

Community-Led Interest Group Meeting

December 15, 2021, 10am-12pm

Virtual meeting via Zoom

In attendance: Cejay Johnson (UBC iSchool), Caitlin Ottenbreit (GVPL), Rina Hadziev (BCLA), Tara Thompson (ORL), Andrea Lam (BPL), Shideh Taleban (NVCL), Emily Gow (VPL), Gordana Rauski (CPL), Alex Friesen (RPL), Ann Johannes (CPL), Jessica Boorsma (RPL), Emily Guerrero (BPL), Mariah Gastaldo (BPL), Eleonore Shaffer (VPL), Leila Meshgini

1. Land Acknowledgment & Introductions

2. September 23, 2021 meeting minutes approved

3. CLIG Community Development Days Update

The event be on February 24th and 25th, with two sessions per day from 10am-12pm and 1pm-3pm. There will be a virtual lunch break social between 12-1 pm on both days. The goal is to start a discussion on community development and related topics in an informal setting with the purpose of knowledge sharing and learning from speakers' experiences.

The event will be free, virtual, and open to all library workers and students. It will be BC focused, but the event will be open to attendees from outside of the province. The event will be hosted through the BCLA zoom account as a large meeting. Will be doing a callout for students to work as tech support during the conference.

Topics will be: What is community-led librarianship (led by Jorge Cardenas and Ann Johannes); EDI and anti-racism in libraries (led by Leila Meshgini and Emily Guerrero); How to work with multicultural and rural communities (led by Ravi Basi and Saara Itkonen); and How to work with library structures, staff processes and management (led by Beth Davis and Ariel Caldwell).

If you have any questions about the conference or questions for the speakers, reach out to Shideh.

4. BCLA Conference 2022 involvements?

Ann – Submitted two proposals. 1. Holiday Hellos Project where they collected cards from all over Coquitlam and delivered them to roughly 566 seniors this year and last year. 2. Past and Present: Conversations about Race in BC speaker series where they ran 5 sessions and received great feedback from the public.

Alex – Submitted several proposals along with Jinny Dannel and Dianna Walker. 1. BIPOC podcasting with youth program from the BC multicultural grant. 2. Community art wall. 3. How computer classes in shelters did not go as planned and how pivoting is a part of the job.

Rina – BCLA presenters are selected by a committee. About 10 people from different library backgrounds (academic, public, rural, etc.) look at all of the proposals and do a first pass, making a shortlist. Then a BCLA panel looks at the list and ensures that there is a balance of topics and libraries. If your submission is not selected it does not mean that your proposal was not good, it is often down to balance. People

should hear back in early January so there is time for presenters to submit their slides and handouts in advance. This ensures that the conference can be more accessible for those with print disabilities.

Caitlin – Worked as a team on a proposal about delivering programs while working across multiple municipalities. What was successful, what was not and how to move forward.

Shideh – NVCL submitted a proposal about Drag Queen Storytime in partnership with North Shore Pride Alliance.

5. Roundtable discussion of what is going on at the various library systems and questions

Okanagan Regional Library (ORL)

Tara – ORL is in-between strategic plans so they are working on a bridge plan while they wait to see how Covid progresses. It looks like the plan will have a focus on community development, inclusion, and truth and reconciliation. There is a new system-wide adult services team which will be working on larger projects and focusing on more intentional programming. The switch to virtual has helped the geographically large system come together. Read Woke is also still active and will continue until April. The library is also closing from Friday, December 23, 2022 through Monday, January 2, 2023 for the holidays.

Shideh – Wants to learn more about the program at ORL that is similar to the Next Chapter Bookclub. NVCL is looking to run something similar.

Tara – Currently on hiatus but they run a First Page Book Club, similar to the NCBC, at the Kelowna branch. It is in partnership with Pathways, a community partner that works with people with developmental disabilities. Participants read aloud to the group. It is an extremely supportive environment with food and socializing which has led to increased literacy rates among participants. The program is run by someone in circulation and he has found it extremely rewarding. If anyone wants to learn more contact Tara at tthompson@orl.bc.ca.

Tara from the chat - Here's our description of our First Page Book Club: An all-inclusive book club, welcoming everyone regardless of reading ability and encouraging adults with diverse abilities to take part in discussions about new as well as classic titles. Books will be read together in a group setting with all participants invited to read aloud. Assistance with echo reading will be provided for those who wish to use it.

Richmond Public Library (RPL)

Alex – The Adult Services Team consists of 4 people. Alex's portfolio focuses on marginalized adults such as those experiencing homelessness. Has been visiting local shelters and trying out different programs. Attempted a computer basics program which didn't work. Is currently trying a computer lab model and movie nights. Would love to hear about other people's experience working with shelters. Also, in contact with other organizations like Pathways clubhouse, Turning Point and employment organizations. Hosted an in-person job fair which received great feedback. Kelly's portfolio focuses on working with racialized adults. She is currently working on a Black history month program with a local Black-led grassroots community group, an LGBTQ+ Bookclub with local organizations, an Arabic women's circle and a program called tall tales which is a storytelling program for adults with disabilities. They are also doing foodbank visits and are still visiting partners in-person as much as possible.

Jessica – Works in Children and Family Services. Are doing quite a bit of in-person programs, but they cap registration. Is currently in contact with the BC Muslim school and Azarah Academy and is hoping to do more outreach with them in the New Year. Has been attending monthly school meetings organized by

the settlement workers. Now that the meetings are online, the meetings are much better attended. It is a great way to hear what the community and families actually need. The focus in the New Year will be Hamilton, which is an area without a library branch. Jinny has been working on the community art wall which is a collaborative space for community members to share their culture, stories and experiences through art. She is also starting quiet nights in the library in collaboration with the Richmond Society for Community Living. This initiative aims create sensory safe evenings at the library for families and children with disabilities. Dianna is starting a multiculturalism grant project which aims to provide teens the skills and technology they need to podcast. She is also focusing on providing LGBTQ+ safe spaces and programs for teens.

Shideh – What is your cap for in-person programs?

Jessica – About 20 to accommodate for multiple caregivers attending a program and for no-shows. Usually about 26 people show up and the room's capacity is roughly 100.

Burnaby Public Library (BPL)

Andrea – Has been working with seniors through a program called Seniors Connect in partnership with Burnaby Neighbourhood House. It is a low barriers phone-based program where seniors call in via Dialpad and discuss a new topic each week. The Adult Public Services Librarians have also started to do community work and are connecting with the Employment Working Group of the Burnaby Intercultural Planning Table to help host online industry specific job fairs, Voices of Burnaby Seniors and the senior community centre to run computer classes. Language Instruction for New Canadians (LINK) would like in-person visits. If you have any advice on navigating in-person visits, particularly to non-vaccinated groups, contact Andrea at andrea.lam@bpl.ca.

Tara – They will likely be requiring proof of vaccination for library programs in the New Year, but do not know for sure yet. But they try to maintain physical distancing during in-person programs to the best of their ability.

Ann – They also try to maintain physical distancing in programs, but it often does not work. LINK groups have also attended the library for tours, but have not visited schools yet. Zooming into LINK classes has also gone really well.

Mariah – A new staffing model has forced the system to figure out how librarians work together to do community development. Navigating passing on relationships that are still developing. Healthy budget for indigenous initiatives in the new year, including pay for knowing sharing and consultation. Is working with Indigenous partners to ensure representation in the new Cameron branch. A lot of community partners do not want to do in-person programs yet. Is helping run an in-person capote workshop with the Metis community.

Emily Guerrero – In the early stages of connecting with harm reduction services and substance users in Burnaby to see how the library can meet their needs. Is trying to think beyond naloxone training. BPL is currently hiring a new Community Development Manager and received permission from the BC Human Rights Tribunal so that all exempt positions in the next 5 years will be posted with BIPOC preferred hire.

Coquitlam Public Library (CPL)

Gordana – CPL is working on a new Strategic Plan, upgrading IT infrastructure, hired a new marketing manager and launching a new e-branch. The city did not approve an inflation tax increase so the library's budget needs to be adjusted. Gordana is overseeing the policy and procedure committee, which has implemented a records management policy. Presented at the Information Literacy conference in the

Western Balkans on design sprint, a decision making similar to design thinking, and how it can be used in information literacy. She also wrote a proposal for a wellness committee to hopefully help support staff mental health.

Ann – Conversations on Race in BC speaker series is continuing, focusing on outreach, home delivery service and library bus. Have some in-person programs, like storytime, but they have a large no-show rate. Hybrid storytime has a low turnout rate and will probably stop in January because it requires a lot of extra staffing. Speaker series has worked well as a hybrid program. Still a lot of no-shows, but more adults will attend online than in-person. Hoping to have more people attend the last session in person because it is meant to be a conversation. Would like management and the board to attend as a public display of support.

Greater Victoria Public Library (GVPL)

Caitlin – Strategic Plan has expired so they are working on a two-year bridging plan that includes IT infrastructure upgrades. Started to extend hours and restarting homebound delivery. Usually run by volunteers but are currently using a courier service until volunteers can safely be brought back. No in-person programs right now, but in good weather outdoor storytime was extremely popular. New Esquimalt branch will hopefully be opening soon.

Vancouver Public Library (VPL)

Eleonore – Has just returned to the role so she is reconnecting with community contacts, including an employment group that assists those who have experienced abuse, mental health drop-in contacts and day group for adults with developmental disabilities. VPL used to have a storytelling program for adults with disabilities that has been paused due to covid. They are trying to figure out what they can offer in the meantime to fill the gap. Hoping to do lots of bike outreach in the New Year.

BIPOC in Libraries Support Group

Leila – BIPOC in library support group came out of the multicultural services committee after noticing a gap. The group is specifically for BIPOC or racialize people working in libraries and information programs. It meets once a month as a drop-in peer led support group. This is not a BCLA group. BCLA supports the group, but they are independent in order to provide privacy and autonomy.

BCLA Student Chapter (UBC iSchool)

Cejay – Organizing in-person and virtual events in the New Year. In-person will be informal, like lunchtime boardgames to help students reconnect after being online. The virtual event will be recorded interviews with librarians across the industry. These can then help future students and be listened to regardless of scheduling. Reach out to Cejay if you have any interesting contacts cejayj@mail.ubc.ca.

North Van City Library (NVCL)

Shideh – Have started in-person storytime and computer classes with limited capacity by registration. Have also resumed in-person monthly shelter visits. Each year the library picks a theme for their programming, 2021 was The Year of Science and 2022 will be Libraries and the Future. Each department tries to create programming around the theme. In response to the good feedback on their birding workshops, they have started lending Birding Backpacks as of December. Received a strengthening community's grant and have expanded their Warming Station in to Open Door Community Hub. Have hired a new Community Access Worker to run the center. It is currently open on Fridays, but are hoping to expand hours. Have started an EDI working group and will be reaching out to other libraries as they become more established. Hoping to work with NVDPL to offer an indigenous language program.

BCLA

Rina - BCLA has changed servers so they have new email addresses. This has caused some emails to go into people's junk mail. The best way to avoid this is to add the BCLA emails into your contacts and mark the emails as "not junk". BCLA is also looking to hire a long-term consultant to help shape the organizations anti-racism work. Please spread the word. BCLA is also looking to support its members in more ways than just providing a discount on the BCLA Conference. Perkopolis is one of those ways. It is a free opt-in discount program. BCLA does not make any money from the service and your information is not sold. If there is anything that you think people would like as BCLA member benefits, please let us know.

6. Next Meeting – Date? Guest speakers?

Shideh - Aiming for February or the beginning of March. We would like Margaret from Write to Read to be the guest speaker and Mark from ORL on First Chapter Bookclub. If anyone has any other guest speaker recommendations, please let us know.