

## Regional workshop in Ajax, Ontario and Smithers British Columbia

### ... Sharing successes and challenges

Regional Friends gathered this Fall in Ajax, Ontario and Smithers, British Columbia. Each workshop provides an opportunity for neighbouring Friends groups to talk, share resources and ideas, and come away with new energy.

The Ajax Workshop included 21 delegates from six communities. This is the second annual Fall meeting. Last year the event was hosted in Lindsay, and Oshawa will host the 2006 regional meeting.

Please look to the FOCAL website photographs depicting many of the ideas and exhibits described in this newsletter - <http://www.friendsoflibraries.ca/regional-meetings.htm#Ajax>

In this issue we will highlight the successes from the Ajax meeting, and in the next issues highlight some challenges faces by the different Friends groups.

### Oshawa

Jim Osborne listed fundraising and program successes. He gave credit to an idea picked up at a library conference and now raises \$2,000 a year from books sold from a book cart near the circulation desk in the library.

- Annual booksale revenue is \$12,000 - \$15,000
- Partner with a community choir organizing a golf tournament, and distributed coupons worth \$2 off the Friends booksale
- During Durham's Cinefest 250 volunteers distributed bookmarks to promote the booksale.
- **Rhapsody in Bloom** program of garden tours, lunch in gallery café, regency home tour and also a bonsai display. Tickets are a good value at \$30 tickets and we sell 250.
- Easter baskets raffle
- November **house decorating and making holiday wreaths** – partner with local church – includes luncheon
- Helped sell 200-300 tickets for local symphony orchestra – got half of value – \$1500 fund-raiser
- **New members package** – contains Library Board members , Friend's Executive list, constitution, calendar of events and newsletter, and Friend's committees
- Advertise in choir newsletter (5 issues)
- We have our own **logo** – becoming familiar
- **Party to celebrate success** – Dec. or Nov. at someone's home – volunteers are invited

### Lindsay – Eileen Anderson

The Lindsay Friends described a very exciting year. They won the Random House Award of the Year award, and gave credit to a wonderful group of volunteers who did do a lot during 2004.

During 2005 the Friends celebrated The Year of the Veteran. They have 13 local Royal Canadian Legions in Kawartha Lakes area, and there will be special events during library week

Noreen described their monthly booksales that are "quite profitable", the record to date being \$703.07 for a one day sale. They do not have a set price except for books on genealogy, and sales are by donation only. They have found people are very generous. They also have an outdoor booksale (library near farmers' market) and sales have been going up every year. They do have a storage area so books can be on shelves all year

Their Friend's book bags are selling extremely well, and a new design was introduced. They are made in Lindsay by a local entrepreneur. They also sell in bulk quantities to other Friend's groups, and Winnipeg has purchased over 1500 in the past two years.

See the FOCAL Market website for new designs, prices and sizes -  
<http://www.friendsoflibraries.ca/market.html>

## Mississauga – Bill Crawford

### Spending

- local author working on history of nine original communities that make up Mississauga – Friends helping with graphics/layout/production – hope to break even

*Question – Historical books*

*- cost? - \$47.50 price for historical books*

*- Suggestion - Ontario genealogical society and Canadian Historical Society – if you advertise their members would be very anxious to get copies*

- 4 new library branches – \$50,000 to each branch to help with capital expenses – fireplaces, seating area, children’s activity areas
- Wish list – try to budget to meet them all – we can’t consistently – try to help out each of branches as best we can
- 17 branches to look after
- donating books to various areas of the world – Africa, Philippines – give to local organization who ship container loads or arrange their own transportation

### Revenue

- Corporate sponsor \$25,000 contributed to Cooksville publication – hoping to get other corporate sponsors
- Hope to set up a new system for corporate donations – head offices – used to get \$5-10,000 a year
- Main source of revenue is book sales – year round – each local branch has small area – cart
- Central library has elaborate set up – runs year round as long as library is open - \$96,000 last year – hope to go over \$100,000 this year
- Area devoted to withdrawn library books - \$1 or \$2 each (hardcover \$2, softcover \$1) and divided by subject  
(See comprehensive price guide, page 8)

## Mississauga - Book Sales

- 75-90 % of revenue from four carts in main entranceway
- Filled with only best quality books
- All donated, really good quality
- Individually priced \$3 to \$5
- Staff at circulation desk take payment and it is entered into our account – takes a bit of time to organize
- we have price guides to our books

*Questions – honour system – works o.k.*

*Having unionized staff do your work – not an issue*

*Branch rivalry – in branch with best sales staff get a lunch – might do every six months*

**Special sales** – Buyers can use a form to make a request and check off areas of interest. They run a special sale every three months, and have 8 pages of names to be contacted, preferably by e-mail, and give them advance notice of a special sale. They make \$1000-1500 at each special sale and \$1590 on the recent textbook sale.

**Teachers only book sale** – Teachers are invited to a special sale where over 2000 books sell for \$1 each or 3 for \$2. They sell out and make \$1000-1200 during the two-hour sale. They use school board’s interoffice mail and use e-mail to send out to school boards, so that promotion doesn’t cost anything.

*Questions:*

*Encyclopaedias – do you sell – silent auction in a display case – write bid and enter name in the box – \$250-\$300 paid for encyclopaedia. That may be 15 years old*

*Books that don’t sell – do you recycle –*

*Colour code as to month – pull out books older than two months and move upstairs to regular cheap section*

*Storage – where do you store – have a central area – 6000 stored in central library – couple thousand on sale at any one time*

## **Peterborough**

Lynn Gibbon from Peterborough described how the Friends area recovering from the flood in their community which caused so much damage to the library collection and facility. Books the Friends had in storage were drowned, and everything had to be disposed of due to sewage. Lynn praised both Markdale and Bradford for responding to their appeal for books.

After cleaning up from the flood, flood insurance was used to purchase 8-10 tables and four book trucks. Additional insurance money spent on flats or platforms to store books.

## **Lindsay**

Partnered in art with the high schools, by asking the high school students to design a mural. The end result is a beautiful mural for boys and girls department. The school will receive \$200 and students will get hours of community service.

## **Ajax**

Highlights of year

- Going to Council to pay next \$100,000 instalment of \$1 million pledge. One last instalment to make next year will complete our pledge to the town
- February Valentines Tea: pianist played Love Songs
- Chocaholics – taste testing – discussion about chocolate
- Appreciation lunch to library staff will become an annual event

Premier event was **Children of the War Years** – tied into 50th anniversary, a legacy project of interest to our members many who have lived in Ajax for a good number of years. Children of the War Years captured memories of those who grew up in Ajax during the war, and an oral history was the end result.

- Local freelance author interviewed kids and videographer put together a short video documentary – premiered in May
- 50 anniversary event was held May 29<sup>th</sup> – teamed up with local authors and launched their book – timed two events together
- Article on children of war years published later this fall in Senior's magazine

*\*\* Excerpt from FOPCAL Point 2006 Winter issue.*