

March 2025



Friends of the  
London Public Library

*Community Support For Your Library*

# Among Friends

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

On behalf of the Friends' Executive, I hope this finds all of you well and looking forward to spring. The past few months have been busy with a variety of events, and I'm excited to share some updates with you.

Our 2024 Annual General Meeting took place on Wednesday January 15th, 2025 in the Stevenson & Hunt Room at Central Library. You'll find highlights from the meeting later in this newsletter.

We presented the Friend of the Year Award for 2024 to Ellen Hobin, Director of Marketing and Communications for London Public Library, in recognition of support and guidance, particularly in helping us advertise for our Annual Book Sale.

The Friends of the Library Bookstore at the Central Library continues to offer a great selection with over 10,000 items, including CDs, DVD movies, all at great prices.

Thanks to your generosity, the Book for Every Child Program, in its 33rd year, distributed 6318 books to children who might otherwise not receive a new book of their own. Donations for the 2025 program are accepted year-round, online or at any Library location. You can also donate in memory of a loved one or as a meaningful gift for a special occasion.

Be sure to check the end of the newsletter for a detailed update about the Friends' website.

Finally, I want to extend my sincere thanks to the Friends' Executive for their commitment and dedication, to our volunteers for their time and effort, and to our members for your ongoing support.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Carmen Sprovieri".

Carmen Sprovieri, President

Website: [www.friendsofthelondonlibrary.ca](http://www.friendsofthelondonlibrary.ca)

Voicemail: 519-661-2448

Email: [friends@lpl.ca](mailto:friends@lpl.ca)

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## FRIENDS' 2024 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The 2024 Annual General Meeting was held on Wednesday, January 15, 2025, in the Stevenson & Hunt Room at Central Library. While Michael Ciccone, CEO, was unable to attend, Nancy Collister, Director of Customer Service and Branch Operations, attended on behalf of the Library. She extended greetings and expressed gratitude for the Friends' ongoing support and financial contributions.

In her report, the President reflected on key achievements from the past year, outlined future directions, and thanked both the Friends' Executive for their dedication and the Library staff for their support. She also emphasized the vital role of volunteers in the Friends' success. Special thanks were given to Scott Curoe and Deb Lowry for organizing the Volunteer Appreciation Program on International Volunteer Day. Unfortunately, due to poor weather, the event had to be canceled, but certificates and gifts were later distributed to volunteers in recognition of their contributions.

On behalf of the Nominating Committee, Deb Lowry presented the slate of Friends' officers for 2025:

- **President – Carmen Sprovieri**
- **Vice-President – Cindy Dierickx**
- **Secretary – Carol Davies**
- **Treasurer – Bob Hahn**

The Friend of the Year Award for 2024 was presented to Ellen Hobin, Director of Marketing and Communications for London Public Library, in appreciation of her guidance, especially in helping promote the Annual Book Sale.

Following the meeting, attendees enjoyed a Jazz for the People concert in the Wolf Performance Hall, a program partially sponsored by the Friends. Before the performance, the Friends were invited to speak about their mission and initiatives. During intermission, a reception was held, where many guests took the opportunity to join the Friends or renew their memberships.

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## FRIEND OF THE YEAR

Each year, the Friends recognize an individual or group whose exceptional contributions of time, energy, or resources have made a meaningful impact on the Library. This year, we are proud to honour Ellen Hobin, Communications Manager at London Public Library, as our 2024 Friend of the Year.

The Friends raise funds to support value-added services and programs at the Library through our bookstore, annual book sale, memberships, and donations. We also partner with the Library on initiatives such as the Book for Every Child Program and Speaking with Friends.

Ellen has become our go-to person for all things Friends-related. Year after year, we rely on her expertise for guidance on promoting our Annual Book Sale, from advertising strategies to social media outreach and the best approach for London Free Press advertising. Most importantly, Ellen always makes time for us—she listens, offers thoughtful advice, and provides practical, effective solutions.

Beyond her professional support, Ellen is deeply engaged in our events. She attends our volunteer appreciation gatherings, our past meet-and-greet events for city council candidates, and our Speaking with Friends events. Her dedication helps raise the profile of the Friends, strengthening our connection with the community.

The Friends have a strong, collaborative relationship with Library representatives, and Ellen embodies this partnership at its best. Ellen Hobin is our BFF and is well-deserving of this honour.

This nomination was made by Deb Lowry and Scott Curoe and was unanimously approved by the Friends' Executive Board.

As Friend of the Year, Ellen received a personal gift of \$75 and a \$200 donation toward the Library program of her choice. She chose to direct the funds to the Library's highest-priority program. Her name is now engraved on the Friend of the Year plaque, proudly displayed in the Friends of the Library Boardroom on the 3rd floor of Central Library.



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## FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY BOOKSTORE

The Friends of the Library Bookstore is open:

- **Monday, Tuesday & Saturday 10 am – 4 pm**
- **Wednesday to Friday 10 am – 5 pm**

Our Bookstore has over 10,000 items, including books, puzzles, music CDs, and DVD movies, all received from public donations and Library withdrawals.

### **Upcoming Sale: Rainy-Day-at-the-Cottage, May 7 – 17**

This popular sale is a great time to stock up on summer reading material as well as music, movies, puzzles and games—great for rainy-day fun.

Spring cleaning? Donate your books! If you're making room on your bookshelves, consider donating to the Friends. Our volunteers offer a pickup service for donations. Leave a message at 519-661-2448, and a volunteer will contact you to arrange a convenient pickup time.

## SPEAKING WITH FRIENDS – MARK YOUR CALENDAR

### **An Afternoon with Author, Jim Freedman**

The Friends of London Public Library invite you to an insightful afternoon with London author, Jim Freedman, who will read from and discuss his book, *Carpet of Tears*. Freedman's collection of "non-fiction stories" is drawn from his work in conflict zones, sharing the real struggles and resilience of the people he encountered.

The presentation will take place on Saturday, 24 May 2025, 2:00-4:00pm, in the Lawson Room, main floor, Central Library. Reception, book sale and signing to follow.

This is a free event, though donations will be accepted at the door to support children and youth literacy programs at London Public Library.

A 2-hour parking validation is available for Citi Plaza. Visit Central Library's main desk to receive a validation slip. Please note that Dundas Street from Richmond to Wellington is closed for road construction, but pedestrian access remains available.

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## BOOK FOR EVERY CHILD PROGRAM 2024

"This is the best book EVER!" That was the heartfelt reaction of a child receiving a book through the A Book for Every Child program.

2024 was the 33rd year for this incredible London Public Library initiative. Books were requested by 19 schools and 18 agencies. A total of 6318 books were distributed to children who might otherwise not receive a new book of their own.

Library staff manage most aspects of the program, including promotion, book collection, purchasing, sorting, and distribution. Many of the books are purchased with money donated specifically for **A Book for Every Child**. Close to \$32,000 was donated for the 2024 program. Friends of the Library donated \$1,475; \$475 of this was donated in the Bookstore donation jar.

Friends of the Library volunteers helped with the program by coordinating with five London bookstores: Chapters (South London), Coles (Masonville Place), Dellelce Family Bookstore at Western, Indigo (North London) and Oxford Book Shop. These bookstores offer a 20% discount on books purchased for the program, resulting in 341 donated books.

Donations for next year's program can be made online or at any Library location, year-round. You can also donate in memory of a loved one, as a teacher gift, or to celebrate a special occasion.

## MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Like many non-profit organizations, last year's postal strike from November 15 to December 17, 2025, affected our ability to send membership renewals on time. Normally, these are sent out early to mid-November, but we chose to delay them to avoid delivery disruptions.

We emailed our Friends' members encouraging them to renew online, and the response was incredible! Although this option has been available for several years, we saw a 400% increase in online renewals during this cycle. We hope you will continue to find this online option convenient and cost-effective. Visit our website at [friendslondonlibrary.ca](http://friendslondonlibrary.ca). Our site is easy to navigate using the tabs at the top of the home page.

Thank you for your ongoing support!  
Ann Walker, Membership Coordinator

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## FRIENDS OF THE LONDON PUBLIC LIBRARY WEBSITE

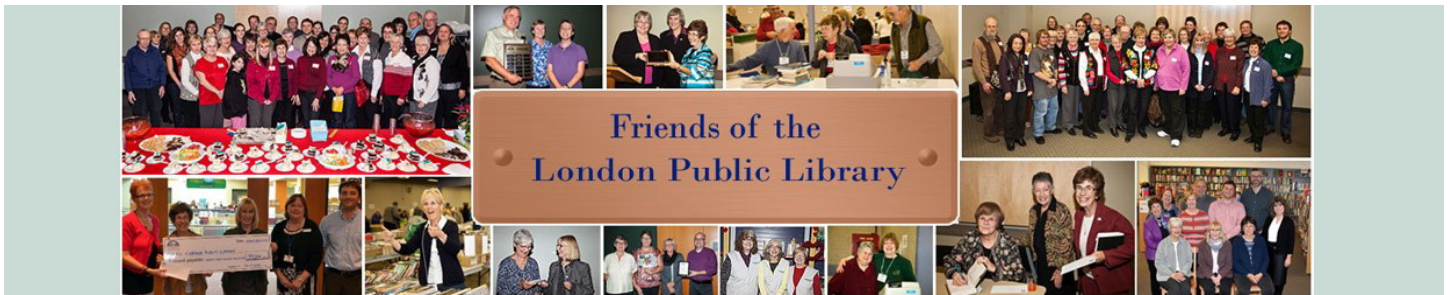
Visit us online at [www.friendslondonlibrary.ca](http://www.friendslondonlibrary.ca). Our website serves as the public face of the Friends, and provides a comprehensive overview of our organization. You can even access this Newsletter online.

Here is a guide to the main components of the website:

### THE FRONT PAGE

Enter [www.friendslondonlibrary.ca](http://www.friendslondonlibrary.ca) into your browser, and your device will open to this landing page. On this main page you will find a message from our president which will be updated periodically. The front page also contains various links including access to the latest Newsletter.

### THE 'ABOUT' SECTION



This page has three sub-sections: the mandate and governance of Friends, volunteer opportunities, and a guide on how you can help support Friends initiatives.

### THE FRIENDS BOOK STORE



This section illustrates the book store's location with a map, opening times, and a guide on how and where you can donate your used books, DVDs, Audio Books, and puzzles.

# Supporting value-added Library programs

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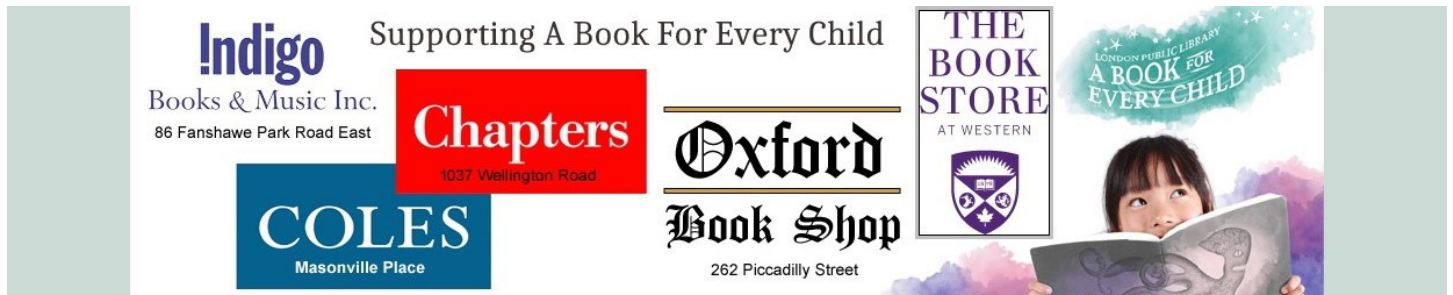
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## EVENTS – SALES



We operate pop-up sales throughout the year at various locations including just outside Covent Garden Market. We also host a giant sale in the Fall—the 2024 event at Centennial Hall raised over \$50,000 in support of various Library programs!

## EVENTS - A BOOK FOR EVERY CHILD CAMPAIGN



This is a year-round London Public Library program with an annual campaign during November and December. This program distributes books to children who would otherwise not own a book.

## EVENTS - SPEAKING WITH FRIENDS



We periodically host Speaking With Friends events which welcome guest authors at the Wolf Performance Hall in Citi Plaza. The evening also includes a reception, book sale and signing. These events are free to attend, but donations are accepted.

## Supporting value-added Library programs

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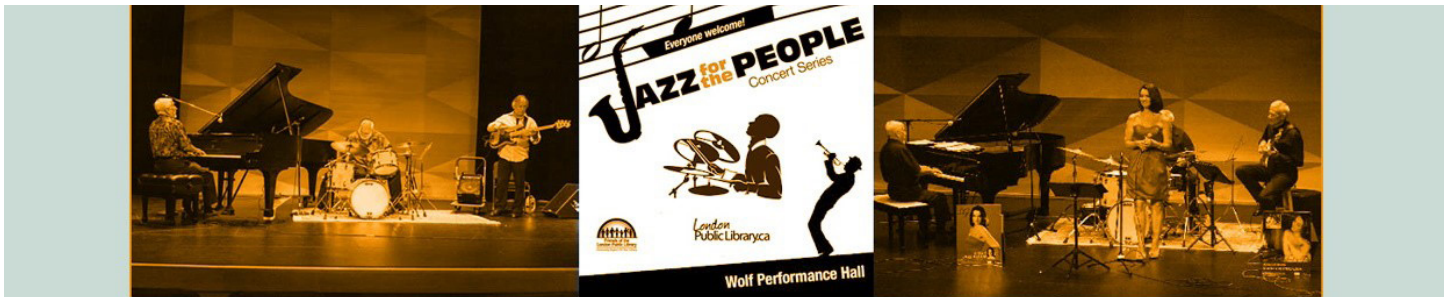


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## EVENTS - JAZZ FOR THE PEOPLE



Jazz for the People is a popular program co-sponsored by the Friends and the London Musicians Association. This free jazz concert series at the Wolf Performance Hall features local and visiting guest musicians playing a wide range of jazz genres.

## FRIENDS' MEMBERSHIP



Interested in supporting the Friends? You can become a member of our organization for a very small annual fee. The application form will also provide an option to donate if you wish. Receipts for donations of \$10 or more are available for tax purposes.

## CONTACTING FRIENDS

Please leave a message on our voicemail system and one of our volunteers will contact you at the earliest opportunity. Or you can also use our contact form to submit a question, and our volunteers will respond.

## DONATING TO FRIENDS

Support London Public Library programs by donating. All donations of \$10 or more are eligible for a tax receipt. Payments are processed online through our secure third-party provider. Please note that Friends does not see or store any payment card information.

Our website and all the events listed above are supported by volunteers of Friends of the London Public Library.