



Vancouver Island Regional Library

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News Release

NANAIMO May 2, 2013 – During the provincial election campaign, let's not forget the importance of public libraries

Public libraries play a vital role in the social and economic fabric of our province. They offer free services for all people from all walks of life. Public libraries offer safe welcoming environments, friendly knowledgeable staff, and free computer and wireless access.

Libraries across British Columbia rely on provincial funding to assist with equitable service delivery in communities large and small, urban and rural. Vancouver Island Regional Library is calling on all candidates running in the provincial election to remember the importance of public libraries as they campaign for office.

"Citizen engagement in lifelong learning contributes to the future of healthy and strong communities," says Bruce Jolliffe, Chair of the Vancouver Island Regional Library Board of Trustees. "A great deal of life's learning happens outside formal educational systems, and libraries are one of the key supports for citizen engagement in non-formal and informal learning."

Libraries support parents as they help their children learn to read; provide free access to the Internet to help people search for employment, apply for jobs or government services, and a host of other tasks to better their lives. Libraries provide resources, guidance, and support.

In BC between 2007 and 2011, in person visits to public libraries increased by 48% to 31M and materials borrowed increased by 17%. Libraries offered 36% more programs, and electronic materials usage increased by over 500%. (Ministry of Education BC Public Library Statistics: <http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/pls/reports.htm>). It is obvious that public libraries are an important part of the social and economic fabric of our province. Let's ensure those who are elected to run our province realize the importance of public libraries and fund them appropriately.

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