



REPORT TO THE LIBRARY BOARD

MEETING DATE: OCTOBER 28, 2010

Session:	Public Session
Subject:	Libro Library Road Show Summer Events and TD Summer Reading Club
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Purpose of Report:	For Receipt and Information Only

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Library Board receive this report.

Issue / Opportunity

During the summer of 2010 there were many activities and initiatives designed to promote library services and encourage children to read. Two of these were the TD Summer Reading Club and the Libro Library Road show. Both of these reflect the Library's commitment to outreach, community engagement and were successful due to the passionate and enthusiastic staff members who delivered them.

Background & Review

TD Summer Reading Club

The theme of the 2010 TD Summer Reading Club was "Destination Jungle!" Designed to foster a love of reading, to encourage children to read throughout the summer, and to act as a reading bridge between school years in a fun way, this year's program was a hit. This year, 5,373 children signed up and read 19,909 books! The number of participants was down slightly from 2009 (1%) and attendance was down slightly more (10%) in part because the program ran one week less than last year (Labour Day was late in 2009 so we ran the program an extra week). Libraries reported steady program activity throughout July, but saw a slight decrease over the month of August. The majority of participants were between 6 and 8 years old in 2010 (41%).

Each year the theme is developed by the TD Summer Reading Club National Creative Committee, a team of Librarians from the Toronto, Ottawa, and London public libraries, staff from the CNIB and Librarians from Library and Archives Canada. London Public Library is honoured to be one of just a few Library systems in Canada to be represented on this Committee and as such we have a unique ability to contribute to the content of the program. Participation in the TD program provides us with high-quality TD funded materials on which to base our in-house program, including: posters, stickers and bilingual activity books. At LPL, we blend our program specifics around the TD theme and materials to create a program which is on the one hand, a high quality national program, and on the other hand, a program which is unique to London and promotes use of our resources and repeat library visits.

Our ever popular and unique game board, designed by Betty Lueddeke, centred on the jungle theme and led children through and around rain forest trees, swinging vines and exotic animals and birds to direct them to read from different genres and formats. The game board supports participation in the program by both emerging and independent readers, and serves to fulfill the stated goal of encouraging children of all ages to read and use the Library throughout the summer. The use of the game board also encourages regular and frequent visits to the Library. Each trip around the board allowed the children to reach a new 'adventure level'. In addition, reading incentives were given after each book read and weekly draw prizes were held.

The theme lent itself to fun and creative ways to promote the program: librarians visited school classes dressed as jungle explorers (in total 545 visits to classes were made which reached 11,257 children); creative in-library displays drew attention to the theme; a video was created starring young "explorers" from Lord Elgin Public School; and of course, it was promoted widely in the Library and on our website.

Special attention was given to taking the program out into the community to reach children who might not be able to get to the Library. The Libro Library Road Show delivered the program to 591 children (who played a total of 1,992 times) and other Library staff participated in program with many of our community partners to bring the program to an additional 87 children (who played a total of 228 times).

Generous donors and sponsors and a dedicated planning team along with enthusiastic staff at all locations helped to make this year's summer reading club a success!

Libro Library Road Show

The Libro Library Road Show attended many community festivals and special events this summer including the London International Children's Festival (June 5); Nicholas Wilson BBQ (June 10); Libro Family Fun Day (June 19); Westminster Optimists' BBQ (June 24); London Multicultural Seniors' Picnic (July 14); Blossom Gate BBQ (July 17); London Pride Parade (July 25) and Oakridge Community Day (Aug. 7); Nor'west Fun Fair (Aug. 14), Festa Italiana (Aug. 28) and the North East Community Health Fair (Sept. 2). At these events, staff promoted library programs and materials; made crafts, read books and spoke to the public about their library experiences.

In addition, the Libro London Public Library Road Show was lucky enough to visit many City of London day camps, including those at Kinsmen Arena, Westmount Public School; University Heights Public School and St. Mark's Catholic School. London and Middlesex Housing summer recreation counselors welcomed us at the Pond Mills, Southdale, Limberlost, Boullee, Vinewood and Marconi housing complexes. The children at these camps were very enthusiastic about the TD Summer Reading Club, and read many books during these visits. Due to the closing of Northridge Branch Library, the Road Show van was a frequent visitor to the Northridge Pool this summer, where the children enjoyed books and played the TD Summer Reading Club game throughout July and August.

The Libro Library Road Show was particularly useful in reaching children who don't live close to a local branch library – at the camp held at J.P. Robarts School, not one of the children said that they had heard about the TD Summer Reading Club. For some of the children, the Libro Road Show was the only opportunity for them to get library books and information about library programs.

Attendance statistics for the Libro Library Road Show topped 2,200 this summer counting festivals, events and summer camp visits.