

# VLA News

## February 2023

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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](#)

### Meet Your Leaders

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

## President's Letter

by Kelly L. McCagg

Personally, as an introvert that tends to get hyperfocused, I am always working to improve my communication skills. I think we as an organization need to make enhanced communication a goal in order to grow participation and heighten the level of benefits one reaps from being a member. With that in mind, I would like to take a moment to make you aware of some upcoming opportunities.

There is exciting news from NELLs (New England Library Leadership Symposium)! First, the application period for Tier II: Mid-Career Leadership is now open. This is what was historically known as NELLs, prior to the growth of the program. This year's retreat is being held in Stowe, Vermont from April 24th through April 27th. The application can be found at [https://nela.memberclicks.net/index.php?option=com\\_mcform&view=ngforms&id=2153722#!/](https://nela.memberclicks.net/index.php?option=com_mcform&view=ngforms&id=2153722#!/) and is due by February 17th. All applicants must be members of NELA (don't worry, there will be more information about this, just keep reading).

If you don't qualify for this round, or if you have already graduated from the program, maybe you would be interested in serving as a mentor. Vermont will have the opportunity to send one mentor to participate in the program, with hotel and meals covered by NELA. Per NELA: "Mentors should be comfortable facilitating small group discussions about topics such as conflict management, community building, strategic planning, resilience, diversity, and addressing modern issues in libraries from a leadership perspective. Mentors will help foster an open, safe environment for cohort members to explore ideas and ask questions." If this sounds like your cup of tea, stay tuned for more information.

I'm so excited that we and the Vermont School Library Association (VSLA) will be cohosting our annual conference this year on April 3rd. "Be the Place: Libraries are for Everyone" guarantees to be a great opportunity for all library workers to get together to learn, share, and grow. In order to make this conference more accessible, the VLA board voted to offer a limited number of stipends for those for whom attending would be an economic hardship, specifically library workers whose annual budget is less than \$100,000. When registering please look for the button to apply.

Membership is what makes all these opportunities possible. By being a member of VLA you qualify for a discounted membership to the New England Library Association (NELA). For just \$20 (Cedar level members can join for just \$15), you will qualify for a deep discount if you ever attend a NELA conference or workshop; and it's required if you want to attend any of the NELLs programs. Not sure if you are a member? You can check by logging in at <https://vermontlibraries.wildapricot.org/>, or contact VLA Membership Chair Erica Shott at [members@vermontlibraries.org](mailto:members@vermontlibraries.org).

*"Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much."*  
--Helen Keller

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VLA President  
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PO Box 803

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](#)

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[Lisa Milchman](#)

### **Section Representative**

**College & Special Libraries Section President:**

[Laura Haines](#)

Organizes workshops and assists college and special librarians.

**Membership & Outreach Chair:**

[Erica Shott](#)

Maintains membership database and communications.

**Public Libraries Section President:**

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)

# VLA & VSLA Joint Conference April 3, 2023

**Be the Place: Libraries are for Everyone!**

<https://www.vermontlibraries.org/event/vsla-vla-joint-conference-be-the-place-libraries-are-for-everyone>

## Public Libraries

*by Susan O'Connell*

This month, much of my time has been taken up with concepts of library leadership. My own library has just elected four new board members, which has been a good chance for me to look at how we welcome our new library leaders to the board, ensure they take ownership of their positions, and have the knowledge they need to understand the role of a library trustee. I was also honored to attend the graduation ceremony for the inaugural class of ARSL Outstanding in their Field Leaders (congratulations to Vermont's own graduates: Bree Drapa and Margaret Woodruff).

There are opportunities of all shapes and sizes for librarians to take on a leadership role in Vermont. My decision last year to run for the vice president of the Vermont Library Association Public Libraries Section was quite honestly swayed by the fact that the title is bigger than the job responsibilities, which fits my needs just right. As I look to transition out of my year-long stint as president, our current vice president Catherine Goldsmith will be taking over, and she will need a VP to be working with. This is just one of the positions that will be available on the VLA board. Perhaps you could look over the job descriptions at <https://www.vermontlibraries.org/board-position-descriptions> and see if there is a position that would suit you?

One of the more exciting roles that my position as head of the VLA Public Libraries Section allowed was that it also includes serving on the Vermont Public Library Foundation (VPLF) board. Long time librarians may remember Dr. Burnett Rawson and his support of youth services through the Winnie Belle Learned Fund. Dr. Rawson supported initiatives that contributed to literacy, the love of learning, critical analysis, and intellectual exploration. The VPLF is excited to be launching a new Winnie Belle Learned Fund opportunity in the coming weeks (watch for an announcement shortly). Public librarians, this is a good time to start thinking about small projects that might have a big impact for the children and families you serve!

If leadership still feels like a by-product of your job, and the idea fits uncomfortably on your shoulders, there is a great opportunity to explore the concept further coming right up. The New England Library Leadership Symposium (NELLS) is a week-long leadership institute developed by the New England Library Association (NELA), and this year the institute will be held in Vermont. The deadline to apply is February 17th. Read more about it at <https://www.nelib.org/nells-leadership>.

Susan O'Connell

VLA Public Libraries Section President

Director, [Craftsbury Public Library](#)

[director@craftsburypubliclibrary.org](mailto:director@craftsburypubliclibrary.org)

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## VLA Award Nominations due March 1

[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.

##### **Personnel Chair:**

VACANT

Assists librarians with questions related to personnel issues.

##### **Technical Services Chair:**

(inactive)  
Organizes

For details, see the Vermont Library Association page: <https://www.vermontlibraries.org/2023-vla-award-nominations-open>

# ALA Vermont Chapter Councilor Report

*by Jessamyn West*

Hello from your local Chapter Councilor to the American Library Association. I attended all Council meetings virtually and this is my brief report. My full report can be found at this web address <https://www.librarian.net/stax/5378/>. It is my pleasure to serve as your Chapter Councilor.

#### **Want to be a Councilor?**

Would you like to go to ALA conferences for free and represent your state? I am more than happy to continue in this role, but I would also be happy to pass the privilege and responsibility on to someone else. Feel free to contact me directly, and I can discuss what is involved.

#### **ALA Conferences Overview**

The January conference that we formerly knew as Midwinter is now LibLearnX. This one was held in New Orleans and while I was somewhat sad to not be there in person, virtual attendance and participation worked really well. VLA also saves a lot of money by not sending me there, so I was pleased virtual participation was a real option for governance.

The ALA attendee report: 2653 attendees of which 1711 are regular members (i.e. not vendors, corporate members, or free attendees).

I attended three Council sessions and here are my brief remarks.

#### **Friday, January 27**

*ALA Bylaws Convention, Special Council Session 1-5 p.m.*

This meeting was specifically set up in order to finalize work on revising the ALA Bylaws. There were 12 articles that did not have amendments suggested, and we zipped through them. On the articles that did have amendments, they were concerned with various things and some small changes were made. The bylaws eventually passed. ALA and Council have been working for years to come up with a new governance model that is finally getting finalized and voted on. This will include a slightly different makeup and role for Council in the years to come, and I was happy to be a part of this change.

The overall bylaw changes were voted in, and there will be a new work group formed to work on changes to the policy manual.

#### **Saturday, January 28**

*APA & ALA Council Meeting 3-6:30 p.m.*

ALA-APA (Allied Professional Association) gave their report which can be found here: <https://www.ala.org/aboutala/sites/ala.org/aboutala/files/content/ALA%20APA%20CD%205%20Executive%20Directors%20Report.pdf>

Council voted whether to approve an extended timeline for a simplification of ALA membership dues, to approve dues adjustments (general price hike but with reduced fees still in effect and free membership for international members), and to try to standardize Round Table dues. There was lengthy discussion. I generally vote against dues increases even though I know most will eventually pass. I think if you are trying to live up to DEI values, cost concerns should be part of that.

There was also an important resolution on continuing virtual access to ALA Membership Meetings that passed.

#### **Sunday, January 29**

*ALA Council Meeting 1:30-4:45 p.m.*

Many reports were read out, all of which can be found linked above on my longer Councilor report. The Freedom to Read Foundation report was of specific interest. They strongly encourage chapters to join

workshops & assists technical services librarians.

**Youth Librarians President:**  
VACANT  
Organizes workshops and assists youth librarians.

**Archivist:**

**VLA News Editor:**  
[Janet Clapp](#)

**Digital Communications:**  
[Tessa Johnson](#)  
[Susan Larson](#)  
[Sarah Scully](#)  
[Jessamyn West](#)

**Representative**  
**S**

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

Planning a purchase on Amazon.com?

the Freedom to Read Foundation and I would suggest that VLA do this, as well as possibly make a donation to the Merritt Fund: <https://www.oif.ala.org/the-merritt-fund/>. There were also more housekeeping discussions and a few resolutions including one on Human Rights and Freedom of Speech and Expression in Iran that passed.

A vote to give ALA honorary membership to Dolly Parton passed. I, of course voted yes.

Jessamyn West  
VLA Chapter Councilor  
[Vermont Mutual Aid Society](#)  
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# Vermont Libraries in the News

*compiled by Susan Larson*

**Bixby Memorial Free Library's** LEGO® robotics teams preparing for the state competition.  
<https://www.wcax.com/video/2023/01/14/legos-robotics-team-gears-up-state-competition/>

**Manchester Community Library** recently hired Kira Mait as its new marketing communications specialist. "A key objective for [the library] is developing the best ways of connecting with our public..." said Edward Surjan, library executive director.  
[https://www.manchesterjournal.com/community-news/manchester-community-library-hires-marketing-communications-specialist/article\\_10460f24-91d2-11ed-bb7f-1b5e236223f8.html](https://www.manchesterjournal.com/community-news/manchester-community-library-hires-marketing-communications-specialist/article_10460f24-91d2-11ed-bb7f-1b5e236223f8.html)

"**Kellogg-Hubbard Library**, with its Italian Renaissance-influenced architecture and its beautiful Dummerston granite, hails from a different age. When it officially opened 127 years ago, on Jan. 2, 1896, with a collection of 5,613 books, the building itself was pretty much the extent of art at the library, but today the library has a growing art collection that includes ancient reproductions alongside modern and contemporary works."

"Art is one of the best ways that we can be reflective and responsive to our community," said co-director and library director Carolyn Brennan, adding that art is an "impactful and visible way...that we can be welcoming, warm, and inviting."  
<https://montpelierbridge.org/2023/01/another-draw-to-kellogg-hubbard-library-the-art-collection/>

"As we continue to support the 'freedom to read,' let's also celebrate the librarians who are on the front lines defending that freedom. This year, *Seven Days* asked Vermont library professionals to tell us about some of their favorite books released in 2022."

This article features recommendations by:

-Sophie Marks, youth services librarian at **Maclure Library** in Pittsford.

-Gretchen Wright, director of **Jericho Town Library**.

-Jeannette Bair, director of **Rochester Public Library**.

-Emer Pond Feeney, assistant director at **Fletcher Free Library** in Burlington.

-Trina Magi, library professor at the **University of Vermont** in Burlington.

-Lori Mitchell, adult services librarian at **Norman Williams Public Library** in Woodstock.

<https://www.sevendaysvt.com/vermont/shelf-improvement-vermont-librarians-pick-their-favorite-books-of-2022/Content?oid=37184703>

Their requests for Congressionally Directed Spending (CDS) funds were approved in the Fiscal Year 2023 Omnibus Appropriations Bill passed by the Senate and House and signed by President Biden.

- **Fletcher Free Library** will receive \$500,000 to bring one of the only Carnegie libraries in Vermont up to today's energy efficiency standards

- **Kimball Public Library** will receive \$200,000 to restore and repair its unique architecture

- **Worthen Library** will receive \$57,000 to install a Solar Energy Demonstration Project

<https://www.facebook.com/VermontLib/posts/pfbid02RNhgS3FnposNoVZJobkQxTCVGtXXToFj1QD7riEWJ9HSuESNWooxGgQtmmJ9AFo1I>

"In **Swanton**, public library director Abbey Gaudette is looking forward to connecting more with the Swanton community in 2023, to expand library programs and services. 'More community entities brought together will strengthen the bond that Swanton is working really hard to create,' Gaudette

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.

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said."

[https://www.samesessenger.com/news/franklin-county-talks-plans-dreams-and-goals-2023-s-new-year-s-resolutions/article\\_d6bb1788-8874-11ed-827b-371ebdebd404.html](https://www.samesessenger.com/news/franklin-county-talks-plans-dreams-and-goals-2023-s-new-year-s-resolutions/article_d6bb1788-8874-11ed-827b-371ebdebd404.html)

"Emily Hamman's parents and young son were on hand at the Children's Room at the **Bennington Free Library** to honor Emily and view new purchases made with money donated in her honor." The money was raised and donated by American Legion Post 13.

[https://www.benningtonbanner.com/local-news/emily-hamann-honored-at-bennington-free-library-you-never-know-what-can-inspire-a-child/article\\_2defc072-7bf4-11ed-a9de-93eee4a47033.html?fbclid=IwAR33muwXJOcAGIYfQ\\_zbO4YuM8iD0qCGbXB2066-5SHw618Ni7vgD5v88A](https://www.benningtonbanner.com/local-news/emily-hamann-honored-at-bennington-free-library-you-never-know-what-can-inspire-a-child/article_2defc072-7bf4-11ed-a9de-93eee4a47033.html?fbclid=IwAR33muwXJOcAGIYfQ_zbO4YuM8iD0qCGbXB2066-5SHw618Ni7vgD5v88A)

After founding the chess club at **Manchester Community Library** in September, volunteer "[Harold] Aronowitz has assembled a roster of 42 young players eager to learn the game, about half of them being 'regulars,' meeting with his new team every Thursday at 3:30 p.m. in the 'Young Adult Loft.'"

[https://www.manchesterjournal.com/arts\\_and\\_culture/the-check-mates-manchester-community-library-s-chess-club-is-a-hit-with-local-kids/article\\_010e8fd8-77fe-11ed-b01d-07f22f4edcca.html?fbclid=IwAR2ANyxrKXVSyX3N7OimSq4liRmdsOxR2qmfwxhdhMFA1sqqSbue1BXuill](https://www.manchesterjournal.com/arts_and_culture/the-check-mates-manchester-community-library-s-chess-club-is-a-hit-with-local-kids/article_010e8fd8-77fe-11ed-b01d-07f22f4edcca.html?fbclid=IwAR2ANyxrKXVSyX3N7OimSq4liRmdsOxR2qmfwxhdhMFA1sqqSbue1BXuill)

Cory Stephenson, director of **Moretown Memorial Library**, is featured in *The Valley Reporter's* "Love What You Do" series.

<https://www.valleyreporter.com/index.php/news/artsent/17485-love-what-you-do-cory-stephenson>

"Enosburg Lions Club President Brent Garrow presented **Enosburg Library** director Brenda Stanley with a check for \$1,500 during a recent Pajama Story Night."

[https://www.samesessenger.com/news/lions-club-presents-1-500-donation-to-enosburg-public-library/article\\_24878e36-6f4a-11ed-982d-e359788fee97.html](https://www.samesessenger.com/news/lions-club-presents-1-500-donation-to-enosburg-public-library/article_24878e36-6f4a-11ed-982d-e359788fee97.html)

"After two years of renovations, COVID, supply chain delays and planning, the **John G. McCullough Free Library** has once again opened its doors to the community it's dedicated to serve."

[https://www.benningtonbanner.com/local-news/lets-get-literate-the-john-g-mccullough-free-library-has-reopened-its-doors/article\\_6b9853ec-70ed-11ed-bf26-7bc8a48f78f0.html](https://www.benningtonbanner.com/local-news/lets-get-literate-the-john-g-mccullough-free-library-has-reopened-its-doors/article_6b9853ec-70ed-11ed-bf26-7bc8a48f78f0.html)

Bennington Children's Library Offers Bilingual Books for Afghan Refugees

A youth services librarian at the **Bennington Free Library**, "[Linda] Donigan said she decided to start the English-Dari book project after two local residents, Brenda MacDonald and Jeanne Davis, asked how the library could support the resettlement of Afghan refugees in the county."

<https://vtdigger.org/2022/11/29/bennington-childrens-library-offers-bilingual-books-for-afghan-refugees/>

Let's Move in Libraries and the Association of Bookmobile and Outreach Services (ABOS) hosted the second annual StoryWalk® Week on social media November 7 - 11. Installations from Vermont's **North Hero Public Library**, **Warren Public Library**, and **Westford Public Library** were featured among the 230 submissions from public libraries in 40 states and two Canadian provinces.

<https://letsmovelibraries.org/storywalk-week-2022/>

"Preschool children in Burlington, Vermont, will receive new picture books as part of **Fletcher Free Library's** annual BOOKS FOR CHILDREN GIFT CAMPAIGN, a holiday donation program that supports early learners from low-income families."

[https://vtdigger.org/press\\_release/library-holds-annual-books-for-children-gift-campaign/](https://vtdigger.org/press_release/library-holds-annual-books-for-children-gift-campaign/)

"After a three-year fundraising campaign reached its goal of \$143,000, construction is underway [at **Windsor Public Library**] to bring the stairs and bathroom into Americans With Disabilities Act compliance and install a lift to improve access to the basement level children's room, bathroom and meeting room. The project is expected to be complete in March."

<https://www.vnews.com/Library-Lift-48677513>

**Highgate Library & Community Center's** Kid's Kitchen program is featured in the American Library Association's Public Programs newsletter and website. The library received a Peggy Barber Tribute Grant from ALA, which helped fund the purchase of a mobile kitchen cart.

According to the website, "I reached out to Virginia, a local teacher and cook, to see if she would be interested in running a children's cooking program. Virginia has free rein to come up with her own programs and she decides what is cooked each month. We provide all of the materials she will need including all cooking supplies."

<https://programminglibrarian.org/programs/kids-kitchen-miss-virginia>

"Librarians at **Brownell and Dorothy Alling Memorial Libraries (DAML)** in Williston invite community members to share a story as part of their 2023 Vermont Reads Programming." ... According to River West, Brownell Youth Librarian, "We are really excited about this collaboration with Dorothy Alling and the intergenerational possibilities of this project. I can imagine families sitting down together to share stories at the dinner table or interviewing elders, and editing and hosting a podcast is a unique opportunity for teens interested in putting their creativity and tech skills to use."

[https://www.essexreporter.com/news/brownell-library-invites-the-community-to-participate-in-vermont-reads/article\\_81bb9d1c-9804-11ed-8cb2-07c89a539842.html](https://www.essexreporter.com/news/brownell-library-invites-the-community-to-participate-in-vermont-reads/article_81bb9d1c-9804-11ed-8cb2-07c89a539842.html)

"Workforce development is a hot topic today," writes **Ilsley Public Library** director Dana Hart in their *Addison County Independent* op-ed. "I've noticed that many politicians talk about the importance of preparing America's labor force for the future, and I'm always a little surprised that they leave public libraries out of these conversations. Maybe it doesn't make a great soundbite, but the truth is that public libraries have been helping connect people with employment opportunities, build skills and improve job prospects for decades. Ilsley Public Library is no exception." Read more:

<https://www.addisonindependent.com/2023/01/26/building-the-library-of-the-future-libraries-enhance-our-workforce/>

Susan Larson, MLIS  
VLA Digital Communications Team  
[susanlarson@gmail.com](mailto:susanlarson@gmail.com)

## Trustees & Friends

*by Howard Burrows*

Friends/Trustees are helping to organize the VLA/VSLA joint conference at the DoubleTree by Hilton in South Burlington, Vermont on April 3rd.

This year uniquely the VLA conference will be in conjunction with the Vermont School Library Association (VSLA). All libraries in Vermont work with school libraries somehow: family support, pre- and post-school literacy, training educators, providing health and legal resources... Yet the school libraries are administered outside the Vermont Department of Libraries. The Vermont library organizations are separate and usually participate in separate statewide conferences. This year the leaders of VLA and VSLA have been meeting together to create a conference program and to find suitable vendors. We hope to use this event to find continuing ways to bring our activities closer together in the future.

\$26.5 million in capital improvement funding will be available this spring: "Upcoming Capital Project Grant Funding Opportunities" on the Vermont Department of Libraries website (<https://libraries.vermont.gov/upcoming-capital-project-grant-funding-opportunities>). Senator Leahy, the VT Department of Libraries, and the Vermont Library Association's advocacy committee worked in concert with the Public Policy and Government Relations office of ALA to win these funds, and we will use the April 3rd meeting to support public libraries as they plan for them. State Librarian Catherine Delneo and her team at the Vermont Department of Libraries will describe the funding process. In addition, the conference is attempting to recruit appropriate vendors to help all of us understand how we might work together to apply funds most effectively.

I am currently only "acting chair" and would like to hear from you.

Howard Burrows, Trustee  
VLA Friends/Trustees, Past and Acting Chair

NELLS-2019  
Trustee, [Brooks Memorial Library](#), Brattleboro  
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# Libraries in Vermont Working Group

The Working Group on the Status of Libraries in Vermont will meet March 24, 2023. They last met January 27, 2023. 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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