

**Chair's Report**  
**June 24, 2013**

**Partnerships, Outreach and other community initiatives**

Toronto Public Library's Multicultural Services Committee took part in the **Portuguese Community Festival at Downsview Park** on June 15, and an associated parade on June 9. The Festival includes a large and well-attended set of events and offers the Library an excellent opportunity to promote its programs, services and collections. In addition to participating in the parade and having a tent at the event, Library staff provided card registration and the opportunity to borrow items, including materials in Portuguese. The Library's presence was also well received, with staff handing out nearly 700 copies combined of *What's On, Let's Get Ready for Reading*, Design-a-Bookmark Contest bookmarks and other materials – including Ready for Reading tattoos that were extremely popular with the children.

Toronto Public Library, Toronto Public Health, and Streets to Homes are embarking on an innovative **six-month pilot project at the Toronto Reference Library and Yorkville Branch to assist Library users who have mental health problems, drug or alcohol addiction, or who are homeless**. A Toronto Public Health nurse will be available at the Toronto Reference Library for two half-days per week to provide counselling and referral for people who are in need of health services. A Toronto Public Health nurse will be available to visit the Yorkville Branch during these times on an as-needed basis. Streets to Homes staff will visit the Toronto Reference Library daily to counsel the homeless or the street-involved in order to find appropriate housing. In addition to improving peoples' health and housing conditions, staff in the library will receive training on how to more effectively assist people who have mental health and addiction problems when they are in the library.

**The new Beaches reading garden** opened the week of June 3 in a lovely shaded area behind the branch facing Kew Gardens. The reading garden is a pilot project that started in the fall of 2012 in response to the suggestion of local residents, including an enthusiastic community group, Friends of the Beach Parks. Thanks to a donation made by the Toronto Public Library Foundation and the efforts of Library staff, the reading garden has become a permanent reality. Attractive tables and chairs are available on a daily basis (depending on weather), extending library service beyond branch walls and into the park. The Library appreciates the ongoing contribution of the Friends of the Beach Parks for their interest and promotion of the reading garden.

As part of **Toronto Public Library's efforts to promote the Library as a summer destination**, Toronto District School Board Parent and Family Literacy Centres are being encouraged to bring families to branches around the city for scheduled visits in May and June. Visitors will get Library cards and learn about the TD Summer Reading Club and the new *Let's Get Ready for Reading* resource guide. Library staff will also be visiting all of the City's After School Recreation Centres that Parks, Forestry and Recreation run in priority areas. Summer is a time when literacy skills can decline if children aren't reading, and the role of the Library is critical in mitigating this "summer reading slump."

At the June 12 Annual General Meeting of The Macaulay Child Development Centre, Toronto Public Library received the **Friend of Macaulay Award**. The citation that accompanied the award reads: *Toronto Public Library is a valued partner. Through varied collaborations, TPL has enabled Macaulay to deliver programs close to our families and children. Our family resource programs, preschool literacy programs, and homework clubs have all found homes at a neighbourhood library. Our shared interest in the early years and emergent literacy has led to many exciting collaborations that benefit children and families.* The Library partners with Macaulay at about 15 branches on the west side of the city. The AGM, which was held at the new Unison Hub on Jane St. near Trethewey Dr., also featured a table display about Toronto Public Library.

## **Programs and Exhibits**

**WORD OUT teen summer reading** encourages all Toronto teens to make their own reading choices and to share those choices with other teens in a comfortable, unsanctioned, non-judgmental environment, through online discussions and at Library programs in branches around the city. WORD OUT opens to teens the vast breadth and depth of reading choice represented at the Library, as well as the freedom to seek the guidance of Library professionals who can help them explore their favourite genres and discover new ones. With author visits at branches around the city throughout the summer, and a dynamic, interactive, content-rich website available 24/7, WORD OUT offers Toronto teens the chance to participate in a fun, friendly, and lively summer-long exploration of books and reading.

The national launch for the **TD Summer Reading Club** took place in Winnipeg on May 29 and was attended by Toronto Public Library Children and Youth Advocate Lisa Heggum as well as TD Summer Reading Club artist Matt James. The TD Summer Reading Club is a free and inclusive national, bilingual program of Canadian public libraries that inspires and encourages all children 12 and under to read during the summer. The theme for this year's club is Go, inviting children to 'travel' and explore their neighbourhoods and the world afar through summer activities at the Library, outside of the Library, online and through reading. In addition to connecting families with books and libraries, and building children's confidence and excitement about reading, the program champions Canadian writers and illustrators.

The **Asian Heritage Month** celebration at Agincourt Branch on May 4 was a great success with over 550 people participating in a full line-up of events that included a lion dance workshop for children, parents and grandparents, Chinese tea, a calligraphy demonstration and a talk by renowned journalist and author Jan Wong called "The Chinese in Canada: One Report's Odyssey." Asian Heritage Month helps fulfill the Library's mandate of promoting and providing pathways to Toronto's culture.

A new exhibition in the TD Gallery at Toronto Reference Library, ***Flight: a Thrilling History of an Idea***, opens on Saturday, July 13 and runs until September 22, featuring rare and unique items from the library's special collections, including a special showing of select prints from one of only five known Audubon *Birds of America* folios in Canada.

## **Foundation**

In 2013, the Library will receive a total of \$69,620, through the Toronto Public Library Foundation, in **Adopt A Branch revenues** from donations made at *The Book Lover's Ball 2013*, thanks to the generosity of event attendees and a generous matching gift of \$25,000 from TD Bank. Adopt A Branch donations help to enhance collections, programs, services and spaces at Library branches across the city.

**Third party fundraising in support of Toronto Public Library Foundation** is starting to grow with a variety of external organizations and individuals hosting events and/or designating proceeds from the sales of products in support of the Foundation. This year marks the 10th anniversary of the City of Toronto Legal Services Division Book Sale. Since 2003, they have raised more than \$15,000 to support Toronto Public Library's Leading to Reading program through a one-day sale of used books in the lobby of Metro Hall each year in June.

## **Online**

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**Toronto Public Library's new intranet**, ShareTPL, built on the Microsoft SharePoint 2013 platform, was launched at the beginning of June to meet the information needs of all Library staff. ShareTPL improves the way Library staff communicate and share information internally. Designed as a central website where staff can find all forms of internal information, and also collaborate and share information easily with one another, ShareTPL gives Toronto Public Library the tools they need to do their work more efficiently and thereby increase their productivity.

In response to customer demand, Toronto Public Library will offer the option of **paying fines for overdue materials online**, starting in early July. Online fines payment offers the convenience of paying fines online with a credit card 24 hours a day, 7 days a week via a secure payment system. Customers can make a payment from any computer with Internet access by signing into their account on the Library's website. As approved by the Board, a \$1.00 processing fee will apply per payment session to offset the cost of offering this option.

## **Collections**

**Zinio Digital Magazines**, a new and much-anticipated library online service, is set to go live any day now, once the vendor makes changes that will improve ease of access for Toronto Public Library customers. The service provides access to over 300 current digital magazine titles, with unlimited in-branch and remote access via PC, Mac, iPad, iPhone, Android and Blackberry Playbook. Among the titles offered are *Newsweek*, *National Geographic*, *Car and Driver*, and an assortment of Canadian titles. Other titles, such as *Snowboarder*, *Skateboard Magazine*, *Golf Tips*, *Android*, and *International Tattoo Art*, are expected to attract new Library customers.

## **Spaces**

**The SPOT** in Malvern opened its doors officially at the beginning of June, with City Councillor Raymond Cho and other community members celebrating in the new 350-square-metre facility that aims to foster Success, Power, Opportunity, and Teamwork (SPOT). The SPOT is a youth-led, safe space where young people age 14 to 25 can develop their creative voice while acquiring skills for long-term individual and community success. “With shared goals of fostering youth engagement, success and learning opportunities, Toronto Public Library and the SPOT are natural partners,” said chair of the Toronto Public Library Board councillor Paul Ainslie. “Our vibrant, shared building space allows us to effectively collaborate to respond to the interests and needs of youth in the Malvern area. More than ever, this community hub has now become the place for youth to be.” The SPOT is a Youth Challenge Fund legacy initiative that was created in partnership with the City of Toronto, the Toronto Public Library and East Metro Youth Services (as operator of the ProTech Media Centre – funded by Microsoft and Renewed Computer Technology).