

VLA News

May 2023

Table of Contents

Articles

[President's Letter Election](#)
[Membership Vermont Library News](#)
[Working Group Newsletter Editor](#)

Sidebar

[Back Issues](#)
[Meet Your Leaders](#)
[Library Jobs & Subs](#)
[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

VLA is here to help you. The people who make up the

President's Letter

by Kelly L. McCagg

As I wrap up my term as VLA president, I am surprised by all that was accomplished and sustained in one calendar year.

Vermont is no longer isolated from the ignorance and bigotry that plagues much of the rest of our nation. Books, programs, and even displays have been challenged. I am grateful for the guidance and support provided by our own VLA Intellectual Freedom Committee and their rapid response team. I am also a huge advocate of the American Library Association's Office for Intellectual Freedom. Please, reach out to these professionals if you need assistance. You will feel better equipped to deal with the situation at hand.

The Vermont State University (VTSU) library issue continues to evolve. The VLA Board released a statement on February 12th where we detailed our concerns in relation to the planned "closing" of the state's college libraries (<https://www.vermontlibraries.org/vla-statement-regarding-vtsu-library-closures>). Since then a new plan has been released (<https://transformation.vsc.edu/refined-plan-for-the-vermont-state-university-libraries>). Many opinion pieces have been written and published, including this one by Provost Nolan Atkins at VTSU (https://www.manchesterjournal.com/opinion/columnists/nolan-atkins-we-are-not-closing-vermont-state-university-libraries/article_593c2488-aed4-11ed-9938-d7d4936aaa8d.html). Demonstrations have been staged on both the college campuses and in Montpelier. Less than a year into his role as Vermont State University President, Parwinder Grewal has resigned. Senator Brian Collamore from Rutland has introduced a library preservation bill (https://www.timesargus.com/news/local/collamore-introduces-vtsu-library-preservation-bill/article_15ff922e-6f60-5be9-a9e7-538d0a897016.html). Now the ball is in your court. We urge you to contact your local elected officials to share your thoughts and concerns about the VTSU library plan (<https://legislature.vermont.gov/people/search/2024>). Let's show everyone what this small, brave state can do.

Many of you who attended our annual conference might still be swimming in a pool of innovative ideas. I want to send out an immense thank you to the conference committee! A joint conference was no easy lift, but they made it seem effortless. I loved the opportunity to meet so many school librarians and discover new and diverse areas of librarianship. Hopefully this will lead to continued collaborations in the future.

Finally, the Working Group on the Status of Libraries in Vermont has been plugging away. We meet every other month to hear testimony, listen to presentations provided by the Department of Library staff or other local professionals in regards to the current

Executive Board, Section & Committee leaders and Representative volunteers 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:
[Daisy Benson](#)

topic, and then discuss our initial findings. If you would like to binge watch our meetings, you can find them here. (<https://libraries.vermont.gov/services/initiatives-and-projects/working-group-status-libraries-vermont#:~:text=There%20is%20created%20the%20Working,Membership>) (Be aware, most are five hours long.) We are still collecting information, so if you would like to share your thoughts on upcoming topics, or even ones that we have already covered, you can submit your written ideas to lib.contact@vermont.gov. Our final report is expected at the end of the calendar year.

An email about our annual meeting in June is forthcoming. I encourage you to attend, or at the very least, request an absentee ballot. Thank you for your participation and support over the past year.

*Coming together is a beginning.
Keeping together is progress.
Working together is success.*
--Henry Ford

Kelly L. McCagg
VLA President
Director, [Burnham Memorial Library](#), Colchester
president@vermontlibraries.org
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Editor's note: After the president's letter above was submitted, Vermont State University Interim President Mike Smith announced further changes to the VTSU library plan, rescinding library layoffs and talking about streamlining the library (https://www.rutlandherald.com/news/local/streamlining-vtsu-libraries-will-be-a-collaborative-effort-smith-says/article_4936edc6-29d0-5f35-be90-33b31ad24af0.html and <https://www.sevendaysvt.com/vermont/vermont-state-colleges-reverse-library-layoffs-athletics-shakeup/Content?oid=38087780>)

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

Election Time

by Kelly L. McCagg

Like most things, COVID has sent our annual meetings and elections into a whirl, but we are working hard to right our sails. The annual meeting will take place virtually the first full week in June (details to follow). Absentee ballots will be made available. But before we can worry about the date or the ballots, we need candidates! Won't you consider serving in one of the following positions?

- Secretary (two years)
- Treasurer (two years)
- Vice President/President elect (three years total)

Organizes workshops and assists college and special librarians.

Membership & 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:

[Howard](#)

[Burrows](#)

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 Co-

- Public Libraries Vice President/President elect (two years)--Any youth services librarians interested in having a turn leading this section?
- College & Special Libraries Vice President/President elect (two years)
- Friends & Trustees Vice President/President elect (two years)

This is an excellent opportunity to build leadership skills, while working with a fabulous group of librarians. Descriptions of each office can be found at <https://www.vermontlibraries.org/board-position-descriptions>, and I'm happy to answer any questions you may have. We would really love to have at least one contested election--it's been almost twenty years--so please give this some real thought.

Kelly L. McCagg

president@vermontlibraries.org

kmccagg@colchestervt.gov

VLA Membership & Outreach

by Erica Shott

Please be aware, if your VLA membership account is set up for auto-renewal and you also hold a New England Library Association (NELA) membership add-on, the NELA membership will not automatically renew. This is part of how Wild Apricot was set up. We are looking into possible remedies. But for now, you have two options: remove the auto-renewal from your account, or email membership and let me know. I can manually make the adjustments. You will be invoiced separately, and I will make sure your information gets over to NELA.

Any questions or concerns, please email: members@vermontlibraries.org

Thank you,

Erica Shott

VLA Membership and Outreach Committee Chair

Director, [Dorset Village Library](#)

members@vermontlibraries.org

802-867-4085

Vermont Libraries in the News

compiled by Susan Larson

Six Vermont libraries were awarded Star Library ratings in the 15th edition of the *Library Journal* (LJ) Index of Public Library Service. The libraries are Craftsbury Public Library in Craftsbury Corners; Enosburgh Public Library in Enosburgh Falls; Fairlee Public Library; Jaquith Public Library in Marshfield; Norwich Public Library; and Pettee Memorial Library in Wilmington. Details here:

<https://www.vermontlibraries.org/six-vermont-libraries-named-2022-library-journal-star-libraries>

Jeudevine Memorial Library in Hardwick was named one of 30 finalists for the 2023 National Medal for Museum and Library Service, awarded by the Institute of Museum

Chairs:
[Pamela Cartier](#)
[Mary Danko](#)
Oversees VLA awards and scholarships.

Vermont Library Conference Chair:
[Kevin Unrath](#)

Roundtables

Inclusion Co-Chairs:
[Bridget Stone-Allard](#)
[Amy Olsen](#)
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 workshops & assists technical services librarians.

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

VLA News Editor:
[Janet Clapp](#)

Digital Communicatio

and Library Services.
<https://hardwickgazette.com/2023/04/04/library-named-finalist-for-national-medal/>

Kellogg-Hubbard Library received national recognition following an Associated Press (AP) story. "Each April, the country's smallest capital city goes all out to celebrate poetry," the AP reported. "'We do National Poetry Month better than anybody as far as we can see,' said PoemCity organizer Michelle Singer, the adult programs coordinator for the Kellogg Hubbard Library in the city of about 8,000 residents." The story was shared by media outlets across the country, including the *Washington Post*.
<https://apnews.com/article/montpelier-poetry-vermont-spring-bd5547c62ed42fa7adc452c2f337e565>

Pierson Library Director Kevin Unrath has accepted the Consultant for Library Operations position at the Vermont Department of Libraries, Janette Shaffer, Assistant State Librarian for Advancement, announced in an email on April 20. Kevin will provide consulting, instruction, and web and print resource development for the department, as well as statewide leadership with a focus on library operations. He begins his new position on May 22. Congratulations, Kevin!

Six people received 2023 Vermont Library Association awards during the Vermont Library Conference on April 3.

- Senator Patrick Leahy was named Library Advocate of the Year. VLA further honored Senator Leahy by renaming the award the Senator Patrick Leahy Library Advocate of the Year Award.
- Eileen Forrester received the Green Mountain Award in appreciation for her years of volunteer service and support to South Burlington Public Library.
- Debbie Roderer, assistant director at Dorothy Alling Memorial Library, and Leslie Markey of Brooks Memorial Library, each received a Birdie Award for their outstanding service in the field of technical services.
- Nate Eddy, director of Winooski Memorial Library, received the Sarah C. Hagar Award for outstanding service in or significant contribution to the field of librarianship in Vermont.
- Beth Wade was recognized as Trustee of the Year for her outstanding achievement on behalf of Cabot Public Library.

Photos and details here:
<https://www.vermontlibraries.org/vermont-library-association-2023-award-recipients>

Eleven people were awarded the Vermont Department of Libraries Certificate of Public Librarianship at the 2023 Vermont Library Conference. They are

- Autumn Bissonnette, circulation librarian at Kellogg-Hubbard Library
- Abigael Gaudette, director of Swanton Public Library
- Shana Hickman, director of Baxter Memorial Library
- Katarzyna Janiga, head adult librarian at Kellogg-Hubbard Library
- Carrie Roy King, youth services librarian at Whiting Library, Chester
- Tiaunna Leddick of Rutland Free Library
- Laura Massell of Woodbury Community Library
- Christine Mix, assistant librarian at Wilder Memorial Library
- Rebecca Pearish of Brown Public Library
- Amy Petersen, a librarian at St. Johnsbury Athenaeum
- Lynn Eisenbrey

ns:

[Tessa Johnson](#)
[Susan Larson](#)
[Sarah Scully](#)
[Jessamyn West](#)

Representatives

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

- Rebecca Goldberg, Fletcher Free Library
- Lesley Markey, Brooks Memorial Library
- Debbie Roederer, Dorothy Alling Memorial Library
- Lisa Sammet, Jeudevine Memorial Library
- Marita Schine, Lawrence Memorial Library
- Cindy Weber, Stowe Free Library

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](#)

ATTN: Gmail Users

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<https://www.facebook.com/VTLibraryAssociation/posts/pfbid025LkrijiDQF9EjurobYpt3A2z9whVhthj3nhN5HhPsvYSmwNi6yTuWBenDFfQmXWHxl>

"One thing will become abundantly clear after I read the list of retirees, and that is that these individuals have dedicated multiple decades of service to Vermont public libraries," said Pamela Cartier, co-chair of the Vermont Library Association Scholarship and Awards Committee. The retirees honored during the April 3 Vermont Library Conference are

<https://www.vermontlibraries.org/retirees-recognized-at-vermont-library-conference>

Nancy Tusinski, who has served as director of the Hartland Public Library for six years, announced her retirement, effective May 27. She has worked as a librarian for 23 years.

<https://www.vnews.com/Harland-librarian-announces-retirement-50696316>

Raphaella Brice: the artist behind the Fletcher Free Library mural on her rise to success:

<https://www.burlingtonfreepress.com/story/life/2023/04/07/raphaella-brice-artist-behind-burlingtons-black-madonna-mural/70068274007/>

"Public libraries across Vermont -- dealing with tight budgets, staffing shortages, and a push to go digital...making it tough for some to keep up," began a story reported by Kiana Burks on WCAX-TV. "Hard times -- but [librarians] say your local library isn't going anywhere. 'Public libraries are really resilient. We will continue to thrive,' said Barbara Ball, director of Windsor Public Library and secretary of the Vermont Library Association." Burks also interviewed Nate Eddy, director of Winooski Memorial Library, and Wendy Hysko, director of Brownell Library and president of the Green Mountain Library Consortium.

<https://www.wcax.com/video/2023/03/31/vermont-libraries-facing-convergence-challenges/>

"Parwinder Grewal, the embattled president of the new Vermont State University, has resigned after weeks of intense criticism following his decision to remove most of the books from the system's libraries. The library plan itself has been put on hold."

<https://www.sevendaysvt.com/vermont/vermont-state-university-president-resigns-library-plan-put-on-hold/Content?oid=38014712>

Georgia Vermont Public Library received a \$10,000 grant from the United Way of Northwest Vermont for eight weeks of teen programming called "Here I Belong." "The project welcomes all teens, and specifically provides a safe, fun, and creative space for LGBTQIA+ youth at Georgia Public Library," said library director Bridget Stone in an email to VLA. Funds will be used for art supplies, food, guest presenters, promotion, and collection development related to LGBTQIA+.

"Four of Davis Family Library's librarians have left their jobs in the past four months, leaving the following vacancies in the User Experience Librarian, Science and Data Librarian, Head of Collection Development, and Head of Research and Instruction positions. A new User Experience Librarian will start this month to partially relieve the

by the mail service.

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intensified workload of the remaining five librarians, who are struggling to maintain their usual responsibilities in the wake of the understaffing."
<https://www.middleburycampus.com/article/2023/04/davis-library-left-understaffed-with-four-librarians-departing>

"Margot Vanscoy is a Bone Builders instructor, helping people exercise to combat the negative effects of osteoporosis and social isolation. She teaches classes at Swanton Library."
https://www.samesessenger.com/news/national-volunteer-week-spotlight-margot-vanscoy-helps-locals-build-healthy-bones-at-the-swanton-library/article_5f3ef18a-debd-11ed-b140-cb21d7f96df4.html#:~:text=Margot%20Vanscoy%20is%20a%20Bone,class%20grow%2C%E2%80%9D%20Vanscoy%20said.

Whitingham Free Public Library in Jacksonville received an Afterschool & Summer Expanding Access Grant for a two-week summer camp at the end of June 2023, according to an email from the Vermont Department of Libraries. The library will partner with Windham Southwest Supervisory Union's Wings Community Programs to expand summer camp options. Vermont Afterschool worked with the office of Governor Phil Scott, U.S. Senator Bernie Sanders, and the Vermont Agency of Education to establish the grant.

Margaret Woodruff, Director of Charlotte Library, and Bree Drapa, Director of Westford Public Library, recently graduated in the first class of the Association for Rural & Small Libraries (ARSL) Outstanding in Their Field Leadership Institute.
<https://arsloutstanding.org/>

Enosburgh Public Library received a Technology Improvement Award from the Network of the National Library of Medicine Region 7, the Vermont Department of Libraries announced in an email. The award of \$9,000 will be used to replace library computers.

Westford Public Library received an Association for Rural & Small Libraries (ARSL) Penguin Random House grant to provide support for collections and library programming.
<https://www.arsl.org/prh-grant>

Waterbury Public Library announced the completion of their 2023-2027 strategic plan. "Guided by our mission to inspire our community to learn, connect and thrive, the plan identified the three overarching goals and related objectives which represent components of the community's vision for the future of the Waterbury Public Library," wrote director Rachel Muse in a *Waterbury Roundabout* editorial.
<https://www.waterburyroundabout.org/community-archive/607baqid2ebf751y0793w4opqhf7ts>

Kelly L. McCagg, director at Burnham Memorial Library in Colchester and president of the Vermont Library Association; Randal Smathers, director of Rutland Free Library; and Ed Surjan, executive director of Manchester Community Library, discussed the future of local libraries on Vermont Public's *Vermont Edition* on February 21.
<https://www.vermontpublic.org/show/vermont-edition/2023-02-20/the-future-of-vermonts-town-libraries-in-an-increasingly-digital-world>

Susan Larson, MLIS
VLA Digital Communications Team
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Libraries in Vermont Working Group

The Working Group on the Status of Libraries in Vermont will meet May 26, 2023 to discuss "Library Structures and Organizations." They last met April 21, 2023 on the topic of "Intellectual Freedom." 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

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<http://www.vermontlibraries.org>

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