



Chair's Report – Friends of the Guelph Public Library - May 2026

It is my pleasure to present this report for the Annual General Meeting of the Friends of the Guelph Public Library.

Over the past year, FGPL has continued to strengthen its role as a community builder and advocate for the Guelph Public Library. From fundraising to programming to governance, we have made meaningful progress and contributed to a vibrant and engaged library community.

Highlights of the Year

Giant Book Sale



Our signature fundraising event returned in full force this past September. With the dedication of our volunteers and strong community support, we raised over \$113,000 in support of library programs and initiatives.

We extend our sincere thanks to Bamco for their ongoing support, as well as to our many donors, partners, and volunteers who sorted, organized, and sold thousands of books. The success of this event reflects the strength of our community.

Programming

FGPL supported and co-hosted a diverse range of events that brought engaging voices and ideas to Guelph. Highlights included *Open Minds* presentations featuring Martha Adams and Alan Jalsajaa, along with a screening of *The Librarians* at the Bookshelf.

These events underscore our commitment to enriching Guelph's cultural and intellectual life.



Strategic Plan in Action

Following the completion of FGPL's first Strategic Plan in 2025, this past year has focused on implementation.

New committees were established to support this work, including:

- **Archives Committee**, to preserve and organize FGPL records
- **Marketing & Communications Committee**, to refresh our brand and strengthen communications
- **Public Art Committee**, to explore opportunities for a meaningful contribution to the new Central Library, particularly within Children and Youth Services

In addition:

- The **Governance Committee** has begun work with other committees to develop a comprehensive Board Manual
- The **Finance Committee** continues to strengthen financial reporting
- The **Programming Committee** is expanding event offerings
- The **Nominating Committee** is focused on building a strong and sustainable Board

Volunteers



FGPL is powered by its volunteers. From sorting donations and running events to contributing behind the scenes, their energy and commitment make everything we do possible.

On behalf of the Board, I extend heartfelt thanks to each and every volunteer. Your contribution is deeply valued.

Looking Ahead

In the coming year, we will focus on:

- Continuing to advocate for and support the Guelph Public Library
- Advancing the priorities outlined in our Strategic Plan
- Completing the Board Manual to align with our updated bylaws
- Expanding volunteer recruitment and community outreach
- Celebrating the opening of the new Central Library

We remain guided by our mission to foster public support for a strong and vibrant public library system in Guelph.

Thanks and Acknowledgements

I would like to extend special thanks to our outgoing Board members **May Goodwin, Nancy Ryan, and Lorna Rourke**. Your contributions have made a lasting impact on FGPL.

We also gratefully acknowledge Chief Librarian Dan Atkins, library staff, Danny Williamson, and the Guelph Public Library Board for their continued dedication to literacy, learning, and community well-being.

Finally, thank you to my fellow Board members; Linda, Tara, Joanne, Lynn, Kathy, Nethmi, Isuri, Melinda, and May for your commitment, insight, and collegiality throughout the year.

On behalf of the Friends of the Guelph Public Library, thank you for your continued support. Together, we are helping to build a stronger library system and a more connected community.

Sincerely,

Ian Findlay

Board Chair

Friends of the Guelph Public Library

