In March of this year, we lost one of our most eloquent voices, First Nations storyteller Richard Wagamese. He was also a great champion of public libraries.

Several years ago I attended an author event with Richard, where he startled the audience with the comment that, “Librarians don’t care.” He went on to describe his life as a homeless 16-year-old in St. Catharines. Displaced, frightened and alone, he followed a group of people into the public library. He found safety, quiet, compassion, and books. He went on to explain that, in fact, the librarians didn’t care that he was unfed and unwashed. They welcomed him anyway, encouraged his curiosity, and provided a safe home for learning that led to a career in journalism and later, as a celebrated and respected Canadian author.

In a CBC interview, Richard explained the impact that the library had in those early days. “I read works of fiction and poetry, but also books about astronomy, philosophy, geography, history, geometry, rocket science, all kinds of different things. I got an entire education for free. I didn’t even have a library card. Because in order to get a library card, you had to have an address, and I didn’t have one.”

**Libraries matter.** And the work of libraries is passionately carried out in Guelph by our librarians, at all of our branches throughout the city.

Recent studies done by the Federation of Ontario Public Libraries confirm that 85% of Ontarians believe that our libraries are important to community vitality and strength. And we know that the tax dollars entrusted to librarians are well spent, supporting our communities in myriad meaningful ways. Libraries build community resilience by:

- promoting literacy and a love of reading
- providing free access to materials and resources; playing an important role in giving everyone a chance to succeed
- improving the quality of life in a community

As we reflect back on the Guelph Public Library’s accomplishments this year, it’s important to recognize our dedicated staff, who create rich and diverse programming that touches every sector of our community. The majority of library resources are available without user fees, supported by the commitment of our city to the public library system. It’s a commitment that we are proud of, and one that our library staff lives up to every day, as they work to enrich, educate, connect, and empower the citizens of Guelph.

Looking forward to 2017, there are some exciting opportunities for citizen involvement. We will be engaging the community as we plan for our next 5 years of library service, and we’ll be asking for your input. We’re also hoping to build stronger connections with our community partners, and will be looking for volunteers to work beside us on our outreach efforts. And at any time, I encourage you to let your librarians know how the library is working for you. Our programs and collections are shaped by your thoughtful feedback.

On behalf of the Guelph Public Library Board, I extend appreciation to our committed and hard-working staff for continuing to creatively and passionately do the excellent work expected of an outstanding public library system!

Katie Saunders
**BY THE NUMBERS**

**2016**

- **7,877 NEW MEMBERS**
  - Accessed our resources and services for the first time

- **55,927 MATERIALS WERE DELIVERED TO OR CHECKED OUT BY HOME-BOUND AND SPECIAL NEEDS MEMBERS**

- **2,314,454 ITEMS**
  - Were borrowed, equivalent to more than 6,340 items a day!

- **42,746 ATTENDEES**
  - Took part in 1,526 children and adult programs

- **3,363 AVERAGE DAILY VISITORS**
  - Were welcomed at our library

- **122,880 MEMBER QUESTIONS**
  - Were answered by our librarians and staff

- **64,133 NEW ITEMS**
  - Were added to bring fresh experiences to members

- **3,375 AVERAGE DAILY VISITS**
  - To our website and digital resources

- **574,600 CHILDREN’S MATERIALS**
  - Were checked out, supporting an early love of literacy

- **3,375 AVERAGE DAILY VISITS**
  - To our website and digital resources

- **MARCH BREAK**
  - Was our busiest week (circulation) and August 2 our busiest day!
FROM JUNE 25 TO AUGUST 27...

**SUMMER READING SNAPSHOT**

**2016**

**798 KIDS**
(AGES 3-12)

**READ**

**28,740 BOOKS**

**106 TEENS**
(AGES 13+)

**READ**

**1,832 BOOKS**

**FINANCIALS**

**2016**

**EXPENDITURES: $9,090,840**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Proportion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Salaries, Wages and Benefits</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchased Goods</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Expenses</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal Charges</td>
<td>2%</td>
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**REVENUES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Proportion</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>City of Guelph</td>
<td>93.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>User Fees and Service Charges</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donations</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**LIBRARY FUNDING AS PROPORTION OF CITY BUDGET**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Proportion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>City-Delivered Services</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Boards and Shared Services</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guelph Public Library</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Guelph Public Library plays a critical role in the community, serving as a safe haven for some, a valuable resource for others and a vital connection for many more. We are proud to be supported by many visionaries whose contributions allow us to more effectively serve the residents of Guelph – here we highlight just a few of our supporters and partners:

Our Annual Giving Campaign raised $16,436 (to date), its most successful yet, with a largest individual donation of $2,000.

Corporate Sponsorships were gratefully received from Omni Basement Systems and Sleeman Breweries Ltd.

There was increased use of Canada Helps as a giving tool to support the Library.

Friends of the Guelph Public Library, through its Giant Book Sale and ongoing support, helped to furnish the interior of our new bookmobile.

Additional grants were received from:
- Oak Tree Project, Mactaggart Team participation
- Ontario Library Capacity Fund towards technology equipment ($15,128)
- Public Libraries Operating Grant, Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport ($167,774)
- Rotary Club of Guelph towards Viewscan (microfilm scanner and reader) project ($1,000)
- The Mowbray and Doris Sifton Family Foundation towards accessible equipment ($26,031)
- Young Canada Works (summer students)
- Youth Internship Program – IT Intern ($12,842)

Our Valued Partners
- Chartwell Retirement Residence
- Creative Encounters with Science
- Domino’s Pizza
- Fantescapes
- Guelph Community Health Centre
- Guelph Storm Hockey Club
- Immigrant Services of Guelph-Wellington
- Jobs. Opportunities. Enterprise. (JOE)
- Nature Guelph
- Planet Bean Coffee
- Sleeman Breweries Ltd.
- Stratford Shakespeare Festival
- Sylvan Learning
- The Anderson Difference
- Upper Grand District School Board
- Visit Guelph Tourism
- Vocamus Press and Friends of Vocamus Press
- Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health
- University of Guelph: Let’s Talk Science

“I love books and this was the first place I could go by myself.”
Patricia, Library Member
In 2016 we launched our year-long Libraries Matter! campaign. Members of the community are invited to engage in a discussion of why libraries matter to them. We are pleased to share a few snippets of the feedback we’ve captured:

“Very welcoming and inclusive.”
“I learned that we all struggle and support each other.”
“So nice to be able to talk with other moms going through the same thing.”

Program Participants at East Side Branch

“We are proud to offer programs, such as our Breastfeeding Café in partnership with Women Everywhere, that allow people to discuss their struggles, share their stories and learn about available resources:

“... Thanks for the work you do and the very apparent understanding you have of people like me who use the Bookmobile. Having access to the Bookmobile has changed my life for the better, and in fact, has saved me from too much time with myself.”

Cynthia Stuart, Library Member
“... Manuel spent two months looking for work and came to the Library nearly every day. In a note he sent to us he calls the Library, ‘more than a building with books and DVDs; it was a safe place to stay, read and look for a new job.’”

Main Library Staff

“I have taken many children to the Library to learn and share as toddlers, puzzle things out as preschoolers, and feel excited about learning as JKS and SKs. By the time they are in the primary grades, the confidence they have internalized about the possibilities ahead is gratifying to witness. All of these stages of personal growth in the context of community resource is facilitated by our wonderful library.”

Alice, Library Member

“I have taken many children to the Library to learn and share as toddlers, puzzle things out as preschoolers, and feel excited about learning as JKS and SKs. By the time they are in the primary grades, the confidence they have internalized about the possibilities ahead is gratifying to witness. All of these stages of personal growth in the context of community resource is facilitated by our wonderful library.”

Alice, Library Member

“It’s easy to smile in here.”

Tony, Library Member

THANK YOU

Guelph Public Library 2016 Board
Katie Saunders Chair
Lisa Maslove Vice Chair
Anne MacKay Past Chair
Members: Aaron Blair, Councillor James Gordon, Getu Hailu, Jennifer Mackie, Gertrude Robinson, Chantal Vallis and Eileen Watson

Main Library Staff

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