

Caledon Public Library shortlisted for provincial innovation award]

By Zachary Roman

Our local library has been recognized among the most innovative libraries in Ontario.

The Caledon Public Library was recently shortlisted for the Minister's Award for Innovation, which is given out by Ontario's Ministry of Tourism, Culture, and Sport. The award is given out at the annual Ontario Public Library Service Awards to recognize successful new ideas that demonstrate a positive impact on a community while contributing value to public libraries.

The Caledon Public Library (CPL) was recognized for its Community Connections Project.

According to Colleen Lipp, CEO of the CPL, the CPL's Community Connections Project is about supporting the community by helping them ?connect with loved ones, attend virtual events, gather information, (and) alleviate isolation? while also providing residents with access to important services and resources during challenging times.

The library has partnered with organizations such as Caledon Community Services and Bethell Hospice for the initiative. At Bethell Hospice, the CPL preloaded digital content onto tablets that were provided in each of the Hospice's 10 private resident rooms. For Caledon Community Services, the CPL created ?Community Connection Kits? consisting of a Chromebook (laptop computer) and internet hotspot. Then, Caledon Community Services ensured the kits made it to people in need.

Also, as part of the Community Connections Project, the CPL created a community corner where local organizations could reach out to share their information and resources at the library.

While the CPL did not win the Minister's Award, Lipp said in a media release that she's pleased the CPL's growing connections with Bethell Hospice and Caledon Community Services have been recognized.

?This is all part of how Caledon Public Library empowers community connections? we will have more exciting news to share once our Margaret Dunn Valleywood Branch renovation has been completed. The community will be invited to use our new recording studio, maker tools, collaboration spaces and more,? said Lipp.

The Ontario Public Library Service Awards were handed out this year at the 2023 Ontario Library Association (OLA) Superconference, held at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre from February 1 to 4.

According to the OLA, it's ?thrilled to recognize individuals, organizations, and initiatives that have greatly contributed to Ontario's libraries.? The association noted that 2023 award recipients ?supported school, academic and public libraries with outstanding service to their institutions and communities.?