

## **One Book Nova Scotia Final Report for 2013**

From September 10 – November 2, 2013, Nova Scotians were invited to take part in the second annual One Book Nova Scotia (1BNS) community reading event. Organized under the umbrella of Libraries Nova Scotia, public, university and community college libraries came together to work with the Nova Scotia Provincial Library, the Department of Communities, Culture and Heritage, as well as local bookstores to encourage Nova Scotians to get excited about one book.

The book selected for 2013 was Alissa York's novel *Fauna* which explores human's complicated relationships with animals.

Print copies of *Fauna* were borrowed 1,009 times between September – November 2013 from libraries across the province. In addition, the ebook was downloaded 86 times from public libraries for a grand total of 1,095 checkouts. The novel was also available through the CNIB as an audiobook to ensure accessibility to as many Nova Scotians as possible. Booksellers reported sales of 554 copies of *Fauna* from September-November.

Thanks to funding from the Canada Council for the Arts, a series of twelve author readings were held throughout the Province with 212 people attending these readings. In addition, there were book club meetings and programs related to the "fauna" theme across the province including a session on Bear and Coyote Awareness, Nature Walk, workshop on Forestry Issues, and a presentation from Hope for Wildlife. In total, 38 programs were held in relation to One Book Nova Scotia with 638 people attending.

Social media also played an important role in the campaign with 365 "likes" on the 1BNS Facebook page which was a 30% increase from 2012. There are now 347 people following 1BNS on Twitter which is a 59% increase from the previous year.

Media coverage included spots on CBC Radio's Information Morning and Global Television's Morning News Show, an article in the Valley section of the Chronicle Herald and coverage in local newspapers and on radio stations throughout the province. A great deal of publicity was generated through the booth at Word on the Street which also featured therapy dogs and APLA's 'Grow a Library' project. An advertisement was placed in the fall edition of Atlantic Books Today.

The One Book Nova Scotia 2013 project operated with a cost of just over \$13,000 which is excellent considering it is a province-wide initiative. Of the \$13,000 needed to run the program, 40% was spent on print and electronic copies of the book, 22% for publicity, and 37% for author

readings. Most of the funds needed for the author readings were secured through a literary readings grant from the Canada Council for the Arts.

Funding was also received from partners such as Novanet, Nova Scotia Community College, Nova Scotia Library Association, Nova Scotia Association of Library Technicians, and the Nova Scotia Provincial Library and Acadian Affairs. Businesses showed in-kind and financial support by donating services such as logo and website design, discounts for copies of the book, and free hotel rooms for author readings. This support combined with the in-kind support of all libraries across the province helped make One Book Nova Scotia possible.

A small group of nine people from public, university, and community college libraries as well as representatives from the Department of Communities, Culture and Heritage, and Nova Scotia Provincial Library comprised the Steering Committee for the project. Library staff from around the province volunteered on sub-committees including marketing, book selection, programming, and social media.

The 2013 Steering Committee was as follows:

Frances Newman (Chair) Annapolis Valley Regional Library  
David Hansen, Halifax Public Libraries  
Lynn Somers, Nova Scotia Provincial Library  
Ian Colford, Dalhousie University Libraries  
Leigh Gagnier/Bruce Ross, Nova Scotia Community College Libraries  
Angela Johnson, Department of Communities, Culture & Heritage  
Erin McDonah, Nova Scotia Community College  
Marlo McKay, Halifax Public Libraries  
Tasya Tymczyszyn, University of Kings College

To sum up, One Book Nova Scotia is a worthwhile project that encourages reading, social engagement among readers, and promotes Canadian literature and libraries. Libraries Nova Scotia partnerships have enabled staff from public, university and community college libraries to work together on a mutual project and minimized the silos that exist between different types of libraries. It provides a positive contribution to literacy and culture in Nova Scotia for very little cost with a good return on investment.

As we move forward, recommendations for next year include:

- Ensure there is a Nova Scotia link, either by author or by subject. Current selection criteria require the book to be by a Canadian author but feedback from participants indicated they expected and/or preferred a Nova Scotia link. Public participation in the

program, although good, was not as active as the previous year due partly because of the lack of a Nova Scotia link. Circulation was down 6% compared to the first year.

- Secure stable funding sources. Current process of applying each year for grants, sponsors and donations does not allow for long range planning and requires a large time commitment.
- If Novanet continues as the entity grants are applied under and serves as banker for the project, Novanet will need to set up new accounts with vendors such as Whitehots, hotels, car rental agencies, etc. Novanet was excellent to work with this year but it was difficult to keep track of funds. For example, some funds were sent to Annapolis Valley Regional Library, who served as banker in the first year. This necessitated cheques being returned and/or cashed and another cheque being issued. The result this year is an amazingly complicated paper trail which will make auditors shudder!

Submitted by  
Frances Newman  
Chair, One Book Nova Scotia