

VLA News

February 2020

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Back Issues

Did you miss previous issues of the *VLA News*? Don't despair! You can read them on the VLA website!

President's Letter

by Amy Olsen

Dear VLA members,

It is always an exciting time to be in library work in Vermont. There is rarely a dull moment in our communities, no matter how big or small.

The same is true for VLA. Amanda Merk, the VLA Vice President/President Elect has resigned. She's written a submission for this newsletter, and we wish her well in her new endeavors. As of the writing of this letter, VLA is working on a replacement for the VP position, and while we are not prepared to make an announcement we are certain that we will connect VLA with the right person to move us forward. Any appointment will be officially voted on at our membership meeting in May at the Vermont Library Conference.

Thank you to the VLA membership team! Jessamyn West, Amy McMullen, and Susan Smolinsky have worked very hard to get our Wild Apricot "Magical Membership Software" up and running.

You may have heard that there is a draft bill in the Vermont Senate Committee on Education to form a working group on the status of libraries in Vermont. Here is the current draft as it was introduced in committee on Tuesday, January 21, 2020. Of course, it sits in committee now, so we will wait to see if the bill moves further. VLA will have responsibilities directed by this bill, so we will all be interested to learn more.

<https://legislature.vermont.gov/Documents/2020/Docs/BILLS/S-0281/S-0281%20As%20Introduced.pdf>

If you are interested in becoming more involved in VLA, please consider leading a special interest group. We have openings in tech services, youth services, sustainability, and health info. These groups can meet as roundtables and report to the VLA board so that we can make sure that we are making the best decisions for our membership.

I say it a lot, but mean it: I feel very lucky to be part of such a supportive group of librarians in Vermont and look forward to VLA

[VLA News back issues](#)

Substitute Pool

Check out what's happening with the [Vermont Library Substitute Pool!](#)

Employers: 43
Substitutes: 82

Libraries with access to pool:

Addison 2
Bennington 1
Caledonia 1
Chittenden 11
Essex 0
Franklin 3
Grand Isle 1
Lamoille 2
Orange 2
Orleans 1
Rutland 1
Washington 7
Windham 2
Windsor 9

Volunteers may be able to work in more than one county. Availability in pool by county:

Addison 27
Bennington 8
Caledonia 16
Chittenden 57
Essex 10
Franklin 22
Grand Isle 14
Lamoille 26
Orange 18
Orleans 7
Rutland 11
Washington 30
Windham 14
Windsor 14

Check out the [VLA Job Postings](#)

Meet Your Leaders

VLA is here to help you. The people who make up the Executive Board, Section & Committee leaders and Representatives volunteer their

being on the forefront of statewide library work.

Respectfully submitted,

Amy Olsen
VLA President
Director, [Lanpher Memorial Library](#)
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Vermont Library Association
PO Box 803
Burlington, VT 05402

Connect With Us:

Website: www.vermontlibraries.org
Facebook: www.facebook.com/VTLibraryAssociation
Twitter: [twitter.com/@VLAlib](https://twitter.com/VLAlib)
Instagram: [instagram.com/vlplib](https://www.instagram.com/vlplib)
LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/groups/Vermont-Library-Association

VLA membership now self-serve!

by Jessamyn West

The Vermont Library Association is moving to Wild Apricot membership software, allowing VLA members to manage their own payments, renewals, and contact information. Don't worry though, we're still here to help! You can renew an existing VLA membership or sign up for a new one by going to the Vermont Library Association website (<https://www.vermontlibraries.org>) and clicking "Join or Renew" under the membership menu. There's also a new membership FAQ (<https://www.vermontlibraries.org/membership/membership-faq>) with more information. Unlike previous years, we now have rolling memberships; sign up whenever you want and get a full year's membership from whenever you pay for it. Feel free to contact us with any questions: vermontlibrariesmembers@gmail.com.

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Vice President's Letter

by Amanda Merk

Dear Vermont library colleagues,

time for VLA because they feel that it is important to be involved in an organization that benefits Vermont librarians and their profession as a whole. Below is a list of your VLA leaders (for more contact information, see the [VLA Leadership Directory](#)). Let them know if you would like to be involved in VLA, too!

Executive Board

President:

[Amy Olsen](#)

Vice President/President Elect:

vacant

Past President:

[Cindy Weber](#)

Secretary:

[Marie Schmukal](#)

Treasurer:

[Susan Smolinsky](#)

Section Representatives

College & Special Libraries

Section President:

[Christie Silkotch](#)

Organizes workshops and assists college and special librarians.

Membership Chair:

[Amy McMullen](#)

Maintains membership roster.

Public Libraries Section

President:

[Loona Brogan](#)

Organizes workshops and assists public librarians.

Trustees & Friends President:

[Dana Rozycki](#)

Organizes workshops and assists library trustees.

Committees

Government Relations Chair:

Vacant

Assists libraries with connections to legislators.

Intellectual Freedom Chair:

[Mary Danko](#)

I would like to thank the VLA leadership and members for the opportunity to be of service as VLA Vice President in 2019. I have been an active member of ALA since I attended library school in 2000. It has been heartening to see the Vermont chapter of ALA thrive and change as the national library field changes and moves forward. In a few months I will be relocating to continue my library career in another state, so I need to resign from my position as VP of VLA. I will, of course, remain active in ALA, and I look forward to connecting with Vermonters at our national ALA conferences.

Sincerely,

Amanda S. Merk, MSLIS

Former VLA Vice President

Former Director, [Norman Williams Public Library](#)

Vermont Library Conference 2020

by Cory Stephenson

The 126th Vermont Library Conference

"Libraries Are For Everyone:

The E's of Vermont Libraries"

Thursday, May 28, 2020

Killington Resort

Have you ever been asked to describe your library and find yourself at a loss of how to start explaining all that it provides for the community? Do you still have patrons and nonusers alike viewing libraries as stacks of books and shushing staff? Then join us for a full day of workshops, networking, exhibitors, and lunch as we explore "Libraries are for Everyone: The E's of Vermont Libraries."

Designed to help overcome the current reality/perception gap that exists around libraries as well as help you tailor your description of all that you and your colleagues do to the audience listening, ALA recently coined The E's of Libraries trademark to promote public awareness of today's libraries (<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/pp/e>). The five E's are: Education, Employment, Entrepreneurship, Empowerment, and Engagement. Programs at VLC 2020 will relate to these E's and much more. We are delighted to open the day with remarks from Alan Fishel, a board member of United for Libraries and chair of The E's of Libraries® task force. In addition, Alan frequently provides training on a variety of topics, including how to improve your advocacy and negotiation skills.

Your VLC 2020 committee is: Cory Stephenson, chair (Moretown Public Library); Cindy Weber, VLA Past President (Stowe Free Library); Chenfang Yang (Vermont Law School); Amanda Perry (Winooski Memorial Library); Abby Adams (Platt Memorial Library);

Assists librarians with challenges to library materials and issues related to patron privacy.

Scholarship & Awards Chair:

[Lisa Milchman](#)

Oversees VLA awards and scholarships.

Vermont Library Conference Chair:

[Cory Stephenson](#)

Roundtables

Inclusion Chair:

[Bridget Stone-Allard](#)

Supports libraries in providing better service to diverse populations.

Personnel Chair:

[Sarah Snow](#)

Assists librarians with questions related to personnel issues.

VLA Sub Pool Coordinator:

[Nancy Tusinski](#)

Technical Services Chair:

(inactive)

Organizes workshops & assists technical services librarians.

Youth Librarians President:

[Caitlin Corless](#)

Organizes workshops and assists youth librarians.

Archivist:

[Paul Carnahan](#)

VLA News Editor:

[Janet Clapp](#)

Webmasters:

[Tessa Johnson](#)

[Jessamyn West](#)

Representatives

ALA Councilor:

vacant

Represents Vermont in the national organization.

NELA Representative:

[Amy Williams](#)

Represents Vermont in the New England Library Assoc.

Michelle Beaulieu (Highgate Library & Community Center); and Toni Fortini Josey (Burnham Memorial Library Trustee).

Details on our lunchtime keynote speaker will be shared soon, and registration will open in a few weeks. For further information and updates, please visit our website, <https://www.vermontlibraries.org/conference2020> or contact the VLC 2020 committee at vermontlibraryconference@gmail.com. See you in Killington!

Cory Stephenson
VLA Conference Committee Chair
Library Director, [Moretown Memorial Library](#)
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Burlington, VT 05402

College & Special Libraries

by Christie Silkotch

Hi all,

Happy winter! We are looking for someone to join the VLA College & Special Libraries Section leadership for a two-year term starting in May. Watch the listservs for details! In the meantime, please feel free to reach out to me and/or Chenfang for more details.

Here are some updates submitted from our group:

Champlain College:

Emily Crist has transitioned to the permanent position of library director of Champlain College.

As of December, Beth Dietrich joined the team as Champlain's new outreach and engagement librarian.

Individual Updates:

Jane Kearns, former director of Hartness Library, Vermont Tech/CCV started a new position as director of Dorothy Alling Memorial Library in Williston, VT in November 2019. Having worked on Vermont Tech's Williston campus for some of her 10 years at Hartness Library, she said she already felt a connection to the local community and is enjoying the transition from academic to public library.

Saint Michael's College:

VT Dept. of Libraries
Representative to the Board:
[Jason Broughton](#)

ATTN: Gmail Users

If you are viewing this using Google Mail, please note your *VLA News* has been clipped by the mail service.

To finish reading the issue, scroll to the bottom of the message and click the link:

[Message Clipped] [View Entire Message](#)

Other mail clients should receive VLA News in its entirety, but if not, please [let us know](#).

Personnel Changes

John Payne said farewell to Durick Library at the end of July after serving as director of the library for thirteen years. During his time at Saint Michael's, John oversaw numerous strategic initiatives and was a force for positive change. John is now director of libraries at Saint Lawrence University in upstate New York.

At the beginning of August, longtime Saint Michael's librarian Laura Crain became director of library & information services.

In December, Beth Dietrich, who was associate director for research and instruction, moved across the river into the position of faculty librarian, outreach & engagement at Champlain College. Beth is a dynamic and creative research and instruction librarian, and while at Durick implemented a host of student engagement activities and services. Champlain is extremely fortunate to have her.

Steve Burks, formerly research & instruction librarian, retired in spring 2019. But he's back! Steve is working on a part-time basis for the spring semester providing research and instruction services to STEM disciplines.

Other News

Thanks to the generosity of Michael (SMC '58) and Geraldine Ready, the archives installed movable compact shelving this summer, which has increased the capacity of the archives by more than 50%. The archives currently house the records from the first 115 years of the college and the first 175 years of the Society of Saint Edmund.

Vermont Genealogy Library:

The Vermont Genealogy Library (<https://vtgenlib.org>), currently in the Dupont Building at [377 Hegeman Avenue](#), Fort Ethan Allen, Colchester, Vermont, is moving sometime in March 2020 to Pinewood Plaza, [57 River Road \(Rte. 117\)](#), [Essex Junction, Vermont](#).

Vermont Law School:

Jennifer Sekula started her new job at the Vermont Law School library in December, as the new reference and academic outreach librarian.

Jennifer joins us from the William & Mary Law School library, where she most recently served as the head of access services and foreign and international law specialist. Having worked in multiple capacities at the William & Mary Law School library since 1999, Jennifer brings a deep range of legal research and library expertise. She has been active in the law library community throughout her career, serving on a number of committees and publishing on a variety of topics.

Jennifer holds a B.S. in Biology and Environmental Science from the College of William & Mary, a J.D/M.S.E.L. from [Vermont](#) Law School, and an M.L.S. from The Catholic University of America. We are thrilled that Jennifer is returning to South Royalton.

Best,

Christie Silkotch
VLA College & Special Libraries Section President
Science and Data Librarian
[David W. Howe Memorial Library, University of Vermont](#)
csilkotc@uvm.edu
802-656-8130

Intellectual Freedom

by Mary Danko

The VLA Intellectual Freedom Committee (IFC) has been working on several projects:

- The John Swan Lecture for this spring. (A save-the-date email will be coming soon!)
- Updating the Vermont library privacy statute (<https://legislature.vermont.gov/statutes/chapter/22/004>)
- Resolution on Library Fines
- Program submission for the spring conference

If you are interested in helping with any of these projects, please send me an email. We are always looking for more help. Also, if you think there is an area that the IFC should focus on or know about, we want to know that, too.

This year's Banned Books Week will be held September 27-October 3 (<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/bbooks/banned>). It is never too early to start planning your displays and programming. In the past Vermont libraries have done some super creative things and this year we want to amplify the amazing work you do.

Mary Danko
VLA Intellectual Freedom Committee Chair
Director, [Fletcher Free Library](#)
mdanko@burlingtonvt.gov

Public Libraries

by Loona Brogan

FIGGY (The Franklin Grand Isle Bookmobile) RETURNS!

In 2002, the Franklin County Early Childhood Advisory Council was awarded an early learning opportunities grant. Among the requests

in that grant proposal: funding to launch a bookmobile – a traveling library whose purpose would be to bring books and fun to all the nooks and crannies of northwestern Vermont. In the spring of 2003, that funding became a reality, and deb Grennon became the literacy coordinator of the Bookmobile, establishing programs and driving the truck throughout Franklin County.

Over its first 17 years, the Bookmobile grew to include Grand Isle County, and participated in numerous community events. With her helpers, deb expanded FIGGY's programming over time, from the daily story time on the route to summer programming for kids. Along the way, the Bookmobile also managed to pick up new and interesting characters: drivers, AmeriCorps VISTAs, Vermont Associates, and endless book lovers. The Franklin Grand Isle Bookmobile was "traveling miles to see your smiles."

The school district that supervised FIGGY's finances, operations, and mission merged last year with another district to become Missisquoi Valley School District. It was determined that its role overseeing FIGGY could not continue. In July of 2019, Vermont Adult Learning (VAL) became the organization's new administrative and fiscal agent, and the work of becoming an independent 501(c)3 organization began. A board was formed with Eric Peterson, regional manager of the VAL district serving Franklin and Grand Isle Counties; Tim Smith, mayor of St. Albans and director of the Franklin County Industrial Development Corporation; and deb Grennon, former director of FIGGY and parent educator, now a resource advisor at CCV's Northern Lights (the hub of the professional development system for early childhood and after-school professionals in Vermont). They recruited this writer (Loona Brogan) as the new executive director and Hadley Priebe as marketing director this past fall. We're both very excited to relaunch FIGGY, serving children, child care providers, and parents, as well as expanding to partner with area public and school libraries. We aspire to work with human service agencies and community groups to increase opportunities for growth, healing, and/or increased economic well-being for individuals of all ages as well as families.

We're participating in the *Franklin Libraries are Really Excellent* (FLARE) initiative to co-produce an end-of-summer reading celebration morphing pieces of Killington Library's successful Fairy Tale Festival with the national summer reading theme "Imagine Your Story," emphasizing storytelling traditions of the cultures represented in Franklin and Grand Isle counties. We've scheduled our first co-produced program with a public library at Highgate Library & Community Center: a STUFFED ANIMAL SLEEPOVER at the end of February. We'll offer our bookmobile to area libraries looking for a program hook. We could come to run an event over the summer, or to build excitement for a library card sign-up week event in September, we can bring the empty vehicle for you to stock with a selection from YOUR COLLECTION, and staff with YOUR STAFF-- parked prominently at YOUR LIBRARY to draw new patrons in to discover all their public library has to offer. We are asking every public library in our region to hire us for a program: we desperately need funding from many sources to sustain this relaunch.

Another way the public library community can help is by passing on some of your donated materials already in your collection for us to supplement our adult and youth materials as well as to give away at “POP UP” library access at annual events, our region’s four food shelves and grocery stores, recovery support group meetings, and (hopefully) at park and rides, and the area’s major employers at the work day’s end (or shift change). You could volunteer one day a month on the bus this summer. Or help us recruit a Grand Isle county board member. We’re fortunate to have a regional planning commission staffer, two child care providers, and a representative from public education who have joined Eric, Tim, and deb; we have room for one or two more board members.

We’re bringing books and stories for everyone; for braver minds and stronger hearts. Look for updates on Facebook (please, like us there!) while we get our new website up and running, or reach out to me at director@fgibookmobile.org to connect and/or partner with this exciting development in the northwestern-most corner of our state!

Loona Brogan
VLA Public Libraries Section Chair
Executive Director, FIGGY
director@fgibookmobile.org

Scholarship & Awards

by Lisa Milchman

Mid-winter through early spring is a busy time of the year for the VLA Scholarship and Awards Committee, and this season we have an additional exciting announcement. There is a new award to add to our current menu of acknowledgements – the Friend of the Year Award! All details are not yet worked out, but look for more information to be available soon at www.vermontlibraries.org/award, where you can also find out about the nominating procedures and particulars of all the yearly VLA awards. All nomination letters and supporting materials should be electronically submitted by April 1.

Also on our docket is the 2020 spring Professional Development Grant (<https://www.vermontlibraries.org/scholarship-committee/vla-professional-development-grant>). This grant provides recipients with up to \$250 for a professional development program such as a workshop, conference, or continuing education course. The deadline for applications for this grant is March 7 (with winners notified on April 1). Grantees are expected to “give back” by writing a short summary of their learning experience. Look for the summaries from previous grantees at <https://www.vermontlibraries.org/scholarship-committee>.

Last, but certainly not least, we are putting out the call for the names of librarians who have given significant years of service to Vermont libraries. As per custom, recognition and a token of

esteem will be granted to those VLA member librarians who have retired in the past year or who will soon retire after working in a public or academic Vermont library for ten years or more. Please submit the names of colleagues that you know should be acknowledged in this way.

Reminders to apply, nominate, and acknowledge are sent through the various listservs serving our library communities, but it's never too early to think about those inspiring and wonderful librarians, trustees, advocates, and now . . . Friends, deserving of our recognition.

Lisa Milchman
VLA Scholarship & Awards Committee Chair
Assistant Director, [Norwich Public Library](#)
lisa.milchman@norwichlibrary.org
802-649-1184

New England Library Association

by Amy Williams

Happy January! The November NELA meeting focused largely on streamlining the meeting and report structure to allow the meetings to focus more strongly on collaborative discussion and decision-making, a new sleek reporting form, and a new easy way to submit reports. NELA also hosted a tech training in January for how to use the shared Google Drive and other features. New England Library Association administrator Bob Schier reminded us that NELA has a new phone number: 413-323-5925.

-NELA 2020 conference meetings are underway! This year's conference will have more morning keynotes and a change to the meal structure so that lunches can become half networking time and half meetings. The theme for this year is: "Creativity Takes Courage."

-NELLS II, coming in August! NELLS II is for people with 15-ish (not strict!) or more years of experience in libraries who are looking to reconnect and refresh themselves and their roles. This year, the theme of the retreat is strongly inspired by *Palaces for the People* (Eric Klinenberg, 2018). It will explore the ways in which libraries provide (and could provide) valuable social infrastructure for their communities. Anyone can apply to NELLS II; admission is not competitive, simply first-come, first-served until the program is full. It will again be facilitated by Maureen Sullivan, Krista McLeod, and Mary Etter. The updated description, application, and details will be up on the NELA page (<http://nelib.org>) shortly.

Some exciting things happening in other New England libraries:

-New Hampshire Library Association reports a legislative move to legally require background checks for every program presenter in libraries and other public institutions. These would need to be per

program, with many presenters being repeatedly checked, and furthermore the cost would fall to the libraries themselves. The institutions have joined together to argue against the unfeasibility of this legislation.

-Rhode Island Library Association reports that they have been advised to hire a PR firm in their campaign against Macmillan. It is hoped that increased public pressure would move the attorney general's office to move to legal action.

-Massachusetts Library Association reports it has voted to support a cataloging project intended to make indigeneous materials more visible and accessible through more defined and representative subject headings.

-NELA has at least two board openings coming up, including junior director and secretary--if you're interested, please contact me!

Amy Williams, MLS
VLA Representative to NELA
Assistant Director, [Rutland Free Library](#)
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amy@rutlandfree.org
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Evolution at the Vermont Department of Libraries and the Small and Rural Libraries Roundtable

by Loona Brogan

The Vermont Department of Libraries has undergone a profound transformation over the ten years that I have worked as a librarian.

Many of us remember that there used to be several regional libraries and regional library consultants. All have closed, and every one of those consultants has since retired or moved on.

The department (with a 15% smaller budget) was moved first onto one floor from three at the Capitol complex; the law library went to South Royalton (housed now at Vermont Law School), and then the smaller department was itself relocated to the Vermont Historical Society. We said goodbye to Martha Reid and then Scott Murphy and re-welcomed Jason Broughton when he was promoted from assistant to then interim, and finally to permanent state librarian in 2019.

Joy Worland, Lara Keenan, Joshua Muse, and Vince Livoti provide direction as statewide consultants, each with their own assigned focus. Jennifer Johnson is holding down the fort in the youth services arena while a new youth services librarian is sought; two

have come and gone since the inimitable Grace Greene left the position in 2014. And we've recently welcomed Janette Shaffer as the assistant state librarian for library advancement. A handful of others work, mostly behind the scenes, to support the department's mission, and while I won't list each name I will say they all give their best to aid our efforts in the library landscape of Vermont and I salute them.

It is in this context that the Small and Rural Libraries Roundtable has emerged. The department can be seen as a living organism that has thrived as well as struggled in a variety of circumstances and challenges over time, not unlike the "institution of public libraries" itself. Its members strive to respond to the evolving landscape of libraries in general and specifically in Vermont. As I've noted in a past article, more than half of the people who live in Vermont live in small towns and are served by small, or "very small" libraries. Addressing the challenges unique to these smaller public libraries is becoming a more visible objective of the department, for which I am grateful.

On the 22nd of January, a handful of librarians met in person, joined by as many who participated remotely, and took part in the first of what we hope will be a quarterly roundtable gathering to discuss, brainstorm, identify, and solve the struggles we face as small-town Vermont librarians. Most states have county and/or regional library systems, and many offer direct financial support to public libraries at the state level. This is not true in Vermont, for better and for worse. One third of the public libraries in our state are not even run by their town government--again, for better and for worse. Governments may provide employees with good benefits and decent wages, but they are restricted by important rules, and slow to change. It's a package deal, then stir in "politics." It has been suggested that "political pressure" is antithetical to impartial librarianship. Catch-22.

So what did we talk about? We talked about burnout. We talked about poor wages and lack of benefits and high turnover. People brought up the difficulty of being supervised by volunteer trustees who usually don't have a current understanding of library science or library trends. We talked about holding 2nd and 3rd jobs because so many of these positions are not full-time. It came up that it's difficult to recruit board members, especially when they're tasked with bookkeeping and payroll and HR management in addition to the traditional tasks of fundraising, advocacy, and strategic planning. Oh, yes, we talked about strategic planning. And unpaid hours worked. And patron privacy. And volunteer staffing, and volunteer skill sets. And expectations. Did I mention that we talked about burnout? We talked about not having enough money. And about the long waiting lines for digital downloads of popular titles on Overdrive/GMLC. And then more about not having enough money.

I don't want to forget to mention that the conversation was grounded in a unanimous understanding that we do the work because it's the most satisfying work any of us can imagine having. I call it "The best job and the worst job in the world." Because especially in the one-person libraries that contribute to Vermont's image as the quaintest place in the whole USA, the work is at least

a lot of nights and weekends and at the most a 24-7 on call responsibility.

Janette Shaffer and Joy Worland of the department did a terrific job facilitating the conversation and helping us figure out where the state might be able to improve the situation and which issues are more appropriately Vermont Library Association's role as an advocacy organization to address. And VLA, in case you didn't know, is also a volunteer organization. We have a difficult time recruiting board members, too. There is a lot of work that gets left undone because it's beyond what we're able to accomplish with limited member involvement. For example, it would be good to do another salary survey, but it doesn't appear that any of us has the time. If VLA could join the Vermont League of Cities and Towns, for example, or create a similar organization to pool resources and access affordable health care benefits for library staff, legal advice, bookkeeping assistance, an affordable payroll service...that would help so much. But there aren't enough dues-paying members to afford the cost of hiring someone to pursue these possibilities. It takes many hands to make light work.

So if your dues are lapsed, or you're not a member because you haven't seen the benefits to you...please join. Donate if you aren't a "joiner." And consider being on a volunteer committee. And please accept the department's invitations to contribute to the conversation regarding what we need from our state government. We may have a spotlight shining on us soon, if the bill to fund a statewide study of public libraries in Vermont is passed, and that would be a good thing in many ways and perhaps not such a great thing in other ways. An accurate assessment would reveal to policymakers and public purse holders how much more we do for and with our community members than we typically measure or blow our own horns about. But many of us know we've got serious concerns to address as well, including providing jobs that draw people who STAY in the work, as well as providing our patrons with all the services provided to patrons of large library systems.

Stay tuned! Join in! We're motivated, we're resourceful, and we intend to have fun making things better for everyone. Because we are Vermont small-town librarians, after all. ;-)

Loona Brogan has two (at-least) half-time library jobs. She can be reached at she.loves.trees@gmail.com

Free online professional development in digital local history

*Submitted by Loona Brogan
for Professor Stephen Robertson, George Mason University*

Do you want to gain skills to use digital history sources and develop local history projects that will open up new programming

opportunities? Do you want to help your patrons connect their interest in genealogy to broader social, cultural, and political history?

Creating Local Linkages is a free online professional development resource for public librarians developed by historians at the George Mason University's Roy Rosenzweig Center for History & New Media. The program introduces them to historical research methods and digital history skills that they can share with their patrons. Each of the five modules consists of readings, activities, step-by-step tutorials, and an assignment. Modules cover topics and practices of local history; framing questions about the past; building digital history exhibits; and creating contexts for historical sources. Using these skills, librarians can create new and enhance existing community programs, develop digital local history exhibits using library collections, and help patrons conducting genealogical research to contextualize their family histories.

The Creating Local Linkages curriculum will be taught for one final session as an eight week online course that librarians can complete at their own pace, starting on **March 1, 2020**. Participants will receive feedback from staff at the Roy Rosenzweig Center for History & New Media, and have access to a private web forum where they can share ideas with fellow librarians from around the country. All participants who finish within the eight weeks will receive a certificate of completion. **Register** today as space is limited to fifty participants:
<https://locallinkages.org/interest>.

You do not need to participate in the course to access the Creating Local Linkages curriculum: it is freely available online at <https://locallinkages.org/course> and will remain so in the future.

This project was made possible in part by a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

Editor's letter

by Janet Clapp

Interested in newsletter design and editing? VLA's new membership software comes with newsletter possibilities. If you're interested in working on the *VLA News*, please contact me at vermontlibrariesnews@gmail.com.

Janet Clapp, MLS
VLA News editor
Adult Services Librarian, [Rutland Free Library](#)
vermontlibrariesnews@gmail.com

Upcoming VLA

Board Meetings

Thursday, March 12th: Howe Library UVM

Thursday, May 14th: Peacham Library

Thursday, June 11th: TBD

Visit Us on the Web!

<http://www.vermontlibraries.org>

Vermont Library Association
PO Box 803, Burlington, VT 05402

