

REPORT OF LESLIE WEIR

2017 PRESIDENT, ONTARIO LIBRARY ASSOCIATION



2017 was an incredible year of change for the Ontario Library Association!

Super Conference 2018

This year's theme **Fearless by Design** captures the essence of the library and information profession in our society – we are here to support

society in being the best it can be and, sometimes, we are called upon to be fearless in ensuring equitable access to accurate information with relevant and innovative services for all members of our communities, especially those that may be marginalized. I know that this year's conference will be fearless by design, thanks to all our fearless speakers, conveners and attendees and a special thanks to our fabulous conference planning co-chairs, Emily Burns and Jacqueline Whyte Appleby and their incredible conference planning team, what an excellent job they have done!

Strategic plan

In 2017, OLA approved its new strategic plan to guide the Association through 2020 with the new vision to *lead and inspire the growth and innovation of the library and information services sector*. Our updated mission is to *empower our members in the library and information services sector to build informed, participatory, and inclusive communities through: Research; Education; Advocacy; Partnerships*. Our Strategic Priorities that will guide our actions until 2020 include:

- Focusing member services across diverse career paths.

- Influencing policy and demonstrating value.
- Building evaluation and research capacity.
- Addressing the unique needs of rural, remote and indigenous communities.
- Enablers: People, Technology, and Fundraising.

Advocacy

Government advocacy, as reconfirmed in our new strategic plan, remains one of OLA's top priorities and as such, OLA participated in meetings with key government officials and several round table consultations. November 23 was Library Day at Queen's Park! Working in close collaboration with the Federation of Ontario Public Libraries (FOPL), we took Queen's Park by storm with our message that we need "A Modern, Sustainable Approach for Ontario's Libraries". Major "Budget Asks" included mandating school boards and schools to properly spend the \$100 million in funding currently invested by the Ministry of Education to support school libraries and teacher-librarians, providing enhanced, predictable and sustainable funding for all public libraries with an increased annual investment of \$17 million, and support of the Ontario Digital Library, currently under study by the government, with a recommended \$25 million annual investment. We will follow-up Library Day at Queen's Park with a submission to the provincial budget process, formalizing these "Asks".

CFLA-FCAB

We are excited that the Canadian Federation of Library Associations / Fédération canadienne des associations de bibliothèques (CFLA-FCAB) will hold its 2nd Annual General Meeting in collaboration with OLA Super Conference 2018. I look forward to hearing about their policy meeting planned for

Regina. OLA continues to support this important voice in national advocacy on behalf of all libraries, though the active participation of Shelagh Paterson, the Executive Director, who has been a board member and treasurer of CFLA for the past two years.

Revenue

The Library Marketplace, with its national role as a seller of library-themed merchandise through The Partnership, has had a great year, with very successful product lines that have led to increased revenue. Check out the favourite Library Lust series as well as the Partnership perks! OLA has launched its Fundraising Committee that has developed a plan for OLA fundraising and member-giving recognition. This year, OLA is highlighting the New Librarian Residency Award (\$20,000 that any college or university library can apply for) to hire a new grad from an Ontario library program that will get a one-year contract! Our goal this year is to raise \$10,000 by February 2018. Please check it out and consider contributing.

With our new fiscal year in place (September-August), we will be holding our Annual General Meeting at Super Conference 2018 – looking forward to seeing you all on Tuesday, January 30 at 6:00 PM

It has been an incredibly rewarding year for me, working with the Board, staff and members, in my role as President. Thank you all for your engagement, enthusiasm and commitment to OLA and keep doing what you are doing, being **Fearless by Design!**