



BRITISH COLUMBIA LIBRARY TRUSTEES ASSOCIATION

2017 / 2018 Annual Report



To support and represent trustees in advancing public libraries

President's Message

Libraries ...

I have a secret, well it's not really a secret, but rather something very few people know about me. It involves two words: Monastery and Library.

When I was a young woman, recently graduated from high school I got a job, I think it was my second job. It was at a Monastery library just outside of Humboldt Saskatchewan.

For several years I lived in Humboldt and worked in the Monastery library. This was long before the horrible loss Humboldt experienced recently, #humboldtstrong. There was always something special about that community of Humboldt and life there, maybe it was the combination of the people and the books.

I always loved books and was an avid reader but there was something that was awe-inspiring about this Monastery library. The library was filled with undeniable reverence and twice a day all work chatter and noise would cease as the Monks made their way through the library to the dinner table. The hushed silence was what I remember libraries of my childhood to be.

Somedays I worked in the main library area which was a hub of quiet activity and some days I got to work in the archival and antique book room where the books were so old and fragile that even the scent whispered "handle with care".

I remember sitting in the small room, with no windows, thinking how much knowledge, how many lives, how much wisdom and thought was held within the four walls. Most of all, that room held pieces of history that may otherwise be lost.

Funny how libraries have been a common thread throughout my life and here I am now in a position to work with others to ensure they remain an important part of our future through governance. I would never have thought I would be advocating for public libraries.



BCLTA President Jerrilyn Schembri and BCSTA President Gordon Swan sign Letter of Understanding, November 25, 2017.

BCLTA has been a busy organization this last 12 months.

The list of what we have done this year includes:

- In September 2017 we held a Board Work Retreat. This was an amazing two days. We set achievable goals and direction for the BCLTA and I'm happy to see that we have stayed true to our plan.
- Work on the Governance Forum and the BCLTA AGM falls largely on our amazing staff.
- 2017 TOP Survey and the TOP Rethink / Refresh Recommendations. These recommendations are a priority, as was the process that they came from. Thank you to all who were part of this work – trustees, library federations, library directors and Libraries Branch staff.
- September 2017 UBCM Vancouver, where we gleaned local government input.
- Regular meetings with Minister Fleming, ADM Squires, Mari Martin and the Library Partners.
- Ongoing communications and collaboration with the Libraries Branch and the Library Partners.
- Working on a provincial framework/plan for advocacy and influence with the Library Partners.
- Our ED has provided BCLTA membership support as well as being a resource for libraries though out the province.
- October 2017 signing of a Letter of Understanding with the BC School Trustees Association.
- Improved communications with the membership. We are receiving regular positive feedback on the *Bulletin*, the *Board Brief*, and responsive emails to membership questions.



Jerrilyn Schembri, Jenny Benedict, and MLA Katrina Chen at UBCM 2017.

Working closely with the Library partners has been one of the highlights of this past year. We always accomplish more working together. Seeing BCLTA move forward in such a positive direction makes me a happy trustee.

Thank you to all of you for being dedicated trustees, for supporting libraries, for being a part of the BCLTA, and for putting up with my trip down memory lane. It truly is an honour to be the President of this organization and to get to work with such inspiring people.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'J' and 'S'.

Jerrilyn Schembri
BCLTA President 2017-2019

Board of Directors



Jerrilyn Schembri

President 2017 – 2019
On the BCLTA board since 2013
Tumbler Ridge Public Library

Jerrilyn has extensive volunteer and government experience which was acknowledged recently with the BC Achievement Award. Jerrilyn has served on the Tumbler Ridge Council, the Peace River Regional District Board and was elected to both the Union of British Columbia Municipalities and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities. Currently Jerrilyn is Manager of Public Relations for Conuma Coal, a metallurgical coal company and serves on numerous boards both locally and provincially. As a single mother, Jerrilyn has raised 5 amazing young adults and loves to spend time with her kids and grandkids in beautiful Northern British Columbia.



David Carter

Director and Vice President, 2016 – 2018
On the BCLTA board since 2016
West Vancouver Memorial Library

David has spent much of his career in public service, including city management, the Canadian Government and a provincial Crown corporation, with a focus on public policy and strategic planning. He has been an active community volunteer, board member and fundraiser throughout his life for a variety of causes including the arts, orchestral music, economic development, community support, and environmental conservation. He is currently the WVML board chair.



Arseny Shchedrinskiy

Treasurer 2017-2018
On the BCLTA Board since 2017
Richmond Public Library

Arseny has an interest in how public libraries provide service to patrons and communities, connect people from all over the world, and support their integration into Canadian society. Arseny brings to

BCLTA an expertise in finance from his professional career in financial management, internal controls, and process improvement.



Matthew Boyd

Director 2017-2019
Greater Victoria Public Library
On the BCLTA board since 2017

Matthew is the Planning Manager at BC Transit with over 12 years of experience helping communities around British Columbia create efficient and effective public transit systems

His passion for creating happy and healthy communities has led him to many volunteer opportunities and he is also the host of the Monorail City podcast which shares fun stories about happy cities. In his free time he enjoys coaching his children's baseball team, playing guitar and spending time with his family in beautiful Saanich, BC.



Erin Carlson

Director 2016 – 2018
On the BCLTA board since 2016
Okanagan Regional Library

Erin was elected in 2014 to municipal council for the District of Summerland. Since then, she has been the Summerland representative on the ORL Board and was involved in the ORL Strategic Planning process in 2015. She believes that libraries are an essential part of every community. Erin works full time as a horticulturalist and sales manager for her family cherry operation. She also helps coordinate the BC Cherry Association.



Kyla Epstein

Director 2016 – 2018
On the BCLTA board since 2016
Vancouver Public Library

Kyla is the Member Engagement Officer with the BCIT Faculty & Staff Association. With almost two decades of experience in non-profit administration, governance, fundraising, engagement and communications, Kyla is an active volunteer having served on many boards including Check Your

Head, PEDAL, Kiwassa St. David's Preschool, Rising Star Co-op, and Next Up. She currently sits on the executive for the PAC at her son's school, serves as a Director with BCLTA, and is a 2017 participant in the Governor General's Canadian Leadership Conference. In her final term with VPL she is honoured to be serving as the Chair. To fill in her free time Kyla loves to read and is lucky to have a child who still loves to be read to.



Mike Gagel

Director 2016 - 2018
On the BCLTA board since 2016
Prince George Public Library

Mike holds a Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Nursing from the University of British Columbia and has progressively focused his career on staff education and the use of technology. Mike is a Cub Scout leader, Chair of his children's school Parent Advisory Council (PAC), and Vice-Chair of the SD57 Prince George District PAC. Mike also serves as Vice-Chair of the Prince George Public Library and sits on the Policy and Governance Committee and Chairs the Local History Committee. An avid reader, Mike's recent interests include medieval European history, and modern murder-mystery, spy, and science fiction novels. He also enjoys listening to audio books and downloads e-books frequently. Mike's other interests include technology and Maker initiatives, birding, backyard astronomy, and travel.



Ernie Ingles

Director 2017 – 2019
On the BCLTA board since 2015
Penticton Public Library

Ernie has had an extensive career in the library community including holding a variety of executive positions, a long list of publications and presentations, founding of the Northern Exposure to Leadership Institute and as a member of the Royal Society of Canada's Expert Panel on the status and future of Canadian libraries and archives which delivered the report, *The Future Now: Canada's Libraries, Archives, and Public Memory*.



Paul Tutsch

Director 2016 – 2018
On the BCLTA board since 2010
Whistler Public Library

Paul brings many years of trustee experience to the BCLTA including 8 years (2004-2011) as a trustee with the West Vancouver Memorial Library during which time he received the BCLTA Super Trustee Award (2008).



Melanie Wilke

Director 2017-2019
Terrace Public Library
On the BCLTA board since 2017.

Melanie is fulfilling her 5th year as a trustee on the Terrace Public Library Board, and is sitting for the third year as Chair. Her involvement with the Library Board is not a coincidence; she has an MLS and spent 7 years as the Children's/Deputy Librarian at the Terrace Public Library, before joining Northwest Community College as the Library Coordinator in 2009. Melanie has a deep belief in the power of libraries. They are places where everyone has equal access to information, activities, and interesting people; safe places where no judgement is passed, and open to everyone equally with no secret handshake or financial commitment. These amazing qualities make libraries every bit as vital today as they have been in the past.

Please visit bclta.ca for more information about the BCLTA Board and for contact information.

Executive Director's Message

As the ED for BCLTA I am responsible for the operations of the association and many of you are familiar with what I, and Jan Thomas the super Administrative Assistant, do. You know my work through the *Bulletin* and *Board Brief*; responding to your inquiries with research, connections, and resources; managing initiatives such as the about-to-be launched new website and the TOP refresh; working with others on the BCLTA sessions at the BCLA conference, the Trustee Orientation Checklist, and shared advocacy opportunities; and through TOP, the Governance Forum, and other in-person meet-ups. And you know Jan as the name behind all the critically important coordination and communications that go into TOP sessions, BCLTA bookkeeping, and our membership management system.

What is often not seen, is the work of the BCLTA Board of Directors. On behalf of the membership, the Board establishes the priorities, sets direction, builds influential relationships and formal partnerships, advises, leads the culture of the organization, and provides oversight – all the regular and expected good stuff from a Board of Directors.

Over the past year, this board has gone further and higher. They pitch in and ask where they can help; they champion your work and libraries; they wow politicians and decision makers with their informed commitment and smart passion; they step up to opportunities, such as BCLA sessions and TOP facilitation; they blitz social media with their trustee pride; and they care deeply about the governance of public libraries. It is a privilege to be their ED and to support their work.

The work of BCLTA has stretched and grown over the past year in response to membership needs and input. Working with our valued library sector partners, the BC Library Association (BCLA), the Association of BC Public Library Directors (ABCPLD) and the BC Libraries Cooperative (BCLC) we have, and will continue, to strengthen our advocacy and influence strategies and outcomes. This is purposeful planned work that has immediate results and long-term outcomes, and we are fiercely optimistic about what we can achieve, working with all of you, as a strong unified voice for public libraries.

Your membership input has also resulted in the board allocating reserve funds to contract the BC Libraries Cooperative for the development of a new website that we will all be able to easily use and navigate as the place for trustee information and board development resources. While continuing to provide TOP sessions, that are partially funded with support from the Libraries Branch, Ministry of

Education, we are working on implementing the 2017 TOP Refresh / Rethink Recommendations (attached to Annual Report). And, much to my delight, the board has provided direction that a significant amount of my time is spent supporting library boards with your inquiries for templates, examples, research, practices, policies, and all the other wonderful governance and community engagement information and tools that is part of your trustee work.

I have great work, with great people, doing great things.

Huy tseep q'u, miigwetch, thank you,

Babs Kelly

execdir@bclta.ca



UBCM Public Libraries Basket Winner Tofino Councillor Thicke (centre) with Fraser Valley Regional Library CEO Scott Hargrove and BCLTA ED Babs Kelly.

Minister Fleming with Prince George Public Library Trustee and BCLTA Director Mike Gagel. October 2017.



Bowen Island Public Library Spelling Bees!

Kyla Epstein and Premier Horgan checking out a very well used GVPL library card!



Burnaby Public Library!



Invermere Public Library ribbon cutting.



Elkford Public Library, showcasing their toques and community spirit!



To support and represent trustees in advancing public libraries

The BCLTA, founded in 1977, represents the boards and trustees that govern local public libraries in British Columbia. We represent 71 library boards and more than 700 library trustees who volunteer their time to oversee the successful operations of public libraries throughout the province.

Our mission is “to support and represent trustees in advancing public libraries,” and in doing so, we strive to provide a range of services to trustees and boards to help them become leaders in their communities.

BCLTA also fills an important strategic role, providing organized representation to local, provincial, and federal governments on behalf of library trustees. We undertake ongoing advocacy work to these same levels of government and the public to raise the profile of – and resolve the issues facing – public libraries across British Columbia.

Our Vision

Vital to library trustees

Our Mission

To support and represent trustees in advancing public libraries

Member Services

BCLTA offers a range of services to support its members in their vital role as public library trustees. These include:

- The BCLTA BULLETIN, a regular email newsletter highlighting news articles, events and stories of interest to our membership
- Publications we have developed to illuminate the responsibilities of trustee and board governance
- Ongoing surveys and research results about BC libraries and library boards
- An annual awards program to recognize trustees whose service and commitment is outstanding.
- An annual conference, either stand-alone or in conjunction with other library organizations
- The Trustee Orientation Program (TOP), BCLTA's flagship training program
- A new directors' and officers' insurance program for library boards to protect trustees from personal legal liability
- Our website, bclta.ca, which we strive to produce as the go-to resource for BC library trustee

BCLTA Strategic Action Plan 2016 – 2018

Strategic Focus #1: Advocate on Behalf of Public Libraries

Goal: Ensure public libraries in BC thrive.

Being informed by membership needs and issues

Representing the membership in partnerships that deliver successful public library initiatives

Meeting with government ministries and officials to discuss the role, value and issues facing public libraries

Collaborating with other organizations to strengthen public library advocacy and influence

Communicating timely and meaningful information

Strategic Focus #2: Support Trustees

Goal: Enhance trustee effectiveness.

Understanding trustee needs, including unique needs specific to some, such as regional library trustees

Providing trustees with tools, training and information

Focusing on governance, financial oversight, strategic planning and advocacy

Designing, in consultation with trustees and partner organizations, trustee needs assessments and development strategies

Strengthening core services such as TOP and the annual conference

Strategic Focus #3: Strengthen BCLTA Organizational Effectiveness

Goal: Strengthen and develop internal organizational capacity.

Enhancing Board effectiveness and engagement

Strengthening policies and process

Recruiting and active Board succession planning

Ensuring financial capacity for strategic growth

Demonstrating value to our members

Building membership relations that are about sharing information, encouraging dialogue and supporting conversations that make a difference to trustees

TOP Refresh / Rethink Recommendations

Six recommendations were proposed by the TOP Rethink / Refresh Advisory Committee to the BCLTA board for improving the development, delivery, and results of trustee orientation across BC. At their November 21, 2017 board meeting, the BCLTA board approved support for the direction of these recommendations and directed staff to begin the coordination and implementation of the work.

The recommendations are:

1. That BCLTA, through its website, provide usefully organized and annotated resources for trustee orientation and ongoing board development.
 - Work in progress and new website expected summer of 2018.
2. That BCLTA establish a trustee orientation check-list, in consultation with the Libraries Branch and ABCPLD. This checklist will ensure a shared understanding and information baseline for trustee orientation across the province, regarding the *Library Act*, current work of the board, the library, and the provincial context.
 - First iteration to be completed and shared out November 2017.
 - Checklist can be found at <http://bclta.ca/trustee-orientation-checklist>
3. That BCLTA support a working group, which includes the Libraries Branch, 2 library directors, 2 trustees (at least one a BCLTA director), a TOP trainer, and a federation manager to update and review the TOP manual.
 - Scheduled for summer 2018.
4. That BCLTA work with the Libraries Branch and ABCPLD to recruit, train, and support TOP facilitators.

- This recommendation is underway with a renewed team of facilitators who are working with the BCLTA ED to ensure that the TOP experience is comprehensive, reflects adult learning expectations and styles, and meets local need while achieving a consistent and high standard of orientation throughout the province.
5. That BCLTA work with the Libraries Branch to develop a one-pager, similar to the SOLS *Cut to the Chase* <
http://accessola.com/olba/pdf/cut_to_the_chase.pdf> and the *Saskatchewan Public Library Governance in a Nutshell*
<http://slta.ca/+pub/document/nutshell/In%20a%20Nutshell.pdf>
- Planned for 2018.
6. That once equitable connectivity is established across the province, BCLTA will work with BCLA, ABCPLD, BCLC, and the Libraries Branch to investigate and consider an user-friendly, low cost, collaborative online learning platform as a shared province-wide library initiative to support staff and trustee learning and development.