

President's Report

By Marjorie Mitchell, BCLA President

It is past the middle of October as I sit down to write this and two things strike me – the changes that have happened and are happening at BCLA, and the dedication and hard work of the people involved in BCLA. The latter is not new – BCLA has always attracted people who believe in the importance of libraries in B.C. I am confident we can continue to provide the inclusive space for people who want to work to keep our libraries strong and vibrant.

Changes at the BCLA Office

The biggest change that has happened this fall has been in the BCLA office. Alane Wilson has resigned as Executive Director effective September 30, 2010. She will continue with BCLA on a part-time basis as the Conference Coordinator until the close of our 2011 conference in Victoria, April 7-9, 2011.

The Board decided to fill the Executive Director position on an interim part-time basis while the work of two groups, the Task Force on Strategic Sustainability and the Fund Development Committee, is being completed. We are very fortunate that Errin Morrison has accepted our offer to work as the interim Executive Director. Errin has a strong background in associations coming to us after having served as the Executive Director of BCLTA, and following her maternity leave. Errin will be in the BCLA Office Tuesdays through Thursdays. Please join me in welcoming Errin.

Allie Douglas, our dedicated Office Manager, continues to staff the office Mondays through Fridays. I would like to thank all three for making this transition incredibly smooth and efficient.

Fall Board Meeting and Training

The Board had its first regular meeting on September 13, 2010. We held the regular business meeting in the morning, then spent the afternoon working with a trainer from Vantage Point (formerly Volunteer Vancouver).

In this workshop, we looked at different approaches boards take to the tasks that are the duties of boards – governance, strategic vision, fiduciary responsibility, and others. Board members learned how asking

questions framed from within those approaches can improve the effectiveness of the Board and the governance of the Association. While this all sounds very dry as a summary it was presented in a way that engaged and challenged our thinking.

Meetings with the Deputy Minister of Education

In May this year, BCLA, BCLTA, and ABCPLD had a teleconference meeting with James Gorman, Deputy Minister of Education. It was an opportunity to share information and discuss issues with respect to public libraries in B.C. At the end of the meeting, Deputy Minister Gorman asked if we could hold meetings like this on a regular basis. We have decided that a twice-yearly teleconference would be beneficial to all of us.

In October, we held the second teleconference. The groups were able to follow up on items we discussed during our first meeting, including new service delivery options for remote libraries and an exciting ROI (return on investment) study conducted by North Vancouver District Public Library.

We will continue to meet with Deputy Minister Gorman regularly and work with him in a positive and constructive fashion to strengthen the vital role of public libraries in serving the residents of B.C.

Feedback Invited

In my first report as President of BCLA, I asked the question "How does an organization such as BCLA engage its members?" It is a question I want to repeat because I think it is vital to our Association.

I appreciate the email I received, but I suspect that more of you have thoughts and ideas you haven't yet shared with me. The offer to listen to you is a standing and open offer.

Please tell me what you think BCLA should do more of or what we should stop doing. If BCLA has made a difference in your career or community, I would like to know that, too. I look forward to hearing from you.

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