



Friends of the  
London Public Library

*Community Support For Your Library*

March 2026

# Among Friends

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

On behalf of the Friends' Executive, I hope this finds you well and looking forward to Spring. Despite the winter weather we have been busy with a variety of activities. This work could not have been done without the hard work of our volunteers, the support of our members, the help and direction of Library staff, and the commitment of our Friends' Executive.

We extend a special thank you to the family of Diane Collette for their generous donation of her personal book collection. The family shared that Diane would have been pleased to know her books would continue to be enjoyed by fellow readers, while the proceeds would help keep the Library a vibrant part of the community. You can read more about this meaningful donation inside the newsletter.

We are pleased to welcome Adrienne Co-Dyre, Director of Public Service, to the Friends' Executive as an ex-officio member representing Library Administration. She is replacing Nancy Collister, who recently retired. We thank Nancy for her help and direction and wish her well in her retirement.

Our 2025 Annual General Meeting was held on Wednesday, January 14, 2026. You'll find highlights from the meeting, including the list of names chosen for The Executive, later in this newsletter.

We presented the Friend of the Year award for 2025 to Scott Curoe, former Manager of the Friends of the Library Book Store for 4 years, and Co-Manager for 15 years.

In addition, the Friends were proud to present \$100,000 to the Library Board in support of value-added programs and services for 2026. Details on how these funds will be used, and the difference it will make, are shared in this issue.

The Book for Every Child Program marked its 34th year in 2025, with 7,368 book requests fulfilled. Our membership campaign also saw a record number of members renewing online, a welcome sign of continued engagement and support.

Finally, we extend our sincere thanks to all our volunteers. We could not operate without your time and dedication. Special thanks go to Claire Mertens and Brian Propper for organizing the Volunteer Appreciation celebration held on International Volunteer Day, December 5, 2025.

If you have questions or would like to connect with us, please visit our website for simple and easy contact options. Details can be found inside.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Carmen Sprovieri".

Carmen Sprovieri, President  
Website: <https://friendslondonlibrary.ca/>  
Voicemail: 519-661-2448  
Email: [friends@lpl.ca](mailto:friends@lpl.ca)

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## FRIENDS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING FOR 2025

The 2025 Annual General Meeting was held on Wednesday, January 15th, 2025 in the Stevenson Hunt Room at Central Library. Michael Ciccone, CEO, on behalf of the Library, brought greetings and thanked the Friends for their support and financial contributions to the Library.

In her report, the President reviewed highlights of the past year, indicated a direction for the future, and thanked the Friends' Executive for their dedication and commitment and the Library staff for their support. She also stressed the Friends could not operate without the work of volunteers. She thanked Claire Mertens and Brian Propper, Co-Managers of the Book Store for organizing the Volunteer Appreciation Program on International Day of the Volunteer to thank our volunteers for their valuable contribution.

On behalf of the nominating committee, John Fracasso presented the following slate of Friends officers for 2026:

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

The Friend of the Year for 2025 was presented to Scott Curoe, who for the past 15 years has been Manager of the Friends Book Store. He spent many hours making the Store the success it is today. As well he used his time and talent in activities that strengthened the organization of the Friends.

Following the Annual General Meeting, the Jazz for the People concert was held in the Wolf Performance Hall. It is a program sponsored in part by the Friends. The Friends were given the opportunity to speak to the audience about Friends and their work. At the intermission Friends held a reception for those in attendance. Many took the opportunity to join Friends, or renew their membership.

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## FRIEND OF THE YEAR

At our recent Annual General Meeting, the Friends' Board was pleased to recognize Scott Curoe as the 2025 Friend of the Year. This award honours individuals or groups whose vision, leadership, and extraordinary contributions of time, energy, and resources help London Public Library achieve its goals.

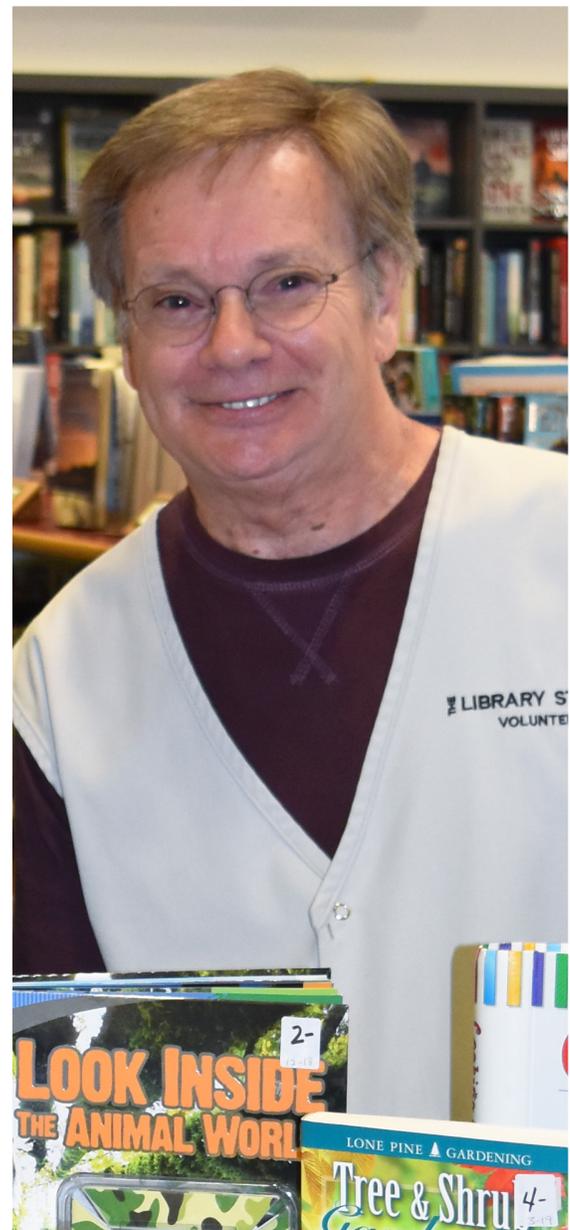
Scott's dedication as Manager of the Library Store and as a member of the Executive over the past year makes him a most deserving recipient. As he prepares to step back from his role, Scott ensured the continued success of the Store by completing a comprehensive inventory system and recruiting co-managers to carry the work forward.

Even more significant is Scott's remarkable 15-year commitment to the Friends and the Library. He first joined as a volunteer, working a weekly shift in the Store. His involvement quickly grew, and as co-manager, his ideas and steady leadership helped shape the Store into the thriving and successful operation it is today.

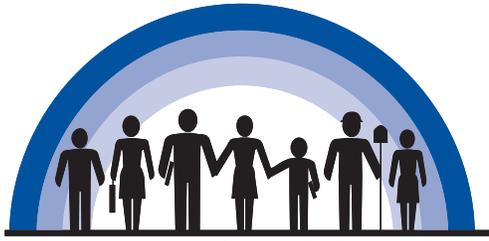
While setting the Store on a course to succeed, Scott also contributed meaningfully in strengthening the organizational capacity of the Friends itself. His research and his insights have often clarified and improved our policies and practices leaving an important legacy in guiding us forward.

**For your dedicated service over the past year, and over the past fifteen years, thank you Scott!**

*P.S. The Friend of the Year Award carries with it an opportunity for the recipient to donate a \$200 honorarium to an aspect of the London Public Library System. Scott has indicated his wish to provide this to the Visiting Library Services Program in recognition of its importance.*



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## FRIENDS GIVE \$100,000 TO SUPPORT VITAL LIBRARY PROGRAMS

At the London Public Library Board Meeting on February 19, the Friends proudly presented a cheque for \$100,000 to the Library Board. This gift will support value-added programs and services across the Library's 16 neighbourhood locations in 2026.

The funding will help sustain essential early literacy initiatives for children and families, including the Summer Reading Program and Family Literacy events. These programs foster a lifelong love of reading while building skills and confidence. Support will also extend to healthy snack programs, additional initiatives for children and youth, and the popular Jazz for the People concert series at Wolf Performance Hall.

Friends President Carmen Sprovieri presented the cheque and expressed sincere thanks to the more than 200 volunteers whose time and dedication make this contribution possible. Volunteers sort and sell books at the Annual Book Sale, staff the Friends' Book Store at Central Library, host outdoor pop-up sales at Covent Garden Market, pick up book donations, support the Book for Every Child campaign, serve on the Friends' Board, and help keep the organization running smoothly throughout the year.

A recent research study by the Canadian Urban Libraries Council pointed out what Friends' volunteers already know "Libraries deliver substantial social, emotional, intellectual and creative impact. They are recognized as vital institutions for children growing up, for ensuring unbiased access to information and for providing some of the most valuable resources a city can offer its community."

The Friends are pleased to be able to give this money to the London Public Library for these value-added programs and services as they reflect what the Library is all about – welcoming spaces, meaningful learning, literacy development, and opportunities to connect.





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## WE WELCOME ADRIENNE CO-DYRE TO THE FRIENDS' BOARD

Adrienne Co-Dyre became London Public Library's representative to the Friends' Board on January 1, 2026. She succeeds Nancy Collister, who served on the Board from 2021 through December 2025.

Ms. Co-Dyre recently joined the senior leadership team at London Public Library as Director of Public Services. She has many years of management experience in academic libraries as well as extensive leadership skills and dedication to community-centered library services that will support the Library's ongoing work to expand programs, enhance access, and serve Londoners with excellence.

We thank Nancy Collister very much for her years of excellent service to the Friends' Board and wish her happiness and success in her retirement.



## BOOK FOR EVERY CHILD PROGRAM

### 34 Years and Still Going Strong!

2025 marked the 34th year of the London Public Library's A Book for Every Child program.

Each year books are requested through London schools and agencies for children who might not otherwise receive a book of their own. Individuals and groups donate new books and money to purchase the books. Library staff select and sort the books based on the requests.

In 2025, requests were received for 7,368 books from 29 schools and 18 agencies.

Friends of the Library volunteers supported a targeted campaign for the program from November 3 to December 13. We were pleased to facilitate participation from the following bookstores:

- Coles – Masonville Place
- Dellece Family Bookstore at Western
- Indigo – North London
- Indigo – South London
- Oxford Book Store

Each store generously provided a 20% discount on books purchased for the program. A total of 554 books were donated through these bookstore partnerships.

We also recognize two groups for their generous book donations: the IODE Eldon House Chapter at Oxford Bookstore and EMCO Corporation at Indigo – North London.

In addition, Friends of the Library contributed \$1,374 to the program, including \$374 collected throughout the year through donations to the Book Store jar.

Donations to the A Book for Every Child program can be made online or at any Library location throughout the year. Gifts may also be made in memory of a loved one or in celebration of a special occasion.

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## VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION EVENT IN DECEMBER

On December 5, we were pleased to host a successful Volunteer Appreciation Event featuring refreshments and games.

Nancy Collister spoke on behalf of the Library, and Carmen Sprovieri shared remarks on behalf of the Friends' Board, expressing thanks for the dedication and commitment of our volunteers. We were glad to receive positive feedback from those who attended.

In recognition of their ongoing support, we also presented the Library's security and facilities teams with boxes of chocolates as a small token of appreciation for all they do to support our work.

We are grateful to every volunteer whose time and energy make the work of the Friends possible.

## MEMBERSHIP REPORT

I would like to extend sincere thanks to all Friends who have renewed their memberships for 2026, and a warm welcome to our new members. We truly appreciate your continued support of the Friends of the London Public Library and the important work we do to bring added value to Library programs and facilities.

The 2026 membership campaign has seen a record number of members take advantage of renewing their membership online at [www.friendslondonlibrary.ca](http://www.friendslondonlibrary.ca). It's quick and convenient – just click on the Membership tab at the top of the home page.

On December 6, 2025, the Friends hosted a very successful Speaking With Friends event at Central Library. Author Linden MacIntyre spoke about his newly released book, *An Accidental Villain: A Soldier's Tale of War, Deceit, and Exile*. He graciously provided the Friends with a signed copy to be presented to a member.

Last week, a random number generator was used to select one renewing member to receive the signed book. Congratulations to Kathleen Somerville, a member since 2019, who was also in attendance at the event.

Thank you to all our members for your continued commitment and support.

Ann Walker  
Membership Coordinator

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## LIBRARY BOOK STORE REPORT

This year marked a transition in leadership at the Library Book Store. Scott Curoe, who served as Co-Manager for 15 years and as sole Manager for the past four years, stepped away from the role. With his recommendation and the support of the Board, Claire Mertens and Brian Proper have assumed the role of Co-Managers.

We are pleased to report that the Store is fully staffed and operating on a full schedule: Monday to Friday, 10 am to 5 pm, and Saturday, 10 am to 4 pm. Fifty volunteers currently staff 17 shifts, covering 41 hours per week. In addition, three volunteers serve on an on-call basis, and three regular shift volunteers have also made themselves available to provide extra coverage. We are especially grateful to our experienced volunteers who have generously supported the training and integration of new team members.

Our annual inventory was conducted between Christmas and New Year's with the help of a dedicated team of volunteers. Since launching our digital inventory system in fall 2023, we have sold and processed 22,416 items. Notably, we saw a 39% increase in goods sold from 2024 to 2025, reflecting the continued growth and success of the Store.

We have also continued to partner with various not-for-profit organizations to supply materials as needed and have worked closely with the Book Sale and warehouse team to more accurately distribute materials across all Friends programs



## UPCOMING STORE PROMOTIONS

- Blind Date with a Book
- March Break Promotion
- Rainy Day at the Cottage

## POP-UP SALES AT COVENT GARDEN MARKET

The Friends of the London Public Library will be outside at Covent Garden Market, rain or shine, from 8:00 am to 1:00 pm on the following dates:

- May 23
- June 27
- August 15
- September 12

We will be offering hardcover and softcover adult fiction and non-fiction books, CDs and DVDs, as well as children's fiction and non-fiction books, puzzles, and games.

We had an outstanding 2025 and look forward to building on that success in 2026.

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## DONATION FROM DIANE COLLETTE

On December 6, 2025, Diane Collette passed away. Diane was a passionate patron and lover of the London Public Library. A regular visitor to the Cherryhill Branch, she stopped in weekly and always had her holds list filled with books, music, and films. She generously supported the Library through donations, purchased books through the Friends of the London Public Library, and promoted the Library whenever she could.

Diane's love of reading and learning shaped her life. She earned a BA in Medieval History and a Master's degree in English Literature, building an extensive personal collection of books along the way. In honour of her lifelong passion for literature, Diane's family made the generous decision to donate her collection to the Friends.

Knowing that her books will be enjoyed by other readers, and that the proceeds will help keep the Library a vibrant part of the community, brings great comfort to her family.

Diane's family extends their sincere thanks to the Friends for their thoughtful support and assistance in transporting all 32 boxes of books to the Friends' facility.

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## ANY QUESTIONS? CHECK OUT OUR SIMPLE WEBSITE CONTACT OPTIONS

We offer a convenient online contact form that allows you to select the category of your inquiry and submit a message directly to the appropriate Friends volunteer. Once your form is submitted, you will see a confirmation message and receive an email acknowledging your request. A volunteer will respond as soon as possible.

Query options are available through a drop-down menu:

Please select from the following options: \*

Click here to select

Click here to select

Donations – Books, Puzzles & DVDs etc.

Membership – Joining Friends

Book Search – Maximum 5 titles

Volunteer – Helping Friends

Other – All other queries

The Book Search option allows you to request a search for up to five specific titles, or books by a named author. Your request will be directed to our Book Store at Central Library, and we will let you know whether we are able to locate the items.

If you are donating books, puzzles, or other materials and are unable to drop them off, please include your phone number so we can arrange a pickup.

If your question does not fit into one of the listed categories, simply select Other and include your inquiry or comment.

You can reach the Friends in any of the following ways:

### **Online Contact Form**

Visit: [friendslondonlibrary.ca/contact-us/](https://friendslondonlibrary.ca/contact-us/)  
(or access the Contact page through our website menu)

### **By Phone**

General Inquiries (Voicemail): 519-661-2448  
Book Store: 519-433-1495

**We look forward to hearing from you.**

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