

**Chair's Report
June 22, 2015**

Partnerships, outreach and other community initiatives

On August 1 and 2, Toronto Public Library will host the **Maker Festival at Toronto Reference Library**, a two-day extravaganza of discovery, experimentation, and innovation. The festival will feature over 100 makers, tinkerers, inventors, artists, tech enthusiasts and hobbyists, and other exhibitors showcasing the latest in technology such as 3D printing, wearable technology, electronics, robotics, and more. Guests can take part in workshops to learn about soldering and other “maker” topics. They can also listen to speakers on a wide variety of tech topics or enjoy an array of interactive art installations throughout the building. Maker Festival drew over 8,000 participants last year, the first year it was held at Toronto Reference Library. This signature library event helps shine the light on the Library’s maker and innovation initiatives, including the Digital Innovation Hub technology spaces that are available at Toronto Reference Library, Fort York Branch and Scarborough Civic Centre Branch.

torontopubliclibrary.ca/innovate

On May 26 at 12:30 p.m., 100 Toronto Public Library librarians and ambassadors marched from the Toronto Reference Library to Nathan Phillips Square, launching the Library’s month-long 100 Reasons to Check Out TPL Campaign. During the march, the ambassadors mingled with the public, handed out bookmarks and encouraged people to sign up for and use their own library card. The group was greeted by Mayor John Tory in Nathan Phillips Square (representing Reason #32: One Card. Unlimited Access on the tpl100.ca website). The TPL100 Walk follows on the opening of Toronto Public Library’s 100th branch at Scarborough Civic Centre on May 20. The campaign will continue through the month of June.

tpl100.ca

On May 27 and 28, a team of five staff from Agincourt and Fairview branches conducted a **library card registration drive** for students at the Newnham campus of Seneca College. More than 200 library cards were issued and library staff talked to more than 600 Seneca students and staff. Besides issuing library cards, staff promoted the Library’s electronic resources, including ebooks, emagazines, digital video and music, Mango Language Learning and online databases, with an emphasis on how the Library’s leisure and lifelong learning resources complement the mostly academic resources at Seneca’s libraries. There are plans to conduct more registration drives this coming fall.

Toronto Newcomer Day, May 29 at Nathan Phillips Square, was a great success and, as a member of the City’s inter-divisional newcomer working group, Toronto Public Library was involved extensively in the planning of the event. Members of the Library’s multicultural services committee delivered two programs with award-winning author Teresa Toten and staffed a very popular information table to promote library services, collections, resources and programs, with an emphasis on electronic resources, including ebooks, emagazines, digital video and music in English and in other languages. The City Hall Branch of the Library offered two branch tours to LINC (Language Instruction for

Newcomers to Canada) classes. Overall, library staff spoke with 295 customers at the information table. Nearly 70 customers attended the two programs and 36 customers participated in the library tours.

The Library's Pride Alliance will march again this year in **Toronto's Pride Parade** on June 28, thanks to the generous support of Toronto Public Library and Toronto Public Library Workers Union Local 4948. All library staff and their family and friends are invited to participate in the parade, which is themed this year "Come Out and Play," inspired by the TORONTO GAMES 2015. Throughout the month of June, the four pillars at the front of Yorkville Branch – home to the Library's LGBT collection – will once again be wrapped in rainbow colours in support of the city's LGBT community.

In May, Toronto Public Library launched a **fine forgiveness campaign** at selected branches as an initiative of the City of Toronto Poverty Reduction Strategy. The goal is to increase access to library service for children and teens living in Neighbourhood Improvement Areas by waiving fines and fees that have accumulated on their library cards, giving them a fresh start. The campaign aims to increase awareness of library services and participation among youth and their families by removing the barrier of accrued fines and fear of potential fines, and encouraging use of existing library cards among children and teens. Children and teens living in select neighbourhoods who have blocked library cards are being offered a one-time chance to have all their fines waived through: a direct mail campaign; in-branch promotion and distribution; outreach to teens through programs like high school outreach; and targeted outreach to high needs families, for example, shelters and teen mom groups. The campaign will run through to the end of 2015 at 31 branch locations and at bookmobile stops servicing Neighbourhood Improvement Areas. Initial response has been good and by May 31, over 150 children and teens had their library privileges restored.

A **newcomer visual arts group** called Without Words, founded in 2014 by members of the English Conversation Circle at Mount Dennis Branch, recently held a display of their artwork at Mount Dennis for two weeks. The exhibit is currently at Artscape YoungPlace. Without Words is supported by the Learning Enrichment Foundation, with funding provided by the City of Toronto/Toronto Arts Council in partnership with ArtStarts.

Programs and exhibits

The **Make Some Noise** series at Toronto Public Library celebrated Black Music Month with special performances by Junia-T and Ania Soul, live in the stacks of Maria A. Shchuka Branch on June 5, a free all-ages show that drew an enthusiastic crowd of about 45 people. The event was hosted by Dalton Higgins, the proprietor behind the popular Rap N' Roll, a multi-genre live music series, and the author of six books including the first biography of Grammy-winning rapper Drake. Make Some Noise brings the Library's local music collection to life in the stacks of library branches around the city. The initiative gives people of all ages an opportunity to see Toronto's hottest indie bands live for free at their local library branches.

tpl.ca/noise

This year's summer program for teens, newly dubbed **tpl teens summer edition**, will shift into high gear at the beginning of July, offering Toronto teens a space, both virtual and in branches, to meet to share ideas, perspectives and their joy of reading. The program includes a list of top ten hot summer reads, contests, prizes and opportunities for teens to post book reviews on the tpl teen blog.

tpl.ca/teens

Branches

Fort York Branch celebrated a full year of library services in May. From traditional library services like storytimes to new services like 3D printing in the branch's Digital Innovation Hub, it has been a very busy year for the fledgling branch. Nearly 12,000 people attended more than 450 programs that saw kids building forts, teens creating microprocessors and adults learning about audio production, green screens and photography, to give just a few examples. Fort York staff also registered 5,279 people for library cards, and circulated/renewed nearly 219,000 items. Birthday celebrations included activities through the week, culminating with a birthday barbeque on May 29, the day the branch opened in 2014.

torontopubliclibrary.ca/fortyork

Mount Dennis Branch is a recipient of the 2015 Ontario Library Association (OLA) Library Building Award, which focused on library architectural design and transformation. The award presentation will occur at the Annual Institute on the Library as Place being held at the Waterloo Delta in Waterloo on July 6 and 7. The OLA Library Building Award encourages and showcases excellence in the architectural design and planning of libraries in Ontario. The award is divided into two alternating categories (Library Architectural and Design Transformation, and New Library Buildings) and runs every third year to allow a critical number of projects in all types of libraries to accumulate.

Collections

Canadian Public Libraries for Fair Ebook Pricing, a coalition including the Canadian Library Association, Canadian Urban Libraries Council, the Ontario Library Association, and Toronto Public Library, is continuing in its efforts to raise awareness of the high ebook prices charged by multinational publishers. Despite significantly increased use and demand for ebooks, Canadian public libraries face challenges in ensuring universal access to this content. Some multinational publishers charge libraries as much as three to five times more for ebooks than consumers, while others place caps and time limits on use. This means there are fewer titles and fewer copies for readers to discover. Coalition members have worked individually and in partnership on advocacy efforts since 2010. The City Librarian hosted a Twitter chat on June 17 to assist in raising awareness of this issue.

fairpricingforlibraries.org

Prepared by Toronto Public Library staff