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Fellow Board Members,

From Wednesday January 28th – Saturday January 31st I had the privilege of attending the Ontario Library Association Super Conference 2015 at the Metro Toronto Convention centre.

Since the Toronto Public Library was good enough to pay the conference fees I thought I should provide a brief summary of what I did!

Wednesday January 28th

I started the day bright and early by observing The Super Conference Hackfest which was a unique opportunity to collaborate with like-minded colleagues on library-related projects, mainly technology related to software projects. The great part? No previous Hackfest experience to participate. You didn't even need to know how to create computer code to contribute to a project!

Sessions Attended:

1. Using Google Sites to create a Virtual Learning Common
2. Implementing e-Books Using a variety of Technology
3. Civic Engagement Building Stronger Communities
4. Ignite Community Dialogue and Debate

One of the last sessions I even managed to catch a movie! Screening of award-winning documentary, "The Creator's Game: the Quest for Gold and the Fight for Nationhood". This is the story of the Iroquois Nationals lacrosse team after being denied entry into England in 2010 because of their Haudenosaunee passports. Determined to be recognized as a sovereign nation, we follow the team on their quest for the 2011 medal in Prague – both a fight for gold and the recognition of their nationhood.

Here not only did we get popcorn, but some delicious fruit punch! (Which left me wondering...at a librarian's conference, do they spike the punch bowl??)

The highlight of the day and the conference was being elected Vice-Chair of the Federation of Ontario Public Libraries! A tremendous honour!

While all of this was going on their was a well attended tour participants could take part in touring different branches of the Toronto Public Library across our city.

Thursday January 29th

Started bright and early with an 8AM session "Speed Networking"

This was mainly my 'techie' day of sessions:

1. Not Boring: Social Media Policy for libraries
2. Taking Your Board to the Cloud
3. What the &**&%^ is Minecraft??
4. Good Governance 8 Ways to Maximize Board member Satisfaction and Minimize Risk

Friday January 30, 2015

It was time to check out Super Expo which had over 200 vendor booths with lots of interesting products!

Throughout both days of the Expo they had a wide range of authors scheduled who did book signings as well...which I heard was a big hit!

Saturday January 31, 2015

This was "*Boot Camp*" Day

Author Gord Hume started off the day with a very interesting keynote address on the relevancy of public libraries to society. He linked it to his most recently published book "Places and Spaces"

Sessions:

1. The Duties and Liabilities of Directors and Officers of a Public Library Board
2. The Effective Governance partnership: What It Takes To Sustain It.
3. Leadership by Design - Strengthening the Four Year Learning Cycle

Overall, It was a very interesting conference. I learned lots, met many interesting people involved in public and education libraries, not only from Ontario but across Canada.

Amongst everything I learned, I came away with the knowledge the Toronto Public Library and the staff who run our system are respected, and held in very high esteem for the work they do. They are needed to play a key role in advocating for the successful operation of libraries across Ontario.

I encourage all Board members to make use of the opportunity to attend the 2016 conference held annually here in Toronto!

Sincerely,

Paul Ainslie