

Executive Director's report

By Annette DeFaveri.

It was a pleasure to see so many of you at the BC Library Conference. Thank you for coming and being so positive about the many changes we made to the conference content and structure. We tried many different things this year and are pleased with the results. Of course we didn't get everything perfect and we see many areas for further improvement.

For this report I'd like to focus on one area where we made significant changes to conference planning and programming: curating conference sessions.

In 2012 the Conference Planning Committee put together the *Hot Topics* and *What Keeps You up at Night* sessions. In 2013 we fully embraced the idea of curating sessions. The goal was to mount a conference that included speakers whose experience and expertise were outside the library community but whose message and learnings were relevant to current library environments. For example, we were pleased to host participants such as Mark Matienzo, Director of Technology for the Digital Public Library of America, and Galen Charlton, Manager of Equinox. We also invited individuals from other provinces who are noteworthy in the library community. We were delighted to have Susan Downs, Chief Librarian/CEO of the Innisfil Public Library and John Pateman, Chief Librarian/CEO of the Thunder Bay Public Library present sessions on innovative services developed in their libraries. Some sessions were curated within BC. For example we invited Shannon Daub, former Trustee from the Vancouver Public Library and Director of Communication for the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives to talk about libraries and the media, and Dethe MacFarlane Manager for Community Development and Service Integration at Island Health to talk about Photovoice, a community-based participatory action research tool and its applications beyond the health care setting.

I have had an opportunity to look at feedback delegates provided and some of the comments made about curated sessions. Comments include: *It was important to bring in speakers who are not necessarily library workers, yet their work has a significant impact on ours.*

I appreciated speakers from outside the library world.

I enjoyed the variety of speakers. There was a good balance of "the usual suspects" along with a really nice assortment of unusual suspects (non-BC, non-library or both). It was a really positive change. I want to use the conference to learn about exciting initiatives down the road, but also want to be exposed to initiatives from across the mountains and in other sectors/industries which aren't on my radar.

I was particularly appreciative of one out of town speaker who wrote to say:

As an outsider to libraries, I appreciated the open-mindedness of the organizers in bringing a wide range of professionals in to the space, to recognize the broad impact the profession has.

The overarching objective in curating sessions was to help expose the library field to new perspectives and approaches that can influence how we do our work and how we think about libraries. We wanted delegates to feel inspired and optimistic about building a vision for libraries in the 21st century. We hope you left the conference feeling energized and excited about the work you do and the work libraries do. We hope you feel committed to an exciting future.

For the next few months the BCLA staff will attend to regular business, but by September I expect us to again be thinking about the BC Library Conference. I invite you all to consider the people you would like to see BCLA approach to do a conference session. Please feel free to call or email me with your thoughts. The best way for the BC Library Conference to remain relevant to the BC library community is to hear directly from you what you want and need from the conference.

I'm looking forward to next year's conference!

Annette DeFaveri is BCLA's Executive Director.