

President's report

By Heather Buzzell.

I have been asked many times since accepting the nomination for this position – why? The answer is fairly simple and complex: BCLA is an organization in transition, with a new strategic plan guiding us, a strong commitment to our values, and a passion for the work that we do – both individually in our jobs and as an organization. BCLA is an organization with dedicated members, board members, sections, committees, interest groups, supporters, and an amazing staff. Why wouldn't I want to be a part of that?

We have a strong board and one that is well represented geographically and within the public and academic fields. We are many voices with diverse backgrounds and opinions at the table. I feel that is something that we, as an organization, should be proud of and make use of to fulfill our goals to serve the library community in this province.

I have inherited this board with a new tradition of challenging the way we have always done things, a vital attitude to have in libraries these days. It has been a pleasure to learn from Gwen Bird as she steered the board through the final stages of strategic planning, clarifying roles and portfolios for our Board members, and much more. Having the BCLA conference early gave us the opportunity to try new things, including a stand-alone AGM! The addition of a keynote address by Duncan McCue which focused on the role that libraries play in positively impacting peoples lives and challenged us as library workers to help address the inequities in educational opportunity experienced by Aboriginal youth, provided us with food for thought while attending our AGM.

My year as vice president has been one of learning and meeting colleagues in other areas of

librarianship. In the coming year we will be strengthening our new direction. We finished our AGM with a new way of presenting our financial statements. We are financially stable, and we intend to build on this and explore opportunities for the future stability of our organization.

Building on the work of the 2014 conference planning committee, who did a fabulous job, we will be looking to continue the success of the conference over the coming year. How wonderful was it to learn not only from our colleagues, but also from members of other professions as they explore topics relevant to us?

Another new thing this year is our directors at large who have taken on specific portfolios: professional development, membership, funding opportunities, and communications. We are planning to deepen our work in these portfolio areas and build the association to strengthen our role as a resource to support all types of libraries, including developing position papers on issues that affect libraries in BC.

Over the coming year we will develop and deepen our partnerships with libraries, library associations and library bodies; building on our existing relationships and building new connections. In September I will represent BCLA along with BCLTA and ABCPLD at the Union of BC Municipalities convention and look forward to representing the association to local governments.

I look forward to working with the BCLA board and staff to continue growing this association for our members.

*Heather Buzzell is Chief Librarian at
Penticton Public Library.*