

A new mural has popped up at the Chilliwack Library thanks to funding from the Friends of the Chilliwack Libraries group and a local Indigenous artist.

Chantelle Trainor-Matties was putting the finishing touches on her painting called 'Nature and Nurture' this week at the library.

She said she didn't want to overcrowd the mural with too many animals.

"But, I wanted to have a good selection so you could pick up the theme," which is 'parents and their children.'

The painting features three types of adult animals – **wolves**, eagles and otters – with their young.

Trainor-Matties' ancestry is Nisga'a and Métis and she painted the mural in her contemporary Northwest Coast form-line style.

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"Anybody who knows me knows if I can squeeze an otter into anything, or a ferret or a weasel, I'm going to do that."

She used to have ferrets as pets, which are in the same family as otters. In the mural, Trainor-Matties painted an otter on its back with a baby otter on its parent's belly.

"It's my way of keeping their memory alive," she said of her former pets. "I really like to illustrate them whenever I get a chance."

She also incorporated water, earth and sky into the painting, plus daytime and nighttime.

The otters are in the water and next to them are two soaring eagles. The mural wraps around the wall and just past a corner, people will see the **wolves** in the night beside a moon.

"It changes the landscape of this department so much," said librarian Kelli Whitehead whose idea it was to have a new mural painted. "It just draws your eye in a completely different way now, and you're led into the space in a different way than it was before."

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Staff at the library have been wanting to update the children's section for a while, Whitehead added. The previous mural, painted in 2012, featured trees and kids reading.

"I thought it would be a wonderful addition to have something reflective of our community here at the Chilliwack Library," Whitehead said.

It was the Friends of the Chilliwack Libraries who provided the funding to make the mural happen. They are a volunteer organization that supports the library through advocacy, fundraising and assistance with various projects and programs.

So far this year, the friends have spent \$9,000 on projects and items for the Chilliwack and Sardis libraries. In addition to the mural, the group has or will have bought a TV, chairs for a teen area, plus a display case, all for the Sardis Library this year.

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