

The Milford Fair Celebrates Magic Carpets

By Charlie Vincent

Every year, the Milford Fair Board chooses a theme for the Fair: sometimes it's a celebration of a piece of history; sometimes it's about who we are; and sometimes it's about where we live. This year our theme is a little different: it's about a magic carpet.

With imagination, magic carpets can take us anywhere to help us see and learn about anything we want. And we've got six of them, one right here in Milford, at 3053 County Road 10. It's called the *Ann Farwell Public Library* and it's part of the six-location single-library concept we have in the County. The library's a place where words and numbers are threads that weave a carpet that can transport us to old familiar places, and take us anywhere in the world of ideas and learning we might want to go – and even get us to places we didn't know existed!

Usually I write a brief first note on the theme for our up-coming Fair, knowing that more can be said in next month's *Mirror*. However, motivated by a love of books and reading that so many of us share, and learning early in life that a library *is* a magical warehouse full of information and a million things to be learned, I wanted to write a few more words than usual.

To get started, I spoke with Barbara Sweet, Library Chief Executive Officer, and Christine Renaud, Picton Branch Manager Outreach and Programming. And as one might expect when working with someone at the library, my knowledge, learning and imagination got a real boost.

If one does the word-association game and says "library", probably most of us would respond

with "books". Which is right . . . and yet so wrong. The County library system does have some 80,000 items in its six locations, but that is just the start. The magic here is that no matter how small each of the buildings is, in many ways our libraries "play above their weight". They may not have the staggering 838 miles of shelves that the biggest general library in the world does (the Library of Congress in the U.S.), but they have the same power as it does to help any user reach out to the limitless world of knowledge and information and make sense of some of it.



The "logo" of the County of Prince Edward Public Library bears the slogan "It's more than you think". And ain't it the truth. So let's explore some of the ways that the library may be "more than you think". Before doing that, though, here are some statistics about our Library system to get us started. In 2011, over 2,700 people visited a branch every week. In the same average week, almost 500 used a computer workstation, over 1,500 visited the library's website, and some 1,800 used the open-access internet wireless connection to link their laptops into the Internet.

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