

# VLA News

## August 2022

### Table of Contents

#### Articles

[President's Letter](#)  
[Membership Vermont Library News VLA Conference VLA Tour VT Libraries Status ALA Forum Newsletter editor](#)

#### Sidebar

[Back Issues](#)  
[Meet Your Leaders](#)  
[Library Jobs & Subs](#)  
[AmazonSmile](#)  
[ATTN: Gmail Users](#)

### Back Issues

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

[VLA News back issues](#)

### Meet Your Leaders

## President's Letter

*by Kelly L. McCagg*

It was wonderful to see so many of you in person at this year's unconference. Though not always a popular format, it offered those that attended the opportunity to share ideas and meet with colleagues; some for the very first time. I wanted to take this opportunity to offer an enormous thank you to Kevin Unrath and Mike Roy, who carried a bulk of the conference workload. Mary Danko, Emer Feeney, and Lisa Milchman were critical to planning and making sure all the small but important details were handled. Finally, thank you to our wonderful facilitators who stepped up and led our discussions. We are truly charmed to be working in a state with such talented and giving professionals.

As we embark on this new VLA year, I want to remind each of you of the importance of your work in Vermont libraries. Every day we are confronted with book challenges, staff shortages, patrons who need more services than librarians are trained to provide—the obstacles can appear too numerous to overcome. We hear you; we are you.

Now, more than ever, librarians and staff need to feel empowered. VLA is working hard to create the tools to do just that.

- Has an item in your collection been targeted for censorship? Reach out to VLA's Intellectual Freedom Committee Rapid Response Team (<https://www.vermontlibraries.org/the-intellectual-freedom-committee-rapid-response-team>). This group of dedicated librarians will help you craft a strong collection development policy, contact the American Library Association in the event of a challenge, and provide support and strategies during an occurrence that is becoming all too common across the country.
- Are you struggling to find and retain staff? Do you spend more time managing the upkeep of your building than buying books or planning programs? The Working Group on the Status of Libraries in Vermont is tackling these and other topics important to libraries. As president, I am now serving in my second year on the working group. We continue to hear testimony from librarians, trustees, and community members on a variety of concerns. Our meetings are open to the public. Please join us for our next meeting on September 23rd ([https://libraries.vermont.gov/services/projects/working\\_group](https://libraries.vermont.gov/services/projects/working_group)).
- Get active! Our association can offer so much more if you become an

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

[Kelly McCagg](#)

**Vice**

**President/President Elect:**

[Bryn Geffert](#)

**Past President:**

[Michael D. Roy](#)

**Secretary:**

[Barbara Ball](#)

**Treasurer:**

[Lisa Milchman](#)

### **Section**

#### **Representatives**

**College & Special**

**Libraries Section**

**President:**

[Laura Haines](#)

Organizes workshops and assists college and special librarians.

### **Membership &**

active participant. You will make professional connections, have opportunities to grow your skills, and meet some inspiring individuals.

*"The most important asset of any library goes home at night—the library staff."*

Timothy Healy, President NYPL 1989-1992

Kelly L. McCagg

VLA President

Director, [Burnham Memorial Library](#), Colchester

[president@vermontlibraries.org](mailto:president@vermontlibraries.org)

802-264-5660

Vermont Library Association

PO Box 803

Burlington, VT 05402

Connect With Us:

Website: [www.vermontlibraries.org](http://www.vermontlibraries.org)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/VTLibraryAssociation](https://www.facebook.com/VTLibraryAssociation)

Twitter: [twitter.com/@VLAlib](https://twitter.com/VLAlib)

Instagram: [instagram.com/vlalib](https://www.instagram.com/vlalib)

LinkedIn: [www.linkedin.com/groups/Vermont-Library-Association](https://www.linkedin.com/groups/Vermont-Library-Association)

# Membership

*by Erica Shott*

Hello! I am Erica Shott, director at the Dorset Village Library. I moved to Vermont from Cleveland, Ohio in 2014 and I love it! I have been a member of VLA for a while, but this is the first year I've decided to take a more active role in the organization. Since May of this year, I am the VLA Membership and Outreach Committee Chair. Being brand new to this role, I am still in the learning phase. I hope I can eventually answer any membership questions, and perhaps down the road, work a little social media. I attended my first conference this year, which was really nice. I met a lot of people I only see on the listservs.

Exciting things are afoot at the Dorset library. The library joined the Catamount Library Network in July. We've been working our way through the first weeks of the new system, and soon we will be transitioning our patrons over to new cards/numbers. We held our first Drag Queen Story Hour, which went really well, as part of our summer reading program; we had an outdoor poetry reading; and we hosted a Pirate Party for some summer reading fun!



Fall is coming soon, which leads us into our busy season. We have an end of summer reading dance party in August on August 13th at 7 pm, and then on

**Outreach Chair:**[Erica Shott](#)

Maintains membership database and communications.

**Public Libraries Section President:**[Susan O'Connell](#)

Organizes workshops and assists public librarians.

**Trustees & Friends****President:**

VACANT

Organizes workshops and assists library trustees.

**Committees****Government****Relations Chair:**[Margaret Woodruff](#)

Assists libraries with connections to legislators.

**Intellectual****Freedom Chair:**[Randal Smathers](#)

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

**Scholarship &****Awards Chair:**[Pamela Cartier](#)[Mary Danko](#)

Oversees VLA awards and scholarships.

**Vermont Library Conference Chair:**[Kevin Unrath](#)**Roundtables****Inclusion Chair:**[Bridget Stone-Allard](#)

Supports libraries in providing better service to diverse populations.

September 17th we will be presenting Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children at the Vermont Fairy Tale Festival. September 24th from 7-9 we will be hosting the first drag show in Dorset, funds graciously provided by the Vermont Humanities Council. The show will also double as the kickoff to our Halloween season. October 8th at 2 pm we're going to hold a craft for kids...make your own witch broom and on October 22nd, they can use their handcrafted broom at our "not too scary" witch-themed Halloween party for the youngsters. At 6 pm on Friday, October 21st we will host Joseph Citro and J.W. Ocker to talk about Vermont's legends and lore, which is also the theme of this year's haunted house held from 5-7 pm on Halloween! Aside from these special programs, we host weekly knitters, a book club, a couple of D&D groups, kids club (games, Lego, and fun), and story time!

Anouk and Chewie, the Dorset Library pugs, would love to see you ... please stop in to say hi and visit our quaint (but exciting) little library in Dorset!



Erica Shott

VLA Membership and Outreach Committee Chair

Director, [Dorset Village Library](#)[ecshott@gmail.com](mailto:ecshott@gmail.com)

# Vermont Libraries in the News

*compiled by Susan Larson*

Ed Surjan has been appointed executive director of [The Manchester Community Library](#) by an unanimous vote of the library's board of trustees, the library announced. Surjan succeeds J. Violet Gannon, who resigned from the position in March.

[https://www.manchesterjournal.com/local-news/manchester-community-library-appoints-ed-surjan-as-new-executive-director/article\\_05fc49fc-06ae-11ed-ab06-235f847a4d44.html](https://www.manchesterjournal.com/local-news/manchester-community-library-appoints-ed-surjan-as-new-executive-director/article_05fc49fc-06ae-11ed-ab06-235f847a4d44.html)

David Gunn, editor of the [Vermont League of Cities and Towns VLCT Journal](#), included nine libraries and the Vermont Department of Libraries in his article "A Library of Things: Non-Traditional Items to Borrow."

<https://www.vlct.org/article/library-things-non-traditional-items-borrow>

[Ilsley Public Library](#) received a \$1,000 grant from the [Vermont Community Foundation's](#) Paul Post Fund. The money will be used for "a significant, one-time investment in graphic novels for tweens and teens."

<https://www.ilsleypubliclibrary.org/library-receives-grant-from-paul-post-fund/>

[North Hero Public Library](#) received an [AARP Vermont](#) grant for "installation of a word garden with adjacent seating to complement raised bed gardens as a focus

**Personnel Chair:**

VACANT  
Assists librarians with questions related to personnel issues.

**Technical Services Chair:**

(inactive)  
Organizes workshops & assists technical services librarians.

**Youth Librarians****President:**

VACANT  
Organizes workshops and assists youth librarians.

**Archivist:****VLA News Editor:**

[Janet Clapp](#)

**Webmasters:**

[Tessa Johnson](#)  
[Jessamyn West](#)

**Representatives****ALA Councilor:**

[Jessamyn West](#)  
Represents Vermont in the national organization.

**NELA****Representative:**

[Amy McMullen](#)  
Represents Vermont in the New England Library Assoc.

**VT Dept. of Libraries****Representative to the Board:**

[Catherine Delneo](#)

**Jobs & Subs**

For library jobs:  
[VLA Job Postings](#)

for community connections."

<https://states.aarp.org/vermont/aarp-awards-45k-in-grants-to-five-vermont-organizations>

One of the first of [Green Up Vermont's](#) water bottle filling stations is located at [Lanpher Memorial Library](#) in Hyde Park. [Georgia Public Library](#) reports that it also has one.

<https://www.wcax.com/video/2022/06/28/green-up-vermont-tries-new-method-reduce-plastic-waste>

[Lincoln Library](#) is one of four libraries nationwide to receive an EBSCO Solar Grant to pay for the installation of a solar array. The grants offset the cost of installing solar panels and allow the libraries to reduce their electricity expenditures.

<https://www.ebsco.com/news-center/press-releases/ebsco-information-services-announces-2022-ebsco-solar-grant-winners>

[Greater Falls Connections of Bellows Falls](#) donated five Kindle Fire tablets to the [Rockingham Free Public Library](#). The library staff will be making the devices available to patrons to borrow.

<https://vermontjournal.com/news/gfc-donates-kindle-fire-tablets-to-local-library>

"[Sherburne Memorial Library](#) in Killington has transformed into 'Sherburne Shores' this summer and they're hoping it'll encourage kids to dive on in," WCAX TV reported.

<https://www.wcax.com/2022/06/02/killington-library-entices-young-readers-dive-this-summer>

Here's the letter to the editor from the [Guilford Free Library](#) on the failed passage of an article to expand and renovate the library.

[https://www.reformer.com/opinion/letters/letter-renovating-guilford-free-library/article\\_bc81780e-e387-11ec-a8d0-0fc16ac66d3d.html](https://www.reformer.com/opinion/letters/letter-renovating-guilford-free-library/article_bc81780e-e387-11ec-a8d0-0fc16ac66d3d.html)

[Brooks Memorial Library](#) in Brattleboro unveiled its newest collection on June 4. "In the red shed in the municipal parking lot behind the library, patrons can find tools to cultivate a garden, to help with harvesting and for preparing and preserving food," reported *The Keene Sentinel*.

[https://www.sentinelsource.com/community/town\\_news/brattleboro-library-to-unveil-new-collection-of-gardening-and-food-preservation-tools/article\\_643cb19e-eb8e-5d98-91d7-4375297ca072.html](https://www.sentinelsource.com/community/town_news/brattleboro-library-to-unveil-new-collection-of-gardening-and-food-preservation-tools/article_643cb19e-eb8e-5d98-91d7-4375297ca072.html)

"In [Chester](#), a library's hesitation to host Drag Queen Story Hour sparks controversy"

<https://vtdigger.org/2022/05/19/in-chester-a-libraris-hesitation-to-host-drag-queen-story-hour-sparks-controversy>

Veterans are now "able to access telehealth services at [South Burlington Public Library](#). The program will be managed through the Veteran Affairs Telehealth Services," NBC 5 reported. "At the library, there will be a private space for veterans to use an iPad and the necessary apps for virtual health care appointments."

<https://www.mynbc5.com/article/south-burlington-library-now-offering-va-telehealth-for-veterans/40007566>

"After two-plus years of planning for a capital campaign to renovate the [Brandon Free Public Library](#) (BFPL), the \$2.2 million quest is well on its way."

<https://www.addisonindependent.com/2022/05/12/brandon-libraris-2m-campaign-opens>

"Travelers must upload their vaccination information, identification, and travel plans

For library subs:  
[Vermont Library  
Substitute Pool](#)

Planning a purchase on Amazon.com? Consider using the Amazon Smile program and select the Vermont Library Association to receive 0.5% of eligible purchases. Visit [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com) for more details.

### ATTN: Gmail Users

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[to the ArriveCAN phone app] in order to gain entry" into Canada. "Many elderly people are very intimidated' by ArriveCAN, [[Alice M. Ward Memorial Library](#) director Sharon Ellingwood] White said. Some drive to border stations to ask for help. When they are turned away, White said, the Québec-bound are advised to head for the Canaan [Vermont] bibliothèque."

<https://www.sevendaysvt.com/vermont/a-library-director-helps-elderly-francophones-cross-the-canadian-border/Content?oid=35436385>

"When she took the job as Vermont's state librarian in February, Cathy Delneo pledged to serve a uniquely Vermont institution: the state's far-flung network of 185 public libraries. It's a new setting for her; she spent 15 years in the San Francisco Public Library system and oversaw 27 urban branches. But Delneo, a South Burlington native who has a master's degree in library and information science, sees the core duties of the big-city and small-state positions as quite similar."

[https://www.sevendaysvt.com/vermont/vermont-born-cathy-delneo-returns-home-for-a-new-role-as-state-librarian/Content?oid=35488266&\\_ga=2.180255652.1458187989.1658493074-16635916.1651840143](https://www.sevendaysvt.com/vermont/vermont-born-cathy-delneo-returns-home-for-a-new-role-as-state-librarian/Content?oid=35488266&_ga=2.180255652.1458187989.1658493074-16635916.1651840143)

"For the first time in its nearly 20 year history, the [[Franklin Grand Isle Bookmobile](#)] is now an independent organization, having transitioned away from its fiscal sponsor and gaining tax-exemption status in February."

[https://www.samesenger.com/news/community/all-aboard-franklin-grand-isle-bookmobile-visits-childcare-centers-becomes-independent-nonprofit/article\\_f05bcab4-bc2f-11ec-b0ff-db7932d2726e.html](https://www.samesenger.com/news/community/all-aboard-franklin-grand-isle-bookmobile-visits-childcare-centers-becomes-independent-nonprofit/article_f05bcab4-bc2f-11ec-b0ff-db7932d2726e.html)

(Send your library news to Susan at [susanularson@gmail.com](mailto:susanularson@gmail.com))

Susan Larson, MLIS  
VLA Social Media Volunteer  
[susanularson@gmail.com](mailto:susanularson@gmail.com)

## VLA Conference 2023

*by Kevin Unrath*

Thanks to everyone who attended VLA Conference 2022, "Better, Together!" This participant-driven conference was different from those in the past, emphasizing reconnection of colleagues who hadn't seen each other in a long time and discussion of topics that the membership chose. Many thanks to our planning committee, the VLA Executive Committee, and our volunteer facilitators who helped make the event a success.

Next year, we are planning a larger, more traditional conference. In fact, we are in talks with the school and academic library associations for consideration of a joint event. Would you like to be a part of the planning committee? It's lots of fun, a good way to meet colleagues, and very rewarding. If you'd like to volunteer, send an email my way at [kunrath@shelburnevt.org](mailto:kunrath@shelburnevt.org). Our first committee meeting will be this September, so now is the right time to reach out.

Very best,  
Kevin

Kevin Unrath  
VLA Conference Coordinator 2023  
Director, [Pierson Library](#), Shelburne

[kunrath@shelburnevt.org](mailto:kunrath@shelburnevt.org)  
(802)264-5017

# VLA Library Tour

*by Susan O'Connell*

## **The VLA (Mostly) Addison County Library Tour - September 30**

The VLA Public Libraries Section welcomes Catherine Goldsmith, director of the Starksboro Public Library, as our vice president. Together, Catherine and I hope to build on the success of the Vermont Library Association's Northeast Kingdom Library Tour this spring with another event this fall.

Last April, the library tour provided librarians the opportunity to see what is happening in other libraries and the chance to catch up with colleagues from around the state who we don't often get to see. The value of the tour was different for each person; for some it was a conversation with another librarian, for others it was a display or the way a library chose to use their space. Feedback I received tells me that the tour was rejuvenating for solo librarians, a good welcome and insight for new-to-Vermont librarians, and inspiring for all in one way or another.

We will be heading to Addison County and environs for the next tour. Scheduled for Friday, September 30, the tour will visit the Starksboro Public Library, the Russell Memorial Library in Monkton, the Bixby Memorial Library in Vergennes, and the Charlotte Public Library. We chose the libraries to be included in the tour based on geographic proximity and variety. We have a mix of municipal and incorporated libraries, and those serving small to not so small communities.

Watch the VTLIBRARIES and LibStaff listservs for tour details in the coming weeks, and save the date for another opportunity to get together and learn from each other before the uncertainties of winter travel and gathering sets in!

Susan O'Connell  
VLA Public Libraries Section President  
Director, [Craftsbury Public Library](#)  
[director@craftsburypubliclibrary.org](mailto:director@craftsburypubliclibrary.org)

# Snowball Fight at Chapter Leaders Forum in Washington – Time to step up?

*by Howard Burrows*

These just seem to be "fraught" times!

The American Library Association Chapter Leaders Forum (<https://www.ala.org/aboutala/affiliates/chapters/chapterleaders/chapterleadersforum>) last month started with a snowball fight – in July, in Washington, DC...

We were given two sheets of white paper at the beginning of the forum and told to write a challenge on one of the sheets and a success on the other. Then we crumpled them into “snowballs” and forty chapter leaders stood in a big circle and threw their contributions on countdown high into the air to land inside the circle. I’m sure the photo will appear somewhere important.



During the day we read through some of the entries: gay pride books all checked out and not returned, trouble engaging younger patrons, awesome experience with a mentor, board members too cliquy, travel grants for affinity group members...The program for the forum also included a presentation on the State Ecosystem Initiative (<https://www.ala.org/advocacy/state-ecosystem-initiative>) and a larger presentation on the rising pressure from a few patrons to ban selected lists of books (<https://www.ala.org/news/mediapresscenter/presskits/surge-book-challenges-press-kit>). The forum gave an opportunity to talk with chapter leaders from across the country – and to realize that challenges to libraries seem to be increasing with the times.

I recommend the offerings from the Chapter Relations Office (<https://www.ala.org/aboutala/cro-resources>) as a second source of ideas in addition to the ALA-United Division for Trustees, Advocates, Friends, and Foundations (<https://www.ala.org/united>).

As has happened before, I come back from the ALA Annual Conference with renewed energy to engage our Friends/trustees. I wish more Vermonters could attend.

At this year’s Vermont Library Association annual meeting, we didn’t have a chance to elect new officers for the VLA Friends & Trustees Section; nevertheless, I’d like to help activate the section again. Please consider stepping up and being part of the leadership of this section. The Vermont Working Group on the Status of Libraries ([https://libraries.vermont.gov/services/projects/working\\_group](https://libraries.vermont.gov/services/projects/working_group)) has collected testimonies that show many opportunities for Friends and trustees. It would be good to reassess common issues facing libraries across Vermont from the perspectives of the great variety of board members. Board members often provide experiences and expertise outside traditional MLIS training that may prove essential as libraries transform to the needs of the 21st century; perhaps we can find leaders in technology, business, climate, health, legal, whatever, and combine efforts in support of our overtaxed library staffs.

Please feel free to contact me if you are interested. I’ll work with the Vermont Department of Libraries to arrange a survey of trustee/Friend members to look for common interests and expertise.

Howard Burrows, Trustee  
VLA Friends/Trustees, Acting Chair  
Trustee, [Brooks Memorial Library](#), Brattleboro

[ghburrows@comcast.net](mailto:ghburrows@comcast.net)  
603-630-0012

## Libraries in Vermont Working Group

On July 22, 2022 the Working Group on the Status of Libraries in Vermont met to discuss the topic of staffing. In May 2021, the Vermont State Legislature passed S.115 (Act 66), an act that created the Working Group on the Status of Libraries in Vermont and charges that group with submitting a report on their studies by November 1, 2023. Information about the group, including testimony and recordings of past meetings, can be found at

[https://libraries.vermont.gov/services/projects/working\\_group](https://libraries.vermont.gov/services/projects/working_group)

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Vermont Library Association  
PO Box 803, Burlington, VT 05402

