

# Shelf life

TORONTO PUBLIC LIBRARY NEWS AND VIEWS

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**Andy Barrie**, host of CBC Radio's *Metro Morning*, led a vigorous public discussion on *Talking about Terror: Rules of Civil Discourse* at the Toronto Reference Library on February 26. Panel members were Andrew Coyne of the *National Post*; Margaret Wente of *The Globe and Mail*; Brenda Cossman of the University of Toronto Faculty of Law; and Joel Ruimy, Executive Director, Canadian Journalists for Free Expression. The event marked Freedom to Read Week, February 23-March 1.

## Passages to freedom

*PEN Canada fundraiser champions intellectual freedoms*



KURDISH writer and former political prisoner Metin Ciyayi saw

his thoughts on freedom of expression given voice, in English, by his 14-year-old son Yilmaz, at a PEN Canada fundraiser at Toronto Reference Library in February. Ciyayi's books include: *Bu Senin Oykundur (This is Your Story, 1994)* and a book of poems, *Bawer Kurdi (Belief of Kurds, 1999)*. Ciyayi came to Canada in 2001. Also reading

at the event: Michelle Berry, Nino Ricci, Dany Laferrière, Shyam Selvadurai, Ken Wiwa and Reza Baraheni. Featured readings were from the recently published *Passages: Welcome Home to Canada*, to which many of the writers had contributed. The evening was hosted by June Callwood, with an introduction by Haroon Siddiqui.

"We're thrilled to support Freedom to Read each year by partnering with PEN," says City Librarian Josephine Bryant. "We're lucky here in Canada to have the freedoms we do, and working to extend those freedoms to all parts of the world is indeed a worthy cause."

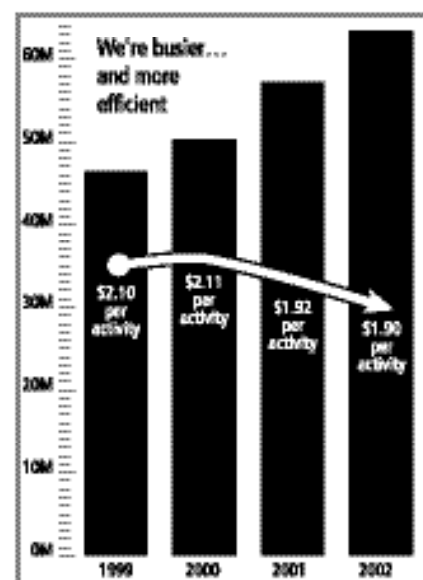
## Toronto Public Library a thriving community resource

*Though no one expected the electronic age would be kind to books, let alone libraries, the fact is that this city is in the midst of a bibliophilic renaissance.*

—Christopher Hume, *The Toronto Star*, February 22

WITH CIRCULATION UP six per cent, multilingual materials borrowed up nine per cent and reserves delivered up 23 per cent, Toronto Public Library (TPL) emerged as the busiest library system in the western world in 2002. As Rebecca Caldwell put it in *The Globe and Mail*: "The Toronto Public Library... circulated 30 million books last year — more than any other library system in North America, and second in the world only to Hong Kong..."

Please see Thriving page 2...



## NOTEWORTHY STATISTICS FROM THE TORONTO PUBLIC LIBRARY, 2002

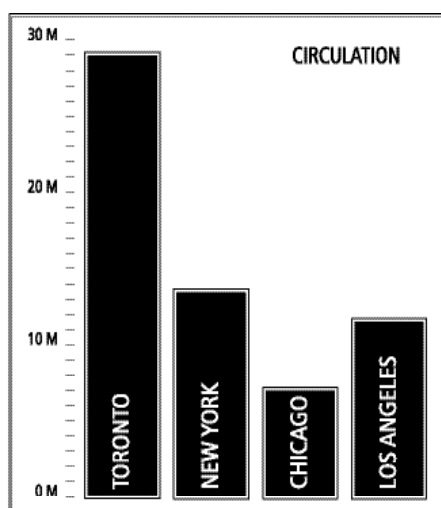
<b>67%</b> children have library cards	<b>31%</b> increase in Web visits
<b>6%</b> increase in materials borrowed	<b>18M+</b> visits to branches
<b>9%</b> increase in multilingual use	<b>70,710</b> volunteer hours
<b>10,000</b> attendees at TD Gallery exhibits	<b>545,133</b> new items added to collection

### Thriving Resource

Continued from page 1...

"We put the equivalent of 31 library books into every household in Toronto last year," says City Librarian Josephine Bryant.

While books are definitely big business at the library, TPL's embrace of the electronic age is also causing unprecedented increases in the popularity of library services in Toronto. With 3,500 new ebooks available, new online resources like *World Book Encyclopedia* and a new online reference service — all available from home, school or work — online activity is up more than 30 percent and online reference requests are



**Serving the fifth largest populace in North America, Toronto Public Library circulates more than twice the number of items of the largest public library system, Los Angeles.**

up more than 40 percent.

Sixty-seven percent of children in Toronto have a library card and over 400,000 children and teens attended library programs in 2002, including reading and homework help clubs. Over 1,000 volunteers contributed 60,000 hours to enhance library service in the city. Adult program attendance was up 26 percent in 2002.

"Toronto Public Library continues to be popular, to reach new people and to improve its services," remarks Bryant. "At the same time, we've achieved a number of important efficiencies and forged beneficial partnerships. By comparing our budget to the number of transactions we've conducted over the past four years, we've seen that the cost of doing business at Toronto Public Library has actually gone down by about 10 percent." Examples of efficiencies and partnerships include: improve-

ments in the way library materials are processed and shuttled around the city, with handling of inter-branch returns and deliveries reduced by 50 percent; savings realized through a proactive energy program; \$1.5 million raised by Toronto Public Library Foundation to enhance programs, collections and equipment; and a number of other initiatives, including

*Libraries are oases within the urban landscape, where people from all walks of life can go to read and learn. Libraries belong to everyone in the community; we strive to create pleasant and comfortable but dynamic spaces that contribute to the quality of life in the city.*

— Toronto architect Bruce Stratton who recently revitalized Black Creek and Bayview branches to great critical and public acclaim.



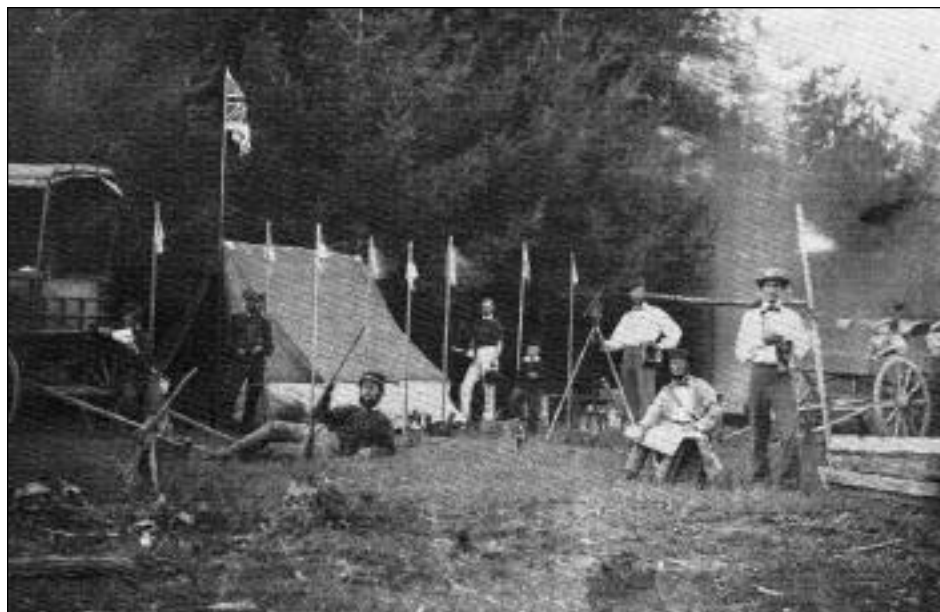
**Library cards 'R' Us.**

partnerships with other community service providers.

Bryant sums it up like this: "We're one of the few remaining institutions

that the public considers its own. We strive for a very welcoming environment. That's especially important, as half of our users weren't born in Toronto. Libraries must appeal to many people—adults and children, seniors and new immigrants. One of the most exciting projects for us is to build a new library. Though we have to work within a budget, money isn't the only considera-

tion. Libraries are public spaces and public space should improve the quality of life for everyone in the community."



### Scarborough history in pictures at Cedarbrae Branch

From an enchanting 1864 image of a land surveyor and his party, to barefoot school children, to a formal portrait of Scarborough's 1896 Museum Committee, a new exhibit of historical photographs, *Scarborough: Township to Borough — 1850-1967*, is a permanent installation celebrating Scarborough's history in pictures. Visitors to the exhibit can learn more by exploring the Scarborough Historical Collection at Cedarbrae.

## In brief

### Library's Star continues to shine

Free *Toronto Star* newspapers at Research and Reference branches of Toronto Public Library are one of the more recent initiatives made possible by an ongoing partnership between Toronto Public Library and the *Toronto Star*. *The Star* delivers the papers and the cost of subscription is underwritten by the Toronto Blue Jays.

*The Star* is also helping the library raise money for essential library initiatives by periodically including library fundraising brochures as inserts to their subscribers.

In another recent partnership initiative, *Brand New Planet*, a *Toronto Star* publication for 'tweens' ages 8-12, is being distributed free of charge in all branches of the library every Thursday.

### New treasures added to Conan Doyle collection, thanks to Friends

The Arthur Conan Doyle Collection at Toronto Reference Library was recently enriched, thanks in large part to a substantial donation by the Friends of the Arthur Conan Doyle Collection. Twenty-nine books that originally belonged to the creator of the inimitable Sherlock Holmes, including editions of Conan

Doyle's own works, are now available to the public on the fourth floor.

### Popular Author Series heads north

The successful Author Series at Toronto Reference Library, now in its seventh year, has featured Marie Claire Blais, Christian Bök and Adrienne Clarkson, to name just a few of the illustrious guest authors. Now a new Author Series, hosted by the Reference Library's northern cousin, North York Central Library (North York Centre subway stop, 5120 Yonge, north of Sheppard) is presenting a series of stimulating readings.

Helen Humphreys, winner of the Toronto Book Award, will read from her latest work of fiction, *The Lost Garden*, described by *Booklist* as a "beautifully crafted and bitter-sweet coming of age story," on Wednesday, April 23 at 7 p.m. Watch the *Shelf Life* Calendar of Events for future events.

Thanks to the Canada Council for the Arts for its support.

### Library Friends raise \$12,000

More than 35 Friends of Toronto Public Library volunteers raised \$12,000 for library initiatives during their recent popular book sale at Toronto Reference Library.

"We did things a little differently this time because we had so many quality books. We individually priced every item," says Friends South Chapter President Doug Browne. "It was more labour-intensive, but it definitely resulted in a big increase in sales and revenues."

### Robert J. Sawyer to take up TPL residency

Award-winning Toronto author Robert J. Sawyer will be TPL's spring Writer-in-Residence. Based at the Merrill Collection of Science Fiction throughout April, May and June, Sawyer will advise new writers on the writing and publishing of science fiction. The assistance of the Friends of Toronto Public Library, South Chapter is gratefully acknowledged.



**British Poet Laureate, the late John Masefield, and former Osborne Collection curator Judith St. John at Masefield's home in England in the 1970s.**

### Letters penned by British Poet Laureate donated to Osborne Collection

Sixty-five handwritten letters penned by the late John Masefield, Poet Laureate of Great Britain, are now part of the Osborne Collection of Early Children's Books at Toronto Public Library, thanks to a donation by the letters' recipient, Judith St. John, former Osborne curator. St. John, who retired in 1979, also donated a miscellany of enclosures that accompanied the letters, including watercolour sketches of ships, photos, cards, clippings and notes. Many of the letters feature poetry, including some amusing lines about Toronto.



**Bookmark winner a big hit in Barbados**  
Toronto Public Library Design-a-Bookmark Contest winners and their families enjoyed an evening of celebration and entertainment on February 28 at North York Central Library. Contestants showed off their artwork and received prizes donated by contest partner Laurentien.

"I like to draw people," says contest

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The Toronto Public Library Board meets monthly from September through June, in Committee Room 2 at Toronto City Hall, 100 Queen Street West. Meetings are open to the public. The Library Board includes eight citizen members and seven City Councillors.

#### **Board Members**

Gillian Mason, Chair  
William Booth, Vice-Chair  
Councillor Maria Augimeri  
Meyer Brownstone  
Councillor Olivia Chow  
Councillor Mike Feldman  
Rick Goldsmith  
Mizan Ibrahim  
Councillor Joe Mihevc  
Councillor Denzil Minnan-Wong  
Mark Nightingale  
Councillor Jane Pitfield  
Councillor Kyle Rae  
Marjorie Stephenson  
Mitchell Weisberg

winner Shakyra Carter, "so I decided to draw my mom. When I found out I won, my mom gave me a card that says, 'You're Amazing'. It made me feel special.

"My grandma and my uncle in Barbados got to see my bookmark on the library website," adds Shakyra, who likes to visit a number of different Toronto libraries. "I like the library because it's got videos, Internet and Junie B. Jones books. Junie B. is my favourite."

Shakyra and her mom were both amazed at the great backpack full of Laurentien markers, crayons, paint and pencil crayons Shakyra won. "Some of the stuff was even scented," says Shakyra.

## **Board Highlights** **March 24, 2003**

### **2003 Bookmobile Schedule**

The Board received an information report on changes to the Bookmobile Schedule. Two new stops will be added at the North Kipling Community Centre and Scarborough Town Centre. For details on hours and other service adjustments, visit the website at [www.tpl.toronto.on.ca](http://www.tpl.toronto.on.ca).

### **Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials**

Staff tabled for information a report on public requests to withdraw or reclassify library materials. Six titles were reviewed by the Materials Review Committee. All of these titles were retained in the collection and another title was withdrawn temporarily pending legal action.

### **2003 Fundraising Priorities**

Children's programming, the Toronto Reference Library and enhanced collections will be the focus of the Foundation's 2003 fundraising efforts.

### **2003 Operating Budget;**

#### **2003 – 2007 Capital Budget**

The Board adopted the 2003 Operating Budget and the 2003 – 2007 Capital Budgets as approved by City Council. The net Operating Budget for 2003 is \$121.8 million. This approval includes adjustments in allocations to support departments, staffing costs and library materials. Also approved are adjustments

to some summer Friday evening hours and the expansion of the Leading to Reading program to Downsview, Annette Street and Morningside branches. For approved projects, the net Capital Budget is \$9.6 million in 2003 and \$19.2 million for 2003 – 2007.

### **Performance Pay**

The Board approved a new remuneration system for non-union employees that will see a pay for performance model introduced in the current year.

### **St. James Town Neighbourhood Branch**

The name "St. James Town" was officially approved by the board for the new branch being built at 495 Sherbourne Street on the northwest corner of Sherbourne Street and Wellesley Street.

## **Calendar of Events** **April 2003**

### **Ongoing to April 27**

#### **Audubon Images on Stamps**

An exhibit featuring prints from Audubon's *The Birds of America* and Audubon stamps from around the world. TD Gallery, Toronto Reference Library 789 Yonge St.

### **Friday, April 4, 6 p.m.**

#### **Performing Arts Lecture Series**

Comedian Sandra Shamas. Atrium, Toronto Reference Library 789 Yonge St.

### **Tuesday, April 15, 7:30 p.m.**

#### **Canadian Poetry**

Nancy-Gay Rostein reads from *This Horizon and Beyond: Poems Selected and New*. Rhea Tregebov reads from *The Strength of Materials: Poems*. Christian Bök reads from *Eunoia*. Keith Garebian reads from *Reservoir of Ancestors* and *The Frida Kahlo Poems*. Ron Charach reads from *Dungenessque* and *Elephant Street*. Beeton Auditorium, Toronto Reference Library, 789 Yonge St.

### **Wednesday, April 23, 7 p.m.**

#### **Uptown Author Series**

Helen Humphreys reads from *The Lost Garden*. Register at 416-395-5639. Room 1, North York Central Library 5120 Yonge St.