

DEPARTMENTS / DÉPARTEMENTS

A word from the President

One of the challenges in writing "A word from the President" is knowing that whatever you write won't be published for several months. So here I sit, on a bleak February day, writing my final "Word" that will be published in June. By then, winter will (thankfully) be a distant memory, and the conference in St. John's will have come and gone. I'm sure it was a smashing success! As I near the end of my term as president, I'd like to take a look back at some of the accomplishments of the Canadian Health Libraries Association / Association des bibliothèques de la santé du Canada (CHLA / ABSC) Board over the past few years and acknowledge the people who work so hard on behalf of the Association.

One of the most visible changes the Association has undertaken is the publication you're reading right now. Still in its infancy, the new *Journal of the Canadian Health Libraries Association / Journal de l'Association des bibliothèques de la santé du Canada* (JCHLA / JABSC) is emblematic of the direction in which we are taking our association. It's modern, dynamic, and professional. While the Board took the decision to move forward with an electronic-only journal, it is thanks in large part to the dedicated efforts of Andrea Hodgson that we have reached this point. Andrea prepared and distributed a request for proposals, evaluated the proposals received, and provided the Board with all the information we needed to make our decision to award the contract to NRC Research Press. Meanwhile, Karen Neves, working from overseas in the United Arab Emirates, is working hard shaping the content and character of the new journal. These are exciting times for our journal! Thank you Andrea and Karen for making it a reality! We hope that many of you reading this issue will submit articles and other content to ensure the journal's ongoing success as Karen, Andrea, and Assistant Editor Rebecca Zakoor continue to develop it.

It's been just over a year since CHLA / ABSC contracted with an association management firm, Associations First (AF), to handle such things as the membership database, renewals processing, and handling general inquiries to the info@chla-absc.ca e-mail address. The transition has gone smoothly, and the folks at AF are becoming increasingly familiar with our association and how we operate. Their experience in managing other associations has been a big bonus for us, as they have knowledge of and access to services that are helping us advance the Association. One prime example is the "push" e-mail service we instituted late last year. I described the benefits of this service in the last issue of JCHLA / JABSC. Many thanks to Wayne Glover and Jan Fralick at AF for all their help during the transition.

The visual identity of CHLA / ABSC has taken a huge leap forward in recent years, thanks to the creativity, vision, and great contacts of Public Relations Director Tim Tripp. Front and centre in this new identity is our logo, unveiled a year ago in Edmonton. Tim does double duty as Webmaster and has developed the Web site beautifully. It has become a

prime source of news and information for members. Check it out at <http://www.chla-absc.ca>. Tim's also investigating means of helping chapters establish their own Web sites. He's created new brochures promoting CHLA / ABSC and health libraries, and he's gotten our message out to the MLIS and technician schools. Additionally, he's worked closely with Wayne and Jan at AF to make the member directory available online. To say Tim has been busy would be an understatement. We're very fortunate to have his expertise and enthusiasm working for us!

The results of the focus groups and survey of 2001–2002 have provided invaluable information to the Board over the past 3 years as we set the direction for the Association. High on the list of priorities is continuing education (CE). This year, CE Coordinator Judy Inglis issued a continuing education survey to determine members' professional development needs and preferences. The results of the survey will help Judy in establishing strategies for the delivery of continuing education to our members. She has also been busy ensuring courses offered at the CHLA / ABSC conference and by chapters are accredited, as well as seeking out topics and writers for the ongoing series of fact sheets published by the Association. In addition to performing her CE responsibilities so ably, Judy contributes valuable insights, in-depth analyses of issues, and plenty of innovative ideas at every Board meeting and in discussions on the Board listserv.

Secretaries and treasurers are often unsung contributors to the management of associations, but without them we'd truly be up the creek. CHLA / ABSC is very fortunate to have Caren Mofford keeping tabs on our budget. She has a real handle on the finances and keeps us all well informed. CHLA / ABSC is not a wealthy organization, and as such, it's even more important to have a treasurer who knows what she's doing. That's Caren in spades. While minute-taking isn't the most glamorous responsibility, it is nonetheless a very important one. Linda Slater's minutes will provide the Association with a very true record of the Board's activities over the 4 years she has served as secretary. Linda also ensures that Board members never forget all the "to do" items on their lists! Linda has also undertaken the mammoth tasks of revising the Executive and Conference Planning Manuals, both crucial to the effective operations of the Association. She has managed all this while also serving as chair of the very successful Edmonton conference last year.

I've been very fortunate over the years, both as CE coordinator and in the presidential cycle, to work on the Board with extraordinary individuals serving as president. Indeed, two of them, Patrick Ellis and Jessie McGowan, are recipients of the Award of Outstanding Achievement, which speaks eloquently to their talent, commitment, and hard work. Penny Logan, who will be our newly minted president by the time you read this, is about to find out what it's all about! In handing over the gavel, I wish her well as she prepares to put her own mark on the Association.

For many former presidents, it seems it's hard to leave CHLA / ABSC activities behind after exiting the Board.

Since their terms ended, Patrick, Jessie, and another of “my” presidents, Liz Bayley, have all worked tirelessly on the National Network of Libraries for Health initiative. Jessie has also continued as our Cochrane liaison. Now, Cathy Rayment is about to prove the rule too. Cathy has made an outstanding contribution throughout her 3 years on the Board. She has a knack for getting to the heart of an issue and finding a sensible, achievable solution. She has shown true leadership and her presence at Board meetings will be missed. But she’s not really going away. Even while serving as past president, Cathy volunteered to chair the 2006 annual conference in British Columbia. She already has a team put to-

gether, and a site for the conference will soon be chosen. That’s Cathy — efficient and dedicated!

It’s apparent from this review that the people I’ve worked with over the past year as president are a pretty remarkable group. They’ve accomplished a great deal, all while also managing their day jobs. It’s been a privilege to work with them, and I look forward to my final year on the Board as past president.

Laurie Scott
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