

REPORT OF SHELAGH PATERSON

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ONTARIO LIBRARY ASSOCIATION



As the OLA Board and Divisions have noted throughout in this report, our **Library Day at Queen's Park** was a success; but what struck me was the diversity of our delegation. We are all in the library sector, but our delegation represented all sorts of different types of

libraries and perspectives. This only strengthened the unity of our message of engagement to Ontario's decision makers: support for libraries equals support for Canadians. Value, influence and positioning of libraries is an ongoing adventure, and we'll have a further call to action for OLA members and partners in 2015.

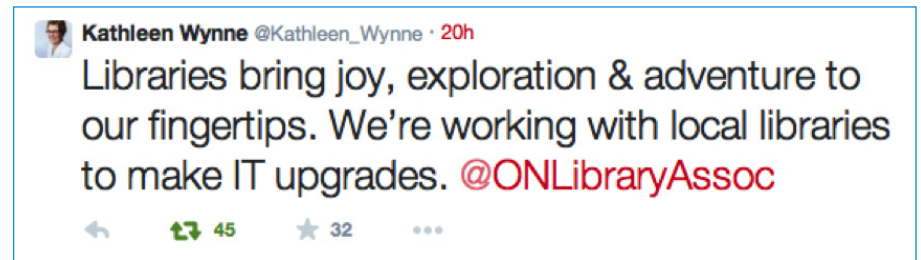
OLA had the opportunity to welcome back key supporters and decision makers while also greeting new ones (and tweeting with others, as you'll see to the right!). This included the reappointment of the Hon. Liz Sandals, Minister of Education; the appointment of the Hon. Michael Coteau, Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport (replacing the Hon. Michael Chan, who we thank for his support throughout his term); and Dr. Guy Berthiaume, appointed in 2014 as the Librarian and Archivist Canada. The Hon. Michael Coteau officially recognized OLA during Legislative Assembly at Library Day at Queen's Park and also launched **Ontario Public Library Week** with Toronto Public Library Board Chair Michael Foderick at the Parkdale Branch in October. OLA also signed the **Lyon Declaration on Access to Information and Development**

(www.lyondeclaration.org/signatories).

As part of our master plan to create the next generation of readers, 2014 was another year of growth for the **Forest of Reading®** program. In celebration of the 20th anniversary of the Silver Birch Award® program, OLA launched a contest to determine the ultimate Silver Birch book – *Hanna's Suitcase*, by Karen Levine. This was also a banner year for the **Festival of Trees™**, with Meredith Tutching, Director, Forest of Reading, clocking 4,838 kilometers to coordinate festivals with local planning teams of OLA members in North Bay, Parry Sound, Thunder Bay, Ottawa, London and Toronto (including the new French Festival), for a total of 15,000 young readers. OLA also welcomed Tinlids as the new official wholesaler for the program.

2014 witnessed the move from *Access*, OLA's print membership magazine, to **Open Shelf** (www.open-shelf.ca), an online and ever-changing magazine beautifully designed and curated under the leadership of Mike Ridley, editor-in-chief, and the editorial team. Visiting *Open Shelf* is like opening a candy box filled with various tips, tricks and treats for library staff and supporters. I encourage you to visit today and indulge (for free, of course!).

2014 was a big year for the 2015 OLA Super Conference Planning team. We said a fond farewell to Liz Kerr, staff Super Conference Planner extraordinaire who retired from the OLA early in 2014 after 7 years on our staff team. We decided to re-think how we 'conference' and unveiled new



events and presentation structure for Canada's largest library conference. A big thank you to the 2015 OLA Super Conference Planning Team, led by co-chairs Richard Reid and Andrew McAlorum, and with staff leadership from Michelle Arbuckle.

The advocacy work for 2014 was incredibly ambitious...and the OLA board under Anita Brooks Kirkland's leadership was completely up to the task. While the OLA President has stewardship of the association as a whole, each year, every president comes from a specific library sector and brings invaluable and unique perspectives that enhance our work. Anita is a teacher, a social media maven, and a collaborator extraordinaire. Jane Hilton, OLA's 2015 President and a board member of Whitby Public Library, is the second president in the past 25 years to come from the public library governance sector. She has already spearheaded a much needed governance review for OLA. Her 2016 OLA Super Conference theme 'Library Lab: The Idea Incubator' will entice the library community to experiment, percolate, test and incubate ideas that build dynamic library experiences for all.