

The Association's Work...

By Alane Wilson.

Lynne Jordon, BCLA's President, writes in her column in this issue of the work of the Association—that work which happens mostly off the radar of members until such time as there is something to report on. And doesn't it all sound thrilling? TILMA, by-laws review, legislative review, copyright, Election Act...OK, perhaps not so much compared to the evening news.

Reading the House of Commons debates in Hansard may not be the most riveting experience either but the work of governance is vitally important if not the material of best sellers. It is why there are BCLA Board members, committee, section and interest group members working on behalf of all BC library staff on issues, big and small, that do or may impact our communities.

In addition to the invaluable work your elected and appointed colleagues do on behalf of BCLA members, there is the work that the paid staff do. That would be me, your Executive Director; Allie, the Office Manager; and Rita, our contract, part-time accounting clerk.

We do everything from booking meeting rooms,

- to ordering envelopes,
- to writing cheques,
- to organizing events,
- to troubleshooting,
- to balancing the books,
- to speaking to groups,
- to making sure the national Job Board is up to date,
- to running the day-to-day Association.

Another important role for the paid staff is to provide continuity as Board members come and go. Planning and long-term projects benefit from having staff who carry the corporate memory with them (and here I must say how grateful I am for Allie, Rita and Michael Burris, who had the good grace not to go very far from the BCLA office—I try not to ask him too many questions). Operational work is vitally important too.

The two kinds of work—governance and operational — come together when strategic planning is undertaken. This is because one has a profound effect on the other. There is no affecting a strategic plan if both sides of the house are not engaged.

It is time for BCLA to embark on another round of strategic planning. The new Board will be installed at the AGM on April 18th and shortly after that, on April 30 and May 1-2, the new Board will participate in a retreat at Sun Peaks, north of Kamloops, to determine exactly what that strategic planning activity will entail, as well as focusing on how to work effectively as a Board. Rebecca Jones of Dysart-Jones will be facilitating.

Finally, I hope to see many of you at the BC Library Conference. This will be my first conference as Executive Director of BCLA and I could wish for better economic times for our annual gathering. But, we are so much better off than many places in library land that we must count our blessings.

Alane Wilson is the Executive Director, BCLA.