

Colleen Lipp is now in charge at Caledon Public Library

By Bill Rea

There's a new person at the helm of the Caledon Public Library system.

Colleen Lipp assumed her new responsibilities last month as CEO and Chief Librarian of the local library.

Prior to that, she was CEO and Chief Librarian in Grimsby for two-and-a-half years and was a branch manager in the Brampton system for 10 months. That came after more than 25 years working for the library in Guelph.

"I was very happy in Grimsby," Lipp said, "but it's not growing the way Caledon is."

She observed that the population is growing, while the demographics are becoming more diverse. "It's evolving in a lot of different ways, and I think that's exciting," she remarked.

Lipp said there are no immediate changes to the local library system planned, although she did say she wants to listen to what the community wants, as well as examine what's been happening and needs to continue.

"'Community-led libraries' is a big buzzword right now," she commented.

She also observed the need to make sure the library system has a good foundation on which to grow, adding that's her main mandate at this point.

Lipp has worked in libraries since 1986, starting in her teens, and she remarked on the many changes that have taken place since then. She pointed out libraries in those days didn't have computers, recalling automation came to Guelph in 1992.

"There's so much technology that we can exploit," she commented, adding the system's website virtually makes it another branch.

"They can use the library 24/7 in their pyjamas and bunny slippers if they really want to."

Lipp has lived in Rockwood for 12 years, and she's looking forward to a much nicer commute to Caledon than the trip to Grimsby, which involved using the Skyway every day. "I'm not going to miss that," she said.

She also said she never really planned to become a librarian.

"Quite frankly, it was better than McDonald's," she remarked, explaining how she got started in the field. She doesn't think many people aspire to be librarians, adding she eventually found she enjoyed it, was pretty good at it and received encouragement from others and advance herself. She said she received her masters degree in library and information services while in her 30s.

"I just sort of fell into it, and I really enjoy working with people."



Colleen Lipp is the new CEO and Chief Librarian of Caledon Public Library.