps to meet objectives and measure effectiveness.



The revised plan is available at https://www.cranbrookpubliclibrary.ca/files/2019/01/Cranbrook_Strategic_Plan_2019.pdf

Outcomes

The Library Board adopted the 2019–2023 Strategic Plan at their January 2019 meeting. The new plan requires the use of an annual action plan to set out how specific objectives will get realized. It also calls for a robust evaluation framework that can be applied to all existing and new programs, services, projects and activities. Staff will use these tools to create a holistic and cohesive framework on which to build strong services and programs that meet the varied needs of all whom we currently serve.

The plan also calls on the library to build stronger relationships with organizations and individuals in our community to reach out to those for whom the library is not a regular part of their lives. In particular, the library will seek to build a stronger relationship with the ʔaq'am Band of the Ktunaxa First Nation, and deliver more direct services to other communities in our service area.

Provincial Commitments

Making life more affordable.

Delivering services people can count on.

A commitment to true, lasting reconciliation with First Nations in British Columbia.

LIBRARY IN
ACTION:
A SUCCESS
STORY

Coding with Ozobots

CHILDREN, PARENTS AND GRANDPARENTS LEARN CODING
TOGETHER

The intermediate coding kit provided by Science World created an opportunity to offer 2 coding workshops featuring Ozobots in mid-December.

Although the sessions were designed for children aged 9 to 12, parents and guardians were encouraged to participate. Initially they were hesitant because they perceived that 'coding' was something only young, technologically savvy people could do. Once they discovered that coding with Ozobots only required them to possess curiosity and the ability to draw lines on a sheet of paper with felt markers, they became fully engaged in the workshop.

Over the course of an hour, three generations of participants had fun creating two courses of differing lengths that used codes to ensure their pair of Ozobots reached the finish lines simultaneously. Everyone was surprised by how quickly the time passed and wished it could have gone on longer.

The sessions were so successful that the library purchased several Ozobot sets so it could offer more programs, including ones aimed specifically at introducing coding to adults and seniors.



SUMMARY

Looking Ahead

The Cranbrook Public Library has a core of dedicated staff, some of whom have been part of the team for over 40 years. In 2019, two of them will spend more time with their families and pursuing other interests. Rather than presenting a challenge, this change presents opportunities. The Library plans to move to a self-checkout system to enable staff to spend more time helping library users, delivering engaging programs, and focusing on developing more relationships in the community.

The challenges faced in 2018 will continue, but the refreshed strategic plan sets out a path to let the library develop services and programs, through collaboration, partnerships and sound planning, that meet the evolving needs of current users and encourage others to discover what the library can offer them. It will support these activities by continuing to develop a diverse range of collections material in both physical and digital formats.

The Cranbrook Public Library remains committed to making information freely accessible to all in a welcoming environment that inspires creativity and enhances the quality of life for everyone we serve.

Approved: 20 February 2019 Cranbrook Public Library Board Regular Meeting

Original signed by

David Clark, Chair