



MEMO

Date: April 28, 2014

To: Jane Pyper, City Librarian

From: Heather Rumball, President, Toronto Public Library Foundation

RE: **Toronto Reference Library as venue for 10th anniversary of The Book Lover's Ball**

SUMMARY

This Memo requests that Toronto Public Library approve the use of the Toronto Reference Library branch as a venue for the 10th anniversary of *The Book Lover's Ball*, subject to the Foundation's confirmation of the costing feasibility of hosting the event in this location.

The event would take place on Thursday, February 5, 2015. For set-up purposes, the Toronto Public Library Foundation would require partial closure to the public of select spaces during opening hours as well as full closure of the Toronto Reference Library as of 3:00 p.m. on February 5th.

Hosting *The Book Lover's Ball* at the Reference Library provides an opportunity to showcase the completed revitalized building to an influential audience, expand the scope of the event to include a wider audience and more closely connect the event to the cause it benefits. Continuing with the tradition of hosting this event on a Thursday night is important for the Foundation in order to engage corporate sponsors in supporting this event and to attract the target demographic of individual attendees.

BENEFITS OF HOSTING THE BOOK LOVER'S BALL AT THE REFERENCE LIBRARY

In 2015, *The Book Lover's Ball* will celebrate its 10th anniversary and our goal is to raise a minimum of \$700k, an increase of \$200k over the 2014 event.

Hosting *The Book Lover's Ball* at the Reference Library – on just this one occasion – provides a unique opportunity to create an exceptional event and to gain additional event sponsorship support and event attendance. A first-ever gala event in the Library itself provides a compelling case for people to attend, just as events held by the Art Gallery of Ontario, the Royal Ontario Museum and the Canadian Opera in their own facilities do.

With the completion of the Reference Library revitalization project, hosting the event at the Library also provides the opportunity to showcase its spaces and collections, and to highlight what donor support helps make possible, thereby encouraging potential future donations.

While plans are not yet confirmed, we are in the process of exploring ways to showcase major elements of the Reference Library by utilizing them to host components of the event. Areas of the Library that we are considering showcasing include the Entrance Cube, TD Gallery, Browsery, Idea Garden, Meet Up, Study pods and window seating, as well as The Bram & Bluma Appel Salon. Of note is that the capacity of the Appel Salon is not large enough to host the event itself, but hosting a component of The Book Lover's Ball audience in it will introduce a new audience to its potential as a venue for private events.

Other benefits of hosting the event at the Reference Library include the opportunity to:

- Make *The Book Lover's Ball* more accessible to a broader audience through the addition of an “after party”, tickets for which will be more widely affordable (approximately \$125 instead of \$750)
- Re-engage **re:vitalize** – Toronto Reference Library Campaign donors
- Introduce non or lapsed users to today's vibrant Library
- Offer guests a unique experience and an opportunity to connect directly with the cause through onsite engagement and fundraising initiatives

SERVICE IMPACTS

The Foundation appreciates the importance of minimizing the service impacts of hosting a major event in the Reference Library and has consulted with senior Library management and Appel Salon staff. At the same time, we are striving to contain event set-up costs and are in the process of consulting with outside suppliers. Set up for and hosting of an event of this scale will necessitate partial closure to the public of select spaces during open hours as well as full closure of the Toronto Reference Library as of 3:00 p.m. on February 5, 2015. Based on our explorations to date, we are confident the public service impacts detailed in the following staged set-up will be the maximum required in order to contain costs and ensure the greatest possible amount of fundraising revenue from the event will be returned to the Library:

Wednesday, February 4, 2015 / 9:30 p.m. - 7:00 a.m.

- Atrium - AV and production set up including rigging and staging install, partial load in of Décor (to be housed in the Appel Salon and Beeton Auditorium).

Thursday, February 5, 2015 / 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

- Atrium:
 - 9:00 a.m. 3:00 p.m. – window area in the Browsery
 - 1 p.m.– 3:00 p.m. – begin set up in main area of Atrium
 - Throughout the day, all other areas will be accessible to the public
- Second Floor:
 - 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. – full closure of the second floor to the public; the second floor would remain accessible to library staff
- Third Floor (pending determination that this space will be needed):
 - 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. - closure of study tables (north and south)
 - Throughout the day, all other areas will be accessible to the public

- Entire Branch
 - 3:00 p.m. – full closure of the Reference Library to the public

Friday, February 6, 2015 / 1:00 am – 6:00 am

- Atrium, Second and Third Floor – dismantle event

FINANCIAL IMPACTS

There will be no financial impact to the library, as the Foundation will cover all the event costs as well as costs for cleaning, security and additional staff needed on site for the event.

REQUEST

It is requested that the Toronto Public Library:

1. approve, in principle, full closure of the Toronto Reference Library as of 3:00pm on February 5th, as well as partial closure of select other spaces during open hours as detailed in this report.

BACKGROUND

Every February, *The Book Lover's Ball* is the only fundraiser to bring together over 600 library Lover's with Canada's top literary talent at an unforgettable black tie affair in support of Toronto Public Library – one of the busiest urban public library systems in the world.

The Book Lover's Ball is the premier fundraising event of Toronto Public Library Foundation. Through this event, the Foundation raises money in support of Toronto's Library. As well, there is a focus on friend raising and awareness raising.

Since the inaugural event in 2006, the Foundation has raised \$3.5m through sponsorship, table/ticket sales and onsite fundraising, all in support of programs and services, collections and community spaces at Toronto Public Library.

Over the past seven years, the event has been hosted at The Fairmont Royal York and has consisted of a reception, dinner, onsite fundraising and a novel inspired show. The Book Lover's Ball is has been recognized as a must attend event in Toronto and has received many awards over the years including:

Winner of 2 international and 1 national award:

- 2013 Special Events Magazine Gala Award for Best Fundraising Event – BLB 2013 (international)
- 2013 International Special Events Society Esprit Award for Best Event for a Non-Profit Organization (Over \$200,000) – BLB 2012 (international)
- 2013 Canadian Event Industry Award for Most Outstanding Event (\$100,000-\$300,000) – BLB 2012 (national)

Nominated for numerous national and international awards:

- 2014 Canadian Event Industry Awards for Best Fundraising Event, Best Event for a High Profile Charity, Best Entertainment Production, Most Outstanding Event (Over \$300,000) – BLB 2013 (award ceremony is March 27)

- 2013 National BizBash Event Style Award for Best Event Entertainment Act – BLB 2013 (North American)
- 2013 Canadian Event Industry Awards for Best Entertainment Production, Best Fundraising Event & Best Event Produced for a High Profile Charitable Organization – BLB 2012 (3 national nominations)
- 2013 International Special Events Society Esprit Awards for Best Social Event and Best Entertainment Production – BLB 2012 (international)

SIGNATURE:



Heather Rumball, President, Toronto Public Library Foundation
416-393-7134; hrumball@torontopubliclibrary.ca