

NewsLETTER NouvELLES

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Message from your President

~ Michael David Reansbury



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welcome your
feedback as well
as your letters,
articles and
photos, but must
reserve the right
to edit for style
and space.

Some of you are aware that over the past four months I have had the opportunity, or disadvantage, depending on how you look at it, of moving three times. While I won't bore you with the details of why I moved three times, I wish to share with you something I learned in my search for a new home. In the world of real estate, the law of location, location, location takes precedence. Map in hand I weighed every possible pied-a-tere against a few criteria; proximity to the subway line, proximity to a (reasonably priced) grocery store and proximity of a library. There were numerous places that looked perfect on paper. However, upon visiting the location I came to realize that something was off about the locale. Initially thrown off by my gut reaction to places, thinking myself too picky in a rental market where I could not afford to be overly choosy, I came to realize it was nothing about the physical location that was amiss. No it was the people, the community that was off. Humans are not solitary creatures. We organize our selves formally and informally into groups. Even if every amenity I could ever wish for or dream of was present in a possible apartment; if the people I would

soon find myself living amongst were not right I simply could not foresee myself living there. People are the composition of our lives.

People are also the composition of this association and it is at this time of year that as president I begin to reflect on the change of personnel that will occur. While in a large association very few presidents get the chance to work closely with all levels of staff, in an association the size of OALT/ABO I have the pleasure of knowing all those people that make the association run, both formally and informally. OALT/ABO is not an association of faceless library technicians; no it is an association full of faces that I have come to know.

And while I know the faces of the old executive and the faces of the new and returning executive, the executive team for 2012-2013 are still missing two faces: that of President-Elect and of 2013 Conference Coordinator. It is my hope that before the handover meeting this June two members will have stepped forward to fill these positions thus making the executive a full house.

By the time the Spring Edition reaches members, the association will have come through Super Conference and will be immersed in the throes of our own conference. While conferences are an opportunity to learn about what is going on in the wider world of the Ontario library community and to garner news skills and knowledge, conferences are really about meeting people. Whether you meet old or new friends, colleagues who work in the same type of library or someone who serves the library community, a conference is about meeting people. Whether the people we serve, the people we work with or the people we aspire to be, a conference is about people.

This past February also marked the creation of a new group of people within the library technician's sphere: those that will graduate from Durham College. The start of a new library and information technician programs presents the chance for the continued growth of library technicians within Ontario. It offers the association the chance to reflect on what has been, what will be, and what could be for our community of people.

It has also been sometime but recently the executive accepted an application for the creation of a new sub-group of people within the association: The Simcoe and Muskoka Chapter. Under the direction of Sherry Lawson, members of the association within the region encompassed by Simcoe and Muskoka counties will be offered the chance to come together to form a new chapter.

Finally two publications from the association will be produced this year: the 2012 Salary Survey and the Membership Directory. Both of these resources are invaluable tools for the executive as they allow us to better understand where and what our members do. These documents also offer members a better understanding of the people that make up the community they are members of. Taken collectively, the Salary Survey and Membership Directory allow library technicians within the province a way to demonstrate to the people of Ontario who we are and what we do. They allow for us to become not just a nameless group of people, library technicians, but a cohesive group of individuals who, though we come from diverse

backgrounds and educations, are united as one group of people, the library technicians of Ontario, in our overriding desire to meet the information needs of the clients we serve.

Libraries are the meeting places of people. A library represents the focal point where library staff and the communities they serve meet. It is the physical place where one group of people meets another. It is the physical depository of the stories, knowledge and ideas of diverse groups of people. OALT/ABO is a sub-set of the library world. It is the place where all those within the province who are interested in the work of library technicians meet. It is an association of and for people: the library technician.



Want to follow OALT/ABO on Twitter?

Don't have a Twitter account?

To create a Twitter account

- 1 Go to <http://twitter.com/> click on 'sign up'
2. Fill in the registration details and click on 'create my account'

After creating your account the next page allows you to type "oaltabo" and click on 'search'. If you already have an account, sign in and search for "oaltabo". OALT/ABO twitter account details will pop up with a Follow button:



Click on '+Follow' and you will be able to see OALT/ABO's regular tweets on Association and Library Technician news.

EDITORS NOTE

When we first volunteered to take on NewsLETTER/NouvELLES, we wanted to make sure that no matter what changes we made we would always maintain the essence of what this publication is all about - sharing the experiences, knowledge, events, ideas (the list goes on) of the community that makes up our Association. So for our final issue as editors we present to you 'The People Issue'.

So just who are we?



We are **advocates** - Read about how we can advocate for ourselves in the simplest ways on page 8.

We are **leaders** - Maggie Weaver shares with us 24 brilliant suggestions for developing leadership in the workplace on page 12.

We face **challenges** - Anita Laine and Monica Mendez share their stories on pages 16 and 22 respectively.

We are **initiators**— Sherry Lawson kick starts a new venture on page 18.

We are **innovative** - Susan Morley reminds us of all the great Innovation Award winners past; and a few words from last years winner on page 24.

We are **reflective** and **knowledgeable** - Bill Lands proves just that on page 28.

We hope you have enjoyed our issues—we know we have enjoyed producing them! Thank you to those who have contributed and we encourage all our members to write!

Yours in writing,

Jessica Goodman and Julie Cristinzo

In this issue...

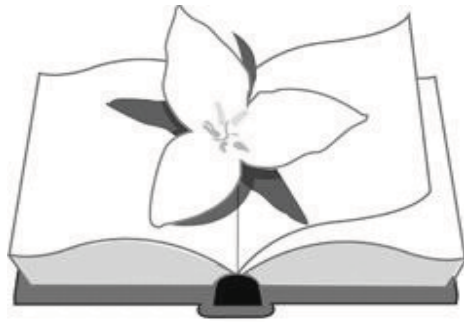
- People: the Value of Every Library
- Developing Your Leadership Potential
- Off the Shelf With You
- Are we Allowed to Form a New Chapter? The Answer's Yes!!
- What it is Like to Seek a Job Over Fifty with a Disability
- Innovation: the Vital Spark of all Human Change
- Book Lovers Alert!
- Reflections from a Library Technician
- OLA Superconference and LIT program updates



DISCLAIMER:

The views and opinions expressed in Newsletter/ Nouvelles are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the OALT/ ABO Executive.

Past and Future Events



OALT / ABO

News from our Chapter Coordinator Millie Yip

As spring is around the corner, I am sure everyone is looking forward to enjoying themselves in the sun or perhaps taking a summer vacation.

We had two wonderful presentations by Maggie Weaver. Maggie is a long time member of OALT/ ABO and other library associations. She has worked in many small libraries, and is a freelance information professional in a company of one. On November 28, 2011, Maggie presented "Top tips for a small library" at the Victoria Avenue Library in Niagara Falls. Due to the requests from our members, she was nice enough to give us another presentation in the Toronto area at the Northern District Library on January 16, 2012. Maggie gave us useful tips for working in a small library especially if you are working by yourself. We learned that you have to know your power, focus your efforts, manage your time, market yourself and the library, as well as get a little help from your friends. Maggie

mentioned the SWOT analysis including knowing your strengths and weaknesses. Setting up goals of what you would like to achieve was also important for someone working in small libraries. That would also mean that you need to focus on your efforts. Perhaps you need to define what your target market is: such as attracting new clients or creating new users. Networking is also important within the library community, to share advice, ideas and materials. I guess the most important point was to have a positive attitude and enjoy the work and clients as well as having fun.

Another wonderful presentation by Maggie was the "Steps for becoming a great leader". It took place in Mississauga at the Clarkson Community Centre on February 28, 2012. The Clarkson Community Centre not only has a library and a meeting room, it also has a swimming pool, hockey rink as well as a basketball court. Maggie first defined what leadership is not. She then told us that leadership is about "creating a vision and developing strategies, enrolling, motivating and inspiring people; building trust and having courage and creating action." She gave us examples of leadership which is through knowledge, purpose, enthusiasm, character and risk-taking. I learned so much from this session because we had a game. We had a handout with a list of skills and attributes. We had to circle the ones that we believed a leader should have. (See Maggie's article on page 12 for the list)

We also have to create opportunities for developing leadership skills. You can take the first steps to broaden your experience, work on projects, involve your colleagues, practice listening skills, learn project management, etc.

For future events, I encourage you to continue checking your email. The "Super Saturday – School library technicians" event should be coming up

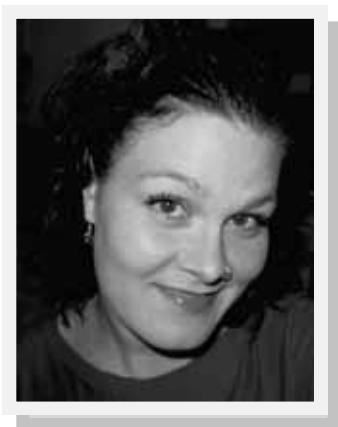
soon. I thank you all for your patience and involvement. When I have all the details and confirmation, you will receive my email. Due to low responses for the "Buying or selling your home" event, I had to cancel the event with the tentative speaker from Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC). As a chapter coordinator, I always welcome your opinion regarding future events. Please feel free to contact me if you have any suggestion or ideas. I can be reached at millieyip@gmail.com

I want to encourage our members to attend our events and I can assure you that you will learn a lot and they are a great opportunity for networking. I look forward to seeing you all in the coming events.



OLA Super Conference 2013

Call for Proposals from OALT/ABO



Hey there OALT/ABO Members!
My name is Lisa, I am the External Communications Coordinator of OALT/ABO for 2012-2013 and I need your assistance!

The theme for the 2013 OLA Super Conference is

The Ultimate Library Experience! Educate, Entertain, Empower.

The OLA 2013 Super Conference will be held January 30 to February 2, 2013.

Now here is where I need your help. You've seen (hopefully!) my previous request on the discussion board for session ideas and input and now I'm coming at you full force!

The link to the Session Proposal form can be found here - www.accessola.com/superconference.

The submission deadline is May 18, 2012. The program is established between May 23 and June 27, 2012. If you have not had a response to your proposal in the latter part of June, you are welcome to contact myself at lchuk@rogers.com or the OLA office at info@accessola.com.

Your input is vital in making this Conference successful! I urge you to consider your own creativity, strengths, and Library Technician knowledge and contemplate presenting a session for the Super Conference. My goal is to create a really vibrant OLA experience for Library Technicians -any and all ideas or suggestions will be considered so email away.

I've had a few really great ideas for proposals from some of our lovely members (I'll never reveal my sources!) Here they are (with a condensed description) –

1. Dewey Decimal Classification - What is new in the 21st century? Where technology is going with respect to cataloguing and how will this impact DDC? Will we have books in ten years?
2. What kind of record management systems are small Special Libraries using and what kind of experiences are they having (positive or negative)? How do they issue or process documents? What kind of system(s) can you utilize when you have no budget for a larger scale Records Management System?
3. Any tips or success stories for library technicians successfully finding work in a special library setting?

Do you feel like you could take the reins and present one of the above proposed sessions?

Do you have a great idea for a session that you would like to propose and present?

Do you know of an interesting library guy or gal that you would love to see present a session?

Contact me with any questions, comments, ideas.



Extra! Extra!

A Few Words from our External Communications Coordinator

By Donna Brown

Salary Survey 2012

Thank you to all who recently responded to the Salary Survey. The number of respondents was a whopping 324! This is by far the best response rate ever.

Full results of the survey will be released in May, but here are some notable highlights:

- In terms of education level, 43% of the respondents were Graduate Library Technicians (LTs), while a very close and slightly lower, 42% of the respondents were Graduate LTs with other degrees or diplomas.
- As for library/information work experience, the highest percentage (30%) had 11-20 years of work experience.

- In terms of professional organization membership, over 84% of the respondents belonged to OALT/ABO with Ontario Library Association (OLA) coming in second with 39%.
- In regards to the staff size, 46% of the respondents worked in an organization with a staff of 2 – 10, with 26% of the respondents working with a staff size of 11-50.

It is always interesting to see the responses to the question regarding job title. Of course the most common title was indeed **Library Technician**. Several listed their titles as **Library and Information Technician**, **Library Assistant** or **Library Clerk**. Additionally, **Cataloguing**, **Reference** and **Technical** appeared in many titles.



OALT / ABO

OLA Superconference 2012

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Once again OALT/ABO shared a booth with the Library Technician program coordinators: Deborah Kay (Seneca), Helena Merriam (Algonquin) and Delores Harms Penner (Mohawk). This year the booth was located in a totally new location – near the front entrance and on the left-hand side of the exhibit area. We were all a bit leery about our new location, but it turned out to be fine.

The call for volunteers was over-whelming with the time slots filling up almost immediately. I even had to turn down a few, as OLA offers us a set amount of Expo passes.

A big thank you to our volunteers: Anita Laite, Michael David Reansbury, Beeda Wijewardana, Leanne Flynn, Lyn Hibbit and Mille Yip. We received a lot of traffic and attention. There were many inquiries about our profession and membership. The volunteers actively highlighted the benefits of membership and of course promoted the upcoming conference, **Blazing New Trails**. Thank you for your professionalism and enthusiasm in promoting the OALT/ABO.

So if you are interested in volunteering at the booth next year – make sure to respond quickly when the call for volunteers is posted on our list serve. Look out for the email in late December.

OALT @ OLA



Saaem Humayun, Session 408 : " Integrated Innovation: CBC/Radio-Canada's Digital Archives"



Ruth Berry, Session 1007:
"The How of Social Media Marketing"

The OALT/ABO presence at the 2012 OLA Super Conference was very positive! All our sessions were well attended and it was wonderful to see many familiar faces as I was walking around. Thank you to the wonderful session presenters as well as our wonderful conveners. This is a group effort and I know you will support Lisa as she takes over the reigns of representing OALT/ABO on the 2013 OLA Super Conference Planning Committee.

~ Kate Morrison



People: the Value of Every Library

By Michael David Reansbury, President

What is the value of a library? The economic downturn and the implementation of austerity measures by all three levels of government has meant that Canadian society has had to re-evaluate, or for some evaluate for the first time, what value libraries have to our communities. Much of the debate has focused on the physical aspects of libraries: the buildings and the collections. Some discussion has occurred with regards to library staff but most has been brought forward, mainly by unionsⁱ, and vaguely deals with the overall reduction in staff. Public discourse on the value of libraries has therefore devolved into what appears to be two separate issues: libraries (the spaces and the collections) and library staff. If it does not alarm you that the debate about the value of libraries has separated the physical, the space and collections, from the staff, the people, let this serve as a red flag.

While the successful implementation of a province wide campaign to re-establish that the value of a library lies in the interconnection and interplay of space, collection and library staff is currently

outside the scope of OALT/ABOⁱⁱ there are a few measures that each member of OALT/ABO, and the Ontario library community, can undertake on their own. It is each member's responsibility to ensure that when our respective communities evaluate the value of a library that they do so remembering that the people, the library technician staff, are an integral and crucial part of any library.

A thread amongst the advocacy pieces that have appeared in the *NewsLETTER/NouvELLES* thus far is that members occupy two niches: that of library staff and that of public tax payer. Therefore it is the responsibility of each member to advocate for library technicians within each of these spheres.

As library staff there are a few relatively simple ways that you can advocate not only for yourself but library technicians. The most important is to ask how visible are you? Start by looking in the library directory, both internally as well as externally. If your name, and credentials, is not listed in your works directory it is worth asking if it could be included. When you assist a client, be it in person, over the phone or virtually do you give your name? While some may be reluctant to give their name to a client, the advantages of having your clients know

Theme Feature

your name far outweigh any negatives. Being on a first name basis with a client demonstrates to your employer your value as an active staff member. The greatest compliment and endorsement you can receive is to have a client ask for you to assist them by name. It is always worth remembering the key to YOUR job security is not the job itself: it is you.

As a public tax payer, and someone that knows a little something about the importance of library staff, members must ensure that our communities are educated about the value of libraries, space, collection and staff inclusive. Because we also are library staff as well as tax payers we must walk a

“As library staff and tax payers, it is important that we clearly, concisely and continually establish that the value of libraries lies with people within the library: library technicians.”

very fine line in how we educate our respective communities. If you try to educate by force the message you are delivering will be ignored. Subtly should be your weapon of mass education. It is time you employed the FYI. The brilliance and subtlety of the FYI is multifaceted. First you are educating people by making them believe they have thought of an idea themselves. Thus you can never be accused of being pushy or preachy because all you did was passed along information you thought may be of interest. Secondly you have established yourself as someone who is in the know and is current. Thirdly you can achieve both educating, without appearing to educate, and establish an excellent reputation for yourself all with little effort. To ensure your FYI has had maximum impact remember to follow up. Simply ask what they thought of the information you pasted along. If their thought patterns are congruent with yours all that is

left to do is monitor what action they take with the information you supplied. So the next time you read a story in *Globe & Mail* or the *National Post* about a library whose staff are doing amazing things share it with your family, neighbours, and other members of the PTA.

As library staff and tax payers, it is important that we clearly, concisely and continually establish that the value of libraries lies with people within the library: library technicians. The public focuses on the fact that libraries serve people, the library community. Library staff through outreach and promotion establish that the libraries they work in serve people^{iii iv}, the library community. However what neither group is doing, and what politicians the country over are using to their advantage^v, is demonstrating that the value of a libraries space and collection is null and void without library staff.

Libraries serve people; Library staff serve libraries. Now it is time for library staff to prove to the public that a library without library staff serves no one.

References

ⁱPeat, Don. “Letter from Toronto Public Library Workers Union Local 4948.” *Toronto Sun*. Jan 2012. 14 March 2012 < <http://www.torontosun.com/2012/01/10/letter-from-toronto-public-library-workers-union-local-4948>>

ⁱⁱStockand, Tanya Robyn. “Random thoughts on roles and responsibilities.” *Practicing Curiosity: an exploration in serendipity*. January 2012. 14 March 2012 < <http://www.practicingcuriosity.blogspot.com/2012/01/random-thoughts-on-roles-and.html>>

ⁱⁱⁱAldana, Patricia. “Toronto City Council: an open letter.” *National Reading Campaign, Toronto*. 12 January 2012 < <http://houseofanansipress.files.wordpress.com/2012/01/citycouncil.pdf>>

^{iv}Humphreys, Adrian. “Ottawa’s ‘Human Books’ include judge, prostitute; one-on-one chats.” *National Post*. 19 January 2012: A2.

^vSelley, Chris. “Chris Selley: Politicians shouldn’t decide what’s on library shelves, librarians should.” *National Post*. Jan 2012. 14 March 2012 < <http://news.nationalpost.com/2012/01/13/chris-selley-politicians-shouldnt-decide-whats-on-library-shelves-librarians-should/>>



what's your story ?

Meeting the OALT/ABO Community One Member at a Time

An interview with a randomly selected member of
our Association



Name: Stephanie
Tryphena Pinnell

**Currently enrolled
at/Alumni of:** Alumni
of Seneca College's
LIT Diploma, 2008

**Years as an
OALT/ABO member:**
Since 2008

Current position (job title, employer): Page,
Bloor/Gladstone branch, Toronto Public
Library

If I had to sum up my job in one sentence: I
shelve everything, and find little lost books.

Best part of your job: Finding items that no
one else can locate, and presume are lost.

Inspiration for working in this field: My
grade 6 teacher librarian, Mr. Dunlop

Latest technological discovery: Working with
RFID at my branch, and all the ways it won't
always work the way it is supposed to.

I would like to learn more about: Children's
Programming and Books

I keep up to date professionally by: Reading
the OALT discussion board

First job: My first job was as a secretary/
bookkeeper/gardener for a former high

school teacher.

I can't live without: Tea in the morning and a
good book on the bus.

What I am reading: Maine Coon Cats by Carol
Himsel Daly & Karen Leigh Davis in
preparation for my two new kittens.

Facebook or twitter: Facebook. More space,
and pictures of people's pets.

E-Book or Traditional book: Traditional
Book. There is nothing, to me, like the
feeling of a heavy book in your lap as you
curl up under a blanket on a Sunday morning.

Biggest pet peeve: Books put back in the
correct place, but upside down.

My motto is: "Examine all the obstacles
carefully. Often they can be turned into
levers." ~ Grand Admiral Thrawn, Star Wars
EU

I am passionate about: Getting the job done
right, and everyone doing it together.

Prediction for the future: Despite all the self
serve technology that is in our public
library now, the need for staff to assist the
public will increase as more come in our
branches.

Secret talent: Making wonderful scrambled
eggs, even though I don't eat them.

Theme song for my life: Goodnight by Buffy
Sainte-Marie

LT's In Action: The Annual Clarington Polar Bear Swim



Hello everyone, my name is Ray Robinson. I graduated from Seneca College's Library and Information Technician Diploma program in the spring of 2011. I currently work as an Information Services Technician at Clarington Public Library's Newcastle branch.

During last night's session on "First steps in Leadership" at the Clarkson Community Centre, I shared a story about my participation in the Annual Clarington Polar Bear Swim, which is also known as the "Plunge for Life" and the "Dash of Insanity". I started participating in this event back in 2006 on a dare by a fellow referee and that is why I have chosen to wear my referee jersey as a costume so to speak.

Since the swim's inception back in 2000 the swim has had a total of 696 plungers or dashers participate raising a total of nearly \$60,000 that

has been donated to the Sick Kids Foundation. The donations go towards Paediatric Liver Disease Research at Sick Children's Hospital. 2011 was the best year to date where 142 swimmers raised nearly \$14,000.

I will ask you to keep your eyes open for a posting in the discussion group inviting you to participate as a "Dasher" or a "Plunger" or maybe just donate to a wonderful and worthwhile cause.

Additional information on this event can be found at:

www.claringtonpolarbearswim.com

Regards,
Ray Robinson

→ Developing → Your Leadership Potential

By Maggie Weaver

For your career to progress, you must be able to demonstrate leadership potential.

John Kotter, a prof at Harvard Business School who is regarded as an authority on leadership and change, wrote:

“Leadership is about

Creating a vision and developing strategies

Enrolling, motivating and inspiring people

Building trust and having courage

Creating action.”

- ⇒ Anyone who thoroughly knows a topic can lead people who know less about it.
- ⇒ Anyone who is enthusiastic can motivate people to join in her enthusiasm.
- ⇒ Anyone who has strength of character will inspire followers.
- ⇒ Anyone who challenges the status quo has leadership potential.

You have skills and attributes that will help you create a vision, communicate it, and deliver it.

- ⇒ *Creating* the vision takes imagination, awareness of your environment, and good listening skills.
- ⇒ *Communicating* the vision takes enthusiasm, knowledge and character.
- ⇒ *Delivering* the vision requires courage, being action-oriented, collaboration and negotiation skills, professionalism, perseverance, and a sense of humour.

There are lots of opportunities for “practicing” leadership – this list of suggestions goes from relatively simple and short-term “exercises” to more complex and long-term projects.

1. Speak up

Ideas are the greatest need that organizations have. No matter what level you’re at, you can be part of the solution to any problem. In fact, you have a responsibility to speak up about how things can be done better.

2. Report proactively

Don't wait to be asked how you're doing, tell people, both your boss and any staff you may have. Book a regular but brief time slot, and be there. Let them know what you know, what you're doing, what you plan to do, what worked, what didn't. Ask how you can help them in their job; ask for the resources you need for your job; ask for info on activities in other areas of the organization.

3. Communicate widely

Let others know about your successes. For example, volunteer to be interviewed for this newsletter, or write a piece yourself.

4. Work on projects

Be a member of a special project team, such as the United Way campaign. You'll learn how people work together, set team goals, work through technical and personality issues, develop recommendations, and present results to management.

5. Demonstrate dependability

Read your email, submit your paperwork on time, go to committee meetings you're assigned to, return voice-mails promptly (even if the response is "I don't know").

6. Demonstrate that you can face "failure"

Volunteer to deliver bad news. For example, brief your boss on a possible budget overrun, or potential personnel problem. In your performance review, articulate your shortcomings yourself, and outline the remedial action that you are already taking.

7. Increase your tolerance for risk

Practice doing things that initially make you nervous, like making presentations or cold-calling.

For example, make special presentations or high level briefings to individuals never encountered, such as Board members, Councillors, or business customers.



8. Learn from a leader

Look for a spot as executive assistant to a respected leader, perhaps on a special project or committee, or during a single event.

9. Learn from bad "leaders"

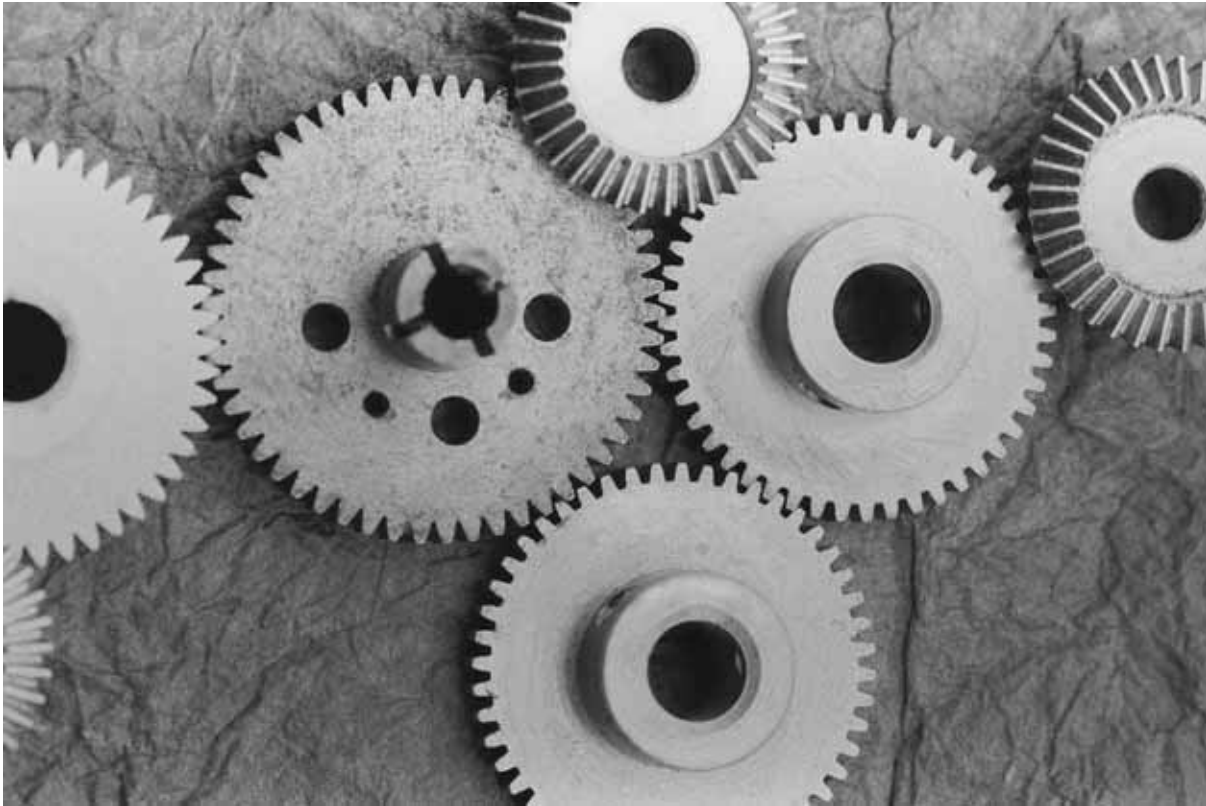
Evaluate the designated leaders within your own organization. Do they in fact "lead"? How would you do it differently, in their shoes? Acknowledged leaders attribute a third of their leadership learning & development to anti-models!

10. Learn to delegate

Learn to delegate before you need to. There is always someone who knows less than you do in some area. In your own specialty area, find someone who wants to learn from you – take the time to show them how, then delegate tasks to them.

11. Involve colleagues

Start a formal discussion, in a staff meeting, on the opportunities or issues in your area. Create a list, but don't resolve anything – instead, ask your colleagues to return to the next meeting with options, and make resolutions then.



1 2. Practice listening skills

Start a discussion on “what would we really like to accomplish around here”. Summarize, and see if the others agree with your summary.

1 3. Learn about body language

When you participate in a brainstorming session, or a difficult team meeting, watch how participants indicate they want to contribute, how they react to others suggestions, how agreement or disagreement is signaled non-verbally, how consensus is reached.

1 4. Increase your external awareness

Create a network of listening posts & lookouts (but not a grape vine!). In particular, be alert to broad signs of change; learn to see the big picture as well as your part in it.

1 5. Practice service development

Ask a valued customer what they think your functions should be doing, & tell them what you think you should be doing. Merge the answers to decide together on something you will pursue, on their behalf or jointly, that involves using your abilities differently. Then do it.

1 6. Practice partnering

Set up a collaborative effort with another function you see as part of your competition, based on shared goals for the organization.

1 7. Broaden your experience

Look for a short-term rotation of exchange that will allow you to work in different departments, or in a different role, for example back-room vs. front desk. Move from line to staff, from headquarters to field, from one agency to another. You'll not only gain broader experience, you'll get noticed among a wider group.

18. Learn project management

Take on a project with a larger scope than you've encountered before. Plan it in as much detail as possible. Log your successes and failures, seek advice when necessary, and learn to adjust the plan as you go. At the end of the project, debrief yourself – what have you learned about planning? About yourself? About how to get advice and help? Eventually, volunteer to start an initiative from scratch.

19. Exercise your problem-solving skills

When a problem arises, don't automatically take the obvious solution, or ask advice immediately. Instead, sit down and draft out alternative solutions. Then rank them by success rate, do-ability, cost, associated risks, number of people required, impact on other issues, etc. Seek advice only if the obvious solution doesn't come to the top, or if you can't choose from your proposed options.

20. Practice marketing

Set up a moment to tell a key manager or client why you work here, what's in it for you, and how you job fits with your life – do it enthusiastically! Then ask why the other person is here.

21. Make a minus into a plus

Find a weakness in yourself, or in the system, the plan, or the process. Rather than looking for a solution, try to think of a case or situation where this weakness is in fact a benefit.

22. Write a position statement

You'll need to practice creating a sound-bite. So the position statement could be a mission statement for your own department or operation, a life goals statement for yourself, the articulation of a value set that you hold, or your view of a

controversial issue. Keep it to no more than two or three sentences, which encapsulate the essence of your position.

23. Write a “white paper”

This helps you to articulate the details of your vision. For example, what you want your department or your life to be in five years – what would you be doing, with whom? What contribution would you be making, what would your own role be, what would others be saying? Then share this vision with someone.

24. Make group “thank-yous”

Invite to coffee a group of people you've been working with, and tell them how much you appreciate their cooperation. Get them to say why the project was important to them.

Now take the first step ...

Identify one leadership skill or attribute or behaviour that you believe you need to develop further, and commit to doing it differently. Get ideas from colleagues and friends on what would be most useful, and make the commitment to them, as well as to yourself. By the time you've done half a dozen of the exercises, you'll be well on the way to demonstrating your leadership potential!



Full disclosure: The list is part of a presentation that I gave recently in Mississauga to members of OALT/ ABO. It is based on a half-day workshop that I presented jointly with Ganga Dakshinamurti many years ago. At that time, it was almost the first workshop I'd ever developed, and Ganga is a library leader from Manitoba whom I very much admire. So it involved learning from a leader (exercise 8), practicing partnering (exercise 16), and learning project management (exercise 18).

Off the Shelf With You!

By Anita Laite

On an RDF (Rain/Drizzle/Fog) kind of day I was blind-sided by an unexpected job loss. My position was deemed redundant, and I was officially laid off. After twenty-five years of employment, I was being weeded out. Like so many people these days, I too was experiencing an involuntary job loss. Despite years of continuing to upgrade my education and skill set, I had reached an invisible expiry date.

As I packed my desk, I told myself to stay calm, be dignified and accept it. The thought of saying goodbye to my co-workers, left me feeling defeated, so I didn't say those goodbyes. Heading home that evening, the feeling of rejection was erased with one of survival, and questions: What's my next move? How do I manage this situation?

Almost immediately, I reviewed my possible actions: I sought legal counsel, looked into financial advice and discussed my future with those closest to me. After reviewing, with genuine gratitude, all the opportunities that had been handed to me over the years, I stopped looking at the past. I used an outplacement service organization to learn about resume building, job interviews and new job searching methods. I evaluated and signed up for jobsite alerts, and I looked for a new doctor; taking care of the practical aspects of life.

With a high percentage of other older workers engaged in the job hunt, I knew that it would be a competitive job market. I researched articles on coping with job loss and the older worker, reviewed job postings, the competition, and the unemployment climate. It led me to a decision to complete the *Library & Information Technician Certificate* with Mohawk College. For years, while working full-time, I had taken the courses that were applicable to my job position. Now, I had the freedom to finish the Certificate. It proved not to be an easy task to remain disciplined. With job searching, and dogs who quickly realized they could manipulate a walk at any time of day, people who thought by keeping me busy for them would, somehow, be helping me, and my signing up for far too many courses at one time – all that had to be managed.

Then a friend told me that OALT needed volunteers for their booth at the OLA conference in February. I signed up for a day of volunteering with OALT. The experience introduced me to the organization and what it has to offer its members, it educated me about the alternative job possibilities for Library Technicians. It was a positive networking opportunity to meet new people: library students, fellow Mohawk



Meet our Archivist: Kathi Vandenhoevel



students, book vendors, librarians, writers, and hear stories of career changes and challenges, it was an inspirational day.

I have discovered how valuable my extended family, friends and partner are to me. They have given me rock solid support, with laughter, stories, and companionship. They have saved me from transforming into a woman who rescues stray cats, although I did try and save a lost dog one morning. This process has been like conducting a personal reference interview; learning to not just see all the opportunities, but recognize the right opportunity. I'm hoping that developing the right skills, education, maintaining a forward thinking perceptive, fostering a positive attitude, and treasuring supportive relationships are the elements and aspects of life that help us thrive, and not just survive it.

Anita Laite, former library assistant (soon to be Library Technician) aalaite@gmail.com



I've been the OALT/ABO Archivist for 3 years now. Other than collect and store the materials required for maintaining the Association's materials, not much has happened. Former Archivist, Penni Chalk made a great start to the sorting. I am hoping to continue sorting where Penni left off. I am using Excel to create a workbook for each box. That will allow for sorting of various fields if necessary. Once these lists are compiled, it is easier to see if there is a hole where a document wasn't collected and someone may have it in their possession to pass along. I'm sure this will be a work in progress for some time to come.

Are we Allowed to Form a New Chapter? Official Answer: Yes!!

By Sherry Lawson, Administrator of Heritage Services,
Chippewas of Rama First Nation

Several decades ago (how long has it been for you?) I graduated from Seneca College in the Library Techniques Program. My diploma got me a good job working for the city of Orillia as the second in command at the Orillia Public Library. I spent quite a few years happily working in various types of libraries: special, academic and public.

At some point since the late 1980's I left the library world to work in the government one, and for a decade even held a corporate job. My checkered work history has been an interesting and varied one, but my first love has always been, and continues to be, the library. Mine was not a childhood full of books. We were not well off, and in our little First Nations community, there were more pressing acquisitions required other than reading material. However, my Nookomis (Grandmother), who taught me to read before I started school, believed that being a good reader would make me a good student. Turns out she was right.

And now, things have come full circle. Beginning in those early days as a new college grad, I was involved with OALT/ABO and remember fondly

attending many years of their conferences. Today my title is Administrator of Heritage Services for the Chippewas of Rama First Nation near Orillia. You may have heard of my community. We have a hand in helping run a little business known as Casino Rama. Ah yes, I grew up in the 1950's B.C. (before Casino). Its revenue has, among other things, helped Rama build a public school, a senior's centre and a beautiful library. I now spend many of my days contentedly overseeing public library programs and services. The other half of my job is supervising the Culture and Research Department, also most interesting, varied and time challenging. I attend the OLA Conference and Gatherings of the Native Librarians group, but am longing to get back with my colleagues with OALT. I am looking forward to the conference this May.

It occurred to me, that in all the associations with which I have been involved in the past thirty years, that OALT/ABO seemed to be missing something. I began to look at libraries of all kinds in Simcoe County and Muskoka, where my library colleagues are always eager to answer any question I might have, using the wealth of their collective experience to assist anyone in need. And I realized that having the existing chapters of OALT/ABO is a

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good thing, but we have an opportunity to make the association and its members even stronger.

Libraries of all kinds in the geographic areas of Simcoe County and Muskoka have unique needs. They are a little bit urban, a whole lot of country, and have, except for the north, statistically a significant number of First Nations communities within their borders. I am asked all the time by other libraries to help them choose library materials that accurately reflect the culture and history of their First Nations neighbours. Simcoe County is a very large place, and reportedly is the largest county in Ontario (how's that for an interesting piece of

“I encourage any Library Technician in either Muskoka or Simcoe to contact me and become part of OALT/ABO's newest chapter.”

trivia?). Add the area of Muskoka to that, with its often far flung libraries, and you have a spot on the map that cries out for its own branch of a library association. It is a long ways from Huntsville, for instance to attend an OALT/ABO conference in Toronto.

One other unique geographic challenge is the fact that there are still many libraries in this area that are still on dial up. For you city folk, that means no high speed. Just try and be involved in a training conference call when you're on dial up. Maybe library technicians from Innisfil to Collingwood to Midland to Bracebridge would benefit from their own chapter. We could get together on occasion and fulfill our obligations as a new part of OALT/ABO.

The executive of the association accepted this possibility at their recent meeting. Now we just have to gather up all the Lib. Techs. in Simcoe and

Muskoka and encourage them to join our new chapter. We could get together in late May or early June at some sort of central spot and not have to pay city prices for the rental space. I might even have a line on cheap meeting space in a First Nations community nearby.

I look forward to reconnecting with my colleagues who I haven't seen in a couple of decades. I encourage any Library Technician in either Muskoka or Simcoe to contact me and become part of OALT/ABO's newest chapter. You will be able to tell your grandchildren that you were there in 2012 when the new chapter was formed. You were at the inaugural AGM. You stood for election on the executive. Well, you can decide what to tell your grandchildren about all of that. I know what I will tell mine.

My husband reminds me that I am in charge of two separate departments in two different buildings with separate budgets and staff. I am still on several community non-profit boards. I am working on book number three. I am a speaker or MC for multiple charities and corporate groups throughout the year. I am a busy grandmother, mom and wife and oh yes, I like to travel. Maybe I have enough to do. And I tell my long-suffering husband, just one more little thing. I want to help start this new provincial chapter. I think I just heard him sigh.

I have begun to contact all the libraries in this great big area to rattle the bushes and get members joining our new chapter. Please contact me for details and further information and let's get things rolling. I look forward to speaking to many of you soon and we'll visit.

sherryl@ramafirstnation.ca or (705) 325-3611 extension 1212.

www.sherrylawson.ca





Update from Mohawk College - Library and Information Technician Program

Greetings to OALT/ABO members! This message is to let you know that there are a number of elective courses being offered in the online library technician program from Mohawk College this summer that you might be particularly interested in.

Our newest course is *Introduction to Metadata & Metadata Applications, LIBR10035*. This course examines the fundamentals of metadata. Students learn to apply various metadata schemes and standards to the description of digital and electronic resources on the web. Previous knowledge of HTML coding is highly recommended.

Other courses that may be of interest for your professional development are:

COMMLT225 Genre Fiction and Readers' Advisory Services

LIBR10034 Youth Services & Issues

OADM100 Records & Information Management Fundamentals

LIBRRM103 Archives

INFOLT402 Electronic Publishing and Emerging Library Technologies

MGMT10041 Library Financial Management and Budgeting

Descriptions of each of these courses, as well as tuition fees and registration information, are on our web site <http://disted.mohawkcollege.ca/library> under Program of Studies. Courses begin on May 11 and end on August 17/12. Registration for these courses is open until May 17, where there is still space available.

Information about fall course offerings will be available on our web site in late July. Registration will open on Aug. 14, and courses will run from Sept. 7 to Dec. 14/12.

At Mohawk our convocation is held annually in the fall. It was a wonderful celebratory evening. This year's OALT/ABO Award went to Heather Sutherland. All of our graduates can be proud of their hard work in achieving their goal of completing our program.

Respectfully submitted,

Dolores Harms Penner

Program Manager, Library Technician Program

Mohawk College

www.mohawkcollege.ca

Professional Development Courses:

Click University (for SLA members)

<http://www.sla.org/content/learn/index.cfm>

Education Institute:

http://thepartnership.ca/partnership/bins/index_ei.asp

Professional Learning Centre

<http://plc.fis.utoronto.ca/>

Three Cheers for Legal Research and Library Technicians!

Nicholas Hoare Bookstore was a welcoming venue on February 2nd for an informal program launch for two new programs at Durham College in Oshawa. Staff representing the college's new graduate certificate legal research and information management program and library technician diploma program teamed up to network with potential students and employers, to share details about courses and campus life.

Nicole Doyle is the lead faculty for the graduate certificate legal research and information management program. This one-year program, offered in condensed, hybrid format (only two on-site days per week) combines instruction in legal theory and substantive law with the development of advanced-level skills in managing and accessing information in a variety of forms. It is a great program for library technician graduates who wish to work in specialized legal, corporate and government environments. For more information about this program, please visit the college website <http://www.durhamcollege.ca/programs/legal-research-and-information-management-graduate-certificate/> or contact Nicole Doyle: Nicole.Doyle@durhamcollege.ca directly.

Susan Pratt is the lead faculty for the library technician program. This two-year certificate program addresses the CLA Guidelines for the Education of Library Technicians http://www.cla.ca/Content/NavigationMenu/CLAAatWork/InterestGroups/LibraryTechnicians/CLA_LTIG_guidelines.pdf, and includes a field experience opportunity in first year in the first semester, as well as two additional field experiences in second year. Graduates will have the knowledge and skills required to work in both public services and technical services areas of special, academic, public and school libraries and information service centres. For more information about this program, please visit the college website <http://www.durhamcollege.ca/programs/library-and-information-technician/> or contact Susan Pratt directly: susan.pratt@durhamcollege.ca

Nicole, Susan and their colleagues at Durham College have enjoyed a warm welcome from the library technician community and look forward to future opportunities to work together.



What it is Like to Seek a Job Over Fifty with a Disability

By Monica Mendez,

Library Technician,
Certified Records Manager (CRM)



Following are a few words on the difficulties faced by disabled people who are looking for a job.

Thanks to my father I have learned how to survive in this world, full of adversities. I found seven major points. They have been the key to success in coping with all kinds of problems.

- How to live in a different country
- How to live on my own and be independent
- How to learn to listen to people
- How to do things without trying to do them first and then say “yes I can do them” or “no I can’t do them”
- How to be myself

- Always laugh or smile whether people like it or not
- Always try to have a good sense of humor

For people with a disability, job hunting can be heartbreaking and very discouraging.

The job search started when I came back to Canada after being absent for more than a year and a half ...

I am fifty four years old. For three years I have been sending resumes and waiting for a phone call from a prospective employer. I am a library technician graduated from Seneca College and would like to keep working either as a library technician, a library assistant, an information specialist or a records management clerk.

I went last year to the University of Toronto's iSchool to get a certificate in records management to see if that would help. Finally, 4 interviews came; I was very excited about this, and prepared myself by rehearsing the interviews. Also, I researched the organizations with whom I was having the interviews. I went to the interviews and the first thing I encounter is the shaking of hands with the interviewers at the beginning of the conversation. When I cannot shake hands well they look strangely at me and almost shake their heads. Later, the questions started and I started talking about myself and my work experience and so on... Finally, the interviews were finished and I was sure I would get the job...

After a couple of weeks I got only emails letting me know that they have hired someone else... big disappointment for myself.

Thinking that I was not going anywhere with my library technician job search, I decided to take a different route. I went to a fashion store to inquire about a recent job posting I saw on the out side window of the store, “we are now hiring sales associates”. The manager as soon as she saw me walking in to the store with my cane asked me if I needed some help. I just told her that I was inquiring about the job posting. The manager pointed, I am not hiring anybody by the moment... I just shook my head and said to myself “hey madam here I am to

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show you what I can do, I can still do the job, give me the opportunity to work as a sales associate”.

Recently, I went to a pharmacy store to submit my resume and job application. I went to talk to the store manager and he said that in two weeks he will contact me. He asked me if I would like to work as a cashier and I told him of course I am willing to do anything. Then he told me that, “in two weeks you will be hearing from me”. After two weeks, I decided to return to the pharmacy to find out if he was still hiring, he said that he was not going to hire anyone. I saw young people restocking the shelves and standing in the cashiers waiting for people to come forward to pay. Again, I wondered why he said that to me when he already hired these young people.

Now, I think that young people count more than older people even those without a disability. What is wrong with the disability act in terms of giving jobs to disabled people no matter the age? Don't retail stores have a hiring policy to accommodate any person with a disability in their business?

After these experiences with these interviews, I started to think that my disability has been playing a big role in not getting the job, and I started working to create awareness about the difficulties a person over 50 may encounter when they are invited for an interview. Some points have to be taken into consideration:

- I think that human resources in organizations as well as in companies, academic institutions, etc., have to change their policies and regulations when they interview disabled people
- Letting the disabled person speak out about his or her being a disabled person in the work force and how this may help coworkers to get used to that person and his or her willingness to perform that specific job. No matter how much time the job will take to perform
- That the interviewers will not take into consideration shaking hands at the beginning and end of the interview. If the person smiles instead of shaking hands, that will be acceptable

- Give the opportunity to the disabled person to show what he or she has to offer to the organization, company, etc., no matter the age

- Career specialists and job developers in agencies; human resources generalists and managers in organizations that you have to deal with, have their own stigma and taboos about disabled people. This has to be changed

- People with a disability have to be more proactive in the interview, and not let the interviewers manipulate them

Feeling so discouraged about not finding a job and seeing myself in a bad situation economically, I decided to turn to the government for help. I had my family doctor fill out the Canada Pension Plan Disability Benefits (CPPD) Application and submitted it right away. After 3 months I received a phone call from a Service Canada lady just to let me know that my application was denied and shouted at me over the phone saying I was still capable of working. She mentioned too, that only very badly disabled people who cannot look after themselves were entitled to get the CPPD.

Later, I tried to apply for the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP), and the same story, I was told that I am not entitled to it. So now what, I have to continue looking for a job, and in the meantime, I am struggling to survive economically. No job at all...

This article was written to help other people no matter their age or disability. To encourage them to come forward and speak or write something “without feeling shy” about their feelings when they have been discouraged in an interview and not getting the job they are dreaming of.

My sincere thanks to the Ontario Association of Library Technicians/Association des Bibliotechniciens de l'Ontario (OALT/ABO) for letting me contribute to the *Newsletter/Nouvelles*, writing this article.

monica.mendeg@gmail.com



Innovation:

The Vital Spark of All Human Change...

By Susan Morley,

Manager Information & Knowledge
Management,
CSA Group

Just as energy is the basis of life itself and ideas the source of innovation, so is innovation the vital spark of all human change, improvement and progress ⁽¹⁾." "Innovation distinguishes between a leader and a follower". ⁽²⁾ OALT-ABO's **Award for Innovation** recognizes 'a member(s) who has done something innovative in the workplace, for the association, or for professional development.' It acknowledges members who've lead the way, changed the way our organization performs, improved our workplace or profession – they've shown that 'spark'.

Do you know a member who fits this description? Our past winners have created or revamped association and/or library services, founded chapters, chaired conferences – admittedly in a completely new way - created new websites, developed and deployed new technologies or services, or received recognition for a body of work.

OALT/ABO is one of the few professional associations recognizing innovation of the individuals that makes up its membership. Several library or information science organizations acknowledge innovation of the institutional members ⁽³⁾ but very few acknowledge **member** innovation.

We have a few forward thinking members of our former HURONIA Region to thank for bringing this award to life. In 2002 a committee of HURONIA members submitted the criterion which is the awards basis, in honour of the late Judy Keonig, a long-term member of OALT/ABO and HURONIA region. Since then we've recognized 9 members. I am honoured to be one, and will attest to how welcome this noteworthy award is. It provides that elusive "15 minutes of fame" which can open a window to other possibilities.

Please give thoughtful consideration and nominate an OALT-ABO member by providing details to the President-Elect (Maria Ripley) at info@oaltabo.on.ca.

PS: A big *thank you* to Kathi Vandenheuvel, OALT-ABO Archivist, who helped identify past award winners.

Past recipients

2011 - Lisa Eschli for her work on the OALT/ABO Members Only area, its new website design, including a system upgrade to Drupal 6.16.

2010 - Melissa Hall for implementing the new Group Membership category, resulting from the 2009 Group Membership Project

2009 - Maria Ripley recognized for her work on OALT-ABO's Group Membership Development, testing the Pilot and designing the Rollout.

2008 - Melissa Hall, Stella Clark and Theresa Ziebell recognized for their work as Conference Coordinators.

2007 – Unknown

2006 – Marina Dranitsaris championed 2 combined *firsts* for OALT-ABO – it's first “virtual chapter” as well as its first “special Interest” chapter – the Book Club Chapter. Establishing the Book Club Chapter was a testament to Marina's will to “make it happen”.

2005 - Susan Morley recognized for her use of information technology in the workplace. Her employer's first corporate webmaster, implementing and managing the first corporate website; designing and launching a web enabled information service, using Library Automation System (InMagic DB/Textworks) to provide staff access to Information Resources while “on the road”.

2004 – None (per minutes of 31st Annual Business Meeting, May 15th 2004)

2003 - Marian Doucette was presented with OALT-ABO's first ever **Award for Innovation**. Her nomination was not based on a single event or project, but recognized her full body of work in the library world and her dedicated service to the Association.

References:

- (1) Originator of quote -- Ted Levitt, former Harvard Business Review editor. Courtesy of The Daily Innovator: Ideas, advice and inspiration for making innovation an individual, group and organizational priority everyday! [http://www.associationinnovation.com/thedailyinnovator/2005/09/quotations_to_i_5.html]
- (2) Originator of quote: Steve Jobs, Apple Inc. Courtesy of Brainy Quote. <http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/s/stevejobs173474.html#ixzz1ouYavWNI>
- 3) Library / Information Professionals Organizations' recognizing Innovation [not an exhaustive list]:

Awards

Canada

Award for Innovative Technology given annually by **CLA/OCLC** to honour a member or members of the Canadian Library Association for innovative use and application of technology in a Canadian library setting. Sponsored by OCLC Canada for 2012 – 2014. [URL: <http://www.cla.ca/>]

Excellence and Innovation in Public Library Service awarded by Alberta Municipal Affairs Minister for innovation in service delivery (doing something new, or doing it in a new way). [URL: <http://www.municipalaffairs.gov.ab.ca/1331.cfm>]

Innovation Achievement Award issued by Canadian Association of College and University Libraries (CACUL) “recognizes institutions that have contributed to the development and advancement of academic librarianship through innovative programs, services, projects, or events.” (Last issued in 2011 & no longer available.) [URL: http://www.cla.ca/AM/Template.cfm?Section=CACUL_Innovation_Achievement_Award]

Library Innovation of the Year Award from the Manitoba Library Association (MLA) is given to libraries who, through innovative thinking, have created or demonstrated improvements in library services. [URL: <http://mla.mb.ca/awards-bursaries>]

Minister's Award for Innovation issued by the Ontario Public Library Service Awards “recognizes successful new approaches that demonstrate a positive impact in a community and are of continued value to public libraries”. [URL: http://www.mtc.gov.on.ca/en/awards_funding/oplsa.shtml]

Bi-National / International

Impact Award from Special Libraries Association (SLA)'s Business and Finance Division "recognizes a Division member who creates value by aligning with the goals of their organization through the

innovative and effective use of information to impact the accomplishment of those goals" [URL: <http://bf.sla.org/awards/award-descriptions>]

J.J. Keller Innovations in Technology Award, issued by Special Libraries Association (SLA) to a member for innovative use and application of technology in a special library setting to facilitate knowledge sharing. [<http://www.sla.org/content/SLA/awardsrecognition>]

Outstanding Achievement in Business Librarianship Award, from SLA's Business and Finance Division "intended to honor an individual for a specific achievement...may encompass any area of professional endeavor including, but not limited to, exemplary management, innovative product or service development, research, creative applications of technology, teaching, publishing, leadership in the field, and the dissemination of knowledge to users." [URL: <http://bf.sla.org/awards/award-descriptions>]

Rethinking Resource Sharing (RRS) Innovation Awards recognizes and honors an individual or institution for changes they made to improve users' access to information through resource sharing in their library, consortium, state or country. RRS is an ad hoc group that advocates for a complete rethink of the way libraries conduct resource sharing in the context of the global internet revolution and all of the developments that have arisen from that. [URL: <http://rethinkingresourcesharing.org/innovation.html>]

Springshare Innovation in Academic Libraries Award, from the Academic Division of the Special Libraries Association (SLA) is "granted to a library which creates a new program or service which demonstrates an innovative approach to academic librarianship". [URL: <http://slaacademic.libguides.com/content.php?pid=301442&sid=2470600>]



Innovation Award 2011

Winner

Lisa Eschli

For her Redesign of the OALT/ ABO Website and Creation of the Members Only Area

I was excited to be presented the OALT/ABO Innovation Award at the 2011 conference in Ottawa for the redesign of the OALT/ABO website and the creation of the members only area. The www.oaltabo.on.ca site redesign and members only area was the first major project I took on in my role of Internal Communications Coordinator. I was so lucky to start the project with the foundation that the web developing team, Wendy Witczak and Angela Carito-Walmsley, started with Maria Ripley. I built a test site from the latest version of Drupal available, teaching myself Drupal as I developed the modules, menus and the designs that still make up the site today. Obtaining feedback from our members as to the content/layout and from the Executive on the design shaped the site prior to the launch. I created 312 member accounts then transferred over content from the old site. It was almost ready to go live!

I presented the finished website at the 2010 ABM. I was nervous to stand up in front of the Association members and show them what I had worked on for the prior 2 months, putting in over 70 hours of work. I was overwhelmed by all the amazing feedback, suggestions and support at the ABM. After implementing the changes suggested at the ABM the new site was up within days. Since that day the website has continued to evolve, but I'm proud to still see the same simple design I passionately helped to build. I am still happy to have been honoured with the 2011 OALT/ABO Innovation Award.. so thank you OALT/ABO!

Book Lovers Alert! This Teeny Library will be Open 24/7

By Leslie Scrivener
Feature Writer

Bill Wrigley's library may be small - tiny, really - but unlike Toronto's beleaguered public libraries, his will be open to readers day and night.

Wrigley, who lives on Lee Ave. in The Beach, has built Toronto's first Little Free Library. He's invited the neighbours for its opening Saturday afternoon.

The Little Free Library is a project born in Madison, Wis. in 2009 to encourage the neighbourly sharing of books. The libraries look like birdhouses, are set on posts near the sidewalk and hold a dozen or more volumes on any subject that appeals to its builder. Passersby can choose a book, leave a book, or in fine weather, sit down and read on the grass.

Wrigley, an engineer and former bridge builder, has stocked his library with titles including *The Collected Works of Grey Owl*, *The Dangerous Book for Boys* and *Peter and the Wolf*.

He lives in a house that's like an old curiosity shop full of paintings and collectibles, ceramic animals from Africa and pill boxes. He built a reading room for his wife, Carolyn Swadron, an avid mystery reader who has collected some 3,000 volumes. The room has hidden marvels including secret doors and a mysterious button on a book's spine that, when

touched, ignites the fireplace.

Wrigley, 79, the father of four grown children, is cheerful and community minded. He plays a multitude of stringed instruments, banjos and the autoharp, and performs at seniors homes where he leads sing-alongs.

He wants people to read, to lose themselves in literature or history; it's more rewarding than scanning fleeting bits of text on a BlackBerry, he says. "But to sit down with a book and absorb what the author is trying to say, that's the wonder," he says. "The beauty of it is when it touches you and you can laugh or cry. You can't feel with bytes, but you can with a book."

The Wisconsin founders of the Little Public Library project have told Wrigley that his is the first in Toronto.

Elsewhere in Ontario, Ellen Skinner, of Uxbridge, is putting the finishing touches on her library.

Retired family doctor Terry Riley built one outside his house in Oakville and donated a second one to the Oakville-Trafalgar Memorial Hospital, where he used to deliver babies and still works as a surgical assistant. Riley has installed a motion sensor light in his library, so evening strollers can find a book at night.

Wrigley used the Beaches public library on Queen St. E. as inspiration for his design. His library is two storeys and includes a door with the welcoming word, "open." He'd like to see a dozen or more little libraries in the Beaches. Readers could take one of his books and return it to another branch.

He distributed flyers inviting the neighbourhood to join him in opening the library. He wondered if he should invite Margaret Atwood.

"I don't want to make political statements, but if (mayor) Rob Ford closes the libraries on Saturdays and Sundays, these will be open, 24 hours a day."

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Reflections from a Library Technician



By William Land

Recent discussion from the OALT/ABO list highlighted current employment trends in Ontario's libraries. As a library technician (Cambrian College, Sudbury, 1980), I was especially intrigued.

There is blurring of roles between librarian and library technician in terms of the tasks performed and level of responsibility, especially supervision and management. Some library technicians are responsible for managing a small, specialized library, but are recognized as being the "supervisor" or "coordinator" and not a "manager." This technician

reports to a higher authority without formal library education, training, or a clear understanding of the needs for effective library operations. This person may or may not be a strong advocate or library supporter.

Some librarians will accept positions advertised and classified as library technician, taking these jobs from library technicians. Many hiring managers (these include librarians) feel there is a benefit to having staff that have a degree and/or multiple credentials over a diploma and/or multiple qualifications. In some cases, staff will be hired because they simply have an interest in working in a library and the employer isn't seeking a person with formal library education, thus overlooking a qualified library technician.

Should librarians be taught about what a library technician can offer the workplace? Some librarians are ignorant of what an educated library technician is capable of completing. Others see library technicians as "competition" or "not being good enough because they are not librarians." Fortunately, many librarians see library technicians as valued members of a library operation and are supporters of library technicians and frequently offer a mentoring relationship.

Some library technicians blame librarians for their job plights and actually dislike working with them. I never understood this thinking – library technicians and librarians have the same goal – to provide effective and relevant library service to the clients they serve. Why are some librarians less than supportive toward library technicians? And the reverse is also true - why are some library technicians not co-operative with librarians? These people must learn to work effectively together, overlooking prejudice.

Fields dominated by women (nursing, teaching, social work and librarianship) have struggled to be recognized as professions. This is part of being a primarily female workforce. Tremendous strides have been made in recent years toward removing the glass ceiling, but there are still great gaps for those employed in libraries to achieve equality with male-dominated professions.

Theme Feature

In my work, I am recognized as someone who can help patrons find what they need when they need it. I strive for excellence in my performance, and to provide the best possible service for my patrons. Many of my supervisors and managers have understood and appreciated this; some did not. Those who didn't share my values and ambition have said comments similar to, "this is not your responsibility," "you're being too pushy," and "you don't have to worry about it; that's my job." Those who have appreciated my work ethic have encouraged me to grow, develop a "can do" attitude, and "be the best I can be."

"...library technicians and librarians have the same goal – to provide effective and relevant library service to the clients they serve."

Like all professions, that of a library technician can have its challenges and its rewards. For me, one of the biggest challenges is to effectively explain what I do and why my skill set and the service (the library) is essential to the institution. Discussions are difficult with those who are close-minded and not interested in my opinions, or might have an opposite agenda to mine (to downsize and cut or close the library).

Lack of staff is often an issue. Staffing cutbacks leave those who remain trying to provide a useful service without enough persons to actually do the work well.

The lack of monetary resources for collection development or replacement resources is a deterrent. Books and other materials wear out, become obsolete, or are lost. Technology is rapidly changing; computer systems become dated and must be upgraded.

The rewards are many. I have developed strong

skills which make me an asset to my co-workers and employers. I am able to do work well with books and other resources, technology, and in an always changing environment. In small libraries, the work is so varied and challenging.

I have had opportunities to work with other library technicians, particularly through my involvement in OALT/ABO. Serving on the Executive regionally and provincially in various associations has allowed me to learn new skills and develop existing ones beyond the scope of my paid work.

My career was not always a smooth ride, but it has been very interesting. The library world of books, information, technology and people is fascinating to me.



William Land is a Library Technician with the Health Sciences Library – Sudbury Regional Hospital. Past positions include work for the Canadian Health Network website, special libraries (correctional services, community and social services, and a legal clinic), a public library, a secondary school resource centre, and a college learning resource centre.

Pssstttt... Read about Bill Wrigley's Free Little Library on page 27?

Interested in learning more? Visit:

www.littlefreelibrary.org

Or look up Little Free Library Toronto on facebook— the group is currently working on installing little libraries in Dufferin Grove and MacGregor Park in Toronto.

ARE YOU SUBSCRIBED TO THE OALT/ABO DISCUSSION LIST?

How to subscribe to the discussion list:

1. Go to the oaltabo website:
www.oaltabo.on.ca
2. Click on Discussion List under the left side Navigation menu
3. Enter your email address in the box in the middle of the page and click on Yahoo! Groups Join Now!
4. You see a page showing "Confirmation Message Sent"
 - a) Check for a confirmation email at the address you entered
 - b) Follow the link they provide in the email
 - c) At the request to join oaltabodiscussion list click on Join the group
 - d) At this point you will either need to register for a Yahoo! ID or sign in with your Yahoo! email address
 - e) After signing in, set your membership preferences. You can choose a profile you would like to display to the group, select the email address at which you prefer to receive group messages, add a

comment to the owner, choose the method by which you receive group messages, and more.

- f) Click Join and then start to enjoy the listserve benefits.

If someone sent you an email invitation to join a group, click on the link provided to join via the Yahoo! Groups web site.

The purpose of the listserve is to communicate electronically with members regarding OALT/ABO and other library organizations events and activities, and to provide a forum for our members to discuss career related issues. All members are encouraged to post job opportunities, meeting notices, professional development activities, and to discuss issues which are relevant to Library Technicians and libraries.



WHY PEOPLE HAVE JOINED THE DISCUSSION LIST:

"I am a library and information technician student at Mohawk College and a library technician in a school library"

"I am a library technician and just read the newsletter with your discussion list at the back and would like access to it."

"I am interested in getting more information about a career in librarianship and considering library technician studies or a masters"

"I am a lib tech with 19 years of experience. I am interested in keeping abreast of current trends and issues."

"I am a library technician and a member of OALT/ABO. I would like to keep up-to-date on the industry."

"I am a recent graduate of the Library & Information Technician program from Seneca College eager to put my education and experiences to work in the industry."

"Library technician at small elementary school in rural Ontario. Would like to connect with others in my profession for sharing and education."

"I am taking the Library and Information Technician Program at Algonquin College. I am a student member of OALT: Ottawa Chapter."

2011 – 2012 Executive Contact List

President: Michael David Reansbury
michaeldavidreansbury@gmail.com

President-Elect: Maria Ripley
mariaripley5261@hotmail.com or
mariaripley5261@gmail.com

Treasurer: Daisy Collins
daisy.collins@gmail.com

Membership Coordinator: Amy Dwyer
amybdwyer@yahoo.ca

Chapter Coordinator: Millie Yip
millieyip@gmail.com

Conference Coordinator: Carolin Toppan
carolin.toppan@yahoo.ca

External Communications Coordinator: Donna Brown
tjbrown@baytel.net

Internal Communications Coordinator: Amna Hussain
amna.hus@gmail.com

Newsletter Editors

Julie Cristinzo and Jessica Goodman:
oaltabonewsletter@gmail.com

Archivist: Kathi Vandenheuvel
kathi.vandenheuvel@lambton.on.ca

Welcome / Bienvenue

A very special welcome to all our new members:

Adam Smircich	Kristen Leenhouts
Agnes Monica Rosali	Krystal Benn
Alex Schmidt	Lauren Bourdages
Alexia Neziol	Laurie Alberico
Alisha Kazimierczak	Lorraine Vlcek
Alison Eagles	Louise Burns
Bo kyoung Bae	Louise Marie Ouellet
Debbie Guy	Lyne Charron
Debbie Stanley	Lynn Kirk
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Jolanta Skrzypek	Senan Kiryakos
Judy Dubas	Shabira Tamachi
Judy Martin	Stacey Boilean
Karen Whittingham	Steve Bouchard
Karine Barrette	Terry Partridge
Kathryn Deiter	Victoria Donnelly
Kayla Gregg	Victoria Murray

Call for Submissions

We would love to hear from you, all and any contributions are appreciated. This newsletter is your window of opportunity, to which YOU can send :

- * Professional development and education matter to us, so please send us your experiences
- * Upcoming events/workshops/training etc...
- * Updates about yourself, your work, job developments etc... How about telling us about a day in the life of your workplace?
- * New technologies/tools/database
- * Book reviews are a fantastic ice breaker if you are nervous about writing
- * Your blogs or blogs you enjoy, websites, your social cataloguing profiles; GoodReads, Shelfari, LibraryThing
- * Photographs

Please submit your articles to:

oaltabonewsletter@gmail.com

Submission guidelines:

- * Length is up to you although we will accept longer submissions if room permits.
- * Microsoft Word Documents
- * Accompanying photos (including of yourself) and/or graphics are encouraged and can be submitted with your piece. Please send as a “.jpg” file.
- * Indicate the names of the people in photos you submit
- * With your submission please include your name, job title and place of employment (if applicable)
- * We welcome articles in French