

INTRODUCTION

Chetwynd Public Library: Inspiring and Engaging the Community

The library is one of the hubs in our community and as such, our Mission and Vision reflects where we are and where we want to be in three years.

Mission: To Inspire our community in a spirit of learning and discovery

Vision: To be in the forefront of our community in learning and discovery

The Heart of a Community: a library is just a building until you open the door

On any given day, you can walk into the Chetwynd Public Library and right away your shoulders relax and you feel like you are visiting a dear friend. Your only thoughts are there just will not be enough time. You look to your right and you will see mothers and their babies in a Mother Goose program being introduced to the benefits of family literacy at a very young age. In the center of the library you will see a teenager requesting a copy of *The Fault in the Stars*, it is a book she must have as everyone is talking about it. On one side you have a staff member helping an elderly patron looking for a book on travel in the non-fiction section. She is excited to share her travel plans with that staff member as she has recently retired and has transitioned from helping her students access the library for projects to having the time to research travel and enjoy some of the latest good reads for her personal enjoyment. Now you head into our children section and you will see a dad who is sitting with his daughter. It is their special day together and she wanted to pick up books. He smiles as he realizes she is growing up quickly as she reads him the titles. Look to your left and you see a pair of tourists from South Carolina checking email and paying bills on their travels to Alaska. They are grateful for the free Wifi access and the local newspaper. They learn from the staff member helping them that there is an event that did not know about and decide to spend an extra day here. Look to your right and you see the library director having a conversation with some young patrons on some books they may enjoy. She smiles and laughs as they tell her about all the books they are reading for the latest library book challenge. In the bistro two friends catch up and enjoy their mochas while showing each other the latest chick lit books they plan to read. They excitedly talk about the book club selections they are enjoying. In another corner a recent resident to the community is speaking with the resource coordinator on what programs are available in their new hometown. Finally in the back office the ESL coordinator is on the phone with a community partner. They are planning a new program which her students will enjoy as a way to obtain a good grasp on the English language while feeling welcome in Northern BC. While all of this is going on, people are buzzing around, visiting, learning, engaging, planning and creating. The feeling is warm, welcoming and beautiful. This is a typical day at the Chetwynd Public Library. This is our home and this is what we create for our community.

Imagine a building that held over 639 community meetings and 59,675 patron visits in 2014. Now imagine what can be created for the community when you add in trained and passionate staff, current technology and a plethora of current resources – all available for free. With this vision in your mind you can see that building turn into a ball of energy that turns ideas into programs, events and services. This process continues and repeats. Transforming the library from a simple building to a place where the community comes for to help and looks to lead the way in community development. Often we have programs which some people will question, why would the library be hosting that? Our answer – why not. With this proactive mindset, The Chetwynd Public Library has established a reputation for being community builders. As any good leader, we do not do all the work. The failure with that would be what would happen if the library ceased to exist. We do however, as a good leader should, inspire the community and offer the resources to find the confidence to grow and develop beautiful things. We believe passionately in our mission: To Inspire our community in a spirit of learning and discovery. This is our building, this is our culture and these are a few of our stories.

Community Demographics

Located in the eastern foothills of the Rocky Mountains at the entrance of the Peace Region, Chetwynd is among the younger communities in the province of British Columbia. In 1962 Chetwynd became incorporated as a Village. The population of the District of Chetwynd is estimated to be at 3300. This does not include the Regional District unincorporated areas of Saulneau First Nations, West Moberly First Nations, East Pine, Hasler Flats, Lone Prairie & Jackfish. The combined population is estimated to be 6500. The primary Industries in Chetwynd are forestry, oil, gas, mining, ranching & tourism.

Challenges into Opportunity

Our library is one of the key hubs in our community and as such, this creates demands on us that many other organizations may not face. This also puts us in a great place to develop further programs and services and grow as the community grows. We completed our plans to expand and upgrade our current facilities including increasing the size of the library and creating a bistro within our library. We have also kept up with technology upgrades, and building on our strengths with fundraising, creation of a Family Resource Corner, a long term ESL program and involvement in the community.

Planning for the Future: Strategic Plan 2015-2017

The board of the Chetwynd Public Library solicits input from a variety of sources to develop its strategic plan. We have used the expertise of both our board and key staff to ensure that the plan's direction is consistent with the board's goals and needs. We will continue to involve our members and partners to ensure that our plan reflects their viewpoints and vision of the Chetwynd Library for both current and future needs. In 2014 the board has designated the following areas as priority issues that need to be addressed. Some are very short term while others will take more time to develop and implement.

1.0 Goal: Long Term Sustainability. A constant challenge for many organizations is ensuring long-term sustainability especially in a region that depends on the resource industries. This plan will assist the library to continue to serve the communities in the area.

Objective 1.1: To keep current with technological changes.

Objective 1.2: To increase membership by 25% by 2017

2.0 Goal: Financial Sustainability. Long-term financial sustainability is necessary for sustainability of the library.

Objective 2.1: To increase the long term number of partners of the library

Objective 2.2: To maintain and increase the fund raising program

Objective 2.3: To increase the contingency fund to address potential major economic impacts or unexpected major costs.

The Chetwynd Public Library has developed a new three-year service plan that guides policy and development of day-to-day operations of the organization. The plan defines goals, expected outcomes and organizational strategies that cover both the geographic and topical areas of our mandate. It will be updated annually.

This new plan will focus on two new goals along with the objectives and work planning items that come from those goals. The Board feels that by doing this, they will strengthen our short and long term opportunities that will benefit both the library and the community that we serve.

Reflections on 2014

I hope that in this year to come, you make mistakes. Because if you are making mistakes, then you are making new things, trying new things, learning, living, pushing yourself, changing yourself, changing your world. You're doing things you've never done before, and more importantly, you're doing something. - Neil Gaiman

In library services we often get caught up in the everyday activity of what we do. Daily tasks, weekly programs, repeat patrons. There are moments when the routine of what we do every day simply melts into the rhythm of life. Staff and board can forget the significance of the services that we provide for our patrons until we stop what we are doing and we are asked why did you change that. The Chetwynd Public Library strives to be a place of community creation, engagement and learning. Beautiful things develop from within the walls of our library. Our community is supported by our passionate staff, innovative board and the diverse resources we have available. We are confident that the method of learn, try, evaluate, change or repeat will continue to lead us on a path of relevancy for our library in the future. We will always face the challenge of trying to stay relevant. Libraries today, ours included, must keep up with changing technologies and habits of people while not forgetting why we exist.

We have had some programs that work and some that did not. We have some days that are amazing and some that could be better. We continue with our strategy of asking the community “what can we do for you?” rather than telling them what we think they need. The board and staff at the Chetwynd Public Library are not afraid to make mistakes and with this cohesive team work we feel poised for success in 2015.

GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES, GOALS, PROGRAMS AND SERVICES, PARTNERSHIPS

GOVERNMENT PRIORITY 1

A focus on equitable access to library services for all British Columbians, including efforts to extend library service, both physical and digital, to under-represented populations.

- **Library Goal that supports the priority:**

Long Term Sustainability. A constant challenge for many organizations is ensuring long-term sustainability especially in a region that depends on the resource industries. This plan will assist the library to continue to serve the communities in the area.

Objective 1.1: To keep current with technological changes.

Objective 1.2: To increase membership by 25% by 2017

- **Programs and/or Services that aligns with the priority:**

Summer Reading Program: we participate in the annual Summer Reading Club and ensure that there are groups that support minority citizens. This includes French immersion students as well as a group for First Nation children.

ESLAP classes and workshops: there are weekly classes as well as monthly events which support English as a second language citizens as well as newcomers to Canada.

Chetwynd Family Resource Corner: a one stop information resource corner which offers resource information and referral services via a variety of delivery options.

Specialized collection: we carry a wide selection of large print books and audiobooks for those with visual impairments. We also carry a large variety of French Language resources for the francophone population as well as the French Immersion students in the community. An extensive English as a second language section complements our ESLAP services and programs.

Young at Heart 55+: we offer monthly social gatherings for patrons who are over age 55. This has evolved into a senior's community dinner as well as senior bus trips. The Chetwynd Seniors Health Blitz also happened this fall in concurrence with the annual flu immunizations Northern Health holds in our library.

Seniors outreach computer training: we offer weekly training sessions for seniors at the Pine Valley Seniors Hall.

Imagination Library: we help support children's early literacy and language development by providing a free book every month for children from birth to age 5 through the Imagination Library program.

Baby Welcome Party: an annual party which celebrates all new babies in our community. We hold this party to welcome them to the library, inviting them to get their library cards and sign up for Imagination Library. The Books for Babies bag is given as a gift to all babies who attend.

Technology upgrades: we upgraded our public access computers to Windows 8 tablets and also upgraded the Wifi system to a user friendly one. We installed a large LCD Smart TV with Wifi capabilities and a speaker system to allow for users to have better equipment in our multipurpose meeting room. A smart TV was also installed in the children section to allow for program use. The phone systems were completely upgraded to ensure patron and staff needs were met.

- **Partnerships that support the priority:**
We partner with many different groups for all the programs and services which support this priority. We have corporate sponsors whom help offset costs for Imagination Library and the Summer Reading Program. We also work with Success by 6, District of Chetwynd, Northern Health & the Chamber of Commerce to help promote our programs within the community. Our seniors programs have met with huge successes in partnerships as all groups who have seniors in their demographics work with us to identify program opportunities. Under the leadership of our two staff members tasked to seniors programs, we have worked with the Tansi Friendship Centre, Chetwynd Rec. Centre, Pine Valley Seniors, Chetwynd Seniors Housing Society & Chetwynd branch of the Royal Canadian Legion.
- **Outcomes that were identified:**
Our programs have high participation in all areas. We do not specifically track demographics of race/gender/disability. In our public library we welcome all community members and ensure that every patron is given equal service regardless of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation or social economic factors. We find that this method of inclusion in our programming is well accepted into the community. We do set specific age groups for some of our specialized programming to ensure that there something for everyone to attend.

Our seniors are a segment that we have specifically targeted in our programming. In an isolated Northern community, the staff and board has identified how important it is to ensure that seniors and elders feel welcome and part of the community. We had over 145 seniors attend our 2nd Annual Seniors Community Christmas dinner. In planning programming that works for the community, with the community, we find that attendance is good and return patron visits to utilize our other services and programs also increases.

A focus on equitable access to library services for all British Columbians, including efforts to extend library service, both physical and digital, to under-represented populations is a government priority which we are able to meet with our strategic goals of keeping current with technological changes and increasing membership by 25% by 2017. The programming and services we offer our community align and support with our goals and the government priority simultaneously. This allows us the ability to serve our community in a manner which meets the needs of what they are requesting while still meeting provincial priorities which ensure that patrons in Chetwynd have access to programs and resources that meet or exceed services that patrons in the rest of the province can access.

Young at Heart gives me a time and place to meet with people we don't normally get to see and visit with. – Phyllis F.

Young at Heart is a place to communicate and be informed about important issues. It is very well organized and has friendly communication. - Erna P.

The ladies at our Public Library do a fantastic job of getting seniors out and about. Our Pine Valley Seniors Association is beginning to rely on the library ladies to organize bus trips for senior travel out of town. – Bernice W.

On behalf of The Chetwynd Chapter of Canadian Parents for French, I would like to acknowledge and applaud the Chetwynd Public Library for their continued support of French language learning in the South Peace Region. French Language books are not only much more expensive than their English counter parts, but would also be nearly impossible to access in this region of Northern BC if it were not for the efforts of our local Library to build such an impressive selection for our community. Their willingness to work with our members and the local teaching staff to provide appropriate French reading material and resources for our students in French Immersion is invaluable and greatly appreciated. We hope that in the future, they will continue to add to their collection and also continue to offer amazing free programs in French like the Summer Reading program for the benefit of all French learners in the area. Keep up the good work! – Daneve M.

GOVERNMENT PRIORITY 2

A focus on collaboration and cooperation between libraries and other partners.

Library Goal that supports the priority:

Financial Sustainability. Long-term financial sustainability is necessary for sustainability of the library.

Objective 2.1: To increase the long term number of partners of the library
and

Long Term Sustainability. A constant challenge for many organizations is ensuring long-term sustainability especially in a region that depends on the resource industries. This plan will assist the library to continue to serve the communities in the area.

Objective 1.2: To increase membership by 25% by 2017

- **Programs and/or Services that aligns with the priority:**

Shiraz and Jazz: a spring multicultural celebration of the diversity in Canada. Guest enjoy a wine tasting, ethnic food, entertainment and a time to learn about the cultures that make up their community.

Meet and Greet & Murder Mystery Night: a fall event for adults which is a time to gather with old friends, meet new friends and learn about all the community has to offer for adults. Murder Mystery was the entertainment for the evening and a fun way to introduce the community to the fledging community theatre group.

Bad Art: once per month we have an evening for adults. They enjoy a few hours of unrestricted creativity where they use our supplies or bring their own.

Exploring Art: an afternoon once per month for children to learn beginner fine arts from a local artist.

Children's Art Gala: an evening gala to celebrate children's art. This evening is a fundraiser for the Exploring Art program and is held in conjunction with BC Arts and Culture Week.

- **Partnerships that support the priority:**

Chetwynd Community Arts Council has provided us with funding and expertise in fine arts for our community. Working with our space and staff, we deliver two monthly free programs. Bad Art is an adult program held once per month. We have supplies and books on art available and participants are free to relax and create anything that moves them. Exploring Art is a monthly program for children to learn beginner fine arts from a local resident who is a multimedia artist who displays and sells at local art galleries. We held our first Children's Art Show in spring of 2014. This evening highlighted the children in our arts program but it also welcomed other community members to sell their created canvases. We also worked with the local schools to highlight the best of what they are doing in the subject of fine arts. In bringing these groups together we are able to use the best of what each partner had to offer while creating a program that filled a gap in the community.

Chetwynd Social Planning Society (Sukunka Group) supports us financially and by way of volunteer support for events such as the Shiraz and Jazz as well as the Meet and Greet. We have a staff member attend all their meetings and this reciprocal relationship ensures that the library is able to help meet the needs of gaps that the Chetwynd Social Planning Society and that the community benefits from programs which meet identified needs. Our adult programming is designed to engage the community and have

people meet one another in a community which is diverse and very busy with industry. This partnership helps the information and ideas to flow both ways, benefiting both organizations.

- **Outcomes that were identified:**

Bad Art has been successful from the very first session. The participants in the room come in and relax for two hours, leaving all stress behind. The rush of calmness and then supportive chatter is quite extraordinary to witness and describe. The group is very diverse in age and they all enjoy the freedom of the art and access to materials and books on art instruction. This program grew from the partnership we developed with the Chetwynd Community Arts Council. It has also had wonderful success by way of a library patron who began to participate in the monthly session and loved it so much and what we were doing in the library, she joined our library board this year.

The Meet and Greet began in 2013 as a way to have new people to Chetwynd meet each other and find out all the community had to offer by way of organizations having tables at the event. In 2014 the Sukunka group and library partnered once again but this time we brought the fledging theatre into the partnership by way of having them act in our murder mystery which took place in a library. The night was a huge success with a diverse range of people coming together for a fantastic evening. We grew in library memberships and we were able to once again provide the support for two groups to meet their goals.

The highlighted programs are just a few of the ways the Chetwynd Public Library is creating diverse programming and services which not only help us reach our strategic goals of increasing the long term number of partners of the library and increasing membership by 25% by 2017, but also the government priority of **a focus on collaboration and cooperation** between libraries and other partners.

It has been one of the best winters I have had because of programs that get the community together and we laugh and talk and get to meet new people. – Wendy F.

I always look forward to bad art evenings. It is fun to get together with friends and meet new people while being creative. The staff from the library put a lot of effort into making it enjoyable by providing tea, goodies and many different materials that I otherwise might never get the chance to try. There is a very pleasant, relaxed atmosphere. I often find new inspiration from the numerous books the library provides with instructions and demonstrations for almost every different media. I believe the bad art evenings are a great success and are enjoyed by the many participants. – Hilde K.

GOVERNMENT PRIORITY 3

Community engagement and planning.

Library Goal that supports the priority:

1.0 Goal: Long Term Sustainability. A constant challenge for many organizations is ensuring long-term sustainability especially in a region that depends on the resource industries. This plan will assist the library to continue to serve the communities in the area.

Objective 1.1: To keep current with technological changes.

- **Programs and/or Services that aligns with the priority:**

iRead: a program where children in Grade 2-6 come to the library twice per week for reading intervention. The children work with staff members and community volunteers at various stations which integrate technology, reading and literacy activities. The children rotate from using the online program, reading to a volunteer and playing literacy games. RAZ kids is a leveled reading program which the local school district uses in all Chetwynd area schools. It can also be accessed by families at home on their tablets and computers. This program works on the basis of building confidence in the emergent readers to ensure that they are willing participants rather than reluctant readers. The use of technology, books and assessments ensures that all facets of reading skills and achievements are used.

The Amazing Book Challenge: an annual event where a local teacher organizes a community wide initiative for school age children to read. She promotes in the schools, we promote in the community and provide prizes. For every book checked out in a set period of time, the students enter the weekly draw. Last year over 998 books were checked out in the weeks following Family Literacy day. It is another way that the school district and library can work together to support community literacy.

Library support for teachers: we offer classroom visits, library tours and we also pull resources for teachers in a time crunch looking for materials. We listen to the details of their curriculum and ensure that our collection will meet the needs of the students in certain subject areas. We also have staff support the schools with outreach at various events throughout the year. This includes ESLAP offering tutoring and the children's coordinator attending Welcome to Kindergarten days and school based literacy events.

- **Partnerships that support the priority:**

The Reading Recovery teacher leader with the school district helped us source a suitable system for this reading intervention. She also trained staff and volunteers on how to implement reading recovery when working with students. Working with the school district in the planning and training for this program has ensured that the library is working in a way that complements the work that will be done at the schools. iRead would also not be successful without the support of community volunteers. Working together, everyone recognizes and supports the importance of literacy and in part we are helping create patrons of the library who feel comfortable and enjoy all the services we offer. The school district has proven to be a good partner at the local school level, ensuring that communication and services work to benefit the students and the community.

- **Outcomes that were identified:**

iRead has had great success with readers moving up from lower levels to higher in a matter of months. The children are finding success and confidence in their reading. Parents and teachers are noticing a change in attitude towards reading and success in school. The methods of the program are embracing technology while respecting tried and true methods of leveled reading. We know we are doing something right when parents who were concerned about their children are reporting huge improvements and reluctant readers are coming into the library at other times picking out books they never would have before.

To keep current with technological changes is a strategic goal which our library feels will ensure we do not fall behind in the services we can offer our patrons. The government priority of **Community engagement and planning** is crucial the success of our library and the satisfaction of our patrons. iRead is just one of many examples of programs which take community engagement and planning to the next level, ensuring that community needs lead in the planning of the programs we offer. Instead of telling the community what they want, they tell us what they need.

My daughter is in grade two French Immersion. I enrolled her in the iRead program at the Chetwynd Public Library in 2014. She is able to come to the program twice a week for an hour. The reason I enrolled her was due to the fact that she does not get English instruction until grade four. Although she is being read to at home each day, we struggled with wanting her to read on her own. This program has done wonderful things already in the short time that she has been involved. She has been tested in English and is reading at grade level now and is reading at home all the time. She is excited with the new books that she gets from the library during our visits and is proud to show her dad and myself that she can read them by herself. I cannot say how much I appreciate our wonderful library with their fantastic staff which makes my daughter feel safe, welcome and that is intelligent. This program is a great program to help those struggling readers become confident learners and to push those capable readers to improve even more. – Wendy P.

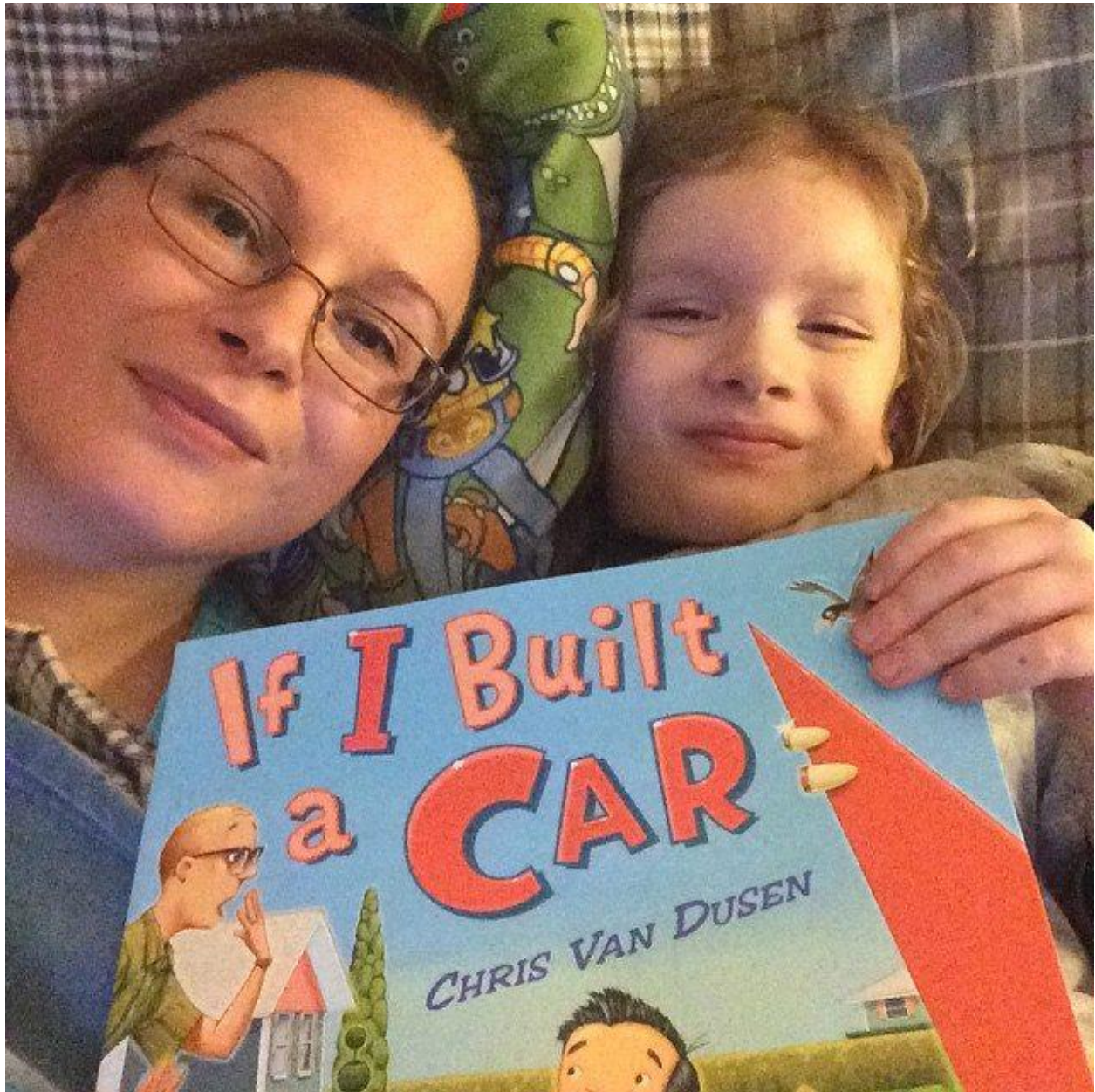
I'm so happy with her reading. The iRead program is helping her. Today she sat and read to me. Her face was lit up, she was smiling and laughing. Her confidence has been built up so much in a short time this program is helping her to love reading and giving her the confidence she needed. I'm one proud mama. I teared up seeing how far she has come and to see how proud she is with herself while she is reading books. I love our library and the great programs you guys have available for free. It makes a big difference. - Annette W.

SUMMARY

2014 was a year of using what we had established in the past and taking it to the next level. We took our past strategic plan and revamped it to meet our current needs and future goals. We sat down as board and staff to do a SWOT analysis to see where we were and where we should be. One thing stood out in the process and that is the fact that change is not always necessary. We discussed changing our mission statement to meet who we were better. In the process we realized that we did not need to change it as it did still meet what we needed. In 2014 we learned that not everything needs to be changed. We learned that sometimes we need to take pause in the day and reflect on what we are doing properly. We learned to listen to the community even more than we had in the past. We also learned that if there was criticism we needed to take it as a positive way to garner feedback to make us better.

Our library will always face challenges. Libraries must evolve in order to stay relevant and it's important to hear what the community is asking for. We believe that we can continue to be a leader in our community. We can continue to be more than a building, more than books, more than ordinary. When staff, board, resources, technology and community come together, we can meet our mission to inspire our community in a spirit of learning and discovery and to obtain our vision to be in the forefront of our community in learning and discovery.

I love the library programs. I've been coming to them since I was a kid. Now I get to bring my child to them. She loves interacting with all the other kids. Keep up the great work! – Kelsey R.



Thank you #ImaginationLibrary and #DollyParton Sawyer has a new favorite book. And thank you to #ChetwyndPublicLibrary #reading #weloveit

Whenever you read a good book, somewhere in the world a door opens to allow in more light.

–Vera Nazarian