

RISE to meet the challenge of external communications

Dr. Kevin Floate, Insect Bio-control Research Scientist speaks about his RISE Network experience — “As a scientist at the Lethbridge Research Centre, I’m always trying to communicate the results of my research more effectively to farmers and ranchers in western Canada. In past years, this was done via radio interviews, news releases, and articles in popular magazines. The opportunity for such events has declined in recent years, thus generating a need to find other options. The RISE Network recently came to my attention as one such option.

Curious about the new technology, and recognizing its potential, I volunteered to give three RISE sessions in February and early March 2010. As a ‘newbie’ to video conferencing, I was nervous as to how well the system would work, but now, I consider my first sojourn into the world of VC a success. Connecting the Lethbridge Research Centre to the RISE Network went without a hitch. While participation at each site was low, with no more than 5 attendees at any one library, the low numbers were offset by enthusiasm and excellent questions. As southern Albertans become more aware of RISE and what it has to offer, I’m confident that use of the system will increase.

Encouraged by my experience, my Lethbridge colleague Hector Carcamo also recently gave a RISE session on the Pea Leaf Weevil. He too was impressed by the technology, as were the participants, who were eager to know what other agricultural presentations were scheduled.

In an environment of budgetary restraints and limited time, video conferencing allows researchers to communicate directly, effectively and simultaneously with rural clients at multiple sites.”



Recording is once again possible! When booking a session, ask about recording.

If at first you don’t succeed...

When we first received HAL (my name for our equipment—based on the supercomputer from 2001: A Space Odyssey), I admit to feeling a little overwhelmed by the magnitude of the power that HAL possesses. Like many other libraries, I’m sure, I felt intimidated by all the gizmos, wiring, camera and so on. In my early attempts at making myself and HAL work together as co-workers, I failed dismally and ended up crying in the electrical cupboard! My co-workers and library managers coaxed me to keep trying—“the other libraries are struggling too!”

After many attempts, I now feel more confident and comfortable with HAL and him with me and we have hosted some great and rewarding evenings.

Our latest efforts with Raised Vegetable Gardening, Xeriscaping, Puppets/Reading/Storytelling, have proved to be huge successes!

HAL and I will continue to have our love/hate relationship, but mostly LOVE.

I keep myself interested and enthusiastic by teasing Lethbridge that someday we will pass them in the number of video conference sessions offered. Of course that won’t happen – but we can try!

Submitted by Debbie Haigh, Program Coordinator, Taber Public Library



Hip-Hop technology engages students

On April 13th, the Guitar Option class at the Tilley School (Tilley, Alberta) participated in a video conference session with the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame (Cleveland, Ohio) as a way to enhance their appreciation of different types of music. The session, entitled "Hip-Hop Technology: From Turntables to Computers," was a free session offered through the TANDBERG Connections program and was presented by Mr. John Goehrke. The 8 boys (grades 8 and 9) who attended the program didn't know quite what to expect and came in with a "yeah, whatever" attitude. Minutes into the program; however, the boys were completely engaged and enthusiastic. Mr. Goehrke was an experienced presenter and had obviously anticipated what teenagers would find "awesome" and "wicked." The boys divided into groups and worked with Mr. Goehrke to create their own music which he later emailed to the group so that they could add to it in class.

In the days after the presentation, teachers were asked if the boys had made any comments and everyone was very positive, especially noting that "if it gets those boys excited...it must be good!" As a staff member, I can't say enough how much I enjoyed this session and watching the students get so intensely engrossed in learning without even realizing it! Great stuff! A huge thank you to our RISE consultant librarian, Jim Dunbar for getting us involved in TANDBERG Connections and the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.

Submitted by Anita Chappell, library manager, Tilley Public Library

He anticipated what teenagers would find "awesome" and "wicked."



TANDBERG Connections

RISE libraries that register for TANDBERG Connections (registration is free) are entitled to receive up to four professional video conference programs per year at no cost. These professional video conference programs come from content providers like the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, Royal Botanical Gardens, Centre for Puppetry Arts, Mote Marine Laboratory, and Royal Tyrrell Museum.

Virtually all of these programs are intended for secondary school children, so joining the TANDBERG Connections program will be especially beneficial for school-housed public libraries.

If you haven't registered yet, visit http://tandberg.cilc.org/connections/account_request.asp and complete the online form. Please note that only one registration is permitted per library. When completing the registration form, type "RISE Network" in the box labeled "School District."

If you have any questions about the registration process or the program itself, please contact the RISE Consultant Librarian for your region.

ALTA connects

In January 2010 and again in March, the board of the Alberta Library Trustees Association had their regular board meeting via video conference. These meetings saved ALTA both time and money, as the board members were able to drive to their closest video conference site for the meeting.

ALTA board members connected from RISE libraries, as well as video conference units at two other library system headquarters using the RISE Network bridge.