

HoOPLA Newsletter



NEWS & UPDATES FROM ONTARIO PUBLIC LIBRARIES

HoOPLA is a privilege of membership for members of the Ontario Public Library Association. It is issued 4 times per year. Electronic issues are distributed in February, May, August, and November

A message from our opla president

Hello everyone!

I hope that your 2025 is off to a safe and warm start. My name is Leah Rucchetto and I will be your Ontario Public Library Association (OPLA) President for 2025. I look forward to the privilege and pleasure of working with you in the year ahead.

As I write this message, OLA Super Conference 2025 is in full swing. I feel grateful to be able to attend sessions by knowledgeable and inspiring speakers, and to spark connections with fellow library professionals from across the province. I would like to say thank you to all the wonderful volunteers who devoted an incredible amount of time planning and preparing for this conference. It is a testament to what can be achieved when like-minded individuals come together with shared purpose.

The year ahead will provide many opportunities to work together to shape positive outcomes. I am confident that we will continue to unite and encourage one another, thereby strengthening the communities that we serve.

I have worked in public libraries for 15 years in different roles in a variety of library systems. As a Teen Librarian, I was inspired by the energy and excitement of youth. As a Community Librarian, I had the opportunity to share with, and learn from, incredible staff in partner organizations. As a leader, I am inspired by, and learn from, fellow library staff. The potential that libraries bring to their communities is endless. Although serving the public can have its challenges, working together through these shared challenges has always been a strength of those who work in libraries.

This year, OLA is launching its Strategic Plan for 2025-2028. The strategic priorities articulate how OLA will work over the coming years to support library workers in sharing their experience and expertise and creating innovative solutions in a constantly evolving environment. The OLA Strategic Plan for 2025-2028 outlines the following:

- Strategic Priority 1: Cultivate a culture of equity, diversity and inclusion
- Strategic Priority 2: Mobilize support for the library sector
- Strategic Priority 3: Empower people with education & professional development

- Strategic Priority 4: Enhance the membership experience

I would love to hear from you. How do you see OPLA working to meet these priorities? Is there a way in which you would like to get involved? Please do not hesitate to reach out to me.



Leah Rucchetto

OPLA President

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What's new

That's a Wrap: 2025 OLA Super Conference - Building Bridges!



Thank you for joining us at the OLA Super Conference! It was a pleasure to host you, and we hope you enjoyed joining us for this year's selection of Keynote and Spotlight sessions, panels, presentations, poster exhibits, author signings, vendor visits, and socials.

A big thank-you must also go out to our speakers, volunteers, planners, as well as our incredible Stream Sponsors **Whitehots** and the **Saunders Book Company**, and our amazing event partners: **Jove**, **CVS Midwest Tape**, **Counting Opinions**, **The Maggie Weaver Legacy Fund**, **Wolters Kluwer**, **Saunders Book Company**, and **Tinlids**. Of course, we're also grateful to [The Library Marketplace](#) for curating a special conference collection and supplying an array of trending books!

Save the date for next year: January 28 - 31, 2026!

2025 OPLA Award Recipients



The Ontario Library Association was pleased to announce the recipients of the 2025 OPLA awards during the annual OLA Super Conference. Congratulations to:

OPLA Lifetime Achievement Award:

Andrea Cecchetto, Markham Public Library

OPLA James Bain Medallion:

Adrian Graham, Springwater Township Public Library Board

Congratulations to our award recipients! More information on awards is available at accessola.com/awards.

Awards – Call for Nominations

OPLA Spring Awards are currently accepting nominations for the following awards:

[OPLA Children's or Youth Services Librarian of the Year Award](#)

[OPLA Leadership in Adult Readers' Advisory](#)

[OPLA Advocacy in Action: Excellence in Children's or Teen Services Award](#)

[Learn more about OLA Awards.](#)

Submit your nomination by March 31.

Invitation to Participate in the Inclusive Librarianship: State of the Sector Survey to Help Shape OLA's Anti- Racism Strategy

Launching March 2025

In fulfilling our commitment towards inclusive librarianship, the OLA will be launching an Inclusive Librarianship: State of the Sector Survey in March.

The survey seeks to understand the experiences of Ontario library professionals who are Indigenous, Black, and People of Colour (IBPOC), while identifying barriers to participation in the OLA. The results will guide our work towards becoming a more equitable and inclusive organization and sector.

IBPOC and non-IBPOC library professionals in Ontario, as well as members and non-members of the OLA are invited to take the survey. We also invite you to share the survey widely with the Ontario library community (including students) once it launches! This survey is being conducted in collaboration with The Commons Consulting and Lisa MacVicar Consulting & Coaching.

INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN THE INCLUSIVE LIBRARIANSHIP: STATE OF THE SECTOR SURVEY TO HELP SHAPE OLA'S ANTI-RACISM STRATEGY

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Canada's Largest Children's Choice Reading Program – Register Today!



You're invited to participate in Canada's largest recreational reading program!

Register today for Canada's largest children's choice reading program – the [Forest of Reading®](#). Let's get young people excited about reading Canadian books and incorporate our programming into your program.

The [Forest of Reading](#) program is designed to provide quality online literacy and reading engagement activities for public library programming – it is reading for fun! The

Forest of Reading is a perfect fit for public library programming from fall through spring, and provides an opportunity to connect with the schools in your neighbourhood.

WHAT IS INVOLVED?

- 100 books nominated each year for [young people](#) and [adults](#).
- 500 Activities for the [nominated titles](#) - minimum 4 per book = Value \$2,500
- 10-20 [Virtual Author Visits](#) (English) = Value \$3,500
- 5-8 [Virtual Author Visits](#) (French) = Value \$1,000
- Additional Presentations from Nominees = Value \$3,000
- Access to all 9 digital award ceremonies in May = Value PRICELESS

TOTAL VALUE = \$10,000+ worth of programming

THE COST FOR PUBLIC LIBRARIES: \$45/branch

*Want to register all your branches? Please email Director, Meredith Tutching directly to inquire about a discount at mtutching@accessola.com.

Get your young patrons excited about reading the newest and best Canadian books. This program gives them a voice when they vote for the books they like.

Website: www.forestofreading.com

Meredith Tutching

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Evergreen Celebrating Its Silver Anniversary in 2025!



Did you know that the Forest of Reading's Evergreen program is celebrating its Silver Anniversary in 2025? The Committee has been selecting books for adults for the past 25 years. If you want to see the full list from 2005, [click here](#).

The Evergreen Committee presented a poster at this year's Super Conference in which we covered what a library needs to do to start an Evergreen program (it does not take much) and we also explained the ins and outs of being on our committee.

We are always looking for new members to join us and we are more than willing to give you advice on starting an Evergreen book club at your library. Please feel free to reach out to us if you have any questions.

Enid Wray and Julie Wendland

Around the province

A New Author Talks Series Launches at Brampton Library

Brampton Library is pleased to collaborate with the Festival of Literary Diversity (FOLD) in its new Author Talks Series, utilizing long lead and shared promotional tactics to promote attendance and encourage borrowing.

At its first event, the Library welcomed popular YA author Farah Heron to the Cyril Clark Theatre last October, during Ontario Public Library Week. On December 8, 2024, FOLD Executive Director, Jael Richardson, interviewed award-winning non-fiction author Tanya Talaga at Springdale Branch Library, the last stop on the bestselling and award-winning author's national tour for *The Knowing*.

On January 24, 2025, another large crowd gathered at Chinguacousy Branch Library to celebrate the first stop on international author Sue Lynn Tan's North American tour for her new novel, *Immortal*.

Together with its community partner, FOLD, Brampton Library is building awareness of the power of author events, which attract fans who wish to meet new and favourite authors, hear them read from their works, learn about their writing process, and get their books signed. The opportunity to work with local and specialized booksellers to facilitate autographing also adds a special component to each event.





*PHOTO 1: Author Tanya Talaga signs copies of her new book, *The Knowing*, with on-site book sales by GoodMinds.*

PHOTO 2: Author Tanya Talaga in conversation with the FOLD's Jael Richardson at Brampton Library's Springdale Branch.

June Dickenson

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Introducing the Next Generation of Clearview Public Library's Fixers and Influencers

"Kids" of all ages have found the introduction of the new Mechanics' Benches to Sunday Afternoon Interactive Play Dates at Clearview Public Library (CPL) 's Stayner Branch, to be an engaging and mesmerizing experience. What an absolute delight to see how young mechanics test out and experiment with the tools and components of the benches -- a welcome addition to the branch's Demonstration Junior Kitchen, Jumbo Lego Collection and Giant Jigsaw Puzzle Collective!

Sunday afternoons are especially busy for families during the winter season, as Skate Canada's CanSkate program is in full swing at the arena next door. Parents and children enjoy dividing their time between exercising on the ice rink and then relaxing by the branch's cozy fireplace, sharing extraordinary bonding moments at the Stayner Arena & Community Center in Clearview Township, Southern Georgian Bay.



PHOTO 1: Team Leader A (in the tutu) directs her "staff" in the proper construction process for her "top secret" project.

PHOTO 2: Team Leader B does a formal check on all the tools and components to ensure that everything is in proper and safe working order for the next round of construction.

Michele McKenzie

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Rideau Lakes Public Library's Portland Branch Moves to its Forever Home



Portland, Ontario is the launching point to the beautiful township of Rideau Lakes. It is home to an active local community and welcomes thousands of cottagers and seasonal friends

throughout the year. After many years in a temporary location, Rideau Lakes Public Library (RLPL) is excited to announce that as of spring 2025, the Portland Branch will be moving to its new home -- a lakeside new build which will house the Library and Community Hall.

This warm, cottage-like branch will be commutable by car and canoe alike, featuring games tables, a children's puppet theatre, a community meeting room, and a cozy fireplace nook – the perfect place for patrons to connect, enjoy, and discover. The staff at RLPL cannot wait to throw open the doors and welcome the community into this exciting new space!

IMAGE: The new home of the Portland Branch.

Mady MacLeod

ROM Passes Now Available at Stouffville Library

At the Stouffville Library (SL), staff believe that learning happens in many ways -- not just through books, but by exploring new places and experiences. That is why library staff are excited to introduce a new partnership with the Royal Ontario Museum (ROM), providing library patrons with access to free museum visits through the ROM Passes.

With the ROM Pass, library patrons can enjoy free general admission for up to four visitors during regular museum hours, including access to select special exhibitions. This initiative is a fantastic opportunity for families to explore together, for students to enhance their learning, and for the Stouffville community to experience one of Ontario's greatest cultural institutions – all for free.

By offering ROM Passes, Stouffville Library is continuing its commitment to providing its community with more accessible learning experiences beyond books. Passes will begin to circulate to customers in mid-February 2025.



IMAGE: Stouffville Library's new ROM Pass invites families and lifelong learners to explore history, culture, and science, free of charge.

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Local Thunder Bay Family Wins Big in Friends of the Library's First 50/50 Draw

Paige Martin, her husband Geoff, and their four-year-old daughter Ivy, are the lucky winners of the Friends of the Thunder Bay Public Library's inaugural 50/50 draw, taking home a wonderful prize of \$41,497.50. Regular visitors to the Mary J.L. Black Branch, the family is well-known to staff, who greeted them by name when they arrived to collect their cheque.

Ivy, who loves reading Frozen books and says Elsa is her favourite character, looked on as her parents received their cheque. Paige described the win as "life-changing," sharing that it will allow the family to pay off their car and take a family vacation somewhere warm and sunny, sooner rather than later. "Our family is so blessed by this lottery, and we are happy to have contributed to the library and its programming for the year ahead."

In the words of Fran Duke, President of the Friends of the Thunder Bay Public Library, "This lottery supports vital library improvements and programs, and it is heartwarming to see it benefit a family so connected to our library community. Meeting Paige and her family was an absolute joy!"

The Friends of the Thunder Bay Public Library are grateful to everyone who participated in this successful first draw and they look forward to continuing to support library services through future lotteries.



PHOTO: Paige Martin, winner of the inaugural 50/50 draw, with her husband Geoff and members of the Friends of the Thunder Bay Public Library.

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Whitby Public Library's 3D Printers Ignite a Local Designer's Passion



Louis Hébert was hooked. As soon as he tried one of the 3D printers in the Discovery Zone at the Whitby Central Library, it sparked something in his creative brain. From what started as a hobby to contributing crucial equipment for Canadian Paralympians, this is a story of a life-long learner who tried something new and ran with it.

As a young child, Louis always liked to draw and build structures. He began by creating his own models out of cardboard boxes and papier-maché. As far as his career was concerned, his design path led him to the injections plastics industry. It was his daughter who told Louis about an introductory 3D printing program at the library. Louis tried it, loved it and instantly began creating his own designs. This led to a partnership with the

Canadian Paralympic curling team, working on the next generation of head sticks for athletes.

When asked what advice he would give to anyone considering experimenting with a 3D printer, Louis was quick to say, "Register for a program at your local library and start with something small. You never know where your creativity may take you!"

The Whitby Public Library continues to seek opportunities to introduce others to 3D technology. A recent 3D printing workshop, which was part of the Library's Seniors' Wellness Series, was a highly successful program.

PHOTO: Louis Hébert stands in front of his 3D printing display at the Whitby Central Library.

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Next Issue

The deadline for submissions for the Spring edition of HoOPLA is May 1, 2025.

Please send submissions to HoOPLA Editor, Andra Steele:

hooplaeditor@accessola.com. For more information, you may visit the [editorial guidelines](#) listed on the OLA site.

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