

NOTES

friends

The Newsletter of the Friends of the Winnipeg Public Library

Winter 2014

Help make our libraries the best they can be

Dear Friends:

Happy New Year!

We're now in the depth of another Winnipeg winter but here's some news to help you think of Spring: we have confirmed our speakers for this year's Books & Brunch. **Frank Albo** (*The Hermetic Code*) and **Alison Gillmor**, (Winnipeg Free Press columnist) will speak of books they have known and loved at

The Gates on Roblin on May 4th. Save the date!

I was delighted to find that someone declared their love of books/reading/libraries (and maybe winter) in the freshly fallen snow at Millennium Library! When it's cold it's good to know that we have libraries full of books we can take home and curl up with.

Thank you for being a friend of the Winnipeg Public Library.



“It was a lot of fun”...Rochelle stepping down from Friends' Board

Rochelle Blumenthal has been a respected and treasured member of the Friends' board since the mid-90's when she was asked by Abe Anhang, the then-Chair of the Winnipeg Public Library Board, to help out. And in her words, “*what began as dogged determination turned into a lot of fun!*”

As board president from 1997, Rochelle ably led the Friends through a period of transition. In 2002 she handed over the reins to Susan Fraser, at which point Rochelle became vice-president, a position she held until the 2013 annual general meeting. Rochelle was a quiet, supportive force on the board, consistently encouraging the work of others and held Susan's work as president in high regard.



She has now decided that she will step down from the board altogether as of the 2014 AGM in the Spring. She leaves knowing how well we work together. She likes the way our new president, Dianne Zuk, is leading the Friends and has never missed an opportunity to praise each of us for our contributions to her favourite organization!

Rochelle has been the *best* ticket seller for Books & Brunch over the years - a role we hope she continues!

At the Friends' recent holiday party we had the opportunity to say thank you to Rochelle for her years of service. Susan Fraser (r) presented her with flowers, a McNally gift certificate and, of course, a book!

Friends Indeed.

How one small organization is working to make a big difference

I was approached by the Friends' president to help the board in an assessment of their work and to proceed with a strategic plan. As I read the materials provided to me ahead of our session I was simply amazed by the determination and incredible success of this small group of book and library lovers. What came to mind was a favourite childhood book *The Little Engine That Could*, a classic anthropomorphic tale that speaks to the determination and simple desire of a small engine to succeed in surmounting mountains. The Friends of the Winnipeg Public Library Board is that engine – they have worked diligently, strategically, determinedly and doggedly to do what they have done.

I have been doing a lot of community work with volunteer organizations over the last 25 years and have yet to see such a successful volunteer board. So I asked myself why in the world would they want and need a board assessment and a strategic plan when things were so functional? I quickly realized that they are a smart board and realized that they were at risk of burnout and continuing to just do the status quo. Everyone at the planning session worked hard, engaged and made commitments to address these issues. One of the major conclusions is that they need, want and in fact **must** have new volunteers and board members who are as passionate and committed

as they are. So if you are reading this article right now, ask yourself if you fit the bill – do you have some spare time? Would you like to work with a winning team that has a successful track record? Would you like to contribute to your community and the library system? Do you love books and reading? Do you like to

have fun and meet extremely interesting people?

If your answers are yes then I recommend you getting in touch with the board and volunteer. Get involved and see how

your help can change our community.

I want to thank the Board of the *Friends of the Winnipeg Public Library* for their work on the planning day as well as to the contributions of their efforts to make our public libraries more rich – literally.

Bobbi Éthier

—*Lover of the written word in all forms; passionate teacher & community activist; works at the Manitoba Teachers' Society.*

"I was simply amazed by the determination and incredible success of this small group of book and library lovers"



Dianne Zuk
President

The *Friends of the Winnipeg Public Library*

continues to be very active. One main fund-raising activity is the *Fall Book Sale*. Kudos to **Billie Stewart** and her team for a job well done. They are busy all year long preparing for the sale. Another important source of revenue is *Best of Friends Gift Shop* in the Millennium Library. Thanks to **Susan Fraser**, the 8th Anniversary Celebration in mid-November was a great success. The third major annual event, *Books & Brunch*, takes place on May 4th at The Gates on Roblin.

In November the board held a successful strategic planning session facilitated by **Bobbi Éthier**. Through this process we were able to take stock of where we are, where we want to go and how to get there. We will be revamping our committees and job descriptions and will create a new volunteer coordinator position. Expanded outreach and communication will be a big part of our work in the coming year to bring new blood to the organization and to expand our profile. We're all going to be busy!

You may have seen our fabulous new banner which is a great prop at events. Thanks to **Reesa Cohen, Billie Stewart** and **Kathy Blight** for making this happen and a special thank you to **Pat Stanton** for her great design expertise.

One of the first jobs the board has this month is to meet with library managers who present wish lists of projects for which they would like funding from the Friends. This process is always an interesting one and we all look forward to hearing what wonderful things our WPL staff are planning.

All in all, the Board of the Friends of Winnipeg Public Library feels rejuvenated and ready to do more and better things this year. On behalf of the board I thank you for your support and wish you all the best for 2014.



Bobbi Éthier (r) after the planning session with board members **Billie Stewart** and **Janet Carriere**



The beautiful bracelet designed for the Best of Friends Gift Shop anniversary by Pat Stanton was won by Tricia Taylor of Calgary. See more of Pat's creations at the shop - as well as lovely items by other local jewellery artists.

Library Teens Catching Fire



You've probably heard of the Hunger Games - a hugely popular trilogy written by Suzanne Collins. The books became even more popular when it was announced that they would be made into movies and library staff recognized a perfect opportunity to bring more teens into the library by hosting **BOOK PARTIES** to celebrate the release of each movie. The second one was held on November 21st and attracted over 50 teens to Millennium Library. The *Catching Fire* Party included a Cornucopia Challenge, Scavenger Hunt, Trivia and more!

The Friends are happy to have been able to financially support such a great initiative. We received the following note from Teen Services Librarian Alix-Rae Stefanko:

Thank you to the Friends of the Winnipeg Public Library for contributing to the success of this event. Aside from the consumables, many props and accessories were purchased which will be used for more teen programming in the future.

Congratulations to library staff and members of the WPL Youth Advisory Councils for organizing exciting teen programs like book parties.

Friends helping Friends

Kathy Blight, Chair, Membership Committee

Friends in the Community: It's always great to get out and about to let more people know about WPL programs and the work of the Friends. Since the last newsletter we've had information tables at the WPL Book Club Fair, the SAGE Conference, the Fall Book Sale and at the Best of Friends 8th Anniversary event. At each we had a free draw for a basket of goodies from the *Best of Friends Gift Shop*. **Congratulations** to the winners: **Sue Wonnek, Carla McMurray, Annette Havens** and **Cyril Shane**.

2013 Book Sale - best one yet!

The 9th Annual Fall Book Sale was another success, generating over \$10,600 - the best year yet! There were nearly 150 people lined up at 10 a.m. on Saturday and traffic was great all weekend. Best of all, everyone - volunteers and customers - seemed to have a great time. What a great way to raise funds for our library and recycle all those great books into new homes.

The Friday night set-up crew really appreciated the wonderful sustenance from **Boston Pizza** on Taylor, (*plus Pamela Bowles' yummy tunnel of fudge cake*). Weekend volunteers were fed well with donations from **Price Choppers** on Stafford, and Taylor Avenue neighbours: **Sobeys, Safeway and Subway**.

As always the staff at Grant Park High School was great. The caretakers looked after us well all weekend. A really big thank you goes to teacher **Bobbi Milberg** for sending us such wonderful student volunteers to help move boxes during Friday set-up. These excellent helpers were: **JiaMin, Dongrui, Kathy, Meron, Mustafa, Zach, and Jaelle**. They were tireless and those strong young backs were lifesavers for us.

Thank you to these wonderful volunteers!

Kathy & Bob Blight

***Pamela Bowles**

Warren Bowles

***Janet Carriere**

Arthur Cohen

Reesa Cohen

Ed Cuddy

****Wade Cudmore**

Heather EMBERLEY

***Marlene Enns**

Sylvia Flam

Susan Fraser

***Lynne Gauld**

***Jill Glover**

Heather Graham

Luba Harasym

Terra Jentsch

Fern & Bruce Kettner

***Mette LaPorte**

***Marvyn Lick**

Dianne Logan

***Marlene Milne**

Coreen Molloy

Lorraine Napora

Carolyn Rickey

***Pat Stanton**

Bill Stewart

Dianne Zuk

* year round volunteers

** our hero with the truck!

"What a great way to raise funds for our library and recycle all those great books into new homes"

Billie Stewart, Chair, Fall Book Sale

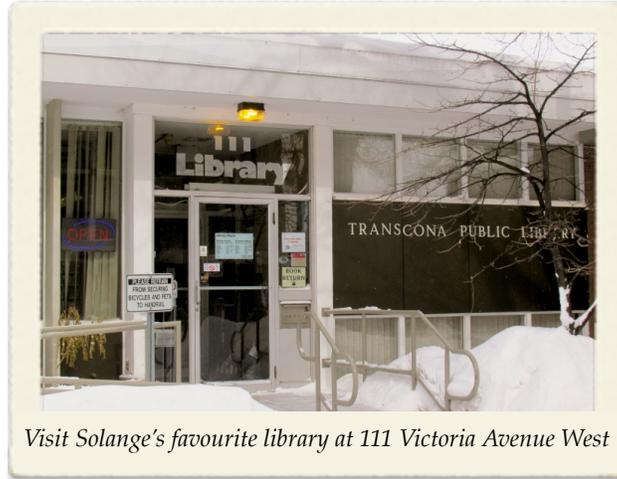
My Library is...the Transcona Branch

Libraries are a gift to the community and my favourite one is the Transcona Library.

It first opened in 1958 and the current building was constructed in 1961 when it was serving 11,000 people - this number has now reached 78,000!

My husband and I moved into the Transcona area in 1963 and quickly became members. I have so many good memories of going there with one, then two and finally with our three boys.

I would help my boys choose their books and then some for myself. Always a treat and still a treat to myself are my weekly visits to my Transcona Library. I walk, ride my bike or drive to the building on Victoria Avenue West, and relax in the quiet of the place where the Library rejuvenates me.



Visit Solange's favourite library at 111 Victoria Avenue West

I head home with my stack of books very happy. If I am stirring the soup pot with a book in my hand, my husband will say "Must be a good one!"

Reading and going to the local library is a pleasure I have passed on to my children and now my six grandchildren. For me, the reward is communication and discussion of books with them all. Often I'll take out the same book that one of my grandchildren is reading to keep connected.

Solange Constant is a member of Friends and volunteers at the Best of Friends Gift Shop.

Do you love *your* library like Solange loves the Transcona branch? This space could be yours to tell us all about it!

Susan Says

Notes from the Best of Friends Gift Shop
Conveniently located in the Millennium Library

Since the last newsletter, we have been busy, busy, busy at Best of Friends Gift Shop. Our 8th Anniversary celebration in November was a great success followed by the holiday season which is, of course, our busiest. We started planning early - always watching for unique, useful and sometimes crazy-useless things for our customers. More and more our shoppers want to avoid the hassle of big box stores and are thrilled to be able to do all their gift buying at our little shop.

And what do we have on the agenda for 2014? Lots! A few upgrades are in the works to improve shop displays, including a beautiful glass-shelf unit for the front window. I just contacted a company that markets games on the Monopoly theme: Cat-Opoly, anyone? A spruced-up shop and lots of great merchandise is the plan. Do come in and check it out.

'til next time, Susan Fraser, Manager



Board of Directors

- Dianne Zuk — President
- Billie Stewart — Vice-President
- Arthur Cohen — Treasurer
- Heather Graham — Secretary
- Kathy Blight — Chair, Membership Committee
- Billie Stewart — Chair, Fall Book Sale
- Dianne Zuk — Chair, Books & Brunch
- Jillian Glover — Communications
- Rochelle Blumenthal — Member at Large
- Janet Carriere — Member at Large
- Reesa Cohen — Member at Large
- Luba Harasym — Member at Large
- Winnipeg Public Library Liaison — Ed Cuddy
- Best of Friends Gift Shop Manager — Susan Fraser
- Newsletter Editor — Jillian Glover

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