

Truth and Reconciliation – Annapolis Valley Regional Library

Hilary Briar, Annapolis Valley Regional Library

AVRL Hosts Gathering in Celebration of Mik'maq Culture

In mid-September 2022, the Annapolis Valley Regional Library hosted our second annual harvest-time Gathering in celebration of Mik'maq culture. Artists and performers from the three Mi'kmaq First Nations communities in AVRL's service area were invited to share their art, knowledge, and stories. These invitations were facilitated by AVRL Indigenous Outreach Liaison **Marlene Joudry**.

Marlene taught guests how to make medicine bags. **Jenna Melanson** of Bear River First Nation danced in jingle skirt regalia. Everyone in attendance joined in the Circle Dance and Snake Dance as Jenna led the way. **Cathy Martin** of Millbrook First Nation sang a welcome song, led the drumming, and told stories of what it means to be Mi'kmaq today. **Della Maguire** of Glooscap First Nation taught a weaving workshop. **Skylar Maguire** of Glooscap First Nation taught Mi'kmaq words. Library staff handed out pins with these words to guests, who greeted each other with *k'we* [hello] and *kelu'sin* [you are beautiful].

The library's Indigenous-voice Moving Through book collection was on display for browsing and borrowing. At lunchtime guests were served soup freshly made using squash, corn, and beans from the library's Three Sisters garden. Old friends greeted each other during the shared meal, and new friendships were forged.

We are already looking forward to our next Gathering!



Jenna Melanson leading the Circle Dance



Cathy Martin leading the drumming