

Today a  
**Reader**

Tomorrow a  
**Leader**

—Margaret Fuller



# 2022 ANNUAL REPORT



RED DEER  
PUBLIC LIBRARY  
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# A MESSAGE FROM OUR BOARD CHAIR & CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



**Shelley Odishaw**  
RDPL Board Chair



**Shelley Ross**  
RDPL CEO

2022 promised to be a year of renewal for RDPL, and, indeed, it was! In our 108th year of operation, we were excited to get back to pre-pandemic programming, staffing, and hours. We marked this return to the 'new normal' with a rather 'out of the box' leap: a well-received pop-up branch at Bower Mall. Red Deerians came back to all our branches in higher than expected numbers to enjoy the many resources, services, and programs RDPL has to offer.

2022 was also a year of new challenges – both economic and social – for RDPL and the City of Red Deer. The ongoing construction of the new Red Deer Justice Centre across the street from our main branch is just one of many reminders of how our City is growing and changing. In fact, in 2022, the City welcomed a number of new Canadians who required, and continue to require, English language upgrading, access to technology for employment searches, and support for integrating into a new culture.

RDPL staff rose to meet the challenges of a dynamic and growing City by working together to meet community needs. The growth in our Adult Literacy program, and the overwhelming response from volunteer tutors in this program, stands out as a shining example of our community's welcoming spirit.

The dedication of staff, volunteers, and Board allowed RDPL to make the most of support given to us by the City of Red Deer, the Government of Alberta, the Friends of the Red Deer Public Library, and the many private citizens of Red Deer.

The Board took part of the year to research and facilitate a new Plan of Service that will assist the library to adapt and grow to meet the community's needs. **We are excited to see what 2023 brings!**

A handwritten signature in grey ink, reading "S Odishaw".

A handwritten signature in grey ink, reading "Shelley".



# 2022 BOARD MEMBERS

- Shelley Odishaw, Chair
- Councillor Bruce Buruma
- Nancy Batty
- Valdene Callin
- Jerry Moore
- David Murphy
- Carol Puszka  
(Nov. 2021 - May 2022)
- Brian Quigg
- Ray Savage
- Laura Thevenaz



“

*"I would like to express my gratitude to the members of the 2022 Red Deer Public Library Board of Trustees. Transitioning from only seeing each other on computer screens to meeting in person was like meeting old friends, even though many of us had never met in person. Thanks to each of you for showing up, regardless of the situation, to share our love and support of public libraries. It was a heck of a year."*

**- Shelley Odishaw, RDPL Board Chair**

”

# VISION

Provide a welcoming environment where everyone will discover, share, develop, and value our public library.



# MISSION

Enrich lives by promoting literacy and providing access to knowledge and culture.

# VALUES

Our core values are:

- Learning and Literacy
- Access and Inclusion
- Community
- Relationships
- Fun
- The Arts





# 2022 | YEAR IN REVIEW

## TOP NEWS

- Bower Mall pop-up branch
- Return to pre-pandemic services
- Introducing Katja, our Facility Service Dog In Training



# 21,182

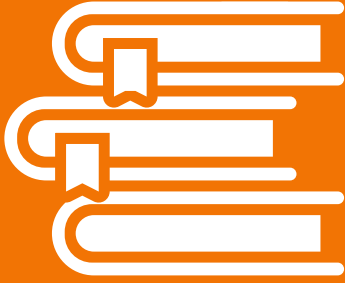
people have a Red Deer Public Library card!



In 2022, we had  
**292,312**  
library visitors

&





**658,991**  
items were checked out!

including  
**86,499**  
downloads of  
e-Content

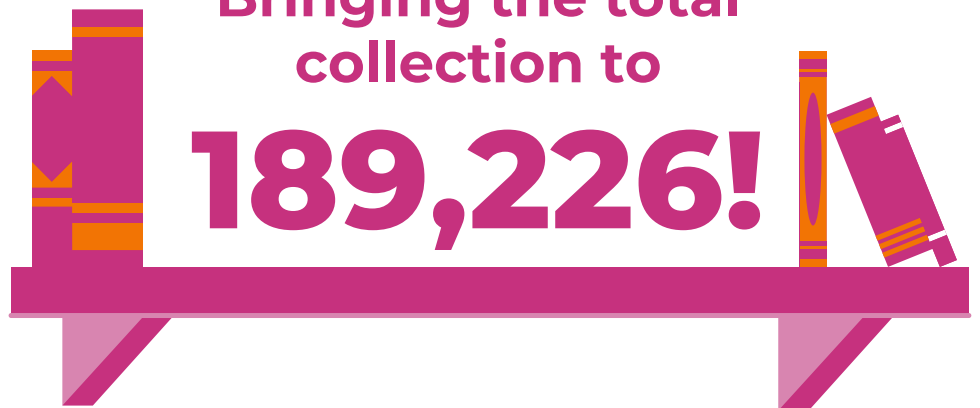
The library added

**15,887**  
new items last year



Bringing the total  
collection to

**189,226!**



Our Wi-Fi had  
**79,762**  
connections!

We brought in  
**3,671 items**  
from other libraries!



And lent our items  
to other libraries  
**4,168 times**





Our service is delivered by

**70 & 175**

**dedicated  
staff**

**amazing  
volunteers!**



We answered

**1,693**

reference questions

**&**

**3,494\***

technology questions

*\*counted from June-December only*



We offered

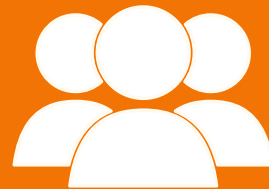
**953**

in-person programs

**&**

**29**

virtual programs



which were enjoyed by

**23,185**

people in total!



**93%**

of people surveyed say that  
the library enriches their life!



**92%**

report that they feel safe  
& welcome at the library.

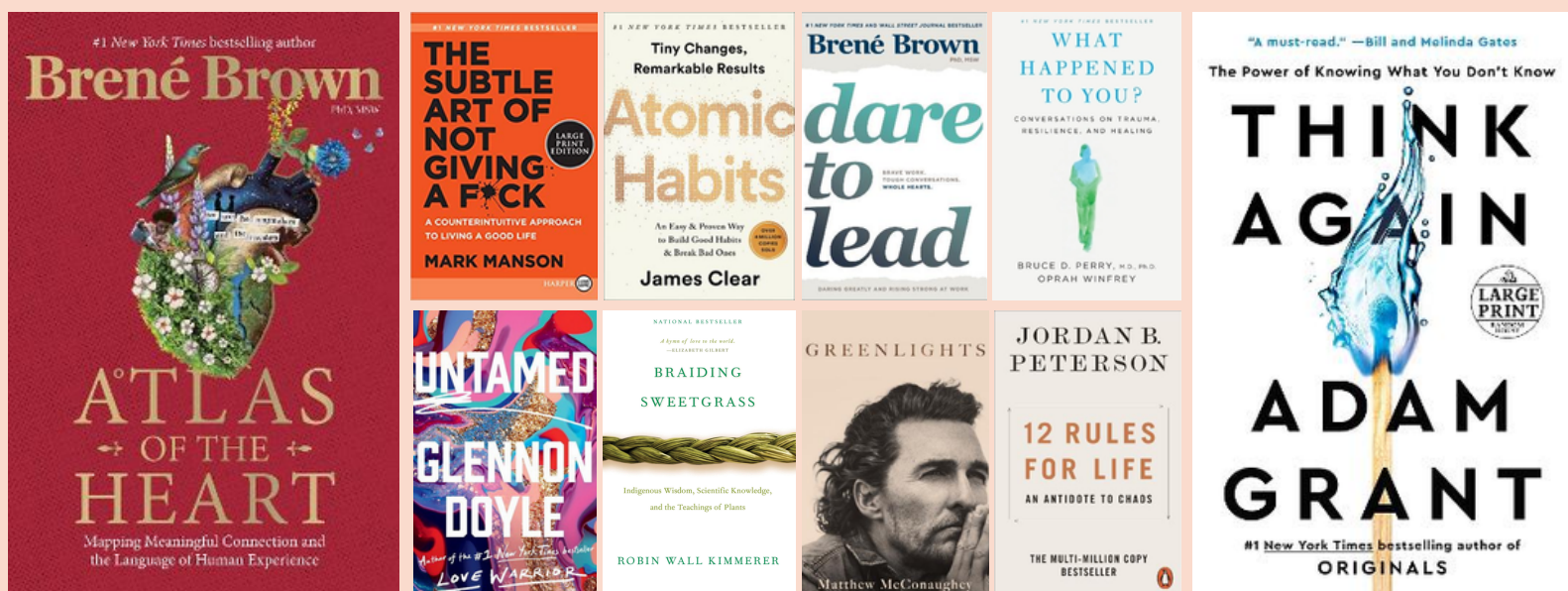
# 2022 TOP TITLES

These were our most borrowed titles in 2022!

## – Adult Fiction –



## – Adult Non-fiction –





## – Young Adult Books –



## – Children's Books –



**222** ↗ children signed up for the  
**1000 Books Before Kindergarten**  
 program in 2022!

Learn more at [rdpl.org/1000-books!](http://rdpl.org/1000-books!)





# 2022 Highlight: BOWER PLACE POP-UP LIBRARY

## PROJECT SUMMARY

Red Deer Public Library opened a 1641 square foot pop-up library at Bower Place Shopping Centre for a six month period from April 4 to October 14, 2022. This was a new initiative for the library, and a way to remind Red Deerians about the services RDPL offers and connect with the community after restrictions during the COVID-19 pandemic.



## BACKGROUND

In the fall of 2021, RDPL wanted to boost library memberships after closures related to the pandemic, and was looking for places in the community to host a membership drive. Bower Place was approached, and it was suggested that we consider a temporary tenancy at the mall. Stefanie Fincham (Director, Retail Leading - QuadReal) immediately envisioned the value to the community of having Red Deer Public Library in the mall. She was willing to work with RDLP to make the pop-up library a reality, and was passionate about the importance of providing increased library access for Red Deerians.





## PROCESS

The process of making the pop-up library a reality was twofold. Before exploring the idea any further, the idea was presented to the Library Board and the City of Red Deer. Once the support of all parties had been established, we moved forward to the second step: planning. This involved creating draft schedules to help estimate staffing costs; evaluating the library's financial position and finding extra sources of funding (approved by the Library Board and donated by the Friends of Red Deer Public Library); creating a budget, running collections reports and selecting materials; planning IT infrastructure; and, finally, renovating the space and moving in March 2022, with a planned soft launch to the public at the beginning of April.



## OPEN FOR BUSINESS!

RDPL's Bower Place pop-up branch opened for business on Monday April 4, 2022, with a Grand Opening Celebration on April 13. The space was vibrant from the first day, with many customers stopping by to welcome the library to the mall and to explore what we had to offer.

The Children's Area was instantly popular, with families coming to relax, visit, and spend time in the space. RDPL ran some programs and initiatives during the time at Bower Place, including programs like Family Fun Storytime, Baby Fun Storytime, and an event to celebrate library month in October, called "A Taste of Red Deer Public Library." These programs and events were well attended by the public, and people commented that they wished there were more programs at Bower Place, as it was the perfect location for families. RDPL also had several contests for customers to encourage them to sign up or renew their library cards, and there was also a "Geek Chic Boutique," a collection of literary and library-themed merchandise that we sold for a small profit. All good things do eventually come to an end, and the last day the pop-up was open to the public was Friday October 14, 2022.



## RESULTS & CONCLUSION

The Bower Place Pop-Up performed well in terms of the original goals and objectives set for the space and in terms of the overall budget (projected budget: \$170,000.00; estimated amount spent: \$164,000). The biggest portion of the budget was used for staffing, a consideration should RDPL explore future pop-ups or expansions to service.

Customer response to the Pop-Up was excellent, with over 350 comments submitted to the library for feedback (more than is typical). Situating RDPL somewhere new and unexpected created many conversations with customers who don't typically visit existing permanent branches. The number of people who "stumbled" across the library was astonishing, indicating to us that, although it might be easy to assume everyone knows about the Library, this is actually not the case. Many people were surprised to see RDPL in a mall location, and they weren't sure what we offered or how to get a card, making the Pop-Up a crucial opportunity for library awareness and education.



OVER  
20,215  
VISITORS!



500+ NEW CARD  
HOLDERS  
& 350+  
RENEWALS



19 PROGRAMS  
WITH 241  
ATTENDEES



9.33% GROWTH  
ON SOCIALS  
WITH 1058 NEW  
FOLLOWERS



OVER 350  
COMMENTS,  
LARGELY  
POSITIVE



## WHAT WE HEARD FROM CUSTOMERS...

*"Having a library outlet in the mall is the COOLEST THING EVER! Love that it's a place where people can hang out without needing to spend money. And builds literacy and connections! Hope this happens more!"*

*"Please keep the branch here! We need a library south of the city for families and easy access."*

*"Yes! My favourite thing is convenience. I live in east Red Deer and other than the drop off at the Collicutt Center, there is no closer place to pick up books. Please consider retaining the pop up location, or another location in southeast Red Deer."*

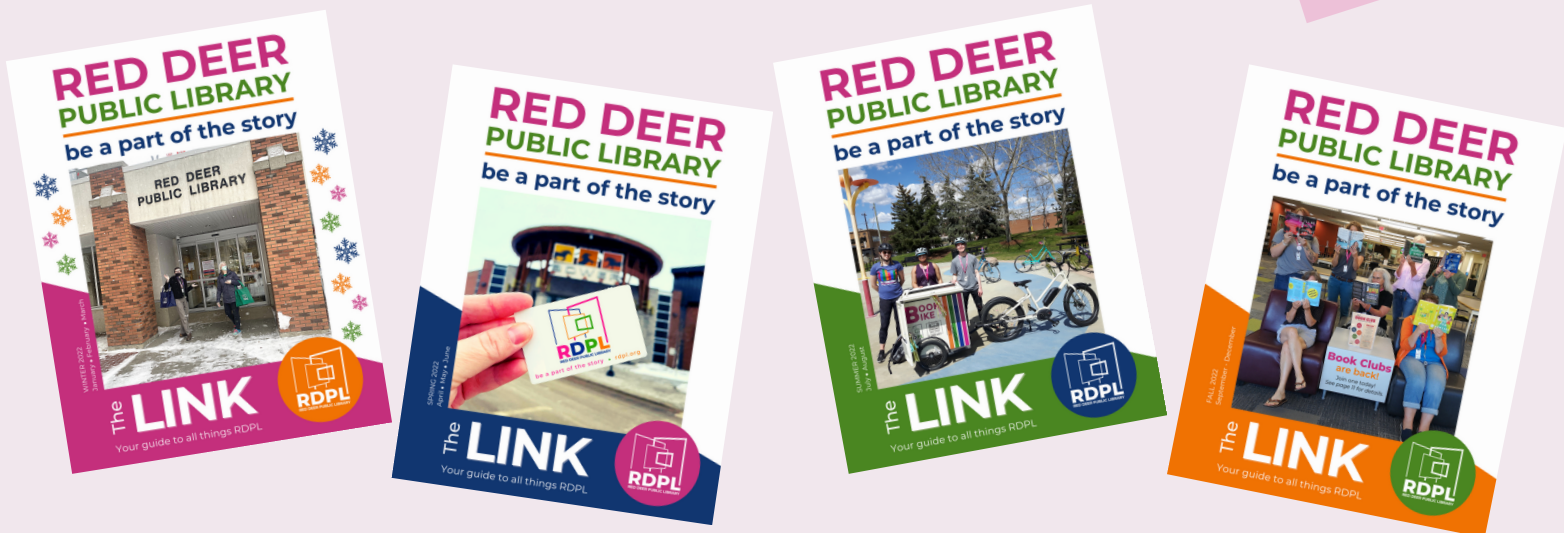
*"I would love to see one pop up at the Collicutt Center. There is an empty space right by the front doors....a popular location with lots of foot traffic and I already use the drop off box on a regular basis. Please say YES."*



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to all those that made this project possible, including the Red Deer Public Library Board and the Friends of the Red Deer Public Library for their financial support; the City of Red Deer, QuadReal Property Management, and the staff at Bower Place Shopping Centre; Chandos Construction for their generous donation of supplies and labour to improve the library space; Angel Rosillo at La Pinta Painting Ltd. and Sherwin Williams for a generous donation of paint for the space; and the Blackfalds Library for their donation of shelving units. Thank you also to Red Deer Public Library staff and management for all their support and hard work – none of this would have been possible without you.

# MORE FROM 2022



## RETURN TO "NORMAL"

After many ups and downs since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, we gradually returned to a pre-pandemic level of library programs, services, and experiences over the course of the year. We returned to our regular hours of service at all branches on October 17, 2022, which meant earlier opening times during the week as well as reintroducing Sunday hours at all locations. In addition, by fall 2022, we were back to offering a full suite of indoor programming at all branches, while also continuing some of our popular online and outdoor programs.

Some of the programming highlights from 2022 include:



Summer Reading Club



Adult Storytime at Red Hart Brewing



Reading with Royalty



## SAY HELLO TO KATJA!

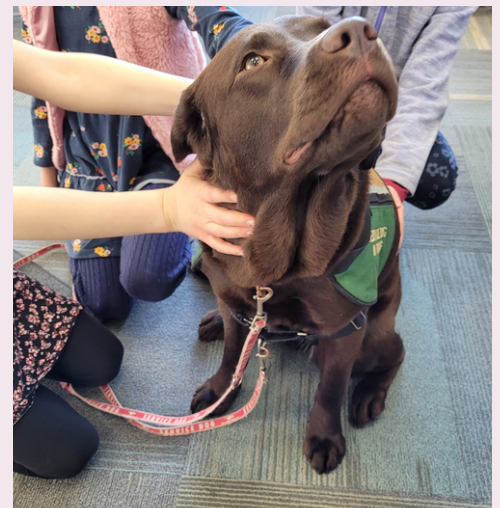
We welcomed a new member to our library family in 2022 – Katja, our Facility Service Dog in Training! Katja is a Chocolate Labrador Retriever who is quickly capturing hearts of library staff, visitors, students, and program attendees.

Katja is enrolled in the owner-based training program with Aspen Service Dogs, an Alberta Government Qualified Service Dog Organization. Katja regularly attends training sessions with the best service dog trainers from Aspen Service Dogs.



Red Deer Public Library has been using therapy and service dog volunteers in a number of reading programs over the years, but there has always been a larger demand for these programs than we could meet. Therefore, we are thrilled to have the opportunity to train Katja to be our resident Facility Service Dog who will be assisting in a number of library reading programs for all ages.

In addition to the emotional and social benefits of these programs, reading to dogs has been shown to help improve reading abilities in children, increase motivation and interest in reading, and build self-confidence in those learning to read. We are already beginning to see the impact that Katja is having on our community and our next generation of readers!





# Thank you

for being a part of our story!



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Red Deer Public Library

