

Thank you, local libraries

By Sarah Sobanski

It won't come as a surprise to anyone that I was a bookworm growing up ? newspapers, writing, reading, books, they all go hand in hand. While I don't get to read as much fiction as I used to now that I'm older, I still love the idea of getting to sit down with a hot ?cuppa? and a good book. There's something about books and the places they occupy that is both exciting and relaxing at the same time. It just sings me-time, I'm sure my fellow bookworms will agree.

Every bookworm has a favourite place to read. They've also dreamed about having a ?Beauty and the Beast? style library in their home, or one like the Library of Parliament, with tall shelves, gorgeous wood inlays and a quiet place of study where no one bothers you. That being said, libraries have evolved to be so much more than books.

I remember getting off the bus after school when I was young in Bethany. I'd head across the street to the library, which also happened to be the municipal office. There, I would get free access to surf the web. Then it was dial-up, today, when you see students congregating outside of the Bancroft Public Library, you know they're there for the same, except now it's Wi-Fi.

Other reasons you might catch people at the library outside of books include movies or video games ? filling the hole left when **Mr. Video closed** ? ebooks, the seed library, Sip & Knit, Pyjama Time, access to LEGO and much more ? that's just at the **Bancroft Public Library**. This fall seniors are gathering to participate in **Wollaston Public Library's** Senior's Personal Electronic Device - Computer Course to learn how to better use their laptops, cellphones and/or tablets for free. At the **Hastings Highlands Public Library** you can get together and attend Bridge and Scrabble games. On Saturday, it's hosting a diabetes information session where patrons can come in and ask a registered nurse and a dietitian about the disease.

Kids might not read anymore, or at least not with physical pages, but that doesn't seem to be slowing down our area libraries. They're constantly adapting, becoming hubs that fill voids in the community.

October is Canadian Libraries Month, and this week, Oct. 15 to 21, is Ontario Public Libraries Week. That's why it's so important this month to remember our libraries and everything they do for our community.

To celebrate, the Ontario Public Library Association is hosting a contest to get people to show their support for their libraries. Its website reads, ?We need your help to get the word out about the contest. Use your library cards to create an eye-catching photo then tell us how you use your library card! You can submit your photo on your Twitter, Facebook or Instagram account using #GetTheCard.? For more information visit **here**.

Now, if you don't have a library card already, here's a nudge to go get one. If you're not convinced, check out each of our area libraries' websites, find an event and go check it out. Many of the events don't require memberships.

Local librarians and library staff work hard to keep up with the times. Next time you walk by the library take a look inside. You might be surprised by what you find.

At the very least, reach out and thank those who keep your library running. We'd surely miss these community spaces if they weren't around.