

Shelf life

TORONTO PUBLIC LIBRARY NEWS AND VIEWS

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Librarians do Toronto

*Super-conference goes ahead,
see story inside...*

“The public library remains what it was in the 19th century. That is, the guarantor of equity of access, no barriers with respect to age, with respect to income or with respect to physical disabilities.”

— CLA President Wendy Newman in the
Toronto Star

“In this technological age, librarians are the ultimate search engines. They keep us, regardless of our incomes, education, or hometowns, information-literate enough to run our lives, our businesses and our nations.”

— ALA President Maurice J. (Mitch)
Freedman and
CLA President Wendy Newman in the
Toronto Star

A BORROWER BE



June 19, opening day crowds at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre. An enthusiastic crowd warmed to the city immediately.

City plays host to large gathering of intrepid librarians

Over 17,500 international participants brave SARS media storm to attend joint ALA/CLA super-conference June 19 – 25

IT WAS EXPECTED to set new attendance records. Organizers were wowed by the number of early registrants. The first American Library Association (ALA) and Canadian Library Association (CLA) joint annual conference in over 40 years was on track to be a huge success.

Suddenly a previously unknown and virulent disease dubbed SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome) had arrived in Toronto.

Against the backdrop of a worldwide health scare, Toronto Public Library — with tremendous help from the City of Toronto — had to fight hard to keep plans for the conference alive.

In the end, as the crisis continued to simmer, the ALA, CLA, Toronto Public Library and the City of Toronto, along with key business partners, were able to work through very diffi-

cult circumstances to keep the conference in Toronto. Over 17,500 attendees joined colleagues from around the world to learn more about the newest practices in serving communities, including TPL workshops on homelessness, budgeting, diversity and youth programs.

Preliminary economic benefits to the City of Toronto for hosting the conference are estimated to be in excess of \$30 million.

A warm round of thanks is owed to the many conference delegates and vendors who came to the city when many other groups were cancelling their plans.

Conference highlights

Featured speakers included Vermont Congressman Bernie Sanders, sponsor of the *Freedom to Read Protection Act*; Ralph Nader,

See ALA/CLA on back page ...

“When I visited the reference library, I was told by people there that Toronto ... is the most heavily used library city in North America... I was astounded at what a hangout it is.”

Andy Barrie, Host CBC Radio Metro Morning, June 19, 2003

“Librarians are turning the tables this week, speaking out loud instead of hissing ‘shhhhh’. This week the American Library Association and Canadian Library Association held their joint annual conference in Toronto.”

CBC National, June 24, 2003



Pre-conference co-sponsor, Whitehots President Russ Culver and City Librarian Josephine Bryant.



The pre-conference panel included Gordon Hume, City Controller, City of London; Russ Mills, Dean of Media and Design, Algonquin College (formerly Editor, *Ottawa Citizen*); Glen Murray, Mayor, City of Winnipeg; Glenn Miller, Vice-President, Education and Research, Canadian Urban Institute.

Keynote message: Diversity

Excerpt from City Librarian Josephine Bryant’s pre-conference presentation to Cities, Neighbourhoods and Libraries forum

TORONTO IS ONE of the most culturally and linguistically diverse cities in the world. Here, you can hear over 150 languages spoken. Not only were 49 percent of the residents born outside Canada, but one out of every five has immigrated here since 1990.

With 98 branches, Toronto Public Library (TPL) blankets the city, from downtown to the suburbs. The library enjoys 18 million visits a

year — more than the Air Canada Centre, the CN Tower, the Art Gallery of Ontario and the Royal Ontario Museum combined — and circulates over 30 million items from our library branches every year.

An integrating force

Library buildings house people as well as materials — those who come for contact

See Keynote on back page ...

"I feel...an enormous gratitude to you and I hope that it is brought home to you every day how much difference you make in the lives of individual human beings..."

Gloria Steinem, speaking of librarians, Conference Guest Speaker

"You have chosen to defend freedom in the deepest sense of the word."

Vermont Congressman Bernie Sanders, as quoted in the Toronto Star June 22, 2003

"Public libraries are quietly spurring a public renaissance in cities."

Nova Res Urbus, June 20, 2003

"...Toronto's Public Libraries... are a great equalizer and should be...available to everyone."

Robert Fisher, Host, Metro Morning, June 23, 2003

"As image-busting continues eventually the word will get out that 'librarians are vibrant, enthusiastic people.'"

Kerry Gillespie, Toronto Star, June 14, 2003

"This joint is jumping"

Headline, Toronto Sun, June 24, 2003

"Cleveland librarian Cal Zunt... said she's certainly planning to go home and 'share the message' about this 'wonderful, gracious city.'"

Sue-Ann Levy, Toronto Sun, June 24, 2003



TVO Chair and CEO Isabel Bassett, Award winning food writer and TPL supporter Sara Waxman and City Councillor Kyle Rae.



National Librarian Roch Carrier.



Architect Raymond Moriyama.



Britnell's President, Jane Cooney.



Chris Sheriff-Scott, Senior VP, MintoUrban Communities.



Andrew Sancton, Chair, Department of Political Science, University of Western Ontario; Honourable David Crombie, President and CEO, Canadian Urban Institute (formerly Mayor, City of Toronto); Councillor Mike Feldman, Ward 10, City of Toronto; Joe Berridge, Partner, Urban Strategies.

Canadian writers fêted

Friends gather to honour Canadian authors

A GALA RECEPTION sponsored by the Toronto Public Library and the Random House Group of Companies was held June 23 at Hart House to showcase some of Canada's most distinguished authors.

"One of our goals during the Conference is to expose Canadian authors to one of the largest book-buying audiences in the

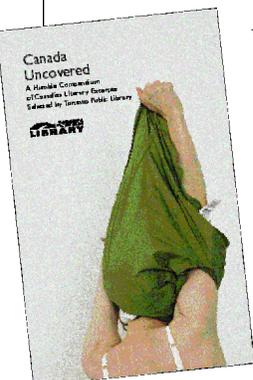
See Writers fêted on back page ...



Lynne Howarth, Dean, Faculty of Information Science, University of Toronto, 1995-2003.



City of Toronto Chief Administrator Shirley Hoy and author/activist June Callwood.



ALA/CLA Joint Conference

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consumer advocate; Naomi Klein, activist and author of *No Logo* and humourist Lynn Johnston, creator of the popular *For Better or for Worse* cartoon strip.

Award-winning author and broadcaster Rex Murphy and Belzberg Professor of Conflict Management at the University of Toronto Janice Gross Stein enthralled the audience during the CLA President's Program.

Acclaimed author Margaret Atwood and her seminal book *The Handmaid's Tale* took centerstage as part of the first-ever One Book, One Conference program, drawing attention and awareness to the strength and depth of Canadian authors. As an added bonus, Random House donated more than 100 of Atwood's newest book *Oryx*

and *Crake* to conference participants.

A gala celebration was held at Toronto Public Library's Lillian H. Smith branch in honour of the 2003 winners of the Canadian Library Association Children's Book of the Year Award.

Toronto Public Library was awarded the prestigious John Cotton Dana Library Public Relations Award for its success in promoting the library's performing arts series.

Keynote message

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with their fellow citizens as well as those seeking a quiet place to study.

Libraries tap and inspire creative development in our society. Collections preserve cultural ties, foster the integration of newcomers to their adopted society and produce readers up for the challenges of the information age. The public library is an important integrat-

ing force for all segments of society: rich and poor, new Canadians and old, babies and seniors. Public libraries promote community at the local neighbourhood level and contribute to citizenship and a sense of belonging.

Governments and the private sector have recognized the range of assets associated with the library. Trusted, popular, accessible to all – the public library in concert with its city and other partners can accelerate and intensify the process of community development.

Poised and ready

Recent commitments by the federal and provincial governments – and an upswing in philanthropic activity – provide some basis for optimism that a cultural renaissance in Toronto is imminent. The city is set to shake the impression of resting on its laurels – and the Toronto Public Library is poised and ready to address any of the challenges that it – and its city – will face.

Writers fêted

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world," said City Librarian Josephine Bryant. To that end, a booklet entitled *Canada Uncovered: A Humble Compendium of Canadian Literary Excerpts* was produced and offered as a gift to conference attendees.

The gala also provided an opportunity for the Library to thank its closest friends and supporters for their long-standing patronage.



A remarkable gathering of over 60 Canadian authors, unlikely to be repeated again.

Shelf Life is published 10 times a year by the Toronto Public Library Board, 789 Yonge Street, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M4W 2G8. Marketing & Communications Office: 416-393-7117.

The Toronto Public Library Board meets monthly from September through June, in Committee Room 2 at Toronto City Hall, 100 Queen Street West. Meetings are open to the public.

The Library Board includes eight citizen members and seven City Councillors.

Board Members

Gillian Mason, Chair
William Booth, Vice-Chair
Councillor Maria Augimeri
Meyer Brownstone
Councillor Olivia Chow
Councillor Mike Feldman
Rick Goldsmith

Mizan Ibrahim
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