

Headwaters Human Library to help

By James Matthews

Ever feel as if you could read somebody like a book?

The Headwaters Human Library (HHL) 2014 promises interesting people willing to share their individual stories. Volunteer "books" from diverse groups in the community will share their unique experiences.

A human library is a face-to-face meeting with individuals who are often subject to stereotyping, marginalization or misunderstanding. Readers participate in one-on-one conversations to broaden their understanding of an unfamiliar culture or way of life.

The local HHL is one of many happening around the world as part of a global human library movement. The HHL affords an opportunity to make the acquaintance of someone you might not normally meet.

"We have a terrific line-up of community-minded volunteers from the Headwaters area who will tell their story of diversity," said HHL committee member Brandy Robinson. "Readers will have a stimulating real conversation that will help build community."

HHL is a grass-roots initiative in collaboration with the Orangeville Public Library. The five-year history of HHL is unique as human library programs are mostly offered in large urban centres.

The registration table where 30-minute sessions with a human book are allotted, opens at 10 a.m. Human books are available from 10:30 a.m. to noon and from 1 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. There are 15 titles, including several new titles for return readers: Child Amputee, It's Not All About the Hijab and So Many Ways to Love: Bisexual Polyamorous Woman.

A number of local community leaders are participating this year. Orangeville Mayor Rob Adams, Mono Mayor Laura Ryan, and Orangeville Councillor Mary Rose will all be at the library to check out a human book.