

# BCLTA Update

By *Erin Morrison*.

## Library 101: A Primer for Local Governments

The BC Library Trustees' Association recently completed work on a public library information piece for local elected officials and staff. *Library 101: A Primer for Local Governments* explains why libraries are important community assets; gives a basic overview of public library legislation in BC; discusses the role of trustees and library directors; communicates some interesting facts about BC's public library system; and surveys some of the key issues facing public libraries today. The idea is to provide trustees with a tool to keep their libraries on the local government radar. An optional fourth page of the *Primer* can be customized with information and photos from your particular library. To download your copy, look under the "Advocacy" tab of the BCLTA website at [www.bclta.org](http://www.bclta.org). A shortened form of the *Primer* will be included in the binders distributed to participants in the Local Government Leadership Academy's 2009 Elected Official Seminars.

## Letter writing campaigns

In other advocacy work, BCLTA has initiated two letter writing campaigns among BC public library boards of late: the first on the importance of maintaining (and even increasing) provincial government funding to libraries in times of economic trouble; and the second encouraging the federal government to consult with the Canadian library community before re-introducing amendments to the *Copyright Act*. Details can be found among the bulletins listed on the home page of the BCLTA website.

## Trustee Orientation Program (TOP)

We will be hosting our first Trustee Orientation Program (TOP) workshop of the New Year on March 7<sup>th</sup> at the Vancouver Public Library. Space is still available and our trainers will also be holding sessions around the province at the request of BCLTA members throughout the coming year. TOP is a comprehensive look at the roles and responsibilities of library trustees in BC – introducing the provincial context for library leadership, including legislation and services, community advocacy, current issues and strategies for success. The program is targeted to new trustees, but returning trustees may find it an excellent energizer and we also welcome (and encourage) the participation of library directors.

TOP is offered free of charge thanks to generous funding from the Public Library Services Branch (PLSB).

## Chairing the Board training

For library board chairs, or prospective chairs, we will also be offering regular Chairing the Board training in 2009. Two pilot sessions were held in 2008, and after some minor adjustments we are now ready to formally launch this full-day workshop in the coming months. Chairing the Board is offered on a cost-recovery basis at \$175/person and sessions can be scheduled in all regions of the province. Look under the "Trustee Development" tab on the BCLTA website for further details.

## Upcoming BCLTA survey

BCLTA will be issuing a survey in order to gather trustee concerns and suggestions regarding the upcoming *Library Act* review. The survey deadline will be mid-February and the results will be used to inform BCLTA's brief to the Public Library Services Branch.

*Erin Morrison is BCLTA's Executive Director, and she invites BCLA Browser readers to contact her for further details on any of the above topics.*