

The Annual Report of the Ontario Library Association

OLA 2009

Peggy Thomas, President

'Don't ask yourself what the world needs; ask yourself what makes you come alive. And then go and do that. Because what the world needs is people who have come alive.' Howard Thurman

As Michael Ridley proposed both at last year's AGM and in a recent article for OLA's Access magazine, we have entered the "Age of Imagination," where creativity, imagination and innovation are the keystones and challenges for our profession going forward. (Ridley, 2010) To that list, I would add passion; passion for the profession, passion for the vision of where we see ourselves going forward and passion for how we can connect with other likeminded professionals worldwide to form powerful and imaginative communities. This is a time of such wondrous possibility, the excitement is palpable.

As such, it has been an absolute pleasure and honour to have been the OLA president and I want to thank all of you for the support and opportunities offered me as I steered my way through this year. OLA has for me been a place to explore and realize my passions; My passion for social justice through the Be the Change project, my passion for intellectual freedom and freedom to read through the Forest of Reading® program, and my passion for this profession. In fact, for those of you who may not be aware, I am in the second semester of my MLIS program at the University of Western Ontario. Where this will lead me is not clear, but what it offers me is an opportunity to stretch and grow, imagine and wonder, and I am

enjoying every minute of it.

The foremost activity of the board this past year has been the creation of a new strategic plan for the Ontario Library Association. I want to personally thank all of the members who took part in the process, whether by attending one of the imagining sessions or by joining in on the online discussions or surveys. Your voice is valued and important; our organization can only be as strong as the members we serve. From that process we have honed our vision and mission for the OLA as well as identified four key strategies: growing career paths and potential, collaborating to extend libraries' strategic voice, strengthening our organization and transforming ideas into solutions. All of these strategies speak to the

comments we received from our members, and all are important. One, however, truly speaks to me, and that is transforming ideas into solutions. Here is where the "Age of Imagination" can actually be realized. I invite anyone with an idea that excites and drives them to consider bringing that forward to their division, or to the OLA board itself. All of the transformative programs of the OLA have started with an idea that was nurtured and developed and eventually blossomed. Think of the Forest of Reading®, Knowledge Ontario and even Super Conference. Each program started small and grew to be quite amazing through imagination, creativity and (it must be said) a lot of hard work.

