

Canadian Library Month Manual

Introduction

Canadian Library Month takes place every October, and provides an opportunity for libraries to highlight the role that they play within their communities. This involves specific “weeks” or “days” that libraries can showcase throughout the month. Northern Lights has created this manual to help member libraries think of ways that they could promote Canadian Library Month. This manual is divided into sections (although there is some overlap between them) that suggest ways that individual libraries can utilize Canadian Library Month. Libraries can potentially create displays within their buildings, feature special speakers or events, host contests, and use social media to bring even more attention to this event. The following sections will outline some potential ideas to be used.

Specific Days/Events within Library Month

For libraries that are located within a school, they can potentially utilize “**National and Provincial Library Association School Library Day**” on the third Monday of October – for 2016 it was on October 24th, so in 2017 it will be October 25th. One event coinciding with this day is the Voices for School Libraries Network “Drop Everything and Read Challenge” (DEAR), where students in schools all stop what they’re doing and read a book. This could be promoted on social media using the hashtag #canadadear2016. Participants can tweet about their own participation in the challenge, and let other Canadians know what students are reading. The Voices for School Libraries Network can be followed on Twitter at @CdnSchoolLibrar, or on Facebook at the Voices for School Libraries.

In 2014, the Canadian Library Association instated the third Friday in October as **Canadian Library Support Staff Day**. This day is used to acknowledge the work of support staff in Canadian libraries. This year, that day will be October 20th, 2017. While the CLA is no longer in charge of this event, this day can still be utilized as an opportunity for libraries to show their appreciation for their support staff. They can do this either through hosting particular events, or perhaps showcasing their appreciation for different support staff on social media.

Events at Different Schools/Libraries

Canadian Library Month could feature a specific “**Seniors Week**” within individual libraries, and showcase events and workshops that may be relevant to seniors. Examples include medication safety, storytelling, genealogy, crafts, travel, technology, and trivia.

One community reading program that could be utilized is “**One Book**,” in which community members are encouraged to read one book together to share a similar reading experience and be able to discuss their opinions (so this would be a “widespread book club” primarily promoted in Library Month). Hosting book discussions and author readings/signings are another way to showcase Library Month.

One “special event” would be waiving fines; for example, the library could say “to celebrate youth literacy, we have eliminated fines on juvenile materials.” Library Month could also be used as an opportunity to host a **used book sale**.

Another event possibility is “**Bring a Friend to the Library Day**”/“**Sign up a Friend for a Library Card**”. If there is an event where patrons bring a friend to the library, there could be treats and fun activities to

make more people aware of what the library offers. Perhaps there could be discounts on library cards for people who bring a friend with them.

One idea is to invite government officials to attend some of your programs, such as storytimes, and read their favourite books to children. Branching off of this, perhaps encourage patrons to “Let your local government official know how much you love your library”

Perhaps conduct sessions on how to use the library’s cataloguing services and search effectively for resources. There could be a general demonstration on the variety of e-resources that are offered through the library that patrons are perhaps not aware of.

Canadian Library Month could be an opportunity to begin a **Birthday Book Club**. Children could be encouraged to donate a new copy of their favourite book to the library on their birthday. Once a year, there would be an event with birthday cake for all the children that participated.

Potential Contests

One way to promote Canadian Library Month is to host contests and feature prizes. Some of the events above, such as “One Book,” the “Drop Everything and Read Challenge,” or “Bring a Friend to the Library Day” could be opportunities for participants to receive prizes of your choosing (budget dependent).

One contest idea (which could also be done over social media) is to have people submit a story about what their favourite book is and why it is their favourite.

Another idea is to have a poetry-writing contest, or some other sort of writing contest (perhaps writing a short essay about what the library means to them or something along those lines).

Another idea is to have a “Read Every Day” challenge for prizes, in which a participant has to read for a certain amount of time every day to be entered to win a grand prize.

Winners of Library Month contests could be featured on social media (with permission of the winner and potentially their guardian)

Some possible prize ideas for a limited budget are giftcards, a free library membership, a small collection of books (possibly donated books in good condition), or your library’s book bag.

General Promotion Ideas

Now that Polaris Leap is being hosted on iPads, new patrons can instantly sign up for a library card from anywhere. This creates new outreach possibilities, and the potential to go out into different areas of the community to offer library cards to people.

Libraries could contact their local radio stations and newspapers and ask for a promotional spot that emphasizes Library Month (either through an interview or article).

Libraries could create posters that they display in popular public locations such as grocery stores. These posters would highlight special events or deals that they are featuring to celebrate Library Month.

Similar to the idea of a Birthday Book Club, you could incorporate an “**Adopt a Book**” program. Through this, people could donate either money or books on behalf of themselves or someone they know, and

the book could include a sticker on the inside saying who this book was “adopted by.” If people donate money, they could request what type of book it goes towards, based on their favourite genre.

Social Media Highlights

A library branch could use Library Month as a way to promote the variety of services and programs they offer – library supporters could be encouraged to follow daily tweets and Facebook statuses and spread the word about the value of libraries. These daily posts could highlight everything from free wifi and digital magazines to conversation groups and meeting rooms.

One way that libraries could be highlighted on social media is by asking patrons to post about why they love their library, and how the library has touched their lives. This could be done either on Twitter and/or Facebook, using hashtags such as “LibrariesInspire”, “librarymonth2016” or “whylovelibraries”. One popular hashtag is “#RuralLibraryLove”. In addition, patrons could be asked to write on paper hearts why they love their libraries, and these hearts could be displayed throughout the library.

One hashtag that could be used is “#ShelfieSunday”, where patrons and librarians are encouraged to post photos of “what’s on their bookshelf.”

Another potential hashtag is “#Bookface”, where people take photos of themselves in which they have covered their own face with the cover of a book (the book cover features a photo of another person, so it looks like the book cover’s face is the person behind the book).

One good hashtag to use is “#tbt” or “#ThrowBackThursday”. If your library has yearbooks or historical materials, use “ThrowBackThursday” as a chance to display those resources online. The “tbt” hashtag is used to make references to historical or older times, and this is a great opportunity to showcase those resources and make the public aware that you have them in the library.

On October 24th, celebrate the “**Drop Everything and Read Challenge**” (DEAR), where students in schools all stop what they’re doing and read a book. This could be promoted on social media using the hashtag #canadadear2016.

If your library pursues **Canadian Library Support Staff Day**, showcase your amazing support staff on social media (with their permission), stating a bit about them and acknowledging the importance of what they do.

To highlight more about library employees, have them perhaps state what a library means to them, and why they work there. Librarians and library staff could use the hashtag “#WhyIWorkinLibraries” or something to this effect.

Feature a different e-resource on your Facebook or Twitter page once in a while, to try and communicate to the public some of the services you offer. The Northern Lights Library System Facebook page does this occasionally, so feel free to share their posts about these e-resources to your library’s page.

Don’t forget that libraries prove time and time again that they provide a welcoming refuge for people that have been hit by natural disasters, such as people affected by the Fort McMurray fires. Feel free to make social media updates that highlight this important role that we play!

Speaking of social media, please visit the Northern Lights Library System’s Pinterest page for more ideas!

Library Displays

There are several ways that libraries could promote Canadian Library Month within their own buildings. Of course, the first way could be to create posters showcasing this event. If you have created any special deals or events to celebrate library month, feel free to feature them on this poster. You can display this poster not only within the library but at popular community centres too.

The library could make a point of showcasing items that are often “not known about” to library users, such as old archives, atlases, or maps through displays within the library.

If you do showcase maps and globes, perhaps incorporate the theme of “The World at your Fingertips” and include information from around the world. You could display materials from both around the world and “around the corner,” and include popular travel destinations in your display.

There could also be a sign within the library that displays its importance – for example, the sign could showcase how long the library has played a role within its community. For example, it could say “proudly serving the community of _____ since 19XX” and include a list of services.

As mentioned earlier, a library could display pieces of paper on which people have written down what they love about their libraries – they could potentially be in specific shapes like hearts or stars.

Feel free to use this as an opportunity to showcase statistics, if available, regarding how many people your library has helped and in what ways.

As you ask people their views on libraries and why they like libraries, place their quotes anonymously around the library

For more display ideas, including seasonal displays, feel free to follow Northern Lights Library System on Pinterest, at [pinterest.com](https://www.pinterest.com)

Conclusion

Please feel free to use as few or as many of these ideas as you feel can be applied within your library. This document is meant to be used as a starting point, and you can use these ideas to help develop your own version of Canadian Library Month. Please don't forget about our Northern Lights Library System Pinterest page too! Feel free to contact us here at Northern Lights if you have any comments or concerns – if you have suggestions for how we approach Canadian Library Month next year, please let us know!