

Chair's Report October 26, 2015

Partnerships, outreach and other community initiatives

Michael Coteau, Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport announced on September 24 the launch of province-wide consultations on the development of **Ontario's first culture strategy**. Library organizations were consulted early in this process and were referenced in the Ministry's discussion paper as "essential spaces for cultural experience, community life, and access to services." The government has brought together a Culture Strategy Advisory Group, which will provide expertise and diverse perspectives on the role of culture in Ontario and the development of the culture strategy. Jane Hilton, president of the Ontario Library Association, is the library sector representative on this group. Consultations will run until December.

On October 20, **Ontario Public Library Week** was launched at Toronto Public Library's newest branch, Scarborough Civic Centre. Library supporters from within Ontario kicked off a week of province-wide events recognizing the unique qualities of Ontario's libraries. Library Board Chair Ron Carinci, City Librarian Vickery Bowles, Branch Head Trina Preece, and Ontario Library Association Vice President Todd Kyle participated in a news conference and a tour of the branch that included the newest Toronto Public Library digital innovation hub. Also at the launch, Deputy Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport Drew Fagan announced the Ontario Public Library Award shortlist, which recognizes innovation, excellence and creativity in public library service.

Toronto Public Library participated in the development of the City Of Toronto **Oakwood Vaughan Strategy** that aims to improve social and economic opportunity and overall community wellbeing in the neighbourhood. The Strategy will be considered at Council on November 3, 2015. The Library is undertaking a number of initiatives at Oakwood Village Library and Arts Centre and at Maria A. Shchuka Branch in support of the Strategy, including Artist in the Library and Business Inc. at Oakwood, as well as partnering with Fairbank Memorial Community Centre to provide an after school homework club for children. As part of the Board's 2016 service enhancements aligning with the Poverty Reduction Strategy, subject to budget approval, a Youth Hub will open at Maria A. Shchuka in the fall of 2016. As well as exploring opportunities to partner with community organizations such as Arts Starts, Urban Arts and NIA Centre for the Arts, the Library continues to participate in the community's Safe Growth Working Group and to explore opportunities for youth in conjunction with the Youth Outreach Worker at Fairbank Memorial Community Centre. Expansion to year-round Sunday service at Maria A. Shchuka Branch and a pop-up learning lab are proposed for 2017.

After-School Recreation Care (ARC), an after-school program for children ages six to 12 is being offered for the first time this fall at a library branch in partnership with Toronto Parks, Forestry, and Recreation. The ARC program is designed to enhance life skills by promoting physical activity, health and wellness, and nutrition, in a welcoming and inclusive environment. The Library regularly visits ARC sites across the City to promote library programs and services. Mimico Centennial is the first library branch to

host an ARC program. This pilot project offerings exciting opportunities for the Library to partner with Parks, Forestry & Recreation and introduce library services to children in the program in meaningful ways. Children are encouraged to use the branch and to use Book a Librarian for one on one research and homework support. The Library is planning other ways to share resources, including involving ARC children in the Artists in the Library program.

Library Settlement Partnerships (LSP) week took place from October 13-24, coinciding with Canadian Citizenship Week (October 12-18) and Ontario Public Library Week (October 18-24). Toronto Public Library, along with eight local settlement agencies, offered a variety of events in several of its LSP branches. This year's LSP Week theme was Music from Around the World, celebrating newcomer contributions to the Canadian music scene and introducing Canadian music to newcomer communities. Celebrations included multicultural musical performances, visits by citizenship judges at five branches, a newcomer youth art exhibit at North York Central Library, library open houses and community information fairs. This year's LSP Week marked the seventh anniversary of LSP. In 2014, more than 1,200 people attended LSP Week special events. The Library offers LSP programs and services year round at 14 branches.

At the **launch of the multilingual book *The Best of All Worlds*** at Agincourt Branch on October 4, 270 people heard eight multilingual authors read, and engaged in activities that promoted the broad range of services and collections Toronto Public Library has to offer. Copies of the book have been purchased for the Library's collection. York South-Weston MPP Laura Albanese attended the event, as did a reporter from Rogers TV.

Programs and exhibits

The **9th annual Sybille Pantazzi Memorial Lecture**, featuring book artist and associate professor at the Ontario College of Art and Design University George Walker, drew a standing room crowd of more than 135 and was very well received. Walker presented an exciting and engaging multimedia show featuring illustrations for Lewis Carroll's Alice books, from Carroll's original manuscript, to iconic images of 19th century English illustrator John Tenniel. The lecture, endowed by Jane Dobell in memory of her cousin Sybille Pantazzi, who was the librarian for the AGO for 32 years, up until she retired in 1980, took place on October 8 at Lillian H. Smith Branch. The 9th Annual Pantazzi Lecture will be available as a podcast in the near future.

October is **Small Business Month**, and although Toronto Public Library has great small business programs all year long, we offer some of our highlights in the fall, including the Entrepreneur in Residence and the Business Inc. program. In 2014, 84 percent of the people who took the Business Inc. program said it strengthened their business skills and 75 percent said it increased their confidence to launch their business. Throughout October, the Library has also promoted the great collection of free online resources customers can access with their library card: ebooks and eaudiobooks on leadership, management and financial planning; databases like Financial Post Advisor, Value Line and Scott's Directory; and current and back issues of emagazines including *The Economist* and *Kiplinger's Personal Finance*. Safari Tech and Business Online provide

instant access to ebooks and videos from major technology and business publishers and cover topics like web and software development, management, marketing, and more.
tpl.ca/business

Prepared by Toronto Public Library staff