

DVDs and video games are still available at the library

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In spite of this electronic age, libraries and their traditional services continue full steam ahead, as set out in a series that looks at the contemporary library in Cobourg and Port Hope. Today's story shows how the Cobourg Public Library has filled the gap left by the closing of Blockbuster.

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COBOURG — The October closure of Cobourg's Blockbuster store resulted in a double-digit increase in game and DVD check-outs at the Cobourg Public Library, chief executive officer Charmaine Lindsay said.

"Over Christmas, both DVDs and video games had a huge explosion," Lindsay reported.

"We are kind of the only game in town now. By Christmas, people knew and they were at the library."

Figures provided by manager of access services Heather Viscount bear this out.

The borrowing for October to December 2011, over the same three months in 2010, increased by over 25% for DVDs, Viscount said, and the circulation of adult-fiction DVDs increased by 37%.

The games were borrowed almost 10% more over 2010.

The great classic movies the Friday Mysteries & More and their Monday Movie Musicals programs screen in the library's Rotary Room come from the library's own collection. But Viscount does her best to purchase all the latest films for both adults and children.

"There are over 350 DVDs in our collection that were released in the last year," she said.

"We have a wonderful collection of non-fiction DVD titles, from *Ed Hardy* to *Meatloaf* to the *Royal Wedding*. Our children's DVDs are popular, too. You can find *Dora*, *Diego*, *Scooby*, *Thomas*, *Angelina* and *Veggie Tales* along with the Disney, and full-length features."

With the purchase price for TV series so high, she focuses on selecting the ones that she believes the most people will enjoy. Her own favourite is *Dexter*, followed closely by *Fringe* and *Nurse Jackie*.

The most popular one at the library right now is *Little House On The Prairie*.

"It never goes out of style," she said.

While the library has offered movies and documentaries for years (in VHS format, prior to the shift to DVD), the decision to get into games was made in 2009.

A major challenge was the multiplic-



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than one hold, the loan period is a non-renewable seven days.

A maximum of five DVDs can be checked out at one time per membership.

ity of gaming systems that are in use.

"We decided to focus on the big three, PS3, Wii and X-Box 360. We also have a collection of PS2 games, which are very popular," Viscount said.

"We have had requests for Nintendo DS games, and we are looking into the possibility of starting a collection of these too.

"If anyone has gently used games that they would like to donate to us, we would be happy to have them."

"As with their in-demand books, they sometimes have waiting lists for their more popular DVDs. It could get lengthy, she said, but they instituted a reduced loan period for DVDs with more than one hold last year.

"It cut the waiting time in half" she reported.

"I run a report weekly that shows the titles of all materials that have more than three holds. Just last week, I noticed that the DVDs of *The Help*, *The Iles of March* and *Water for Elephants* had over 10 holds each, so I have ordered another copy."

On the other hand, Viscount seldom sees long waiting list for games. The largest one right now is three holds, for a *Lego Wii* game.

DVDs are typically loaned for 14 days, and are not renewable. If there is more

Games are loaned for 14 days, non-renewable, and there is a maximum of two titles per membership.

"We will never have as many copies of movies as Blockbuster, so you may have to wait a little for the newest release. But place your hold, and you will have it before you know it.

"We offer many classic films that you couldn't find at Blockbuster (like *Breakfast at Tiffany's*, *Howard's End* or *Mutiny on the Bounty*) for you to enjoy while you are waiting for the newest release."

NEXT IN THE SERIES: E-books expand library membership.

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