



Press Release

Let's Forget the Late Fees...Welcome Back to Your Library!

NANAIMO, September 30, 2016 – "We miss you. Let's forget the late fees," says Vancouver Island Regional Library (VIRL), as it announces **Welcome Back Week** happening this October.

For one week, the community is being invited to bring back their overdue materials to have all associated fines and costs removed! The library is welcoming everyone, especially those with late fees, to visit their branch **October 23-29th** and get back into borrowing again!

"Vancouver Island Regional Library serves a wide variety of customers, including children, youth, seniors and vulnerable populations in our community," says Jamie Anderson, Director of Library Services & Planning. "While overdue fines are a necessary way to ensure materials are available for everybody to use, overdue fines and fees can also have an adverse effect on economically sensitive members in our community."

Customers who can't find their overdue materials or have long outstanding fines are also welcome back during Welcome Back Week. VIRL will waive up to \$20 owing from their account and, for those with fees in excess of \$20, can provide a payment plan to help make paying back fines more manageable.

"For those who can't afford it, having an overdue fine can make the difference between choosing to come back to their library or not, and therefore accessing the wealth of resources and opportunities their library provides. VIRL is a vital resource for the community as an access point to public computers, job seeking help, printing, tech support, the internet, and of course, access to a huge collection of materials which promote literacy, learning and enrichment."

Initiatives like Welcome Back Week are tried and tested programs that bring people back to their local libraries and materials back into circulation; they have been shown to work effectively when employed.

With October being Canadian Library Month (I <3 Library Month), the opportunity was perfect to host and promote a Welcome Back Week across Vancouver Island Regional Library, encouraging library use, increasing access to literacy in our communities and enriching lives through universal access to knowledge and lifelong learning.

To learn more about Welcome Back Week, visit virl.bc.ca or ask a friendly staff at any of VIRL's library branches. Welcome Back Week runs October 23-29th (until the branch closes).

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Vancouver Island Regional Library (VIRL) is the fifth-largest library system in British Columbia. We serve over 430,000 people on Vancouver Island, Haida Gwaii, and Bella Coola on the Central Coast

For more information contact:

Natasha Bartlett
Marketing and Communications Officer
250-327-3114
nbartlett@virl.bc.ca



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through 39 branch libraries, a virtual branch, and a books-by-mail service. VIRL's holdings number one million and include books, magazines, CDs and DVDs. Administrative offices are located in Nanaimo.

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