



# NEWS & Notes

PEACE LIBRARY SYSTEM'S QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

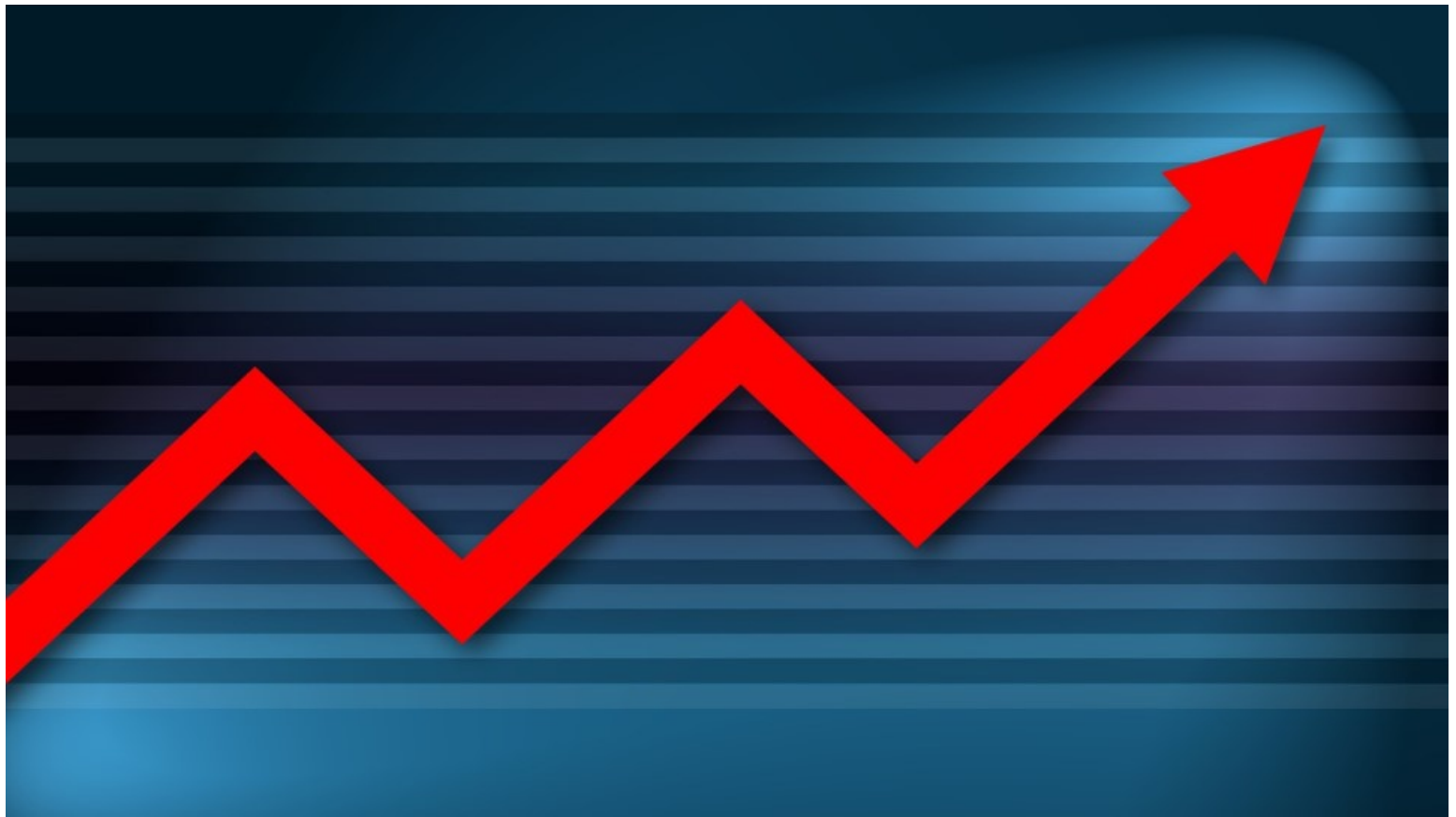
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SPRING 2021

## 2020 eResource Growth

Library patrons increasingly making use of PLS eResources



Despite library closures and overall limited access to physical collections over the course of 2020, public library users were able to access Peace Library System's digital collection of eResources, and they seem to be liking it. While we have seen steady growth of interest and use of our eResources over the past number of years, 2020 saw the biggest sustained increase to date for many of our major eResources. While digital material can never replace our physical libraries, it is a crucial supplement to in-person service as digital content can be accessed 24/7 online, which is especially important when libraries have to close their doors to public foot traffic due to public health measures.

Peace Library System continues to support eResource growth by dedicating more funds to building our digital collections and also by allowing patrons to sign up for a Temporary eResource Card. Check out our website for more on this initiative.

For a breakdown of usage growth by eResource, please turn to page 14.

# >> From the CEO



Louisa Robison

Welcome to spring! While the calendar may say it's nearly spring time, the weather begs to differ. With the huge cold snap we had in the north, and apparently the rest of the province, I'm very impressed that we are all still functioning. The courier never missed a day, even with the bone-chilling temperatures freezing vehicles and people alike. Hopefully the weather will warm up soon and we can all come out of hibernation with some awesome spring outdoor activities. Easter egg hunt, here I come!

## Virtual Conference

As I'm sure you'll read further on, planning for the next conference is well underway. This year we are going into it with eyes open and prepared for online conferencing, and I know it'll be just as successful as last year. I've had a sneak peak at some of the suggestions for speakers and I can't wait; there will be some truly excellent sessions. In the meantime, there is also the Southern Alberta Library Conference and the Northern Lights virtual library conference, both of which have free registration.

## COVID-19 Protocols

COVID continues to be a thing, and will for a while probably. Headquarters remains vigilant with cleaning protocols, mask wearing, social distancing and working from home where possible. Travel outside of the courier service is still suspended. Consulting by computer is working well and please remember that your consultant is your first point of contact for library related questions. Technical help is still available through the help desk and over the phone. Leave us a voicemail, we promise to get back to you as soon as we can.

## Boardroom Upgrades

We're very excited about some upgrades done to our boardroom to make online meetings and conferencing so much easier. We've installed a big screen monitor and are using a system called ClickShare, which is a little dongle you plug into your computer which immediately shares everything to the big screen. Zooming is SO much easier now! This will hopefully make Zoom board meetings a smoother process, and will in the future assist with training programs when we're able to do them in person again.

## Steps to Reconciliation

I hope everyone enjoyed the January sessions by Teneya Gwin of Eleven Eleven Consulting, Steps to Reconciliation. Those sessions

were brought to you as part of the provincial Indigenous Populations grant which is there to assist you in bringing programming and services to the Indigenous populations in your community. If you have an idea for a program that may qualify, please get in touch with Samm to discuss it.

## Indigenous Liaison

Speaking of Indigenous programming, our new Indigenous liaison, replacing Kaylee in High Prairie while she's off on maternity leave, is Candace Cardinal. She's been a whirlwind for the past two months, traveling to the communities around High Prairie and delivering programming and literacy kits all over the region. I'm super excited to see all that she is doing to connect with the Indigenous people in the area.

## Population Data

The Province has changed the way they report populations, as I'm sure everyone is aware. We are right in the middle of analysing the differences in the actual population counts, that they have been using to provide operating grants and that we have been using to bill municipalities, and their new estimates. For this year the billings and grants will continue to operate on 2019 numbers. The Board will review the changes in population numbers later this year. Since the Master Agreement already says in section 8.4 that the population shall be the most recent estimate of population available from Alberta Municipal Affairs, no amendments to the Master Agreement are anticipated at this time.

## Plan of Service

Don't forget that this year is the year PLS writes a new plan of service for 2022-2024. Discussions are underway for the elements going forward and some new initiatives that I think will be very exciting. But don't forget, we need you to weigh in on what we're doing and how we do it. Please keep an eye out for invitations to surveys, the coffee chats, and virtual roundtables as we try to connect with each and every one of you to get your input into our direction.

Louisa Robison  
CEO



# What's trending in books

## CBC CANADA READS FINALISTS 2021

This year's Canadian Battle of the Books is taking place between these 5 novels:

**The Midnight Bargain** by C.L. Polk  
**Two Trees Make a Forest** by Jessica J. Lee  
**Jonny Appleseed** by Joshua Whitehead  
**Hench** by Natalie Zina Walschots  
**Butter Honey Pig Bread**  
by Francesca Ekwuyasi



## EDGAR AWARD FINALISTS 2021



The Edgar Awards celebrate the best works of mystery and suspense fiction. This year's nominees for best novel are:

**Djinn Patrol on the Purple Line**  
by Deepa Anappara  
**Before She Was Helen**  
by Caroline B. Cooney  
**Thursday Murder Club**  
by Richard Osman  
**These Women** by Ivy Pochoda  
**The Missing American**  
by Kwei Quartey  
**The Distant Dead** by Heather Young

## RNA POPULAR ROMANTIC FICTION FINALISTS 2021

The Romance Novelists' Association honours the best of romance with their annual awards. This year's shortlist for Popular Romantic Fiction features:

**Sing Me a Secret** by Julie Houston  
**Christmas Wishes** by Sue Moorcroft  
**Sunny Days and Sea Breezes**  
by Carole Matthews  
**A Perfect Cornish Escape**  
by Philippa Ashley  
**The Two Lives of Lydia Bird**  
by Josie Silver





# >> Consulting Corner



## News & Notes

News & Notes is your quarterly professional guide to news, services and connection with the staff at PLS.

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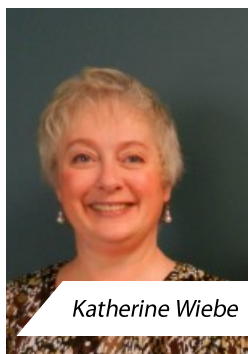
Louisa Robison

Emma Stewart

Katherine Wiebe

Bettina Worrall

Alycia Vickrey



Katherine Wiebe

How lovely this warm weather feels now that we're out of the deep freeze! The Consulting Department has a lot going on this month and into spring.

The public libraries' 2020 LibPAS Annual Report is due to the Public Library Services Branch on February 28, 2021. If you have any last-minute questions with your LibPAS, Katherine is happy to walk you through it.

The Public Library Services Branch will release the application forms for the 2021 Operating Grant after the provincial budget has been tabled on February 25. Prior to submitting your operating grant application, library boards will have their 2020 financials reviewed - a full audit is not required by the PLSB. The reviewed financials along with the library boards 2021 Budget are the main pieces of the operating grant application, along with a one-page application form. Watch for an announcement from the PLSB after February 25th regarding the Operating Grant application package.

We are all eagerly awaiting Step 3 of the provincial re-launch strategy when libraries may re-open, which at the earliest could happen on March 22 if all goes well.

The Alberta Library will be the provincial coordinator for the 2021 TD-Summer Reading Club, and Katherine is the PLS' coordinator. 18 libraries that registered for the TD-Summer Reading Club last year have now confirmed their interest in receiving the promotional materials that were held back due to the virtual nature of the 2020 club. The Game On! theme continues for 2021's club, and delivery of the promotional materials is anticipated in May for the activity notebooks, sticker sheets, recommended reads brochures, and Kids' website access code stickers. If in-person

programming ends up not being possible in July/August, the materials can be used to augment grab and go bags through curbside library service. Our public libraries may also be wondering when the prizes order form is coming out. The direction to go on this has not been clarified between the library systems yet, but we will provide more information when we have it.



Reading fun for kids, from  
Canada's public libraries  
[tdsummerreadingclub.ca](https://tdsummerreadingclub.ca)

Emma is already gearing up with the planning committee for the 2021 Stronger Together Virtual Conference, which will be held on Wednesday-Friday, September 22-24. A call for session proposals will be issued shortly, with conference registration to open Friday, July 30th. Updates will appear on the conference website at <https://strongertogether2021.heysummit.com/coming-soon/>. More on page 15!

Samm is focusing on updating the eResources brochures and Niche Academy training, as well as investigating new initiatives under the Indigenous Grant. We really appreciated and learned a great deal from the "Steps to Reconciliation in Libraries" sessions she coordinated with presenter Teneya Gwin of Eleven Consulting. Eleven Consulting's quarterly scheduled training webinars will resume in Q2. Uptake will be considered when planning for the second half of 2021.



Barb is steadily working away on Relais ILLs. As we are finding that Relais is demanding more of Barb's time, we are feeling our way as we



re-balance her job description more towards Relais Interlibrary Loans Technician, with fewer Member Services Assistant duties. Barb continues to coordinate the circulation of our rotating blocks and kits. Libraries are asked to direct other inquiries to their consultants, who are Emma at [estewart@peacelibrarysystem.ab.ca](mailto:estewart@peacelibrarysystem.ab.ca) and Katherine at [kwiebe@peacelibrarysystem.ab.ca](mailto:kwiebe@peacelibrarysystem.ab.ca). Samm at [smercer@peacelibrarysystem.ab.ca](mailto:smercer@peacelibrarysystem.ab.ca) is onboard for all your digital, eResources, and Indigenous library services inquiries; and please submit a HelpDesk request to assist with your Polaris/IT needs at [helpdesk@peacelibrarysystem.ab.ca](mailto:helpdesk@peacelibrarysystem.ab.ca). If you prefer to phone: 1-800-422-6875 or 780-538-4656. Our extensions are Emma 103, Katherine 104, and Samm 107. Even if we're not in the office, our voice messages go straight through to our email accounts, so we will get back to you ASAP even if we're working from home.

We look forward to seeing all of our public library managers (and other library staff are welcome too!) at our March Coffee Chats on

Monday, March 1 at 2:00 p.m., or on Thursday, March 4, at 10:00 a.m. Emma has sent out the meeting links via email. The same content will be covered at each chat. Please participate and let us know how you are doing. And you are welcome to turn on your cameras so we can see each other!

PLS is embarking on a Plan of Service planning year to create our new 2022-2024 Plan of Service. We will be calling on your libraries and boards for your input into the library service goals you would like from us.

Onward and upward!

Katherine Wiebe  
Consulting Services Manager and Deputy CEO



## >> Tech Services Tidbits

With the environment and your convenience in mind, we began phasing out paper delivery of financial statements on January 1st, with the goal of being email only by March 1st. That being said, some new eyes may be seeing their library's financial statement for the first time, so let me give you brief breakdown of what you're looking at!

This is what a monthly statement from PLS looks like:

# Financial Statement

Date: Monday, March 01, 2021

Report For: Feb 1 2021 12:00AM to Feb 28 2021 11:59PM

Owning Organization:

Balance at Beginning of Report Period:

Expended Amount:

Credited Amount:

Balance at end of Report Period:

Total Amount for Items On Order:

Free Balance:

Peace Library System

\$2,000.00

(\$200.00)

\$500.00

\$2,300.00

\$800.00

\$1,500.00

Fund Name: 0100F ( 0100F Peace Library System Full GST )

Date	Title	Transaction Type	Details	Debit	Credit	Total
04/02/2021		Supplementary allocation	Beginning Balance			\$2,000.00
			PLS - Allotment – JAN – JUN 2021		\$500.00	\$2,500.00
06/02/2021	Border	Paid		(\$10.00)		\$2,490.00
06/02/2021	Lost and Found Bookshop	Paid		(\$10.00)		\$2,480.00
06/02/2021	Into The Jungle	Paid		(\$5.00)		\$2,475.00
06/02/2021	Revenge	Paid		(\$5.00)		\$2,470.00
06/02/2021	Truth About Melody Browne	Paid		(\$5.00)		\$2,465.00
18/02/2021	Salt River	Paid		(\$20.00)		\$2,445.00
18/02/2021	Other People	Paid		(\$25.00)		\$2,420.00
18/02/2021	False Values	Paid		(\$15.00)		\$2,405.00
20/02/2021	Persuasion	Paid		(\$30.00)		\$2,375.00
20/02/2021	Minute To Midnight	Paid		(\$25.00)		\$2,350.00
21/02/2021	Old Bones	Paid		(\$30.00)		\$2,320.00
26/02/2021	American Dirt	Paid		(\$10.00)		\$2,310.00
26/02/2021	Chain Of Gold	Paid		(\$10.00)		\$2,300.00
Totals:				(\$200.00)	\$500.00	\$2,300.00

**Expended Amount [RED]:** The total amount of funds spent on items within that month, including book/DVD/Audio purchases, vouchers, and supplies. This total can be seen at the bottom of the debit column and near the top of the invoice.

**Credited Amount [YELLOW]:** Total amount of funds deposited. This total includes allotments, additional funds, and credits for titles. It can be seen at the bottom of the credit column and near the top of the invoice.

**Total Amount for Items on Order [BLUE]:** Total amount of funds being held for ordered items that have not yet been received at PLS from the vendors. In Polaris, this amount is also referred to as the "encumbered" amount.

**Free Balance [GREEN]:** Total amount of available funds the library has left to spend. The Free Balance is the Balance at end of Report Period minus Total Amount for Items On Order and can be seen at the top of the invoice.

Alycia Vickrey  
Receiving Clerk

# >> Don't Forget to Stretch



Ryan Goff

For this go around of my quarterly News & Notes article I thought I would go with something a little different, but still extremely important. Between gyms being closed, a lack of options for activities during our spare time, and winter finally hitting us, we are all spending even more time than normal sheltered indoors with our TVs, phones, and computers. This typically leads to increases in aches and pains, and if not addressed, can lead to larger problems long term.

The good news is that it doesn't take much to make dramatic improvements. Here are a few tips to change your posture and daily routine that will pay big dividends:

- 1) When working at your desktop or laptop, 90 degree angles are your friend. Your neck should be in a neutral, slightly tucked position, back flat against your chair, hips pushed back to form a clean 90 degree angle, and finally your knees bent at a 90 degree angle with your feet flat on the floor. Your keyboard and mouse should also be in a position where your arms hang in parallel with your upper body and form another 90 degree angle at your elbows with your arms parallel to the floor.
- 2) Get up and take a break from your desk once at least every 20 minutes, even for 30 seconds. This helps to get your blood flowing and is a quick way to reenergize your body, especially later in the day.
- 3) Drink plenty of water. This will also force you to incorporate the point above. In addition, if you've never read about how many different ways water helps your body go have a look. It's honestly amazing, there's no other way to describe it.
- 4) Find a basic stretching plan that focuses on areas that are giving you the most grief. Most problems can be dealt with in a matter of 1-2 minutes a couple times a day, and the majority can even be done at your desk.

While the above tips are extremely simple, if you follow them I guarantee you will notice a major difference in terms of both aches & pains as well as your general productivity throughout the day. Taking care of your body now will have your future self thanking you when things return to normal and we can resume our usual activities (pain free).

Ryan Goff  
Desktop & Network Administrator



# >> From the IT Desk



Janet Ayles

## Polaris Upgrade

Mark your calendars, there is a Polaris upgrade scheduled for April 19, 2021!

Normally, we try and get in (at least) one Polaris upgrade per year. However, with all the craziness in 2020, upgrading Polaris wasn't at all a priority.

With the start of a new year, we're trying to get back

onto a schedule.

Keep an eye on your email for more information on what to expect from the new version.



## SuperNet 2.0

The last time I talked to you all about this, our SuperNet transition had been put on hold because of the pandemic. Like so much in 2020, this got pushed to the side as other items took priority. The good news is that we've been rescheduled already. Starting at the end of May, our libraries will begin to transition. As we confirm the details, we will let you know what to expect.



## PIP (Purging Inactive Patrons)

As the New Year dawns, there's a list of tasks that we complete. Part of that list includes Purging Inactive Patrons. That means that any patron who has been expired for more than two years (so prior to December 31, 2018) with less than \$10 in charges on the account. This is one of a few steps we take to help keep Polaris clean.

This got skipped in 2020, because, you know, 2020.

In early March, you'll get an email from me with the info for your patrons slated to be purged. You'll have some time to review the list before I carry out the process.

## Reports and Notices Problems

We are aware that there's a problem running some of the reports in Polaris. There are some reports timing out, running forever, or just not running properly. It's frustrating, I know, but I'm asking for a bit more patience. We've escalated the problem to Polaris directly to ask them to help root out the problem.

In the meantime, if you're running into problems, try accessing Polaris via Remote Desktop and running your reports there. The instructions for Remote Desktop can be found on the PLS website at [peacelibrarysystem.ab.ca/Training-Toolkit/Polaris](https://peacelibrarysystem.ab.ca/Training-Toolkit/Polaris).

## Check Out This Report

Speaking of reports, have you taken a look at Statistical Summary (Custom) report? It's located in the Custom folder of Reports and Notices. The Statistical Summary (Custom) report gives you lots of information about what's going on at your library. Want to know how many holds were placed? This report can tell you. Want to know how many items were borrowed and lent between your library and others? This report can tell you.

## Pecans

Our new Pecans listserv has launched. Are you getting the emails? You should be, because there will be lots of discussion about cool things. If you're not sure that you're a member of Pecans, please reach out and we'll make sure you're signed up.



## HelpDesk

The easiest way to reach the PLS Helpdesk is to email [helpdesk@peacelibrarysystem.ab.ca](mailto:helpdesk@peacelibrarysystem.ab.ca). Submitting problems or questions to the helpdesk is the best way to go as it reaches me and Ryan. Maximum coverage for help with one email.



When should you call instead of email? If you have no internet, can't search TRACpac, can't check items out, or are unable to log into Polaris, definitely pick up the phone and give us a call.

Janet Ayles  
IT and Technical Services Manager



# >> From Grande Prairie Public Library

by Charlotte Anderson, Emerging Technologies Librarian, Grande Prairie Public Library

## Creating a Maker Area

Recently, I've been thinking a lot on how to bring a Makerspace to GPPL, especially with most of our space already in use. It's the common story in libraries – the community interest is there, the funding is not. I'm bracing myself for the storm of staring at grant applications until my eyes bleed. Since they've been on my mind this past week, influencing my inspiration on topics to write about, here are some of the things I've learned about the maker movement in my position of Emerging Technologies Librarian.

One of the major maker concepts is the idea of exploration and learning through doing, in a collaborative environment. The maker culture represents technology-based Do-It-Yourself, usually covering topics like 3D printing, robotics, and other forms of physical creation ranging from engineering to woodworking. Recently in libraries, this has also encompassed other types of creation, especially catering towards children, that includes activities like arts and crafts.

### 1. Having a maker area, or running maker programs, doesn't need to be as complicated or expensive as it sounds.

Is a table in the library with craft supplies technically a maker area? Yes. Is running a paint night program a maker program? Yes. We're all doing things that we haven't considered branding as part of the maker movement. There is a difference between a maker area, which is more of an informal term and can mean 'craft area' or 'an area to make things in' and a Makerspace, which has the connotations of the technology-based DIY areas. I'd put a 3D printer into a Makerspace. A programming room mostly used for hands-on programming can be considered a maker area.

Programming, however, doesn't always fall into the category of a collaborative environment. In a grand, library-oriented sense, that's ok. We do sometimes run programs as though they're classes, and some of them need to be treated that way. From a maker movement perspective, collaboration is something easy to bring into our programs by fostering group activities, idea sharing, and conversation. In my experience, that tends to happen naturally during crafting/creative programs, anyway. People love sharing their ideas and helping others.

(Most people. I'm sure we're all thinking about that one person or incident that disproves that statement, but ignore them.)

### 2. It's ok to start small with maker technology.

We've all been there. There are only so many hours in a day, we're working within a fixed budget, and learning new skills is a daunting concept when there isn't much time to even take lunch breaks sometimes. At GPPL we've been working our way up in terms of technology over the years, starting with a few items for the Children's Department and building as we go.

Admittedly, in the list of Lego Mindstorms, Oculus Go, Snap Circuits, and Nintendo Switches, I wouldn't recommend all of it as easy for the beginner library staff maker.

### Some easy technology to start with:

**Sphero:** A robotic ball. It has an app that allows you to control where it goes (a tablet may be necessary to own with it, though worst-case your patron could sync it to their smartphone). Kids love to make it go fast, and if you own more than 1 they'll immediately figure out you can race with them. It teaches basic coding skills, and the app has a module where they can program the Sphero to move however they want (an easy one would be to have it move in a square by telling the Sphero to go 2 feet to the left, 2 feet up, 2 feet to the right, and 2 feet down).

Cost: About \$150 each, depending on the model.



**Snap Circuits:** These are really easy to use and teach basic electrical circuits using pieces that snap together, batteries, and other components like fans and buzzers. The training program kit comes with a manual that walks you through what piece to put where and what should happen. This works fantastically as a parent/child learning activity.

**Cost:** The full kit is around \$220, though there are smaller packages.



**Makey Makey:** These aren't the most glamorous on the list, but they're pretty versatile. This is the one you can hook to playdough or bananas to do something on a computer, like play a song. It teaches very basic circuits right out of the box, and if you want to really explore it, there's a coding aspect on the computer too with Scratch.

(Scratch on its own is a fantastic, and free, website from MIT that teaches basic coding.)

**Cost:** \$65



### 3. It's ok to fail (at first)

Recently, GPPL bought a 3D printer. As the Emerging Technologies Librarian, did I have any idea how to use a 3D printer before we purchased it? No. A month in, do I have any idea how to use a 3D printer? I'm getting better, but I still wouldn't say I'm an expert. I am learning, though, and I'm letting myself learn through trying, failing, and improving. As adults, we're not great at failing at things, and we're not great at looking at new opportunities when we feel like we might fail at it.



*My first 3D print. Ironically, it's a trophy that says "You Tried".*

If you're thinking "okay, great, but it's your job to learn new technology," you're 100% right. That's literally my job description. That doesn't mean I don't struggle with it sometimes.

Here are a few secrets I try not to let on to: I'm awful at Excel, I once brought down an entire email server by signing into it, and sometimes coding technology made for children stumps me when I first see it.

And that's ok. Why do we, as adults, think ourselves exempt from learning tools just because they're geared towards a different age group? If I handed a child a Sphero, I would expect them to explore it. To try new things. To learn, make mistakes, correct, and try again. Why does that feel frustrating as an adult? It shouldn't. Knowledge has always been a slow progression of building blocks, and sometimes we have to start from the sub-basement level instead of at ground floor, regardless of age.

As people with careers in libraries, we know how to find help when we're stumped and frustrated. Google is a button click away, and so is YouTube. The whole world can be our support network, and that's pretty wonderful.

So, if you get the chance, try something new this week, whether it's an app, a computer program, or even just watching a YouTube video on how to use one of the devices I mentioned above.

Exploration and learning through doing: that's very Maker.





# Around the System...

Here's what's been going on around Peace Library System this winter! Remember, you can send your own photos and articles at any time to [estewart@peacelibrarysystem.ab.ca](mailto:estewart@peacelibrarysystem.ab.ca) and they will be included in the next newsletter. We'd love to hear from you!

## Fox Creek Municipal Library

Along with our curbside checkouts we have been offering take-home kits to our community. In December the library packaged up supplies and sent home Christmas themed crafts for children aged 7-11, teens, and adults. The childrens' and adult crafts was a take-home Santa/Christmas Gnome while teens were offered take home DIY Ugly Christmas Sweater Kits. The registration was high for all three age categories, and the take-home kits flew out the door. The library also offered Christmas Eve Jingle Kits, where patrons could pick up kits to make a jingle bell craft to ring and spread Christmas Cheer on Christmas Eve. To "Flush Away 2020", the library partnered with Bear Creek Rentals in Fox Creek and hosted a Toilet Paper Tube Wreath Contest, we had 8 entries and a lot of fun seeing the creative wreaths sent in.



In January, the library offered Boredom Buster Kits for children and adults. Those who registered were able to curbside pick-up a different craft for each week in January, and we had 200 kits picked up! The library supplied different crafts/activities including: DIY stress ball, macramé feather key ring, miniature zen gardens, coloring pages with pencil crayons, tea/chocolate, DIY wooden bookmark, etc.

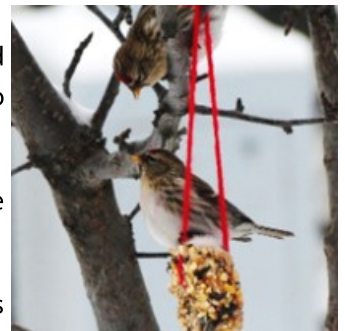
January 27 was Family Literacy Day and we spent the month of January collecting entries for our "Basket of Books" Contest. 725 entries were collected curbside, one for each book read and 5 Baskets of Books were given out from the draws.



During the month of February the library offered the community Winter Bird Feeder Kits for all ages, with the opportunity for our community to participate in the Great Backyard Bird Count through [birdcount.org](http://birdcount.org).

The library also offered "Home Sweet Home" Glass Block Kits for adults—the adults are really loving the take-home kits!

The Fox Creek Library has also started a jigsaw puzzle collection for patrons to check out. This has been fun to collect donated puzzles and has been well received by the community to keep people busy while staying home.



—Submitted by Mandy Miskelly, Fox Creek Municipal Library

## McLennan Municipal Library

This battered cart has come out of hibernation to become the hub of activity at McLennan Municipal Library. Crafts, masks, books and DVDs rest here for a short while before finding homes with our patrons.

—Maureen Fisher, McLennan Municipal Library





## Grimshaw Municipal Library

We started our Featured Creature Craft to Take & Make kits in October, while the doors were still open, and were very fortunate to have a program that could then continue into curbside when the doors were closed! These kits are available for pick up Saturdays only, while quantities last, and change each month. Each kit comes in a paper bag, and includes everything needed to complete the craft, as well as an information sheet about the featured creature. We do an instructional video that is posted onto our Facebook page the evening before the first day the craft is available, and then reminders on Facebook and Instagram every Friday or Saturday. Throughout the month, we have books about that creature that we promote alongside our kits.

We started with Sea Bunnies, and found out that underwater slugs make adorable stuffies. In December, we wanted a holiday creature, so the reindeer made an appearance. The current Featured Creature is the fantastic platypus, which gets more unbelievable with everything we learn as we put the packages together – poisonous barbs on the male that could kill a dog! Eggs the size of gumballs and babies the size of jellybeans! Hunting for food underwater with their eyes closed, using the electrical receptors in their bills!! This kit is a pony bead craft, with the beads being packaged in plastic eggs, and a small individual pack of jelly beans included for fun.

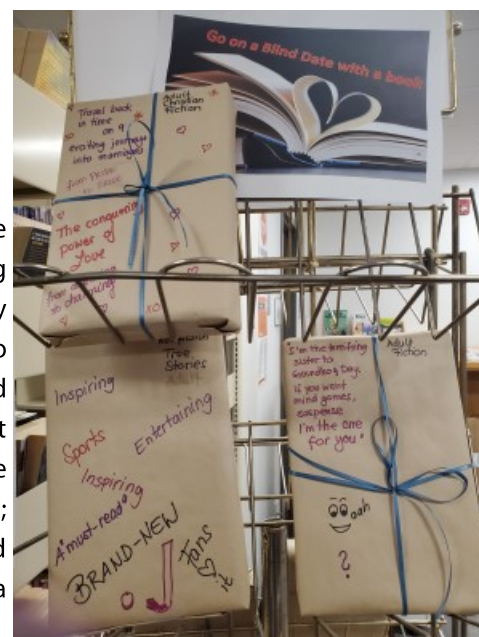
Plans are in place for the star-nosed mole, and potentially the Superb Bird-of-Paradise, for future months. We started the program in October with the hopes of bringing more patrons to the library on Saturdays, and it works! In the middle of the polar vortex in early February, we had a patron show up Saturday morning specifically for kits.

—Submitted by Vivianne Gayton, Grimshaw Municipal Library



## Menno Simons Community Library

A great BIG hello from Cleardale, we are alive and well and our little library is doing ok. We share our space with the school, so we are still getting the students as regular patrons. During the school holidays we decided instead of closing to scale back our hours and open one day per week for curbside. Many people did not travel and needed extra reading material and to our delight we got people calling in, emailing in and dropping off lists of books they wanted to read over the holidays. I often asked what they liked and then picked a sampler pack, put it outside for them at the appointed time and they could look through it and then return the books they had read or that did not interest them. We got great responses on this; apparently I chose well! I made newsletters for the door and public bulletin board and posted our new arrivals. We have continued this and for the month of February we have added a "Blind Date with a Book" and some matches were made.



I am looking forward to going to work even with the restrictions. We have two special needs volunteers that come in with their caregivers about 1 hour per week and we have permission for them to keep coming in. They do a great job and obey the rules and it has been a delight to work with them. As a small community people are our biggest advantage and it is such a great thing to be there for each other when times are tough. I hope you all find new and creative ways to serve your communities.

—Submitted by Bettina Worrall, Menno Simons Community Library



# More from around the System...

## High Prairie Municipal Library

We have been re-purposing old courier bags so each senior at the Pleasantview Lodge receives their own individual package of books now to go back and forth in. They have made our job of delivering books to them so much easier for us and the workers at the lodge. We set them in the entry as you see in the picture (right) and then we step out for the workers to retrieve them and they will leave any returns for us the same way.

Our Indigenous Outreach Programmer has been prepping and delivering Craft To Go Bags to East Prairie, Grouard and Gift Lake so far. The Coordinators on that end pass out the bags to their groups on our behalf to reduce contact.

—Submitted by Tracy Ireland, High Prairie Municipal Library



## Valleyview Municipal Library

Despite library closures, we have been busy moving shelving and doing online programming like This or That - Library Bachelor and Bachelorette edition which ran Feb 1 - 14. We provided popcorn, hot chocolate and a movie in February with our CALP Valleyview Community Learning.

We've been busy putting together Binge Bags for our readers, and are pleased to say we came in second in Read for 15 for the second year running!

—Submitted by Kerri Danner, Valleyview Municipal Library



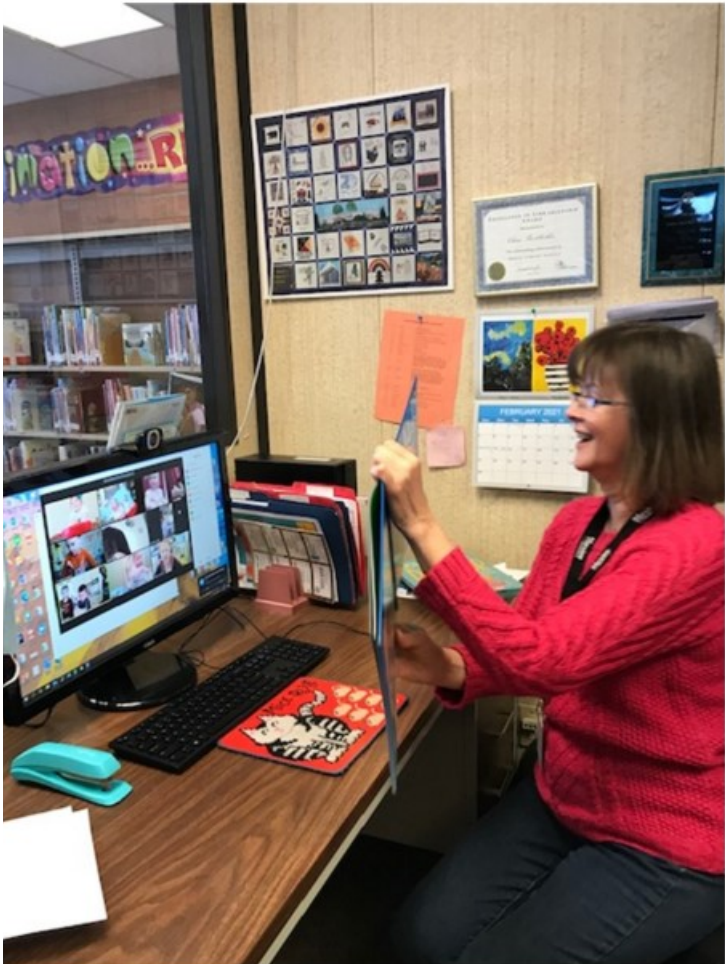


Fairview Public Library

In December, the Peace Region Family Resource Network contacted the library to see whether we wanted to start a Virtual Story Time for the children in and around our community. We decided to partner with them. We decided on our half hour program which starts with singing a few songs, a story to read (by the library programmer) and a science experiment to do online, while on Zoom. We also have a craft for the kids to do on their own during the week. There is a time for a Show and Tell, a few more songs and if we have time another story. We contacted families that were previously in our other preschool programs and they were more than excited to join our virtual platform.

The library and the Resource Network work collaboratively on the crafts and science experiments for the month. We decided to start with 10 children who could sign up, pick up their packets of 4 weeks of crafts, science experiments etc. After they sign up we send them a link via Zoom to join our live program on Wednesday mornings. It takes a bit of planning, but with the 2 organizations we work well together in getting the kits and supplies ready for each virtual visit. The parents pick up their monthly bag of items, all dated for each week for the entire month. We have done this program now for 3 weeks and have a waiting list for March. We've increased the attendance to 15. This program is meeting the needs of the children. It's not the same as being together, but this works in the crazy time we are living in right now.

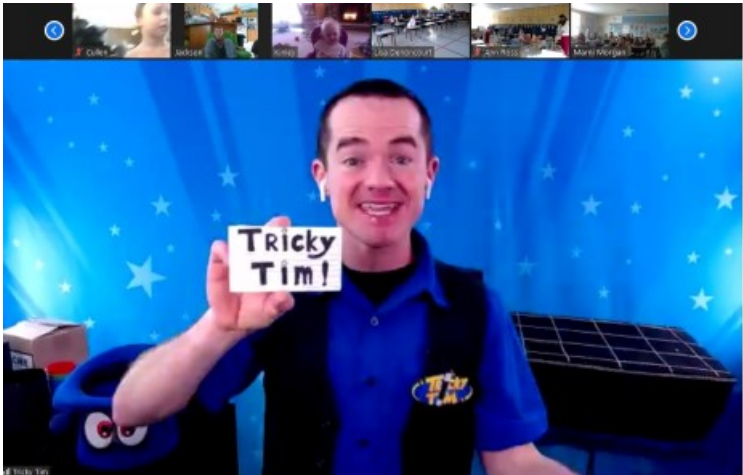
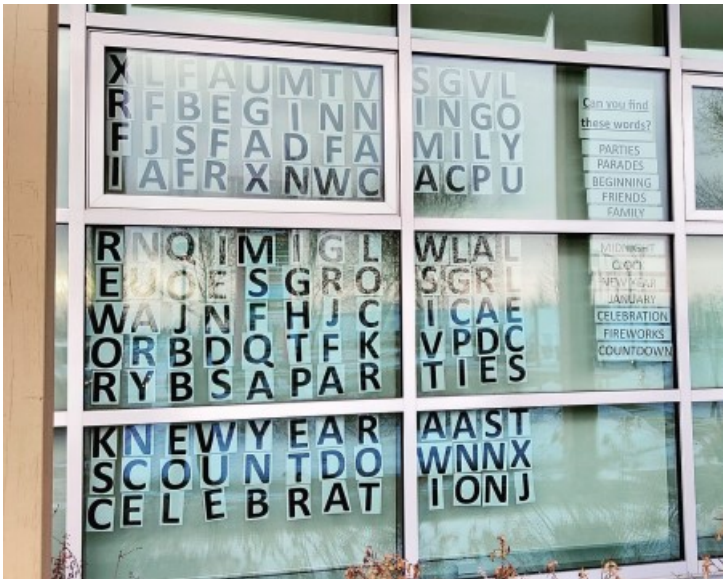
—Submitted by Chris Burkholder, Fairview Public Library



Rotary Club of Slave Lake Municipal Library

Even though we are not open to the public, the Slave Lake Library has been busy trying to stay engaged with the community! Some of our recent offerings include the monthly guessing game (in January it was crayons); window puzzles – we place different puzzles in our front window for passerbys to engage in and enjoy; craft in a bag for people to pick up curbside; partnering with the Town during their annual Frost Fest event to offer a community Storywalk; and we recently hosted an online magician! Of course we have other regular programming going on as well, but these offerings are unique to the pandemic circumstances and our programmer Suzi is always looking for new and inventive ways to engage during these weird times.

—Kendra McRee, Rotary Club of Slave Lake Municipal Library





# >> 2020 eResource Checkouts

**OverDrive®**

Total checkouts: 121,128

**+25%**

**rbdigital**  
eMagazines

Total checkouts: 15,048

**+28%**



**cloudLibrary™**  
by bibliotheca

Total checkouts: 8,986

**+89%**

**lynda.com**



Total views: 9,522

**+17%**



**NICHE**  
ACADEMY

Total patron views: 2,641

**+228%**

## >> Lynda.com > LinkedIn Learning

One of our favourite eResources is getting a rebranding this spring!

Lynda.com will soon become LinkedIn Learning for Library. All the same great video tutorials covering everything from brand new technologies to basic computer literacy to photography will continue to be offered, so there's something for every patron who wants to learn.

And LinkedIn Learning will give patrons access to even more content — over 16,000 courses, while with LyndaLibrary, patrons only had access to 7000 English courses. LinkedIn Learning for Library includes courses in English, French, German, Japanese, Spanish, Mandarin, and Portuguese.

You may recall that when this transition was initially announced there were concerns in the library community about patron privacy, as the plan was to have patrons sign up for a LinkedIn account to access the library of content. This is no longer the case; patrons will only need a library card number and PIN to access content. However, we will now have less statistical data—we will not be able to break down usage by library.

Right now, the transition from Lynda.com to LinkedIn Learning is scheduled to take place at the end of March, at which point we will update the links on the back end and make sure that the transition is as seamless as possible for patrons. Keep an eye on PECANS for email updates about forthcoming changes!



## >> Stronger Together 2021



The Alberta Library, Parkland Regional Library System, Peace Library System, & Yellowhead Regional Library are pleased to announce the return of their joint conference *Stronger Together* for 2021.

*Stronger Together* was the first fully virtual conference for the Alberta public library community and was a success beyond our wildest expectations, with hundreds of attendees from across Alberta and around the world. We look forward to building on last year's success by demonstrating how libraries leverage collaboration and teamwork to thrive amid adversity.

Registration will again be free and open to everyone who is passionate about the power of libraries.

A call for session proposals will be issued shortly, with conference registration to open Friday, July 30th.

Join us from September 22 - 24, 2021 as we become Stronger Together.

Stay up to date with all our conference news by following us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#), or [visit our website to learn more](#).



Peace Library System acknowledges Treaty 8 territory as well as the Métis Nation of Alberta. Peace Library System libraries are located on territory that provided a travelling route and home to many Indigenous peoples.

## TD Summer Reading Club

The TD Summer Reading Club (TDSRC) [Staff Site](#) is live with updated content for 2021! Due to COVID-19 service disruptions, the 2020 print materials for TDSRC were held back last year, and will be distributed in 2021. This means that the theme for Summer 2021 will continue to be *Game On!* But even though the theme remains the same, all of the content has been updated. The staff site's Resources section has a new batch of recommended reads, activities, images, promotional templates, program forms, and online films provided by the National Film Board.

The TDSRC Kids' Site goes live in mid-June with brand new content. Until then, anyone who visits the website will see the *About the Club* page and a countdown to the launch of the 2021 Kids' Site.



## Submit to News & Notes!

Submissions are welcome at any time and will be in the next newsletter. **Submissions from public and school libraries welcome!**

Please send photos and articles to Emma Stewart at [estewart@peacelibrarysystem.ab.ca](mailto:estewart@peacelibrarysystem.ab.ca).

Please note: PLS email inboxes can only receive emails less than 10 MB in size. If you do not receive an email acknowledging that your submission was received, delivery may have been prevented due to file size. Please contact Emma Stewart.

# Peace Library System's events calendar

## *Freedom to Read Week*

February 21-February 27, 2021

## *Southern Alberta Library Conference*

Online

March 1-5, 2021

## *Canada Reads Debates*

March 8-11, 2021

## *Polaris Upgrade*

April 19, 2021

## *PLS Executive Committee Meeting*

Location TBA

April 17, 2021, 10:30 am

## *NLLS Virtual Library Conference*

Online

May 27-28, 2021

## *PLS Board Meeting*

PLS Headquarters

May 29, 2021 10:30 am