



# 2022 Year in Review



Sharing  
stories.

Inspiring  
dreams.

Connecting  
Wood Buffalo  
to limitless  
possibilities.





## A Letter From Our Director

2022 was a year of change for Wood Buffalo Regional Library. On behalf of staff and leadership, we were thrilled to welcome you back fully into our space to browse collections, study and access computers, and attend programs. We also returned to in-person services and programs in the rural communities and through our outreach collaborations. We are grateful for our patrons, partners, and community champions – those who supported us through more than two years of pandemic restrictions, who understood as we phased back into normalcy, who returned when they were ready, and who visited us for the very first time in 2022. We are so happy to see your smiling faces once again!

We know the pandemic was a time of extended isolation for many patrons. Now, more than ever before, WBRL is focused on our goal to create connections and contribute to an engaged and inclusive Wood Buffalo. As one patron put it, “We consider our library a primary hub for our community. There’s a sense of belonging when we come to visit.” Through the programs, spaces, services, and resources we offered in 2022 we hope you built friendships, sparked new ideas, and reconnected to your community.

We look forward to the opportunities 2023 brings!

**Melissa Flett**



## A Letter From Our Board Chair

I am proud of the accomplishments of the Wood Buffalo Regional Library over the past year. As our community weathers the lingering impact of the pandemic, as well as the ongoing effects of high inflation and other geopolitical events, the role public libraries play in communities have never been more important.

Libraries are a safe space for everyone. In 2022, the WBRL continued to promote inclusivity and diversity in both the materials made available to the public, and the programs it hosted or partnered with. We also eliminated extended use fees (aka late fines) which will eliminate barriers and make our collection more accessible to everyone. Over the past year, we added thousands of items to our physical collection, expanded access to online resources including learning platforms, and expanded our Tech to Go program ensuring that everyone, regardless of economic means, has access to information and technology that is essential in today’s world.

As you review the many accomplishments of the WBRL, I hope you are excited as I am about the future of our Library and community.

Thank you to our staff and volunteers, funders and sponsors, and all our community partners who make it possible to do what we do every day.

**Corinna Pirie**



# PROMOTE CREATIVE EXPRESSION AND FOSTER AN ENGAGED COMMUNITY

2022 saw many opportunities for community members to expand their creativity and build connections through WBRL programs and services!

As of April 2022, WBRL returned to a fully in-person program calendar for the first time since March 2020; we offered 155 in-house programs focused specifically on creating for 1,869 children, teen, and adult participants. Programs included our popular weekly STEM Lab programs for children ages 6-8 and Tween Create for children ages 9-12. In response to demand, we have doubled STEM Lab to twice a week in 2023!

## Words in Motion

Each year, in celebration of National Poetry Month, WBRL invites local wordsmiths to submit their original poems for the Words in Motion Poetry Contest. In 2022, 50 poems were selected for a regional poetry booklet and honored at our launch event in April.

## Arts & LitFest

WBRL held Arts & LitFest in September during Alberta Culture Days, including an all-day Kids' Event, a Writers' Panel, and Tween and Teen Art Workshops. Programs featured a variety of local talent sharing their culture and skills: three storytellers, three authors, and four artists.

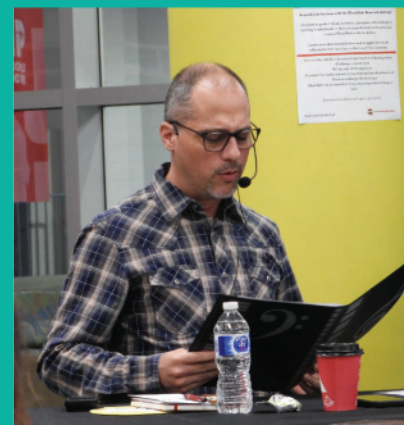
A main outcome objective of programming and events at WBRL is to develop community connection; through a fun activity or a shared passion, we build friendships and deepen engagement in the region. In a community survey, 93% of respondents indicated they feel more connected to people in their community as a result of participating in a WBRL program.

## **FOCUS ON:**

***Spaces for connection,  
reflection,  
and creation***

***Nurturing and sharing  
talents***

***Creating friendships  
and community ties***



# REDUCE BARRIERS FOR TEENS AND ADULTS TO ACCESS INFORMATION AND LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Through our extensive collections of materials and online resources, WBRL supports the region in accessing information freely and easily. In January 2022, the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo Library Board eliminated extended use fees, a significant barrier to access for many community members, especially those who are lower-income.

In 2022, we added 9,796 items to the physical collection, including books, DVDs, Blu-Rays, and more, to meet the informational needs of the region. Physical resources circulated over 240,000 times.

Online resources, including eBooks, eAudiobooks, digital newspapers and digital magazines, continued to be a popular option for many community members post-pandemic, with over 60,000 circulations. Online learning platforms such as Solaro, Consumer Reports, and Auto Repair Source also provided valuable information to the region.

Programs for teens and adults offered unique learning opportunities. WBRL continued our partnership with Keyano College to offer the Keyano Lecture Series and Junior Achievement developed entrepreneurial skills in teens over 16 sessions.

## Circulating Technology

WBRL expanded our circulating technology collection with Tech to Go (launched in June) and Internet to Go (launched in September). Through Tech to Go, cardholders can borrow mobile technologies including Chromebooks, Lenovo Laptops, MacBooks, and iPads. Internet to Go, allows patrons to borrow mobile WiFi hubs for at-home use. Electronic equipment circulated 249 times in 2022.

### **FOCUS ON:**

***High quality  
lifelong-learning  
resources***

***Accessible technology***

***Intuitive access***

**“The Tech to Go collection contributes to bridging the digital divide in our region and gives community members access to technology at their point of need.”**

**- Melissa Flett, Director**



## NURTURE AN INCLUSIVE AND INFORMED COMMUNITY

WBRL continues to champion inclusivity and intellectual freedom. 2022 saw increased challenges to 2SLGBTQIA+ programs and materials at public libraries across Canada; for our part, WBRL reaffirmed our commitment to safe, inclusive spaces and services for the region's LGBTQ+ community and our ongoing programming collaborations with Pride YMM. Our October Story Time at the End of the Rainbow featuring Simma Downe saw our highest numbers ever, with 90 children and parents in attendance.

Other programs also focused on meeting diverse needs and fostering inclusivity, including Afternoon Activities, our weekly program for teens and adults with disabilities, and the English Language Learners for Foreign Workers Conversation Group offered in partnership with the YMCA.

Our addition of Beanstack, an online reading challenge app, offered new opportunities to encourage reading diversely. #ReadWoke, a challenge for teens, aims to expand awareness of marginalized perspectives and experiences. To date, 52 teens have signed up.

### It's Time to Read

WBRL is pleased to partner with the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo Indigenous and Rural Relations Department on It's Time to Read, an Indigenous-focused book club. Over the course of 2022, we offered four virtual book discussions on titles written by Indigenous authors. This ongoing initiative seeks to expand awareness of Indigenous culture and history and the ongoing impacts of colonization on Indigenous Peoples. To date, over 100 people have joined the It's Time to Read Facebook group.

### **FOCUS ON:**

***Inclusive services to meet a wide variety of needs***

***Diverse perspectives***

***Welcoming environment***

***Truth & Reconciliation through consultation and collaboration***





# EXPAND BEYOND THE PHYSICAL SPACE TO CONNECT WITH THE ENTIRE WOOD BUFFALO REGION

WBRL aims to bring library services to the entire region through rural and outreach initiatives.

In 2022, WBRL staff visited rural communities (Anzac, Conklin, Fort Chipewyan, Fort McKay, Fort McMurray 468 First Nation, and Janvier) over 80 times for programs, material delivery, and take-and-make kit drop off. Over 9,000 participants took part in WBRL programming, either in person or through a take-and-make kit during ongoing COVID-19 restrictions.

WBRL continued to offer material delivery to rural communities via community lockers or mail. Holds for rural delivery can be placed on any of our collection items in our online catalogue facilitating access to information and resources throughout the region.

In 2022, we also piloted a rural computer service with laptops and printing services. This state-of-the-art computer kit can be booked by organizations or individuals in any rural community.

Within Fort McMurray, outreach programming delivers service to vulnerable populations who may not be able to visit the library facility. In collaboration with other agencies like the Northern Lights Regional Health Centre, Willow Square, Stepping Stones Youth Services, and Centre of Hope, WBRL meets community members where they are.

## FOCUS ON:

*Equitable rural services*

*Bringing the library to you!*

*Convenience and outreach*

*Thank you to our rural space partners:*

- **Regional Recreation Corporation** - Conklin Multiplex & Anzac Recreation Centre
- **Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo** - Janvier Municipal Office & Fort Chipewyan Municipal Office



**139,299**

in-person visits

**58,151**

website visits

**508**

in-house programming  
sessions

**12,020**

participants

**14,900**

information inquiries



**11,936**

computer sessions



**100**

outreach programming sessions

**13,336**

community members reached

**9,359**

take & make kits

**1,130**

items brought in from other libraries



**3,199**

items loaned to other libraries

**306,734**

total circulations

**241,485**

physical  
materials

**65,249**

digital  
materials



**5,732**

unique borrowers checked out items  
over the year

**3,391**

new library card holders



# Statement of Revenue and Expenditures

	2022	2021
<b>REVENUE</b>		
Municipal	4,232,480	3,687,480
Provincial	706,610	693,928
Library Generated	81,882	47,562
Donations and Fundraising	182,744	117,849
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5,203,716</b>	<b>4,546,819</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
Wages and benefits	3,471,497	3,062,425
Facilities and operations*	1,084,808	967,260
Amortization	358,349	366,888
Library services*	296,032	258,074
Special projects and other	143,208	136,993
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5,353,894</b>	<b>4,791,640</b>
Annual deficit	-150,178	-244,821
Library materials**	182,820	193,707

\*Includes expenses funded by internally restricted reserves.

\*\*Funded as a capital asset.







**We thank our funders, the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo and the Government of Alberta, for their support.**

**We are also grateful to our 2022 sponsors, donors, and grantors.**

#### SPACE MAKING AT WBRL:

**Bouchier** (Indigenous Cultural Corner)

**Canadian Natural**  
(Teen Area)

**Syncrude Canada Ltd.**  
(Syncrude Corner & Program Room)

#### 2022 PROGRAMS & SERVICES:

**Enbridge Pipelines (Athabasca) Inc.**  
(Community Outreach)

**Pembina Pipeline** (Afternoon Activities)

**Suncor Energy Inc.** (Indigenous & Rural)

**Syncrude Canada Ltd.** (Children's)

**Telus** (Internet to Go Circulating Smart Hubs)

#### 2022 EVENTS:

**Banff Centre Mountain Film Festival  
World Tour**

Northland Forest Products Ltd.  
(Presenting Sponsor)

Country 93.3 & 97.9 Rock  
(Supporting Sponsor)

#### **Team Trivia**

Syncrude Canada Ltd.  
(Presenting Sponsor)

Country 93.3 & 97.9 Rock  
(Supporting Sponsor)

#### **WBRL Arts & LitFest**

Government of Alberta: Alberta Culture Days  
Grant

#### SPECIAL PROJECTS:

**Government of Canada's Canada Healthy  
Communities Initiative**  
(Circulating Technology Collection)