PUTTING INFORMATION IN THE HANDS OF THE WORLD

ANNUAL REPORT
2007-2008

Disclaimer: Librarians Without Borders is not in any way associated with Médecins Sans Frontières / Doctors Without Borders
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OUR PHILOSOPHY

Vision
LWB envisions a global society where all people have equal access to information resources.

Mission
Librarians Without Borders (LWB) is a non-profit organization that strives to improve access to information resources regardless of language, geography, or religion, by forming partnerships with community organizations in developing regions.

Values
LWB holds a core set of values that form the basis of our existence and steer our activities:

- Librarians have a fundamental role as defenders of intellectual freedom and providers of equal access to information.
- Access to information is vital in supporting learning and literacy, reducing poverty, empowering citizens, and building healthy, strong communities.
- We do not draw cultural or linguistic boundaries—diversity is embraced; we will work with our partners in their own cultural context and in their own languages.
- Our efforts are enhanced by working collaboratively, internally as well as externally with the domestic and international community, to further our mutual goals.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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OUR PEOPLE

Board of Directors
Director Isola Ajiferuke board@lwb-online.org
Director Marsha Iverson board@lwb-online.org
Director Gina LaForce board@lwb-online.org
Director Sylvia Piggott board@lwb-online.org
Director Melanie Sellar board@lwb-online.org

Executive Officers
Co-Executive Director Ariel Lebowitz ariel.lebowitz@lwb-online.org
Co-Executive Director Rebecca Jansen rebecca.jansen@lwb-online.org
Membership Director Daniella Liebregts membership@lwb-online.org
Secretary Sandra Hodgson secretary@lwb-online.org
Treasurer Katherine McConnell treasury@lwb-online.org

Coordinators
Committee Liaison Sara Janes liaison@lwb-online.org
Publications Coordinator Loretta Melhado communications@lwb-online.org
Resource Centre Coordinators Laura Banfield research@lwb-online.org
Webmaster Susanna Galbraith webmaster@lwb-online.org

Committees
McGill 2007-2008
Chair: Nicole Gaston
Co-Chair: Katherine Hanz
Treasurer: Beth Goslett
Information Officer: Diane Michaud

UBC Committee 2007-2008
Co-Chair: Mary Julkowski
Co-Chair: Kelly McElroy
Co-Secretary: Morgan Traux
Co-Secretary: Krista Tolman
Treasurer: Kaedra Kirilenka
Technical Communications: Lee Losell

UWO 2007-2008
Co-Chair: Dana Deathe
Co-Chair: Jill Klaponski
Treasurer: Michelle Paradis
Media Rep: Shannon McGuire
MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Dear Members and Friends,

Thank you for keeping your interest in Librarians Without Borders (LWB) while the Board worked on getting a legitimate name under which to operate. As you know, we have been operating under Librarians Without Borders but in May 2007, we were sent a ‘cease and desist’ notice from Doctors Without Borders (DWB) / Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) who claimed to have registered as a trade mark, the nomenclature “Without Borders /sans Frontières”.

The Board is mindful that at the 2007 Annual General Meeting you instructed us to look for an alternate name since we were encountering some resistance from MSF. We are in the process of doing just that while investigating the possibility of continuing to use LWB, a name in which we had invested time and money and a name by which we had come to be known. The Board’s tactic was to research some names contributed by members so that we would be in a position to have a name to be brought to you at the 2008 Annual General Meeting for approval. We felt however, that it was worth trying to negotiate with MSF to allow us to register LWB and operate under that name. The Board therefore secured the help of a trademark lawyer to help to interpret the ‘cease and desist’ notice as well as to research some possible alternate names in case we are not allowed to use LWB.

At the time of writing this message, we are at a stage in our investigation and negotiation with MSF where we are considering accepting a co-existence agreement between Librarians Without Borders and MSF. This co-existence agreement that was offered by MSF, has some restrictions that are not serious enough to deter us from using the name to achieve our objectives of providing information-type assistance to the Angola Project. Rest assured we are as anxious as you are to see this happen.

It is understandable that some of our members are frustrated by the long delays in getting the Angola Project fully functional however, we hope you will understand that the Board must ensure that the organization has satisfied all legal requirements before it can operate as a nongovernmental organization. This requires formal letters patent, charitable status, liability insurance, and stringent accounting practices. Each of those requirements depends upon the official name of our organization. Successful fundrais-
ing is predicated on donor confidence and consistent branding, hence our eagerness to get the name settled and duly registered. We are close enough to an acceptable agreement with MSF and so we hope to be able to have the name ratified at the 2008 Annual General Meeting in November.

With a legal name secured we will be able to disburse some of the funds that we are holding in escrow for the Angola Project. In addition, we will be able to continue to plan our fundraising campaign, complete our legal liabilities requirements, and encourage former members to rejoin the organization. We are confident that 2009 will be a more productive year for the organization and we are dedicated to launching the Angola project as soon as possible.

As always, the Board welcomes your input on all aspects of the organization’s operations.

Very truly yours,

Isola Ajiferuke
Gina LaForce
Marsha Iverson
Sylvia Piggott
Melanie Sellar
MESSAGE FROM THE
CO-EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

Dear Friends of Librarians Without Borders,

The previous year has been one of many hurdles for the organization as we continued to deal with the “cease and desist order” that we received from Médecins Sans Frontières in May 2007. Despite the enthusiasm and energy of our volunteers and members, we have had to tread very lightly while we are in legal limbo and we appreciate everyone’s patience.

The organization has continued to work hard despite the circumstances of the past year. We took very seriously the resolution of our members at the 2007 AGM to move forward with a name change and pursued that avenue. We began this process by soliciting name suggestions from the membership in February 2008 and two potential new names (Library Seeds and Seeding Libraries) were cleared for use in an in-depth trademark search in July 2008. The LWB Board of Directors chose also to explore the possibility of a co-existence agreement with Médecins Sans Frontières and is currently continuing negotiations.

The next step in this process is for the membership to support a co-existence agreement or a name change, which will enable the organization to begin to move forward with our original goals. This vote should enable the name issue to be resolved during the 2008-2009 fiscal year and the organization will be able to pursue its original goal of supplying a nursing library in Huambo, Angola. We will also hopefully be able to continue with the organization’s development that has been put on hold including, but not limited to, obtaining charitable status and liability insurance.

There are a number of dedicated volunteers who are saying goodbye at this year’s AGM and we would like to sincerely thank them all for their time, effort and dedication. This organization would not exist without their commitment.

Our Membership Director, Daniella Liebregts is resigning her position this year. For many of you, she has been your point of contact with the organization as she disseminated information and replied personally to questions from our members. She has been with LWB since the beginning and she will be missed.
Susanna Galbraith, our Webmaster, will also relinquish her role this year. Susanna maintains communication with our members (since 2006) by creating our new Members’ Blog, posting to the RSS feed and continually updating and improving our website.

Katherine McConnell, the LWB treasurer for 2007-2008, will be leaving the Executive. She has brought an important new and fresh voice to the organization over the past year.

Daniella, Susanna and Katherine have all made invaluable contributions to the organization. We wish them all the best in their future endeavours.

We, Ariel and Rebecca, have chosen to leave the organization this year and extend our gratitude to all of our Executive and Coordinators who spent countless hours working to move LWB forward. Whether it was through meetings, researching potential new names for the organization or preparing a campaign to ship nursing materials to Angola, it was a pleasure to work with you all.

We would also like to acknowledge our appreciation to our members for their continued patience and support throughout the past year.

Finally, we wish the continuing and incoming Executive and Coordinators luck with the challenges and successes the coming year will bring.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Jansen and Ariel Lebowitz

Co-Executive Directors
YEAR IN REVIEW

Education and Outreach

I. Speaking Engagements and Publications

Our Secretary, Sandra Hodgson, spoke at the Northeast Regional Law Libraries meeting in Toronto on Oct 18th. The session, called “Libraries of Hope: When Professional Competencies and Social Responsibility Connect”, was an opportunity to introduce LWB to a new audience. The talk was well received and the audience expressed interest in the organization and our future. In fact, another speaker generously donated his honorarium to Librarians Without Borders.


Our Secretary, Sandra Hodgson, has been invited to speak at the March 2009 meeting of the Toronto Chapter of CASLIS. The focus of her talk will be Re-Energizing Librarians Without Borders.

The Executive is currently vetting two recent requests for newspaper articles about the organization, our mission in Angola, and access to information in the third world. We are excited by the possibilities for organizational recognition, and therefore, support for our vision of equal access to information.
II. Website

The website has undergone some exciting improvements in the past year. The most current news can now be found on the home page as well as through the RSS feed. In an effort to bring together the various people around the world who belong to Librarians Without Borders and to gain their feedback on our name change, a blog was created for members. The blog has been successful in generating discussion amongst members on our potential name change and we thank all those who have shared their thoughts. We look forward to generating future discussions on the activities of LWB with our members.

III. Resource Centre

The resource centre has continued to grow with the addition of some very valuable resources including open access scholarly material like SciELO Brazil and open access software such as eIFL-FOSS. Other book donating organizations such as Books With Wings, have been added and organizations such as CUSO have been included in our volunteering abroad section.

In the coming year we intend to continue to investigate and subsequently develop a content management system for indexing and retrieving LWB documents. As the organization grows we will refine the Resource Centre’s organization and respond to changing needs for information.

We thank those who have contributed ideas for the Resource Centre and look forward to hearing more suggestions in the future.
IV. Student Committees

In addition to our two continuing committees at McGill University and the University of Western Ontario we were pleased to welcome a third committee at the University of British Columbia. These three highly motivated committees were involved in successful fundraising, awareness events and social activities over the previous year. As always, we thank them for their continued support and look forward to the many activities that they plan for the coming year.

V. Membership Profile

Each year, our membership grows even larger and continues to build a strong community that shares a common goal - striving to improve access to information resources regardless of language, geography, or religion, by forming partnerships with community organizations in developing regions. Librarians Without Borders is currently 608 members strong. Members come from 54 different countries, including 6 new countries such as Bangladesh, Palestine, South Korea, Trinidad, Uganda, and the United Arab Emirates.

Approximately 312 of our 608 members have or are volunteering with a non-profit organisation. Many are volunteering with like-minded organisations as well as reaching out on their own and working selflessly on bringing resources to their own communities. LWB has profiled some of our members in our newsletter, The Compass, and will continue to do so in future issues.

We always welcome stories about our members successes, and look forward to hearing more from you in the future – suggestions and information about projects that have inspired you are especially appreciated!
International Distribution of Members

LWB is proud to have members from...

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Angola and the Sponsor-a-Book Project

We began this fiscal year with the expectation that our legal difficulties would be short-lived and materials for the Biblioteca Tutangi housed at the Centro Cultural Joao Paulo II would be on the way to Angola by the time the 2008 Annual General Meeting took place.

To achieve this goal the Executive has continued our contact and conversations with our community partner, the Archdiocese of Huambo, through our project liaison, Jorge Chimbinda. Jorge recently reported that he expects “to have a significant announcement” in the coming months. While progress has been slow and our legal difficulties more lengthy than previously expected, we are now at a turning point. The Board and Executive look forward to bringing you updates via our website and blog in the coming months.

Members of the Executive met and discussed the future of Librarians Without Borders and our mission in Angola with members of the Portuguese-Canadian community in the Toronto area. There is potential for assistance to the organization following the AGM.

The Executive has also been pursuing alternative avenues for obtaining the requested educational materials. We have begun investigation into translation of English-language materials, purchase of second-hand Portuguese language materials, and transportation partnerships.

The Board and Executive look forward to fulfilling our commitment to the Nursing students of Huambo, Angola throughout 2009.
Financial Summary

Revenues raised were a result of fundraisers held by our student committees, library associations, generous personal and corporate donations, LWB merchandise sales and honorariums from conference presentations.

Our expenses were modest and have been directed towards maintaining our operations. The bulk of expenditures were on fees for the trademark search for potential new names for LWB, as resolved by the membership at the 2007 AGM.

Below is a summary of our revenue sources and our areas of expenditures for our 2007 – 2008 fiscal period:

Revenue: $977.43

Expenditures: $458.49

Our $458.49 in expenditures includes …

Administration: URL domain renewals, PO Box rental, Corporations Canada fees, shipping
Name Change: Trademark search fees