Message from the President

Thank you for taking the time to peruse this issue of InsideOLBA. If you have any thoughts on how it might be improved, I encourage you to contact the editorial team. Constructive criticism is always welcome.

InsideOLBA is your newsletter and is created for you by OLBA Council members who are volunteer members of their respective boards, just like you. Its content has been assembled with the interests of library board members in mind. Many of the articles are timeless and can be read a year or two from now and still be relevant and informative. With that in mind, I encourage you to see what has been written in past issues. Simply go to the website www.accessola.org/OLBA and follow the link to Publications.

If you are not quite sure what OLBA is all about, I urge you to visit the website. It’s all there for you: our mission, our values, and resources for you to access. Many dedicated volunteers, who were board members in their respective libraries, have preceded me and many more will follow when my term as President ends at the end of this year. Their good work continues, changing to meet the needs of the membership, and always striving to be current and relevant.

The OLBA Council is composed of regional representatives, covering all parts of the province. Please feel free to contact your representative with any concerns or questions. Not sure who your representative is? Simply go to the Council link on the website to find a list of libraries by region and the contact information. In an effort to reach out to the membership, we are endeavouring to contact as many libraries as possible. To further that end, we are also in the process of recording several short video messages to put voices and faces to the names. If you would like to learn more about OLBA, simply search YouTube for A Message from the 2014 OLBA President.

As your four year term is coming to an end, I hope that you can reflect back on the successful stewardship of your library. No doubt you have acquired new skills and competencies that will benefit you and your community in any future endeavours. If you are fortunate enough to be reappointed to your board, you can proceed with confidence, having grown in the knowledge of what is necessary to make your library a hub of the community. From one volunteer to another, thank you for your service. Thank you also for supporting the work of OLBA through your membership. Whether you are in the last few months of your service on your board or expect to be back on the new board next year, you can carry with you the knowledge that you have made a difference.

Sincerely,
Don Lynch, OLBA President

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Greetings From the Editors
Kim Vares and Ann McLaughlin

Welcome to the Fall 2014 Issue of InsideOLBA!
The editorial team has endeavored to present an eclectic collection of articles that you will find both entertaining and enlightening. We encourage feedback and are always looking for constructive criticism, comments, and even the occasional compliment, as we can only do better if we hear from the readers. Do you have an interesting story to tell or do you know someone in the library world who does? If so, we’ll be happy to send along our editorial guidelines. Our contact information is on the last page.

What’s Inside?
There isn’t a theme per se, but there is a definite focus on preparing your board to be effective through times of transition.

There are also articles of general interest as well as important information about upcoming events and dates to circle on your calendar. We hope you find them all interesting.

Missed an Issue or Specific Article?
Back issues of all of OLA’s newsletters are available on the website: www.accessola.org. Click on Divisions; OLBA; Publications; and then look for InsideOLBA. There’s a drop down menu with all the back issues of the newsletter. Click on the one you want and download the pdf.

Thank You!
Thank you for being an involved volunteer and serving your community by sitting on your library board. Thank you also for reading InsideOLBA, a publication written by and for library board members, who strive for governance and editorial excellence!

Kim and Ann

Thank You To Our Sponsor!
Focus on Connection – OLBA Listserv

The OLBA listserv is an electronic email application that puts you in touch with all the members of the Ontario Library Boards’ Association. Imagine the power of tapping into all that collective knowledge!

You may have occasion to poll the membership for guidance and support related to a current challenge as a public library board member, to share a best practice or to share a success. One ask, one statement or one thought connecting to a plethora of ideas, suggestions and solutions!

The OLBA listserv is open to all members of OLBA. When individuals join the organization, they are automatically added to the list. Individuals who fail to renew their memberships are removed from the list.

To send a message to all the members of the list:
• Use the new listname address: olba-l@lists.accessola.com

To remove your name from the list:
• Send a message to the Host address: info@accessola.com
• In the “subject” area, type the message: “Unsubscribe olba-l”

If you are an OLBA member in good standing and are not receiving any messages or are experiencing difficulties, please contact info@accessola.com.
What’s Ahead for OLBA?

By Don Lynch

With the term for your board coming to an end and a new board soon to be named, OLBA is striving to provide aids and educational modules to help in the transition. We want to assist the retiring board in creating a legacy document and provide guidelines that your municipal council can use in selecting members for the new board. Moving forward, the OLBA will try make available to the membership everything that will be helpful to the incoming board in each of its four years, starting with the basics. We are especially mindful that a number of new members may be unaware of or lacking in a full understanding of the duties and responsibilities required by the Public Libraries Act. As their knowledge increases, the OLBA will stand ready to assist with more tools for good governance.

To further that end, earlier this year the Ontario Library Association and the Federation of Ontario Public Libraries received a Cultural Development Fund grant, funded by the Government of Ontario, to develop a province-wide strategy which will identify and address gaps in the existing tools and documents needed in the four-year life cycle of Ontario’s library boards. This project will strengthen public library board performance and effectiveness by creating tools to increase capabilities in the areas of: board recruitment, municipal engagement, and strategic and financial planning. OLBA will play a significant role in this project.

Consultants and researchers will be engaged to develop the training resources on community leadership, board effectiveness, capital projects, and financial planning. Six modules are anticipated along with a “train the trainer” plan. As this project comes to fruition, OLBA will inform the membership, and, if all goes well, it will be in time for the boards that are appointed in the new year.

The OLBA mission has always been to be a centre of excellence in governance for public library boards in Ontario. With this new and exciting project, we hope to remain as a leader and recognized authority in public library governance and community leadership development. Starting with the trustee Boot Camp at Super Conference, 2015 promises to be a significant year in the world of library governance.

Leadership by Design
Choosing An Effective Library Board

Municipal Councils and Public Library Boards – Working together to make our communities stronger!

An effective public library board will

• Develop a Strategic Plan to establish goals and objectives for the library system
• Support ongoing professional development opportunities for its staff and its board members
• Ensure delivery of significant programs that reflect the diversity of the community
• Provide leadership through supporting the identification and development of emerging local programs
• Measure the impact of existing community programs and provide library resources and services that will enhance community results
• Present a budget to the Municipal Council that reflects the library’s Strategic Plan and identified community needs
• Evaluate the performance of the library within the community and adjust its goals and objectives where the needs are not being met
• Ensure excellent management of the library on behalf of the community within the budget approved by the municipality
• Hire and evaluate the ongoing performance of the library’s Chief Executive Officer within the management goals set by the Board
• Ensure adherence to the Public Libraries Act, its Regulations, and any other legislation affecting the operation of the library within the community

The qualities Needed in a Trustee

As a potential trustee, you should be:

• Interested in making a difference in the future success of your community
• Available to attend board and committee meetings and to come prepared to contribute to the discussions
• Willing to become more aware of the bigger picture by learning about public library issues and concerns at both the provincial and the national levels
• Prepared to represent the interests, concerns and attitudes of your community
• Open to learning about library programs and services that give your community the level of access to information and enrichment that it needs
• Enthusiastic about working with other board members and the Chief Executive Officer in a team process designed to provide programs and services that meet the greatest number of needs in your community
• Committed to being an active participant in Board leadership activities in your community

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The Legal Requirements

The Public Libraries Act and its Regulations, not the Municipal Act, legally control public library boards in Ontario.

Municipal Council is responsible for determining the composition of library boards and for appointing library board trustees immediately following municipal elections and when vacancies occur. Positions are for four years, concurrent with the term of Municipal Council.

Public library boards can be composed of a minimum of five members. Although there is no maximum number, most municipalities have appointed boards of between seven and nine members.

Municipal Council can appoint its own members to the public library board, up to one less than 50 per cent of the total number of library board members. The majority of a library board must be comprised of citizens appointed from the community. County Council has the option of appointing a bare majority of its Councillors.

An advertisement must appear in local newspapers soliciting applicants who are:

- At least 18 years old
- A Canadian citizen
- A resident of the municipality within which the library operates
- Not employed by the library or the municipality

The Selection Process

It is recommended that a municipality pass a bylaw to formalize selection procedures for:

- Advertising vacancies
- Requiring all candidates to attend a mandatory information session
- Developing criteria for selection of candidates
- Establishing a selection committee
- Developing a structured interview process.

Important considerations include:

- Consultation with the existing library board Chair and the Chief Executive Officer to determine the current needs of your community and gaps which may exist in the current board composition
- Developing a set of questions that all candidates will be asked during the interview to ensure fairness and meaningful comparison of candidates. Your library’s Chief Executive Officer is a valuable resource for helping Council develop interview questions.

The Bottom Line for Your Community

Research studies from coast to coast and in every jurisdiction consistently find the Public Library to be the most visible and important service to the citizens of a community.

Selecting strong, responsible Board members who are dedicated to your community and its successful development works for everyone.

Take time. Take care. You and your community have everything to gain.

Open Shelf Is Now Live!

Open Shelf, the new online, digital magazine of the Ontario Library Association, is now LIVE!

It is envisioned as a dynamic, multimedia publication with diverse content and broad popular appeal. Open Shelf is about the people, places, services, and resources that impact libraries and related organizations.

Visit www.open-shelf.ca to read feature stories, columns, and what’s new in the library world. You can also follow @OpenShelfOLA on Twitter.
On Board!

By Abbie J. von Schlegell

Serving on a public library or any nonprofit board is a great responsibility with great rewards. So make sure your commitment is in check – do you want to fulfill a role or just fill a seat?

Here are some things to consider before joining:
- your interest in the focus area of the organization
- composition of the particular board
- meeting schedules
- expectations of you, for time, talent and treasure

Also important are the stage and quality of the organization. If you are in agreement with these considerations, then bring on your unique blend of experience, expertise and passion! Your personal connection to the mission will bring meaning and fulfillment to your work.

When an organization recruits new members, they seek out individuals who can add value, have needed skills, and expands diversity to complete the board composition. So keep this in mind when you consider joining a board to ensure a good fit for all.

Remember, the interview process goes both ways so ask about board orientation. OLA has the Library Trustees’ Handbook. Member boards include it with their orientation process. BoardSource has an excellent New Board member Orientation Checklist:

**Before Election**
- Organization’s history and mission
- Role and expectations of board members
- Bylaws, budget, current members
- Strategic plan, major goals
- Programs and staff overview

**Soon After Election**
- Facility visit and staff introductions
- Briefing on program strategies and results
- Introduction to committees and advisory groups
- Committee assignments and orientation
- Calendar of meetings and events
- Field visits (if applicable)
- Library of organizational information
- Review of audits, insurance, contracts
- Other

The nonprofit sector is of significant importance to Canadian communities. Economically, according to Imagine Canada, it’s 8.1 per cent of GDP and partially funded by the government. Scholars have argued that nonprofits perform essential social functions better than either government or for-profit organizations.

Boards provide leadership, support and governance. Nonprofit boards have specific roles and responsibilities:
- Select, evaluate, and support the CEO
- Ensure adequate financial resources
- Shape and clarify mission and vision
- Engage actively in strategic and policy decision making
- Enhance organization reputation
- Lend expertise; provide access to connections
- Oversee financial management and ensure appropriate risk management
- Monitor performance and ensure accountability
- Improve board performance

Tapping into your talents in service of your organization is expected and appreciated. Stepping into unfamiliar and uncomfortable territory such as library advocacy or a capital campaign is crucial but not always embraced or even encouraged. The organization and board must build and sustain a culture of advocacy.

Board members are ambassadors making friends and building relationships. They are advocates making the formal and informal case and key to board recruitment. While your town council selects the library board, current board members know the needs and likely the community members who should be encouraged to apply. Being prepared to speak for your library to council, potential supporters and community members is a requirement.

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Training and coaching are excellent tools to build confidence.

Staff and board members work together and it’s not always harmonious. Research suggests that in a successful working relationship, there is a “strategic partnership” between the Board and CEO. Keys to success are based on both parties focusing on respect, trust, leadership, accomplishment, strategy and mission.

Under-involvement and micromanagement tends to happen when board members (and CEOs) do not have a clear understanding of their role. Board training and participating in strategic planning and committees will increase your knowledge about your organization and its programs and enable you to work more efficiently and effectively.

While there is so much more to serving on a library or nonprofit board, remember to stay inspired by your reasons and purpose for service. Keep that passion alive!

Abbie J. von Schlegell is a Certified Fund Raising Executive in Williamstown, Massachusetts. She has been in the development field for over 40 years, as a consultant with several U.S. national firms for half of her career and as a senior development officer with four institutions. She has special expertise in women’s philanthropy. She heads her own advancement consulting firm, which she founded in 2007. In 2013, Abbie was named a BoardSource senior governance consultant. She regularly works with non profit organizations on philanthropy and governance.

Her extensive nonprofit experience includes program planning, capital and endowment campaigns, major gifts programs, strategic planning, increased annual fund-raising efforts, start-up plans and programs, interim management of development programs, leadership development and volunteer and staff training. Abbie’s consulting services range from individual coaching to large group facilitations. You may email Abbie at abbie@abbievonschlegell.com, or visit her website at abbievonschlegell.com.

What would you consider to be the best tool, tactic or best practice used to support dedicated and effective Boards?

We have tentatively been approved by our City Council to relocate our east end branch (Churchill Plaza) to an east end sports complex within the next year and a half. This plan initially took place with a dedicated board that collaborated together for a presentation that met approval. Respect for each individual’s say and contribution.

What has been your all-time favourite read?

Orphan Train by Christina Baker Kline, followed by Sarah’s Key by Tatiana de Rosnay.

If the world were listening, what would you say?

With all the wealth in the world, why all the poverty? Can we not SHARE? I just recently enjoyed Dr. Henry A. Giroux’s presentation on TVO about his book, The Violence of Organized Forgetting.

Who is your favourite author?

Khaled Hosseini – The Kite Runner, A Thousand Splendid Suns, and And The Mountains Echoed.

What are you currently reading?

The Casual Vacancy by J.K. Rowling and The House I Loved by Tatiana de Rosnay.
Getting the right person into the CEO role is just part of what your library board needs to do to make the new hire the success you desired through the search process. Once the contract is signed, there is much to do. Boards likely regard the hiring of a CEO as their biggest achievement, but need to plan beyond that to lay groundwork for this new relationship. Fort Erie Public Library hired Craig Shufelt in the fall of 2011, and Amy Guilmette became Acting CEO of Pelham Public Library in 2013. OLBA asked them to provide the CEO perspective on jumping into the new job. In this article they suggest how a board can ensure the relationship is set up for success.

Starting Off On The Right Foot

The most critical element in cultivating a healthy relationship between the Board and CEO is the communication of expectations. Moving into the top position of an organization can be intimidating at the best of times, but a Board can help by sharing their goals and expectations. Any new position is going to come with existing challenges, and communicating those challenges beforehand is an excellent first step in building a healthy Board/CEO relationship.

Once expectations have been communicated and the CEO is moving into their new position, regular communication remains key in continuing a healthy and mutually beneficial relationship. Have regular contact between the CEO and Board chair, to discuss library issues, to talk about early accomplishments and simply to make sure the transition is going smoothly. This shows the CEO that the Board cares about how they are faring. Weekly calls or short, informal visits over the first couple of months can be very valuable. The frequency of such discussions can be reduced after this initial period, but continuing regular communication is important.

The tone and presentation of any discussions, including Board meetings, committee meetings, or one-on-one discussions, should be kept as positive and constructive as possible. Just as a CEO will offer positive encouragement for new managers in their organization, so should the Board do the same with their new hire. Letting someone know that they’re doing well is rarely a bad idea, no matter the level of their position. At the same time, this should not preclude the Board from offering criticism. Nobody wants to spend their first four months in a new position working towards certain goals or managing in a particular way, only to be told six months later that the Board doesn’t like their direction.

Another way to cultivate a healthy relationship in the early stages is to provide the CEO with an accurate picture of the environment they’re entering. Every organization is going to come with its fair share of quirky characters, recent issues, and long-standing challenges that may affect the incumbent’s ability to do their job effectively. While these are unfortunately a reality of the position, having at least some knowledge of them before beginning their tenure can allow the CEO to avoid being surprised or blindsided when problems arise. It would be great to take a position at the top of a library system that doesn’t have any such challenges, but it’s unlikely that such a system exists.

Finally, the CEO needs to know that they have the support of their Board for whatever decisions they might make early on in their tenure. That’s not a suggestion for boards to give their new hire carte blanche, but allowing them to make decisions, and supporting those decisions, will give the CEO confidence in both the board and themselves. Again, this is not to suggest that a CEO should not be challenged or asked to justify a decision or request, but only that they be given a little leeway early on as long as it’s not likely to be detrimental to the library.

The Board and New CEO Relationship

By Amy Guilmette and Craig Shufelt

Amy Guilmette and Craig Shufelt reside in Fort Erie, having previously worked in Public and College library systems in Ohio and Fort McMurray, Alberta. Amy is currently Acting CEO of the Pelham Public Library, and Craig is CEO of the Fort Erie Public Library. They are married to each other and have two children.
Twelve Principles of Governance That Power Exceptional Boards

These principles define governance not as dry, obligatory compliance, but as a creative and collaborative process that supports chief executives, engages board members, and furthers the causes they all serve.

Good governance requires the board to balance its role as an oversight body with its role as a force supporting the organization. The difference between responsible and exceptional boards lies in thoughtfulness and intentionality, action and engagement, knowledge and communication. The following twelve principles offer chief executives a description of an empowered board that is a strategic asset to be leveraged. They provide board members with a vision of what is possible and a way to add lasting value to the organization they lead.

1. **Constructive partnership**

Exceptional boards govern in constructive partnership with the chief executive, recognizing that the effectiveness of the board and chief executive are interdependent. They build this partnership through trust, candour, respect, and honest communication.

2. **Mission driven**

Exceptional boards shape and uphold the mission, articulate a compelling vision, and ensure the congruence between decisions and core values. They treat questions of mission, vision, and core values not as exercises to be done once, but as statements of crucial importance to be drilled down and folded into deliberations.

3. **Strategic thinking**

Exceptional boards allocate time to what matters most and continuously engage in strategic thinking to hone the organization’s direction. They not only align agendas and goals with strategic priorities, but also use them for assessing the chief executive, driving meeting agendas, and shaping board recruitment.

4. **Culture of inquiry**

Exceptional boards institutionalize a culture of inquiry, mutual respect, and constructive debate that leads to sound and shared decision making. They seek more information, question assumptions, and challenge conclusions so that they may advocate for solutions based on analysis.

5. **Independent-mindedness**

Exceptional boards are independent-minded. They apply rigorous conflict-of-interest procedures, and their board members put the interests of the organization above all else when making decisions. They do not allow their votes to be unduly influenced by loyalty to the chief executive or by seniority, position, or reputation of fellow board members, staff, or donors.

6. **Ethos of transparency**

Exceptional boards promote an ethos of transparency by ensuring that donors, stakeholders, and interested members of the public have access to appropriate and accurate information regarding finances, operations, and results. They also extend transparency internally, ensuring that every board member has equal access to relevant materials when making decisions.

7. **Compliance with integrity**

Exceptional boards promote strong ethical values and disciplined compliance by establishing appropriate mechanisms for active oversight. They use these mechanisms, such as independent audits, to ensure accountability and sufficient controls; to deepen their understanding of the organization; and to reduce the risk of waste, fraud, and abuse.

8. **Sustaining resources**

Exceptional boards link bold visions and ambitious plans to financial support, expertise, and networks of influence. Linking budgeting to strategic planning, they approve activities that can be realistically financed with existing or attainable resources, while ensuring that the organization has the infrastructure and internal capacity it needs.

9. **Results-oriented**

Exceptional boards are results-oriented. They measure the organization’s progress towards mission and evaluate the performance of major programs and services. They gauge efficiency, effectiveness, and impact, while simultaneously assessing the quality of service delivery, integrating benchmarks against peers, and calculating return on investment.

10. **Intentional board practices**

Exceptional boards purposefully structure themselves to fulfil essential governance duties and to support organizational priorities. Making governance intentional, not incidental, exceptional boards invest in structures and
practices that can be thoughtfully adapted to changing circumstances.

11. Continuous learning

Exceptional boards embrace the qualities of a continuous learning organization, evaluating their own performance and assessing the value they add to the organization. They embed learning opportunities into routine governance work and in activities outside of the boardroom.

12. Revitalization

Exceptional boards energize themselves through planned turnover, thoughtful recruitment, and inclusiveness. They see the correlation between mission, strategy, and board composition, and they understand the importance of fresh perspectives and the risks of closed groups. They revitalize themselves through diversity of experience and through continuous recruitment.

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Once again, OLBA is awarding five bursaries to assist new board members living in distant communities to travel to Toronto and experience Super Conference 2015, on January 28 to January 31!

What is Super Conference?

It is four days of concentrated education and entertainment for everyone in the library world, including library board members and library professionals. Held at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre, it presents many unique opportunities to learn new skills, share ideas, and network, as you meet a vast assortment of library board members and professionals. There is so much from which to choose, that it's safe to say that there is something for everyone!

While there’s no doubt about the opportunities that Super Conference presents, attendance may be prohibitively expensive for those who reside a considerable distance from Toronto. To assist OLBA Member Boards to defray some of these costs, OLBA is offering five bursaries to members of eligible library boards within the Northwest, Northeast, and the Ottawa Valley regions of Ontario.

Who is eligible?

Public Library Board Members may enter the draw if:

- They serve on a board which is a member in good standing of OLBA;
- They have never before attended Super Conference;
- They serve on a public library board in one of the designated regions; and
- They are able to cover any remaining expenses, if any, beyond the awarded amount.

Is your library within one of the designated regions?

For a detailed list of libraries within the two Northern regions, please refer to the OLBA website > Ontario Libraries.

What does the bursary include?

Each bursary includes free Super Conference registration, a ticket to the Ontario Public Library Awards reception, and reimbursement of travel, accommodation and incidental expenses – including up to $50 per day towards meals – up to the following maximums:

- $1,250.00 per person if you’re in the Northwest Region;
- $750.00 per person if you’re in the Northeast Region; and
- $500.00 to the winner in the Near North/Ottawa Valley Region.

Who can win?

There will be two winners from each of the two northern regions and one from the Ottawa Valley. More than one board member per library is allowed to enter the draw as long as the aforementioned pre-requisites are met. However, to make the Super Conference available to as many different libraries as possible, there can be only one winner from any one library. The only exception would be if there were entries from one library only, and no others.

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What if you’ve already registered?

If you are a Bursary winner and have already registered, you must ask for a refund and re-register as a Bursary winner in order to receive the winner’s benefits. Details will be provided.

What does OLBA expect in return?

Two things:
1. The winners must provide a written account of their impressions, thoughts, and lessons learned of Super Conference. These accounts may be published in this newsletter. Photographs are welcomed.
2. The winners are asked to attend Public Library Awards reception (ticket provided) where, if you wish, you may be seated with a member of the OLBA Bursary Committee.

What else should you know?

Can I give my bursary to someone else?
The bursary award is nontransferable and is for the exclusive use of the winner.

Where do I stay?
The place and type of accommodation is the choice of the recipient, however OLA has negotiated a corporate rate at several of the hotels in the vicinity of the MTCC. For more information on these hotels, please check the OLA website. (If someone else from your library is attending, you may wish to share accommodations, otherwise OLA has reserved rooms at the Intercontinental Hotel for bursary winners. Lower cost hotels are available. Payment is the winner’s responsibility with reimbursement coming from the bursary award.)

How are expenses paid?
The OLA claim form (which will be provided at the initial meeting) must be completed, with the bursary winner’s information and signed by the winner. We really encourage individual board members to submit their own entries so that the reimbursement will go directly to the winner. If the payment is to be made to the winner’s library, this should be indicated at the bottom right of the claim form and the Library information should be written there.

Are receipts needed?
Reimbursement of expenses (up to the previously mentioned limits) will be made upon presentation of expense receipts.

What should my written summary include?
Ideally, what we’d like to see is something more than a list of the sessions attended. We’d like to know what you gained from the experience and how the lessons learned will benefit you and your fellow board members in the future governance of your libraries.

Is an orientation to Super Conference provided?
Over 4,800 library people attended last year’s big event and it can be a bit overwhelming for a first time attendee. To help you, members of the OLBA Council will meet with you at the start of the Conference just to let you know what to expect and provide you with all the information needed to have a successful Super Conference experience.

At that time, all the necessary information and forms to submit claims for reimbursement of expenses will be provided at that time; and OLA provides a “first timers” workshop as part of the conference.

What is the deadline for submission?
Deadline for submissions is MIDNIGHT, December 15, 2014 and only one entry per person is permitted.

Where do I send my submission?
All submissions are to be emailed to the OLBA Bursary co-ordinator, Pierre Mercier, at pierremercier0122@gmail.com.

Be sure to include your name, the name of your library board, your contact information (home and/or work phone number and e-mail address) in your entry.

When does the draw take place?
The draw will take place on December 16, 2014 and the winners will be notified by email the same day.

To conclude
If you meet the other eligibility requirements, please consider entering the OLBA Bursary Draw. Every member of a library board should attend Super Conference at least once. It’s a fantastic experience and a tremendous opportunity to learn and network.

Visit olasuperconference.ca for more information on Super Conference 2015.

Good luck ... and we hope to see you there!
The Town of Lincoln library board and council have just completed a joint $15 million library, arena, walking track and community meeting space project, their Town of Lincoln Community Complex. It was a partnership in all ways, including a shared community-wide capital campaign that raised $3.2 million.

Unique challenges arise in building projects. This one may inspire your library board to seize an opportunity to partner. John Kralt, Board Chair, Jill Nicholson, CEO, and Margaret Andrewes, Capital Campaign Chair, gave a full tour of their new facility and explained the multi-year project that led to the grand opening in June of 2014.

Following the municipal election in 2010, John Kralt was the only returning board member. He was also a Town of Lincoln councillor. The remaining board members were new to library governance. Three of Lincoln's nine-member board are town councillors. In 2005, council increased its seats on the library board. Eight cents of every Lincoln tax dollar goes to the library.

With the new project as a primary focus during its 2010-14 term, the new board needed to commit fully to the demands of a new build, and engage with all the partners. This new board was passionate about the freshly announced community project but, with so many inexperienced members, learning their role in setting strategic direction together was a steep learning curve. Fortunately, they were quick learners as they undertook to envision library service ten years into the future. They determined the library could become a “community living room,” with features including a fireplace, child play area, coffee bar and quiet room. Many wanted specific design elements.

It was necessary for the board to articulate this vision early in the process, as Town council and staff prepared the comprehensive request for proposal for its design/build project. The total cost of $15 million was non-negotiable. There are many of the desired components in the final design, but not all. On the plus side, the total cost was kept under control.

The Lincoln library system consists of two facilities – the twenty-year old Moses F. Rittenhouse Branch in Vineland, and the Fleming Branch in Beamsville. The new Fleming Branch replaces the original library, housed in a heritage building built in 1851. With the town's 50 per cent population increase over 20 years, library space constraints have kept the board and staff scrambling to meet the needs of their rapidly growing community. The last 15 years had seen three needs assessments done for the old Beamsville library. The library was ready for the change. The arena had needs too, but nothing could move forward until this partnership came together.

The new library and arena facility is situated on four acres beside a five-acre public park in a new residential development centrally located in Beamsville on the former fairgrounds. Fortunately, the town secured these nine acres from the development company that purchased the original 27 acre fairgrounds parcel from the local agricultural society.

From the conception of the building project followed by the town's application to the 2007 Building Canada Fund, Dean Allison, MP, Niagara West-Glanbrook, remained an unwavering champion. So it was in October 2010 that the project was made possible when the Government of Canada granted $5 million to the Town of Lincoln leaving the town to raise the remaining $10 million.

Lincoln library CEO Jill Nicholson gave enormous amounts of her working days and her own time to this project. She served on the technical advisory staff team responsible for the oversight and management of the building project. As the lone library representative on the team, Nicholson found that her input was very necessary to educate the rest of that group on the specialized needs of the library. Her pride in the finished facility is evident.
There are a host of ongoing benefits to the shared facility. There is the convenience to families with all the components under one roof, of course, and that easier access means greater library usage. Library operating costs are lower, as there are shared washrooms, staff lunchroom, and large meeting room that can be divided into three meeting rooms, each with its own kitchenette. From an office in the lobby of the complex, town staff books meeting room space, and the library has top priority. The space is large enough for film shows and the children’s summer reading party. The shared cafe and lounge area are visible from the library entrance extending the Wi-Fi access seating. The library itself features good sight lines allowing staff to see down the aisles of the full length of the facility from the circulation desk. The children’s area is larger. All the shelves are more accessible. The library staff has a common work area within their office space.

The capital campaign overcame daunting odds. Ontario’s small towns love their libraries and hockey arenas, but much was asked of them in Lincoln. First, there was widespread public sentiment opposed to the loss of the fairgrounds. Then, a fundraising target was set for $4 million, far in excess of the $140,000 raised the last time the library board undertook a public campaign in the early 1990s. Still, led by a team of enthusiastic volunteer community members in their strong commitment to secure this much needed public facility, the campaign was a success. The appeal of the new building is undeniable, and has won over Lincoln residents. Shelves in the library and seats in the arena were named for a $100 donation. A most appreciated lead donation of $500,000 by the Fleming family is honoured with their name on the new library, a delightful outcome, as the previous branch was also named for this family in tribute to its deep roots in the community since the mid-1800s.

Key people make these partnerships happen. Finding the right team to lead a capital campaign is vital. Lincoln was fortunate to have Margaret Andrewes chairing this campaign. She is well known in both her local community and the library community for making a positive difference. Andrewes credits town council for investing in Campaign Coaches, the consulting firm it hired to enable her volunteer team to plan the campaign and develop the leadership know-how necessary to achieve its task successfully.

Lincoln Town Council knew from the outset that this project would take plenty of planning, partnerships and participation from their whole community. Fortunately, the people needed to make it happen were right there, giving the needed leadership that resulted in a facility that will be the community’s living room, and arena, and more, for the future. 

Ann McLaughlin is the OLBA representative for Central-West region. She is past chair of the Fort Erie Public Library Board, current board member, and President of the Friends of the Fort Erie Public Library. Ann teaches Grade One and Two students for the DSB Niagara.
Have you heard any of these comments at your library recently?

- “I can’t explain what I do, I just do it.”
- “Our library is different, we don’t do that here.”
- “We’ve always done it that way.”
- “I don’t know why we do that.”
- “The other librarian let me do that.”

If yes, your library has a serious condition. Fortunately, there is a successful treatment. You need a policy audit.

The Rainy River Public Library Board completed a full audit of our agency’s policies in 2010-12. The process took 18 months and a lot of hard work. However, the end result – a fully-updated, relevant policy manual published on-line for our funders and patrons – demonstrated the benefits of a clear, manageable process.

Before you start, define your terms. Policy describes the why and what of library service. Procedure describes the who, when, where, and – most importantly – how of library service.

Why have policies and procedures at all? Does anyone care about this stuff? They do. Policies and procedures support consistent service, continuity of service, and, accountability and transparency.

And why audit? A full policy audit keeps your library relevant and modern, matches your operations to your strategic goals, and gives your Board a full picture of how the library works.

These objectives matter. They speak to your credibility and currency as a community resource. The tax-paying public and the levels of government they fund expect us to meet these standards, now more than ever. So often, administrative issues are caused by a preventable mismatch between what you’re doing and what your policy or procedure says you are doing. This can get ugly.

Start with your current policy framework. Is it written? Hopefully yes. Is your policy framework verbal? Hopefully not. Write it down. If you have no consolidated policy manual, collect relevant documentation you can find, like library board minutes and staff reports. Document what you’re doing right now.

If you have a manual, when was it last reviewed? Are you still governing the use of floppy discs in the library? (It happens.) If a policy hasn’t been looked at within the last four years, it’s due for a revisit.

Set a realistic timeline for your work. Rainy River is a very small library with 0.7 FTE staff, and we needed 18 months. The audit was on every board meeting agenda – sometimes two or three brief policies, sometimes only one longer document. Be realistic about your capacity to manage the discussion and be respectful of everyone’s time.

Make a policy template. Your policies should all have the same basic format and details. This means none of the vital details, like the review date, will be missed.

Consult the Ontario Public Library Guidelines. The current, 6th edition (available on-line at www.ontariopubliclibraryguidelines.ca) has a very helpful listing of the policies you will need to cover. Whether or not your long-term goal is accreditation, the Guidelines are gold. In addition, many sample policies are loaded at the SOLS/OLS-N Clearinghouse (www.sols.org).

Make an audit checklist. This should include the policy areas you need to cover, how your library addresses those areas now, and, what you need to do to satisfy your audit.

To help us understand the context of our policies at Rainy River, we made a policy pyramid with four layers: foundational, governance, personnel, and services.

Foundational policies affect how you use everything else in the manual. Governance policies speak to the work of the Board. Personnel policies cover your staff. As the pointy end of the business, services are usually the most populated policy area.

We placed each policy in one of those layers, and – generally – we did the layers in sequence. Policies in the same layer will often have overlapping concepts and raise common concerns. Doing them in sequence keeps those concepts and concerns in the spotlight. If you have to switch layers, maintain a policy parking lot to keep good ideas idling until you can return.

continued on page 16
As I noted above, to maintain momentum you should address policies at every board meeting. Track your progress so that everyone at the table can see the advances being made. Lack of visible progress undermines the process.

And: set your policies free. Share them. Policies are not confidential. They only thrive in the sunlight. If your funders and patrons cannot see and understand your policies, how can they have confidence in them? Rainy River posted every approved policy on-line during our audit, and we continue to do so now. See it at www.rainyriverlibrary.com/board-policies.html.

Most importantly, talk to your colleagues. There are over 300 library boards in Ontario. We do not work in isolation. If you face a policy challenge, you can be sure another board is facing the same challenge.

Audit complete? Congratulations, doctor, the patient is cured!

Michael Dawber is the CEO of the Rainy River Public Library in Northwestern Ontario. He is the 2014 winner of the Ontario Library Association's Media and Communications Award. Reach him at libraryrr@gmail.com.

Remembering Lorraine Williams

The library community lost a big champion with the passing of Lorraine Mary Williams in July of this year. She was an honourary life member of the Ontario Library Association.

Lorraine was passionate in her service to people through volunteer work. She was past president of both the Ontario and Canadian Library Trustees Associations, the North York Public Library Board, and a former member of the Metro Toronto Reference Library Board of Trustees. Among her many contributions to the public library governance she was the author of *The Library Trustee and the Public Librarian: Partners in Service* (Canadian Library Association Press, Ottawa) and *The Library Trustee and the Public Librarian: Partners in Service* (Scarecrow Academic Press, Meteuchen, New Jersey)

Lorraine was born on December 8, 1932. On July 4, 2014, she passed away peacefully in the palliative care unit of Markham Stouffville Hospital in Markham with family at her side. Beloved wife of John Reesor Williams for 57 years. Loving mother and grandmother to her five children and four grandchildren, Theresa, Megan (grandsons, Zachary and Samuel), Harland, Maureen (husband, Stan) and Barbara (granddaughters, Scarlet and Margaux). Dearly beloved by her sister, Suzanne Hearn (children, Kathy, Mary Pat, Christopher, Michael, Kevin and Sean), and her brother, Neil O’Donnell (wife, Cynthia and children, Sarah, Sanford and Susan). Loving sister-in-law to Bill and Jean Williams and Tom and Mary Williams (children, Cyndy and Tom).

Lorraine lived her faith-filled life to the fullest in her thoughts, words and deeds. Her unbounded love of her family was but a reflection of her deep respect for the dignity and sanctity of all human life; which she constantly displayed in her love of and caring for people in a very personal way and as a professional social worker (MSW).

Professionally, Lorraine was a senior social worker in the correctional, forensic psychiatry fields and psychiatric field of social work. Latterly, her career transitioned into a private psychotherapy and marriage counselling practice in Toronto. Lorraine was passionate in her service to people through her volunteer work, including a Board Member on the Visiting Homemakers Association, Chair of the Social Action Committee of the YWCA of Metro Toronto, Executive Secretary of the Indian-Eskimo Association of Canada, Board Member of the Marguerite Bourgeois Family Centre (now known as FertilityCare Toronto), founding Board Member of the Human Life Research Institute (now known as the deVeber Institute for Research into Ethical and Social Issues), Past Chair of the North York Public Library Board, former Member of the Metro Toronto Reference Library Board of Trustees, Past President of both the Ontario and the Canadian Library Trustees Associations, member of the Founding Committee for St. Timothy's Willowdale Parish and Parish Council, President of St. Timothy's Catholic Women's League (CWL), President of the North York Regional CWL and an active leader in Discovery Theatre, a forum for adult inquiry.

Through her love of reading and writing, Lorraine became an active author and journalist. She was a member of The Writers Union of Canada, the Society of American Travel Writers, The Word Guild and the Catholic Press Association. She was a former contributing editor to *The Catholic Register* and former editor of the pro-life magazine, *The Uncertified Human*. Her authorship was a work in progress, having previously authored two books about the relationship between Library Trustees and Library CEOs, as well as publication of the Ontario Library Trustees Handbook. Her last completed book was *Memories of the Beach: Reflections on a Toronto Childhood*, published by Dundurn Press.
What is your greatest concern about public libraries?

My concern is twofold: First, that the misconception that public libraries are somehow diminishing in relevance in the digital age will take hold and flourish. And second, that libraries will sacrifice their independence and cultural significance in the scramble to remain relevant.

What would you consider to be the best tool, tactic or best practice used to support dedicated and effective Boards?

Focus on recruitment and knowledge – within the scope of representing the communities in which they serve select Board Members for their “passion” for libraries. Look next to balance Boards with individuals bringing skills and experience required for effective Board performance. Provide knowledge through consistent orientation that imparts an understanding of the reason library boards exist and create a forum for open and ongoing discourse drawing inspiration from a global perspective. Desired outcome: inspired and articulate advocates.

What has been your all-time favourite read?

Leon Uris’ *Mitla Pass* (amplified because it was a gift from my parents). I enjoy Uris for his masterful long-form historical fiction. I’ve read several of his books, *Battle Cry*, *Redemption*, and *The Haj*, to name a few, and have a life goal to read the remainder of his novels.

If the world were listening, what would you say?

Life is for loving, living and being grateful. Wake up every day and ask how can I make a positive difference today, what can I do?

To be frank, I find this the most difficult question of the six to answer and was reluctant to go with this spontaneous response, yet on further reflection perhaps there is something of value here. If world leaders were to ask themselves this question and embrace this attitude (and there was an universal agreement on what constitutes positive), then perhaps a shift could begin to impact the multitude of social atrocities that affect people everywhere. A girl can hope!

Who is your favourite author?

I have an enduring soft spot for Dr. Seuss, in part for a whimsical sense of “play” that I enjoy ... and mostly because I credit being enrolled in his book “club” at a very early age for my enduring love of reading and passion for youth literacy.

What are you currently reading?

I read fiction and non-fiction in phases. Currently in a non-fiction phase, two books I have on the go are, *I Am Malala* by Malala Yousafzai with Christina Lamb and *Essentialism: The Disciplined Pursuit of Less* by Greg McKeown.

I have a tendency to follow book trails – where the reference in one book will spark my interest and lead me to seek out another book, and so on, and so on.

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**Library Champion: Donna Cragg**

Donna Cragg is 2013-15 OLBA Councillor for the Mid-Central Region.

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**Coming Up @ The Education Institute**

- **Thursday, October 2 @ 12 pm ET**
  Virtual Collaboration Best Practices with Chad Mairn

- **Thursday, October 9 @ 12 pm ET**
  The Open-Source Alternative: Options for Libraries with Sam Popowich

- **Thursday, October 16 @ 2 pm ET**
  Community Connections: Needs Assessment for Small and Rural Libraries with Ken Feser

The Education Institute Fall 2014 Calendar is now available for download at [www.accessola.org](http://www.accessola.org).
InsideOLBA

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OLBA COUNCIL MEETINGS
Next meeting:  
November 22, 2014

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