

Edmonton Public Library



2006 Annual Report

Message

from the Chair of the Board and Director of Libraries

The year 2006 was one of both reflection and action at the Edmonton Public Library. Not only are Library trustees and staff extremely pleased with what EPL achieved, they are excited by prospects for the future.

As the time came to implement the Library Board's new five-year strategic plan to carry EPL forward to 2010, the executive team, managers and staff took the opportunity to re-examine the Library's role in the community, and developed a three-year business plan (2006-2009). Packed with action items to achieve the goals of the Board, the plan looks at a wide range of initiatives such as podcasts and downloadable music and movies.

The 94-year-old Strathcona Branch reopened after a major restoration and expansion. Now also more accessible, the revitalized library will provide excellence in service to Old Strathcona residents well into the future. Construction started on the new Lois Hole Library to meet the growing need in west Edmonton, and we anticipate a grand opening in the spring of 2008.



Dr. Sheila Bertram
Chair, Board of Trustees

The Library began to implement Radio-Frequency Identification (RFID), a technology that will revolutionize how it manages its large collections, increase the efficiency of its operations and allow customers to check out on their own, the books they are borrowing.

As always, the Library focused on reading, literacy and learning. It increased its collections, added new services and expanded its virtual library. EPL reached out to the Aboriginal community and teens to encourage them to take advantage of what the Library has to offer.



Linda C. Cook
Director of Libraries

The Board and EPL staff are fortunate to be working with a City Council which recognizes that the Library enriches the community and adds to the economic vitality of the city. Without Council's support, we could not have renovated the Strathcona Branch, built a new library in the west end or undertaken RFID.

As Board Chair and Director of Libraries, we are also grateful to Library staff for their dedication and commitment to providing quality service to Edmontonians. They are the heart and soul of our Library and deserve the credit for our many successes.

We are well-positioned to build for the future, and are confident that Edmonton's public library system will continue to be a leader in Canada's library community.

Building...

Edmonton Public Library trustees and staff have kept their eyes firmly fixed on the future as the city expands and prospers, continually asking what can be done to meet the needs of a growing, diverse population in an increasingly busy and technologically-driven world.

- The Board of Trustees officially adopted a five-year strategy document (2006-2010) titled *Enriching People's Lives*. It was the culmination of an exhaustive and consultative information-gathering process that included a major public survey, focus groups, plus analysis of demographic projections, lifestyle trends and developments in the library field. The information was distilled into a vision for the Library's future and concrete strategies to achieve that vision.
- Library staff took this process further by developing a comprehensive, three-year business plan to put into action the Board's strategic directions. Dozens of individuals from throughout the organization participated, and a broad range of action plans were developed.



Dignitaries cut the ribbon with EPL puppets Jazz and Andy at the official reopening of the Strathcona Branch. From Left: Punch Jackson, the Alberta government's Director of Libraries, Community and Voluntary Sector Services; Dr. Sheila Bertram, Chair of the EPL Board; Mayor Stephen Mandel.



Sod-turning ceremony for the new Lois Hole Library. From Left: Councillor Linda Sloan, Mayor Stephen Mandel, EPL Board Chair Dr. Sheila Bertram, Jim Hole and Bill Hole – sons of the Late, The Honourable Lois Hole, 15th Lieutenant Governor of Alberta.

- Construction of the new Lois Hole Library began in the Callingwood area in July. This beautiful, large facility will replace the Lessard Branch, and will serve a growing west-end population expected to reach more than 72,000 by 2010. The Library named the new branch in fond remembrance of the Late, The Honourable Lois Hole, 15th Lieutenant Governor of Alberta, to pay tribute to a woman who championed libraries, literacy and learning. City Council approved a budget of \$10 million for the project.

for the Future



- In September the Library began implementing radio-frequency identification (RFID) to manage its large collections – demonstrating once again why EPL is regarded as a leader in public library services. Items were tagged with special electronic markers that will allow customers to check out their own library materials with speed and ease. Freed-up library staff will be able to make better use of their expertise, whether it's spending time helping customers or providing more programs. EPL is the first major library in Canada to adopt RFID technology system-wide.
- October saw the Strathcona Branch, a designated municipal and provincial historical resource, officially reopen amid much fanfare after its major restoration and expansion. EPL succeeded in preserving the 94-year-old building's character while making many improvements. The branch is now wheelchair and stroller-accessible. With the extra space, there is now a bright, cheerful children's area, a teen area (Rotary Teen Zone) and a large program room (Crystal Glass Community Meeting Room).



Building... Literacy

The Library wishes to help foster reading – a fundamental skill in a knowledge-based society.

- In an ongoing quest to instill a love of reading in young people, the Library once again offered winter and summer reading programs:
 - There were nearly 12,000 participants in the 2006 TD Summer Reading Club for children, which had as its theme, Quest for Heroes. The online Winter Reading Club for kids logged about 4,700 visits.
 - Teen Survivor Online invited youths to read selected books over the summer and eliminate one title each week until only the winner remained. More than 3,700 visits were logged on the Teen Survivor website.
 - The Big Chill online winter reading club for adults was also popular. There were more than 7,300 visits to the Big Chill website.
- READ IN Week, the big literacy event of the year, takes place each October. As a key partner in this community-wide celebration of books and reading, EPL was involved in a variety of activities. The 2006 theme was *Reading Crosses Cultures*.
- EPL and the Edmonton Transit System co-sponsored an adult literacy awards initiative called "Get Caught Reading." Once a month, a "Reading Reconnaissance Team" of library and ETS staff members looked for adults they could "catch" reading on buses, the LRT or at transit centres, and rewarded those passengers with books and prizes. The Library developed a Get Caught Reading website to support the initiative.



Children listen to a story read by staff member Mireille Smith at the Penny McKee-Abbottsfeld Branch.



The "Reading Reconnaissance Team" from the Library and Edmonton Transit gets an early start to "catch" transit riders reading.

Building...

The Edmonton Public Library belongs to the community it serves. One of the Library's priorities is to forge additional ties with people and organizations.

- EPL has always had a strong relationship with Edmonton Public Schools and in 2006 the two knowledge institutions formalized their partnership with a Memorandum of Understanding. They have a mutual goal – to promote reading, literacy and lifelong learning. During a successful pilot project to put more public library cards in the hands of students, more than 1,500 signed up for a card. The two partners also shared information and best practices in promoting literacy.



Mayor Stephen Mandel and Councillor Michael Phair with Linda C. Cook, Director of Libraries, at a City Hall reception held to recognize Ms. Cook's inauguration as president of the Canadian Library Association.

- One of the Library's goals has been to further develop its leadership capacity and to continue to strive for administrative excellence. Many staff members play an active role in library organizations, giving the Edmonton Public Library a high profile in the field, both locally and nationally. In 2006, Linda Cook, EPL's Director of Libraries, was honoured by her profession by being chosen as the president of the Canadian Library Association, which carries a one-year term.

- The culinary arts and literary themes came together in a delightful way at the unique Books2Eat gala, organized by the Library to raise funds for the Strathcona Branch restoration. Local chefs created elaborate, imaginative cakes based on or inspired by books. About 250 guests were invited to bid on the marvellous creations and dozens of other items in a silent auction.



One of several elaborate cakes created for the Books2Eat fundraising gala.

Relationships within the Community



- EPL's Writer in Residence, Linda Goyette, completed a special project for the Library, which was to catalogue and edit the *Edmonton: A City Called Home* online collection – a rich resource of citizens' stories, interviews and photographs. For another special project, Goyette has been collecting immigrants' stories in their first language for a new anthology, *The Story That Brought Me Here*. Goyette also helped many emerging writers with their manuscripts, edited three other books and organized monthly writers' workshops at the Library.



EPL Writer in Residence
Linda Goyette works with
Vernon Wishart, author of
What Lies Behind the Picture?
A Journey into Cree Ancestry.

- Responding to popular demand, EPL hosted the Teen Gamers Palace program for a second year. With funding from Child Friendly Edmonton, the Library held these evening events at five selected branches. Supervised by library staff, the teens had the branch to themselves as they ate pizza and amused themselves with video games and board games or surfed the Internet. Altogether, about 160 young people participated, and their feedback was overwhelmingly positive.
- EPL partnered with radio station “91.7 The Bounce” in a promotion aimed at raising the Library's profile with teens – the Back to Cool contest. The Bounce promoted the contest on air, directing listeners to enter on the Library's website. The contest was a resounding success with more than 500 entries. Five winners each received a pair of concert tickets, plus a party for their school featuring DJs and pizza.



- As a major institution in the heart of the city, the Library is an active member of the downtown community. Up against stiff competition from major hotels and eateries, EPL was thrilled to win second prize for its entry in the 16th Annual Chili Cook Off, organized by the Downtown Business Association to kick off Canadian Finals Rodeo week in November.

The Library's own “James Bond and the Chili Chicks” celebrate their second-place finish at the Chili Cook Off held during Canadian Finals Rodeo Week.

Building... Bridges

The Edmonton Public Library has made it a priority to meet the needs of Aboriginal and multicultural groups in its collections, services and programs.



- In 2006, the Library made great progress in implementing many of the recommendations of an EPL task force which conducted a major study evaluating public library services to Aboriginal people in Canada and abroad. EPL allocated resources to build on current services and programs, and to enhance the Library's collection of materials of interest to the Aboriginal community, such as Cree-language materials, and books and music by Aboriginal artists.



Jason Skani, a member of the Thundering Spirit Song & Dance Troupe which performed at the Stanley A. Milner Library to celebrate National Aboriginal Day.

- EPL maintains its commitment to serving Edmonton's many citizens from other countries through its services, including materials and databases in languages other than English. The Library was pleased to add an important new database, Rosetta Stone, to its website (epl.ca) for people learning English as a second language. As well, EPL introduced Dragon Source, a database with the full text of 100 Chinese-language magazines, which has a devoted segment of users.
- The Chinese-language book collection received a boost when Dr. Fu-Mei Chang, minister of Taiwan's Overseas Compatriot Affairs Commission, presented the Library with a gift of books and reference materials from her country.



Dr. Sheila Bertram, Chair of the EPL Board, and Dr. Fu-Mei Chang, minister of Taiwan's Overseas Compatriot Affairs Commission. Dr. Chang presented the Library with a gift of books and reference materials from her country.

Building on Success

Always on the lookout for new services to offer and more ways to help the public access resources, the Edmonton Public Library introduced a number of initiatives in 2006.



- Customers who wish to create professional-looking documents but do not have access to a computer can now come to any of the Library's 16 branches. Word-processing stations were set up in all EPL locations after a successful pilot project at four branches.
- The Library entered into a partnership with the City to improve low-income residents' access to services. Coupons for a free annual adult library card are included with information the City gives out about its Leisure Access Program to those in need.
- Flicks and Tunes To Go was introduced as an extension to the popular book service Bestsellers To Go. Customers can choose from a selection of the latest DVDs and CDs without waiting in the request queue and may borrow items for one week. It is one of the most popular services the Library offers.
- EPL added 13 new databases to its already-extensive virtual library in 2006, including popular websites such as Price It Antiques and Collectibles, and a comprehensive new resource for bird lovers, the BNA Online database (Birds of North America). The eAudiobooks NetLibrary allows library members to download and listen to unabridged audiobooks.



The Library's computers are a popular service with EPL customers.

Statement of Revenue and Expense

For the year ended December 31, 2006
with comparative figures for 2005

	2006	2005
Revenue		
Grants		
City of Edmonton	\$ 25,917,179	\$ 24,757,000
Province of Alberta	3,056,157	2,857,586
Annual Registration Fees	723,790	726,210
Fines and Charges	904,697	831,965
Other	391,952	283,073
Total Revenue	30,993,775	29,455,834
Expenses		
Salaries and Benefits	19,110,271	18,039,654
Books and Library Materials	5,204,162	5,000,000
Supplies	2,111,535	2,296,014
Maintenance of Properties	2,992,851	2,179,623
Property and Equipment Rentals	1,529,629	1,634,553
Total Expenses	30,948,448	29,149,844
Excess of Revenue Over Expenses	\$ 45,327	\$ 305,990



Collections and Services

For the year ended December 31, 2006
with comparative figures for 2005

	2006	2005
Visits to Library		
In Person	5,413,008	5,364,329
Website Visits*	5,666,487	4,395,593
Total	11,079,495	9,759,922
Items Borrowed		
Adult	5,085,344	5,067,150
Juvenile	2,895,775	2,657,004
Web Renewals	1,447,748	1,236,007
Telephone Renewals	79,318	77,665
Total	9,508,185	9,037,826
In-house Collections Use	1,723,550	1,643,800
Public Internet Use	1,003,835	947,424
Questions Answered	1,751,218	1,811,075
Programs Presented	4,734	4,369
Program Attendance	147,484	150,177
Items Purchased	363,822	344,359
Magazine Subscriptions	1,235	1,220
Total Collection	1,607,290	1,926,066
Number of Databases	77	67
Population of Edmonton**	712,391	712,391
Number of Libraries	16	16

* 84 per cent are visits to epl.ca from computers outside EPL branches

** Municipal Census 2005

2006 Board of Trustees

Dr. Sheila Bertram, Chair
Mr. Nashir Karmali, Vice-Chair
Mr. Roger R. Breault
Dr. Diana Davidson
Mr. Tim Haysom
Ms. Karen Lynch
Dr. Austin Mardon

Mr. Colin W. J. Minor
Mrs. Joan Welch
Councillor Michael Phair

■ New Trustees in 2007

Mr. Brent McDonough
Dr. Carol Suddards



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1. From Left: Pat Jobb, EPL's Associate Director of Public Services; Linda C. Cook, Director of Libraries; Ian E. Wilson, Librarian and Archivist of Canada; Jody Crilly, chair of EPL's Aboriginal Services team. Mr. Wilson paid EPL a visit to learn about the Library's work in providing services to Edmonton's Aboriginal community.
2. Students at Ottewell Junior High School check out the Library's booth at the Back to Cool pizza party, one of five such events held at schools across Edmonton.
3. EPL Teen Services Librarian Wendy Grønnestad-Damur is ready for the Capital Ex Parade.

Quick Facts



5,413,008
visits

were made to the
Library's 16 locations

9,508,185
items

were borrowed

1,751,218
questions

were answered

147,484 people
attended **4,734** programs

5,666,487
visits

were made to epl.ca

149,879 adult
and children's books
were added to the
collections

104,299
paperbacks were added

65,161
AV materials were added

36,974
periodicals were added

5,031
reference books were added

398 volunteers
with Friends of the Library
and the Library Access Division donated

8,450 hours to three
fundraising book sales, and to
provide Library Access service to
customers unable to
use traditional library services

108 teen
volunteers
participated in Teen
Advisory Groups



Edmonton Public Library

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