

2009-2010 Treasurer's Annual Report

By *Christina de Castell*.

We entered 2009 knowing that we had a rough year ahead because of the economy, but it proved even more challenging than we anticipated. We received direct cuts to revenue, and we were affected by the economic situation around the country.

When we created the 2009 budget in November 2008, it was just the beginning of the financial crisis. We conservatively estimated that interest rates would go down, along with membership revenue, but planned for a balanced budget for the year. We intended to apply for a \$20,000 grant from PLSB for strategic planning, and we thought we would have income from our Vancouver Foundation endowment fund. Unfortunately the financial situation rapidly declined, with the news in December 2008 that the Vancouver Foundation would not be distributing funds. In August 2009, we heard the news of library funding cuts around the province, including a reduction in our own operating and administrative grants from \$40,000 to \$20,000.

In January of 2010, we told you that we expected a \$40,000 loss in 2009. This was the result of the reduction in provincial grants, lower interest rates, less advertising and fewer job postings. Membership revenue also declined slightly. At the same time, we saw increased expenses in some areas. With the difficult funding situation continuing, we announced in January that we would be reducing Alane's hours as Executive Director to a 4-day week to introduce

cost savings, and were looking at other measures to reduce expenses.

On the positive side, our conservative approach and early action resulted in higher than expected conference profit and decreased expenses last year. Our actual loss in 2009 is just over \$19,000, rather than the \$40,000 we expected earlier. However, we need to be operating with a balanced budget, since we can't sustain losses year after year.

We will continue to look for ways to save money in 2010, and we have re-established the Fund Development Committee to explore opportunities for active fundraising. I'm pleased to announce that we have four volunteers who have been appointed by the Board to join me and Assistant Treasurer Debbie Schachter on the committee: Ken Haycock, Deb Thomas, Ross Tyner, and Maggie Hodge Kwan.

Our reserve fund balance at the end of 2009 is \$185,982, down from \$205,000 at the end of 2008. While we have a lot of work ahead of us, continuing to take a conservative approach and seeking new opportunities to increase revenue and reduce expenses will help us continue to deliver valuable services to members in the years ahead. I welcome your suggestions for the fund development committee, and look forward to your assistance as we seek new fundraising opportunities in 2010.

Christina de Castell
BCLA Treasurer, 2009-2010.