



THE NEWSLETTER Vol. 8 • No. 1 • January 2017

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From the State Librarian

If January is any reflection of what is to come in the next eleven months, 2017 promises to be a year of significant change. Like many Americans, I have been closely watching the rapid changes that followed the inauguration of our new President. And, as both a citizen and a librarian, I am alarmed at the rise of misinformation characterized by "fake news" and "alternative truth." Providing citizens free access to accurate and current information has always been a core mission of libraries, and our Democracy depends upon having informed citizens. Library collections provide a variety of books and other resources which offer a diversity of ideas and viewpoints. Our school and academic libraries are essential in helping students develop information literacy skills so that they can be good information consumers, able to discern fact from opinion and negotiate the swirl of social media and pseudo-news. The complex nature of public policy --at a time when we have so much at stake -- cannot be negotiated or conveyed in a series of tweets, and libraries have a powerful role in stimulating reading, learning, literacy, critical thinking, and community engagement.



[Full article](#)

Vermont Department of Libraries Staff News

Vermont Center for the Book

Vermont Digital Newspaper
Project

Vermont Library
Association

Vermont School Library
Association



Scott Murphy

Welcome to Scott Murphy, Assistant State Librarian for Library Advancement. Scott came to us from the South Carolina State Library, but he is no stranger to Vermont. Scott worked as Director of State Library Services at the Department of Libraries in 2014, and before that was Director of the Milton Public Library. Welcome back, Scott!



Cherie Yaeger

Cherie Yaeger is the new Executive Assistant to the State Librarian. Formerly a project manager at the Department of Motor Vehicles, Cherie brings state government experience and a fresh outlook to the Department. Welcome, Cherie!

We say farewell to **Sara Walker** who was hired as a temporary employee at the Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped in Berlin. Sara helped us with a project to weed 38,000 out-of-date items from our collection and helped with the daily mailing operation. Her positive attitude and work ethic made a huge impact.

Cindy Titus, who works in our Technical Services Unit, celebrated 40 years of employment with the State of Vermont. Her hard work and dedication has made a tremendous difference in the Department of Libraries and in libraries across the state. Congratulations, Cindy!

After 33 years with the Department of Libraries, **Greg McCandless** has retired from his job which was focused at the Northeast and Midstate regional libraries. Librarians from across the state can attest to his outstanding customer and interlibrary loan service. Greg, we wish you well in your retirement!

Jeremiah Kellogg left his position as Public Library Consultant to take a

new position as a systems librarian at Eastern Oregon State University. We wish Professor Kellogg all the best in his new endeavor!

Former Youth Services Consultant **Sharon Colvin** is now enrolled in the doctoral program at the University of Pittsburgh. Sharon brought a high-energy, creative approach to her work as a library consultant to Vermont school and public libraries and we wish her well.

El Deafo Visits Vermont!



Cece Bell, the author of the **2016 Dorothy Canfield Fisher Book Award** winner *El Deafo*, visited Vermont for an event at Montpelier High School way back in June.

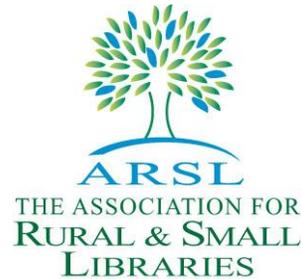
[Full article](#)

National Book Festival



Jennifer Johnson, Library Assistant in our Library Advancement Division, and Vermont Center for the Book Associate Director Wendy Martin represented Vermont at the **National Book Festival** in September.

Scholarship Winners Attend ARSL Conference



The Department of Libraries awarded scholarships to six public librarians to attend the annual conference of the [Association for Rural & Small Libraries](#), held in Fargo, North Dakota, on October 26-29.

Scholarship funds were made possible with federal LSTA funds from the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

The scholarship awardees:

Susan Smolinsky, Director, Arvin A. Brown Library, Richford

Hannah Peacock, Children's Librarian, Burnham Memorial Library,
Colchester

Nancy Rumery, Director, Haskell Free Library, Derby Line

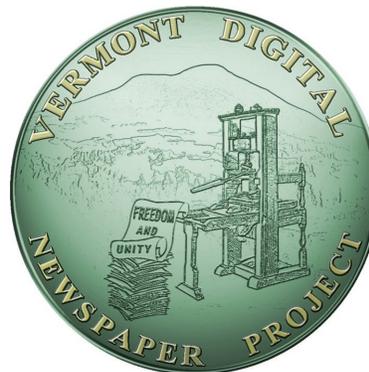
Colleen Korniak, Director, Jericho Town Library

Lucinda Walker, Director, Norwich Public Library

Becky Jensen, Director, Peacham Library

The Department of Libraries' own Mara Siegel and Craftsbury Public Library Director Susan O'Connell presented a hands-on workshop at the conference on maker spaces in public libraries. Congratulations to all of the 2016 Vermont ARSL scholarship recipients.

Vermont Digital Newspaper Project Wraps Up



Tom McMurdo, the Department's Collections & Digital Initiatives Librarian, shares the success story of the **Vermont Digital Newspaper Project**.

Year One of VELI-STEM Grant Ends on a High Note



The **Vermont Early Literacy Initiative in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (VELI-STEM)** grant project finished its first year of science learning for young children and their families in 25 public libraries. Year One focused on the science concepts of force and motion.

[Full article](#)

ONLY COMPLETE ARTICLES BEYOND THIS POINT

From the Vermont State Librarian

If January is any reflection of what is to come in the next eleven months, 2017 promises to be a year of significant change. Like many Americans, I have been closely watching the rapid changes that followed the inauguration of our new President. And, as both a citizen and a librarian, I am alarmed at the rise of misinformation characterized by "fake news" and "alternative truth." Providing citizens free access to accurate and current information has always been a core mission of libraries, and our Democracy depends upon having informed citizens. Library collections provide a variety of books and other resources which offer a diversity of ideas and viewpoints. Our school and academic libraries are essential in helping students develop information literacy skills so that they can be good information consumers, able to discern fact from opinion and negotiate the swirl of social media and pseudo-news. The complex nature of public policy-when we have so much at stake -- cannot be negotiated or conveyed in a series of tweets, and libraries have a powerful role in stimulating reading, learning, literacy, critical thinking, and community engagement.

The Department of Libraries takes seriously the need for Vermonters to have access to quality information and in 2017 we are working to improve that access:

Vermont Online Library. ALL Vermont citizens and students have free access to reliable and current information in the electronic resources of the [Vermont Online Library](#) (VOL) via their public, school, and academic libraries. The VOL offers a wide array of information resources - including tens of thousands of full-text periodical articles and access to newspapers from around the world - which can be accessed

online by using the barcode number from your public library borrower's card. Beginning on January 1, the Department of Libraries dropped the requirement for local libraries to pay a portion of the cost for the Vermont Online Library, so now ALL Vermonters have access to these licensed subscription-based resources, which include everything from car repair and medical information to U.S. History, homework help, and foreign language learning.

Statewide Shared Public Library Catalog. In February, we will announce the first steps of implementation of a new statewide resource sharing system that will allow citizens to see the online catalogs of public libraries across the state and discover library holdings (e.g., books) that are housed in these libraries. We have been working on this project for more than two years and expect to have the new system up and running by September. This project is especially important to Vermonters who live in rural towns where local libraries have small book collections. Interlibrary loan, the system by which Vermonters can borrow books from other libraries (including libraries out of state), supplements what is available on local library shelves and in library downloadable e-book and e-audiobook collections.

New State Librarian. The last big change in our Department is more personal. On February 17, I will leave my position here at the Department of Libraries so that the new Administration and the Board of Libraries can begin the process to appoint a new State Librarian.

It has been a privilege and pleasure to serve as Vermont's State Librarian for the past eight years. I have worked with an outstanding group of smart and innovative Department employees who are committed to ensuring that Vermonters have access to quality library services and resources. Vermont has a wonderful library community and I am proud of what we have accomplished with the help of librarians, library trustees, state agencies, and our state and federal partner organizations.

Thank you!

Regards,

Marty Reid

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Dorothy Canfield Fisher Book Award Winner Cece Bell Visits Montpelier

Over 3,000 Vermont students in grades 4-8 voted for their favorite Dorothy Canfield Fisher Book Award nominee in 2016 - and out of thirty nominees, Cece Bell's *El Deafo* came out on top!

El Deafo is a graphic novel that tells the story of Bell's childhood battle with meningitis and her resulting hearing loss. The novel, illustrated by Bell, shows Cece's elementary school trials and tribulations. Most of these are typical of *any* student, but Cece's unique trial is navigating school life as a deaf student who wears a "Phonic Ear." The "Phonic Ear" is a powerful hearing aid that allows her to remain in class with hearing students and gives her the inspiration to create "El Deafo," an imaginary superhero who gives Cece the confidence to hear and be heard. Bell's novel, also a Newbery Honor Book, won the Vermont students' vote by a landslide.

In 2016 the [Vermont Department of Libraries](#) and the [Friends of Dorothy Canfield Fisher](#) hosted Cece Bell at a ceremony at Montpelier High School. The ceremony was attended by many eager students, teachers, librarians, and parents.

(Former) Youth Services Consultant Sharon Colvin presented Ms. Bell with her award, a piece of artwork by local artist Diana Dunn that depicts Bell's signature rabbit-inspired characters. The audience was

spellbound by Bell's talk, which was interpreted by two talented sign language interpreters. Bell spoke about her inspiration for the book and provided some behind-the-scenes stories of its creation.



Author Cece Bell presenting at Montpelier High School.

Students clamored to ask Ms. Bell questions and get their books signed, a testament to how much Bell and her book are beloved by Vermont students.

Onion River Community Access filmed this event and the video is available on their website [here](#).

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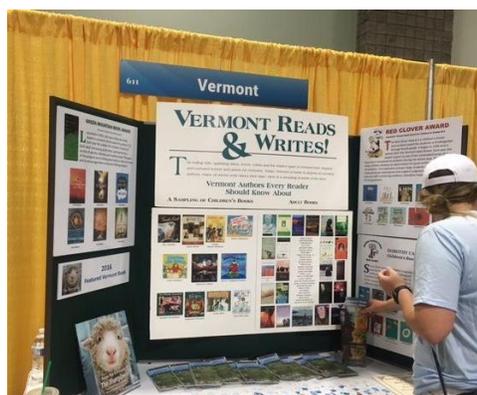
Vermonters Exhibit at the National Book Festival

In September Vermont Department of Libraries' Jennifer Johnson and the Vermont Center for the Book's Wendy Martin represented Vermont at the [National Book Festival](#) in Washington, D.C. Begun in 2001, and hosted by the Center for the Book at the Library of Congress, the National Book Festival brings together authors, publishers, librarians, teachers, and readers of all ages to celebrate the written word.

Vermont authors Katherine Paterson, Jacqueline Woodson, and Jo Knowles were featured authors at the festival.

The Department of Libraries joined representatives from the state library agencies of all 50 states at the Pavilion of the States section of the festival with an exhibit that celebrated Vermont's award-winning books for children. The Vermont exhibit also featured the picture book *The Sheepover* by Vermonters John and Jennifer Churchman.

Thousands of attendees visited the 50 booths, where they could receive stamps or stickers for the U.S. maps provided when entering the exhibit area. With the help of two local Junior League volunteers, Jennifer and Wendy gave out Vermont stickers to almost 2,000 visitors.



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Vermont Digital Newspaper Project Ends After Six Successful Years



The Vermont Digital Newspaper Project (<http://library.uvm.edu/vtnp/>) has completed work in its third, and final 2-year grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. Over the last six years, the project digitized approximately 350,000 pages of historical newspapers from 20 locales in 13 of 14 Vermont counties. And the best part: they are all now freely available on the [Library of Congress Chronicling America site](#).

The Vermont Digital Newspaper Project (VTDNP) is based at UVM, but has truly been a statewide effort. An advisory board composed of journalists, historians, librarians, and museum professionals from all over the state selected the titles for digitization. Newspapers were digitized from microfilm negatives, virtually all of which were produced by the Vermont Secretary of State Public Records Division in the 1960s, 70s, and 80s. Thanks to forward-thinking people at the State Archives and the Department of Libraries, this trove of microfilm has been well preserved and was ready for digitization when the moment came.

Project Director Birdie MacLennan (UVM) brought Project Librarian Tom McMurdo to Vermont from the California Digital Newspaper Collection to start the project in 2010-11. During the second grant term Tom left to join the Vermont Department of Libraries and was replaced as Project Librarian by Erenst Anip, a veteran of the Hawaii Digital Newspaper Program. When Birdie passed away in March 2014, UVM Head of Special Collections, Jeff Marshall, assumed Project Director duties. Sally Blanchard and Karyn Norwood were instrumental in the success of the Project. Prudence Doherty was a steadying hand throughout, and if not for Chris Kirby's impetus and work, the VTDNP may not have existed at all.

The VTDNP is a small part of the work Birdie accomplished in her career, and serves as a tribute to her dedication to preservation of historical resources and service to the citizens of Vermont and the world. The inclusion of newspapers in English, French, and Italian are a testament to this. The [Cronaca Sovversiva](#), an Italian-language anarchist newspaper from Barre in the early 20th century, had a perspective that spoke not only to the stone cutters of Central Vermont, but to the world at large. [Le Patriote Canadien](#), a French-language newspaper from Burlington from 1839-40, supported the rebellion against the English in Quebec and agitated for self-rule.



Images from the Library of Congress' *Chronicle America* site.

And, there is much more available. Long runs of Vermont newspapers, like the [Caledonian](#) from St. Johnsbury (1837-1922), [Burlington Free Press](#) (1836-1920), [Middlebury Register](#) family of titles (1838-1922), the [State Journal/Vermont Watchman](#) from Montpelier (1836-1910), the [Vermont Phoenix](#) from Brattleboro (1836-1922), and many others allow readers to trace Vermont's daily and weekly history from the antebellum years through the Civil War and Reconstruction to World War I and beyond. Other titles show a different perspective on life, such as the Democratic Party organs [Windham County Democrat](#) from Brattleboro and the [Spirit of the Age](#) from Woodstock. These titles backed the Democratic Party in Whig-dominated and then Republican Party-dominated Vermont. The oppositional writing in these titles provides a different perspective on life in our state.

Another title with an oppositional perspective was the abolitionist [Vermont Freeman/Green Mountain Freeman](#). Daring to proclaim support for abolition in the first issue in December 1842, at a time when such a sentiment could be dangerous for one's health, the Green Mountain Freeman saw its cause not only become popular, but saw the nation finally prevail in abolishing slavery. Historically, Vermont, like much of the North, was anti-slavery, but anti-slavery and abolition were two very different things in the antebellum years.

As Vermonters, we can be proud of our forebears who stood up against popular opinion for what they believed. It is part of the fabric of the state, and part of what makes us who we are today. We can also be proud of the success of the Vermont Digital Newspaper Project, providing preservation and access to our rich history for the foreseeable future.

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Year One of VELI-STEM Program Comes to a Close

The [Vermont Early Literacy Initiative in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math \(VELI-STEM\)](#), a three-year project made possible by a National Leadership Grant for Libraries from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), ended its first year in October. The grant, awarded to the Department of Libraries, includes partners Vermont Center for the Book and the Montshire Museum of Science.

The grant project grew out of the Vermont Early Literacy Initiative (VELI), a program co-sponsored by the Department of Libraries and the Vermont Center for the Book, which has provided training to public library personnel in over 80 libraries to introduce programming for young children in the areas of early literacy, social/emotional development, and basic mathematics. VELI-STEM is a pilot project, designed as a national model for small and rural libraries, centered in 25 Vermont libraries, providing librarian training, books, and hands-on materials to promote inquiry-based physical science education for young children, their families, and local child-care providers.

In 2016 training and activities focused around the themes of force and motion. In 2017, the program focus is on building and engineering. Local librarians can build on the VELI-STEM themes to develop local services and programs. For example, Westford librarian Bree Drapa created a program called "STEM Buddies," which pairs kindergarteners and first-graders with sixth-grade "buddies" for working together on after-school fun science activities.



A Westford sixth-grader guides two youngsters through making and testing a ramp.

Project evaluator Kelly T. Myles will assess the project throughout the 3-year grant period. Her first year report can be found [here](#).

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