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Shelburne library reflects on 2025 changes and 2026 plans

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The Shelburne Public Library saw big changes last year and adopted a renewed focus on the library's role as a cornerstone of community life.

The biggest of the changes was Shannon McGrady was appointed CEO. She succeeded Rose Dotten in the role. McGrady said the year was defined by its changes.

?2025 was the year of change for SPL,? McGrady said. ?Staff, patrons, and the board navigated a time of unprecedented (and fast) change with the grace and community spirit we've become known for.?

Despite the changes, the library continued its commitment to deliver a high level of programming to draw residents through its doors.

One of the year's biggest highlights was national recognition for the TD Summer Reading Program. The library placed third among libraries across Canada and McGrady said it was an achievement especially meaningful given its size.

Participation in the Adult Summer Reading Challenge also increased, signaling a growing engagement beyond children's programming.

Another milestone in 2025 was the first anniversary of the Shelburne Public Library Kiosk at Foodland. The offsite location has expanded access to library materials while partnering with local businesses, offering residents a convenient way to browse and borrow books as part of regular routines.

McGrady said the way patrons use the library also continued to evolve. Increasingly, the library has become a place for technology assistance.

?Increasingly, patrons are turning to us for their tech needs,? she said. ?Whether that is help with printing forms or downloading ebooks from the library, we've become known as the go-to place for tech help.?

McGrady assumed the helm partway through the year and said getting to know both staff and patrons quickly became a top priority.

Looking ahead, she has identified youth engagement, community connection, and inclusive programming as key areas of focus, with new initiatives such as a Teen Advisory Board and wellness-focused programming planned for 2026.

?A strong public library is the cornerstone of a healthy community,? McGrady said. ?My goal in 2026 is to connect with our residents as we continue to work together to shape Shelburne Public Library into a dynamic hub that embodies our community's values and aspirations.?