

Shelf life

Toronto Public Library News & Views

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One place to call for reference information
Who you gonna call? Find out how to get all the answers on Pg. 2.



TEENS BACK TO READING

Welcoming teens to the library

Successful fines waiver project brings youth back

THE LIBRARY'S 2004-2007 Strategic Plan recommended that the Library make a concerted effort to reach out to youth, newcomers and at-risk neighbourhoods. Library staff and Board members consulted with teens and learned that incentives including the provision of an overdue fines waiver and reduced fine rates

would encourage teens back into the Library – and back to reading.

Although the reduced fine structure, introduced last September, enables teens to more readily pay their fines and continue to use the Library, it does not help teens whose borrowing privileges are already suspended because of high outstanding fines and fees.

The fines and fees waiver pilot project was implemented in all branches in October and ended January 31. Coupons were distributed in the branches, delivered by branch staff to schools and were available for downloading on *ramp*, the teen page of the Library's website.

The pilot project reaped the following results:

- 3,279 coupons were redeemed, an average of 205 per week, with an average of \$8.95 waived per coupon;
 - Forty-two percent of the coupons were redeemed at branches in designated "at risk" areas, indicating the project did reach high need teens;
 - 1,285 or 55 percent of those presenting coupons also renewed their cards, allowing them to borrow Library materials again;
 - 547 teens had not been in a library in a year or longer, indicating that they had returned to the library because of the coupon.
- Clearly the initiative was a success and Library staff will continue to seek out opportunities to bring teens back to the Library.

REACHING OUT TO UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

Library and Annick Press publish second book

First book in second printing

TORONTO PUBLIC LIBRARY has teamed up again with Annick Press to publish a new research handbook for college and university students.

The Research Virtuoso – *Brilliant Methods for Normal Brains* – is now available across

North America. The compact handbook shows readers how to find information in the library and on the Internet. It also guides them in conducting research in an academic library. Toronto Public Library staff was consulted for input and feedback.

"This clear, concise and user-friendly handbook will allow students to excel in their post-secondary studies," says Ken Setterington, Children and Youth Advocate for Library Services at Toronto Public Library. "What's great about this book is that adults can also

use it to learn about or improve their search skills."

The Research Virtuoso also marks the first time that Annick – long-respected for its books for children and teens – is targeting an audience outside its regular demographics.

The Library and



Annick previously teamed up to create *Research Ate My Brain*, released last September. Going into its second printing, the book was shortlisted for the Willow Awards from Saskatchewan Young Readers' Choice.

Oppel makes generous contribution to Osborne

Stinson builds on previous gift

FOR MANY RARE and unique items, the Library depends on the generosity of authors, artists and other individuals to build our special collections for generations to come. Fortunately, staff and volunteers continue to pursue new opportunities and maintain existing connections.

In one recent coup, Kenneth Oppel presented the archival papers of his writings for children to the Osborne Collection of Early Children's Books, one of Toronto Public Library's special collections. His novel *Airborn* won the Governor General's Literary Award (children's fiction), Oppel's work includes picture books and animal and adventure



tales. He is well known across Canada and abroad and has won a number of literary awards, including the Book of the Year for Children Award from the Canadian Library Association for *Silverwing* and for *Sunwing*. Oppel was the recipient of the 2002 Toronto Public Library Celebrates Reading Award.

The distinguished author Kathy Stinson generously added to her earlier gifts, presenting Osborne with the papers of all her recent books.

The Library is grateful to the generous individuals who make it possible for us to possess so many distinguished Canadian literary archives. These archives are among our most heavily used research materials for Canadian children's book history.

Asian Heritage Month

Events highlight Asia's rich heritage

OVER 100 PEOPLE crammed into the theatre at the Palmerston Branch for the launch of Asian Heritage Month on May 4. Hosted by CITYNews personality Jee-Yun Lee, the event featured readings and commentary by authors Joy Kogawa and Madeleine Thien and entertainment and silent storytelling by Noriko Yamamoto.

At North York Central Library, over 60 children attended a Korean dance performance on May 6. The program was interactive, with the Korean performer doing traditional dances in costume and the children participating. Asian Heritage Month saw more than 40 performances and readings at the Library representing a wide range of Asian countries and backgrounds, a fitting tribute to the rich heritage this continent has shared.



Top: Noriko Yamamoto clowns for the audience before the event.

Bottom: A Korean dancer entertains children of all ages.

SPEAKING TO TEENS

In the footsteps of Mandela

South African Lionel Basil Davis speaks to teens across city

AS PART OF an ongoing series of Teen Speakers, Cedarbrae, Malvern and York Woods branches hosted talks by Lionel Basil Davis on April 18 and 19. For his part in the struggle against apartheid in South Africa, Davis was imprisoned on Robben Island for seven years together with Nelson Mandela. He now lives and works on the island as a heritage educator at the museum that has been developed there. Davis has a passion for youth and for



After his moving presentation, Lionel chats with a few students from Brookview Middle School including Toni-Ann, Szilvia and Vanessa.

peace, and spoke inspiringly about the lessons of the South African experience.

"We live in a world of prejudice and hatred where some believe they are superior to others," says Davis. "As an Ambassador of Peace, it is my wish to instill in others a culture of love, peace, tolerance and understanding and, in so doing, help in the building of a new world order."

LIBRARY'S QUICK REFERENCE SERVICE

Who you gonna call? Answerline of course!

WANT TO KNOW about the benefits of MSG? (It depends on who is answering. At www.glutamate.org/media/nutritional_benefits_of_glutamate.asp, the International Glutamate Information Service's website claims that MSG adds flavour with less sodium than table salt. Searching the health databases using the Library's All-in-One-Search function show pluses and minuses.)

How many cows are slaughtered in Canada each year? (According to Cattle Statistics from Statistics

Canada www.statcan.ca/english/freepub/23-012-XIE/23-012-XIE2005002.pdf, 4.7 million cattle were killed in Canada in 2005.) Before many students, writers, researchers and other members of the public start pulling out their collective hairs in frustration because they can't find the answer they need, many Torontonians just pick up the phone and call Answerline (416-393-3171) or peck out an email to the Library's quick reference service via the form on Library's home page.

More than just the central telephone service, Toronto Public Library's Answerline handles many services on the Ask-A-Librarian page of the

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York Woods District

Profiles of Downsview, Black Creek and other branches in the north-west end of the city

IN A CITY as diverse as Toronto, tailoring library service to the local community is absolutely essential if the service is to be relevant, accessible and used by its community. York Woods District (Downsview, Black Creek, Humber Summit, Jane/Sheppard, Woodview Park and York Woods), located in the west end of what used to be North York, caters to a multitude of diverse audiences and consequently, needs – the Library has responded.

Children & youth

Children and youth are a focus of much branch activity. The birthplace of *Leading to Reading*, Toronto Public Library's first reading help program for children, was York Woods Branch. Today, five of the six branches in the York Woods District have very active reading and homework help programs for primary school children. *Rap'n Read*, the precursor to the *Teen Homework Club*, now offered at a number of Library branches, also started at York Woods Branch and continues to this day with close to 30 students attending weekly. And the York Woods Youth Advisory Group has been active since 1991.

Making it in Jane-Finch

Making it in Jane-Finch, featuring popular CityNews Co-Anchor, Dwight Drummond, is one recent example of a successful teen program. Drummond provided students with a biographical overview of his life in the Jane-Finch community and encouraged

them to remain in school, complete their education and avoid drugs and gangs. His presentation was so popular that area schools requested a repeat performance for students who were unable to attend the first session. Over 400 students and 12 teachers attended these programs.

Resources & programs

York Woods District staff is creative in developing resources and programs for their diverse communities:

- Special district resources include a Black and Caribbean Heritage collection as well as collections in 15 languages, including a large French collection;
- Multicultural, Youth and Children's Services Specialists are members of the staff;
- Both York Woods and Downsview have Adult Literacy offices;
- Co-sponsored with the Toronto District School Board, the Literacy and Basic Skills program at York Woods helps adults improve their mathematics and English skills;
- Downsview branch runs daily English as a Second Language classes.

Newcomers

York Woods District serves a particularly ethnically and culturally diverse community – local newcomers speak over 60 different languages. Residents of Italian, Spanish and Caribbean backgrounds

account for a high percentage of the population. New immigrants from Africa, South Asia, China, Vietnam and other countries are contributing to the increasingly varied ethno-cultural mix. In October 2002, Black Creek relocated to the North York Sheridan Mall and since then circulation continues to rise as new patrons discover all

relocation from its current mall location to a stand-alone 7,000 square feet facility designed by Cannon Design, formerly Moffat Kinoshita. This new project is a co-operative venture with Let's Build and Toronto Community Housing Corporation. A separate building onsite will provide transitional housing for young parents.



Black Creek Branch

the branch has to offer.

Programs addressing the needs of newcomers include Settlement and Education Partnership Toronto (SEPT) at Downsview and York Woods and, new this year, Citizenship classes at York Woods. Access to free computers is a high priority for customers and having a Le@rning Centre at York Woods enables staff to offer much needed computer training programs, including Kids@Computers.

And there are some exciting changes coming. Jane/Sheppard Branch is one of the smallest service outlets in the Toronto Public Library system at 3,500 square feet. There are plans for

The future

In 2006, the York Woods District is expanding community outreach through new and established programs and partnerships including:

- Storytime Outreach funded by the Paloma Foundation;
- The Toronto District School Board's Inner City Model School Project; three city schools will participate, one being Firgrove Elementary, a school in the Jane-Finch area;
- Jane-Finch Neighbourhood Action Team;
- Innovative programming such as *Opera is Cool* and a teen talent show.

Opera Atelier, Library collaboration a success

Library resources provide ongoing assistance

SOME OF THE most successful Library programs involve collaborations with non-Library agencies and organizations – the latest Opera Atelier program on April 21 at Toronto Reference Library being a recent example. Co-Artistic Director Marshall Pynkoski spoke eloquently about the ways the Library continues to support Opera Atelier. He recalled – with some amusement – that in the early years he had virtually “set up office” in the Reference Library, researching scores, drawing up business plans – and using a pay phone on the main floor that, at the time, took incoming calls and didn’t require a coin for the outgoing ones!

Pynkoski noted that the Picture Collection and other

resources offered by the Reference Library continue to be important to Opera Atelier, especially to their set designer, Gerard Gauci, whose designs were recently on display in the TD Gallery. One of the most popular items in the exhibition was an exquisite libretto from Special Collections, produced by the Duke of Parma (1690), complete with fold-out engravings by the Bibiena Brothers.

Jeannette Zingg, co-artistic director and choreographer, along with dancer Courtney Lutz performed a number of Renaissance dance sequences, in full costume and accompanied by music. Vocalists Jenny Such and Olivier Laquerre entertained the crowd with several moving excerpts from Opera Atelier’s production of *Orfeo*. The event was well attended, as was the exhibition in the TD Gallery with a record 3,300 visitors during the run. Both the Library and Opera Atelier look forward to future collaborations.

...ANSWERLINE CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

Library’s website, including email and many of the Virtual Reference Desk services. In addition, Answerline receives the emailed Customer Feedback Forms submitted via the Library website. Consider these fast facts about this popular service:

- Answerline answered approximately 146,000 phone calls last year (about 500 a day);
- Staff dealt with 9,100 emails;
- The service is available 63 hours each week, including Sundays – the only phone service available at the

Library on this day;

- Over 550 Customer Feedback Forms were answered in 2005;
- Virtual Reference Desk allows customers to chat online with Library staff, who refer patrons to appropriate web sources – over 3,300 questions were handled last year.

Common questions pertain to: factual matters (who/what/how/when etc.); electronic resources (what the Library owns and how to use it); library services (closest book club, income tax clinic etc.); directory look-ups; and general research advice.

Library Board Highlights

May 2006

Foundation Assessment of 2006/2007 Fundraising Priorities

The Toronto Public Library Foundation responded to the Toronto Public Library’s list of 2006/2007 fundraising priorities and assessed their priorities on the basis of funding potential. The 2006 Foundation budget represents a 29 percent increase in charitable activity level to the Library as compared to 2004 results.

2007–2010 Revised Capital Plan Submission

The Board approved the 2007–2010 Revised Capital Plan Submission, which has been provided to the City for discussion and consideration. The Revised Capital Plan Submission seeks approval for

\$72.7 million gross funding, of which the City will fund \$46 million over four years consisting of \$11.5 million each year.

Woodside Square Branch – Relocation and Expansion

The Board approved a ten-year lease agreement with Woodside Square Holding Inc., which would accommodate the relocation and expansion of the Woodside Square Branch in the Woodside Square Shopping Centre.

Teen Forgiveness Fines and Fees Waiver Pilot Project

The Board received the Youth Incentive Program – Teen Forgiveness and Fees Waiver Pilot Project report for information and approved repetition of the incentive program at strategic intervals using a \$20 coupon.

Calendar of Events

Coming Together: A History of Community, Pride and Resistance from the Canadian Lesbian and Gay Archives

Toronto Public Library, in partnership with the Canadian Lesbian and Gay Archives, presents a gallery exhibition featuring protest posters, slogan buttons, artifacts and portraits documenting the rich history of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered, Two-Spirited and Queer (LGBTQ) communities in Toronto and beyond.

Sat., May 20 to July 22.

Screening of film *Stand Together*, a documentary of gay rights in Canada. Filmmaker, Nancy Nicol, will be present.

Wed., June 14, 6:30 p.m.

Toronto Public Library, TD Gallery, 789 Yonge Street

Visit the Toronto Public Library website for dates and times of programs, film screenings and guided tours.

Official re-opening ceremony for Morningside Branch

Tues., May 30, 2006

Doors open to the public at 1:30 p.m.

Special opening ceremony at 2 p.m.

4279 Lawrence Avenue East (west of Manse Road, next to the Heron Park Community Recreation Centre)

Toronto Challenge fundraising walk for seniors

The Library team will be there, again, raising funds for Home Library Service.

Sun., June 11 starting at Metro Hall, 55 John St.

Registration starts at 7:30 a.m.