

Executive Director's report

By Annette DeFaveri.

Website

BCLA has begun a website redesign project!

As many of you know redesigning and updating the BCLA website has been the subject of discussions for years. My predecessor identified the dire straits the website was in and her parting words to me were basically, "Fix the website, now!" My own experience using the website, as well as daily feedback from other website users, demonstrated the need for building a new site, and developing a new face for BCLA.

Money was an issue, and connected to the money was the question of whether to manage a group of volunteers for a website redesign project, or to hire a professional to shepherd the project. Past attempts at beginning a website redesign project revealed how impractical it was to ask volunteers or students to commit so much of their time and energy to a single project. After much discussion with staff, at Board meetings and with BCLA members, the decision was to use BCLA reserves and fund a website redesign project.

Our hope is to give BCLA a new web vibrancy as well as to create a clean and confidence-inspiring space that demonstrates, through design and content, that BCLA is a vital, active, accessible and socially responsible association. Jon Whipple of Jon Whipple Design Counsel was hired to take on the project. Some of you know Jon from his work in public libraries and then in the private sector. Jon brings a depth and breadth of design experience to the project as well as a detailed knowledge of libraries and their role in the community. He is a great fit for BCLA and for this project.

The website redesign project is underway and moving at lightning speed. Our hope is to be far enough along to unveil the website . . . or at least the beginnings of the website . . . at the BC Library Conference in May.

Conference preparation

Aside from work on the website project, or perhaps despite this work, most of the time Allie and I spend from now until May will be focused on the conference. While the conference is at the same location as last year, we have tried to make small changes to sessions and events to ensure the conference continues to feel exciting and surprising.

Some changes this year include the introduction of shorter 45-minute sessions that, we hope, will let more people engage with more topics. We are also moving our awards ceremony from the AGM to the Awards Lunch. We hope that this change helps us better honour our awards recipients.

BCLA will also use the conference as an opportunity to get member feedback on Mission, Vision and Core Values statements for the Association. The conference is our single largest gathering of BCLA members and we hope that we can entice each of you to add your thoughts to the low-tech message boards we will set up at the conference. This type of feedback is invaluable to a member-driven association and I hope as many people as possible will contribute their thoughts and ideas.

Thanks

And finally, I'd like to take this opportunity to thank Myron Groover, Barbara Jo May, Carla Graebner, Heather Morrison, Jon Scop, June Stockdale and a host of other IPC and IFC members who have, in the past months, worked to ensure that BCLA remains on top of its advocacy work. Member participation is the key to a relevant association and the ongoing contribution by members is what defines us and our place in the library environment.

Annette DeFaveri is BCLA's Executive Director.