

Executive Director's report

By Annette DeFaveri.

Volunteer vs. member-driven

Recently I've been involved in discussions about the overarching goals of BCLA and BCLA's role in the library community. One aspect of this discussion is whether BCLA is a volunteer association or a member-driven, common interest association. Like many of you I automatically refer to BCLA as a "volunteer organization" but am no longer so sure this is the case.

Does describing BCLA as a volunteer organization adequately capture the passion for and commitment to libraries and library issues that are the foundation of the Association? Describing BCLA as a "volunteer association" could be interpreted to mean that BCLA provides volunteer opportunities, much like the Friends of the Library. My own thought is that BCLA does not provide opportunities to do volunteer work, but instead provides opportunities to engage in issues that members are passionate about and that evolve the role and relevancy of libraries in our communities.

Being involved in BCLA is what we do because we care about libraries, because we are interested in the intellectual debates that shape libraries, and because we are interested in the future of libraries. At a basic level I would describe BCLA as a group of individuals and institutions who share a similar interest and commitment to libraries, who come together to share information, and who choose to work cooperatively around unifying issues. I'd be interested to hear if any of you have strong thoughts about this discussion.

Virtual connections

I recently attended a Continuing Education committee meeting and have asked for help with an evolving and near critical challenge facing BCLA. As a provincial association we want to support our members regardless of where they live and work. We want to provide remote access to the training and professional development opportunities that BCLA members create. I have asked the CE Committee if they can support the membership by assessing existing tools needed to provide remote access, and if they can investigate partnerships for this service. The hope is that the CE Committee will prepare recommendations for the Board around policy and procedures for providing remote access to programs,

training opportunities and even conference sessions. Thank you to Sylvia Nurse and all the members of the CE Committee for considering this request and for being so enthusiastic about providing support to members.

Conference update

The BC Library Conference (<http://bclacconnect.ca/2014-conference/>) is early this year, March 31st to April 2nd, and so we are well in to the conference planning schedule. Holding the conference downtown is adding a lot of vibrancy to social and event planning. Kate Sloan from Richmond Public Library and Erin Watkins the Co-op Coordinator for SLAIS, the iSchool at UBC are looking at new and unique things for conference delegates to do when they want to eat out, shop, go on tours, or just meet with each other downtown. There are many great things to do in the vicinity of the conference site, the Renaissance Harbourside Hotel at 1133 West Hastings, and Kate and Erin will provide delegates with exciting options for their social time.

And finally, the Conference Planning Committee invites you to submit proposals for the 2014 BC Library Conference by November 15th. Details are available here: http://bclacconnect.ca/2014-conference/?page_id=51

Our conference theme is >Hello, World! and we hope the theme captures our sense of optimism, creativity, exploration, and engagement with the world. The conference is a great opportunity to present and discuss new and ongoing library services that interest you, and interest our library community. Presenting a session at the conference is an opportunity to share what you have learned with colleagues across the province, and in doing so help us all better understand what the future holds for libraries.

Acknowledging and identifying the best things that are happening in libraries right now, helps us discern a possible future for our institutions. Contribute to the discussion! Lead the discussion! Submit a proposal for the BC Library Conference.

Looking forward to seeing you all at the BC Library Conference in 2014!

Annette DeFaveri is BCLA's Executive Director.