



PLR e-NEWS

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The new Chair and Vice-chair of the Public Lending Right Commission

At its recent Annual General Meeting on 13 June 2004, PLR Commission members elected **Carole David** for a two year mandate as their new Chair. Carole David is a poet and fiction writer from Montréal. Her first book of poetry, *Terroristes d'Amour* won the Emile Nelligan prize, while her most recent collection, *La maison d'Ophélie*, was shortlisted for the 1999 Governor General's Literary Awards. Carole is very active in the writing and publishing milieu, and has participated in book fairs at home and abroad. She has just published a collection of poetry for adolescents entitled *Averses et réglisses noires*. Carole replaces Joan Clark who was PLR Chair from 2002 to 2004.

At the same meeting, **David Copelin**, representing the Playwrights Guild of Canada, was elected as Vice-Chair of the PLR Commission. David Copelin is a playwright and dramaturg whose adaptation of Alfred Jarry's *Ubu Rex* has been produced all over North America, most notably at Yale Repertory Theatre and the Shaw Festival. He replaces Carole David who was PLR Vice-Chair from 2002 to 2004.

New members of the Public Lending Right Commission

The PLR Commission also named two new writer representatives to the board: **Louise Halfe**, Sky Dancer, from Saskatoon, SK, a full-time author with two prize-winning books of poetry to her credit, and **Stefan Psenak**, from Gatineau, QC, a full-time writer having published 11 titles, including poetry, plays, works of fiction and two young adult novels.

Funding

The Public Lending Right Commission put forward a request for \$1.6 million to the government this past February. This request was based on funding required to implement a sliding scale plan, a system conceived of by the Commission to address continuing growth of authors and titles in the program. Adding this funding to our base budget of \$8.9 million would provide an overall payment budget to authors of \$10.5 million. Because of the recent election, it is unlikely we will hear of the outcome of this request until later in the year.

Quick facts

- Once you have registered your title(s) in PLR, it is not necessary to re-register each year. You need to return the PLR File Update form to the PLR office only if you have a new title to register (by 1 May of each year) or if you have moved.
- We are always looking for ways to find efficiencies in the PLR program. This past January, we learned that Revenue Canada no longer requires organizations to issue T4As for payments under \$500. We saw this as a way to save time and money in the PLR cheque mailing. So, as of the February 2004 payments, and until further notice, we will not be sending you a T4A for your PLR payment if it is below \$500. You must still claim this amount on your income tax. It's just that you don't require a form from us to substantiate the amount. For your ease of reporting, we record the amount you received in the previous year on your Title Earning Summary included with your cheque.
- At this stage of the PLR cycle, the PLR staff is in the process of verifying the eligibility of the 4,310 titles registered this past spring, as well as preparing to send these titles to the sampling libraries. For those who have registered a new title this year, please be advised that you will not hear from us again until February 2005, as the PLR cycle takes a full year to complete.

Commission's plan to control spending on program growth

At its June 2004 meeting, the Commission approved in principle the sliding scale plan. The basic principle of this plan is that, as the years of a title's registration in the program progress, the hit rate for that title would decline. It would also restore a \$40 hit rate (the rate in force in the first 7 years of the program) for a period of five years following the registration of a title in the PLR program.

The Commission recommended implementation contingent on a further report of the sliding scale plan at its December 2004 meeting. This report will take into account the progress of the funding request to the Department of Canadian Heritage; it will address concerns raised by the national writer's associations as well as assess the impact on writers based on the new library sampling model. This new sampling model will see the Commission sampling only in public libraries, including a certain number of province-wide catalogues.

Changing your address via e-mail

We appreciate the efficiency of receiving your address changes by e-mail – we have to ensure however that no fraudulence occurs in this process. For this reason, when you are sending an address change by e-mail, we ask that you please include your author number (the 5 or 6-digit number on all your PLR forms), your old address, as well the title of one of your registered books. This may seem like a lot to ask, but we need to ensure integrity in our address change system. Thank you. Please note that it is not possible to change your address from the PLR web site.

Let us know . . .

Let us know if there are other topics you would like addressed in future newsletters.
We are at your service!