

OLA 2013

Susanna Hubbard Krimmer, President

2013 was a very exciting and productive year for the Ontario Library Association. The year was about considering the “universe of possibilities” for OLA, its divisions, and its members. It was about considering our enduring value to the people, institutions, and communities we serve. It was about ensuring that OLA continues to be an exceptional association.

In 2013, we developed the OLA 2014–2017 Strategic Plan. The plan was developed by consulting with OLA members, the broader library community, and the OLA Board and divisional councils. Many thanks to Dysart & Jones who led us through the consultation process and creation of the new plan. Always innovative, Dysart & Jones provided us with some new planning elements that will ensure that OLA’s results are relevant and timely for its members.

The process validated OLA’s existing Vision, Mission, Values, Strategies, and outcomes:

- Growing career paths and potential
- Collaborating to extend libraries’ strategic voice
- Strengthening the organization
- Transforming ideas into solutions

The top themes that emerged from the research and consultation were: the ongoing importance of advocacy – critical in terms of demonstrating value and for securing funding; the desire for learning opportunities and events to support members in development of competencies and skills; OLA’s role in supporting networking through events, such as the Super Conference and via partnerships with other library associations and organizations; and the ongoing need to ensure that OLA’s organizational model supports the association’s mandate and objectives.

A number of key 2010–2013 Strategic Plan initiatives were completed in 2013 and these built a strong foundation for actions identified in the new plan. Of great significance is the foundational work of the Advocacy Committee, led by Co-Chairs Tanis Fink and Michael Rosettis. The Committee completed extensive and significant member input and research and took its findings and recommendations for next steps to the OLA Board in 2013. This work has become an essential component of the new plan and specifically the Value, Influencing and

Positioning (VIP) strategy to ensure that all Ontarians view libraries as essential.

The strategic planning also underscored the fact that as OLA works towards achieving its strategic outcomes, it will continue to face fiscal challenges, and therefore, needs to identify sufficient and sustainable revenue streams.

In response to this, the OLA Board instituted a Revenue Development Committee of the Board to review the existing revenue streams and explore opportunities to increase existing sources and establish new funding sources, aligning revenue strategies, and organizational strategies.

As part of the planning process, we also considered the future of the Super Conference to ensure that it remains vital, relevant, and innovative. There was much lively discussion and debate at a “think tank” session designed to reflect on ideas and information, engage in some brainstorming, and explore possibilities for change moving forward. The 2014 Super Conference was an overwhelming success and much credit goes to the Co-Chairs Lita Barrie and Richard Reid, along with the SC Planning Committee, OLA Staff and Volunteers. We celebrated the 20th anniversary of the Super Conference – the first time that all OLA Divisions came together to offer one “SUPER” conference. At the same time, the speakers, presenters, and participants looked to our professional future considering “A Universe of Possibilities” and where that might take us. Building on this, the 2015 SC theme “Think It. Do It!” is a call to action.

Each year, OLA and its divisions recognize those who have made an impact. The award winners this year epitomize excellence. The President’s Award for Exceptional Achievement, which acknowledges an outstanding action or contribution that has in a major or unique way enhanced or furthered librarianship in Ontario, was awarded to Liz Kerr. Liz Kerr has made an outstanding contribution to the Ontario Library Association and its members through her more than 20



years of involvement. Liz has supported the association in many volunteer roles, including as President of OSLA in 1996 and as the 2003 OLA President, and as an OLA employee for the past seven years.

Sincere thanks to the OCULA, OLITA, OLBA, OPLA, OSLA, and ABO-FRANCO Presidents and Vice-Presidents who brought passion, knowledge, and insights to the work of the OLA Board and contributed to its 2013 accomplishments. These dedicated people ensured strong communication and collaboration between the OLA Board and Division Councils as we developed the 2014–2017 OLA Strategic Plan and concluded the previous plan. At the same time, they supported the needs of each of the library sectors through their divisional leadership and countless volunteer hours.

It has been indeed an honour to work with such a collegial and competent Board Executive: Past-President Karen McGrath, Vice-President/President

Elect Anita Brooks Kirkland, and Treasurer Lita Barrie. Thanks also to 2011 President Tanis Fink for her ongoing support and enthusiasm.

My thanks would not be complete without thanking and recognizing Shelagh Paterson and the OLA Staff. It has been my great pleasure to work with you. Shelagh: you bring great passion and boundless enthusiasm to your role as the OLA Executive Director. Thank you for your great leadership and contribution to the success of OLA in 2013. To the OLA Staff: you are a fine group of creative, dedicated, and hardworking people. You make great things happen for OLA and its members.

It has been a privilege to be the 2013 President of the Ontario Library Association. This is an amazing organization!



REPORT OF LITA BARRIE OLA TREASURER



In 2013, I completed my first year as OLA Treasurer. It has been a privilege for me to work with OLA in this capacity. We've faced some challenges in 2013; I want to thank the staff and Board for their ongoing dedication and commitment to serving the OLA membership and the Ontario library community. We ended 2013 with a deficit of \$294,000 in 2013, but our accumulated surplus continues to be very strong at \$790,000.

This year's deficit is significant, though only a small portion of \$20,000 is an operating deficit. A significant portion of the deficit is due to pre-planned investments, including the third and final year of a multi-year investment in our new integrated system, iMIS. \$117,000 of the deficit is due to a one-time write-off of accounts receivable during 2008-2011. This amount reflects a mix of duplication errors and receivables that could not be properly tracked with the old association management system. The challenges as a result of the old system further emphasize the much needed investment in OLA's iMIS system.

An added pressure to our 2013 revenues continued to be the impact of the shifts in digital publishing on the OLA Store. OLA staff have developed a comprehensive marketing strategy to reposition the OLA Store during 2014.

OLA's record of service, innovation, and membership growth aligned with our mission have all contributed to OLA's success. The OLA Board has committed to the ongoing development of revenue streams to support innovation and member initiatives. In 2014, we have created a new Board Committee that will be looking at OLA's revenue and fund development strategies to align the organization to maximize future opportunities. Moving forward, I encourage the Board to explore new initiatives that will help ensure OLA remains on a sustainable path for the future. I encourage all OLA members to find ways to get more involved in our association, not only is a tremendous personal opportunity, it is also critical to the future success of our organization and our profession.