

Mr. Mayor, Fellow Councillors, Staff, Media and Town Citizens, it is a pleasure to report to you this evening on the activities of the Community Services Division of the 6 months from January to June of 2015. The Community Services Division has 10 physical locations under its purview and various other programs, services, and committees to administer.

Museum

Visitors

January to May 2015: 1270 (as opposed to 1393 in 2014). Numbers were higher than normal when we first opened the World Wars exhibit in the fall, but have declined through 2015. Although there is some benefit in running fewer exhibits, we run the risk of having the public lose interest if the exhibit is up too long.

Exhibits

- Sept - Apr: WWI & WWII personal stories of those who served.
- Apr - May: Local hockey history.
- May – Aug: 50th Anniversary of Noden Causeway. Public reception Wed June 24th.

Miscellaneous

- Many school groups visit at this time of year. Students have incorporated some new programming that better reflect heritage. For example: using plants to imprint on fabric.
- Sherry attended Regional Museums Meeting in Atikokan, and was intrigued by Kenora and Sioux Lookout's introduction of I-pads into their exhibits, allowing for the use of video clips and dialogue to give additional information to interested visitors.
- A one-year intern position has been approved through the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation. Interviews will take place prior to the end of June, with hiring to follow in July.
- Serving tea & scones on Market Thursdays starting June 18.

Fort Frances Children's Complex

In January the Ontario Government announced a Wage Enhancement for eligible Day Care centres, we are optimistically moving forward with the application for qualifying staff.

Our new cook is doing well in her position and the children are enjoying a multitude of delicious and nutritious meals.

Day Care staff have been very fortunate to attend many training opportunities so far in 2015, the most beneficial of which has been the "How Does Learning Happen?" Pedagogy. It was a wonderful occasion for the program staff to receive valuable

instruction as well as network with other program staff in the Kenora/Rainy River District.

We had a very successful Licensing inspection with our Program Advisor commenting specifically on how the teachers are really embracing 'Emergent Curriculum' and necessary documentation. She also noted that the teachers and children were continually engaged in a variety of positive interactions.

The Day Care enrolment continues to do well, we have been maintaining approximately 84% capacity as we enter the summer season with 3 Full Programs and enrolment growing in the other 2 programs.

The Best Start Hub has been truly fortunate to once again partner with St. Michael's School as well as the Sports Centre to offer outreach programming in our community.

The Health Unit also played a great role in our programs by offering 'Make the connections' (an attachment based program for caregiver and babies under 1 year of age) and prenatal classes in our main Hub. Our program attendance has been doing quite well with many new and returning patrons. As the Hub enters the summer we're excited to boast programming with community partners at the Library, Friendship Centre and Sports Centre Rec'n Crew to offer a wide variety of child & caregiver interactive programs.

The **Fort Frances Public Library** received very generous donations from the Estate of Jack Gagne and the Estate of Dino D'Agostini. Both men were avid readers and Library users, who continued to use the library later in life through the Home Delivery program. Both donations are not intended to be used for operating expenses, as the result the funds were invested and will be used as required in consultation with the Estate Trustees.

One of the projects to be funded with the Gagne donation is the Library's Maker Space, a new collaborative and innovative space for the community to come together to discover, explore, and create. The space will include the latest technologies such as 3D printing, and be open and accessible to all.

The funds received from Mr. D'Agostini's estate will continue to support the projects that he was passionate about, namely the Forest of Reading Program and our collections. This program continues to foster a love of literacy and reading for children and families.

We have seen an increase in the use of Library Services. Our Tech Boot Camp program and free computer service continue to be popular. Our "Let's Speak Ojibwe" and "French Storytime" Programs have proven to be a great success. These programs build community by bringing together members to learn in a comfortable setting. In April 2015 we launched our Seed Library, a free accessible community seed resource. Once registered, members can check out seeds and grow them over the summer, then donate back to the Seed Library to ensure sustainability for the following year.

Our Home Delivery Program is growing to meet the needs of the community. Our dedicated volunteers, help select and then deliver material to members in the community. Last year the Library delivered 11,541 items to home-bound members in our community.

The Fort Frances Public Library Technology Centre is a community hub, which will continue to grow and flourish.

The **Sister Kennedy Centre**, under the direction of a new Board have experienced a successful Spring with several Seniors frequenting the Centre on a weekly basis for programming, coffee, and fitness classes. The SKC was also the beneficiary of a Seniors Community Grant as applied through an ad-hoc committee to produce a comprehensive Community Seniors Guide to assist retirees with all senior related services & activities in the district.

Along with a busy end to the hockey & skating season this Spring the **Memorial Sports Centre** has taken a huge technological step forward by upgrading the booking and membership software to a web-based version called ActiveNet. The new software will perform a greater service to the community by enabling convenient online transactions for patrons. The Sports Centre is about to engage in the popular summer programs for young students with encouraging enrolment again this year. Fitness continues to be at the forefront for many people in Fort Frances with over 400 regular active participants in the fitness & pool area. The MSC is poised to begin an eventful fall and winter schedule of activity on the rinks and residents may also appreciate the annual coat of paint through most of the facility and an upgraded kitchen in the auditorium.

The **Sorting Gap Marina** had the benefit of a capital component for new flooring this Spring that has certainly spruced up the appearance for a busy summer with many regulars stopping by for ice cream and refreshments. The Marina will also play host to the Dragon Boat Festival and the Fort Frances Canadian Bass Championship again this year.

Kiwanis Sunny Cove Camp is relishing Town capital funding and Moffat grant funding for the 2nd year that will greatly improve the camp infrastructure for the enjoyment of our 6 weeks of youth camps and numerous other functions being hosted.

The **East End Hall** now features new main floor accessibility bathrooms and an outdoor wheelchair ramp as funded by the federal, 'Enabling Accessibility Grant' that has again made it a terrific facility for residents who require a smaller venue to host an event.

The **Community Services Division** has experienced a demanding and successful first half to 2015 and would like to extend our genuine gratitude to all our guests and residents who encourage us daily to deliver the best service possible to our fantastic community.