

President's Column

by Lisa Lee Broughman

There is a tree on my campus, located just outside of the library, which isn't particularly well shaped or attractive. However, it is still my favorite tree because it is so unique: this is the first tree in the area to herald the upcoming autumn season. Beginning at the very top, a few of the leaves start to turn orange in August, and the color methodically works its way down to the bottom by the end of September. Those first few leaves to change color signal an upcoming transition, simultaneously winding down the relaxed and balmy summer months while ushering in a new school year, crisp weather, and the upcoming holiday season.

This is almost always my favorite time of year; however, this autumn will be somewhat bittersweet. I will soon find myself traveling to Williamsburg for our annual conference, which is the crowning jewel in my tenure as the Association's president. Over a year in the making, the planning committee has organized many new events and activities, while still holding true to many of our traditions. At this conference, we will introduce you to Battledecks, Unconferences, and BYOB (Bring Your Own Bag) competitions. The 2013 Jefferson Cup Award for Older Readers will be presented to Steve Sheinkin for his book *Bomb: The Race to Build and Steal the World's Most Dangerous Weapon*. We will hear keynote addresses from the author Elisabeth Doucett and the immediate ALA Past-President Maureen Sullivan, as well as an NMRT-sponsored

keynote by Naomi House. The conference theme, *A Universe of Knowledge in One Small Space*, both reflects on the seemingly limitless amount of information and services libraries can provide to our customers, but also the vast

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amount of knowledge you can acquire at this conference in only two days' time. My hope is that you will find your time here to be well spent, and that we can offer a good balance between professional development and enjoyment.

The conference also marks the end of my term as VLA President, a year that has been dizzying and chaotic, but at the same time, educational and a whole lot of fun. I have been privileged to work with an amazing group of librarians on the Executive Committee, Council, and Conference Committees. I attended my first ALA National Library Legislative Day, which is a remarkable experience that I recommend each of you try to do at least once in your careers. I responded to hundreds of emails, worried about a countless number of concerns, and learned so much about our community and the awe-inspiring work that you all do in your libraries, every day.

Thinking back to the leaves on my favorite tree, I am also reminded of how soon an exciting new season will begin for the Virginia Library Association. However, before I pass the gavel, I would like to thank you all for being a part of this year with me. A librarian's mission is to serve her community, and I sincerely hope I have served you well.

**In memory of Jim Gwin
and Carolyn Barkley**

James (Jim) Gwin began his professional career at the University of Tennessee, Chattanooga but is best known for the 37 years he served with the Boatwright Memorial Library at the University of Richmond. A great mentor and educator, he also held leadership positions in both the Virginia Library Association and the Potomac Technical Processing Librarians.

Carolyn L. Barkley was employed by the Virginia Beach Public Library for well over thirty years. After her retirement in 2006, Carolyn remained active as a freelance editor and genealogist, which was her lifelong passion. As well as serving as the president of the Virginia Library Association in 2000, Carolyn presided over the St. Andrew's Society of Tidewater, the Scottish Society of Tidewater, the Virginia Beach Genealogical Society, and the Wintergreen Nature Foundation. She was also a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries, Scotland.

Both of our esteemed colleagues will be greatly missed. **VL**