



**Northern Alberta Health Libraries Association: Chapter President's Report
October 2007 – September 2008
Prepared by Orvie Dingwall, September 21, 2008**

This has been an active and rewarding year for NAHLA. At the Annual General Meeting on September 25, 2007, we elected a new vice-president and accepted the addition of a bylaw detailing the financial course of action in the event of NAHLA winding-up or dissolving. Following the business meeting was a catered dinner complete with networking opportunities.

Executive

President: Orvie Dingwall
Vice-President: Patricia Chatterley
Past President: Liz Dennett
Treasurer: Linda Seale
Secretary: Connie Winther

Membership

This year we were very successful in engaging all of the health librarians, as well as some library technicians, in Edmonton. We had the largest NAHLA membership ever, with 41 members: 37 regular members and 4 student members.

NAHLA History Event

The first event of the year was on November 27, 2007 and took 14 NAHLA members back in time. With the work of the NAHLA History Group approaching completion, this event celebrated the 22 year history of NAHLA. The group shared their poster *Harnessing history: highlighting CHLA/ABSC capacity building through the Northern Alberta Health Libraries Association (NAHLA), 1985-2007*, which was presented at the 2007 CHLA/ABSC conference in Ottawa, and highlighted some of the accomplishments of the association.

This celebration was paired with Jeanette Buckingham and Linda Seale providing a tour of the Rawlinson Rare Book Collection, housed at the John W. Scott Health Sciences Library. The NAHLA History Group has since had their article on the history of NAHLA published:

Chatterley, Trish, Dorgan, Marlene, Clifford, Connie, Chan, Liza, Varney, Janice and Dingwall, Orvie. **Harnessing history: highlighting CHLA/ABSC capacity building through the Northern Alberta Health Libraries Association (NAHLA), 1985-2007.** *Journal of the Canadian Health Libraries Association*. 2008 Spring; 29 (2): 51-54. Retrieved September 22, 2008 from: <http://pubs.nrc-cnrc.gc.ca/jchla/jchla2-08.html>

Annual Christmas Lunch

On December 6, 2007, NAHLA held its annual Christmas lunch at Café Select. Thirteen NAHLA members enjoyed the great food, the opportunity to socialize with new and existing members, and the humour and fun of the re-gift exchange.

Sponsorship of SLIS Professional Development Day

This year NAHLA again provided support in the form of a \$100 donation to the University of Alberta's, School of Library and Information Science (SLIS) Professional Development Day. For 20 years, students have been organizing this event which brings together librarians from across Alberta, providing an opportunity for continuing education and for networking with fellow colleagues. NAHLA was thrilled to be able to support this wonderful student initiative.

Sponsorship of SLIS Partners' Week

In previous years NAHLA has alternated between sponsoring Professional Development Day with sponsoring SLIS Partners' Week Reception. The purpose of Partners' Week is to give MLIS students a chance to spend a few hours with a librarian or information professional to learn about the work environment of a library, and to discuss some of the current issues in librarianship. The planning committee of Partners' Week did not ask for sponsorship for the reception this year or last, as they have sustained ample sponsorship. The planning committee did not foresee that they would be seeking sponsorship in additional years.

Leading Edge Workshops

Since 2005, NAHLA has hosted a series of professional development sessions titled "Leading Edge Workshop" at no cost to members.

1. Our first session of the year was on January 22, 2008 with Dagmara Chojecki and Thane Chambers presenting a hands-on session about the new "*Changes to Ovid Databases*". This was a timely session that was extremely well anticipated, and received, by 14 attendees.
2. The second Leading Edge Workshop was a special treat for 17 members and attendees, as Margaret Sampson was in Edmonton presenting at the Canadian Cochrane Symposium. She graciously accepted the opportunity to present to the NAHLA members and delivered an evidence-based presentation "*In search of the perfect search*".

NAHLA / SAHLA / HKN Conference

In the fall of 2006, NAHLA began collaborating with the Southern Alberta Health Libraries Association (SAHLA) and the Health Knowledge Network (HKN) of Alberta, to plan and host a symposium. The conference took place on April 11, 2008 at Canada Olympic Park in Calgary, with the theme of *Evidence in Complementary Medicine: getting it right*. Nearly 70 participants attended the conference, including health practitioners and administrators, researchers, students, and librarians, including 10 NAHLA members. This first time event was a resounding success.

NAHLA, SAHLA and HKN representatives met in Red Deer on June 27, 2008 to discuss further joint opportunities and the potential of hosting a similar conference in future years. NAHLA and SAHLA will ask for feedback from their members during their AGMs in September and October respectfully, about these opportunities.

TRENDS Mini-Conference

The final event of the year was NAHLA's fifth Teaching, Research, Education, 'Knowledge, Direction, Strength (TRENDS) Mini-Conference. This event, held on May 9, 2008, offered a high quality and affordable educational program for the 26 librarians in attendance. This year's

sessions included Raj Boora detailing “mobile technologies in libraries”, Diane Clark discussing “good customer service on a bad day: the video ‘CSI: JWS’”, and a panel discussion on evidence-based librarianship, featuring Denise Koufogiannakis, Orvie Dingwall, and Obianuju Mollel.

CHLA/ABSC Conference

CHLA/ABSC’s annual conference was held May 26-May 30, 2008 in Halifax, NS. NAHLA was well represented at this conference, with both Trish Chatterley and Liz Dennett presenting contributed papers. Trish also won the CHLA/ABSC Emerging Leader Award, which recognizes the skills, enthusiasm and energy that new health science librarians contribute to the profession. Marlene Dorgan was also named Vice-President of CHLA/ABSC.

President's Reflections

I have greatly enjoyed the past year as being president of NAHLA and am excited about my responsibilities in the coming year as past-president. (I'm not quite ready to leave the executive yet!) As a solo librarian still relatively new to the city and the profession, NAHLA and its members have done nothing but provide a welcoming, supportive and informative network. It was because I have gotten so much out of NAHLA that I ran for vice-president two years ago and I hope that I have contributed to providing that welcoming, supportive and informative network to others.

It was articulated in the results of the NAHLA History Project that NAHLA is a very small and cohesive group and this year has been no exception. The other members of the executive have been amazing to work with and it is almost shocking how effortless and seamless it has been to plan the many events we hosted this year. I attribute the success of this year to the true teamwork exemplified across the executive and throughout NAHLA.

On the executive this year, we talked a lot about "winning" (or at least, I did) as a way to evaluate and articulate our success. Some highlights that I wanted to specifically articulate that are unique successes to this year are as follows:

- We "won" this year at membership; having the most members than any other year and having close to the same number of members as the Greater Edmonton Library Association does, even though they are targeting all of the librarians in Edmonton and we target only those working in/interested in health.
- We won at being the first CHLA chapter to develop a process and compile the history of their chapter, which is something many other chapters have commented they wish to do as well.
- We won at providing quality educational sessions that (we felt) were current, relevant and inexpensive – if not free – to our membership. We especially won at bringing Margaret Sampson to speak at a NAHLA leading-edge event for only the cost of her dinner.
 - At the CHLA annual conference and in discussions with SAHLA, it became apparent that NAHLA's model for successful events (high quality at a low cost) is unique and that other chapters are trying to adopt.
- We won at collaborating with SAHLA and HKN in co-hosting the conference, especially when reflecting on the financials.

With many thanks for the phenomenal opportunity to serve on this executive,

Orvie Dingwall,
NAHLA President, 2007/2008