



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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**PROGRESS CONTINUES ON RESTORING GEORGETOWN NEIGHBORHOOD
LIBRARY BUILDING, MATERIALS AND LIBRARY SERVICES**

(Washington, DC) – The District of Columbia Public Library, its contractors and volunteer professional associates continue to make progress toward restoring the Georgetown Neighborhood Library following a three-alarm fire on April 30, 2007. After the fire was extinguished by the D.C. Fire Department, the Peabody Room, widely known for its valuable antiquities and deep historical files on the Georgetown community, was found to be largely intact but very wet. However, many items in the Children’s Room, which is on the second floor across the hall from the Peabody Room, were lost. Those items include books, equipment, computers, program items and puppet theatre.

Minkoff Company, Inc., was hired by the D.C. Public Library the day of the fire to do all work associated with clearing out debris, stabilizing and shoring up the building and installing a temporary roof. To date, debris removal is about 90 percent complete and should be completed by the end of this week. Original built-in woodwork has been preserved and protected where possible. All remaining furniture that is original to the building has also been saved for restoration.

Today, trusses for the temporary roof will be delivered to the Georgetown Neighborhood Library. Minkoff Company, Inc. will begin installing the trusses immediately and estimates that the roof should be complete by the end of this week. The trusses will be covered with plywood sheathing and finished with asphalt composite shingles. Once the temporary roof is completed the contractor will begin an active drying process to remove any remaining moisture from the interior. Only after the drying process is complete can the Library and its contractors estimate permanent damage to the building and determine what it will take to restore it.

Belfor Property Restoration estimates there is a 100 percent chance that none of the wet books and materials they recovered from the Peabody Room will develop mold because they were placed in a freezer truck within 48 hours. Many of these documents were taken to Belfor’s Ft. Worth, Texas, site and put into a vacuum chamber. Belfor estimates they will have the documents dried in about six to eight weeks. By next week progress updates will be made to the Library about Peabody Room items that went to Page Conservation and the Smithsonian Institution Libraries.

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Library services will again be offered in the Georgetown community within a matter of weeks. A Memorandum of Agreement has been drafted for use of the Jelleff Boys and Girls Club's parking lot to operate a 40-foot hi-tech bookmobile. The hi-tech bookmobile will be in place before the end of May. The Boys and Girls Club is located approximately one block from the Georgetown Neighborhood at 3265 S Street, NW. Once open, the bookmobile will offer Internet and computer access, WiFi, a small collection of books and media, and special children's programming. Hours of operation for the bookmobile will mirror those of the library. Five Georgetown Neighborhood Library staff members, including Branch Manager Mary N. Hernandez, will work on the bookmobile; other Georgetown staff have already been reassigned to libraries within the system. An announcement for when the bookmobile will begin operating is forthcoming.

The DC Public Library Foundation has established the Georgetown Recovery and Restoration Fund for those who would like to make donations. Those interested in donating can link to the Foundation through the Library's website, www.dclibrary.org. The Foundation is also committed to providing public support toward the interim libraries and permanent construction in the Anacostia, Benning, Tenley and Shaw neighborhoods where libraries are being rebuilt. Donations for these libraries can also be made through their website.

Contact Mary Augusta Thomas at the Smithsonian Institution Libraries for information on the Book Conservation Laboratory at ThomasM@si.edu or 202-633-2240. Contact Anna Velazco for information about the DC Public Library Foundation at avelazco@dcplfoundation.org or 202-727-4943. For more information on the Library's contractors go to www.us.belfor.com; www.pageconservation.com; www.minkoff.com.

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