

Toronto Public Library Annual Report 2011

Engaging Toronto's Diverse Communities

Each year the library celebrates the city's diverse communities by partnering in city-wide events, including Asian Heritage Month, Black History Month, Holocaust Education Week and Aboriginal Celebrations. In addition, the library continues to attract and engage Torontonians of all ages, stages and abilities with creative and innovative programs and services. And the library's collections also continue to reflect Toronto's diversity. In addition to the growth of collections in other languages throughout the year, a new collection of over 360 circulating copies of books and DVDs for adults with developmental disabilities was built up based on the assessment done by the Centre for People with Disabilities staff.

Homeland Festivals celebrate the diversity of Asian culture

In 2011, a new Asian Heritage Month initiative at the library brought Homeland Festivals to eight branches, celebrating a variety of Asian populations in their respective neighbourhoods, including China, South Asia, West Asia and East Asia. More than 1,200 people participated in a broad range of music, dance and storytelling programs, including performances of Bhangra, belly and Balinese dancing, Chinese opera, Arabic cooking and Turkish folk tales.

The eh List connects with Toronto's francophone community

Toronto Public Library's signature author series, the eh List, generously sponsored by the Canada Council, saw a new development in 2011 as Quebec author Dany Lafèriere did two events, one in English, which he did along with his translator, David Homel, and one in French. This model is one the eh List will continue to explore in order to extend its reach deeper into Toronto's francophone community. The eh List celebrates the best in Canadian literature in all its forms and from all the nation's various cultures and communities. In 2011, among the nearly 40 eh List events, Canadian music icon Sylvia Tyson presented her first work of fiction, and David Bezmozgis drew 300 people to a reading from his much anticipated debut novel.

The TD Summer Reading Club outreach project empowers shelter residents

The 2011 TD Summer Reading Club outreach project was an initiative of the Toronto Public Library and the TD Summer Reading Club to bring storytime visits to shelters serving families across Toronto. This project brought the library to shelter residents, registering them for library cards on site, running storytime programs inside the shelters themselves, and bringing materials for residents to check out at the end of each program. The Shelter Outreach Project reached eight shelters, and programs included storytime sessions, a chartered bookmobile visit, and general information sessions for both shelter staff and mothers, promoting the TD Summer Reading Program and services for children and youth at Toronto Public Library. In an effort to encourage shelter workers and their residents to adopt a sense of ownership of the library, and to improve library outreach services to Toronto's unique shelter population, recreation workers, programming coordinators and other staff at participating shelters were consulted about the types of programs and services they would like to see offered at the library. An article about the initiative was published in the library industry magazine *Feliciter*, written by Toronto Public Library staff member Jessica Rovito.

Sophie's Studio supports children's literacy, creativity and writing skills

From tried and true programs such as the annual Design-a-Bookmark Contest, to Dial-a-Story, to the relatively new Book Bash Canadian Children's Literature Festival, children have always benefited from

library programs. In the spring of 2011, Toronto Public Library launched a new series of children's writing workshops made possible by a generous bequest to the Library Foundation from the Estate of Sophia Lucyk, a long-time library lover, user and donor. Children participating in the workshops were given the opportunity to learn to make a book or write a play. The workshops are part of a larger initiative dubbed Sophie's Studio, created by the Toronto Public Library Foundation in honour of Lucyk's commitment to support literacy, creativity, and writing skills in children at the library. Children ages birth to five also benefit from Sophia's generous bequest to the library when they visit the many KidsStop interactive early literacy centres in various branches across the city and play at the Sophie's Studio writing stations there.

Library Settlement Partnership Days expand to include additional opportunities for newcomers to get to know their library

Annual Library Settlement Partnership Days aim to raise the profile of the library's important role in supporting newcomers to Toronto, and in 2011 some exciting new program elements were introduced to help achieve this goal. A newcomer-focused "Human Library" aimed to promote dialogue, reduce prejudices and encourage understanding by giving participants the opportunity to have one-on-one conversations with "human books" who have experiences with and connections to settling in Canada. Visits to library branches by citizenship judges afforded candidates for Canadian citizenship an opportunity to meet, listen to and ask questions of a citizenship judge and learn first-hand the requirements for becoming a Canadian citizen. And 60 newcomers to Canada became citizens in a moving and enlightening citizenship ceremony held in the atrium of Toronto Reference Library.

Library programs provide older adults with opportunities for engagement and community connections

Programming for older adults is ongoing at the library, and 2011 was no exception. In partnership with Volunteer Toronto, the library presented the Boomers & Beyond Volunteer Fair which showcased a wide range of volunteer opportunities for active older adults. Forty different organizations participated in a variety of events including a volunteers' panel discussion and slideshow presentations by various organizations, including the Ontario Health Study. The fair promoted volunteerism, encouraged civic participation, contributed to city-wide networking among older adult service agencies, and increased public awareness of services, programs and resources for this growing group of Torontonians.

Another 2011 popular program that was geared mainly to older adults featured a concert in the atrium of Toronto Reference Library featuring a number of 1960s era local musicians and songwriters, including Kensington Market, Chick Roberts, and The Sinners. Dubbed Yorkville Sound, the concert demonstrated the library's support for Canadian music, and was in response to interest from the performers and their community supporters to celebrate the legacy of Yorkville as the artistic birthplace of Canada's music industry.

Storybook Dads fosters family literacy, helps break the cycle of low literacy

Storybook Dads, a family literacy project initiated by Toronto Public Library's adult literacy department in the fall of 2011, brings incarcerated fathers together with their children by creating audio recordings of men in the Toronto East Detention Centre reading children's storybooks for their children, or other young relatives. Children who are part of the program receive the book and audio CD. Plans are underway to expand to fathers in other situations in order to foster literacy in all families. The primary goal of Storybook Dads is to allow men who are separated from their families to model reading for their children, a fundamental step in the direction of breaking the cycle of low literacy in families.

Addressing the Growing Income Gap

Toronto Public Library addresses the city's growing income gap by ensuring that all residents, regardless of age or income, have support in developing the literacy skills they need, and access to the information and knowledge they require to attain success in work and life. In 2011, Toronto Public Library increased its spending on resources for adult learners and newcomers, continued to provide free access to information, technology and other resources, and presenting numerous programs that helped Torontonians achieve their earning and employment goals and learn about other employment supports.

Business and Personal Finance Collections bolstered by generous donations to the Library Foundation

A generous bequest of \$50,000 by the late Mr. Norman Hinton through the Toronto Public Library Foundation enabled the library to acquire over 2,500 books and DVDs on small business development and financial literacy in 2011. In addition, an anonymous donation of \$50,000 spread over four years allowed the library to purchase 275 copies of circulating careers material for Toronto Reference Library.

Business Inc series helps make small business dreams a reality

The Business Inc. Series, featuring an eight-week program in three branches, is a partnership between the library, the Toronto Business Development Centre and the City of Toronto's Economic Development & Culture Division. Successfully initiated in the spring of 2011, the partnership allows Toronto Public Library to offer access to professional business planning expertise at an affordable, subsidized cost. During the series, participants network with other entrepreneurs, learn how to prepare a business plan, and have access to a business advisor along with other valuable business resources. At the conclusion of the program, candidates obtain a Business Seminar Series Certificate of Completion from the Toronto Business Development Centre and have an opportunity to apply for a small business loan. The program is also an excellent way for the library to increase awareness of our business and finance services, which include a wide variety of books, e-books, online databases, programs and in-branch resources.

Investing in Families reduces barriers to service

With grant funding support, Toronto Public Library partnered with Toronto Employment and Social Services to reduce barriers to service for families. As part of the Investing in Families initiative, case workers distributed library Welcome Kits and fine forgiveness coupons to encourage families to take advantage of library services. Library branches in various parts of the city helped to organize and host open houses, employment and other programs, as well as client meetings. As a research study component, a temporary part-time outreach librarian was hired to work in the Centennial Branch community. The study's evaluation will assess the impact of the librarian on the use of library services among Investing in Families clients in this community as compared with other parts of the city.

Improvements to the Sun Life Museum + Arts Pass program increase accessibility of the program

Beginning in September 2011, the library introduced improvements to check-out and redemption procedures for its very popular Sun Life Museum + Arts Pass (MAP) program. The changes – which include improved tracking and security procedures – have resulted in reduced line ups at the branches, reduced misuse of the passes, and increased access to the program by more Torontonians. In fact, over the past year, almost 100,000 families have participated in the library's MAP program, and since the program began in 2007, more than 320,000 families have used the program to explore the city's top arts and cultural venues – many of them for the first time.

Expanding Access to Technology and Online Services

In 2011, the library continued to explore and implement new technological advances as a means of:

1. Improving customer service by providing new ways of delivering services more efficiently and in more personalized ways;
2. Increasing access to the library's diverse collections by digitizing traditional and special collections and providing easier access to already digitized information.

An outstanding virtual library allows customers to not only access their records and place holds online, but also to access special collections, download books, music and videos, ask reference questions, participate in online communities such as book clubs, and provide user-generated content such as book reviews. Computers, wireless, high speed Internet and training services in our branches enable individual and collaborative learning and economic opportunities.

INCREASING ACCESS

The Digital Archive makes special collections available online, 24/7

Toronto Public Library continues to improve access to its special collections by making them available online. The newest addition, The Digital Archive, offers access to historical images, maps, digitized books and posters from the library's special collections.

e-books, e-audiobooks, other online and downloadable resources surge in use

In 2011, use of the library's e-book and e-audiobook collections was up 103 percent over 2010, and by the end of 2011 we surpassed the 500,000 circulation mark for e-book downloads. While this is a significant increase in e-circulation, this represents only 1.5 percent of Toronto Public Library's overall circulation (which saw growth for its third straight year). To meet the growing demand for e-content, the library increased its spending in this area from \$450,000 in 2010 to \$625,000 in 2011, adding over 5,800 e-book titles and 1,400 e-audio titles, much of that new content being Canadian. But 2011 was also a challenging year for libraries to acquire e-content, as many major publishing houses would not make their titles available for lending, and in Canada we only recently started to see an increase in the availability of more Canadian titles. The library website continues to add new online resources such as downloadable e-books, e-audiobooks, and subscription databases.

IMPROVING CUSTOMER SERVICE

Automated checkout, check-in and sorting increase library efficiency

The library continues to improve the efficiency of its service delivery through the installation of self-serve technology at its branches. By the end of 2011, forty one branches offered customers the option to check out their own library materials, and more installations are planned for 2012. An automated sorting machine was installed at North York Central Library at the end of 2011, and at Cedarbrae Branch earlier in the year. Very shortly after it was installed, the new machine at North York Central Library broke all records, sorting an unprecedented 7,188 items on a single day in December 2011.

Supporting Creativity and Culture

The livability of a city is enhanced by the vibrancy of its cultural life. Library-initiated programs such as Keep Toronto Reading Festival and the One Book community read bring literary culture and the joy of reading to the entire city; programs at Toronto Public Library's premiere event space in the heart of the city, the Bram & Bluma Appel Salon, attract internationally renowned authors, thought leaders and newsmakers; the Thought Exchange, History Matters and the Human Library attract Toronto's intellectually curious, and promote life-long learning. But in 2011, local and community cultural initiatives and partnerships took centre stage, bringing arts and cultural opportunities into neighbourhoods from Malvern to Rexdale.

Culture Days at the Library brings artists out of their studios and into public space

Toronto Public Library entered into a new partnership with Culture Days and the Neighbourhood Arts Network, to present Culture Days @ The Library in September of 2011. From Etobicoke to Scarborough, North York and downtown, 48 branches participated in presenting 78 events, with overall attendance of over 2,000. Toronto-based individual artists, small and medium-sized professional arts groups as well as volunteer-run cultural organizations, collectives or groups were invited to participate, and activities in all artistic disciplines were encouraged as well as those that appeal to families and to audiences of diverse ages. All arts activities were free and interactive and the programs were enormously varied. A few examples include: At Malvern Branch, the Indian Martial and Performance Arts Collective of Toronto did an amazing demonstration; The Little Pear Collective Canadian Chinese dance and opera company put on a well-received performance at Weston Branch; and violinist Mo Jamal led eight violinists in a fascinating improv session at North York Central Library. The partnership enables artists to take their practice out of their private studios into the accessible spaces of library branches so that the public can discover and engage with their work. Culture Days @ the Library participants describe the event as a great opportunity to connect with new audiences and to build strong community relationships.

Culture Days is a collaborative coast-to-coast volunteer movement to raise the awareness, accessibility, participation and engagement of Canadians in the arts and cultural life of their communities. With the support of a National Steering Committee and volunteer provincial and territorial task forces, thousands of activity organizers self-mobilize at the grassroots level to present and coordinate free public activities that take place throughout the country over the last weekend of September each year. This exciting partnership was created to help artists and arts groups share their creative work with the public in free, accessible space.

Art on the Move brings the power of imagination to Mimico

For six weeks in 2011, Mimico Centennial Branch Youth Advisory Group teen volunteers worked closely with local artist Amir Akbari painting unique designs on paper and large panels, which were then transposed digitally onto a Toronto Public Library delivery van that travelled around the city showing off the artwork for a year. The theme of the artwork was The Power of Imagination. This mobile art mural project, called Art on the Move, was born of a partnership between Lakeshore Arts, Arts Etobicoke and local community groups and is part of a three-year program to bring local art into the public realm.

Supporting a Sustainable Library

Sustainability is a hallmark of responsible organizations in the twenty-first century and in 2011 there were many ways that Toronto Public Library contributed to the sustainability of the organization, to the environment, and to the many communities that we serve.

Toronto Public Library actively supports environmental sustainability through practices that reduce the Library's current and future impact on the environment. The library also strives to promote greater resident participation in discussions about the environment and sustainable practices as part of our overall responsibilities as an information provider. In addition, sustainability extends to our responsibility to advocate for the essential role of public libraries in the community. Delivery of high quality library services today and in the future depends on sustainable infrastructure, and financial and staff resources.

State of Good Repair renovations, automation improvements increase library's ability to serve the community

In 2011, a number of capital projects, at various phases of development, made significant contributions to sustainability through State of Good Repair renovations and significant self-service and automation improvements. Northern District Branch reopened in February after a brief closure for a retrofit that enhanced the customer service experience. In addition, the retrofit involved the repurposing of a space in the basement that is now a youth-friendly, youth-led space run in partnership with Delisle Youth Services.

Other capital project developments in 2011 included: the closure of Mount Dennis Branch for a renovation that will bring customers a new, improved and more accessible library in their neighbourhood when the branch reopens in 2013; a relatively short closure at Richview Branch for a renovation, made possible in part through federal infrastructure funding, brought about a renewed and renovated main floor space; two open houses that provided valuable input for the planned new Fort York/Bathurst Branch, with construction slated to begin in 2012; and the move of the Bridlewood Branch to its new, larger location in the same mall, funded by mall management, and creating 47 percent more space, which vastly improves the library's ability to serve the busy Bridlewood community.

Other busy communities saw their library branches celebrate milestones in 2011: Don Mills Branch celebrated 50 years of service, Bayview Branch reached its 45th anniversary, and in September 2011, Heritage Toronto presented Toronto Public Library with a plaque recognizing the historical significance of the George H. Locke Memorial Library.

Toronto Reference Library continues to move into the future

Toronto Reference Library is undergoing a multi-year renovation, one that will transform it into a library of the future and help it to better meet the diverse needs of today's and tomorrow's learners. By the end of 2011, the new two-storey Cube entrance was unveiled, followed shortly by the new Browsey space on the first floor. Work also began in fall 2011 on the new Special Collections Centre on the 5th floor of the library. In 2012, the enlarged and redesigned TD Gallery on the first floor and revitalized second floor space are expected to open. The revitalization project is expected to be completed by the end of 2013.

Urban Affairs consolidation with TRL increases access to civic documents

In February 2011, the library consolidated its Urban Affairs reference services and collections located at Metro Hall as well as at North York Central Library with a move to the Toronto Reference Library. Over the summer, staff finalized the consolidation of the collections and closed the Metro Hall location to provide a single central location for all of the library's specialized information resources about the city's urban affairs. Relocated at Toronto Reference Library, the entire Urban Affairs collection became available to library customers in September 2011. With the relocation, access to the collections and staff support increased from 48.5 hour service week at Metro Hall to 60 hours per week at Toronto Reference Library.

North York Central Library teens get a new space of their own

A new North York Central Library Teen Zone opened at the end of 2011. The youth-friendly space is inviting, using natural light, glass partitions, hardwood flooring and vibrant colours throughout to make this a place where youth can feel comfortable to browse collections, use a computer, meet with friends or just sit back and relax. An urban living room features comfortable seating equipped with outlets; the computer bar provides customers with an outdoor view, and the glass-enclosed Learning Centre provides a quiet space for group instruction or individual use. Collaborative study areas are available for small group study; a large study space has furniture that can be reconfigured to allow it to be easily transformed into a programming venue.

2012 budget process generates discussion and debate about the value of Toronto's library services

During 2011, the City's Core Services Review engaged the city's residents in discussions about the value and sustainability of their public services. Through surveys, town halls, deputations, letters to councillors, and in the media, Torontonians talked about the services that were important to them and to their communities, and the library was a big part of the discussion. Throughout the year, there were lively public debates about what kinds of services the library should offer, now and in the future, which increased awareness of and appreciation for all that libraries have to offer and how important they are to the health and well-being of the city. Throughout this process one thing became very clear: Torontonians really value and appreciate their public libraries.

Increased efficiencies and new revenues help Library Board achieve 2012 budget reductions

In 2011, the library undertook an efficiency review and analysis of revenue generating opportunities to help achieve the City's budget reduction target without impacting library services. The internal efficiency review was supported by training in Lean Six Sigma methodologies – an approach to finding efficiencies which focuses on customer service and maps processes to eliminate unnecessary steps and reduce errors. From this review, the library identified a number of different approaches to achieving efficiencies including service consolidations, technology-driven efficiencies, and business process re-engineering. The library was also able to identify increased revenue generating opportunities including some increases to grants; increases to auditorium, meeting room and theatre rentals fees; and a fee for holds not picked up. In all, the saving from efficiencies and additional revenues totalled \$9.72 million.

Statistics

In 2011, for the third year in a row, use of Toronto Public Library programs, services, collections and public spaces was on the rise with customers visiting our physical and virtual branches, borrowing materials, using our in-branch internet and wireless services, and attending programs – all in record numbers once again. With more than 19 million visits to our branches and more than 33 million items borrowed, 2011 was again our busiest year ever. And internationally, the Toronto Public Library continues to maintain its position as the busiest urban public library system in the world.*

| LIBRARY USE | 2011 | 2010 |
|------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Circulation | 33,252,235 | 32,324,416 |
| In-library use | 7,798,010 | 7,808,931 |
| Information requests | 7,715,256 | 7,484,286 |
| Visits | 19,064,857 | 18,352,210 |
| Individuals using public computers | 6,380,037 | 5,993,062 |
| PROGRAM ATTENDANCE | 2011 | 2010 |
| Preschool | 236,057 | 243,021 |
| Children | 241,466 | 205,678 |
| Teen | 89,859 | 70,488 |
| Adult | 105,697 | 87,625 |
| Older Adult | 15,655 | 16,728 |
| WEB SERVICES | 2011 | 2010 |
| Virtual visits** | 23,403,526 | 27,003,433 |
| Database queries/searches | 18,026,863 | 19,688,259 |
| Virtual information requests | 39,655 | 40,150 |

*Toronto Public Library has higher circulation per capita than any other international or North American library system serving a population base over 2 million.

**Includes websites, databases, catalogue, Dial-A-Story.

Financials

Toronto Public Library Board Statement of Revenues and Expenditures Year Ended December 31.

| | 2011 | 2010 |
|--|--------------------|--------------------|
| | \$ | \$ |
| REVENUES | | |
| City of Toronto | 178,865,342* | 170,229,047 |
| Provincial and federal grants | 6,515,656 | 6,706,294 |
| Fines and fees | 4,182,068 | 4,128,602 |
| Rental, donations and other | 3,539,608 | 2,534,469 |
| Total Revenue | 193,102,674 | 183,598,412 |
| EXPENDITURES | | |
| Staff costs | 148,291,828* | 137,384,772 |
| Library materials | 17,114,854 | 17,514,854 |
| Maintenance and supplies | 13,520,289 | 14,234,305 |
| Utility costs | 7,840,954 | 7,768,811 |
| Programs & Administration | 2,779,430 | 3,077,584 |
| Rental costs | 2,713,755 | 2,766,259 |
| Transfers to City of Toronto and other | 841,564 | 851,827 |
| Total Expenditures | 193,102,674 | 183,598,412 |

* Includes \$7,228,000 million funding from the City for a Voluntary Separation Program used to reduce the workforce to achieve budget savings.