

Greetings,

First let me say how much I enjoyed attending CFLA-FCAB's first National Forum and SLA's Annual Conference May 2-4 in Regina. Kudos to the conference planning committee, its chair Jeff Barber and Alix-Rae Stefenko (CFLA-FCAB Chair), committee volunteers, sponsors, exhibitors, and the Doubletree by Hilton Hotel. The Canadian Urban Libraries Council and the Canadian Association of Research Libraries also held successful business meetings earlier that week. Saskatchewan's library community rose to the occasion of hosting a very successful week of library workers from near and far converging in Regina.

Also many thanks to the 63 individuals who completed our conference evaluation survey. Responses are being reviewed and improvements in areas are being noted and will be shared with the 2019 conference planning committee and its chair Tasha Maddison. Be sure to mark your calendar to attend our next conference at the Hilton Garden Inn in Saskatoon May 2-3, 2019. It will be fantastic!

My two year term as your president was an incredible professional development opportunity for me. I didn't envision the many learning experiences I would have. The long-term benefits of volunteering will be invaluable for my career. I highly recommend those with leadership aspirations to consider running for president, another executive position, or a member-at-large. SLA also has many committees that require a diverse mix of people with ideas and a passion to make a difference in the province's library community. You will not regret it.

This occasion also marks the end of my six year tenure on SLA's Board. I had been an expatriate for ten years when I moved to Regina in late 2010. One of my first professional activities was register as an individual member of SLA and in 2012 I was elected as a member-at-large. My professional network grew rapidly and I learned much about the association, the non-profit sector, our major funder SaskCulture, and the province's incredibly rich library community. I had the pleasure to engage with many library workers from across Saskatchewan and Canada along with the privilege of collaborating with four hardworking SLA executive directors and also many talented and passionate association board and committee members. A special shout out to Anne Pennylegion, SLA's tireless Program Coordinator, with whom I worked the longest at SLA (over 5 years).

Highlighted 2016-18 SLA Board Accomplishments:

- Completed a project established by past president Gwen Schmidt to review and revise, as needed, all sections of SLA's Handbook <https://saskla.ca/about/articles-and-bylaws>
- Published a president's handbook <https://saskla.ca/about/articles-and-bylaws>
- Established regular communications with various stakeholders during the spring 2017 public library budget cuts crisis
- Created a chronological log of all board motions from 2014 to present. Did you know your board discussed and carried more than 80 motions from June 2016 to June 2018?
- Improved board discussions by utilizing basecamp more and streamlining the frequency and length of in-person and teleconference meetings
- Drafted logic models for many committees and a review of committee structures and functions is currently underway
- Developed guidelines for the new shared Prairie Provinces seat on the CFLA-FCAB Board and endorsed Julie McKenna to be SLA's first representative in that position
- Successfully applied to participate in a SaskCulture sponsored Lifecycles Capacity Building pilot that will also assist with the board reviewing SLA's 2015-18 strategic plan

When my presidential duties officially end at the annual board changeover meeting (June 19-20 at Manitou Springs Resort in Manitou Beach) I will become a member of SLA's Advisory Council. The council consists of the previous three serving members of each of the executive positions of president, treasurer, and two vice-presidents. I will make myself available to our new board if any advice or consultation is needed. My involvement with our association will continue, albeit in a different capacity, by being a member on the association's Lifecycles Capacity Building Team and representing SLA on the CFLA-FCAB Indigenous Matters Committee.

On a final note, our incoming president, Alison Jantz, 2018-19 board of directors, and executive director, Dorothea Warren will do a fabulous job of exploring new board and association initiatives, continuing to support SLA's vision and mission, and being a responsive, member-driven association.

Best,

Michael Shires

President, 2016-2018