

Chair's Report January 30, 2012

Performance Measures

The final details of **the annual performance measures** are still being collated, but the Toronto Public Library had its busiest year on record, as measured both by how often Torontonians visit the Library and how much they make use of its resources. Circulation was up in 2011 by 2.9% with customers borrowing more than 33 million items, up from 32 million in 2010. E-book downloads increased by more than 100 percent. Visits to our branches were also up at more than 19 million compared to 18 million in 2010. This is the third consecutive year in a row that circulation and visits have increased.

Partnerships

Toronto Public Library's partnership with the Canada Council for the Arts continues its success with an increase in funding for the Library's popular authors series, **The eh List**. For 2012, the Canada Council grant increased \$5,000, bringing the total to \$20,000. The eh List has proved extremely popular from its beginnings in 2009. The series provides an opportunity for authors and their readers to meet and talk at Library branches in all corners of the city, and has attracted such Canadian literary lights as Joseph Boyden, William Deverell, Louise Penny, John Ralston Saul, David Bezmozgis, Andre Alexis, Adrienne Clarkson, Peter Robinson, Richard B. Wright, Margaret Wente, Austin Clarke, Dany Laferriere, Camilla Gibb, Marina Nemat and Sylvia Tyson. Authors lined up for 2012 so far include Michel Tremblay, Esi Edugyan, Michele Landsberg, Wayne Johnson, Holger Petersen, David Gilmour, Gail Bowen, John Fraser and Nahlah Ayed.

Yorkville Branch was the recipient of a \$2,400 donation by neighbouring business Whole Foods at Hazelton Lanes. The store sold toy penguins throughout the holiday season, with \$5 from each sale going to the Yorkville branch. In all, 481 penguins were sold.

Branches

The **new North York Central Library Teen Zone** is now open. The youth-friendly space is inviting, using natural light, glass partitions, hardwood flooring and vibrant colours throughout to make this a place where youth can feel comfortable to browse collections, use a computer, meet with friends or just sit back and relax. An urban living room features comfortable seating equipped with outlets; the computer bar provides customers with an outdoor view, and the glass-enclosed Learning Centre provides a quiet space for group instruction or individual use. Collaborative study areas are available for small group study; a large study space has furniture that can be reconfigured to allow it to be easily transformed into a programming venue.

Also at North York Central Library, a **new automated check-in and sorting machine**, installed at the end of December, is breaking records, sorting an unprecedented 7,188

items on a single day in December. This is the second automated check-in and sorting machine installed at a Toronto Public Library branch, the first being at Cedarbrae.

In addition to automated check-in and sorting, three more branches, **Gerrard/Ashdale, Port Union and Morningside now have self-serve check-out capacity**, bringing the total number of branches with the new technology to 41.

Programs

Among the many Library programs being offered at branches across the city during January was a series of **Family Literacy** events based around Family Literacy Day, which is sponsored by ABC Life Literacy Canada on January 27. ABC's mission to help create a Canada where everyone has the skills they need to live a fully engaged life fits nicely with the Toronto Public Library's goal of fostering lifelong literacy throughout the city.

Toronto Public Library celebrates **Black History Month** throughout February with a booklist of related material and nearly 60 programs at branches across the city, offering an insight into the experiences of black Canadians and the vital role they have played throughout our shared history.

The **winter season in the Appel Salon** kicked off in great style – writers William Gibson and Sara Paretsky were both sold-out events, as was the "Steal This Idea" panel, a discussion on ideas for civic renewal. Jazz star Jane Bunnett and her band celebrated 30 years of Cuban music with a wildly enthusiastic audience. Looking ahead, Anne Rice will visit the Salon in February, for what will be, undoubtedly, another sold-out event.

Online

The **Toronto Public Library YouTube channel** drew over 100,000 viewers in 2011. Topping the viewer list were instructional videos on using library services, such as how to get a Library card and how to download ebooks from the Library site, and full recordings of Bram and Bluma Appel Salon programs.

Foundation

The **Foundation's annual telefundraising campaign** is underway. This year's campaign runs from January 8 through March 8 with a fundraising goal of \$80,000. As in past years, the focus is on acquiring new donors with the majority of calls being made to Library users who have agreed to be contacted by the Foundation. The campaign message is on the vital contribution the Library makes to the city, the diversity of the Library's offerings and users, and how donor support can help the Library to thrive. The initial response to the calls has been welcoming, and affection for the Library has been apparent in many conversations. As of day seven of the campaign, 76 new donors have been acquired and over \$8,825 has been raised.

Many Toronto Public Library Board members were in attendance as the Foundation presented a very special **donor recognition event hosted in the new Cube** at the Toronto Reference Library on January 13. This celebratory event, attended by 125 guests, was hosted by the Foundation as a way of recognizing Literary Circle and re:vitalize donors, and celebrating the success that the re:vitalize Campaign has been. On January 17, the Foundation publicly announced a \$1.5 million gift received from Marilyn and Charles Baillie in support of the re:vitalize Campaign. This gift, which will be recognized through the naming of the Library's new Special Collections Centre, puts the re:vitalize Campaign over its \$10 million goal. Congratulations to the Foundation for its great success with this first-ever broad-based capital fund-raising Campaign.

New Collection, a membership program of the Foundation, offers individuals under 40 the opportunity to connect with other young urbanites while supporting one of the city's most important assets, Toronto Public Library. To join New Collection the cost is \$300 for a Solo member, or for \$500, a Duo membership. Members will enjoy benefits such as invitations to exclusive New Collection events throughout the year; invitations to behind-the-scenes tours with curators of the Library's collections; invitations to lectures, programs, exhibits, and events at Toronto Public Library; a charitable tax receipt for the maximum allowable amount; subscription to *Absolutely Vital*, the Foundation newsletter; a special edition membership card; and more. To give potential members a taste of what belonging to New Collection would be like, Toronto Public Library hosted a launch event for 150 Torontonians on January 19, featuring *New York Times* reporter Jodi Kantor, who shared stories from her new, much-anticipated book, *The Obamas*.