



## Report to PNLA – August 2011

The following is a brief summary of BCLA's 2010/11 news, events and activities.

BCLA began 2011 with a new, part-time Executive Director having taken over from Alane Wilson as of October 2010. Alane continued on as 2011 Conference Manager, effectively splitting the full-time ED position into two roles from October to the end of April 2011. Going forward, the ED position will remain part-time at three days per week – largely due to financial challenges facing the association. Some funding has been set aside for hired assistance in planning and organizing the 2012 conference, but the association will be increasingly dependent on the work of volunteers as it moves forward.

One of the major changes in 2010 was the transition of various provincial Public Library Services Branch program administration functions from BCLA to the BC Libraries Cooperative (<http://cooperative.bclibraries.ca>). The BCLC is a limited-liability, non-profit corporate body and governance structure set up to manage Sitka's Evergreen Integrated Library System, BiblioCommons, and consortial database licensing among member libraries. The loss of the revenue generated through PLSB program administration amounts to approximately 30% of BCLA's operating funds. In response to this financial challenge, the BCLA Board elected to reduce expenses wherever possible and hire a part-time Interim Executive Director to see the association through the transitional period from the end of 2010 to the first few months of 2012. BCLA's Task Force on Strategic Sustainability conducted a survey of the membership and developed a realistic budget scenario for 2012 and beyond. Key priorities moving forward will be holding the annual conference, which survey respondents identified as their primary member benefit; as well as reducing expenses; undertaking a membership drive and reaching out to all types of members in all areas of the province; providing more continuing education and networking opportunities; improving BCLA's virtual presence; and continuing to advocate on behalf of British Columbia's libraries and library workers.

Of note over the past year was the 2011 BC Library Conference in Victoria, BC. This annual event is hosted jointly by BCLA, the BC Library Trustees Association and the Health Libraries Association of BC – but this year there was special focus on BCLA's 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and various activities and events were organized in celebration of our Centennial. As BCLA was founded in Victoria, it was also significant that we were celebrating 100 years of association back where it all began. The conference was a great success – it was well attended and evaluations were positive. Following the conference there was some question as to whether we would be able to continue holding a large annual event in light of the aforementioned funding shortfalls; but it became clear during our member survey that the conference is a key priority for the membership and the board has decided to do what it takes to make it happen. We have since signed a contract with the Sheraton Vancouver Airport Hotel in Richmond, BC for the 2012 and 2013 BC Library Conferences – to be held May 10-12 and May 9-11 respectively.

Another way that BCLA marked its Centennial in 2011 was with publication of *The Library Book*, by Dave Obee. This is a beautiful book, full of wonderful anecdotes and photos, which traces

the development of BC's libraries over the past century and a half – looking back at our history of service to British Columbians and forward to our future. A full description, table of contents, extracts and purchasing information can be found online at <http://thelibrarybook.bclibraries.ca>.

BCLA priorities for the remainder of 2011 include website renewal; expanding a mentorship program established by the Library Technicians' and Assistants' Interest Group (LTAIG) to the full BCLA membership; undertaking a membership drive; possibly presenting a session on public libraries at the upcoming Union of BC Municipalities Convention; and working on a realistic budget and action plan for 2012 and beyond.

Also of interest was the very near transition of LTAIG to section status, which would give BC library technicians and assistants a guaranteed seat at the BCLA board table. A petition for section status fell just shy of the required 10% of association members at the 2011 conference, but is very likely to succeed in 2012. BCLA has also seen the formation of the LGBTQ Interest Group in recent months and may soon be establishing a Readers' Advisory Interest Group. Publication of *The Browser*, our quarterly newsletter, continues and our special annual report and summer/conference editions are now available and freely accessible to all at <http://bclabrowser.ca/index.php/browser>.

Of interest at the provincial level is the transition of the former Public Library Services Branch to Libraries & Literacy under Ministry of Education restructuring. Under its new mandate, Libraries & Literacy will have an expanded focus on government literacy objectives in addition to its work in supporting public library services throughout the province.

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**Submitted July 25, 2011**  
**Errin Morrison, BCLA Representative**