

## President's Report 2021

Good evening everyone. Thanks for calling in. I apologize in advance if my son gets a little loud. He is almost 2 months old and just has no respect for anyone. What nerve.

This year has come and gone relatively quickly. One thing that has remained the same is the dedication of the PAL staff. Despite being closed for a good chunk of it, the work continued as Derek and Mark recorded tirelessly. Further, they have all but perfected the use of the Obi recording software. They've reached the point where they've been able to remotely teach a few of our more tech savvy volunteers to use it in their own homes and give them support when they run into the occasional problem.

Mark is slowly easing volunteers back into the rotation as well. There are 5 volunteers that have returned to regular in-office reading. There will be more over time, but we are taking it slow to make sure everyone remains safe and within federal, provincial and municipal COVID guidelines. For the time being, this is the new normal.

Once again, the PAL family has blown us away. The last fiscal year saw over \$157,000 in donations. It is simply astounding. We truly cannot thank you enough.

I'm sad to say that this year, the board says goodbye to Mala Naraine. We will miss her very much as she always spoke her mind and brought a different perspective to the conversation. Mala will, of course, remain in the PAL orbit as a client and friend. I will also be stepping down as president. As I have obligations as a new father, I will be taking on a less intensive role on the board.

On a related note, the nominations committee has put our current vice president, Danielle McLaughlin, forward as the nominee for the position of president. As her term as VP was not finished, I will take over for the interim and vacate in 2022 to continue the 2-year staggered terms of the executive positions.

The timing on this is interesting, as our first interactions with her were to talk to us about policies and the ever-looming ONCA (Ontario Not-for-profit Corporations Act). ONCA is being proclaimed in October, so it is fitting that she takes the reins to take us further into ONCA compliance. I am extremely confident that things will move upward and onward with her guidance.

As Carmela Dutra said, "The family that reads together, grows together." Finally, I want to extend a massive thank you to the volunteers, staff, clients, donors, board and everyone else in the PAL family. Thank you.