

Chair's Report
June 25, 2012

Partnerships, Outreach and other community initiatives

WORD OUT, Toronto Public Library's online teen summer reading program, is being sponsored this year by the TD Bank Group through the Toronto Public Library Foundation. The funding has allowed for an enhanced website and greater promotional opportunities, giving WORD OUT even more profile in the teen community in Toronto. The WORD OUT launch on June 27 will feature bestselling author of teen books Kelley Armstrong. The program promotes reading through the summer months by giving Toronto teens the opportunity to share their thoughts on books, get ideas for future reads, and enter contests to win cool prizes.

The TD Summer Reading Club national media launch took place on June 13 at Calgary Public Library Central Branch. In attendance were Toronto Public Library Children and Youth Advocate Lisa Heggum and Senior Department Head Jennifer Schmitt; Deputy Chair, TD Bank Group Frank McKenna; a number of Calgary Public Library staff, including CEO Gary Meek; Lianne Fortin and Fabien Lengellé from Library and Archives Canada; TD Summer Reading Club illustrator Dušan Petričić; Andrew Succi from RealDecoy, the main developer of the new TD Summer Reading Club website; and 60 Grade 5/6 children from Connaught Public School in Calgary, all clad in TD Summer Reading Club t-shirts. Frank McKenna talked about TD's commitment to childhood literacy, making reading fun for children, and building stronger communities. Lisa Heggum reinforced the importance of making reading fun, and the important role libraries play in this regard, by relating this year's theme and activities. Appropriately, the afternoon wrapped up with a focus on the kids, with Dušan Petričić leading the children in an art activity before lunch was served.

The new and improved **TD Summer Reading Club website**, launched in early June, provides children across Canada who are participating in the program with an exciting interactive environment. The site includes fun games that help kids build their literacy skills and an interactive booklist that allows children to comment and recommend their favourite books to their peers. The TD Summer Reading Club website is developing ties to local library systems, with booklists on the site linking directly to the sites of other library systems with supportive catalogues. The site also amalgamates content previously found in three locations on the web on a single website, to make it easier for children, their parents, and library staff to find the content they want! The site can be found under the following new, easy-to-remember URLs: www.tdsummerreadingclub.ca (English) and <http://www.clubdelecturetd.ca> (Français). TD Bank Group proudly sponsors the TD Summer Reading Club through the Toronto Public Library Foundation.

Oakwood Village Branch was a big player in the **Oakwood Village Arts Festival**, held June 8 and 9 at various locations around the Oakwood Village community. The family-friendly festival, which featured storytelling sessions and other events at the library, will help to get the word out that Oakwood Village Branch has space for and welcomes the arts.

Branches

North York Central Library celebrated its 25th anniversary this month with an intergenerational music program. The occasion was also marked by displays throughout the building highlighting programs, services and collections from the past 25 years, and a special Anniversary Memory Book full of wonderful photos for the public to browse, sign and add their favourite memories about the North York Central Library. A community walking tour will be held in the fall in conjunction with the North York Historical Board, which will highlight local historical sites and changes that have taken place in the community over the past 25 years.

On May 23, Councillor Ann Bailao and residents of the Junction hosted a **reception at the Perth/Dupont Branch**, celebrating the history of the library and the building in which it is housed. In attendance was Councillor Cesar Palacio, who spoke on behalf of the Library Board, and Councillor Ana Bailão, who spoke of her work securing Section 37 funding for the Perth/Dupont building. Also in attendance was Library Board member Mike Foderick and MP Andrew Cash. A local playwright, Erin Shields, spoke about how much the library has contributed to her profession and how her family enjoys the services and collections. She conducted a brief reading from a recent publication. Kevin Putnam, a leading organizer of the residents group spearheading this event, spoke on the history of the Junction area, from its earliest days as a farming community, through to the changes that occurred when the railroads were constructed, and up to more recent developments. Particularly appealing to the participants were the many photos of the current and former staff at Perth/Dupont conducting storytimes, class visits and assisting patrons in their use of the library. Putnam also spoke on the results of a recent community survey that asked residents how they used the library, what they particularly enjoyed about it, and where they would like to see some improvement or expansion. Of note were repeated observations regarding the level and warmth of service that the staff provide to the customers of Perth/Dupont.

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Collections

Earlier this month, over 70 library systems from the United States and Canada – including New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, and the TPL – issued a joint statement demanding vastly **improved e-book services for library users** in North America. The statement, dubbed the ReadersFirst Initiative, outlines four principles the libraries want e-content providers – the intermediaries between publishers and libraries – to follow in order to lift content restrictions and to ensure that users have the same open, easy and free access to e-books that they have come to rely on with physical books. The principles state that e-content providers must be willing partners, and offer products that allow users to:

- Search and browse a single comprehensive catalog with all of a library's offerings at once;
- Perform library transactions (placing holds, checking out items, etc.) within the library's online environment, not on separate third-party websites;
- Seamlessly enjoy a variety of e-content; and
- Download e-books that are compatible with all readers.

“In order for libraries to continue to function as key providers of information to the public, these basic principles must be followed,” the statement said. “The libraries who signed this agreement are committed to holding content providers to this standard, and will prioritize these requirements when acquiring e-books and other e-content.”

Programs

On June 26, Toronto Public Library wraps a **very successful spring season in the Bram and Bluma Appel Salon**, with Conrad Black. This follows a dynamic couple of months, with popular events featuring John Irving, Stephen Lewis, Jeff Rubin, Malcolm Gladwell, Peter Carey and Pulitzer Prize-winning historian Alan Taylor. Work is already underway for the fall lineup, with David Frum, Martin Amis, Val McDermid and Carlos Ruiz Zafon all confirmed thus far.

Foundation

Toronto Public Library Foundation is accepting applications from Canadian public library systems interested in hosting the **Book Bash Canadian Children’s Literature Festival** in 2013. Book Bash is a fun-filled, free, children’s festival featuring a wide variety of activities and programs, and an all-star cast of Canadian children’s authors and illustrators that instills a love of reading and an appreciation for Canadian authors and illustrators. Funding for the Festival, up to \$15,000 each year, is supported by the Muller Scholastic Endowment Fund for Canadian Children’s Literature at the Toronto Public Library Foundation. The fund was established by Larry Muller, retired president of Scholastic Canada, with a goal of promoting reading and recognizing the wealth of Canadian talent writing and illustrating for children. Book Bash! debuted in Toronto in 2010 and since that time more than 3,000 children, parents, grandparents, caregivers and teachers have enjoyed and been inspired by the festival. The intent of the Fund is to support a Festival held by Toronto Public Library in Toronto every second year and a Festival outside of Toronto, across Canada, in alternate years. Toronto Public Library Foundation, in partnership with Toronto Public Library, administers the Festival. Toronto Public Library has developed a Festival model that will be adopted by libraries wishing to host Book Bash. Visit tplfoundation.ca/bookbash for more information.

Volunteers

At the end of May, about 20 teen volunteers who are part of Toronto Public Library’s Editorial Youth Advisory Group met with six professional writers and one artist to make the selections for the **2012 edition of Young Voices**, the Library’s magazine of teen writing and visual art. The editorial team chose about 75 pieces from the nearly 500 submitted. A highlight this year saw one of the groups of teens approach Library staff to see if arrangements could be made to have a member of the team, who was out of town for the final selection meeting, participate in the discussions by Skype. Staff were able to set up the connection, and teen volunteer Nora Marku, who was travelling in Europe, joined in from Kosovo to be part of the two-hour selection meeting in the basement of Toronto Reference Library.