

## Chair's Report March 23, 2015

### Children's

In February 2014, Toronto Public Library announced the arrival of the **IBBY Collection of Books for Young People with Disabilities** at North York Central Library. Featuring more than 3,000 multilingual books for children and teens with disabilities, the collection comes from the International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY), a non-profit international organization that was founded in 1985. Every two years, a new selection of Outstanding Books for Young People with Disabilities is announced by IBBY, with Toronto Public Library selecting the Outstanding Books and creating an annotated print catalogue of the books. A new catalogue launches at the Bologna Children's Book Fair in Italy in March, showcasing the IBBY Collection, North York Central Library and the new selection of books. Two sets of the Outstanding Books will be available as a travelling exhibition, arranged by the IBBY Secretariat, while a final set is housed at North York Central Library as a reference collection.

[torontopubliclibrary.ca/ibby](http://torontopubliclibrary.ca/ibby)

### Partnerships, outreach and other community initiatives

Toronto Public Library has collaborated with Annick Press to develop a go-to learning guide for teachers, librarians and students in grades three to seven. In the same way that the highly acclaimed *Research Virtuoso* helped high school and college students maximize their studying potential, this second collaboration between Annick Press and the Toronto Public Library, titled *Superbrain: The Insider's Guide to Getting Smart*, challenges younger students to develop the skills they need to become “lifelong super-learners.” Written in a kid-friendly style, the book encourages readers to develop learning habits that will help them inside and outside of the classroom, including preparation, organization and leadership values, research and critical thinking, and navigating the online world. Researched and written by two professional librarians at the Toronto Public Library, *Superbrain* comes with a superhero theme woven throughout, and features wacky and exuberant art by seasoned illustrator Dave Whamond.

When the maple tree that is believed to have inspired Alexander Muir's famous poem and song “The Maple Leaf Forever” was felled in a storm in July 2013, the City determined to preserve the wood from the tree and use it to make a variety of memorabilia arts and crafts projects that would be displayed and used in locations throughout the city. A number of library branches located closest to the site of the tree will be receiving items. Jones and Main Street branches will each receive a small easel and Beaches Branch a book stand. The Toronto Reference Library will receive an art easel, a book stand and two thin slices of the tree, or ‘cookies’, that will be carved with the tree's provenance. All of these items, crafted by Dixon Hall Mill Centre, formed part of a display at City Hall in February. At the request of the City, the Reference Library also provided facsimile copies of items from the collection to display with the artifacts: a painting of the Muir house by J. M. McPherson and original sheet music for the song

“Maple Leaf Forever”. These items will also form part of a similar display of the maple tree legacy items at the Green Living Show in March.

### **Programs and exhibits**

March 4 was a very busy night at the Toronto Reference Library, with over 1,000 people attending two exciting and high profile events.

In the Atrium, Toronto Public Library partnered with CBC Radio to celebrate the shortlist for **Canada Reads**, the CBC’s annual battle of the books. Hosted by Mary Ito of CBC Radio One’s Fresh Air, the event featured three of the shortlisted authors defending their books for the honour of being this year’s Canada Reads final selection: Kim Thúy defending her book *Ru*; Raziel Reid, author of *When Everything Feels like the Movies*; and Kamal Al-Solaylee, whose book *Intolerable* was championed at the event by *Beauty and the Beast* actress Kristin Kreuk. Canada Reads 2015 is about books that can change perspectives, challenge stereotypes and illuminate issues, asking the question: “What is the one book to break barriers?” A series of Canada Reads debates, hosted by Wab Kinew, took place on air from March 16 - 19.

**[torontopubliclibrary.ca/canadareads](http://torontopubliclibrary.ca/canadareads)**

Upstairs at the Appel Salon, the third annual **Bluma Lecture** (which sold out in two hours) featured the Honourable Louise Arbour in conversation with the Honourable Marc Lalonde. The Honourable Elizabeth Dowdeswell, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, was one of the special guests. The program, funded by the Appel Community Trust, is delivered in partnership with the Toronto Public Library Foundation, and is an important donor cultivation event. A reception for donors and library supporters was held prior to the lecture and generously supported by Borden Ladner Gervais LLP.

Toronto Public Library has launched a new program series **Law at the Library**, which focuses on helping Torontonians address common legal problems. Covering topics like buying a home, writing a will, getting fired or getting divorced, these talks are presented by members of the legal community and draw on their expertise to help Torontonians understand the law while broadening their access to law resources. Law at the Library has been made possible by the contributions of the Law at the Library Steering Committee, which consists of 14 Toronto-based lawyers, all with a wide range of law expertise.

**[torontopubliclibrary.ca/law](http://torontopubliclibrary.ca/law)**

The **2015 Personal Finance campaign** is underway, running from mid-January to the beginning of April. Related programming is being held at library locations across the city on a wide range of topics such as tax planning, investing, estate planning, and consumer protection. The emphasis continues to be on programs that deliver quality information delivered by experts. Some topics new to 2015 include debtors’ rights, credit score rating and reporting, insurance and identity theft protection. Also included in the series is programming for target audiences, including new Canadians, older women and

low income earners. The Personal Finance campaign is supported by the late Norman G. Hinton donation through the Toronto Public Library Foundation.

[torontopubliclibrary.ca/personalfinance](http://torontopubliclibrary.ca/personalfinance)

Toronto Public Library's **first Aboriginal writer in residence, author Cherie Dimaline**, launched her residency on March 7 at North York Central Library with a meet and greet featuring traditional drummers and singers Stephanie Pangowish and Josh Smoke and special readings by acclaimed author Lee Maracle and poet Giles Benaway. Special guests at the event included the Honourable David Zimmer, MPP for Willowdale and Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, and Deborah Richardson, Deputy Minister for the Ontario Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs. Board Member Dianne LeBreton attended and introduced the event. Dimaline, who is an author and editor from the Georgian Bay Metis community, will be meeting one-on-one with writers and running a number of programs between now and June.

[torontopubliclibrary.ca/writerinresidence](http://torontopubliclibrary.ca/writerinresidence)

### **Staff training, enrichment and other enhancement opportunities**

**Toronto Public Library continues to cultivate a culture of innovation among its staff** and build their creative capacity in a variety of ways, including:

- training opportunities offered both at the Library and online via webinar, and by bringing in guest speakers on a range of innovation topics;
- publishing an electronic Innovation Digest staff newsletter, which highlights innovation initiatives at the Library such as 3D printers, the Asquith Press, and maker programs such as a recent partnership that saw video games created in the Library; the newsletter also links to articles to expand staff awareness and understanding of interesting developments and initiatives outside the Library;
- providing an ongoing Staff Innovation Program that invites any library staff member to submit an idea for an innovative project that will help the Library better serve its customers.

A Digital Content and Innovation Steering Committee of staff from library branches and departments across the city leads initiatives intended to foster a spirit of innovation and entrepreneurship in the Library.

### **Toronto Public Library Foundation**

On February 24, New Collection, a Toronto Public Library Foundation members program, launched the inaugural **Toronto Off the Page Series** with Everybody Knows it's the T.Dot, an event that showcased the Library's vinyl collection and explored the genres and history of black music in Toronto. The evening was hosted by music journalist and Polaris Prize juror Del Cowie with special guests sharing stories and their favourite LPs. New Collection offers young Torontonians exclusive access to the city's vibrant literary scene. Through New Collection, the Toronto Public Library Foundation is attracting the next generation of donors both as financial supporters and city builders.

**In the first quarter of 2015, the Foundation received almost \$30,000 in bequest gifts** from three estates. In addition, Deloitte renewed their support of the Young Voices program. TD Bank Group also renewed their support of New Collection and Hush Hush – New Collection’s annual fund-raising event.

The Toronto Public Library Foundation continues to promote **100 Reasons to Give to Toronto Public Library**, inviting donors to submit and share their reasons for giving. The spring issues of the Library’s program guides, *What’s On* and *What’s More*, feature real-life donors and their reasons for giving.

**[tplfoundation.ca/100-reasons](http://tplfoundation.ca/100-reasons)**

Prepared by Toronto Public Library staff