
HoOPLA

The Electronic Newsletter of the Ontario Public Library Association

May 2003

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FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

Happy spring!

We Ontarians find ourselves in a unique situation right now. We know that within the next year we will be called to vote in at least two elections, municipal and provincial. This makes it a crucial time for public libraries as these two levels of government influence libraries most directly. By "crucial" I mean we are at a crossroads. As I see it, we face at least 2 routes to

choose from: either doing nothing and accepting our fate as it falls; or taking steps to try and influence the attitudes of those who will figure prominently in our future. See the feature article in this issue for ways to interpret library needs to soon-to-be-elected officials.

In my opinion, the first option, doing nothing, verges on defeatism and is unacceptable. Too often I have heard colleagues complain that many politicians do not understand libraries or appreciate the value libraries provide to communities and to individuals. (Don't forget, though, many do appreciate libraries very well and we must avoid alienating them by falling into the easy trap of speaking in gross generalizations.)

We cannot, however, blame the politicians. If they do not understand libraries, it is because we have not done a good enough job of informing them about libraries and their value. I think the Ontario Library Boards Association emphasis on the role of libraries in community development will help inform politicians in the long run.

In order to try and make a more immediate impact, I will be writing a letter to Chief Executive Officers of Ontario public libraries encouraging them to send all candidates in the municipal elections a library card. I will suggest that the card be sent as an invitation to candidates that they use the library's resources; after all, the informational resources of the public library are fundamental to the democratic process. I will encourage CEOs to tell those candidates who already have a library card to give the mailed library card to a colleague or a constituent or a child who does not have one yet.

In the context of this offer to the candidates, it should be easier for the library to remind candidates that the public library is a municipal "local board" that derives most of its funding from the local council. They should see it as part of their job description to be informed about their local library. We will be seen to speaking to them from a position of strength rather than approaching them merely as supplicants.

In the same vein, a very important report has just been released, Citizens First 3. (See more detail on these reports elsewhere in HoOPLA.) These studies measured the service reputation of dozens of public and private services across Canada. All our local candidates need to know that, repeatedly, public libraries have ranked among the highest of public service providers, and our rating is increasing, at 79 out of 100 in Citizens First 3. Only emergency services (fire and ambulance) rank higher. When private services were included, in Citizens First 2000, libraries ranked higher than shopping malls in terms of how the public perceived us to be delivering service.

Personally, I think the most exciting aspect surrounding the Citizens First phenomenon is that the federal and provincial governments have gotten together and created something actually called, the "Institute for CitizenCentred Service". Maybe it will be up to us, public libraries, to extend the vision to our municipalities.

Let's do it!

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2.1 FUTURE LIBRARIES IN THE GOLDEN HORSESHOE -AND ACROSS THE OCEAN

Mississauga Public Library recently played host to a day of interaction as development staff, PR/marketing staff and C.E.O.'s from 20 different Ontario public libraries joined together to learn and brainstorm. Several of us were invited to join the "Golden Horseshoe" gang.

Don Mills, CEO of Mississauga PL opened the day by talking about the CELPLO vision of marketing, followed by Carol Finch, of Market Probe, discussing the survey results of the Ontario Public Library project of 2000. After lunch Karyn Stock MacDonald, the Business Planner for the City of Mississauga, brought us practical information on market research resources and tools, doing market research and surveys, plus a hands-on learning session on how to facilitate a focus group. And that is where the fun stuff really started as that room full of library people brought a wealth of ideas and interest to "Our Joint Vision of Ontario Public Libraries".

Our many fantastic ideas produced an enthralling vision of our future libraries. We developed a magnificent embodiment of a future where

Ontario Public Libraries:

- will have proactive helpful staff
- utilising leading edge technology
- to put people totally in touch!
- in a vibrant alive setting
- where everybody is welcome

and

there's an attitude of need it = find it because we've got lots of stuff!

There was a huge variety of possibilities linked together, ideas and possibilities which started to show just how far we could all step forward if the OPL community chooses to work together. I found it a strengthening experience to spend the day with forward-looking library staff from so many different public libraries ... and it made me eager for more! Think of the marvellous opportunities that could open up

And then just last week our Business Librarian here at Barrie Public Library sent me a weblink to something which seems to be a living embodiment of what was envisioned in that focus group. London, England must have somehow received our thoughts of spacious, light spaces full of warmth and welcome and an abundance of information in visually appealing attractive displays to engage many satisfied users ... and they built it into this:

http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/2859845.stm. Go check out the link to see.

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2.2. BRIT STUDY SAYS DIGITAL DIVIDE HURTS RURAL BUSINESS

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/online/news/0,12597,951140,00.html>

Rural firms 'hit by digital divide'

Simon Jeffery

Wednesday May 7, 2003

A growing digital divide between town and country is hampering the development of rural businesses, a {British} report warned today.

The study said that 95% of urban households have access to affordable broadband internet services but only 26% of market towns, 7% of rural villages and 1% of more remote areas can receive similar services.

The Countryside Agency's 2003 State of the Countryside report warns that such restrictions could put rural businesses at a disadvantage, leaving them unable to compete fairly with urban businesses with high speed internet access.

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2.3 OLA BOARD OF DIRECTORS ANNOUNCES CHAIR OF THE ONTARIO DIGITAL LIBRARY BUSINESS PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE.

The Ontario Library Association is pleased to announce that Peter Rogers (former OLA President and Chair of the Hamilton Public Library Board) has been named by the OLA Board of Directors as the Chair of the Ontario Digital Library Business Plan Steering Committee.

The Steering Committee is responsible for development of the Ontario Digital Library (ODL) business plan, securing support within the library stakeholder communities, and the management of the planners and the planning process.

The other members of the ODL Business Plan Steering Committee (who represent school libraries, public libraries and libraries in colleges and universities) will be announced shortly.

The Committee will work throughout the summer with a final report due by September 30, 2003. For more information about the ODL see the OLA Issues section of the OLA website.

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2.4 CITIZENS FIRST: CELEBRATE OUR SUCCESS!

Not since the Godfather movies has a more important series come out than the 3 "Citizens First" publications. They make libraries look great! Every library should get a copy from the Institute of Public Administration of Canada (go to <http://www.ipaciapc.ca/english/menu.htm>, click on "What's New", then click on "Publications"). Check out the summary at the website of the Institute for CitizenCentred Service <http://iccsisac.org/eng/cf02.htm>).

This is not a study that sat on a bureaucrat's shelf. Citizens First was first done in 1998 and repeated (and further developed) in 2000 and 2002. Citizens First 3 was sponsored by the federal government, 8 provinces and several cities.

The foreword to Citizens First 3 deserves to be quoted at length as it summarizes succinctly the general thrust of the Citizens First movement:

"Governments across Canada and around the world are embracing a "citizencentred" approach to

service delivery. Slowly shedding the internally focussed (or "insideout") perspective that too often dominates large organizations, the public sector is increasingly adopting an "outsidein" perspective when delivering service to the public a perspective where the interests and opinions of citizens are instrumental in defining expectations, setting priorities, and establishing service standards.

"The original Citizens First study (published in 1998) was a landmark step in this evolution. Through Citizens First, Canadians across the country were asked what they thought about the delivery of public services, what expectations they held, and what they saw as the priorities for improvement. Sponsored by federal, provincial, territorial and municipal governments, Citizens First identified the drivers of satisfaction with service delivery, dispelled myths about the relative quality of public services, and highlighted the importance of service standards.

"Citizens First 2000 picked up where the original Citizens First report left off, confirming major findings of the 1998 project, tracking trends, and extending the discussion to new areas such [as] the drivers of citizen satisfaction as they relate to specific delivery channels (facetoface, telephone, and electronic service delivery).

"Citizens First 3 is the latest in this series of worldclass research initiatives, once again breaking new ground and offering governments across Canada an invaluable understanding of what their citizens expect and experience with respect to service delivery. In particular, Citizens First 3 focuses on the challenges associated with multichannel service delivery. As citizens grow increasingly comfortable with new electronic delivery channels such as websites, e-mail, and kiosks, governments are searching for ways to manage seamlessly the service experience of citizens, regardless of which (or how many) channels they choose to use.

"Citizens First 3 also breaks new ground by exploring the relationship between service quality and confidence in government. In fact, more than any other finding, this analysis may prove to be the lasting legacy of this research. Through Citizens First 3 we have quantitative evidence demonstrating that the quality of service that citizens receive has a direct impact on the level of confidence that they have in their democratic institutions."

For ease, I will refer to the three publications as: CF1 (for the first), CF2 (for 2000) and CF3 (for the latest).

As a librarian, the striking news from CF1 was that public libraries ranked so highly and were shown so prominently to have one of the best service reputations in the country. (In CF1 & CF2, which also measured private sector bodies, libraries ranked above shopping malls and all other private bodies.) Our citizens, our customers, appreciate what we do for them.

Many of us have made use of Citizens First findings to tout the effectiveness of public libraries, especially in an attempt to persuade the federal and the Ontario governments to "hire" libraries to deliver services on their behalf. CF3 should help bolster our argument as libraries continue to rank extremely high. CF3 does not measure Ontario's "Government Information Centres" (GICs) but it does measure the federal Access to Information programs (1800Canada; Canada.gc.ca & Service Canada) at 24% lower than libraries.

If governments want to achieve a very high service ranking very quickly, partnership with public libraries would seem to be the fast track route to take. Interestingly, expectations of Ontarians for service improvements in the public service have increased by 29% since CF2. Ironically, the Ontario government itself may have contributed to this increase as it has set out on an aggressive

program to integrate and improve service delivery (a coauthor of the foreword was at the time, Assistant Deputy Minister of the Integrated Service Delivery Division of the Ontario Ministry of Consumer & Business Services).

One table in CF3 caused me to chuckle as it appears so obvious: "Access is easier when you already know how to get the service". What wasn't obvious to me was that ease of access improves when you realize that you do not know how to get the service. The difficult searches come, I guess, when you start thinking you know what you're doing (when you don't) and you waste time based on false confidence.

CF3 spends a lot of time analyzing the finding process, including combinations of the number of channels used and the number of problems encountered and the effect these have on how the citizen perceives access to be easy or not. I had to remind myself many times that CF looks at public libraries as delivering traditional library service (we are grouped under "recreation and culture"). CF is not looking at libraries as being one means by which citizens choose to try to access government information or services, although we know that many of our users do come to the library for that purpose.

CF3 also devotes an entire chapter to patterns in Internet use. It does not refer to the extent to which citizens may come to the library to use the Internet and thereby access government sites. It does, however, conclude with the following paragraph:

"There is a common tendency to think of the channels as one means of accessing government services, and to think of the traditional channels as a different or alternative means. Citizens do not take this view. They are happy to use any convenient combination of traditional and channels in getting a single service. Multiple channels are the rule rather than the exception."

Could we argue that public libraries, in fulfilling their access to information role, are already serving as a conduit for multiple channel access to government service? Would this not be further argument for why the federal and Ontario governments should engage our services on their behalf?

The sponsors of CF3 are excited by what the Foreword calls CF3's "lasting legacy": "Through Citizens First 3 we have quantitative evidence demonstrating that the quality of service that citizens receive has a direct impact on the level of confidence that they have in their democratic institutions."

Clearly, it is not simply a matter of improving quality of service because citizens want it. The legitimacy of our entire democratic system is at stake.

Libraries are already here! Our rating is high because citizens recognize, at least intuitively, that libraries are good for the community. The left wing and the right wing (and even the wing nuts) value us because they know they can come to the library for the information they can use to support their particular point of view. Libraries serve citizens of all ages. Even citizens who don't use us support us because we are good for the (take your pick): children, seniors, families, economically disadvantaged, students,

Although I find myself heartened by what I read in CF3, I also see some caveats.

The most obvious warning is that the various components of public service are working hard and fast to increase their service rankings. If we want to continue to be seen to be at the top, we have

to begin to work hard and fast to improve ourselves as well. We cannot be complacent. We cannot simply say, "We're good, so you should work with us" or "you should support us". We must improve!

CF1 identified the drivers of customer satisfaction, the five things that really make a difference in how citizens rank services:

- Timeliness (I was satisfied with the amount of time it took to get the service)
- Knowledge, Competence (Staff were knowledgeable and competent)
- Staff were courteous/Went the extra mile (.... to get what I needed)
- Fairness (I was treated fairly)
- Outcome (I got what I needed)

We libraries need to find out which of those drivers matter most to our clientele and figure out why our ranking is only 79 and not 100. Then we have to improve.

CF3 dedicates an entire chapter to service standards and how they are key to service improvement strategies. CF3 is referring to published levels of service an organization promises to deliver to its clients. These service standards play an important role in shaping client expectations. How many public libraries in Ontario have set service standards? How can we know which standards will be most relevant if we don't have a good sense of what drivers most influence our users?

We also receive a pretty broad hint from CF3 as to how to best measure our service as we strive to improve. The following paragraph says it all:

"The Common Measurement Tool (CMT) has been designed to assist public sector organizations in two tasks, 1) conducting service quality research, and 2) benchmarking with comparable public sector service providers. The CMT model is a model survey that contains a wide range of service quality questions. The questions can be used as is, or modified, or added to, in order to create the survey that is best for any organization. The CMT has been developed in parallel with the Citizens First research. Citizens First provides a global analysis of government services in Canada, while the CMT gives individual service organizations a template for conducting their own client research. The CMT is available from the Institute for CitizenCentred Service, www.iccs.isac.org. In addition to support CMT users, the Institute maintains a confidential database of CMT research results and provides benchmarking reports to participating organizations."

I know! I know! We already have loads of libraryspecific measurement tools and we have our professional organizations and we have the OLS. And I say that all the library resources are fine and valuable and should not be discarded or ignored. However, if we don't try and connect them to the rest of the world, don't we run the risk of languishing forever in library lala land?

CF3 closes with some thoughts about how the public sector should prioritize its efforts to improve. Most evocative to me is the statement: "The news that service quality is improving needs to be widely communicated...." Should not the library world start by widely communicating the high ranking of public libraries?! I wonder how many of our colleagues know about Citizens First? I wonder how many of you have boasted to someone outside the library community about how well libraries did?

Celebrate our success!

CF3 continues by suggesting that: "Service improvement awards, sharing of best practices, and breaking down barriers within and between jurisdictions to encourage more seamless service need to be more common".

Yes! The Award for Service Improvement! The Award for Breaking Down Barriers to Service! The continuous intake, no limit on the number of awards, Best Practices Award! Maybe they could all be subsets of the OPLA Citizens First Annual Awards?

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3. AROUND THE PROVINCE

3.1 BARRIE NEWSLETTER ON-LINE & FULLY ACCESSIBLE

Our quarterly newsletter, "@ Your Library", is now also available for our patrons to read online in PDF format. We are also very excited to announce that we have launched a new initiative to make our newsletter accessible to the blind and visually impaired. Starting with the Fall 2002 publication our quarterly newsletter will be available through our website in a PDF version formatted to be easily used by patrons using screen readers. Visit our website at www.library.barrie.on.ca and go to the What's New! page.

Barrie Public Library would like to give a special thank you to the people who helped make this possible. Thank you to Mr. Jay Mendham, (blind himself) one of our Library patrons, for bringing this possibility to our attention and thanks also to our newsletter designers, Graphic Evolution Ltd. for working with us on this project.

3.2 A TRULY ACCESSIBLE LIBRARY FOR EVERYONE: LETTER FROM A BLIND PATRON.

Most people are astonished to learn that totally blind people also take full advantage of library services and materials. Current technology is rapidly eliminating boundaries that have plagued the blind until fairly recently. Using a "screen reader" (an electronic, synthesized voice designed to verbally read aloud the text that would normally appear on a computer monitor screen) a blind person now has the ability to take advantage of electronic text and computer programs like the Barrie Public Library's new online catalog. If a standard "scanner" is attached to the computer being used by a blind person, that individual can use any of the readily available "optical character recognition" software packages to scan and verbally read printed material such as books, newspapers and other periodicals and materials available through the library.

With this equipment, a blind person has access to the Library resources that are enjoyed by his or her sighted peers. Now, with the changes made to the online catalog, that blind person may search for and select the article or book they require, then borrow and scan it. Once scanned, the publication is then fully accessible to that blind person.

The feeling of independence generated this way is worth far more than can be easily expressed. It's a credit to the City of Barrie that the Barrie Public Library is ensuring that access barriers are being eliminated for all of our residents.

I really appreciate the time and effort that you are putting into this and am sure other blind or visually hampered people in the Barrie area will join me in thanking you for your work toward creating a truly accessible library for everyone.

~Jay Wendham, patron, Barrie Public Library.

3.3 CUSTOMER SERVICE = INCREASED CIRCULATION AT COLLINGWOOD

‘Selling’ to our patrons is a new concept that we have adopted at the Collingwood Public Library. We’ve had great success with this strategy. If we follow the retail model, we are 'sellers' and must promote our product to increase circulation. Impulse 'buying' and ‘added value’ can both accomplish this. We must regard our patrons as customers from a service aspect as well. If they are offered excellent customer service each time they visit the library this will result in positive feedback, referrals, and increased circulation.

We use monthly book displays to create awareness and focus on topics which are timely throughout the year. Through book displays with various themes (Canadian Authors, Black History Month, First Novels, Poetry Month etc.), we can increase circulation numbers. We track circulation statistics from each of these monthly displays.

Another method is to display lists such as: 'Top 10 Holds' and 'Coming In The Next Month' on a blackboard near the Circulation Desk. We discuss books at staff meetings so we can all be book-talking to our patrons. Word of mouth is a great method of promotion and will create interest and demand...and increased circulation.

We also use our web page to promote books, through book lists and reviews. Our goal is to get the right book into the hands of the right person and keep our patrons coming back for more books...more often!

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3.4 NORTH BAY: BROADBAND IN THE BLUE SKY REGION

Soon there will be better broadband capability highspeed internet access through the Blue Sky Region due to the participation of a network of CAP sites, primarily based in public libraries, operating as the Blue Sky Region Community Network, an incorporated nonprofit agency with charitable status. The project is called Blue Sky Net and is a joint federal provincial enterprise. It involves two initiatives, BRAND sponsored by Industry Canada and FedNor, and COBRA, sponsored by the Ontario government. The goal is to bring a minimum of 1.5 mbs connectivity to over 80% of the population of the Blue Sky Region.

Blue Sky Region Community Network, working as the regional communitybased network (CBN) for the Blue Sky Region, is pleased to announce that it is the recipient of a federal Industry Canada Broadband for Rural and Northern Development (BRAND) Pilot Program funding for \$30,000. This funding will create a business plan and a regional technology inventory, to support bringing high speed internet by DSL, cable modem or wireless broadband access to many local communities, as part of a \$95,000 Blue Sky Net BRAND project. We will be applying to BRAND in a second stage for implementation funds, as well as to the provincial COBRA program for additional implementation funding to a maximum of \$7.5 million.

During the BRAND project, Blue Sky Net has conducted a regional broadband needs analysis including a lowlevel technological inventory of existing connectivity. A business plan is being written to increase broadband connectivity throughout the Blue Sky Region plus parts of East

Sudbury, focusing also on regional service delivery capability and sustainability potential. Forty-six communities are included in the BRAND project.

The Blue Sky Net steering committee has hired the consulting firm AcresPacomm to carry out this important work. Enhanced broadband services in the region will contribute to an innovative economy, increased competitiveness and an inclusive society of skilled and empowered citizens.

Blue Sky Net is a committee of the Blue Sky Region Community Network, a grassroots regional network of CAP sites. The Blue Sky Net steering committee members represent communities including East Ferris, French River, Mattawa, Nipissing, North Bay, Powassan, Restoule, and West Nipissing. Other participants are welcome and membership will change depending on the projects being undertaken. Blue Sky Net's mandate is to facilitate private and public partnerships that will result in better telecommunications infrastructure and ICT-related services in the region.

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3.5 Oakville Public Library Announces “The Discovery Centre! “

Oakville Public Library has always believed that play is an integral part of a child's developmental growth. For the past 25 years the Central Branch of the Oakville Public Library has provided a Toy Library service. In the past few years, however, customer needs have changed. In an effort to meet these new needs and yet continue to support learning through play in our libraries, we would like to announce "The Discovery Centre".

Modeled after similar spaces at the ROM, Science Centre, and children's museums, this exciting new initiative will create a special interactive environment where parents and their preschool children can learn and play together. The space will include computers, sand tables, listening centres, puppets, flannel board stories, magnetic letters, mirrors, Big Books, and games. It will be located in the Children's Department at the Central Library. The Discovery Centre concept will boldly enhance the Central Children's Library space and complement the library's many resources. See you @ The Discovery Centre.

Becky Dumais
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3.6 IT WAS A GRAND BATTLE

Each year, to promote an enthusiasm for reading, the Children's Services of Halton Region Public Libraries host an annual “Battle of the Books” competition, and this year's event was packed with more schoolchildren, more trivia, and more fun!

Public libraries and schools work closely together each year to create a competition among teams of students who identify titles and authors of books based on questions about setting, plot, and characters. The trivia questions for each year are from a wide range of categories such as Canadian books, myths, folk or fairy tales and old favourites. The Battle is held on two levels: Junior and Senior. Twenty-two teams fought it out in the Junior Battle, for children in grades 3, 4,

and 5, and 11 teams of grade 6, 7 and 8 students participated in the Senior level.

See if you can answer these two Battle of the Books questions:

Q. In which fantasy novel does Hermione Granger develop a big crush on the silly new “Defense Against Dark Arts” Professor, Gildery Lockhart? Answer elsewhere in the newsletter.

Q. In which modern classic does a family move from place to place so that no one will notice that they never age? Answer elsewhere in the newsletter.

The Battle of the Books is a great way to encourage team spirit, good sportsmanship and provides an excellent opportunity for public libraries to work with schools in a community effort and put on a real celebration of books. To read more about this year’s Battle of the Books, visit our web site, www.opl.on.ca and click “Kids”, then “Battle of the Books”.

Becky Dumais

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3.7 HISTORY BOOK OF THE OTTAWA PUBLIC LIBRARY LONG OVERDUE

The Library Book, An Overdue History of the Ottawa Public Library, 19062001 has just rolled off the presses and is now available to the general public. This well-written history by local author Phil Jenkins stretches back into the 1800’s and covers the period from the earliest campaigns to found a local public library right up until the amalgamation of 11 local library systems in 2001.

“No narrative of Ottawa would be complete without the story of its library, its busiest institution, and I was proud to have the chance to put that story between the covers and on the City’s screens,” said Jenkins. The Library Book was launched with considerable fanfare at the Rosemount branch of the OPL the former city’s oldest library.

History buffs can look forward to more stories in future since Jenkins has started to work on the history of the other former library local systems starting with Nepean. In addition, brief histories of all OPL branches are on the Library Web site.

Anyone who would like to purchase a copy of The Library Book, An Overdue History of the Ottawa Public Library, 19062001 can pick up an order form at any Ottawa branch or order through the Web site. The cost is \$15 including shipping, handling and tax. For more information about purchasing a copy of this limited edition, call 5802424, ext. 41343

Greg Dunlop, Communications Coordinator, Ottawa Public Library 580-2424 ext. 41332

3.8 Waterloo Region Readers all get on the same page

Organizers of the One Book, One Community program today invited all of Waterloo Region to “get on the same page” by reading Jane Urquhart’s “The Stone Carvers”. Urquhart’s novel was unveiled as the 2003 One Book, One Community reading selection.

According to Tricia Siemens, one of the organizers of One Book, One Community, the success of the program lies in the selection of a Canadian novel by a living author who is available for the “Meet the Author” events in all area municipalities in September. “Both loyal readers and new

readers enjoy the opportunity to hear and see talented writers who create masterful works that are successful in Canada and around the world,” says Siemens.

One Book, One Community was created to promote reading by adults, and to build new connections in the community through the shared experience of reading. “Once people have read the same book,” says Siemens, “they talk to friends and neighbours about how the story resonates in each of their lives.

In 2002, when One Book, One Community was launched, organizers expected that 1% of the Region’s population would read Alistair McLeod’s “No Great Mischief”. Instead of the expected 4000 readers, more than 6800 readers were counted and an additional 3000 people attended author events. Interest in the novel has continued long past the conclusion of the 2002 program, with “No Great Mischief” still generating lots of interest in libraries, bookstores, workplaces and book club gatherings.

Organized by library staff, city staff and volunteers, the program requires a year round commitment. After the book title is announced, individuals, book clubs, organizations, employers – everyone – is invited to take up the challenge of the One Book, One Community initiative and organize their own way of “getting on the same page.” Author events are planned for Cambridge, Kitchener, Waterloo and the townships from September 24 to 26.

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3.9 Waterloo region: Ayr gets new library soon
by KEVIN SWAYZE
(Abridged from CAMBRIDGE REPORTER, Tuesday April 1, 2003)

Ayr could have the doors of a new public library open by the end of this year. After last month's announcement of a \$250,000 SuperBuild provincial grant towards the estimated \$700,000 project, work should get underway later this year.. The existing library, a historic Carnegie library, is 2,500 square feet in size. The new library, proposed on the site of the former township fire hall across the street, would be 5,000 square feet.

Township council has set aside \$90,000 in development charge funds for the project, \$250,000 in capital funds and will donate the property.

The Friends of the Library committee is spearheading the project, and will likely raise about \$150,000 for the project, said Sam Head, chairman of the volunteer group. Once an architect is chosen, an artist’s conception of the new building can be created, which will be used to get fundraising off the ground, Head said. The committee already has about \$30,000 in donations in the bank, after it was created a year ago.

Design of the building may include a basement community meeting room. And there's talk underway about the future of the old library building, once the new building opens, Head said.

That building could be converted into space for community groups and services.

3.10 AYLMER IMPLEMENTS TOUCH SCREEN

Although the Aylmer Old Town Hall Library in Elgin County only implemented its touchscreen

display idea for last year's Ontario Public Library Week, its staff is not giving up on the idea that it could be applied on a widescale.

Held Oct. 21-27, 2002 the initiative was designed to make the library's current static display more interactive and userfriendly and to make more content available to library patrons, especially to those intimidated by technology. The Aylmer Old Town Hall Library exists in a rural part of Ontario and is the largest of the 11 branches in the Elgin County library system, which serves 10,000 people and has an annual circulation of 80,000.

"If a new book comes in and there's already several holds on it, this does not allow the casual browser to come in and see what kinds of new books we have," said Christina Mayhew, head librarian at the Aylmer Old Town Hall Library. "We do have a static wall display that comprises of a printout of the new book covers...but people don't always understand what kind of book it is or what the content is."

The initiative was completed inhouse, when staff members brainstormed how to tie in computers to the "It's not just by the book anymore" theme.

Michael Manchester, was hired through Industry Canada's Community Access Program, which allows branches to hire temporary staff to train the public on computer use. He handled the technical side of things, including the design of the Flash display that demonstrated the books available.

The computer and monitor were provided by the County and Manchester created the Flash screen display, by taking images of the book covers and scaling them down to create a thumbnail version. Ten book images were featured and transitions were added in Flash so when someone touched a thumbnail image it dissolved into a larger image of the cover, information on the author and the synopsis from the book's jacket.

"Because touch screen displays are very expensive, the only reason we were able to design this and go ahead with the idea was finding an inexpensive way to put it together," he said.

A frequent Ebay user, Manchester came across a seller offering devices that would attach to the front of 17inch computer monitors and connect into a computer's serial port, which ended up costing the library around \$150 of its budget.

The touchscreen could not be maintained on an ongoing basis because of the time and staff required to keep it updated but Cathy Bishop, manager of library services for the Elgin County library system, says their goal is to have the displays installed in all of their libraries and new releases updated on a weekly basis. "It is a program that we would like to duplicate in all our libraries and we're thinking about that this year," she said.

However, the plan is currently on hold due to budget constraints. The Elgin County library system wants to have one dedicated touchscreen computer per branch in each of their 11 branches. The time and cost involved in updating the displays with new material is also a factor.

Christina Mayhew, Aylmer Old Town Hall Library chris@atlas.library.elgin-county.on.ca

3.6 Reprise: WHERE IS ELSEWHERE? ELSEWHERE IS HERE:

1. Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets, by J.K. Rowling
2. Tuck Everlasting, by Natalie Babbitt

4. PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

4.1 WENDY NEWMAN ANNOUNCES RETIREMENT

Wendy Newman announced her plans to retire as the Chief Executive Officer of the Brantford Public Library, a role she's held since 1994. Newman's retirement will take effect on December 31, 2003, according to Bruce Hodgson, Chairman of the Brantford Public Library Board.

"Wendy's dedication, visionary leadership, high principles and passion for libraries are well known to the library community. She will be difficult to replace," said Mr. Hodgson.

"It has been my privilege to serve the community of Brantford for nearly 10 years in my role as CEO of this wonderful library. I'm proud of the caliber of staff and volunteers we've been able to attract, and the significant results we've achieved during my tenure at Brantford Public Library", Newman said. "Now it's time to move on. I plan to spend more time with my husband, but will also remain connected to the library world. I will be Librarian in Residence at the Faculty of Information Studies, University of Toronto, where I will be working with the next generation of librarians and information specialists."

Under Wendy's leadership and commitment to partnership, Brantford Public Library has pursued a number of innovative and awardwinning initiatives that established its leadership in the library community. Internationally recognized for successfully combining traditional services with the latest technology, it also serves as a "virtual university library" for Brantford campus students of Wilfrid Laurier University. Brantford Public Library is the first public library in North America to be invited to join the UNESCO Model Library Network. "Not only did she identify the challenges facing libraries today, she demanded innovative results," Hodgson added.

Since taking on the role of CEO of the Brantford Public Library in 1994, she has consistently put Brantford Public Library out front in the areas of planning, advocacy and partnership development. She has worked tirelessly with the volunteer members of the Library Board to engage the support, partnership and trust of its funding Council.

Professor Lynne Howarth, Dean of the Faculty of Information Studies, University of Toronto says "We are pleased to welcome a librarian of Wendy Newman's stature as the Librarian in Residence. Students will gain from being able to interact with someone with such varied experience. Her extensive background in the development of policies associated with information issues and her strong advocacy skills are also assets."

As the current President of the Canadian Library Association, Wendy Newman contributes significantly to issues and policies that develop and support library and information services in Canada. Her strong personal conviction on the role that public libraries play in education, culture and information is evident in her leadership of this national organization.

Ms. Newman's leadership is recognized both nationally and internationally. She has been a member of the National Broadband Task Force, the Smart Communities Blue Ribbon Panel, the Advisory Group on Connectedness of the Conference Board of Canada, and a mentor at the Northern Exposure to Leadership Institute.

She is an acclaimed speaker, a volunteer trainer for Library Advocacy Now and is on the Board of the Media Awareness Network. Wendy's recent receipt of the Queen's Golden Jubilee

Commemorative Medal is evidence of her contribution to public libraries and their importance in the community.

The Brantford Public Library Board will begin a formal recruiting process to select Ms. Newman's replacement.

5. GRANTS/ AWARDS:

5.1 2003 Peter F. Drucker Award

The Peter F. Drucker Canadian Foundation invites your organization to apply for the 2003 Drucker Award. The Drucker Foundation exists to find, recognize and celebrate innovation among Canadian nonprofits and to inspire others to action. The Drucker Award is accompanied by a cash prize of \$20,000 and a short documentary of the winning project or program. Honourable mentions receive a prize of \$2,000.

For a 2003 application visit: <http://www.innovationaward.ca/submit.html>
The deadline for postmarked submissions is July 31, 2003

Not sure if you should apply? Looking for more information? Contact the Foundation at 519-439-2631.

Forwarded by Beth Ross, for the Ontario Rural Council
bross@huroncounty.ca

5.2 STARBUCKS FOUNDATION LITERACY GRANTS

Canadian nonprofit organizations are eligible to apply for the Starbucks Foundation Literacy Grants. Grants range from \$5,000-\$20,000. Guidelines and application forms can be found at the Foundation's web site. Starbucks Foundation Literacy Grants
<http://www.starbucks.com/aboutus/grantinfo.asp?cookie%5Ftest=1>> Note that working with a nearby Starbucks location is one of the conditions of the grant.

Originally forwarded by: cappac.ont@ic.gc.ca

5.3 Trillium Foundation Grant

I hope all eligible libraries are working on a grant application to the Ontario Trillium Foundation. I suggest you talk with Trillium's Program Manager" for your area. Click on their website, and click on "Contact Us."

Sam Coghlan

5.4. Trillium Foundation Grant applications: Hints for success

As you are aware the Trillium Foundation, which receives revenue from the province's charitable casino initiative, recently announced changes to its funding formula, making some libraries eligible for grants.

I recently attended an information session where application guidelines were clarified and important differences between municipal and library applications were defined.

Eligibility:

In the past, the Trillium Foundation has provided grants only to non-profit groups, mostly volunteer organizations.

Under the Strategic Granting Initiative for Library Boards, libraries serving communities with populations of 20,000 or less may apply. For example, our county serves a population of more than 60,000, however each of our communities served is under 3,500. We are eligible for only one one-time grant, to a maximum of \$15,000.

Note that “Friends of Libraries” are not eligible.

Grants:

Funding is available in four primary areas:

- Capital, which includes equipment purchases and renovations for accessibility,
- collections,
- programming, and
- training and technology.

The foundation receives \$2.03 in requests for every \$1 available.

Process:

One of the key differences between Trillium and other applications is that the Foundation staff are keen to work with applicants BEFORE the deadline, to ensure that the application is correct and complete. After the deadline is too late. To find the representative for your area, click on “contact us” on their website.

Application must include specific details of the projects and quotes from at least two sources. For capital grants, line drawings and specifications are required. For collection building, it is sufficient to state types of material and approximate costs per item, from two suppliers.

Deadline:

The deadline is June 30th.

Municipal vs Library Grants.

We are considering applying for funding to improve accessibility in our branches, which are in facilities owned by the municipality. I asked if these would be seen as a library application, or a municipal one. The reply was that grants that improve library service are library grants.

Key differences:

- Municipalities may apply for up to \$75,000 per year for up to 5 years;
Library grants are one-time grants ranging from \$5,000 to \$15,000.
- Municipal grant deadlines are quarterly;

library deadline is June 30th, with no second chance.

Further information is available at their website:

<http://www.trilliumfoundation.org/OTFEnglish/new/index.htm>

Rudi Denham, CEO, Stormont, Dundas & Glengarry County Library
rdenham@sdglibrary.ca (613)936-8777, ext 226 FAX (613) 936-2532

6. Feature: FIDDLING WHILE LIBRARIES BURN

In keeping with this issue's theme of "interpreting public library need to various levels of government", and in view of upcoming elections, both provincial and local, I asked for contributions from across Ontario. Wendy Newman, CLA president and Library Advocacy trainer, provides personal observations - and the title of this feature. Donna Marentette, now at Windsor Public Library, was formerly a City Councillor. While Wendy focusses on NEED, Donna focusses on PROCESS. I asked Marcel Giroux, Chair of the Kingston Frontenac Board and 2002 OPLA Trustee of the Year, to reprise his thought-provoking keynote speech to the Cornwall Public Library Board and staff for their professional development day. He discusses the bigger picture: Libraries as champions of democracy. Last, but by no means least, Paul Walker, of North Bay Public Library, always a political animal, provides practical tips that have helped him maintain an excellent relationship with his City Council.

6.1 WENDY NEWMAN: PERSONAL OBSERVATIONS ABOUT LIBRARY ADVOCACY, MOST OF THEM LEARNED THE HARD WAY

I think the most important observation I can make is this: Libraries need to be on the radar screen. Right now, they're not. Why is that? I think it's that we treat library advocacy (including its all important "glue" of relationship management) as less important than almost everything else we do.

It is a learnable skill. It requires knowledge, skill, conviction, time, guts, and maturity, but not magic. It IS learnable.

It is everyone's job; everyone has at least some role in it. In fact, treating it as "someone else's job" is a highrisk behaviour. Libraries are not going to survive on entitlement, passivity, whining, or a view of ourselves as simply "employees". (In particular, the perception that it's really the job of library associations, and not practitioners and users, is one of the most painfully disappointing ones I have experienced over the years.)

It is sufficiently urgent as to be a survival issue. If we don't do it in a highly disciplined way, we are effectively fiddling while libraries burn.

It is about libraries and the kind of society we value; it is not about us. "Image" is a byproduct and not a goal.

It takes longer to plan that it does to do. The more careful the planning, the greater the potential for success.

It is political as hell. Let's acknowledge that and get on with it. If we shrink from the political nature of advocacy, do we seriously think there are no other competitors for public funds? Are the competitors bashful?

Courageous, principled library advocacy is infinitely less risky than the alternative.

If you need help, there's an excellent selfhelp guide produced for the Canadian public library

community on the CAPL Web site. The ideas in it are fieldtested and they work. And it's free! Check it out at the CAPL website at www.cla.ca/divisions/capl/capl.htm Click on the LAN icon on the front page, then click on the Workbook in the bar of choices at the top

Wendy Newman, Chief Executive Officer Brantford Public Library
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tel. 519-756-2223, x 4 fax 519-756-4979

6.2. DONNA MARENTETTE: THE WHO AND WHAT OF ADVOCACY

The optimal time for interpreting public library needs to potential municipal elected officials is during the election campaign period, and the optimal people to do so are members of the public, a.k.a. voters!

If your library has a Friends group this is the key time for them to be an advocacy group on behalf of the library. Even if there is not a Friends group, really, all it takes is one person from the public willing to stand up at the all candidates' meeting(s) and ask the question "What is your position on support for the public library?" If there's a particular aspect that needs to be highlighted, for example, need for a new branch or central library building, increased collections budget, more staffing, etc. this is the time for the person to ask "Our community needs a new library building (or whatever). If elected, will you vote in support of (whatever)?" At the very least you want each potential elected official to go on record in support of maintaining the current levels of funding for the public library.

If more than one person is attending the meeting(s) and is willing to speak, it's a good idea to have two or three or more questions printed on a piece of paper and distributed among the supporters attending so that each person can ask at least one question. This is helpful for people who are shy about getting up to talk at a public meeting. The more different people (i.e. voters) who get up to ask a question the more impressed the potential elected officials and the news media will be with the library's level of public support. But again, even one person asking one question is significant!

It is important to be clear and direct in the question and to have the candidates go on record with their position for or against what is needed.

Then it is very important to write down exactly, in quotation marks if possible, the responses of each candidate and share them with all the voters the Friends can possibly reach. Again, even one person can have a huge impact using only word of mouth. "Did you know that candidate X is in support of the new branch but Candidate Y is not?" is all it takes. A handout is even better to get the word out. Homemade and photocopied is ok because after all this work is being done by a grassroots community group or an interested resident without a lot of resources.

If the advocacy group is more sophisticated they can issue media releases to the local media prior to the election endorsing the candidates who have gone on record in support of the public library.

A few additional methods that can be used given time and resources are

- meet with candidates and provide them with background information about the library, what it does and the needs;
- hold an allcandidates meeting at the library and make sure to have members of the public ask questions that focus on library needs;
- meet with the editorial board of the local paper to make them aware of the needs and

- suggest that support for the public library be factored into their assessments/endorsements of candidates;
- provide endorsements for supportive candidates to include in their campaign literature and media releases;
 - encourage prolibrary residents to run for elected office.

An especially enjoyable way to help candidates who are supportive of the public library is to work on their election campaigns. People who haven't tried it have no idea how much fun it is to work on election campaigns. Even going door to door in your own neighbourhood and telling your neighbours "I'm dropping off a pamphlet for Candidate X because they are on record in support of the library" will have an impact.

There's lots to do after the election too but that comes later!

Donna Marentette, Director of Technology & Development, Windsor Public Library,
<dmarentette@city.windsor.on.ca>

.6.3 MARCEL GIROUX: THE BIG PICTURE

“Unhindered access to information is essential to freedom, equality, global understanding and peace.”

The role of the Public Library in Community Development has become a favourite topic of the Library community in the last few years. At the OLA Super Conference 2003, there were several sessions on the subject. Most made reference to the OLBA pamphlet: Effective Library Boards are in the Community Development Business, based on Dr. Ken Haycock's presentation; to SOLS Trustee Tips Issue No. 15 Nov. 98 and also to the SOLS handbook the Library's contribution to your Community.

All of these documents remind us that libraries are not only useful but essential in the life of our communities. They also help us try to convince our funding agencies at budget time.

While researching for my own presentation on this topic, I came across the following quotations. The first, from Andrew Carnegie: There is not a cradle of democracy upon the earth as the free public library, this republic of letters where neither rank nor wealth receives the slightest consideration. The second quote, from the International Federation of Library Associations: Unhindered access to information is essential to freedom, equality, global understanding and peace. Therefore the IFLA asserts that intellectual freedom is the right of every individual both to hold and to express opinions and to seek and receive information; it is the basis of democracy; and it is the core of library service. (For both quotations, I thank Maria Cook who wrote a most interesting series of articles in the Ottawa Citizen in May 2002)

We, who are involved in public libraries must and do consider ourselves as community builders, but we must not stop there. If we accept the premise that the public library is the cornerstone of a free democratic society, then we are not only community builders, we are ultimately nation builders. When we consider all the attempts at censorship that we suffer constantly, then we can also call ourselves the keepers of democracy, even its first line of defence.

In our society, we are considered and funded mainly as a municipal service. In reality the question should be: The Public Library: A Federal or Provincial Responsibility?

6.4 PAUL WALKER: STRATEGIES FOR BEING A POLITICAL ANIMAL

The North Bay Public Library has had a positive relationship with its city council for a number of years. As C.E.O., I took it as one of my responsibilities to establish and nurture this relationship

Several things I have done over the years include:

- becoming very active in the Chamber of Commerce: Most councillors are either business people or professionals who have some relationship with the Chamber. Run for the Board, sit on a committee, especially Public Affairs and Economic Growth. Avoid membership and special events.
- I always emphasize that the Library is a business and puts X number of dollars into the local economy. Libraries represent business and generate wealth.
- As part of the Chamber, I have organized and run Federal, Provincial and Municipal candidate's nights for the past 15 years. Each municipal election I establish contact with every would-be councillor for these nights. So no matter who wins, they already know me.
- Right after the election, I identify which councillors have library cards and check their family use so I can gauge what level of use and knowledge I'm working with,
- For Councillors without library cards, we mail a "Welcome to Council" letter and enclose a card which can be activated when they come to the library. Enclosed is a fact sheet on the library. The implication is that a library card is a perk of being elected.
- I send this letter to their home address rather than to the City address where it will be lost.
- Pay special attention to Budget or Finance committee members. In the end they will carry the City budget.
- I try to get appointed to one or two municipal boards. Currently I sit on the Board of Health. This Board has three active councillors which give me a chance to interact with them in a different venue, but also establishes a library presence.
- Be a political animal; work on other projects and establish networks.

These are a few of my thoughts. We may not score home runs, but we are always on base!

Paul Walker, CEO, North Bay Public Library
paul.walker@cityofnorthbay.ca.

7. NEXT ISSUE

Deadline for the next issue is September 30th. Send articles on the following topics:

- What's up, doc? (Oops: WHAT'S NEW)
- The Brag Board (Oops: AROUND THE PROVINCE)
- The Gossip Column (Oops: PEOPLE IN THE NEWS)

and the FEATURE ARTICLES will be around the theme :OPLA and it's relationship with other groups/organizations. If you'd like to share a CLA /ALA experience, please send it in..

All articles to: rdenham@sdglibrary.ca before September 30th. And please don't title your attachment "press release" or "Ho-OPLA article". More specific titles would be helpful!

Rudi Denham, Ho-OPLA editor.

8. OPLA EXECUTIVE

If you wish to contact a member of OPLA Council, please use the appropriate email from the following:

Sam Coghlán, President

<scoghlán@ocl.net>

Katherine Palmer, PastPresident <kpalmer@tpl.toronto.on.ca>
Dawna Rowilson, Treasurer <drowilson@tpl.toronto.on.ca>
Barbara Love, East <blove@kfpl.library.on.ca>
Donna BoltonSteele, CentralEast <dbsteele@whitbylibrary.on.ca>
Sue Coles, MidCentral <suzanne.coles@mississauga.ca>
Dawna Rowilson, Toronto <drowilson@tpl.toronto.on.ca>
Elise Cole, CentralWest <colee@opl.on.ca>
Donna Mikeluk, Northwest <schlib@nwconx.net>
Irma Sauvola, Northeast <i.sauvola@cityssm.on.ca>
Janet Woodbridge, Southwest <jwoodbridge@city.windsor.on.ca>