

OLA 2010

Mary Ann Mavrinac, President

It has been an honour and a privilege to be nominated by my peers to become the 2010 President of the Ontario Library Association. This is truly an amazing organization. During my year as President, I feel like I have only scratched the surface of the depth and breadth of activities in which the OLA and its sector organizations were involved. I have come to realize that we have a winning formula in terms of our organization's structure. Each sector—OSLA, OLBA, OCULA, OPLA, OLITA and ABO-Franco—through dedicated leaders and volunteers, delve into issues, opportunities and challenges for which they are passionate. Through their respective Board Executives, each comes together as the OLA Board, working harmoniously and enthusiastically, and balancing the needs of their sector with the needs and health of the greater OLA organization.

This organizational structure is supported by an outstanding, dedicated OLA staff led by Shelagh Paterson, Executive Director. In combination—OLA Board, OLA staff, OLA sectors, and OLA members—this is an über organization; however, unlike other über organizations, OLA has remained nimble, generative and impactful. I am constantly amazed and intrigued by all of the initiatives swirling around OLA—some big, many small. However, the tie that binds this organization together is collaboration. We are an organization of collaborators, believing that we achieve greater impact when we are working together, drawing ideas from many.

Which leads me to the Power of C!: Collaboration, the theme of the 2011 Super Conference. Again the Super Conference lived up to the "super" expectation we have all come to anticipate for this conference which regularly draws over 4,000 delegates. The Power of C!, to me, spoke to the transformative capacity of collaboration which is emblematic of the OLA Boards, but also for libraries in general who collaborate within and beyond their domains, working with multiple and diverse professions and organizations to deliver outstanding resources and services to our users.

The 2011 Super Conference again drew outstanding

plenary speakers: film producer Atom Egoyan, the iconic Stephen Abram with his "Voices of the Generations" series, Michael Wesch, cultural anthropologist (Kansas State University), publisher and author Anna Porter, and CBC news anchor Diana Swain. The energy and enthusiasm at this conference were palpable. Several felt it was the best conference ever, a tribute to co-Chairs, Ann Perez and Kristin Hoffman, and to the Super Conference Planning Committee and OLA Staff led by Liz Kerr.

One of the very special roles of the OLA President is to award the OLA's President Award for Exceptional Achievement. This year's recipient was Wendy Newman, former CEO of Brantford Public Library and since 2004, Senior Fellow, Faculty of Information, University of Toronto. Wendy is iconic in the world of libraries, a strong advocate who furthers and fosters awareness about critical issues at provincial, national and international levels, most recently assisting the provincial government advocacy strategy for Knowledge Ontario. Wendy works across sectors, and in keeping with the theme of the 2011 Super Conference, she is all about collaboration.



In 2010, the OLA completed the first year of its strategic plan. Goals and tactics were developed for the four strategic priorities:

- Growing Career Paths & Potential
- Collaborating to Extend Libraries' Strategic Voice
- Strengthening the Organization
- Transforming Ideas Into Solutions



For Year 1 "**Growing career paths and potential**," the OLA continued to offer a premiere quality Super Conference, created a virtual Super Conference stream that was offered through the Education Institute, implemented new features at Super Conference (e.g., Saturday Career Day, student volunteer registration incentive, and a massage service—for those lucky enough to get a session!), and increased the number of student volunteers by 20%.

The Education Institute is an essential program for "Growing Career Paths & Potential," with the development of a long term plan a pivotal goal. Another goal for "Growing Career Paths & Potential" is to expand the Forest of Reading® Festival experience through satellite festival sites. I had the privilege of attending the Festival of Trees at Harbourfront in May 2010. We know our future is in good hands when we witness over 7,000 children and youth screaming with enthusiasm for their favourite author! Kudos to Meredith Tutting for, again, organizing this amazing event.

Through Jim Brett's (University of Guelph) leadership, the informal, but very active, Mentoring Committee formalized their role by developing terms of reference that articulates their responsibility for developing and implementing sustainable mentoring-related activities and services in support of OLA members. I wish to thank Jim for his unflin-

ging leadership and passion for mentorship, in particular by assisting to equip new information professionals to achieve their career aspirations.

For the strategic direction "**Collaborating to extend libraries strategic voice**," the key goal was to develop a government relations strategy. Terms of reference have been created and recruitment for a tactical advocacy team have begun. In the meantime, the OLA was very active in extending libraries strategic voice. Led by Professor Margaret Ann Wilkinson (University of Western Ontario), the Copyright Committee responded to the Ministry of Industry's Bill C-32, the Copyright Modernization Act, indicating library concerns had been listened to with more favourable user rights than in previous legislation, noting advances to access to information for people with print disabilities, and expanding fair dealing for libraries, archives and museums and the addition of parody, satire and education. We registered our concern that copyright collectives had inflicted unwieldy licensing and royalty fees on organizations. On behalf of OLA, a heartfelt thanks to Professor Wilkinson and OLA's Copyright Committee!

OLA also provided a detailed response to the Digital Economy Strategy for Canada, the draft Canadian Library Association Future Plan and the Mandatory Long-Form Census issue. We were invited to the Libraries and Archives Canada Stakeholder Forum held in October. And, OLA was very active in supporting the advocacy effort for Knowledge Ontario, hosting a Summit in June 2010, inviting key library and information professionals to provide creative input and register advice to the Knowledge Ontario Board to address the provincial government funding issue. Sincere thanks to members



who contributed their intellect and passion to all of these important issues.

The strategic direction “**Transforming ideas into solutions**” saw the implementation of an Ontario Human Library program lead by Sophie Gorskie (Hamilton Public Library) with the Human Library Committee. Former President, Peggy Thomas hosted a past-President’s luncheon at Super Conference 2011 to generate ideas to advance the transformative power of great ideas. And, arising from the public library initiative, Libraries 2020, OLA is developing an Annual Institute on Library as Place to meet the needs of libraries in all sectors undergoing a renovation or capital expansion project.

Lastly, the strategic direction “**Strengthening our organization**” was a focus during 2010 because of the foundational importance of a strong OLA supported by outstanding volunteers and staff, a sound technological infrastructure and vibrant entrepreneurialism. A Manager of Member Services (Beckie MacDonald) was hired as was an Education Coordinator (Michelle Arbuckle.) A small group of OLITA members, under the leadership of Helios He, Operations Manager, developed an RFP for a technology consultant to lead the development of a new technology plan for 2010-2015. A strong technological platform is essential for OLA to facilitate member engagement and services in a 2.0 world.

Highpoints for me during my 2010 Presidency were: experiencing sector initiatives such as the Festival of Trees and Treasure Mountain Canada (a school library research symposium spearheaded by Liz Kerr), events that I would not typically have the opportunity to attend; feeling the palpable excitement at Super Conference,



being proud that I am part of this astounding profession; but most importantly, having the opportunity to work closely with the OLA staff, in particular, Shelagh Paterson who somehow keeps all of the myriad OLA and sector balls in the air. Shelagh: thank you for your leadership in strengthening OLA. We are primed for more greatness in service to our members.

Lastly, I wish to thank the OLA Board who had spirited discussions but acted in unity for the good of the Ontario Library Association. The special working relationship that I enjoyed with the OLA Executive: past-President Peggy Thomas (Toronto Public Library), vice-President Tanis Fink (Seneca College) and Treasurer Paul Takala (Hamilton Public Library) was something that I will treasure forever.

M. Mavrinnac

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OLA President, 2010

