



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

VIRL Board Chair wins prestigious advocacy award

Wednesday, April 25, Vancouver Island, BC: Barry Avis, Chair of the Vancouver Island Regional Library (VIRL) Board of Trustees, is the 2018 winner of the British Columbia Library Trustees Association (BCLTA) Advocate Award. The award recognizes the outstanding advocacy work Barry carried out on behalf of VIRL in 2017.

"Since being elected as Chair of the Board in 2017, Barry has stepped into his role with passion and forward-thinking ideas, and has been an absolute pleasure to work with," says VIRL's Executive Director Rosemary Bonanno. "I am thrilled that the BCLTA has recognized Barry's outstanding work by awarding him this prestigious prize. It could not have gone to a more deserving recipient."

In the last year, Barry worked with his fellow Trustees to write letters to MLAs, including the Premier, to remind our Provincial politicians of the innovative, trailblazing initiatives happening in our libraries, and how the brunt of the funding now falls on the shoulders of local taxpayers.

Barry is also a strong advocate for Indigenous community members. Under his leadership, the Board of Trustees now include a First Nations acknowledgment at the beginning of every Board and Executive Council meeting, and at the start of every meeting involving the public. He is an active supporter of VIRL's Indigenous Voices initiative, which invites Indigenous Elders to speak at branches up and down our library system. Barry encourages each Trustee to attend the Indigenous Voices events in their communities, and to invite other stakeholders, such as municipal councils and provincial MLAs, to these powerful events.

On the Capital Projects file, Barry is committed to ensuring that VIRL communities receive new and refurbished branches to suit their evolving needs. In 2017, he attended and spoke at every public consultation and open house.

Barry will receive his award at the BCLA Awards Luncheon on Friday, May 11.



Media Release

About Barry Avis

Barry is a longstanding and committed advocate for libraries and communities on Vancouver Island. He is currently in his second year as Chair of the Vancouver Island Regional Library (VIRL) Board of Trustees, and previously sat on VIRL's Board from 2003 – 2011.

At the municipal level, Barry has served the Town of Qualicum Beach as a Councillor on two occasions, from 2002 – 2011 and again from 2014 – present (his current term ends in 2018). He plans to seek re-election in 2018.

In 2013, he ran provincially for the NDP in the riding of Qualicum Beach.

For six years, Barry was a director for the Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities (AVICC), serving as the Vice President for two years. He is also the previous Chair of Arrowsmith Water Services and has sat on numerous committees during his time on Qualicum Beach Council.

Over the course of his career in the manufacturing sector, Barry spent 35 years working at the senior management level and held the role of Operations Control on two occasions at a pharmaceutical and technology company.

He and his wife have lived in Qualicum Beach for the past 18 years.

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