

Name: Rose Jurkic  
Local: 1123  
Employer: Okanagan Regional Library

How long have you worked at the library? I started at the Library in 1992 as a Circulation Assistant at our main branch in Kelowna. Currently I am an Assistant Community Librarian at the Rutland branch.

Tell us about the work you do or an innovative service or program you support:

Our system has changed over the years, books, reference services, children's programs continue to be a focus, but we have expanded our role as a place for learning, exploring, dreaming to becoming community hubs. Our interaction with the people in our community is still our most precious and important role. Libraries are places where, social or economic status has no importance, our programs and services are free and available for all.

I have many stories I could share but I would like to tell you about a 9 year-old boy that participated in our summer reading club this summer. I will call him Matthew!

Matthew is young boy with learning disabilities, reading is particularly difficult for him and the school year did not go well for him. By the end of the school year his self-esteem was pretty low, but he got very excited after listening to my presentation about the Summer Reading Club. He convinced his grandma to sign him up and started reading right away. He worked so hard all summer, coming in every week, recording the titles of books that he read, desperately hoping to finish his reading log and earn enough book bucks to buy an activity book he had his eye on. It took all summer but he did it, unfortunately the book he wanted was gone, but he said it was okay he would find another item. I felt his effort needed to be acknowledged, so I asked grandma if it was okay to give him a special prize – a free McDonald's Happy Meal per month for a year. She was so pleased, told me very quietly that she was on a small disability pension and could not afford such treats. Matthew was overjoyed, he was so excited that he could not stop smiling. I told him we were all so proud of his accomplishment, he had worked so hard, and that he deserved a special treat. His grandma phoned me later to tell me that he had gone around to all the neighbours to tell them how the nice library lady had said she was proud of his reading.

I know this is a long story but for Matthew it provided a much needed boost, he was so much more confident and I truly believe that it made it easier for him to face going back to school.

What does being a CUPE member mean to you?

"Matthew's" story also ties into what being a CUPE member means to me. I am proud to be a member of a union that continues to fight for the rights of working people not only in our work environment, but in our communities, our province, our nation and globally. The fight for fairness, equality, and human rights is made easier knowing that together we are making a difference by standing up for what is right and by speaking up on behalf of those that are not yet ready or able to do so. CUPE cares, that is what I always tell my members.



Name: Karri Whitehead

Local: CUPE 411

Employer: SD33 (Chilliwack School District)

How long have you worked at the library? 4 years

Job Title: Secondary School Library Assistant

Tell us about the work you do or an innovative service or program you support:

It's all about community! We serve our students and staff but are also part of the larger education community. Being part of a community school, we partner with community services, distance education and our public libraries to help with common goals.

What does being a CUPE member mean to you?

Being a member of CUPE gives opportunities to collaborate and grow with like-minded individuals who are on your team.



Name: Linda Sjuberg

Local: 401

Employer: Vancouver Island Regional Library

How long have you worked at the library: 22 years

Job Title: Library Assistant

Tell us about the work you do or an innovative service or program you support:

We are a busy, lively part of the community and people always say to us, "I don't know what I would do without this library".

What does being a CUPE member mean to you?

As a library worker and union member I am part of two of the most vital environments in the world.