

Mr. Dewey and Friends

Newsletter of the Friends of the Guelph Public Library

A Call to Council...again!

A recent headline in the Guelph Mercury reads “[City] Deficit could put Library at risk”. The related article quotes three council members who feel that the planned new main Library should be one of two primary capital projects considered for delay or elimination as a way to facilitate municipal financial belt-tightening. One of them quotes the mantra of the previous City Council that an improved main Library is “a want, not a need”.

A basic 3.5 second Google search yields more than 100 references demonstrating, with statistics, that public library use increases dramatically during poor economic times. One of those 100 references, selected at random, notes that in the few months immediately following the economic crash of late 2008, more than 300 articles were published documenting the same phenomenon. Statistics from three U.S. states record increased public library use of 26%, 28% and 33%. In 2009, Ontario also boasts a use increase of 27% year over year. 21 million Canadians, or about 2/3 of the population, hold public library cards. In Guelph the number is about 78%.

Public Libraries not only provide information and entertainment for adults in a variety of media, and literature and programs for children, they provide:

- ✓ Information resources for continuing education
- ✓ Information resources for job hunting and resume preparation
- ✓ Free access to the internet including assistance and teaching to facilitate the most productive use possible of that resource.
- ✓ Support for early literacy
- ✓ A repository for local history including valuable municipal and family documents.

- ✓ Professional reference (i.e. research) assistance including support for local businesses
- ✓ Free access to huge data bases of information on an inconceivable variety of subjects
- ✓ A centre of community activity

The physical facilities available to provide public library service in Guelph are an embarrassment. We are a city of 120,000 souls with above-average literacy, education and income levels, and we are the seat of one of Canada’s leading universities. Our main library is dramatically inferior to those available even in much smaller municipalities in this country. That the Library staff continues to provide the excellent services they offer in such completely inadequate facilities is an enormous credit to them.

It is not logical to use economic constraint as a reason to reduce support for the resource demonstrated to be increasingly crucial to community well-being in times of economic constraint.

The majority of present City Council members were elected, in part, because they saw the wisdom of support for a renewed main library facility. It is important that neither Council nor the electorate lose track of that concept. Wonderful plans have been proposed for urban renewal, including a library appropriate to the standard of this community. Downtown businesses have been closed or disrupted in anticipation of this development. There are other ways to cut total expenditures. Targeting a significant project because it would allow a large sum to be recouped would be an easy fix, but I have confidence that this City Council can do better.

Virginia Gillham
Chair, Friends of the Guelph Public Library

Friends of the Guelph Public Library

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Virginia Gillham, Chair

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Ex-Officio Members

Norman McLeod,

Chief Librarian

Kerry Hannah,

Acting Chief Librarian

Alan Pickersgill,

Library Board

Newsletter Editors

Marilyn Crooks

Susan Ratcliffe

The Executive welcomes your comments and suggestions. Members may be contacted individually; written submissions may be left with Circulation staff at any library branch.



Giant Book Sale

9 - 5 Saturday October 24
10 - 3 Sunday October 25

Preparations for the Friends 3rd Annual Giant Book Sale are well underway. For several weeks, organizers and volunteers have been planning and working toward the big weekend.

Deadline for donations of sale items is Friday, October 16.

Donations have been collected through the summer, and since September 1, sale items have been accepted at any branch of the Guelph Public Library. As well, deliveries to the sorting location can be arranged: call **519.821.5874** or **519.836.0513** to confirm receiving times.

More than 20,000 gently used books, educational and entertainment items have been donated to date. Adult and children's books, comic books, media items (CD, VHS, DVD) and complete puzzles and games have been assessed and sorted for sale. Sale tables will be continually restocked throughout both days.

Volunteers Opportunities

Volunteers are now required for the actual sale. Help will be required for setup during the week prior to the sale. On both sale days, October 24 and 25, volunteers in shifts are needed to staff the tables, tally and bag purchases, work cash tables and assist patrons to carry out their bargains. Assistance with post-sale cleanup is needed on Sunday and the week following. Students will earn credit for hours worked. Volunteers may call **519.821.0747** for further details.

Volunteers and sponsors will be recognized at a social and preview evening on Friday, October 23.

Invitation to Sponsors

Individual and business supporters are invited to assist in offsetting the expenses of mounting the annual book sale. Tax receipts are available for any donation of \$10 or more; any donation of \$100 or more, or in-kind donations of services or equipment with a value of \$100 or more, will be considered a sponsorship.

Major costs range from printing (\$200) to collection and transportation of donated items (\$1,000). Additional costs include table and equipment rental, post-event waste disposal and hospitality for volunteers before and during sale days. Full or partial support of general or specific costs will be appreciated. **Sponsorship Benefits include:** Tax receipt for the value of the donation; Public recognition in advance publicity and at the time of the sale; Invitation to the Friday evening sponsor and volunteer recognition event and sale preview; and Invitations to special Friends events throughout the year

For full sponsorship details, contact Virginia Gillham.(viriniagillham@aol.com 519-821-5874).



Book Sale News

Everyone should know by now that the former Wyndham Arts Supply store at 160 Wyndham Street North is the home of this year's Giant Book Sale.

But it may not be such common knowledge that it is also the location where 60 hard-working volunteers have been sorting donations three or four times every week since the end of August in preparation for this year's sale. After being given a brief training session the sorters spend two or three hours during a typical shift redistributing donations from the drop-off area throughout the store to one of nearly one hundred separate sorting categories! Subject categories include 47 adult non-fiction designations, 13 children/youth, 8 paperback and hardcover fiction, 4 media, games/puzzles/comics, and special collections categories.

This year's Sorting Volunteer Coordinator, Brenda Elliott, and her assistant, Linda Kearns - known by the volunteers as "Ruth and Ruthless" - have been very pleased and utterly amazed by how hard the volunteers work during each shift to get books out of the cartons in which they arrive, move them around to the most appropriate sorting location, count, and re-box them.

To date they have sorted approximately 20,000 items, and hope to have at least 30,000 by the sale date. The variety of materials donated is tremendous. Opening the boxes feels like Christmas, and volunteers often feel compelled to share the treasures that they find inside.



Not everything received is sellable. Mouldy books, items with yellowed, torn or missing pages are being boxed up for Torchlight Industries to recycle. Unsold Bibles and textbooks are being sent overseas by the Christian Salvage Mission. We give away books that are not sellable but too good to be destroyed. Seeing passers-by choose books from the FREE trolley outside is heart-warming.

This undertaking is hard work. Books are heavy. But we all love to read and are excited that our efforts will raise money for young readers in the new library. Without the voluntary sorters' contribution the annual Book Sale could not take place. Hats off to everyone who has given his or her time to help get this job done!



Our thanks to artist Dorothy Amey for creating our colourful Wyndham windows, and to Mary Ellen Cann of the Guelph Public Library for the inviting Baker Street window display.

Thank You

The Friends of the Guelph Public Library are extremely grateful to Mr. Chester Carere and his company, Guelph City Realty, for the use of the space at 160 Wyndham St. N. We have had access to this space since early May. It is ideal for our needs and resolves a whole host of complications related to both the sorting of donations and the mounting of the book sale. We feel extremely fortunate to have the support of such a community-minded individual and company.

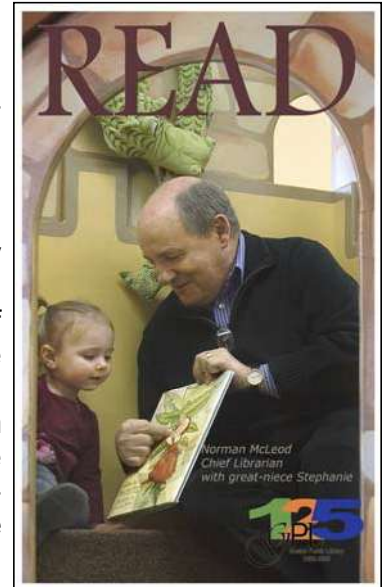
Virginia Gillham

Norman McLeod Announces His Retirement

After 32 years of guiding the City's Library system through the most dramatic period of growth in its history, Norman McLeod steps down, officially, from the post of Chief Librarian at the end of 2009.

During Norman's tenure, the city's population has more than doubled and he has steered the library system, expertly, to provide outstanding Library service to the much enlarged population. When Norman took office in 1977, there was a main library and a bookmobile, and an annual circulation of fewer than 400,000 items. Today there is a system of four (about to become five) branches, annual circulation approaching two million, and astronomical use of electronic information resources both on the spot and remotely from home computers. It is telling that the increase in use is more than twice the increase in population. Under Mr. McLeod's guidance the City has developed one of the most active library systems in Canada with nearly 80% of the population holding Library cards.

More about Norman McLeod's career in the next issue of Mr. Dewey. In the meantime, **THANKS NORMAN**. It is hard to imagine how things could have developed so well, within the constraints that have existed, with anyone else at the helm.



AN INVITATION TO FRIENDS
OF THE GUELPH PUBLIC
LIBRARY

FIRST LECTURE IN THE
2009-2010 AUTHOR SERIES

OUR GUEST -
MICHELLE WAN

AUTHOR OF THREE
MYSTERIES FEATURING
MURDER AND ORCHIDS

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 10 2009
AT 8:00

WESTMINSTER WOODS
BRANCH OF THE GPL

CALL 519 827 9013 TO
RESERVE YOUR SEAT.



Author Series Resumes

Mystery writer Michelle Wan will speak at the Westminster library on November 10.

Ms. Wan, a Guelph resident who every year spends time in France charting wild orchids, has written *Death in the Dordogne*, a murder-mystery trilogy. Her books "reflect her enthusiasms: wild orchids, food, memorable people and places, personable dogs, intriguing puzzles". Fans of the murder-mystery genre will want to attend this special evening. Call 519-827-9013 to reserve your seat

This year's Author Series follows the success of our first season. On March 3, Mary Swan, Guelph's own Giller Prize short-list nominee, spoke on writing *The Boys in the Trees*. The May 5 event presented Mike Cadman who described the challenging process of compiling the second edition of the *Ontario Breeding-Bird Atlas*. Question and answer sessions followed each presentation, after which audience members enjoyed light refreshments and informal conversations with the speakers.

Members of the Friends of the Guelph Public Library enjoy preferred access to Author Series events. Admission is free of charge; however reservations are required as seating is limited. Friends have exclusive access until a few days before each event.

GUELPH PUBLIC LIBRARY

100 Norfolk Street
Guelph, Ontario
N1H 4J6
Phone: 519-824-6220
Website: www.library.guelph.on.ca

Mr. Dewey and Friends,

the newsletter of the Friends of the Guelph Public Library, is published three times annually: spring, fall and winter. Next issue: Spring 2010

Submissions, photos and comments are welcome. They may be delivered to the Friends mailbox at the Main Branch or to any Branch Library.

Website:
www.friendsguelphlibrary.ca

Newsletter Editors
Susan Ratcliffe, Marilyn Crooks


Construction Season



The Main Branch Library is in the midst of major construction projects with completion anticipated by the end of November 2009, weather permitting.

Renovations to the front walkway and front doorway are expected to take six weeks. For the duration of the construction, the main door to the Library will be closed. A temporary wheelchair accessible door and ramp, and a temporary book drop, will be installed at the corner of the building next to the walkway.

Norfolk Street reconstruction continues. Phase II from Paisley/Quebec Streets to Green Street is underway.



Is Your Membership Up-to-Date?

Did you know that last year's memberships in the Friends of the Guelph Public Library expired at the end of April?

Is yours up to date?

Renewals and new memberships may be submitted any time.

Completed membership applications addressed to *The Friends of the GPL* may be left at the Circulation Desk of any library branch.

Why become a Friend of the Guelph Public Library? Friends have the opportunity to

- meet and join an enthusiastic group of people dedicated to furthering the purposes of the Library
- participate in the programs and activities which are offered by the Friends of the Guelph Public Library
- enjoy the satisfaction which comes from serving your community

Friends of the Guelph Public Library

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Enclosed is my/our annual membership fee and/or donation.

Renewal New

\$10 Individual Friend

\$5 Senior (65+) /Student

\$15 Family (list dependent children)

\$30 Community Group

\$50 Corporate

Name: _____

Address: _____ City: _____

Postal Code: _____ Day Phone: (____) - ____ - _____ Evening Phone: (____) - ____ - _____

Email: _____ Enclosed: Cash Cheque (payable to Friends of the Guelph Public Library)

My/our areas of interest are: Program Fundraising Publicity Newsletter Advocacy Book Clubs

Literacy Issues Author Visits Writing/Reading Workshops Educational Exhibits Special Events

Membership Hospitality Other (please specify) _____