



New technology adds a different dimension for programs in public libraries with the Pictou-Antigonish Regional Library (PARL)

(Monday, June 27, 2016): Pictou and Antigonish Counties, N.S. - What does a rollercoaster and a library have in common? Maybe the fact that you can experience both at the same time thanks to the addition of Virtual Reality goggles and some other unique technology and gadgets available as part of PARL's annual summer learning program!

Similar to past years, the theme of STREAM for PARL's summer learning program stands for 's; for Science, 't' for Technology, 'r' for Reading, 'e' for new Experiences, 'a' is for Arts, and 'm' is for Math. This year's recent addition of new technology from the Nova Scotia Community Access Program, like Virtual Reality goggles, 3D printers and 'Little Bits' Kits (funded in part by the Friends of the Antigonish Library) adds a new dimension and dynamic to the program, and gives children the opportunity to experience technology they may not normally have access to. While these technological advances are something that excites library staff and will be shared between libraries this summer, some are also learning how to use it themselves and will be training soon-to-be summer staff in the coming weeks.

"It's a challenge, but we're getting the hang of it" says Cristal Van de Pol, Branch Assistant at the New Glasgow Public Library. "What's amazing is the opportunity to expose our younger library users to cutting edge technology for free!"

While there might be some changes to the structure of the programs depending on the location, kids will still have a logbook that can be picked up at their local library starting Monday, June 27th in Antigonish and Tuesday, June 28th in public libraries throughout Pictou County to track their learning activities throughout the seven-week summer reading program. As they complete their logbook, kids can visit the library to enter ballots to win prizes. The grand prize at the end of the summer is a brand new bicycle (on display at the Antigonish, Westville and Pictou libraries) which was donated by the Adopt-a-Library Literacy program. The new technology is a way to add something different to the summer programs, but also a reminder of how libraries are changing to meet the needs of their population.

“It’s a steep learning curve for some of us because this technology is so new, but a reminder to everyone that reading is not the only thing libraries have to offer for our communities. We have other hands-on learning opportunities that improve early child development, and since it’s free it is accessible for everyone,” says Kristel Fleuren-Hunter, Children’s Services librarian and manager of The People’s Place: Antigonish Town and County Library.

Please check in with your local library for more details on summer programming, or visit our upcoming events page at www.parl.ns.ca. Since technology and gadgets will be shared between libraries, schedules may vary according to location. Please call ahead to confirm availability.

Library locations & phone numbers:

Antigonish Town and County/People’s Place Library
283 Main Street, Antigonish
(902) 863-4276

New Glasgow Public Library
182 Dalhousie Street, New Glasgow
(902) 752-8233

Pictou Public Library
40 Water Street, Pictou
(902) 485-5021

River John Public Library/Janice Murray Gill Memorial Library
2725 West Branch Rd, River John
(902) 351-2599

Stellarton Public Library
248 Food Street, Stellarton
(902) 755-1638

Trenton Public Library
1 Forge Street, Trenton
(902) 752-5181

Westville Public Library
2042 Queen Street, Westville
(902) 396-5022