

PRESIDENT'S ACCEPTANCE SPEECH BY LAWRENCE LAVENDER, CLTA 2007 AGM

Thank you for this opportunity to serve as your president of the CLTA and to represent trustees on the executive of the CLTA.

First, a special thank you to outgoing president, Art Batistte. Previously, and in this past year as president, Art has worked diligently to raise the profile of CLTA within the CLA. He has kept on top of national issues and has helped set the stage for the future. We wish him well, knowing that service to public libraries will always be part of his life.

In the eyes of many trustees, we are at a crossroads, not dissimilar from the one mentioned in a presentation yesterday - that of either despair and depression or extinction. I don't believe that things are that bad and that with a concerted effort we can rebuild the CLTA.

We can do that most effectively with the participation of the leadership of our provincial organizations, an expanded team of trustees working with the CLTA executive and increased support from the CLA. We need to develop and implement action plans on the concept of a provincial advisory council. We must and we can offer more to our members and then we can reasonably expect an increase in our membership.

I would like to reemphasize the need for a national trustees' organization. There are national issues and library trustees, either appointed or elected, are key public representatives in advocating support for public libraries and literacy causes in general. A collective voice is a stronger voice at the national level. The CLTA should mobilize that cross-country support among the provinces. We can also facilitate the sharing of a variety of resources and support among our provincial partners in a number of ways. We can assist CLA in providing better conferences for trustees.

There's a huge job ahead of us. Your executive is eager to move forward. We solicit and welcome your support and input at this crucial time in the rebuilding of the trustee division within the CLA. Expect to hear from us soon.