



The Leadership Forum on November 9 – 10 with Ken Haycock was an important moment for OLTA. Not only was it the first time in my memory the public library chairs and vice chairs have come together to talk about library trustee leadership but that leadership also represented a strong cross-section from Windsor to Thunder Bay to Ottawa to Brockville to Niagara-on-the-Lake. We were able to listen and share thoughts and experiences with all sizes of boards and municipalities.

As well, there was overwhelming endorsement for our new focus on community development and capacity building at the local level. There was a strong understanding that trustees need to be speaking with one voice. When Ernie Eves spoke to the delegates at the AMO (Association of Municipalities of Ontario) Conference this past August, he told them that he knew

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# InsideOLTA

For and about members of the ONTARIO LIBRARY TRUSTEES' ASSOCIATION

No. 9



Photograph of attendees from the OLTA Leadership Forum. A Special Insert: The Library Board in Community Development: and now for something completely different, is included in this issue of *InsideOLTA* that examines the discussion at the Leadership Forum and asks the question, "where do we go from here?" ■

## SUPER CONFERENCE: The Next Step

The OLTA program at this year's conference aims to both fill in the knowledge gap for library trustees not able to participate in the spring video conference with Dr. Ken Haycock and those not able to attend the OLTA fall Leadership Forum facilitated again by Dr. Haycock. Session #114 The

**new Library Board in Community Development** will highlight the significant points of Dr. Haycock's presentation. Those who have already heard the message can join in the follow-up session #211 **The Search for Best Practice**; this program will bring together as exemplars

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### NOTICE OF MOTION

MOVED THAT the Ontario Library Trustees' Association change its name to the Ontario Library Boards' Association.

### OLTA Annual General Meeting

February 1, 2003  
8:00 a.m.

Presiding: Peter Rogers,  
President 2002.

## PUBLIC LIBRARY AWARDS

Wednesday January 29, 2003, 7:30 p.m. OLA Super Conference.

Join your colleagues at the Awards evening to mingle, to share and to recognize the success of our colleagues. The Event is sponsored by CVS and Whitehots.

- OLTA's Robertson Medallion for 2003  
Rosemary Bonanno, CEO Vaughan Public Libraries
- OPLA's James Bain Medallion for 2003  
Carman Dix, Chair, Niagara Falls Public Library

Recognizing the value of people @ your library™



@ your library™

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## Report from OLTA President Peter Rogers

they represented 95% of the Ontario municipalities and that he needed to listen to them. (In 1995 AMO only represented about 55%). Our current Cabinet Minister David Tsubouchi has expressed a strong commitment to libraries and is also chair of Management Board. Certainly the stars are aligned at the moment and WE need to be at the table as one group with one message. We are the appointed representatives of city Councils. Libraries can and do play a major leadership role in building stronger more viable communities: socially, economically, culturally and educationally.

Where then do we go from here?

1. OLA office has facilitated a board forum listserv to continue the conversations begun at the leadership forum. If you are a board chair or vice-chair were not at the forum and would like to join our talk please e-mail me <rogerscottage@hotmail.com>.
2. OLTA will be working with the SCD (Strategic Directions council to develop a new plan for public libraries. This is a response to the public library strategic plan, **Building Value Together**. On January 10th, OLTA will be at the table with your CEO's. Ask them about the CELPLO (Chief Executive Officers of the Public Libraries of Ontario) initiative.
3. OLTA will be presenting more material at the OLA Super Conference (see right).
4. OLTA will be looking for and promoting "Best Practices in Community Development" beginning at the conference (see session # 211)
5. This spring we will sponsor cross-province audio workshops which will allow whole boards to participate at a very reasonable rate, perhaps as part of their own board meeting.

6. We will work with the Trustee Councils in SOLS and through the OLS-North conferences to deliver programs and information that advance library trusteeship in this province.

7. OLTA will start the planning on a new trustee training program which will begin with the production of a new handbook to be used as part of the training. The first section will deal with **Board Operation Rules and Practices**. We hope to develop trainers across the province similar to the United Way approach. We have recently held discussions with the United Way (thanks to Mike Hick OLTA Councillor for Central East). This program will be in place for the appointment of new public library trustees in January of 2004. We will launch this program as part of the OLA Super Conference in 2004 and follow it up with an all Ontario program delivered to large and also remote communities.

8. OLTA will use our website as a significant communication piece to provide support to our members.

9. By April of 2004, OLTA's goal is to represent 75% of the library boards in this province, and truly be the political voice for public libraries in Ontario

Our program is ambitious. We need your support. We need your input. We need your participation. We need one strong voice.

At the AGM OLTA Saturday February 1, 2003 we intend to change our official name to OLBA: the Ontario Library Boards' Association of Library Boards of Ontario. Join us for the vote!



Peter Rogers  
OLTA President

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## The Next Step: Super Conference 2003

some Ontario best practices in community development and provide ideas how trustees can implement such a direction in their own boards.

In session #812 on Friday, Marcel Giroux (last year's James Bain medallion winner as Trustee of the Year) will take another look at **the Role of the Public Library in Community Development**. Saturday's session #904 **Building the 21st Century Community: Communities and Libraries Working Together** will provide an update on the five **Smart Community** projects that involve libraries. ■

## OLTA AT THE TABLE WITH CELPLO

Building Value Together with OLTA

Over the summer CELPLO has been hosting a group of meetings with various administrator groups in Ontario libraries (dubbed the Multi PLO group) to try and create a model for a new organization (federation) CELPLO had suggested that this new organization focus on three areas:

1. Research
2. Marketing
3. Purchasing

At the December 11th Strategic Directions Council meeting, the need for trustees to join the group was identified with the addition of marketing. Library trustees are the natural advocates for marketing the library and advocacy. OLTA President Peter Rogers and Bob Allen will meet the "multi PLO" group on Jan 10th.

Watch for an update on this at the Super Conference Saturday session #1008 **Building Value Together**. ■

## NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE KALEIDOSCOPE SUCCESS

On Monday November 25th the OLA hosted its first member's Kaleidoscope event providing over 50 members with an opportunity to meet and share ideas and practices in a local setting.

Members from colleges, universities, public and school libraries and Library trustees had a sneak preview of OLA's new @your library™ section of the website.

Best practice displays were set up from Niagara Falls, Fort Erie, Pelham, St. Catharines, Oakville, and the Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library.

Thanks to Gerda Molson and all the Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library staff and Library Board for providing such a welcoming environment for OLA members! Hopefully we will see lots of trustees at the next event. Watch [www.accessOLA.com](http://www.accessOLA.com) for more details! ■



## HOW'S YOUR WEB?

by Ian Hunter, OLTA Vice-President  
Ottawa Public Library Board

*Trustees: when was the last time you visited your library's web site?*

If the library catalogue is on-line, perhaps that's the only reason you've ever been there. Maybe you've haven't been to the website in months!

Do you know that for some libraries, they get more on-line visits than people coming through their doors? This is reason enough for library trustees to give some thought to what's on their web site, and how it could be used more effectively.

Most library web sites simply share basic information. They tell library users library branch locations, the hours of operation, special library programs, and those sorts of things. Some libraries put some of their policies on the website, but these are usually limited to things like **Acceptable Internet Use and Library Rules**.

I suggest that most libraries are missing a great opportunity with their web sites. Why not leverage your web site to help with your board's goals? For instance, your library is an essential and growing force in the community, but it needs secure and funding to meet tomorrow's challenges. The web site is an ideal place to tell your story.

Here are some ideas to give the library website a boost:

- Be interactive. Ask library users to tell you what they like or don't like about the library, and what services they'd like to see.
- Present your library's strategic plan, and ask for comments. Include the Board Chair's e-mail address.
- Talk about the library's usage statistics (not just

circulation!), and explain any new trends.

- Promote the library's role as a powerful economic and educational presence in the community, and give examples.
- Make a library's web site a "must visit" destination for tourists planning to visit your area. List the local attractions, and talk about their history.
- Explain the important role of the library board, and what it's doing to give the library solid long-term direction.

To help you think of what to include, imagine that you had the rapt attention of your entire municipal council and community leaders. What is it about the library that you'd like them to know? What could they do to help you improve library services? Your website is a good place to tell them!

If your library's web site is boring, and if it downplays or even ignores the role of the library board, then you've got a problem. Worse, your municipality's website is probably a lot more interesting and dynamic. Why let that situation continue?

As a library board, give some thought to the dialogue you want to create and the messages you want to share, and then get going.

**Readers: have you examples of any new or innovative ways your library has improved its website? What did you do, and what was the result?**

Please e-mail us at: [info@accessola.com](mailto:info@accessola.com), Attention: InsideOLTA, and tell us about it. A compilation of these good ideas will be featured in our next issue. ■

## OLTA PROPOSES ONTARIO LIBRARY BOARD'S ASSOCIATION: WHY A NAME CHANGE

by Peter Rogers, OLTA President 2002

OLTA has committed to a future that will take library boards into the community development business. This change in direction for trustees is moving away from looking inward and results by output towards one of looking outward and evaluating board performance by outcomes.

This change in perspective is reflected in the name change to The Ontario Library Board Association. Emphasis on the whole board acting with one

voice and with one message to our governments, business and communities is the desired result.

The Motion is noted on page 1 of *InsideOLTA* and will be voted on at the AGM.

To have your voice heard, please attend the AGM at the Super Conference Saturday morning and support your Association. ■

**Margaret MacLean's USEFUL WEB SITES**

**Outcomes-Based Evaluation Web Sites**

Outcome-Based Evaluation (OBE) is the "new kid on the block", and libraries had better start to evaluate their programs and services looking at outcomes rather than outputs. This was the message Ken Haycock so eloquently put forward at the OLTA Leadership Forum in November at the Valhalla Inn in Toronto.

The **Basic Guide to Outcomes-Based Evaluation for Nonprofit Organizations with Very Limited Resources**, written by Carter McNamara, [www.mapnp.org/library/evaluaton/outcomes.htm](http://www.mapnp.org/library/evaluaton/outcomes.htm) is an excellent website which "provides guidance toward basic planning and implementation of an outcomes-based evaluation process... in nonprofit organizations."

Using the United Way of America's book **Measuring Program Outcomes: A Practical Approach** (1996) as well as providing links to many

useful web sites, the above web site covers:

- reasons for an outcomes-based evaluation
- basic principles
- what OBE is about
- planning your OBE
- a framework for an OBE plan
- useful on-line resources

Other outcome-based evaluation sites include:

- [www.communityresearchpartners.org/html/community.cfm](http://www.communityresearchpartners.org/html/community.cfm)
- [national.unitedway.org/outcomes](http://national.unitedway.org/outcomes)
- [www.evaluationforum.com/trainings](http://www.evaluationforum.com/trainings)
- [www.sfu.ca/~tcopley/pro/eval](http://www.sfu.ca/~tcopley/pro/eval)
- [www.c2t2.ca/idea/symposium99/BC-Evaluation.html](http://www.c2t2.ca/idea/symposium99/BC-Evaluation.html)

Check these sites out. You will find the information at all of these sites, easy to follow and replicate. Include an outcomes-based evaluation plan in your library strategic plan. Remember, evaluate using outcomes not outputs!

**OLTA Web Page**

<http://www.accessola.com/olta>

OLTA plans to use its web page as another means of communication with members. The OLTA's goal is that the web site is the first place for library trustees to look for information and reference tools. **Check it out!**

The OLTA web site currently includes:

- Articles on current issues
- The latest in community development business
- Sessions for trustees at the Super Conference

- *Inside OLTA*
- Upcoming changes that trustees need to know about
- Links to other OLA pages
- Reasons why you need to be a member of OLTA
- Best Practices
- Ask a question – get an OLTA answer
- Meet your OLTA Council Members
- Educational Institute – "The Learning Space"
- AND MUCH, MUCH, MORE!

**Professional Training Services: A Resource for Library Trustees**

by Mike Hick, OLTA Councillor Central-East Vice-Chair, Cobourg Public Library Board

Earlier this year the OLTA Council approved a education plan for library boards and trustees aimed at improving the effectiveness of library boards. The plan has an advocacy component, to convince local municipalities that effective library boards are important, a "best practice" guide on how councils may select capable trustees to sit on their boards, and the provision of training and consulting services specifically tailored to the needs of library boards.

OLA is working to develop a listing of suitable trainers and consultants, publish them on the website and to make library boards aware that professional services are available from the private sector.

Realistically, it will take some time to build up a network of

trainers to cover all these topics right across the province. Nonetheless this is our goal. We also want to provide free services to those libraries that are poorly funded. To this end we have had several meetings with the United Way to utilize and adapt their Leadership Training Services.

This is an evolving topic. I will be making a presentation at the 2003 Super Conference (Session #1008) where I will describe the initiative in more detail.

Our aim is to establish OLTA as a customer focused organization dedicated to providing services to help library boards. Over time we would like OLTA to be first place that libraries boards will turn to for top quality professional services and information. ■

**OLTA at SOLS TRUSTEE COUNCIL MEETINGS**

by Ian Hunter, OLTA Vice-President

In October 2002, OLTA Councillors attended the SOLS meetings, where OLTA was allotted time to talk about up-coming events and initiatives. OLTA Councillors spoke about the November 9 & 10 Leadership Forum in Toronto for Ontario library chairs and vice-chairs.

The OLTA is currently looking at how it can partner with

SOLS to do more training for trustees. The two groups worked together on trustee training in 2001 and it will be important that OLTA and SOLS combine efforts in 2003 as OLTA rolls out it education program in support of library board work in community development. ■

**InsideOLTA**

Ontario Library Trustees' Association  
 100 Lombard Street, Suite 303, Toronto M5C 1M3  
 416-363-3388 or 1-866-873-9867 toll free  
 FAX: 416-941-9581 or 1-800-387-1181 toll free  
 E-mail: [info@accessola.com](mailto:info@accessola.com)  
 URL: [www.accessola.com/olta](http://www.accessola.com/olta)

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Ontario Library Trustees' Association  
Special Insert:  
OLTA Leadership Forum:

# THE LIBRARY BOARD IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

By John Swartz  
Vice-Chair, Orilla Public Library

## ... and now, for something completely different...

That could very well have been the title of the Ontario Library Association's Leadership Forum held November 9th and 10th at the Valhalla Inn in Toronto. Instead, the Forum was called The Library Board in Community Development, which is somewhat more descriptive.



To say that the Forum, facilitated by Dr. Ken Haycock, was thought-provoking, challenging, and a real eye-opener is understatement in grand proportion. For years I, like many other trustees, have struggled with the feeling that I should be doing more as a member of my community library board but I just couldn't see how. Dr. Haycock took what we do and

turned how we view it on its head. There is a way to approach this.

We have been stuck with doing things the way they always have been done, some of which is useful, but most of which does not serve any identifiable purpose any longer. Breaking tradition is one of the hardest things to do; many people have a lot invested in the way things are, or have been. Dr. Haycock says that for libraries and library boards to remain relevant, they must come to terms with some very essential questions or wither away.

Over two very intensive days, Haycock showed us the tools, infecting me, our board chair, and I suspect many attendees, with the fire to get on with the job of dragging libraries into the 21st century.

### BE A PLAYER AT THE TABLE. NOT A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE LIBRARY.

Libraries have typically been largely passive institutions, waiting for people to come through the door to identify what they are seeking. Haycock says that is no longer good enough. Boards must be proactive in setting goals for libraries if they and their institutions are to be more visible and effective.



Boards must be advocates for community problem-solving and go beyond being by-standers while others struggle for solutions to issues and needs. We must be active about literacy, job training, child safety. We must not be about circulation numbers. Making what we do known to the communities we serve (early childhood educators, schools, business, local government, and others) and finding ways to support what they are trying to accomplish is where we should be spending our best time.

It means getting out and being active with community groups, attending their meetings, sitting down with community leaders – being at the table. We must let them tell us what and who they are – what they are trying to resolve in the community. We think we know but we don't always know, and sometimes what we think we know isn't right.

If we are not a natural partner at the table, we cannot be part of the solution our communities value. If we are there, we can then address the question of what can we do for them and for their issue within the community. We must be prepared to help, or find ways to include what is being asked of us in future planning.

### THE QUALITY OF OUR DECISION-MAKING IS CRITICAL

Before any real change can happen, our own house needs to be in order. Haycock emphasized that decision-making at the board level has to change. Too often we are bogged down with things that waste our time. Who sets the agenda often dictates how meeting time is spent. The meeting agenda must reflect the work of the board, and be set by the board.

Boards must adopt a vision of what they aim to do as community development partners, and deal with those issues. We also need to include development time for ourselves.

Haycock even suggested that all agenda items be set under a 'consent agenda' format. This unique approach allows members to pull items for discussion, leaving the rest to be passed as recommended. The theory is that the board will then spend time only on the things that are important rather than visit each and every item. It's a good theory.

How boards make decisions is important. Haycock said several times that we need to make our decisions based on evidence. That often hasn't been the case. We've all heard what sound like good ideas while sitting around the table. We've even acted on them, and sometimes we've wondered what went wrong. It is action by opinion. Acting on evidence not only ensures that good decisions are made, it saves time, money, and resources.

**EVIDENCE IS AT THE HEART OF THE 21ST CENTURY LIBRARY**

A report coming to the Board needs to outline a situation and to offer options for action. Most importantly, it must tell us what evidence exists about the situation and the truth and nature of the need being described. It must tell us what other important players are doing and the basis for their action, and who has tried the solutions being suggested and what their experience has been. Reports lacking these things are of no service to a board.



We, board members, CEO and senior staff, need to be agents, going out into the community to gather information. Lunch, lunch, and more lunch. We need to ask our municipal officials to have a chair available at administrative meetings so that our CEOs can be at the table when municipal issues are being discussed. We need to be active participants when community organizations meet, and when coalitions of community groups meet. We should expect reports back to the board about the community issues that were discussed, along with some recommendations on how we can use the information gathered and can contribute to the solution.



The flow of information has to be constant, and the action relevant to the strategic and business plans we have adopted for our libraries. This brings up an important point. What plan? Planning is an ongoing process. It needs to be long term and visionary. Yet, the constant influx of information means that any strategic plan needs to be flexible to fit new realities and to respond to the ideas generated by other community groups. How does new information fit with the plan? If not, are we prepared to adjust our plan? And how quickly?

**HOW ARE WE DOING?**

Haycock says that this is one of the overlooked questions. Sure we get stats and reports on stats, but what do they mean? What are we measuring? Are the numbers relevant to the work of the board? If not, take them off the table.

Our old way was measuring outputs. The better way is to measure outcomes. Is it better to count how many people are using computer terminals, reference materials, or walking through the doors; or to find out what they are doing with the information they collect? Did our library users find their effort worthwhile for their purpose?



What about the board? How are we doing? Are we effective according to the goals we set? The same can be said of how we measure the CEO's success. Are we measuring the right indicators?

**GET WITH THE PROGRAM OR PERISH**

Libraries are in a battle for survival. Haycock says get with the program or perish. If our municipalities are going to continue to fund libraries at the current rate (or think about returning to adequate levels), we need to show them that we deserve it by our obvious value as a community player. We need to have thousands of allies - our communities - on our side who will speak with us, and on our behalf. If we don't become a vital part of our communities, we can't expect them to be on our side.

If we are going to develop some supplemental sources of revenue we must be relevant to those who can write a cheque. For example, many businesses have needs we can help with. Their employees have needs we can help with. The people they do business with have needs we can fill. These are powerful constituencies to have on our side - and they do talk to each other as well as elected representatives. They also are willing to spend money, especially when they can be seen to be investing in the community.

We have to matter to our communities a lot more than we do. We do well in community polls but it is the principle that is being supported. There is little understanding of the investment municipal councils make in their libraries. Haycock's organized approach to change can change that.

*John Swartz is the Vice-chair of the Orillia Public Library Board. He is also a print and television journalist (his former English teachers wouldn't believe it if they knew that). He can be reached at johnswartz@encode.com.*