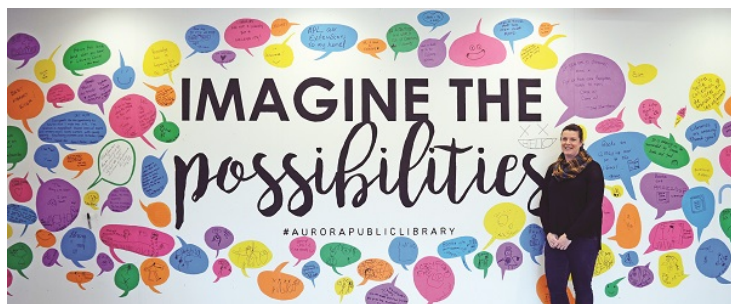


Imagine the Possibilities ? pen in hand ? at the Library



By Brock Weir

Why do you go to the library?

Is it to pick up the latest work by your favourite author and explore the new adventure on every page between its covers? Do you pull up to grab an audio book for the commute? Maybe you come in to use the computers to stay in touch with family and friends around the world, or to bring your ideas to life through burgeoning maker-spaces.

Now, as the Aurora Public Library continues its renovations into the first quarter of 2019, they are inviting you to Imagine the Possibilities of things to come by leaving your mark on a temporary wall at their main entrance.

If you have been into the Aurora Public Library (APL) since the early days of December, you've noticed the stark white wall jazzed up with colourful dialogue and thought bubbles just waiting to be filled in. If you're a frequent flyer at APL, you've seen these spots get filled in pretty quickly with quotes, doodles and inspiring messages.

But there's still room to fill in, and more possibilities to be imagined, says Jodi Marr, Manager, Customer Opportunity, at APL.

‘We wanted to give people a spot to express themselves in a more controlled way, hopefully!’ says Ms. Marr with a laugh. ‘Any big white wall is going to attract some friendly fire.’

The title of this community effort, ‘Imagine the Possibilities’ came from a suggestion made by fellow APL staffer Michelle, selected as it tied in nicely with their renovation mantra that ‘great change is coming.’

‘The response has been really great so far,’ says Ms. Marr. ‘The bottom has been totally taken over by small children during story time. There have also been a lot of parents engaged as well. There were a few who even wrote on it before it was ready to go who said they loved the idea and couldn't wait for us to finish painting. We had to paint around those comments! We love that there are six or seven different languages on our wall, some Arabic, some Chinese, Malaysian and French.’

Particular inscriptions Ms. Marr says she finds especially interesting are those giving a shout-out to Library staff – often noting story times performed by Polly and Jackie – and those that really heed the idea of limitless possibilities, including ‘Wherever knowledge is, that's the place to be.’

‘There is room for this wall to grow,’ she says. ‘The whole point of the wall is for people to continue to add to it. While the bubbles are already filled, there is lots of white space in between and people can continue to just go and go. It might get a little messy looking, but we're okay with that! Anyone can just grab the marker and write little messages as they go by. So far, everyone has been very rule-following and no one has really taken it upon themselves to draw anything inappropriate.’

‘We love to hear more about where our customers and our community feel like the Library could take them, or where we have taken them and help them out. If anyone wants to come in and share or express where they have been or how the Library has really impacted them, that would be fantastic. The wall is going to be up until the end of February, which is what our timeline is looking like for the renovations. Because of all the great feedback, I can totally see us doing something similar in the future. We will have to see where and how that will play out. Having this community-led feedback is what is a huge part of our strategic plan and it is exactly what we want to start to gather more of.’