



# VLA News

## August 2016

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## President's Letter

*by Margaret Woodruff*

In addition to providing a steady supply of kale, my vegetable garden also provides a great metaphor for all projects in my life: there's always more to do than I can possibly accomplish, the variety of seeds (or tasks) can be distracting, and finally, I'm always looking for more inspiration and information. It is in the spirit of my vegetable garden that I invite all VLA members to take part in developing, contributing and using a Vermont-wide library database.

The plan is to put together a list of programs, resources and services available at libraries across the state; there would also be a wishlist section, tracking the programs and other items that libraries would like to provide. Using this list as a platform, VLA would help create a resource clearinghouse to detail library services and highlight areas where service is lacking. Eventually, this database would also provide links to sources for training and material goods. These could be geographic or subject areas, for example, the Champlain Valley or e-book access. The list could include information on advocacy efforts, trustee/friend relations as well as book lists and links to materials for library programs.

Your institution may need information about maker programs but has knowledge to share about developing a friends group. The give-and-take aspect of this project ensures that everyone has a reason to take part, but it also means that success is dependent upon involvement. Here at VLA, we hope that all libraries will find a way to participate in this database. Look for survey information and news about the project soon. If you're interested in contributing to the planning and development of the database, please contact me at [vermontlibrariespresident@gmail.com](mailto:vermontlibrariespresident@gmail.com). Free kale seeds for all!

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LinkedIn: [www.linkedin.com/groups/Vermont-Library-Association-5172256](https://www.linkedin.com/groups/Vermont-Library-Association-5172256)

Planning a  
purchase on

# Vice President's Letter

by Joy Worland

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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!

[VLA News back issues](#)

## Substitute Pool

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

Employers: 29  
Substitutes: 38

Types of  
Employers:

Public: 27  
Community: 1  
Academic: 1

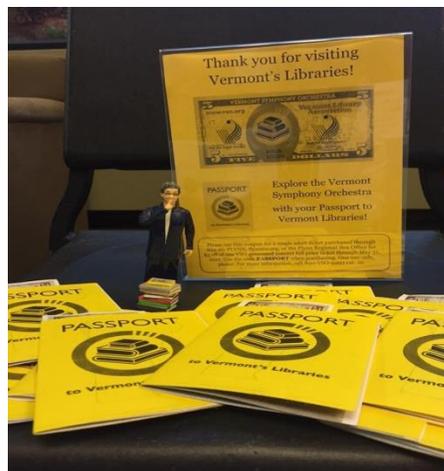
Availability in pool  
by county:

Addison: 9  
Bennington: 5  
Caledonia: 6  
Chittenden: 21  
Essex: 3  
Franklin: 9  
Grand Isle: 6  
Lamoille: 11  
Orange: 6  
Orleans: 4

This year a fun confluence occurred for the Passport to Vermont Libraries program when the theme of the Vermont Symphony Orchestra's annual summer tour was Wanderlust. As I had been hired to play the tour, it seemed only natural to share library passports at the concerts.

Audiences from Ludlow to Shelburne received library passports, a stamp for attending the concert, and a coupon for a VSO concert. Each night I wandered through the crowd pre-concert, making conversation about the beautiful libraries all over the state. I met people who were already doing the passport program, librarians and trustees, Vermonters who had heard of the program but hadn't started yet, and avid library users from out-of-state who almost always ended with something like, "we should do this at home."

The VSO generously donated a large number of coupons. Libraries can print them from the passport page (<http://www.vermontlibraries.org/vla-vso/>) and give them to patrons when they get their passports stamped. At the Joslin Library we are also incorporating them into our end of summer passport party and featuring a musical instrument "petting zoo" as a further tie-in to the symphony.



*Nancy Pearl action figure promoting the Passport to Vermont Libraries program at a Vermont Symphony Orchestra concert*

ALA Annual had a special intensity this year because the conference was in Orlando late June. Several speakers incorporated issues of diversity, inclusivity, and non-violence into their presentations, and there were opportunities to give blood and contribute in other ways to Orlando's work toward healing.

One of the most meaningful experiences for me was a presentation by author Ryan Gattis, whose book *All Involved*, was a 2016 Alex Award winner (<http://www.ala.org/yalsa/alex-awards>). Our charge on the Alex Awards committee is to annually select 10 books published as adult books that have teen appeal. Based on extensive research, Gattis's novel features several diverse characters and how their lives were impacted by the 1992 riots in Los Angeles.

Until winning the Alex, Gattis never thought of his book having a teen audience. Eventually, though, he began to use the book as a tool to connect with teens in the area of LA featured in the book. He arranged for book donations to schools, held writing workshops, and developed connections with students, many of whom had parents who were involved in the 1992 riots.

Gattis's stories about working with these at-risk middle and high school students demonstrate how his actions and his writing transformed lives. His presentation was also a reminder of how

Rutland: 6  
Washington: 12  
Windham: 6  
Windsor: 7

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 time for VLA because they feel that it is important to be involved in an organization that benefits their fellow 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:**

[Margaret Woodruff](#)

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[Joy Worland](#)

#### **Past President:**

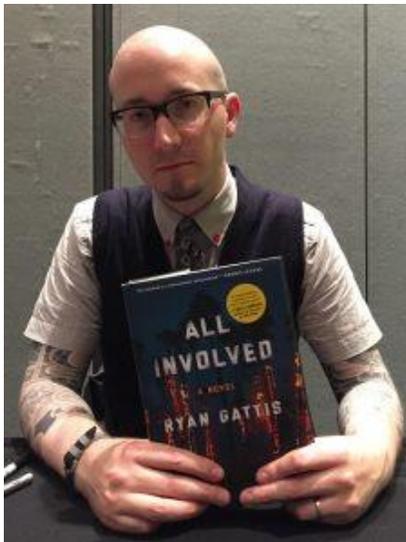
[Virgil Fuller](#)

#### **Secretary:**

[Kelly McCagg](#)

librarians promoting books and bringing attention to books through awards can have a concrete impact on social and cultural issues.

“Standing in front of a room full of young teenagers who know the cost of violence, who are dealing with its monstrous grief, at that very moment being asked to comfort them, to inspire them, is by far the most difficult thing I’ve ever done. And yet...nowhere was it more important to say that reading helps us learn the consequences of behavior without having to suffer them ourselves.” Ryan Gattis, Alex Award presentation, Orlando, June 2016



*Author Ryan Gattis at the Alex Award presentation at ALA Annual, Orlando June 2016*

Joy Worland,  
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## Past President's Letter

*by Virgil Fuller*

I hope that everyone enjoyed the conference on May 18 at Stoweflake as much as I did. I'm really looking forward to next year's conference at which we will collaborate with the New England Library Association. We may be holding a separate unconference of our own in May - stay tuned for details about that!

We hope everyone has been having fun with the Passport to Vermont Libraries program so far! We believe that all the participating libraries have passports, but if you don't please contact a member of the committee or remember that you can print them out from our webpage. The committee also just put together a handy list that includes all the participating libraries. Head on over to our webpage: [www.vermontlibraries.org/passport/passport-to-vermont-libraries-info-for-librarians/](http://www.vermontlibraries.org/passport/passport-to-vermont-libraries-info-for-librarians/)

A passport patron did an awesome write-up about her visits to various libraries. To read it and see the photos: <https://www.facebook.com/vermontpassport/posts/603961166444251>

Lastly, a bit of selfless promotion here, I was on WCAX at the end of June talking about the

**Treasurer:**  
[Angela Bernard](#)

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Representative  
s**

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Organizes  
workshops and  
assists college  
and special  
librarians.

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librarians.

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Organizes  
workshops and  
assists youth  
librarians.

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**Archivist:**

program. Watch it here: <http://www.wcax.com/story/32321811/visit-vermonts-libraries-win-prizes>

We're looking for prizes at the end of the program, so please let us know if you have something to donate. Our contact info is below:

Virgil Fuller: [vermontlibrariespastpresident@gmail.com](mailto:vermontlibrariespastpresident@gmail.com)

Amanda Perry: [aperry@winooski.vt.gov](mailto:aperry@winooski.vt.gov)

Sarah Snow: [williamstownvtlibrarian@gmail.com](mailto:williamstownvtlibrarian@gmail.com)

Jessamyn West: [jessamyn@gmail.com](mailto:jessamyn@gmail.com)

Joy Worland: [joyworland@gmail.com](mailto:joyworland@gmail.com)

About a month ago or so I posted about starting a Library Backpack program in Vermont. Colorado is doing a similar program and I think it is something that could really take off in Vermont. More information on how Colorado does it can be found here:

<http://lj.libraryjournal.com/2016/06/public-services/co-parks-collaboration-expands-to-all-state-libraries/>

I would like to form a committee to start working on this and have heard from seven librarians who have expressed interest in helping out. If you would like to join this committee, or have suggestions or questions about it, please get in touch with me.

Virgil Fuller

VLA Past President

Library Director, [Chelsea Public Library](#)

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## Online Privacy Rights and the Role of Librarians in Protecting Them

*by Paige Martin*

Attending the New England Library Association (NELA) spring ITS event "Digital Privacy: A Practical Approach for You & Your Patrons" was an experience in learning about how libraries can advocate for patron privacy in this new digital age. From learning about the consequence of information tracking, to knowing library rights in maintaining patron privacy, the NELA conference on privacy and technology was eye-opening and educational. As librarians, we were able to learn ways to ensure a greater level of privacy for our patrons and begin to push back against this age of information tracking as we continue to strive towards providing privacy to our patrons in this age of digital information.

First off, it is important as both librarians and as citizens of the United States, that we understand that at this point the government is collecting data on everyone. Secondly, it is important to know that this action of data collection has an impact on what actions people take online. Increasing surveillance means that people will actively and passively restrict what information they look up and report on due to the fear of being watched. The result of being followed over time means that everyone will understand the threat of being watched, and therefore, do less. In fact, this level of surveillance has already led to some authors in the U.S. to self-censor. A PenAmerica study called "Chilling Effects" has found that already one in five authors are afraid to research certain topics because they know that the information they research would be followed.

This level of mass surveillance is made possible by certain laws: Executive Order 12333, and the FISA Amendments Act of 2008. Executive Order 12333, which started during the Reagan administration and has been edited since, allows for the collection and retention of data on not only foreigners but citizens as well. This collection of data is known as metadata, which indicates not necessarily the words used in phone conversations, but collects information about the time of the conversation, place of the conversation, and who that conversation was with. The Foreign

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Freedom Chair:**

[Ray Brior](#)

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[Kelly McElligott](#)

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**Personnel**

**Chair:**

[Shara McCaffery](#)

Assists librarians with questions related to personnel issues.

**Scholarship**

**Chair:**

[April Shaw](#)

Oversees VLA scholarships.

**Vermont  
Library  
Conference**

Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA) allows for the widespread collection of any international communications without requiring a warrant. The content of that information or who is communicating with international parties does not matter. As soon as a communication goes outside of the United States, under FISA, this communication is open to complete surveillance.

Something that tends to get muddled up in these conversations about national security and privacy is that we are made safer by this increased level of surveillance. This idea is just not true. An increased quantity of information does not mean that any of the information collected is useful. Instead, vital material gets buried amidst the massive collection of information surrounding the three billion phone calls made daily in the United States. This kind of mass surveillance has been present in every recent shooting and bombing. All of these incidences, from the Boston Marathon bombing to the more recent Pulse, Orlando and Dallas, Texas shootings have happened despite this level of mass surveillance.

Another straw man argument that gets introduced surrounding the importance of national security and our online privacy is that if you have nothing to hide, why does it matter? It matters because privacy is a huge part of being human. Having privacy as a person and actively keeping secrets are not analogous. Privacy means that you as a person are controlling information about yourself. I do not share the information that I share with my doctor with everyone I know. Is that because I am keeping secrets and am a national security risk? No, it is because I am controlling information about myself, and importantly, controlling who has access to that information. Maintaining online privacy is a similar concept. I shouldn't have to share everything I do online with others whether that information is my online banking or information I research. Choosing not to share private information does not make a person a national security threat.

Understanding the vital importance of online privacy and our rights as humans and the value of that kind of information as currency in our democracy is a first step in beginning to acknowledge the critical role that libraries play in helping their patrons maintain their online rights. People should be able to gather information without fear of character assassination due to their research. The first amendment, the right to free speech, also includes the right to gather information, and as libraries, we should move towards advocating for the right to gather that information anonymously and without fear. A step to show we are practicing the privacy policies we preach is to make sure that we as libraries are not keeping more information than we should on our patrons. We should update or create data retention policies for our libraries. How long is your library retaining patron data and information? Does that information need to be held and does it need to be held for that long? The golden rule with data retention is the shortest amount of time and the smallest amount of data possible is always the best option.

Concerning different scenarios relating to patron privacy, what happens when law enforcement shows up at the library with or without a warrant for patron information? And in those tense situations, what can we do as librarians to ensure that patron privacy remains a top priority? There are multiple different scenarios that could and have occurred in certain libraries throughout the country, including libraries receiving national security letters and having the police come and demand information about a patron. One of the best ways to prepare for these incidents is to have library policies in place already for when these situations occur. For more information, and to help formulate library guidelines to handle these scenarios, check out the websites [www.privacysos.org/libraries](http://www.privacysos.org/libraries), [www.chooseprivacyweek.org](http://www.chooseprivacyweek.org), or the ACLU website [aclu.org](http://aclu.org).

Lastly, what can librarians do to provide resources about technology anonymity to our patrons? The goal of any of these tech anonymity resources is to obfuscate content and decentralize information. First off, it is important to use and stress for patrons that if they want Internet privacy they should use Free and Open Source Software (FOSS). Other things to encourage include the use of any devices or software that offer end-to-end encryption of information. Another simple thing to look for is data minimization. Always look for software and devices that collect and store the least amount of information possible about people over time. For more concrete resources, here are some examples of certain types of browsers or software that patrons can use to increase Internet privacy. Download the Tor browser ([www.torproject.org](http://www.torproject.org)), and use it like you would any other Internet browser to search for things, check email, etc. This alternative browser does have certain limits, but because the Tor network scrambles the output node, the information that is being searched online cannot be traced back to the original location. Privacy

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Badger ([eff.org/privacybadger](http://eff.org/privacybadger)) is another device to download to your Firefox, Chrome or Safari browser that will look at how much information is being gathered about you by third parties on certain websites. Privacy Badger analyzes what information needs to be shared, and blocks all other third parties from gaining more information about the searches if not vital to the operation of the website. These are two of many types of resources out there to increase anonymity online, however it should be noted that none of these Internet resources can guarantee complete privacy online.

Another note about these privacy tools is that they should be used all the time, not just if you are doing research about something radical. The increased frequency of privacy protection use creates more of a blanket over what we all do online, protecting more and more people, making mass surveillance more and more impractical for governmental organizations to enact. If you are interested in learning about more resources for your computers, public access computers or mobile phones look at the Library Freedom Project ([libraryfreedomproject.org](http://libraryfreedomproject.org)) website and other sites like Crypto-Party and Surveillance Self-Defense.

Learning the ins-and-outs of online privacy is a necessary step for libraries as more and more information is collected and gathered online. Privacy online has been attacked in the name of creating a safer world, but it is important to remember first, that this increase in surveillance has not made us safer, and that second, online privacy should not be afforded only to criminals. We should all be allowed to learn how to protect ourselves online. An analogy can be made between how we use cash now and how we should start to use and think about online privacy. Cash is not necessarily a good thing or a bad thing. Some people use cash to pay for illegal items, but that does not mean that we should get rid of cash altogether. Yes, increasing access to and information about Internet privacy means that it will be used by people for both good and bad things, but that does not mean that no one should have privacy on the Internet.

Taking that one step further, as librarians who are interested in creating ways for more people to learn whatever they want and increase their access to information, we need to begin protecting our patrons who want to gather information. There is no easy way to establish 100% privacy on the Internet (at least at this point), but I believe that we can still attempt to create and recreate safe places for people to learn online. In advocating for movement towards a world of digital anonymity, we can become a powerful tool and provide resources and ways to maintain and further the safe collection of information for all the coming tech generations.

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## College & Special Libraries Section

*by Beth Dietrich*

**Save the Date and Call for Proposals!**

Reaching Across the Aisle, Reaching Across the Desk: Engagement, Inclusion, & Outreach in Academic Libraries

Friday, October 21, 2016: 9:30 am – 3:00 pm

Campus Center, Castleton University, Castleton, VT

Please consider joining us for a one-day conference to learn how academic librarians in Vermont and New England are reaching across the aisle to collaborate with colleagues, other departments on campus, as well as publishers and vendors. As we gather to hear how librarians are reaching across the desk to engage with students, reach out to faculty, and create a more inclusive environment, we hope you are able to take advantage of this opportunity to

[know.](#)

network and share with colleagues throughout Vermont.

Featuring presentations from academic librarians around the state and region, this conference is an opportunity to learn how college and university librarians are tackling new and old challenges in our libraries and adopting inventive strategies to serve our students and faculty.

We are currently seeking proposals for this event. Length of presentation: 15 minutes to 45 minutes. Please consider presenting – your contributions will make this a great day to network and get new ideas. Submit proposals by September 9th here:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSc8gZjZ9HI1iU0MYjng7xaWwoLRE4aBQHWcNlWKlbsTEvJZ7Q/viewform?c=0&w=1>

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## Friends & Trustees Section

*by Nancy Mark*

Plans are underway for the November Trustees and Friends Conference, cosponsored by the Department of Libraries and the Trustees/Friends section of VLA.

The date is set for Saturday, November 12, 2016 with the site set at Stoweflake Mountain Resort and Spa. Thanks to early planning done by Marty Reid, we already have Rebekkah Smith Aldrich confirmed as our keynote speaker. If you haven't heard Rebekkah speak yet (or even if you have!), you are in for a wonderful experience. Her topic will be sustainable libraries. Other sessions are in the planning stage; we welcome your suggestions. Thank you.

Please send your ideas to me:  
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VLA Trustees and Friends Section President  
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[802-468-5479](tel:802-468-5479)

## Membership Committee

*by Kelly McElligott*

In early June, I was able to attend a program to learn more about the Tor project at the Howe Library. First, I would like to say that the Howe Library is a beautiful and amazing library! One of the speakers was the librarian from the Kilton Library in West Lebanon, Chuck McAndrew. After discussing the benefits of Tor with the library director and board, Chuck went ahead and installed the Tor browser on all of their public access and staff computers. Tor is beneficial to their patrons because it keeps their information safe and protects the patron against corporate surveillance. Chuck explained that by enhancing our patron's privacy, we are empowering our patrons. However, after only ONE month of using the Tor browser, the local police and National Security Agency came knocking on the library doors telling them to take down the browser. They did remove the Tor browser for a period of time but have since reinstalled it and have also put in a Tor relay. It is the first library in the country to host a Tor relay.

Link to NPR article about Kilton Library's quest for patron's privacy:

<http://www.npr.org/sections/thetwo-way/2015/09/16/440848324/n-h-public-library-resumes-its-support-of-tor-network>

What is Tor? Check out this link for a short animated video that describes how Tor works and protects our information: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JWII85UizKw>

For more information about Tor, here is a link to the Tor project: <https://www.torproject.org>

After this program, I felt very strongly about keeping our patrons and community members aware of the lack of privacy on the Internet and also giving them an alternative browser to choose from. This is another way for not just our library but libraries around the country to stay relevant by identifying and addressing issues that are important to patrons and helping to get the pertinent information out to them.

The Stowe Free Library will be soon adding the Tor browser on all of our public access computers and hoping to have Internet privacy classes in our library to inform and educate the community and our patrons how they can stay safe on the Internet. If you are interested in Tor or privacy online for your patrons, please visit the Library Freedom Project website ([www.libraryfreedomproject.org](http://www.libraryfreedomproject.org)) for many other great resources.

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## VLA Continuing Education Grant Winner

*by Alice Kirk Godin*

I received a VLA continuing education grant to take Amanda Goodman's, "Using WordPress to Build Library Websites." I highly recommend this six-week online ALA course. In this course, I learned to build a WordPress (WP) library website. During the process, I looked at many WP websites, learned how to make backups for our site, and discovered more about pages, posts, and plug-ins. We were asked to think about what our users find useful or want to see on a library website vs. what we might think our patrons want. We set up photo galleries. We studied and observed website structure and how our website could be or should be organized. We explored and experimented with WP themes. We investigated online WordPress community interaction such as forums, forms, blog postings, and chat; and discussed ideas from the class about how we would use these tools on our library website for everything from surveys to book suggestion forms to online teen book discussion forums. The last week was devoted to exploring a little bit of coding in the HTML editor and wrapping up any questions or thoughts from the students. The instructor was very responsive and gave great feedback, ideas, and information and asked thoughtful pertinent questions. We students also learned from each other through the questions and posts to the discussion boards.

Now that we've had our first open house at the library, planned a few events, scheduled our

open hours with our dedicated volunteers and purchased new books, I plan to start working on Waterville Town Library's new WordPress website. Stay tuned; hopefully it will appear by the end of the summer. I am at the library on Saturday afternoons and work on various Waterville library projects in my spare time when I am not working at the Johnson State College Library. While I am still learning, I can now be more confident in assisting the Waterville town clerk with maintenance and updates for the town's WordPress website. I would like to express my thanks to the Vermont Library Association for the grant which helped with the financing to take this beneficial course.



*Demo of Waterville Town Library's new website*

Reading Material:

*The Comparative Guide to WordPress in Libraries*

Amanda Goodman

Series: Lita Guides

Paperback: 240 pages

Publisher: ALA TechSource (December 6, 2013)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1555709680

Aaron Schmidt <http://www.walkingpaper.org/6179>

*Alice Kirk Godin works at an academic library, Johnson State College, in northern Vermont (12 years). She and her husband have five children between them who are all grown now. Four daughters are working and attending either college or graduate school; one son is stationed in Romania. Besides working in libraries, she enjoys spending time with her husband, playing with her Boston terrier, making cards, visiting the kids, and learning new things.*

## VLA Graduate Student Scholarship Winner

*by Allison Maynard*

I was so honored to receive the VLA scholarship at the conference. I am proud to say that after three years of public librarianship, I decided to further my education. In January I enrolled in the iSchool program at San Jose State University to earn my Masters in Library and Information Science (MLIS).

To date, I have finished two classes and am very close to finishing my third. The University requires that every student takes a mandatory class before the end of the first semester. This class is mainly about how to use the online class system, but one of the most important elements of the class is how to use their online library. The lessons include YouTube videos created by university librarians explaining how the website works, how interlibrary loan works, and even information sources specifically for MLIS candidates. I thought that this was the best service the university could provide to its incoming students. I have used this information in every class I have taken and I'm sure that I will continue to do so until I finish the program. I wish I could have taken a class like this to begin my undergraduate experience – maybe my college transcripts

would be more respectable! Another bonus to taking this class is that these videos gave me some good ideas for our library. Maybe instead of providing a pamphlet for our new patrons we could show a video tour of our library and services? Every class that I take makes me feel that I am learning new information and ideas every day and I look forward to applying them whenever possible.



*Allison receiving scholarship award from VLA President Virgil Fuller at 2016 VLA conference*

Thank you so much to VLA and all of its members for helping to make this possible for me.

*Allison Maynard is the director of Pettee Memorial Library in Wilmington. When she is not frantically catching up on book club books, she enjoys spending time with her husband and two dogs hiking, snowshoeing, snowboarding, and swimming.*

## Vermont Library Conference

*by Toni Josey*

Thank you to all the participants of VLC 2016 for contributing to a fantastic day. Many presenters contributed notes and slides which can be found at [vermontlibraries.org/conference2016](http://vermontlibraries.org/conference2016).



*Rebekkah Aldrich Smith giving the VLC 2016 keynote address*

Some of you may remember that the New England Library Association (NELA) held its annual conference in Vermont in 2011. We are pleased to announce that the NELA conference will return to Vermont on October 22-24, 2017 at the Sheraton in Burlington. Part of this collaboration means that VLC will not hold a full conference in May 2017. A smaller conference experience will be held in May for the purposes of our annual VLA business meeting, section meetings, and elections. Stay tuned for details about this VLA experience as well as a call for proposals and volunteers for the 2017 NELA conference.

The Vermont Library Conference seeks a chair for a two-year term (May 2017-May 2019). The chair is appointed by the president with the approval of the VLA board and is a voting member of the board. If you're interested in serving in this role, please contact me or VLA President Margaret Woodruff. For more information, read the position description at [vermontlibraries.org](http://www.vermontlibraries.org) under "About VLA" then click "Board Position Descriptions" or go straight to <http://www.vermontlibraries.org/board-position-descriptions>.

Toni Josey, Interim Chair (2016-2017)  
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## American Library Association

*by Amy Wisehart*

I attended the ALA Annual Conference in Orlando in June as Vermont's ALA Councilor.

### **ALA Council highlights**

ALA Council is the governing body of the association, and much of the action and debate during council meetings consists of resolutions brought by council members for a vote. Resolutions passed during the 2016 Annual Council meetings include

·A resolution to urge the ratification by the U.S. of the Marrakesh Treaty to give access to

international published works for blind and visually impaired people.

-A resolution calling upon libraries to build more inclusive communities, a response to the Orlando shootings that urges libraries and librarians to engage with communities to combat violence, discrimination and hate.

-A resolution in support of the professional cataloging processes and determination of the Library of Congress – supporting the decision to replace the subject heading “illegal aliens,” a decision that has become politicized in Congress recently.

-A resolution on equity for school libraries, particularly regarding adequate funding and staffing for school libraries, and access to library resources for all students.

In addition, two proposed resolutions were debated in depth and deferred to working groups: a resolution on gun violence, and a resolution about the role of chapters in the American Library Association. Both are likely to come up again at ALA Midwinter in January.

### **Libraries Transform**

There was a lot of discussion about Libraries Transform, ALA's new advocacy campaign, at the conference. ALA plans to continue this campaign for the next 3-5 years, and individual libraries can sign up to receive their toolkit with publicity resources. Learn more at [www.ilovelibraries.org/librariestransform](http://www.ilovelibraries.org/librariestransform).

Please don't hesitate to get in touch if you have questions or feedback to share!

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# New England Library Association

*by Karson Kiesinger*

Spaghetti, anyone? (It pairs well with advocacy.)

The Vermont Library Conference held May 18 was a wonderful opportunity to talk with people and get feedback about the New England Library Association (NELA). Thank you to everyone who spoke with me and completed a comment card to enter the NELA raffle for the crate of goodies (including wine AND chocolate!). Comments ranged from enthusiasm for VLA/NELA joint membership, praise for the NELA annual conference, and requests for VLA to continue collaborating with NELA to a lack of awareness of NELA and its annual conference and questions about NELA's relevance: "If I have VLA why do I need NELA?" These are excellent questions and all of the feedback is being used by NELA's executive board to clarify its mission and consider how it can support its six state members (Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont). Congratulations to raffle winner Shara McCaffrey, a new NELA member who took advantage of VLA/NELA joint membership!

I recently attended the NELA Advocacy Summit held July 19 at Tower Hill Botanical Garden in Boylston, MA with four other Vermont librarians. It was an informative and energizing day, and when I've typed all my notes I'll happily share. Warning: I take copious notes.

Representative Kate Hogan of Massachusetts reminded attendees library aid is local aid and the adage "all politics is local" is still true. When approaching legislative representatives, she emphasized relating points to their constituents, demonstrating library card use and using statistics (every X minutes a Vermont resident sits down at a library computer) and pushing

technology access, especially by sharing stories.

By the end of the summit, advocacy felt less like a complicated and intimidating task and more like a tool forgotten/neglected in the bottom drawer. As Beth Nawalinski of United for Libraries explained, "Advocacy is not public awareness. Advocacy is turning passive support into action for a well-defined, well-articulated goal." I was surprised to learn simple emails and phone calls to elected officials have a significant impact (scripts are provided for community members and seven phone calls was described as a landslide).

You may be thinking, "This is great, but how do I 'do advocacy' when it feels like I don't have time to maintain current levels of service?" A fair and too frequent question, so please take two minutes to share whatever you've just said aloud to your screen (see spaghetti below) and send me an email. As members of VLA what would help your advocacy efforts? Would you like training? Do you need help motivating your trustees, your friends group, or your volunteers? Do you need help defining your goal? Do you need help with technology? Do you want to learn more about/be kept aware of the Vermont legislature? Would you like to be better connected with local libraries and/or peer institutions? And, since there's never enough time, what are the best ways for you to get what you need (online meetings, in-person workshops, short videos, a website with resources...)?

It's throw-spaghetti-at-the-wall time and see what sticks. NELA is a regional organization sitting between our state organization and ALA, and NELA wants to hear from Vermont library folk. It's especially important as a smaller, less funded state that we are heard. No idea is too meatballeque and we don't have to do all the cooking.

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