

The Library Connects Our Community

By Katherine Anderson, Joanne Richards, and Kate Sloan.

The Library Connects our Community (F15) session, presented by June Stockdale of the Nelson Public Library and Emma Dressler of the Fernie Heritage Library described how these two libraries set overarching goals such as 'continuing to understand the community and how to meet its needs' (Nelson) and 'enriching lives and community' (Fernie). With the support of their trustees, staff and volunteers these libraries are truly the third space of their communities.

Both the Fernie Heritage Library and Nelson Public Library have placed themselves firmly in the centre of their respective communities. Emma and June detailed the many activities and tasks undertaken by themselves and their staff to ensure the importance and relevance of the libraries' collections, services and roles in the community and how participants could learn from their experience and success.

Methodology for connecting with their communities has commonalities such as planned, targeted communications and careful attention to and aligning with the priorities of local government. Networking, novel partnership development and relationship building have featured prominently in the processes. Through moving services and personnel out of the library building into the community and always asking the question – 'How can the library serve your group better?' each library has created a positive perception of the library in the community. The presentation reinforces the concepts that link vibrant library and vibrant community and shows how these libraries have "created a broad, inclusive, approachable, accessible license to read."

A responsive audience of 95 people attended the session at the B.C. Library Conference 2012. The presentation has been made available through a video recording available at:
<http://www.islandlink.ca> or <http://kfb.bclibrary.ca>.



Emma Dressler



June Stockdale



The Kootenay and IslandLink Library Federations, in collaboration with the Fernie and Nelson Libraries, funded and developed the session and the production of the video, with support from the BCLA Continuing Education Committee in the form of the 250 and the Sunshine Coast Grant for 2012.

The goal of this pilot video project was to extend access to the experience of the B.C. Library Conference and the valuable information shared by the presenters, to those who were unable to attend in person. Working in partnership with BCLA we hope to explore expanding the post-conference access in future years.

Please contact Joanne (kfb-ofc@telus.net) or Katherine (kanderson@islandlink.ca) if you have questions or you wish to provide your feedback on this pilot project.

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