

YAACS Annual Report: 2011-2012

By Tara Williston.

Young Adult and Children's Section (YAACS) has seen a lot of changes in the past year -- most of them good ones, I am happy to report! Here is a rundown of the year's activities:

The section is very proud to announce the winners (yes, plural!) of our first annual YAACS Award recognizing excellence in library services to children and youth: Sharon Freeman, a longtime teacher-librarian with the Burnaby School District, public library trustee, and tireless advocate for libraries, children's literature, and literacy initiatives for youth; and Allison Taylor-McBryde, the recently retired Coordinator of Children's Services at North Vancouver District Public Library, not to mention invaluable instructor at UBC's School of Library, Archival & Information Studies for some 20+ years, founder of a bevy of awards and innovative literacy programs, and enormously influential mentor to countless new children's librarians. There was absolutely no choosing between these two outstanding candidates, and so we didn't!

The fact that YAACS is presenting its first-ever award to two people is testament to the high calibre of the many worthy nominations we received, and to our great excitement at having an award to present at last. A lot of behind-the-scenes work went into getting this award off the ground. Special thanks to our Awards Committee, made up of April Ens, Alicia Cheng, Barbara-Jo May, Alison Campbell, and Randi Robin, as well as to those in the BCLA office, in particular Annette DeFaveri, who answered our many questions and provided guidance during the award's development. And without Past Chair Susan Redmond to plant the seed of this idea and get the ball rolling, I would not be writing about any award at all, so a very big thank you is due to Susan especially.

There has been lots of recent discussion within YAACS about improving communications within our section and with the wider BCLA community. Several members of the executive have formed a re-invigorated Communications Committee to pick up where former members left off, and throughout 2012 we will be looking more closely at our organization's goals and how best to achieve them. Input from our section members is very important to us in this process.

YAACS members will be hearing from us over the course of the year asking for their feedback, but we

welcome comments and suggestions at any time. Members may contact me directly at twilliston@gmail.com.

One way YAACS improved communication to its members in 2011 was through the revamping of our quarterly newsletter, YAACing. Editors April Ens and Pamela Fairfield have done a fantastic job of streamlining the newsletter's look and cooking up great ideas for fresh new content, including "vintage YAACing" snapshots from YAACS' earliest days. As part of this process April undertook the digitization of all past issues of YAACing -- with the newsletter nearing its 30th year of publication, this is no small feat!

The ongoing efforts of our Lower Mainland Continuing Education Coordinator this year brought a very successful sign language workshop, held in the beautiful brand new Surrey City Central library in November, 2011. And there are sure to be lots more excellent continuing education opportunities for the youth library set in the coming year with Caroline Johnson of NWPL in the Continuing Ed position.

Other changes/additions to the executive include: Saara Itkonen of VPL will become Vice-Chair; Jean Allan of NVDPL will become secretary; Elizabeth Bell will be our new SLAIS Student Liaison; Alicia Cheng of VPL has already stepped in to join Francesca de Freitas as one of our two webmistresses; and myself, Tara Williston, took up the role of Vice-Chair in September. We are also very pleased to now have an LTAIG Representative joining us: Julianne Mutimer, a Library Technician at Surrey Libraries. In addition, Min So and Anna Hudson have recently joined as enthusiastic new members-at-large. All of these wonderful additions to YAACS almost make up for us having had to say good-bye too early to our most recent Chair, Darby Love. We miss Darby's capable presence, but with so many dynamic new members, can't help but feel positive about what lies ahead for YAACS.

Tara Williston is the incoming Chair, YAACS, and an auxiliary Children's Librarian in Vancouver and Burnaby. She will soon be moving her puppets and picture books northward, to gain some rural library experience based out of Hazelton, B.C.