

CLTA ANNUAL REPORT 2008

by Jan Harder, Acting President, Canadian Library Trustees Association,
Chair, Ottawa Public Library Board, Councillor, City of Ottawa

The Canadian Library Trustees Association is one of the five divisions of the Canadian Library Association. We are a unique division because we represent the public who use the public libraries under our care, rather than library personnel. Our bylaws call for a small executive council of four. Your executive council for the 2007-2008 year has been: President, Lawrence Lavender from Creston, BC, past-president of the B.C. Library Trustees Association; Vice-President and President-Elect Jan Harder, Chair of the Ottawa Public Library and member of Ottawa City Council; Secretary-Treasurer Elaine Kivisto, Vice-Chair of the Regina Public Library Board; and Director at Large, Don Hamilton, a trustee with the Greater Victoria Public Library. Due to the illness of President Lavender, Jan Harder assumed the position of A/President in early 2008. A/President Harder has been a library trustee for 4 years.

In his inaugural address to trustees at the 2007 conference in St. John's, Nfld., Lawrence Lavender stated: *With a concerted effort we can rebuild the CLTA. We can do that with the participation of the leadership on our provincial organizations, an expanded team of trustees working with the CLTA executive and increased support from CLA. We need to develop and implement action of a provincial advisory council. There are national issues and library trustees are key public representatives in advocating support for public libraries and literacy. A collective voice is a stronger voice at the national level. We can also facilitate the sharing of resources and support among our provincial partners, and we can assist CLA in providing better conferences.*

Our goal is to build CLTA into a force for change across the country. As a result, your executive has focussed on communications and reaching out to the provincial trustee associations. The results have been gratifying. We established the provincial advisory council to the CLTA executive consisting of the presidents of the provincial trustee associations or their designates. We initiated an electronic quarterly newsletter called **CLTALK** under the leadership of Don Hamilton, and produced issues for June '07, October '07 and March '08. They were distributed far and wide. Soon we will be adding information on a monthly basis to CLA Digest so that we extend the trustee reach to all CLA members and beyond. We have even posted information and photos on the CLA Facebook site.

In the coming year as your president, I am committed to meeting hundreds of Canadian trustees by attending many of the provincial association conferences. We will expand the content on our section of the CLA website. I will leverage my location in Ottawa to work with CLA to meet personally with the Minister of Canadian Heritage and the Librarian and Archivist of Canada. In addition, I want to encourage a cross-country legislative action strategy where all boards assume responsibility to meet annually with their local councils and councillors (outside of budget time) as well as with local provincial parliamentarians and where all provincial trustee associations meet annually with their Minister responsible for libraries. CLTA will also be working more closely with FOCAL—the Friends of Canadian Libraries, with our sister division CAPL—the Canadian Association of Public Libraries and the ALTA—the American Library Trustees Association. This will all support learning, communication and joint action.

The CLTA has an award program with two categories. The first is the Stan Heath Achievement in Literacy Award and I am delighted to announce that the 2008 winner is the Ottawa Public Library. The second is the Merit Award for Distinguished Service as a Public Library Trustee. Doug Deans of Dauphin, Manitoba will be recognized this year for extensive service to his community and province over 26 years..

This year's annual conference in beautiful Vancouver has a full spectrum of workshops and events to inspire and stimulate trustees. These include *Get Strategic: Library marketing in the digital age; Public Library Success: how do we measure; Creating a Reading Culture in the Digital Age; City Council and Library Boards, working together, working apart.* Just as important is the learning and fellowship at meetings, in the hallways and over coffee.

Finally, I want all boards to consider sending trustees and staff to the IFLA (International Federation of Library Associations and Associations) conference to Quebec City in August 10-14. For many of us this is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to meet public library practitioners from more than 125 countries and to learn and share in a global environment.

Earlier this year I not only stepped into the CLTA presidency but as a result found myself a member of the CLA Executive Council. I would like to thank council members and our executive director for their warm welcome and their patience as I worked to get up to speed. Finally, I would like to thank the members of my executive for all their hard work and support this year and to the many, many trustees I have met and talked to all across the country.

CLTA increasingly seeks to be a vehicle for trustees across the country to share with and learn from each other. To support this goal, the final section of this report includes an overview of many of our provincial trustee associations in action this past year.

The common strategic themes running through most association activities have been communications, funding, advocacy and trustee training. Collectively, we have been a very busy group.

Alberta: 2007 was another active year for ALTA. We created a vision statement “Great Public Libraries, Effective Trustees” which was introduced in the trustee voice newsletter, our quarterly electronic ALTA Announces, and the 6th edition of the Trustee Handbook. In 2007, 220 trustees attended the Alberta Library Conference (ALC) thanks in part to registration and travel subsidies to 30 public library boards from towns in Alberta serving populations under 10,000. Feedback from members continues to confirm that this subsidy and the ability for trustees to attend the ALC Conference, to network with other trustees and attend educational and personal development sessions are very important to trustees serving boards in rural Alberta.

ALTA provided Trustee Workshops in 2007 for nearly 100 trustees. Our main focus for 2007 was on reaching out to members to solicit their input on trustee development. We conducted an online survey of members and received excellent feedback. We used this feedback in its successful application for funding from the Provincial Public Libraries Development Initiative program. The \$42,500 received will be used in 2008 to create two additional on-line modules in partnership with the Board Development Program (Tourism, Parks, Recreation and Culture), the Alberta School Board Association, and two technology and content providers.

ALTA’s members passed a balanced budget for 2007, updated its 3-year business plan and did a comprehensive review of its policies in 2007. We continue to update our website regularly, and we encourage members to go to the web site first for information, forms, and breaking news. ALTA is now using the web site increasingly for trustee development and educational programs and information.

ALTA continued to represent Alberta’s public libraries in advocating for the continuance and expansion of the Book Rate, the continuation of CAP funding, sustainable increased operating grant dollars from the Alberta government linked to current population figures, and improved public library services to all Albertans, regardless of location, ability, or culture. Finally, ALTA joined over 200 other not-for-profit organisations in speaking out against items within the Lobbyist Act, which resulted in government changes to this legislation.

Donna Campbell, President, ALTA

British Columbia: 2007 was a busy year for the British Columbia Library Trustees’ Association. From training, to advocacy, to conference and communication initiatives, board members and staff have been working with a full itinerary. Our stand-alone trustee conference in Kelowna last spring was well received and well attended by the trustee community. We participated in the Library 2020 Symposium this past fall and continue to provide representation on the follow-up Library 2020 Steering Committee. Likewise, our participation in the “Libraries in Dialogue with Government” initiative continues, with sessions planned for the 2008 BC Libraries Conference and the 2008 CLA Conference. Trustee development has been a continuing focus for the Association, with over 100 BCLTA members attending our Trustee Orientation Program (TOP) in 2007 thanks to funding and support from the provincial Public Library Services Branch (PLSB). We continue to work closely with the PLSB (Public Library Services Branch) on various projects and initiatives – including the 2007 BCLTA/BCLA/PLSB distribution of the advocacy publication *It Takes a Library to Raise a Community: A Community Development Activities Tool Kit for Libraries*. Our annual meeting with the Minister of Education and our BC Libraries reception at the Union of BC Municipalities Convention were other activities designed to keep the various levels of government informed and aware of trustee concerns.

Within the Association, activities focused in large part on communication initiatives in 2007, including development of a formal communication plan, completion of a BCLTA membership survey, the addition of a new online discussion feature to the BCLTA website, and continuing distribution of our bi-annual newsletter and periodic bulletins. We also saw Executive Director Maureen Black leaving BCLTA to pursue new career opportunities this past fall and welcomed her successor, Errin Morrison, in late 2007.

Errin Morrison, Executive Director, BCLTA

Manitoba: The Manitoba Library Trustees Association (MLTA) has for the past number of years concentrated on encouraging all libraries, both independent and regional, to become full members of MLTA. We have not reached our goal of 100% but we do have over 75% membership. The Board of the MLTA has determined to continue with the annual "Award of Distinction" to be presented to a deserving library trustee in Manitoba.

The new MLTA Board of Directors, 2007 to 2009, has identified our strategic goals including: improving the quality of the newsletter (4 times a year) as a very good tool to encouraging libraries to become and stay as members; improve direct contact with Board chair persons by members of the MLTA Board. This is a difficult task. Because of freedom of information provisions within Manitoba, we can not easily access the list of members for each Board. However, we are developing means to directly contact individual Board Chairs; improving our relationship with the Association of Manitoba Municipalities (AMM) since these municipal councils appoint trustees and include one of the elected councillors on the Library Board.

A major task the MLTA has embarked on is looking at the funding formula now in existence on Manitoba and finding ways to improve the formula, especially for the special and unique needs of specific library boards, for example a bookmobile system for a very, geographically, large regional library system with a declining population. Finally, the MLTA, with the assistance of the BC Library Trustees and Manitoba Public Library Services Branch has embarked on the development of a training program which will be relevant and useful to each and every library system in Manitoba.

Conrad Artibese, Chair, MLTA

New Brunswick: The New Brunswick Library Trustees' Association (NLBTA) held a successful workshop and annual meeting on September 29, 2007 in the Town Hall in Dieppe. The workshops concentrated on fundraising and the effectiveness of boards. The Executive of NBLTA met with the Minister responsible for public libraries, the Honourable Dr. Ed Doherty, in October. The Executive emphasized, that although great strides have been made in technology and developing equity throughout the system, the government needs to commit additional funding for collections.

On May 16, 2008 the NBLTA will be hosting a reception for MLA's in the Members' Lounge of the Legislative Assembly in Fredericton. This reception gives trustees from across the province the opportunity to meet with MLA's and discuss the importance and needs of the public libraries of the province.

Marielle Caron, President, NBLTA

Nova Scotia: Many of the nine regional boards carried out extensive advocacy programs, which were well received by communities across the province. Over the year we sent out three newsletters to our members, keeping them up to date on what was going on across the province. LBANS (Library Boards Association of Nova Scotia) continued to lobby MP's in regard to the Library Book Rate. We hosted several meetings with the Chiefs and Chairs of the individual boards to discuss our common issue, the need for sustainable funding. Following these meetings we had the opportunity to meet in Truro, with Minister of Education, Karen Casey and Jennifer Evans, Director of NS Provincial Libraries. Minister Casey at that time committed to setting up a task force to deal with our concerns, which was done in early December. The task force would develop a cohesive approach to sustainable funding, to be presented to the Government and at the completion of this report. An MOU will be signed by all partners. Minister Casey has the buy-in of her cabinet and government and they are committed recognizing the need and the struggle libraries are dealing with.

Our Fall 2007 conference was held in Antigonish, with an excellent turnout. The joint conference with NSLA (Nova Scotia Library Association) has really been working out well with lots of networking and sharing of ideas. Larry Honey of AVR (Annapolis Valley Regional Library) Board received our annual Merit and Honorary Membership Award. We are working presently with NSLA getting ready for the 2008 fall workshop to be held at the Old Orchard Inn in the Valley. The theme this year will be Sharing Resources and Building Communities.

All and all 2007 was busy but 2008 is proving to be even busier, with three LBANS members sitting on the Task Force committee and meeting every second Friday in Halifax. We hope for a most positive outcome.

Claire Detheridge, President, LBANS

Newfoundland: Public Libraries in Newfoundland and Labrador are provided by the Provincial Information and Library Resources Board (PILRB), an independent board established by the Provincial Government through the Public Libraries Act. The Chair of the Provincial Board is Calvin Taylor. From the very beginning in 1935 the board has been responsible for public library services throughout Newfoundland and Labrador. This makes the organizational structure different from most other Canadian provinces. The Provincial Board presently operates 96 public libraries throughout the province which is divided into four divisions, one of which is the City of St. John's. Each of the libraries has its own local library board which is responsible to the Provincial Board. St. John's also has its own advisory board. These local boards advise and assist the Provincial Board. They are active in promoting the public library in their communities; making representations to town councils and other community groups to build support for the public library; raising funds locally to extend hours of service or to acquire additional library materials.

The Provincial Board is comprised of 10-15 members: The current Provincial Board has 10 members with four non-voting 'observers' – one from each of the geographic divisions and the St. John's library board. The Provincial Board has a multi-year strategic plan with a strategic focus on legislative review, establishing a baseline for staffing requirements, evaluation tools and the setting of service priorities. Earlier in 2008 the Provincial Board launched a province wide promotional campaign to raise the awareness of public libraries and their services.

www.nlpl.ca

Ontario: Let me open by stating how delighted the Ontario Library Boards Association (OLBA) is to be invited to contribute to the annual report of CLTA. What better evidence of CLTA's goal to promote and support cooperation and communication among library trustee associations!

Within the trustee division of the Ontario Library Association, our eight-member council has been hard at work in a concerted effort to fulfill their mandate to provide the tools, resources and networking opportunities that trustees need to ensure sound library governance. We have focussed our efforts on our *Leadership by Design Program (LBD)*, the primary resource for all public libraries in Ontario to find the information needed to expand their knowledge and understanding of their governance role and responsibilities, and strengthen their capacity as community development leaders.

LBD is a six-element program being developed incrementally by 2010. In 2007, OLBA launched *Cut to the Chase* – a laminated, 4-page, quick reference guide on Public Library governance in Ontario. Simultaneously, a series of audio conferences available through *The Partnership – Education Institute* was offered to library boards and their senior staff available right across the country. These teleconferences provide an opportunity for boards to go beyond their immediate surrounding and engage in a dynamic exchange of ideas with Dr. Ken Haycock, creator of the *Effective Board Governance* series.

We are very excited to announce that the latest element, *One Place to Look* is up and running on line. *One Place to Look* is essentially an on-line library of board development resources accessed by the click of a mouse! Please try it out... you'll be amazed at the wealth of information at your fingertips! www.accessola.com/olba/oneplacetolook

In May of 2008 the next element in LBD, '*Leadership Development Planning Tool*' will be on-line. This is a diagnostic instrument designed to help your library boards plan their training and development activities by identifying the board members' knowledge gaps. As part of the pilot project, my library board was very impressed with this tool's abilities to identify our training needs and we have planned our board training sessions accordingly.

OLBA strives to promote opportunities for board members to network, to learn from our successes and share our stories. Our constantly evolving website acts as a conduit towards this goal. We take library-related news stories from provincial, country and world-wide newspapers and feature them on our website feature '*Headline Stories*.' At the present time, we are categorizing these stories into subject types for easy access to specific information. Visit us there.

OLBA is firmly committed to building partnerships with organizations that share the ultimate goal of stronger libraries and stronger communities. We have been privileged to be afforded opportunities to collaborate and network, mutually support and share information with OPLA, Ontario Public Library Association, SOLS, Southern Ontario Library Service, and OLS-N, Ontario Library Service-North. By working together in areas of commonality, our organizations will help Ontario's public library boards with the provision of sound library governance.

Like most wide-spread membership organizations, deciding the most effective vehicles of communication within our membership continues to plague our mission. We are constantly seeking better and more efficient methods to address this problem. Hopefully, our thrice-annual publication, '*Inside OLBA*'; our website: www.accessola.com/olba; our listserv; our attendance at SOLS Trustee council meetings; our attendance at the upcoming OLS-N conference at Sudbury, in May 2008; continued communication with CLTA; and OLBA-sponsored sessions at the Ontario Libraries Association annual Super Conference will serve to enhance the profile of OLBA. And if all else fails, we are not averse to using carrier pigeons to reach our present and future membership!

The OLBA councillors and volunteers are truly a hard working, dedicated group of trustees who hail from all corners of Ontario and represent the many sizes and types of public library boards. I am very blessed to work with such a fine group! I would like to convey my thanks to CLTA for this opportunity to share our story with Library Board Trustees and Members throughout Canada. From your colleagues in Ontario Library Boards' Association, I would like to extend our best wishes for success in your endeavours towards excellence in library governance!

Lynn Humfress-Trute, President, OLBA

Saskatchewan: SLTA's (Saskatchewan Library Trustees Association) primary objective is to promote and foster the development of libraries and library services in the province through idea and experience exchange, conferences and publications and inter-provincial trustee cooperation. Through its annual brief to the Saskatchewan Minister responsible for libraries, SLTA strives to seek improvement to and foster necessary changes in funding, provincial initiatives and legislation affecting libraries. As an organization SLTA has initiated or facilitated projects, such as CommunityNet, letter campaigns expressing concern over the postal rate and lobbying for fair changes to the Copyright Act. One of the major current projects is the development of a Single Integrated Library System (SILS). The boards of Saskatchewan's ten public library systems and the Ministry of Education have signed a SILS protocol agreement identifying their support for the project and to create a steering committee to develop the RFP. It is hoped that this project will be approved in the 2008-2009 provincial budget. This year we hired a new executive director Ciara McIllwaine. Our newsletter is now available in an e-version. We held our annual meeting in February in Regina and during the joint MLA/SLA joint conference in Regina May 1-3, 2008 the SLTA will be sponsoring two workshops.

Bev Dubois, President, SLTA