

we are
Fierce!



Impact Report to the Community 2019/2020





Create your own video game at CodeJams



More and more people are accessing information and reading material online through our ebook and streaming tools. Residents borrowed more than 38 000 ebook and eaudiobook titles last year! There's so much interest in these formats, that we moved to a new ebook service, CloudLibrary. Now, wait times are much shorter, even for the most popular titles. Those who speak other languages will also be excited by the variety of non-English titles available in CloudLibrary, including French, Russian, Mandarin and Spanish.

Digital Literacy TECH RULES

Times are changing - fast!

The Library is uniquely positioned to prepare our community for the non-stop stream of technological change. The ability to use technology to find and assess information, to use it for communication, social engagement, and collaboration is critical. Through our HackLAB



and MediaLAB programs we encourage and support digital literacy and life-long learning by helping our community develop the skills they need, not to just survive, but to thrive in our digital world. Tinkershops and OpenMake drop-in programs in 2019 were an engaging way for people to learn digital design skills, combining technology and creativity to make amazing

projects using our laser cutter, 3-D printers and vinyl cutters.

Kids who attended CodeJams learned how to code by creating their own video games, which anyone can play on our arcade machine at the Lakeshore Branch. Drop by the Cookstown Branch and see if you can beat the high score on Jonathan's game, "Get the Hamburger 2"!



OpenMake Drop-in programs for all ages!



WHAT IS DIGITAL LITERACY?

Digital literacy is the ability to use information and communication technologies to find, evaluate, create, and communicate information



Combine technology and creativity to create a beautiful vase!

Nature in your Neighbourhood

We're pollinating more than plants!
Bringing diverse ideas and people together...
to create new ways of thinking and doing!



Families visited the library daily to check on the progress of the chrysalises!

More Gardens!

Our team is constantly thinking of new ways we can create engaging and surprising spaces for our visitors. The issues that matter to our community, matter to us too! Volunteers came together at the Cookstown Branch to plant our second pollinator garden, another official Monarch Waystation, with the first one being planted at the Lakeshore Branch in 2018. The monarch butterflies showed their appreciation by laying eggs on the milkweed, and we soon launched Butterfly Nurseries at both the Cookstown and Lakeshore Branches.

Throughout the summer, we raised and released a total of 102 butterflies! Hundreds of visitors watched the remarkable life cycle



Pollinator gardens provide
**INSECTS AND
HUMMINGBIRDS**
with food sources when other
sources may be scarce.

unfold, and joined in the awe-inspiring first flight of these beautiful creatures.

Butterfly season ended in the fall with thousands of milkweed seeds being given away at all our Branches, and 2020 should see more habitat created throughout Innisfil.

Making an Impact

We were proud to do our part to support this species of Special Concern, and excited to hear that the eastern population rebounded, breaking the declining trend of previous years. There's still much work needed and we are already making plans for the 2020 nurseries.

The Innisfil Seed Library also supports the creation of local habitat for our much needed pollinators, and builds awareness around sustainability and agriculture. Bridget Indelicato, volunteer gardening guru, used her skills to not only care for the Seed Library, but to deliver outstanding programs about gardening and seed collection. We hope you're as excited as us to see what she has in store for 2020, starting with Seedy Saturday in March.

InnisfilSeedLibrary.ca

More and more people asked us for information on sustainability, climate change, and other environmental issues, which led to *Films for Our Planet*. Screenings of award winning environmental films on topics such as seed diversity, preserving watersheds, and leading sustainable efforts locally were paired with expert speakers. The series encouraged discussion around how we support and preserve our local environment, as well as develop more efficient resources.



Local History

History at your Fingertips

What do you know about Innisfil's storied past? 2020 is the year to find out more!

Local history is even more accessible to you now that the collection has moved to the Lakeshore Branch. It is now easier to get assistance with learning more and digging into the past.

Beyond the physical documents, we are always improving our digital collection through **OurStoriesInnisfil.ca**.

Here, you can explore Innisfil's past through stories and videos, and even contribute to our history yourself! This site is only possible through the long-standing partnership with the Innisfil Historical Society, and we continue to rely on their archive and expertise in connecting residents with the past.

Ice Harvested from Lake Simcoe - stored on Hasting Ave.



Bell Ewart School 1957



Allan Cowan
1988 Olympic Torch through Stroud



Building Community

Your Community Hub



Did you know?

We can't do it alone. Our community partners make us better. Last year we worked with many local organizations and businesses to bring services into our libraries, and to bring the Library out to the community. We even had mermaids come for a visit! The Innisfil Mermaids, an adventurous group of seniors exploring new experiences throughout Simcoe County, were among the many groups to visit our HackLAB to learn new skills and get creative.



- You can take advantage of Early ON Child and Family resources for free drop-in programs at the Lakeshore Branch
- VON offers free exercise programs for seniors aged 55+ at both Cookstown and Lakeshore Branches
- The Library supports Innisfil's growing entrepreneur community – offering business resources, and access to technology
- Innisfil's newcomers are able to build their English language skills thanks to a partnership with the Simcoe County District School Board
- You can use the Library space too – a group of happy knitters gather at the Lakeshore Branch weekly for informal crafting, and we are the ideal location for community meet ups!
- From Scouts to Girl Guides, Empower Simcoe to schools, we had visits from hundreds of community partners learning about our space, resources and technology!

Youth Engagement

Teen Art Wall at the ideaLAB, making music in the sound room, working with seniors at Lakeside Retirement, creating custom holiday cards



Our Teens - Future Leaders

The Library took a new approach to youth engagement this year – with less emphasis on formalized planning, we focused on spontaneous outreach, partnership development, and interest-based, teen-led programs.

We experimented with a host of new programs designed by teens from our Teen Advisory Group (T.A.G.). These include: the first

ever Mario Kart Tournament late last year, and Teen Movie Nights that feature films chosen from our ACF Films subscription. Input from T.A.G. helps us make sure we're offering programs teens want, in the way they want.

Youth mental health continues to be a priority in Innisfil, and the Library has a role to play here too.

Through a collaboration with Youth Haven and the Town's successful "Speak Your Mind" youth mental health series, the Library hosted a selection of workshops tackling important mental health topics for teens, that will continue throughout 2020.

BUILDING ON NEW-FOUND PARTNERSHIPS WITH STUDENTS AND THE LOCAL HIGH SCHOOLS WE LOOK FORWARD TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE TOWN-WIDE YOUTH ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY – THIS STRATEGY WILL HELP US LINK YOUTH TO VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES, SPECIAL EVENTS AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT.





Culture Master Plan

Where Inspiration is Planted, Creativity Thrives and Culture Abounds



Jeanette Luchese's work at Town Hall, for International Sculpture Day

In December 2019, the Town's Culture Master Plan (CMP) was adopted by Council. Spearheaded by Library Staff, the plan will support existing municipal policy goals and objectives, and helps us make decisions about programming at the Library.

Culture creates a vibrant sense of place and contributes to a community's unique identity. It enhances quality of life, contributes to economic development and celebrates a community's heritage and distinctive diversity.

Why does this matter? As we implement the recommendations outlined in the CMP we will pave the way to delivering on our commitments to create a unified Town identity, enhance community engagement and facilitate community experiences. Existing projects, such as the Town Square and bicentennial celebration, will allow us to bring the ideas of the CMP to life!

Abundant Experiences, Shared

Supporting Local Arts

Working with talented local artists, we created more opportunities for Innisfil to explore and discover art and music through exhibits, performances, and presentations. Drop by the Town Hall, Rizzardo Health & Wellness Centre and the Cookstown, Stroud, or Lakeshore Branches anytime, year-round, to enjoy the work of local artists through exhibits of paintings, photos, prints, mixed-media ... you name it!

Highlights Included:

- A celebration of International Sculpture Day – featuring displays of sculptural art at all of our branches and other locations around Town, in partnership with the Innisfil Sculpture Group.
- New in 2019 was a partnership with the prestigious Maclaren Art Centre that brought the work of world renowned Anishnaabe artist, Norval Morriseau to be displayed for the first time in Innisfil.
- Thanks to the Innisfil Arts, Culture & Heritage Council (IACHC), Innisfil was treated to four world-class musical performances. This Live at the Library series had everyone dancing, swaying and bopping to the beat of Juno Award winning musical act the Ennis Sisters, blues duo Suzie Vinnick & Rick Fines, maritime folk of John Prince & The End of the Road and folk/country sensations The Travelling Mabels.



Newfoundland's own - The Ennis Sisters - perform at the idealAB & Library - as part of the the IACHC Concert Series





Literacy -

At the core of what we do:

Book lovers and Early Readers

As we continue to grow and explore new ways to serve the community, one thing remains true: **we are dedicated to nurturing literacy.** We work hard to make sure our collections meet the needs of residents. A tool we use to help us make decisions about the types of materials we curate for the community is the Collection HQ software. It tracks trends and creates the “Top Reads” list to share with our customers. As a result, over the past five years we have seen a dramatic improvement in the representation of popular authors available in our collections.

Looking for something to read? Join a Book Club or try one of our Staff Picks. This program received amazing feedback from our customers. These recommendations are displayed prominently for four months. One customer remarked to Staff that the book *Alphabet House* by Jussi Adler-Olsen was “not something she would normally have chosen” but tried it because

it was a Staff Pick, and was very glad she did. Stop by your local branch to discover hidden gems of the Library’s collections.

Our storytimes, from birth to age 5, help children develop their early literacy skills, and help families create life-long habits that will help grow and maintain this critical skill. Storytimes are carefully planned to introduce and practice the skills that need to be in place before reading can start, such as phonetic awareness and sequencing.

2019 was a record-setting year, with more than 11 000 people participating in our preschool programs. While literacy is an important focus of these programs, they are also a time to build social skills by interacting with peers; increase attention capacity through sitting still and listening; and improve manual dexterity through crafting. One little girl loved storytime so much that each week she does a storytime at home, for her stuffed animals!



“I like that the program is teaching children how to apply different technologies, that it’s affordable, and creative.”

Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math (S.T.E.A.M)

form the foundation for our school-age programming, whether in after school sessions of TechTastic or Kid Creators, or during special events at March Break and throughout the summer. As a hub for discovery, these programs create opportunities to explore new technology and push the limits of creativity.

“My daughter LOVED this program! She had so much fun with hands on activities!”

“I love that it helped me learn about the computer and the machines [in the hackLAB.]”

The focus on S.T.E.A.M. elements will remain in place for 2020, as Programmers seek out new and engaging ways for children to use robotics and coding, making screen time more meaningful, as well as encouraging traditional crafting such as knitting and sewing. We will continue to invest in the tools, techniques and technologies that will captivate children and inspire innovation.

“Make the program longer! I would increase the time of the program to two hours!”

SMITH FAMILY STORY:

In September 2018, the Smith’s came to the Library and registered two children for programs: the younger child, Mary, would participate in Ready, Set, School, while the older child, Justin, registered for Techsplorers.

When they first came to Ready, Set, School, Mrs. Smith explained that Mary had some severe allergies and was very shy, and so they were keen to build her confidence but knew it would be a struggle. For the entire session, Mary refused to come into the room and join her peers. However, during playtime, Mary showed more interest in the other children, slowly starting to interact

more comfortably with them. As friendships developed, so did Mary’s confidence and by March, along with her two other friends, Mary was independently attending both Ready, Set, School and Kid Creators. With her daughter’s increased confidence, Mrs. Smith felt more at ease in the space and was so relieved to see her daughter thriving as it meant she could succeed in Kindergarten as well. In September 2019, Mary started Kindergarten but continued to attend Kid Creators.

Meanwhile Justin started Techsplorers with some reluctance but an interest in technology, robotics, and coding. Slightly older than

his peers, Justin was a little removed from the group at first, but as he became comfortable with the staff facilitating the program, he emerged from his shell. By his second session in the program, Justin was a leader in TechTastic and in the summertime, staff benefitted from his presence in other technology-based programs, as he would assist newer participants. His mother noticed positive changes in his personality and confidence at Library programs. After starting grade 8 and doing tours of the local high schools, Justin spoke with staff about his plan to start a coding club at his high school the following year, so he could share this passion with others.



A Place for Everyone!

"Thank you for all the wonderful things you had planned for our babies, we will miss our baby bookworms on Thursday for sure. [...] This group [was] so special."

"We love the Innisfil Library. It has changed our lives in a really positive way. Nikolai and I are also really appreciative of all the time and effort [the Programmers] devote to the programs."

"I love that my child has the opportunity to spend time in a classroom setting, learning and practicing many of the classroom skills he will need once he begins school."

"We love all the interactive games and songs. [Our daughter] has a lot of fun watching and playing with others, she also loves to read the different stories than the ones we have at home."

All Candidates debate at the ideaLAB & Library



Civic Engagement

As Innisfil's information hub, during the 2019 federal election campaign period, we made sure that there were many opportunities for residents to learn more about the election process, the issues being discussed, and the local candidates.

Our Democracy in Action series featured a session on Fighting Fake News to help residents be critical about the information and sources they come across in the media, so they can identify false or misleading information and be sure they're considering the facts.

We partnered with 100 Debates on the Environment, the Simcoe County Greenbelt Coalition, and Deborah McGrath to host an all candidates debate that was live streamed by Rogers TV. The candidates answered questions from the audience, and debated issues related to the environment, allowing the audience to get a better understanding of each can-

didate and their parties' position on the issues.

The final event in the series was a visit from Toronto-based author and political activist Dave Meslin. He talked about Canada's broken electoral system and what people can do as responsible citizens to advocate for electoral reform at all levels of government, empower others to participate in the democratic process, and advocate for reforming the education system.

The Library is a safe, non-partisan space where residents can learn how to become informed and engaged citizens of the world. In the future, we plan to continue our efforts to bring reliable information to our community so that they can be confident in their election decisions.



Author and political activist Dave Meslin

Coming to a
Neighbourhood Near You!

Innisfil is Celebrating 200 Years!

Are You Ready?

Celebrate Innisfil's Bicentennial 1820 - 2020

Innisfil is celebrating 200 years, and you're invited to join in and enjoy an amazing array of story-worthy events.

Explore the hidden gems of Innisfil, discovering little known stories replete with tall trees and ironside ships, mythical lake creatures and lakeside businesses. Explore Innisfil with our all-new calendar of unique experiences and events.

innisfil.ca/i200

We're ready. Are you?

