

with their borrowed books will have a new look, Cobourg Public Library chief executive officer Donna Bright said at last week's library-board meeting.

Until now, she explained, the biggest date on the receipt is the date they checked out the book. But a patron has to look around to find the due date, which is, after all, the more important date.

"We want to emphasize the due date," she said. "And we will add the library's phone number so they can call in to renew if they want."

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With the library now running a weekly column in the *Cobourg*

LIBRARY NOTES

Daily Star, Friends of the Cobourg Public Library are considering discontinuing their newsletter after its current issue.

Board chair Wendy Curtis thinks there are other options.

"The hospital newsletter comes out electronically, and it is painless as far as cost," Mrs. Curtis pointed out.

"I have suggested to the Friends that the work with Donna to compile an e-mail data base (for future newsletters). It will provide information at no cost.

"The point is, let's look at it."

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Thurs. May 3/02

Safe surfing

The Internet provides access to a wealth of information - some valuable and some undesirable. How can you help make your child's Internet experience safe, enjoyable and productive?

Encourage the children in your life to follow some basic but critical rules for on-line safety:

- Never give out personal information (full name, address, age, phone number, computer passwords, school or financial information);

- Choose a 'gender-neutral' on-line name that doesn't identify you; and

- Tell a trusted adult if you encounter anything that makes you uncomfortable.

Remember that anyone with a computer, software and Internet connection can put their ideas and opinions on to the Internet. Teach kids to evaluate the information they find on-line. Is it reliable (who or what is the source?) Is it current (particularly important for medical and financial information)? Is it accurate (can you verify this information)?

As the parent or friend of a child, you can be the child's best defence against suspect information or people. Start by becoming familiar with the Internet yourself: ask your child or a friend to show you the basics, or book a training session with one of our dedicated volunteers. Put the computer in your main living space -

family room or kitchen. Write and sign a family contract (see www.safekids.com or Ilene Raymonds' A Parents' Guide to the Internet for examples). If your child wishes to meet an on-line friend in person, arrange to meet

in a public place and be sure to go along. Get to know your child's on-line friends as you do their other friends.

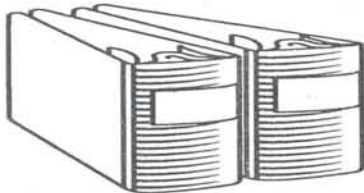
The children's department at our library offers access to pre-

selected web sites only, and children who wish to have full access to the Internet must have their parent sign a parental consent form in person at the library. By signing this form, parents accept responsibility for their child's use of the Internet.

Please visit www.cobourg.library.on.ca/internet.html for our full Internet access policy.

NOTE: Join us on Wednesday, May 15 at 7 p.m. for a discussion of *In the Skin of a Lion* by Michael Ondaatje - the book that all Canadians are reading!

Shelagh Straughan / Cobourg Public Library



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