Social Development Goals and Program Design

Hi everyone and thanks for having me!

How many of you have had this happen: you’re getting your groceries and you run into one of your lovely patrons and they say:

“Oh, hi! When are my books due?”

So we’re going to take a moment to be gently amused by that:

“Just a sec, I’m going to use my implant to access the database…”

Right? But if you take a second to analyse that little interaction, it speaks volumes about what people think librarians are capable of ( including the fact that we all have eidetic memories) and it also indicates the amazing potential that every interaction and connection in your community can carry with it.

So this little presentation actually happened because I decided to apply for the community librarian position in Revelstoke. The interview process involved creating a presentation about how to align library programming to Revelstoke’s Development Goals. So I embraced the opportunity to really learn something and ended up with a strategic plan for programming at the library. In case you’re wondering, I actually didn’t get the job. All that work, aaaargh! Luckily, I kept trying, and now I am a Community Librarian with a PLAN!

So, on to the presentation: I am so happy I get to use this again, because as I said, all that work…

The City of Revelstoke and the Okanagan Regional Library: Shared Goals, Mutual Support, Ongoing Excellent Outcomes.

In 2016 The City of Revelstoke rewrote the Social Development Plan that it had originally created in 2010 – coincidentally, in the same year, the ORL created its current strategic plan. If you spend a bit of time with these two documents you start to see a lot of shared vocabulary: inclusion, responsiveness, accountability, connection, sustainability, equity, lifelong learning, freedom, diversity, community….

The social Development plan identified a few challenges in Revelstoke, in particular around delivering services to seniors and teens. I spoke with Jill Zacharias, Social Development coordinator for the city of Revelstoke and author of the social development plan about the role the library could play in supporting the city’s social development goals for these two groups:

I also spoke to Ruth Boetteger, President of the Revelstoke Senior’s Association, and one of the original authors of the social development plan back in 2010. It seemed important to do some consultation with seniors so I also interviewed Bill Pollack and Bill Shuttleworth:

After that it was time to look into what the library could do for teens, so I interviewed Revelstoke’s Youth Liaison, Leslie Hoag:

Finally, I talked to some of our charming local teens:

Having gathered all this information, the challenge became how to distill it all into a workable cohesive plan. After creating the plan I went back and got some feedback from everyone I had talked to before and tweaked things based on their comments. I then began to set my paln in motion:

For seniors: the library can act as a contact point for seniors, this concept is definitely something important I took away from talking to Jill Zacharias: that within our community we can offer numerous contact points that meet individual needs. Our contact with individuals may seem small at times, but it often has a bigger impact than we realize. Beyond that, we had seniors asking for day time programming, senior’s day at the library, travelogues, help with technology, and contact with youth and children

For teens: again the all-important contact point. Teens in Revelstoke need somewhere to hang out, volunteer opportunities, access to technology, and contact with supportive community members.

The overlap between these two groups, technology, contact point, contact with supportive community members instantly suggested a Teens teach tech program. This in turn led to a lot of overlap and contact not just with seniors, but with children and families as well.

Other programs that were born out of this: a weekly teen board game program that is still running two years later, our first ever seniors day, many, many teen led STEAM programs, and a change in programming that ensures that we have events that occur at a time that is convenient for seniors. We also partner with many groups in the community to offer programming and are involved in many community events.

Ongoing we continue to assess our programming, consult with partners, adjust, and try to meet needs in our community.

We continue to look ahead and plan to meet new needs as they arise.