

BCLTA

From: BCLTA [admin@bclta.org]
Sent: Wednesday, March 07, 2007 12:36 PM
To: BCLTA - Library Board Chairs (lib-bd-chairs@interchange.ubc.ca); BCLTA-Liaisons (bclta-liaisons@interchange.ubc.ca)
Subject: AskAway Update - March 2007

**To: Library Board Chairs and BCLTA Liaison
Please pass along to your boards.**

FYI - the note below provides an update on the AskAway province-wide reference service.

----- Original Message -----

From: "Michele Pye" <michepye@vpl.ca>
To: <bcla-list@lists.bclibrary.ca>
Sent: Wednesday, March 07, 2007 7:37 AM
Subject: [BCLA-List] AskAway Update - March 2007

AskAway Update; March 2007

HOW ARE WE DOING?

The first year target for public library questions was 1250 sessions per month. Well, we've already surpassed that times three! In January, the total number of sessions was 3900 sessions, which translates to about 4900 questions. If you want more details, a full report was distributed to Library Directors and public libraries have been provided with instructions on accessing their own statistics. Our thanks to Prince George Public Library for compiling the statistics. February's stats will be out soon.

WHAT DO USERS ASK?

No surprise, the questions are what you expect at any public library; be it in-person, at the desk, on the phone or virtually. Sample questions include:

- * Environmentally safe ways to dispose of garbage and waste substances
- * Traditional Italian desserts
- * How to build a hydro-electric turbine

WHO IS THE PUBLIC LIBRARY ASKAWAY COMMITTEE?

In the last bulletin, we provided the committee members; names. Now, here is what they do:

- * Represent the interests and concerns of their regions, sectors, and/or federations.
- * Advise the Coordinator on policy issues.
- * Bring forward issues and suggest initiatives.
- * Carry out research or projects and make recommendations.
- * Communicate regularly with colleagues.
- * Act as good will ambassadors; for AskAway.

The members of the Advisory Committee represent the diversity of public libraries; they are drawn from a cross-section of libraries, based on size, geographic location, and type. Only staff of libraries participating in

AskAway may be members of the committee. Seats are also set aside for representatives of the AskAway academic cooperative and for other library sectors. There are three permanent positions on the Committee - the Public Library Services Branch (PLSB), the lead contractor for the project's implementation (currently Vancouver Public Library), and the AskAway Coordinator. PLSB oversees committee member selection. Membership term is 2 years.

The Advisory Committee meets monthly. Meetings are managed by the Co-Chairs ; Kristen Andrews (replacing Deb Hutchison in 2007) and Michele Pye. Phil Hall, the AskAway Coordinator, oversees the day-to-day operations of AskAway.

POST-SECONDARY SERVICE

AskAway Academic is into its second successful term! All 27 publicly funded post-secondary institutions in BC are now participating to bring virtual reference to post-secondary students, staff and faculty around the province. The hours have been expanded to meet increasing patron demand for the service. Live chat reference will be available from January 15th to April 6th:

Sunday through Thursday, 10 am - 9 pm
Friday and Saturday, 11am - 5pm

Marketing materials, including posters, flyers, boilerplates and a fact sheet are available online for downloading and customizing for your institution's needs:

http://www.eln.bc.ca/vr_portal/marketing.html#toolkit

STILL HAVE QUESTIONS?

Public Libraries:

For scheduling, training, and day-to-day operations, contact:

Philip Hall - 604-331-4123 or philhall@vpl.ca

For general information, contact:

Kristen Andrews - 604-598-7371 or ktandrews@surrey.ca

Michele Pye - 604-331-4058 or michepye@vpl.ca

Post-Secondary Libraries:

For questions, contact Sunni Nishimura, BC ELN Virtual Reference Coordinator, at sunnin@eln.bc.ca or 604-268-6937. You can also visit the BC ELN Virtual Reference website <http://www.eln.bc.ca/view.php?id=1324>.
