

# President's Column

*by Matt Todd*

**T**ransition. Transitions can be both exhilarating and frightening, and sometimes both at once! This year has been and will continue to be one of several transitions in our association, and I would like to take this opportunity to discuss a few of these with you.

## Executive Director

Perhaps the most significant change this year has been the retirement of VLA's executive director, Linda Hahne. Hahne held the post for the past fourteen years, and before that served the association in several volunteer capacities. During Hahne's tenure as executive director, the association attained financial stability and adopted accounting and budgeting practices that have served the membership and the association's fiscal health well to this day. Hahne also ensured the smooth running of not one but two conferences each year, working with the Paraprofessional Forum as well as the Annual Conference Committee to produce successful and productive conferences. Finally—and in some ways perhaps most importantly, as one member told me recently—Hahne was always courteous, friendly, and responsive to queries and concerns of members and nonmembers alike. For many years, Linda Hahne was both the public face of VLA as well as the calm presence behind the scenes making sure everything came off without a hitch. And for all of that, and for her good humor and great devotion to VLA, I would

like to thank her on behalf of all the membership, and wish her well.

When Linda Hahne announced her plans to retire, the Executive Committee (after recovering from the shock, ordering a bottle of wine, and perhaps panicking just

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a little bit!) began the process of finding a new executive director. After a considerable discernment process, the committee was pleased to announce that Lisa Varga had accepted the appointment. Varga worked until recently at Central Rappahannock Regional Library, and many of you may know her from her varied involvement in VLA. As first vice president-elect, I appointed Varga as chair of the 2011 Conference Committee—a role which, to my great relief, she maintained even after assuming the post of executive director. To her new position, Varga brings great enthusiasm and creativity, facility with new and emerging technologies, and a great ability to “think outside the box.” I am very pleased to welcome Lisa Varga as VLA's new executive director, and I am confident that the members will find her responsive and committed.

## Communications

You can expect to see considerable developments in the way the association communicates with its members, advertises conferences and other events, and reaches out to librarians and libraries around the state. These developments mirror trends in the profession as a whole as we all strive to be more green, more sustainable, and, yes, more economical. You may notice some enhancements and improvements to the VLA website. Make sure you get up-to-the-minute updates on VLA's news and events by subscribing to the site's RSS feed (<http://www.vla.org/wordpress/>). More and more content, including news and announcements, will be populated directly on the VLA website. The intention is for this medium to take the place of paper newsletters and to reduce costly printing and postage expenses. You can also find VLA on Facebook (<http://www.facebook.com/VALibraryAssociation>), where you can get updates about the association and the profession. We hope that these communication tools will be effective in connecting with the membership. Remember to sign up for the VLA Google Group so you will not miss important email communications sent directly to your inbox.

There have been some behind-the-scenes changes, too. As the association's publication and communication projects have evolved, so have our structures. The Publications Committee will take over from the Ad Hoc Technology Committee to advise on policies for the

association's electronic as well as print publications, including the website. The executive director will assume responsibility as webmaster, as well as managing the blog, Facebook page, and listserv.

### Budget/State Funding/Profession

It has become a cliché to say that the profession is always changing, but like many clichés, of course there is much truth to it. It seems that we are always reading about innovations in technology, pressure to adapt and transform services, new media, new priorities, unpredictable budgets, and of course the inescapable pressure to “do more with less.” It is ironic that this state of flux is actually the *status quo* for our profession. When people ask me what I do all day as a librarian, my most frequent answer is “adapt to change.” By the nature of their jobs, librarians are change agents (even if sometimes begrudgingly!), and that reality is one of the things the Virginia Library Association is here to support, nurture, and up-build. More than anything, VLA is a resource—for professional development, professional and personal renewal, making connections with peers around the commonwealth, and of course advocating for secure and stable funding for library collections and services.

Transitions naturally produce anxiety as well as optimism. As everyone who has ever worked in any institutional setting knows, change can have both positive and negative outcomes, and for everyone who greets innovation with enthusiasm, there will be some people who mourn the loss of the familiar. I am not unaware that the transitions I describe in this article will have both small and large consequences for our association. Sometimes the transition will be awkward. But I am certain that the Virginia Library Association is poised to move confidently and responsibly forward to serve the commonwealth and her libraries well. **VI**

## Guidelines for Submissions to *Virginia Libraries*

1. *Virginia Libraries* seeks to publish articles and reviews of interest to the library community in Virginia. Articles reporting research, library programs and events, and opinion pieces are all considered for publication. Queries are encouraged.
2. Please submit manuscripts via email as attachments in Microsoft Word, rich text, or plain text format. Articles should be double-spaced with any bibliographic notes occurring at the end of the article. Please avoid using the automatic note creation function provided by some word processing programs.
3. Articles in *Virginia Libraries* conform to the latest edition of the *Chicago Manual of Style* and *Webster's Third New International Dictionary, Unabridged*. Accepted articles are subject to editing for style and clarity. Authors will be consulted on points of fact.
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8. Articles should generally fall within the range of 750–3,000 words. Please query the editors before submitting any work of greater length.
9. Email manuscripts and queries to Cy Dillon, cdillon@hsc.edu, and Lyn C. A. Gardner, cgardner@hampton.gov. Please be sure to copy both editors.
10. *Virginia Libraries* is published quarterly. The deadlines for submission are: November 1 for Number 1, January/February/March; February 1 for Number 2, April/May/June; May 1 for Number 3, July/August/September; and August 1 for Number 4, October/November/December. **VI**