

Friends, family, board members, staff, and colleagues join in retirement party for Marigold Director and Assistant Director

MARIGOLD REPORT

“ Rowena Lunn — June 20, 2009

When one works in a regional library system, there is a lot of travel. Usually driving, usually alone. Sometimes we are fortunate enough to have company on the road, but usually it is travelling alone. I would not have survived my years in Chinook in Saskatchewan or in Marigold without MY CBC. Yes, it is my CBC because I have always felt that the people I listened to were talking to me. I recently traded my truck to my brother – I had to warn him that I had four CBCs coded into the radio – 4 out of the six slots included 2 CBC in Alberta, one for Saskatchewan (bless their cooperative hearts) and one for Manitoba. Working in regional library systems makes you a friend of CBC.

Two travelling stories involving animals and the night. Coming back from Acadia one evening we were told to watch for deer. What we actually saw was an owl – right in the middle of the road – just sitting there. We turned out the headlights and he was gone when we turned them back on. The other incident was the racing rabbit of Gladys Ridge. We were coming back from Okotoks and this rabbit decided to race the van. I was terrified that he was going to veer across the road, so kept slowing down, turning off the headlights, but he would still be there. If I was a real storyteller, the rabbit would have raced ahead and charged across the road – having won the race and stayed alive – this guy just bounded off into the ditch.

When one works in a regional library system, we come to know how to read the sky for weather. Especially when you work in a prairie library system – you can see a lot of sky. I have a little story to tell about my colleague from Chinook Regional Library in Swift Current, SK. The Chief Librarian at the time brought in a catalogue of art work by Margraf; and Myra, Mike and I looked through the catalogue and each picked a print. This was my first but (as my friends know) not my last purchase of “art”. When the prints arrived, I fell in love with the one I had purchased; Myra and her husband John felt that the colours in their print weren’t realistic so sent it back. About two months later, we were heading west out of Swift Current – and yes, you guessed it, there was the sky as it appeared in the print! Margraf knew what he was doing! That amazing prairie sky, in the winter with the early afternoon sunset. It would seem to be impossible to replicate – but he did it.



They leave with more than intrinsic success, however. Through their work in Marigold, APLEN, and TAL, individual libraries in Marigold, the Marigold organization, as well as libraries across the province have attained higher standards of service and achieved greater visibility in their communities and the Province. You will be missed and your contributions will live on.

Janine Jevne, on behalf of Airdrie Public Library staff and Board



Rowena...

When one works in a regional library system, one meets the most dedicated people – especially those Board members – who are willing to work Saturdays and many evenings, travel in snowstorms and in minus 29 weather to come to a meeting. I have been, continue to be, and will always be in awe of those dedicated volunteers who made work in regional library systems and small rural libraries so rewarding.

I have also been very fortunate to work with and for some amazing people. The staff at headquarters, the member libraries and other libraries in the province have made my career something to be envied. The cooperation and collaboration has ensured that I have been able to succeed in my career and that Marigold has been able to grow and thrive over the past 28 years. I am not going to mention names, because I don't want to leave out anyone. You know who you are – thank you for the dedication, commitment and the memories. I fell into librarianship and can't think of anything else I would rather do/be. Although being a truck driver is still number 2 – but I would fail the backing up test!

When one works in a regional library system, you get to have really high ceilings. Lots of light, lots of room (in the early years) and some character. How can someone say they love a building, but I do. Sure we have had chicken fleas, floods and sewer back ups and power outages/surges/zaps, too hot or too cold. We have also had barbecues, and pot lucks, and golf tournaments and scavenger hunts. Our headquarters has been part of who we are. No one else has a rifle range, or a drill hall, or a munitions room. No one else has a dent in the end of the rifle range after target practice. No one else has a bomb shelter. Neat places, the headquarters buildings for regional library systems.

Working in a regional library system means that you are fed well. Another story about the early days. I think this was sometime in the early 90s – Karen and I aren't sure, but we had a staff development day – team building I think – with Sue Dutton (no relation to John). The staff was asked to go into three groups and bring back a collage about working at Marigold. The efforts ranged in creativity and style, but in the end, Sue concluded that this was an organization that believed in food (top of the list), fellowship and fun. Not one group had included anything about work in the collage. Sue saw that as a positive aspect in that we succeeded at what we did because we had food, fun and fellowship. I also remember especially enjoying those early Standards and Services meetings because the Delia rep – Frances Andersen – always fed us – and the early Executive meetings, because Lilah Hunter was the cook – she was a Board member, but she always fed us too.

The team building workshop was just one of many attended over the years, some with our own Marigold staff and many at conferences and conventions over the years. Being a procrastinator and a collector, I have every ALC and CLA brochure from the first conference I attended. All lined up nicely in my credenza. Will have to recycle that to the big bin in the back of Marigold, but it was fun looking through them from time to time.



I consider it a great blessing that these vibrant women have been a part of my life and I will miss working with them very much. It is my heartfelt wish that they will visit my little hamlet in the mountains and spend some of that glorious retirement time with me.

Rose Reid, Bighorn Library in Exshaw



Rowena ...

Over the years I have discovered that I am:

- a lumper
- a “green”
- an avoider
- a 9 in control (out of 9)
- a collaborator
- a procrastinator
- an introvert
- a morning person (when teamed with Ms Markle)
- a camel (when teamed with Ms Calvin)
- a reflective observer
- someone who will do everything in her power to avoid a conflict

I am also

- kinesthetic, with auditory a close second
- adaptive
- ISTJ – although I really, really wanted to be an INTJ (intuitive)!
- Analytic/Autonomizing (whatever that means – a very old workshop)
- And a part of a group whose slogan is “leap and the net will appear”

But first and foremost, I am a librarian, a public servant, a believer in public space for the common good, a reader and a friend. Thank you to everyone who came here today – thank you for all the kind words, the laughter and the tears. A special congratulations to Karen. I think I am more excited about her celebrating 50 years in libraries than she is. I am really looking forward to the golden parties we are going to have in September as Karen looks back on 50 years.

As Bill Richardson said – you are never, not a librarian. I may be retiring, but I will always keep libraries in my heart.

“ Karen Labuik — June 20, 2009

I have had rich and rewarding years in library land, many of them here in Marigold. I went to library school after doing time in Prince Albert, and then came to Marigold, perhaps by destiny or maybe it was serendipity.

My first day, as a contract cataloguer, was attending a change workshop. Change is great word to describe Marigold – in the following 18 or 20 months, I became the Consultant, Audrey moved to La Ronge, we opened the expanded h.q. and I accepted Audrey’s position as Assistant Director.



Karen ...

Marigold is a dynamic organization within a vibrant library community that just keeps growing and changing. The process of creating TAL (The Alberta Library) was incredibly exciting for the whole province. TAL makes our lives easier with:

- its licensing of e-resources on our behalf
- APLEN
- Ask A Question e-reference service
- marketing initiatives
- and everything else it does for us

The opportunity to create TRAC (The Regional Automation Consortium) kept Marigold in the innovative column, for those keeping track. In 2001, I went to a Rural Libraries conference in Ohio and selected a session on consortia. Imagine my surprise and pride that the presenter used TRAC as his first example. His consortium was merely two systems in Michigan – and small ones, at that.

RISE is working well for Marigold and our two partner systems. Videoconferencing opens up hundreds of possibilities for our member libraries, for headquarters, for the Board and for our customers and potential customers. Ain't that great?

Marigold is close to achieving VISION 2010. I'll be thinking of you all next year as you create a new vision for the future.

When I began thinking about this moment, my mind really wanted to create a top ten reasons for working at Marigold list. I couldn't narrow it down to less than three or four dozen. My daughter says I'm lucky to love my job.

So instead of a humongous list, I'd like to toast a few people – actually it might be a couple of hundred!

- To Pat — my mentor and friend. I've learned a lot from you.
- To Rowena – great boss, great camper, great organizer and friend. Your mind and your grammar is better than mine.
- To Board members — for having solid governance and expecting us to be involved in professional associations. You make it easy to work here. Thank you, Lucille and Bob, for getting the ball rolling — and for not driving all the way to Saskatchewan.
- To Committee members — for your dedication and enthusiasm. You accomplish so much.
- To headquarters staff — you are exceedingly productive, fun-loving and caring.
- To the member libraries — our raison d'être.
- To my family, Kat, Michael, Clay and Lorraine — who get my schedule, accept my quirks and support my dreams. You keep me centered.

Thank you all. It's been a slice!



Libraries are often the underrated component of a society and yet they have a significant impact on whether the society survives – or not. The history of the Library goes back to at least the 3rd century B.C., and we who work in the field are charged with a truly amazing responsibility. In the cases of Rowena and Karen, they have carried out their responsibilities in a way that should make them proud. They have been “labourers” at the front end, builders and innovators in the middle and the face of experience at this point just before retirement. Awards and accolades mean less than the fact that they have kept the Chain of Libraries strong.

Enough of the serious stuff....though that what I just said is quite true, the fact is they had a blast in a job that is full of a million ways to keep a person hopping – and keep them young! They made friends in their travels around Library World – they shared a lot of laughs, many bottles of wine – and my personal favorite – great philosophical arguments over library issues. I loved having disagreements with either one because, regardless who “won” there was always a brain stretch involved. Any discussion always had the best interests of the Library at heart with the final result of pleasing our patrons and giving them the best service possible.

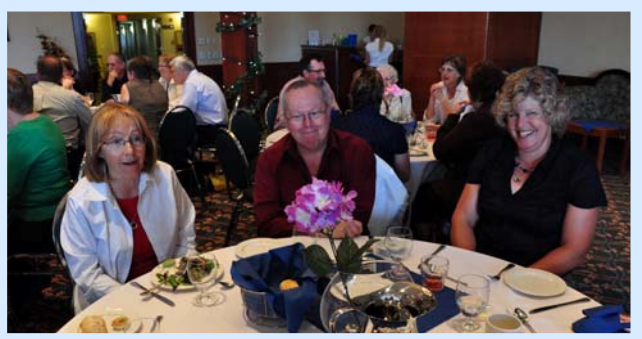
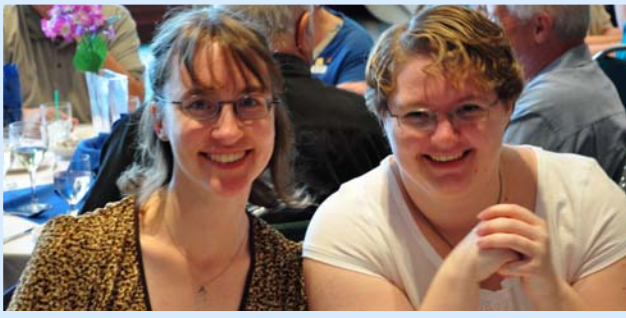
I’m sure it’s been quite an experience being at the helm of an organization such as Marigold. In some ways it’s great to have the power to implement change and in other ways it’s like being a duck during hunting season.

As one of many of the librarians over the past quarter decade, thanks for all your hard work and the very best wishes to you both on a retirement full of fun and dreams fulfilled.

And remember as Catherine Pulsifer said: "Retirement may be an ending, a closing, but it is also a new beginning."

Mary McKay, Hanna Library





Dates to Note

July 29 Executive conference call, 5:30
August 10 Advocacy, Drumheller
August 12 Board orientation, headquarters, 1:30
August 29 Marigold Board, Torrington

September 15 Standards & Services, Cereal
September 18-20 Alberta Arts Days
September 26 Governance, headquarters, 9:30

RISE workshops <http://wikirise.pbworks.com/>