

MEMBERSHIP NEWS



BY KAREN ST.AUBIN
TLABC MEMBERSHIP DIRECTOR

As TLABC's Membership Director, Karen St. Aubin combines her passion for stewardship, relationship-building, and event management. Karen came to TLABC after almost 5 years with the Canadian Bar Association, BC Branch. She has more than 15 years of event and member-service experience in the non-profit world, previously in the arts and medical industries. Growing up in a military family and having moved every few years, she enjoys exploring new places and meeting new people (kind of perfect for member outreach, right?). Outside the office, Karen is the Immediate Past President (2018-19) of the International Live Events Association (ILEA), Vancouver chapter.

How do we learn new things? Through trial and error. As much as we don't want to admit that *we* make errors, one of the only things we can say with certainty is that *we all* do make mistakes. Too many of us view a mistake or setback as a black mark that we can never erase. Shouldn't we shift that thinking? Why don't we think of making mistakes as a learning opportunity, an occasion to reflect and reinvent, to improve. When something doesn't work the first time, why don't we think of it as a message that something needs to change.

I'm pretty sure that every person we admire and look up to failed many times before they became the successful person they are now. When Thomas Edison was questioned about his many failures along the way to inventing the lightbulb, he said, "I have not failed. I've just found 10,000 ways that won't work." Those who we respect and admire are those who weren't afraid to try, try, and try again.

With failure comes pain, and it's our instinct is to protect ourselves from pain. It's easier – and safer – to stay within our comfort zone, to stick with what we know. The staff of TLABC has been experiencing this push outside of our comfort zone recently with some new technology. We were all excited about transitioning from our familiar teleconferencing to a slick videoconference system. There are so many benefits to the new system, but there's a big learning curve that comes along with it – and pain when we forget exactly how to make it work. We're still learning, and we know we're going to make some mistakes as we figure out the best way to use this new technology efficiently and seamlessly for Committee and Board of Governors meetings, webinars, and more. We started using the system internally for staff meetings, and not surprisingly, experienced some bumps along the way. But we tried it within the safe place of our staff team, and gave ourselves permission to fail as we learned (and continue to!). It's worth the effort – and pain – of trial and error as we know it's going to make the remote access experience so much better for you, our members.

I hope you consider the TLABC community YOUR safe place. A place where you can ask questions, make suggestions, and continue along your path of professional growth. There are many resources available to you of which I encourage you

to take advantage. One of these resources is the listservs (email information exchange). **The Trial Practice listserv is a complimentary member benefit. If you aren't already signed up for this - what are you waiting for?** Many members tell us the listserv is their most valuable benefit. With the strike of a few keys, you have instant access to your fellow TLABC members – from new lawyers to seasoned trial masters who practice all areas of law. Exchange information and assistance on experts, trial tips, settlement strategies, referrals and more. TLABC also has specialty practice-area listservs including Family Law, Criminal Defence, Corporate Commercial, Estates, Plaintiff-Only Personal Injury and Plaintiff-Only Medical Negligence, as well as a listserv for Paralegals/Legal Assistants. You can find the User Agreement forms on the TLABC website, or get in touch with me by email or phone for more information or to subscribe.

The next generation of lawyers are the future of this association, and one of the ways TLABC supports them is with new lawyer-specific programming. We host a six session series called *Trial By Fire No More* at the TLABC office at no cost. Members and non-members are encouraged to attend to learn and network, and build the foundation of their TLABC community. The third annual New Lawyers Retreat will take place 26-28 April 2019 in Whistler. Law students, articling students and lawyers up to and including 5 years of call are invited to attend this fun and educational weekend retreat. In addition to formal education presentations, there is a 2-hour mentorship workshop with seasoned lawyers. Attendees from previous years' retreats have shared how unique and valuable the networking experience is as they build their professional connections. Events such as these offer all our members a safe place to ask questions, to learn from peers, to talk about what has worked and what hasn't, effective strategies and what to avoid – truly trial and error.

The actress Carrie Fisher once said, "Stay afraid, but do it anyway. What's important is the action. You don't have to wait to be confident. Just do it and eventually the confidence will follow." It's never an error to step out of your comfort zone and try something new. You may try and fail, but it's never an error to fail. Rather, it's another step forward on your way to success. **V**