

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Sharing the joy of reading: a new Dementia Friendly Collection for Memory Impaired adults, and their caregivers

(Tuesday June 18, 2019): “When you have a book, you’re never alone...” A simple phrase, but so very meaningful and inspiring the Pictou-Antigonish Regional Library to create a special collection of reading materials for Memory-Impaired adults, and their caregivers – to share together in the joy of reading.

The Memorable Books collection includes *Dementia Friendly* books for various reading and cognitive abilities, discussion cards, Memory Kits (of interesting items to spark memories and conversations), and resource books for caregivers. According to the Alzheimer Society of Canada, there are approximately 564,000 Canadians currently living with dementia, a range of conditions that includes Alzheimer’s disease. One of the most difficult aspects of living with these memory impairment conditions is the impact that they have on one’s ability to enjoy favorite pastimes, such as reading and sharing books with loved ones.

To help with this challenge, the Pictou-Antigonish Regional Library is introducing a new collection of *Dementia Friendly* books, for Memory Impaired adults. This collection is geared towards anyone who is starting to find traditional books challenging to enjoy, due to their condition. *Dementia Friendly* books offer engaging content, just like other books, but they use techniques like special fonts and spacing, navigation cues and includes more pictures to encourage memory retention and make stories easier to follow. “We are so thankful to be able to offer this new service to our community. The early response to the collection has been overwhelmingly positive,” said Trecia Schell, Community Services Librarian with PARL, “and at each library, as we were delivering the books and kits - everyone had a memory to share of a family member and loved one whom they knew who was diagnosed with a memory impairment, such as Dementia.”

The new *Dementia Friendly* books, and Memory Kits will be located near the Large Print sections in all our library branches, and titles may also be found in the library’s online catalogue by searching with the topic of “Dementia Friendly”. Each item has a special identifying Memory Collection sticker logo attached to the cover. The new logo was created by Jess Davey, our Manager of Web Services, and the Memory Kits were created by Andrea Currie, our Staff Trainer. All books and items may be placed on Hold (or request), and borrowed as a 3-week loan by library patrons with a Pictou-Antigonish Regional Library card.



The collection was built with the advice from the Alzheimer’s Society of Nova Scotia, and members of our local Community Links/Ageing Well Together Coalitions in Pictou and Antigonish Counties. In addition, the Burlington Public Library, Cambridge Idea Exchange and Waterloo Regional libraries in Ontario currently offer Dementia-Friendly collections. The library wishes to gratefully acknowledge the funding to support the Memorable Books collection was received from Community Wellness Grants from our 3 local Community Health Boards – Antigonish Town & County CHB, Pictou Central & East CHB, and the Pictou West CHB.



Figure caption: Andrea Currie (Staff Trainer), and Jess Davey (Web Services Manager), featured with items on display from a Memory Kit and several books from the new Dementia Friendly collection.

-30-

For more Information:

- Trecia Schell, Community Services Librarian, Pictou-Antigonish Regional Library
- tschell@nsngp.library.ns.ca (902) 755-6031