



March 1, 2005

Dear Library Supporter,

**We are writing to invite you to work with us in creating a better future for Regina Public Libraries.**

The Library Board will soon be presenting the public with its options for the future direction of the library system. We will need to respond to this new plan. We are contacting organizations and/or individuals for the following reasons:

- 1) To let you know what is happening from the Friends' point of view and what we anticipate.
- 2) To let you know how you can participate.
- 3) To broaden the awareness of everyone in our community and make sure that everyone is fully aware of the consequences of the future library plans.
- 4) To make sure all voices are heard.

### **A Report on Events**

As you will likely know, in early 2004, many citizens made presentations to the Library's appointed Task Force. Friends of the RPL also held our own task force that was much less formal and more representative of the whole community. The Friends also organized the petition that the whole city got behind to the tune of 26,000 signatures. We also tried the legal avenue. All through the crisis period, the Friends and other library supporters wrote letters to the editor, presented briefs at the Library Board meetings and had conversations with various people of influence. This led to a new process of consultation by the Library Board.

It was great to see so many people from the community out at the Library Board's focus group meetings held in November. By the way, the verbatim record of those meetings is available from the Regina Public Library. Many of our concerns, ideas and hopes were once again voiced, and this time directly to the Library Board members. A phone survey of Regina residents was also conducted by the Library Board this fall. This too indicated huge support for libraries and literacy, including visual literacy, and the community they foster.

The Library Board will soon release the its draft future-looking strategic plan. **The Board wants public response.** The plan will be published on the RPL website. An information package and feedback mechanism will be available at library branches. **A public meeting will be held on March 8.** Time for feedback will be short. The 2005 budget will be finalized March 9 **and the budget and strategic plan submitted to the City on March 15.** **The City Council meeting to approve or not approve the Library Board's recommendations will be sometime in April.**

We need you to provide feedback on the draft plan. If the Board does not ask City Council for sufficient funds for the library - which was the goal of our petition - **we will need your input and comment and attendance at City Hall.** Your attendance will also be needed to show support for a Library Board request for additional funding. We must continue to watch and speak out regularly about the operations of our libraries.

## Our Community

One good thing this crisis did was to bring us closer together as a community. So many people have told stories over the last year of how the library played a crucial role in their childhood and in the life of their family. We know that you and/or your group have many talents, skills and experiences that can help keep our libraries open and help them continue to develop as democratic, accessible community, literacy and cultural centres.

So, we need you to do the following:

- a) **Express your support for libraries** - Send letters or e-mails to Library Board members, attend Library Board meetings, make a presentation, talk to your City Councilor and attend City Council meetings.
- b) **Send us a copy** if you write to the Library Board. Many good ideas come from these letters. We may want to put forward these ideas on our website or in our communications.
- c) **Join the contact list** to receive communications, an electronic newsletter every month or so and notice of major events. Send an email to FRPL. Let others know and have them contact us. We can send written information to people without email, or contact them through a phone tree.
- d) **Invite FRPL** to put an article in your newsletter or make a presentation.
- e) **Join in** by helping out with our phone tree, newsletter, fun fund-raising events, and strategic planning.
- f) **Involve others** – we encourage you to post this letter and distribute to your friends and contacts.

**We would be honoured to work together with you on this exciting and important issue in Regina.**

**Merrilee Rasmussen (Chair)  
Friends of the RPL**

### Steering Committee Members

Vanessa Thorson (Vice-Chair)	Susan Birley	Edith Mountjoy
Mark Dyck (Treasurer)	Jim Elliott	John Murray
Mary Love (Secretary)	Joanne Havelock	Dawn Stanger
	Trevor Herriot	

### IMPORTANT DATES

**March 8 – Library Board’s public meeting to discuss Draft Strategic Plan.**

**March 9 – RPL budget finalized by Library Board.**

**March 15 – RPL Budget and Strategic Plan submitted to City Council.**

**In April – City Council meeting to approve or not approve Library Board’s budget**

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