

# More than just books at the public libraries in Clarington

By Frances Mallon

The Clarington Public Library, Museum and Archives (CPLMA) has an exciting line-up of programs underway for people of all ages. Just getting going is the Teen Advisory Group, (TAG) geared toward youth in grades 7 through 12. Here is a chance for teens to become involved in developing and delivering programs for the library.

Program Coordinator, Emily Smith, states, "it's a way for teens who may be looking for volunteer hours to earn them. It's also a way for us to connect with teens to get their ideas for programming and services and seeing how they use the library."

The TAG group meets at the Newcastle branch on the first Thursdays of the month, from

3-4 p.m. so it's a seamless move from school to the library for the meeting. "There is no registration, teens can just come out to the meeting and see if it's something that they want to be involved in. There's a small group that has expressed interest, and we're hoping to see it grow," adds Smith. March 2 is the next scheduled meeting in Newcastle.

The first opportunity for TAG to put their leadership skills and ideas to work is in the Explore Games component of the March Break Programs for young people in grades 4-6.

The theme for the school break programs is 'Explore'. There is no registration for these free programs, just check the schedule and drop

in based on the activity of interest. There are investigations into sea habitats, games Lego and more. There is a Teen Café on March 13 from 3-4 p.m. which requires a sign up.

Residents of Clarington are encouraged to access the 'In the Know' Program Guide, which details the vast number of ongoing activities offered by CPLMA. Storytime, creative activities, scavenger hunts, and in Newcastle, seniors' health and fitness programs such as Zumba Gold, Chair Yoga and Falls prevention. Classes are offered on a drop-in basis. A tax clinic is also available on March 5, just in time to help answer any questions when filling out the government paperwork.

Smith wanted to high-

light a new program that will draw the creative individual. The Clarington Crafters will meet on the third Thursday of the month, February 16 being the next meetup. "We've just launched the Clarington Crafters. It's a drop in once a month. People are invited to bring their own handheld craft. It's really just a social time where people can connect with other crafters. Staff will steer them toward library resources that relate to their craft or will connect them to something new they might like to try."

The library has so much to offer, books, special collections, including new GoPro cameras available for loan. They see the need in the community, and they respond by providing what programs are

relevant for all patrons as much as possible.

## New Foodbank Initiative at CPLMA

Something that is new to most branches, is an outreach foodbank supplement program. In Courtice and Bowmanville, Feed the Need in Oshawa supports the initiative. In Newcastle, The Clarington East Foodbank stocks the mobile unit located at the branch. Smith states, "we're glad we have something we can offer that meets that need."

Susan Pascoe, Coordinator of CEFB points out that "they reached out to us. You see this in other areas, both the library and the foodbank see what is needed in the community, and we can combine

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resources." Resources combined to the extent that the library has contributed books to the foodbank for neighbours to take home and use in their households.

For the items on the cart at the library, people can avail themselves of what is on hand, no need for anyone to interact with any staff. Pascoe says, "we're looking at things for a single day, emergencies, for the times we're not open and those who need it can still get food." There are no questions asked, it's in a discreet location, people can get what they need to tide them over. From library staff reports, it has been used several times, and it's in the second week of operation.

CEFB continues to serve their neighbours in any way that is needed, in partnership with many businesses and organizations in the area. The library and the foodbank are a good fit. On a final note, for community members wishing to buy in, Pascoe says that Wal-Mart has a funds matching program in place from

February 16 to March 16. It's called, 'Fight Hunger, Spark Change'. Everything donated at the store will be matched by Wal-Mart and transferred to

the CEFB to purchase much needed supplies.

So, the library is indeed more than just books, and the foodbank is more than just

food. They are both essential community resources.

Two websites to visit for all the latest information:

[clarington-library.on.ca](http://clarington-library.on.ca), and [claringtoneastfoodbank.ca](http://claringtoneastfoodbank.ca).



The Clarington East Foodbank has a pantry cart set up at the Newcastle branch of the library. For those who require this service outside of CEFB regular hours, are welcome to choose from the foodstuffs available.



Clarington Library, Museum and Archives programming staff have prepared some exciting activities for area residents to enjoy over the next few months, including a host of March Break activities. All branches have scheduled and self guided programs available for patrons of all ages. Program Coordinator Emily Smith is flanked by Member Service Associates Carrie Subrizi (L) and Hailey Van Londen. The team are excited to work with members of the community as they explore all the library has to offer.