LIBRARIES: Foundations and Fundamentals in Times of Challenge and Change

Virginia Library Association 2009 Annual Conference
Williamsburg, Virginia • October 29–30, 2009

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 29
10:00–11:30 a.m.
Opening General Session

The opening general session began with a welcome from VLA President Robin Benke, who recognized the generous gift of five hundred copies of The Jefferson Cup Award Turns 25: A Silver Anniversary Publication Celebrating 25 Years of Excellence in Historical Writing for Youth by Donna J. Hughes from longtime VLA supporters O’Brien Associates of Richmond. These books were made available to the first five hundred registrants. Benke then introduced James Kennedy, chair of the James City County Board of Supervisors, who welcomed everyone to the Historic Triangle of Jamestown, Williamsburg, and Yorktown.

Conference Chair Benjamin Goldberg took the podium and recognized the members of the Conference Committee. Karen McCluney of William and Mary’s Earl Gregg Swem Library, who had passed away in the early fall, was recognized for her work on the design of the conference logo. Goldberg went on to announce that, even in this year of economic problems, there were 536 attendees and over 60 exhibitors at the conference.

The keynote speaker for the opening session was Virginia author Emyl Jenkins, who charmed the audience with her funny and endearing stories related to her writing career. Previously a writer of nonfiction, she is now a successful novelist. Her works of fiction include The Big Steal and Stealing with Style, both in the Sterling Glass mystery series. A third Sterling Glass novel is in the works.

Jenkins began her presentation by announcing the telephone number to her literary emergency hotline. Filling in for Adriana Trigiani, who was unable to address the conference due to illness, Jenkins said that she was always willing to come to the rescue of a fellow writer: literary emergencies are nothing new to her. Jenkins previously came to the rescue of Rita Mae Brown in a similar situation. Jenkins reminisced about her first literary emergency, which took place at Danville Public Library when she was just twelve years old. She was asked to help out during a day when most of the staff were away; she eagerly stepped in and offered her assistance, which she fondly remembers as a special, life-changing experience.

Jenkins talked about how her youthful reading of classic works of literature resulted in her love of reading and writing. Reading Gone with the Wind was another
Right: As always, the 536 attendees were registered efficiently by Linda Hahne, her staff, and volunteers.

Below: The 2010 scholarship raffle featured an abundance of attractive prize baskets.
life-changing experience; the book inspired her to become a writer. Some of the other works that have influenced and inspired her include Charles Dickens’s *Great Expectations*; Emily Dickinson’s “There is no frigate like a book”; and Alan Bennett’s *An Uncommon Reader*, a hilarious and joyous fiction about an unlikely friendship between Queen Elizabeth II and a kitchen boy over their love of books.

In the mid-1970s, Jenkins combined her two passions—antiques and writing—and launched a career as an appraiser and columnist. To date, she has authored over ten books about the world of antiques. The fascinating stories she heard from clients about their treasures and their histories eventually led her to write the first book in the Sterling Glass series.

The *Big Steal* and *Stealing with Style* have been best sellers, so now Jenkins devotes her time to writing fiction. She shared a few intriguing details about her mystery series, describing the main character as a divorced woman “of a certain age” who writes an antiques column for the local paper. While the novels are not autobiographical, Jenkins does step into character when she writes, becoming Sterling Glass, who encounters the mysteries to be solved.

Jenkins shared her philosophy of writing and offered advice to potential writers. Writers should write about what they know best, and write from the heart. Jenkins has been successful in writing about what she knows, the world of antiques and their owners. In her opinion, a great mystery doesn’t have to include dead bodies or be filled with sex. A good mystery often includes one of the three *d’s*—death, debt, and divorce—with greed being at the heart of all three. Greed often stays well hidden, but it runs deep and long and provides the catalyst for a good story.

Jenkins closed by saying that writing a short story in high school was an experience that impacted

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An a cappella group from William & Mary performed at the opening of registration and vendor exhibits.

“’My God,’ said the duchess to the plumber, ‘take your hand off my knee!’”

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her love of writing. When she struggled with this assignment, she went to her mother for advice. Her mother told her to remember three things that make a good story: a distinction between the classes; religion, which is a deep part of life; and a little sex. Jenkins credits her mother with the perfect story, a single sentence that combines all three: “‘My God,’ said the duchess to the plumber, ‘take your hand off my knee!’”

Jenkins closed her presentation by reminding the audience that she could always be called upon to help out in a literary emergency.

—Lydia Williams, Longwood University

1:15–2:00 p.m.

State Government Publications & DigiTool

Presenters: Nathan Verilla and Meikiu Lo, Library of Virginia

The State Government Documents staff at the Library of Virginia is using DigiTool, an Ex Libris product, to create a centralized collection of born-electronic state government publications. Nathan Verilla and Meikiu Lo designed a course to teach a user base with little to no technical library experience to deposit their agencies’ publications using DigiTool. The training program began in December 2007, and to date approximately ninety agencies have received training. As of October 21, 2009, the State Government Publications collection numbered over 1,650 items. Although the training program has been a success, issues that have impacted the training process are off-site connectivity and agency turnover. Verilla and Lo discussed cataloging and collection management issues related to digital publications and then showed how a user would search for a specific state publication. In closing, the presenters said that agency users have responded enthusiastically because making electronic deposits is an easy process. It is obvious that the training program has been successful in promoting the collection of electronic government publications.

—Lydia Williams, Longwood University

Broadcasting Business Information: Library Instruction for 500

Presenters: Jason Sokoloff and Kathy Clarke, James Madison University

Sokoloff and Clarke began this lively and detailed session by describing the James Madison University (JMU) environment, which includes around eighteen thousand students in sixty-eight majors and thirty-eight graduate programs on a campus that is increasing in size and posing more of a challenge for the librarians charged with delivering bibliographic instruction. The completion of a new business library in 2008, located at a considerable distance from Carrier Library, adds to this challenge. The business program at JMU includes six separate majors and enrolls over four thousand students who are required to have a 2.8 grade point average for admission into the program. These students benefit
from an innovative gateway class that requires them to write a realistic and ambitious business plan working in small groups. In any given semester, as many as five hundred undergraduates may be enrolled in this course, which is supported by a rich selection of marketing and business research resources.

That large group of relatively inexperienced researchers addressing sophisticated material requires significant help from librarians; and the JMU staff, who stay in touch with the faculty and know the nature and scope of their assignments, respond with a coordinated set of subject guides tailored specifically for the class in question. The guides they develop can be incorporated in classroom work or used independently. They address specific resources with embedded objects and resource-specific help files. The guides connect students to a single, consistent source for reference help, instruction in using databases, and consultation with librarians.

Beyond the subject guides, the library staff keeps a variety of communication lines open, and experiments with new tools as they become available. Some of the methods that work for the JMU staff are reference desk shifts, Internet chat sessions, email reference, posted office hours, and interaction through Blackboard, the university’s course management system. Along the way, librarians have determined that not all ideas about improving access work out. Open sessions, blogging, and using Facebook are among the techniques tried and found wanting.

Like most academic librarians, the JMU staff are still searching for means of collecting quantifiable data for assessment. This reporter hopes that if Sokoloff and Clarke have success in this search, they will present what they find at a future VLA Annual Conference session.

—Cy Dillon, Ferrum College

**Face(book)ing the Facts: A Librarian’s Guide to Surviving Facebook**

Presenters: Bettina J. Peacemaker and John Glover, Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) Libraries

Bettina J. Peacemaker and John Glover introduced attendees to the valuable service that can be provided to our patrons via Facebook in this connected age. Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) has Facebook pages both for the university as a whole and for individual departments. In addition, subject librarians find it useful in providing liaisons to schools, departments, and programs and outreach to better serve patrons, many of whom are very busy and have full-time jobs.

Part of the message of this session was what not to believe about Facebook. The presenters debunked several myths, such as “Facebook is mad, bad, and dangerous to know!” A lingering aura of fear persists in which potential users fear their information will get stolen or that stalkers will use Facebook. Several other myths include that patrons don’t want librarians on Facebook, and would see this as harassment; or that Facebook isn’t useful for library work, that it’s a waste of time full of quizzes and photos, and that one can’t use it for official announcements because not everyone’s on the site. Some ask, in this time of shrinking budgets and staff hours, if Facebook is worth the time and effort. Social sites pop up constantly, and one can’t keep up with every new thing.

In debunking these myths, the presenters offered some definitions and facts. One-third of American adults have a profile with a social networking service. This includes 75 percent of online adults ages eighteen to twenty-four and 57 percent of online adults ages twenty-five to thirty-four. Some of the most common social sites include Facebook, MySpace, LinkedIn, YouTube, and Twitter. The sites and profiles are often themed, allowing participants to focus on hobbies, families, or their professions.

Facebook itself was started in 2004 by college students. Currently, 90 percent of students have Facebook accounts, which makes the site very hard to ignore. Once Facebook opened to everyone in 2006, it rapidly became one of the top-ranked sites on the Internet, and has about three hundred million active users, 50 percent of whom log in every day. Nor is it geared mostly toward youth: the fastest-growing demographic on Facebook is thirty-five and older.

The presenters assured the audience that some patrons, especially young ones, do want us on Facebook. There’s a growing dissatisfaction with email; many students don’t check their email, and email in general is losing ground with teens, who prefer phones. Facebook is primarily social; students do discuss school and professors, but usually don’t communicate with them. Authority figures may be seen as intruders. However, the majority of students surveyed did express willingness to communicate with librarians, even though some thought the concept “weird.” The survey reported that 23 percent would communicate with librarians on Facebook or MySpace; 17.2 percent would “friend” the library; 57.7 percent would accept the library as a friend; 42.6 percent are
receptive to communication from librarians; and 36 percent wouldn’t mind, but wouldn’t pay attention.

Facebook can be useful for libraries if they have goals that match its capabilities. One has to use it for the right things, such as outreach to patrons. Not everything gets seen on Facebook, so one should also continue outreach via phone, mail, email, and in person, though all of these have their own limitations, just like the library bulletin board, which many patrons pass without reading.

There are also questions of etiquette, the use of personal profiles versus group pages, and the type of presence one desires to maintain (very personal, more community-oriented, or more corporate). Using an individual profile, one can be highly personal and less official, and there’s often the advantage that the librarian is already there; however, information can fade in a trail of updates. Forming a Facebook group allows more interaction, including discussion boards; members must join, but it allows pushing content and creates community. However, users might join and never go back, and there’s an ultimate cap on the number of users (probably around 5,000 people). By contrast, forming a page for fans allows the library to push information; it’s easy to become a “fan,” and there’s less information that needs to be shared by users.

In terms of etiquette, Peacemaker and Glover recommend staying modest when getting started. One can always add more information later, but take some time first to get to know Facebook and your audience. Keep in mind the following questions: What do you share with friends in real life? In what settings do you talk about things? Once on the Internet, information lives forever; so if you wouldn’t say it in front of a patron, it doesn’t belong on Facebook.

Facebook is quite useful for many library services, such as book clubs and organizing and promoting events. For instance, VCU created a summer reading program book club for incoming freshmen. As discussed in a June 2009 School...
Library Journal article on the Facebook book club application (http://bit.ly/42jjOe), students got very engaged and created a good discussion. For event promotion, it’s easy to cut and paste or cross-post events. These can include college-wide or library-only events, and even liaison programs or departmental events. Lots of Facebook users do like to participate, and even offer useful feedback and suggestions. Facebook and its applications can also provide instruction-related uses, as well as basic information such as office hours and advising. It can help put a human face on the library and librarians, providing connection and familiarization. The ubiquitous polls and quizzes could be used for surveys, marketing, and micro-tutorials. The outreach portion can help in unforeseen ways; for instance, there’s now a committee at VCU on the quality of life for patrons and how to improve it, all because of Facebook.

To address questions of security, Peacemaker and Glover recommend common sense with one’s private data. Facebook has many ways to adjust security levels about who sees what information. Also, please remember that Facebook is not affiliated with the many Facebook applications, which each have different terms of service. Sometimes things go wrong with the applications, such as when an application used people’s faces in online dating ads. However, one can adjust privacy settings as well as settings for applications and what to allow them to have access to. One will also need to decide whether to moderate incendiary comments or allow free speech.

Facebook can be worth the effort. It’s different from having your own website, offering more of a community feel; further, rather than standing aside and waiting for patrons to come to you, Facebook takes you directly to your audience. People need to be able to find you, so be sure to maintain links to your parent institution and colleagues. Remember that faculty and staff are also your audience; in addition to connecting with students, Facebook can facilitate inter-library communication, professional development, networking, and teamwork.

Peacemaker and Glover provided handouts that included reading material and websites. First, of course, is http://www.facebook.com, but you may also wish to examine http://tinyurl.com/yi9ydk3 and http://www.people.vcu.edu/~bippeacemaker/facebook/presentation.

—Lyn C. A. Gardner, Hampton Public Library

Are You a Censor? Of Course Not!
Presenter: Noreen Bernstein, Williamsburg Regional Library

Noreen Bernstein led an active discussion about how libraries can provide access to challenged and/or challenging materials. Librarians expect parents to be the final arbiters when it comes to their children’s reading, but we still have to make decisions regarding collection development,
Bernstein suggested that libraries can make compromises to ensure that our collections are as diverse as our users—while at the same time organizing them in a way that minimizes conflicts. She gave the example of placing books such as *And Tango Makes Three* in the children’s nonfiction 300s, rather than in the picture book section. While acknowledging that some frown on these decisions, she suggested they should vary from community to community. In small libraries, it might be as simple as warning a conservative parent that she or he might want to preview the material that a child has selected.

When librarians are aware of controversial materials in their collections, they should familiarize themselves with the content and issues. This will guide them in making decisions to include (or exclude) such materials in recommended reading lists and displays; it will also prepare them for requests to remove such materials from the library. If a challenge arises when you have not yet had a chance to read the book in question, explain to the patron that you will only be able to discuss their concerns after all parties have had a chance to read it in its entirety.

Audience members shared their stories, discussing policies and practices. Some talked of moving young adult and adult manga to separate sections, while others credited proximity to a rise in circulation for all graphic novels. Several attendees had encountered challenges in their own libraries: some had cases that reached all the way to the mayor’s office, while others only encountered the “stealth” version of censorship, theft. A final useful suggestion: a truly diverse collection includes options for patrons with conservative tastes. Be sure to offer alternatives such as a well-stocked Christian fiction section.

— Maryke Barber, Wyndham Robertson Library, Hollins University

**Dialogue with Directors: Library Leaders Answer Your Burning Questions**

**Presenters:** Sandra Treadway, Library of Virginia; John A. Moorman, Williamsburg Regional Library; Wendell Barbour, Longwood University; Sylvia Rortvedt, Northern Virginia Community College; and Scott Firestine, Appomattox Regional Library; with moderator Elizabeth Hensley, Culpeper County Library

The VLA Leadership Forum has organized a Library Leadership Academy to address the Virginia librarians’ expressed needs for library administration and management education. Elizabeth Hensley moderated the forum’s panel discussion. Panel questions were collected prior to the conference from a Google Groups survey. Questions ranged from “At what point did you decide to become a director?” to “What is the most important experience needed to be a library director?” Several leaders commented that nothing fully prepares you for the role of director; others stated that administration and management cannot be taught in library school, which is primarily geared to providing a foundation in service philosophy. Other key themes included helping frontline staff understand the director’s role, the importance of mentoring the next generation, and allowing staff to take risks and fail. In response to what is important for a leader’s character, comments included the need to be secure and honest, set a positive tone, maintain the confidence of the staff in the leader’s competence, surround yourself with knowledgeable staff, and adjust your communication style to the individual. Succession planning was discussed; suggestions included making sure that staff members operate at their full potential, training across departments, assigning stretch projects, and having a structure in place for those who will follow. Several stressed the importance of taking responsibility for ensuring the future of the profession as well as the organization.

— Karen Dillon, Carilion Clinic, Health Sciences Libraries
2:15–3:00 p.m.

Learning to Share: Research Guides as Web 2.0 Tools of Interaction and Collaboration

Presenter: Tatiana Pashkova-Balkenholt, Longwood University Library

This session was one in a series of evidence-based presentations from VLA/ACRL’s “User-Centered Libraries” conference-within-a-conference. Longwood University librarians searched the literature and selected and tested the LibGuides software to help students and faculty move through the research process. A template was devised to maintain a consistent look and feel and facilitate staff processes. Course specific guides were developed in consultation with faculty and included links to course documents, handouts, and related library resources. Library staff created topical guides on popular topics such as sustainability. Guides included Web 2.0 features such as chat and polls. Library staff found marketing to be a key element in the success of the guides. Following a year of analysis and user feedback, the LibGuides template was redesigned to have less clutter, more search boxes, the addition of a “Search Google Books” feature, and photos of “friendly” librarians as suggested by students. Library staff learned the value of collaborating with users, asking for and listening to student feedback across disciplines, and “cleaning up the clutter.” They found the vendor-hosted LibGuides software from Springshare to be an economical, user-friendly solution for sharing resources, increasing information literacy, and facilitating access to the complex digital environment.

—Karen Dillon, Carilion Clinic, Health Sciences Libraries

How to Score the Score: Copyright-Friendly Music in Your Library

Presenter: Ana Dubnjakovic, Virginia Tech

Dubnjakovic is a performing arts and foreign languages librarian at Virginia Tech, where she does everything from purchasing books to dealing with licensing issues for small performing ensembles to answering the reference questions of retired faculty. Failing to take the proper precautions with copyright is not just risking your own liberty and finances, but the institution as well. Governments take these issues very seriously, and violations can cost the library millions. When in doubt, always ask for permission.

There are certain freedoms within the forest of laws. Many resources exist for and about copyright holders, and as technology changes the shape of the world every day, experts offer many opinions about the future of copyright and how it affects our lives. Pew Research Center data suggests that there is a lot of violation now that electronic file sharing is so simple. Statistics in 2003 showed that even with the more limited access back
then, 29 percent of Internet users had downloaded files (more than 50 percent of users ages nineteen to twenty-eight), of which 67 percent didn’t care if the material was under copyright protection. The mindset for many seems to be that if the resource isn’t tangible, it isn’t stealing. Following the lawsuits filed by the music recording industry in the United States, the estimated number of people making illegal downloads decreased from thirty-five million to eighteen million, with users citing a fear of lawsuits.

Under current copyright laws, unpublished sound recordings are treated much like books in the United States, with a few exceptions. Those published prior to February 15, 1972, are governed by state law and enter the public domain on February 15, 2067. For a collection of LPs, one can’t simply convert them to CDs; one must go piece by piece, checking the copyright and obtaining permission if necessary. For work published after 1972, the rule of the life of the author plus 70 years applies, with unpublished and corporate work expiring 120 years from the date of copyright fixation. There are different laws for published work. Sheet music published prior to 1923 is all in the public domain and can be digitized now without the need for research; this explains the current prevalence of art deco themes in digitally available work. After that, it gets complicated.

Copyright has far-reaching implications, and the rules get broken every day. There was a huge, international project that utilized volunteers from around the world, much like Wikipedia, in an effort to scan public domain music. The project made a mistake in digitizing a whole run of manuscripts from Vienna. These were in the public domain in Canada, but not in Austria, where they would enjoy copyright protection for another twenty years. The publisher, Universal, got other companies together and brought a huge lawsuit against the very tiny volunteer organization. For copyright protection, the laws of the home country of publication are always paramount, so err on side of caution. While there are limits to exclusive rights, and legally defensible uses are possible, these are not laws themselves, and are very vague.

To get a more accurate picture of how fair use and the TEACH Act affect library services, and how to apply Section 108 of the U.S. Copyright Code, Reproductions by Libraries or Archives for Their Users, for Replacement, or for Preservation, take a look at the Section 108 spinner at http://librarycopyright.net/108spinner/. This site provides information but also shows how nebulous these guidelines can be. For instance, for work published within the last twenty years, libraries are allowed to make an archival or replacement copy if they cannot obtain another copy at a fair price. However, who determines what’s a fair price? One must approach the company and ask if they’re willing to sell the library a copy at a discounted rate. If they are, one can’t make copies. The TEACH Act mostly governs distance education and covers getting the right to digitize material and/or post it on Blackboard and similar sites. It doesn’t allow electronic reserves or course packs, nor does it supersede fair use. The entire situation is a bit like playing chess.

The Harry Ransom Center provides WATCH, “a database of copyright contacts for writers, artists, and prominent figures in other creative fields,” at http://tyler.hrc.utexas.edu/. The center offers both U.S. and U.K. copyright information and other resources, as well as contact information for musicians, publishers, and related links. Other useful resources for hunting down copyright holders and information include ASCAP, the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers, whose site (http://www.ascap.com/index.aspx) allows searches by song titles and authors. Similarly, BMI (Broadcast Music, Inc., http://www.bmi.com/), SESAC (http://www.sesac.com/), and MPA (Music Publishers’ Association, http://mpa.org/) all offer searches by such terms as title, author, alias, and publisher. There’s some overlap between these databases, but it’s not tremendous—one really has to hit them all. One can also pay to order microforms from the Library of Congress that may aid in the search, or hire an LC librarian to do the work (at $100 an hour).

Many are concerned about the future of copyright. Yochai Benkler addresses its impact on social production; Charles Leadbeater is concerned with innovation; and Larry Lessig, the founder of Creative Commons, talks about “laws that choke creativity” (http://www.ted.com/talks/larry_lessig_says_the_law_is_strangling_creativity.html), arguing in favor of remixing as a needed part of art that has been done for centuries. Lessig states in particular that modern technology makes it very difficult to justify antiquated laws.

Ana Dubnjakovic is happy to email this very informative presentation; just send a request to ana@vt.edu.

—Lyn C. A. Gardner, Hampton Public Library
What’s Hot in Romance?

Presenter: Randi Wines, Roanoke Public Library

Randi Wines provided an overview of what’s new in the romance industry. She discussed each new trend and shared information regarding the publishers of the many different types of romantic fiction. The romance genre now encompasses categories with new labels, including inspirational, erotic, and romantica. Old standbys that are ever popular include historical romance and the tame contemporary romance. Inspirational fiction with a romantic twist has become a popular genre, and these books are published by Harlequin Publishers and Bethany House. A recently accepted form of romance fiction is “erotic,” and erotic fiction ranges from romantica to hardcore erotica. Wines provided a long list of publishers of erotic fiction that includes Harlequin Spice, Red Rose Publishers, Kensington’s, Berkley Heat, Avon Red of Harper Collins, and Hatchette. She mentioned a few of the more popular books, which include Anne Rice's Sleeping Beauty series and the Zane books. Another growing trend is gay and lesbian romance produced by Kensington Publishers. Wines stated that not every library is ready to make the shift to the newer trends, nor are all library patrons ready to accept them; but she reminded the group that it is important for libraries to provide reading material that appeals to all patrons. This enlightening session provided everyone with an update on what is popular in the world of romance literature.

—Lydia Williams, Longwood University

ALA: Your Way!

Presenters: James Rettig, Boatwright Memorial Library, University of Richmond; and Jessica Schwab, Bull Run Regional Library, Prince William County Public Library System

VLA was very fortunate to have the immediate past president of the American Library Association, James Rettig, on hand to conduct this lively session that involved the audience with seventeen thousand other members in participating in ALA’s five-year strategic planning process. Jessica Schwab, the VLA representative to the ALA Council, assisted Rettig in this presentation.

After some background discussion about ALA’s past plans and hopes for the future, the presenters distributed planning form worksheets from ALA so that participants could jot down their responses to four key questions.
before the discussion began. The questions asked what ALA could do to help us as individual library workers, what the association could do for libraries as institutions, what it could do for the public, and what were the most pressing issues facing libraries and our profession.

The questions were discussed in order, with Schwab recording results. Then responses were prioritized using traditional brainstorming techniques. Judging from the intensity and length of the discussion, VLA members are very concerned about the role of libraries in American society, the future of librarianship, and ALA’s role in working for the best outcomes for a variety of constituencies.

Rettig and Schwab assured us that our discussion would be reported and considered with other discussions conducted all over the country.

— Cy Dillon, Ferrum College

4:00–4:45 p.m.

Textbook Sticker Shock? Come to the Library!

Presenters: Marcia Dursi and Gwen Vredevoogd, Marymount University

Marcia Dursi and Gwen Vredevoogd described how Marymount University’s Reinsch Library developed processes and procedures to satisfy their Student Government Association’s request to place course textbooks on reserve. However, this request had to be satisfied with no additional monies from the print collection budget. They began the session with an introduction of Marymount’s enrollment, popular programs, and economic backgrounds of their students. Many were transfers from community colleges, working students, or commuters saving money by not living on campus.

In spring 2008, the Student Government Association (SGA) at Marymount investigated what other campuses were doing about access to textbooks; spoke with various parties on campus, including the library; and created a report that went to Marymount’s administrators. The SGA suggested the campus do the following: encourage faculty to request textbooks early so students have time to shop around; encourage faculty to utilize library reserves instead of having students buy textbooks when they only have to read one chapter from them; and put textbooks in the library’s collection on reserve. They discussed the realities of putting all textbooks on reserve, which would cost an estimated $30,000 if they purchased all the textbooks for one semester. There was no extra money in the budget; their collection development policy states that they do not

IONA provided both music and dance lessons for this year’s social.
routinely purchase textbooks; and different service groups and teams would have to work together to make the project a success.

The librarians piloted this service in August 2008. They called it Textbooks on Reserve (TOR) and worked with Access Services to implement placing textbooks already in the collection on reserve. They set up procedures that included comparing lists from the bookstore and the library's collection, limiting the texts to undergraduate courses, recalling books from faculty, not allowing checkouts, getting liaisons to ask for copies from faculty, and making sure the texts were edition-specific. They couldn't obtain a complete list of textbooks from the bookstore, so they had to search course by course on the bookstore's website. They also had little time to promote the service. The library held 130 of the 615 textbooks the bookstore displayed. Usage was low, with only six titles used a total of eighteen times during the semester. In spring 2009, the library placed the texts on reserve earlier, promoted the pilot through various means, and created a student survey about the pilot. This time, the library held 106 of the 553 textbooks displayed in the bookstore. Usage increased significantly, with 51 titles circulating a total of 270 times during the semester.

For fall 2009, the librarians discovered that putting the titles in the program too early caused them to miss titles that faculty added in early August, resulting in the need to search again. Librarians added textbooks on reserve at their Ballston location, included survey slips in all the texts on reserve, and promoted the pilot again. Survey results showed students learned about TOR through their professors or the library's website; they chose to use the service because textbooks were so expensive or they forgot their copy that day; and they would recommend the service to other students. Students suggested placing more textbooks on reserve and allowing overnight checkout. One student would support a fee for the service.

The audience discussed experiences with textbooks on reserve. Questions were posed such as whether additional funds for textbooks should be requested and whether textbooks should be a part of the budget. The session concluded with Dursi and Vredevoogd stating that they did not request additional funds for textbooks due to the economy, and that one graduate program was beginning to use e-textbooks with more programs most likely following suit.

— Pat Howe, Longwood University

User-Centered Teaching: Experiences Developing a Credit-Bearing Graduate Course

Presenter: Connie Stovall, Virginia Tech

Connie Stovall described the evolution of a one-credit, one-hour research course for graduate students in the English department at Virginia Tech. The required course covered humanities-specific resources as well as broader topics such as copyright and bibliographic citation software.

Classroom sessions used problem-based learning (PBL) and other user-centered instruction methods. PBL places students in real-life scenarios: they learn while working toward a solution with their team members, while the instructor takes the role of facilitator. Students worked with literature databases and journal packages, as well as the still-unique materials available via print reference tools and microforms. Based on student feedback, later semesters of the course included hands-on assignments on publication. Students explored the peer review process, editorial guidelines, and more.

Copyright and bibliographic citation software were initially taught in plenary sessions by librarians specializing in those areas. The sessions combined the English class with students from research courses for the sciences. When evaluations showed that the English students disliked this format because they did not feel the sessions focused sufficiently on their subject areas, in subsequent semesters the plenary sessions were removed. The topics were then covered within the class.

While feedback shows that students object to the department's requiring them to take the course, it has also confirmed its value: students say the content is very helpful, and they would recommend it to other students. Additional lessons learned include that as students become more proficient with database searching, certain e-resource lessons become redundant. Students also requested that more time be spent supporting individual research needs. Due to scheduling difficulties, in the current semester the course has been redesigned as an online offering.

— Maryke Barber, Wyndham Robertson Library, Hollins University

Crossing Over

Presenters: Randi Wines and Alicia Gladwell, Roanoke Public Libraries

Randi Wines and Alicia Gladwell provided an introduction to the world of crossover fiction—novels that appeal equally to young adult and adult readers. Often, these are YA books that also appeal to adults; however, sometimes these books are published simultaneously for both audiences, and may be cataloged in both locations as well. The writing in these books may be more fast-paced and action-
oriented to appeal to a teenage audience; the books still offer romance and action-adventure, but may be somewhat more tame. These can be good for adults who aren’t as strong readers; however, more often these are simply fun reads that have an appeal far beyond their intended age-level. Likewise, there are many books written for adult audiences that attract teens, such as Stephen King novels or adult books with a teenage protagonist. There are also a number of writers who built their careers on adult fiction but are now branching out into work for younger audiences.

Since 1998, the Alex Awards (www.ala.org/yalsa/booklists/alex) have been pointing out good crossover fiction, such as Marley & Me by John Grogan or The Devil Wears Prada by Lauren Weisberger — adult books with teen appeal. Some of the teen titles that appeal to adults include the Darkest Powers trilogy.
by Kelley Armstrong, *The Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins, Neil Gaiman’s *Stardust*, and Stephenie Meyer’s *Twilight*. Graphic novels appeal to both audiences, and are now considered less of a guilty pleasure, thanks to Hollywood. Teen stars who grow up can carry their following into adult movies drawn from books, and YA authors who also write adult fiction encourage an interest in crossover reading.

One reason for considering purchasing two copies of these titles and shelving them in both YA and adult locations is that adults may feel guilty or ashamed about reading something considered to be teen literature; likewise, adults without children may feel odd about walking into the kid’s section. So strong are these fears that adult editions of the Harry Potter books were printed in the United Kingdom, with covers more suited to an older audience. Another idea is to shelve crossover books in a neutral location, like a new book display near the front. Finally, libraries can promote these books by holding multi-generational or “no-shame” book clubs that deliberately market to adult fans in hiding.

—Lyn C. A. Gardner, Hampton Public Library
Bikes, Bytes, and Books—Creating a Downtown Library Scene

Presenters: River Laker, Wendy Allen, and Nathan Flinchum, Roanoke Public Libraries

The three young and energetic presenters—River Laker, Wendy Allen, and Nathan Flinchum—shared information about successful programs they have used to bring people into the Roanoke Public Libraries. Their creative ideas have been successful marketing tools. Citizens now view the library as the hub of the community. The library is being used for public performances by local performers, for display of artwork by local artists, and to bring attention to local writers; as a result, the library has become more visible and popular with citizens of all ages. The Artist Series has been one of the most popular programs. Displaying the works of local artists adds another dimension to the library by providing a venue for public appreciation of artists within the community. During October, patrons were invited to come and read something scary aloud in the library and to then share their best screams. This project was so popular that one of the librarians was invited to scream on the local radio station.

Take one of these programs and make it your own. Don’t be afraid to take risks. Be a change agent. If you make your library a vital part of the community, people will come to the library.

Marketing is vital to the success of these programs. Library newsletters, flyers, posters, newspaper ads, and television and radio spots are great ways to draw attention to the library. The presenters went on to say that these programs require time, money, effort, and extra staff if they are to be successful, but with all the visibility generated by these marketing tools, the Roanoke Public Libraries have become a vital part of the Roanoke community.

—Lydia Williams, Longwood University

4:00–6:00 p.m.

VIVA User’s Group Meeting

Presenters: Kathy Perry, Virtual Library of Virginia; Madelyn Wessel, University of Virginia; Peter Bruce and Donna Hughes-Oldenburg, Old Dominion University

Kathy Perry welcomed attendees to the 13th Annual User’s Group Meeting of the Virtual Library of Virginia (VIVA). VIVA accomplished a lot in 2008–2009. In addition to surviving budget cuts, VIVA’s activities include collections, training, holding an ILL community forum, regional EBSCO training sessions, and a multimedia task force that organized an “Install-fest” on November 12, 2008, for twelve to fifteen schools, helping to build dialogue between IT and library people.

The VIVA Outreach Committee, chaired by John Ulmschneider, university librarian for Virginia Commonwealth University, worked with Tansy Matthews, associate director of VIVA, to develop new publicity materials that are due out in early 2010. The webpage and brochure will feature service-oriented pictures.

VIVA canceled subscriptions to Academic OneFile, Academic Press’s IDEAL Archives (1996–2002), and Stat-USA and started subscriptions for EBSCOhost, ProQuest Safari Tech Books Online, Mergent Online, and Mergent Horizon.

The chart “Budget Sources Allocation: 2009–2010 Estimated Revenue Sources” shows that 56 percent of VIVA’s budget is derived from the state, 26.6 percent from public institutions, and 17.44 percent from private organizations.

For 2009–2010, the estimated VIVA expenditures include reimbursing members for expedited ILL shipping within forty-eight hours (4 percent), electronic collections (92 percent), central administration (less than 3 percent), and travel and training (less than 1 percent). Other 2009–2010 priorities included information about the RFP for American Psychological Association publications, chaired by Sharon Gasser, associate dean at James Madison University. The proposal will be released December 9, 2009; the Vendor Fair will be held the week of March 9, 2010; and services will begin August 1, 2010.

In other news, reports on database searches and journal article downloads from 1996–2009 show that both trends are moving up: the total abstract and indexing searches numbered 136,436,786, while the downloads reached 53,975,816.

The Steering Committee formed three task forces to look into three priority areas for long-range strategic planning: (1) collections expansion, to explore what types of additional resources, formats, and datasets may be of interest to members, such as art images; (2) discovery tools, to explore other tools such as open-source-based tools; and (3) library and information technology cooperation.

VIVA will be proposing efforts to gain funding to sustain current collections and funding for ILL reimbursement. While total ILL use is leveling off, the number of books moving around the state has increased in the past few years, and the funds to reimburse our members for expedited shipping have not kept pace. While the current estimated cost to move a book round trip is $13, current reimbursement averages approximately $6.50. VIVA efforts will work to return to a higher reimbursement.
rate of approximately $10, since reimbursement proportions have eroded over the last several years.


Iris Moubray, contract team buyer senior for Procurement Services at James Madison University, gave attendees the straight talk about procurement. Moubray displayed a large, ten-pound file (one of two) of the paperwork for VIVA procurements. Its size is prohibitive for conversion to PDF format. Because VIVA is short-staffed, a lot is expected of the vendors: they must know VIVA and do their homework. VIVA has had some stellar vendors. In general, RFPs in the United Kingdom and European Union are final, with no negotiating. In the United States, the RFP process is totally negotiable. The use of statistics is not just for cancellations, but also identifies who is using the service and where they may need more training, and justifies use with legislators. Reasons vendors have given for not generating statistics include that the resource was not designed to do that and that the statistics lump participants together, making it difficult to separate out institutions. RFPs must not include the word “please”; as a technical document for a purchase, an RFP needs to be direct. The objective in final negotiations is to both obtain a price that we only dreamed we could get and yet remain sustainable. “Is that your best and final offer?” is Moubray’s favorite phrase in negotiations. When VIVA does an RFP, they also try to obtain discounts for optional items for their members. Moubray closed by distributing a list of all the things VIVA does not agree to in contracts.

For the Stat-USA Task Force update, Alan Zoellner, government information librarian at the College of William and Mary, discussed the cancellation of Stat-USA last spring. In managing the loss, the task force looked at three points: (1) the desire to find a way both to map statistics used in Stat-USA and to make it free; (2) the difficulties caused by the fact that all federal depositories in the state have user names and passwords, which means that library staff must sign users into the system; and (3) the wish to expand access through a proxy server. However, the third item is against contract, and there is no way to accomplish the first. It is possible to create a gateway that maps where users are going, and a session on Friday will provide instruction on how to gain free access to the same information that is in Stat-USA.

Concerning the VIVA/OCLC Reclamation Project, Donna Hughes-Oldenburg (Bibliographic Services) and Peter Bruce (Systems Development) suggested best practices based on their experiences at Old Dominion University, where they undertook an OCLC reclamation project that corresponded to a requirement for their implementing WorldCat Local. After isolating their records, exporting them in MARC format, and sending them to OCLC via FTP, OCLC matched them up. There were multiple options for the return of the records from OCLC to the institution. After receiving the records, Bruce wrote a small script that allowed for a quick and painless replacement of records in their database. They made available a best practices document for this kind of reclamation project.

Tansy Matthews reported that a do-it-yourself statistic generator is now available. The project was the result of a graduate student’s assistance in building a retrieval system. It will allow generating statistics on anything back to 2003 in an Excel spreadsheet. Matthews plans to update the numbers quarterly. Matthews commented on Project COUNTER-compliant data (Counting Online Usage of Networked Electronic Resources). Some vendors do not supply COUNTER-compliant data, and some COUNTER-compliant data from a vendor is not always useful. Matthews reminded members that a training session on statistics will be held this winter, tentatively scheduled for February 2, 2010, at the University of Virginia.

—Andrew L. Pearson, Bridgewater College

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 30

8:00–8:45 a.m.

Website Redesign on a Dime: Gathering User Input on a Budget

Presenters: Alison Peppers and Ilka Datig, Mary Baldwin College

Alison Peppers and Ilka Datig of Mary Baldwin College described how they managed to survey library website users before a redesign of the site. Using focus groups and an online survey ensured that views were gathered from on-campus and distance education students.

The focus groups included think-aloud protocols, group discussions, and website markup exercises. During the think-aloud protocols, students narrated their thought processes and choices as they com—
pleted routine tasks; meanwhile, a librarian recorded the number of clicks, number of links tried, success achieved, and so forth. Group discussions revolved around questions about the website’s design and terminology. In markup exercises, students marked their likes, dislikes, and questions about the website on a printed copy. All sessions were audio-recorded for further study. The online surveys were made up of questions similar to those discussed in the focus groups.

Data from both survey methods were analyzed, and themes and common problems were identified. Results of the online survey showed that distance education students had concerns similar to those of on-campus students. Students had conveyed their dissatisfaction with certain appearance and design elements, as well as confusion about terms. One interesting result was their reaction to redundant links, an effort by librarians to ensure that users would locate a service—if not in one category, then through a link in another area of the site. Students found this practice confusing because they assumed the links led to different services, and they were unsure which they should use.

Library staff used the outcome of their analysis to create a map and list of suggestions for the college’s web design team, and continued to provide feedback as the new site took shape.

The focus groups and the survey were advertised using free options within the college’s communications systems such as campus announcements, mass email, and television advertisements; particularly useful was a weeklong announcement placed in the college’s courseware system. Incentives for the participants were simple: pizza and snacks. Finally, freeware was used for the online survey, for audio recording, and for dictation and transcription. Total budget: $50. Value: priceless.

—Maryke Barber, Wyndham Robertson Library, Hollins University
Diantha McCauley of the Augusta County Library will be second vice president, and Matthew Todd of Northern Virginia Community College will be president-elect. Of course, John Moorman of the Williamsburg Regional Library will be VLA President for 2010.

The Jefferson Cup Award announcement was then made by Connie Moore, who led the selection process in 2009. The winner is Tonya Bolden for her book *George Washington Carver*. Bolden has published more than twenty children’s books and won numerous national awards and recognitions. Her book describes Carver’s life from his birth in slavery to his hard-earned success as an educator and research scientist.

Sandra Shell, Scholarship Committee chair, then recognized the four 2009 VLA Scholarship winners after acknowledging the members of the Scholarship Committee and the volunteers who helped raise funds for the deserving recipients. Shell noted that the Tidewater Area Library Director’s Council awarded a new scholarship this year with funding from their libraries and foundations. Deborah Sweeney of the Augusta County Library received the Clara Stanley Scholarship, Megan Hodge of Randolph-Macon College won the VLA Scholarship, Lisa Byldenburge-McGuiness was selected for the VLA Foundation Scholarship, and Kelly Bevins was the first recipient of the Tidewater Area Library Director’s Council Scholarship.

The 2009 VLA Awards were also announced and presented during this session. Award winners included the Friends of the Jefferson-Madison Regional Library, who were selected for the Friends Award. Alan Bernstein, recently retired from the post of director of the Heritage Public Library in Providence Forge, was named a VLA Life Member for his work reporting for VLA from meetings of the Library of Virginia Board. The Trustee Award for 2009 went to Larry Yates of the Lonesome Pine Regional Library Board for his work developing a new community library in Haysi. Finally, this year’s George Mason Award went to the innovative project “ALL HENRICO READS: Linking Libraries, Communities, and Cultures,” which featured author Julia Alvarez leading a two-day event.

After recognition of members of the VLA Executive Committee whose terms are complete, the VLA gavel was passed to John Moorman. John used this opportunity to recognize Libby Lewis, who is retiring from the Library of Virginia’s Public Library Development Office, with a presidential citation. Lewis was warmly applauded by the membership.

Then Moorman introduced the keynote speaker for this session, author Leonard S. Marcus, the respected historian and critic of children’s literature. Marcus began his talk by reminding us that “Children’s books represent the hope of a generation for its children,” and then plunged into a fascinating and carefully detailed discussion of the history of Golden Books from the company’s beginnings in Racine, Wisconsin, in 1942. The ups and downs of the career of Sam Lowe, who saw a market for inexpensive books even before Golden Books began, made an intriguing tale as interpreted by Marcus, and the relation of the popularity of the first twelve books, the partnership with Walt Disney, the Simon and Schuster connection, and the stories of brilliant émigré artists who illustrated the classic early titles kept the audience completely absorbed in the talk.

Marcus continued the history with discussions of the role of the Bank Street College faculty and writers such as Margaret Wise Brown in influencing the course of Golden Books publishing and the influence of television adaptations and the Disney empire in the 1950s and 1960s. Various marketing strategies such as publishing a sixteen-volume children’s encyclopedia at the cost of a dollar per volume were also explained, leaving us with a deeper appreciation for the books that many of us remember best from childhood. To conclude an excellent presentation, Marcus conducted a patient and informative question-and-answer period.

—Cy Dillon, Ferrum College

11:30 a.m.–12:15 p.m.

**Case of the Millennials’ Mysterious Searching Habits**

Presenter: Lucy Holman, University of Baltimore

As part of the research for her doctoral, Lucy Holman wanted to hear directly from students how they search and what they think about library tools. Her findings reveal that Millennials prefer to learn by experience rather than reading or listening to lectures; they (especially males) tend to grab bits of information from various parts of a site or document rather than reading linearly. Having grown up with multimedia, they tend to evaluate sites and materials as much by perceived visual relevancy as by content, and they prefer simplicity to complexity. The instantaneous nature of the Internet has led them to expect results immediately, and they tend to make deliberate searches rather than browsing sites, wanting to go directly to what they’re looking for. They are “satisfiers” who are happy with information that is “good enough”—they aren’t looking for the perfect article or search. They are very confident of their search abilities, and rate themselves at the skilled/expert level—and thus don’t think they need librarians to help them.
Current mental models driving the online resources we provide to students may actually make things harder for them. Mental models are a means of mapping a real-world experience for electronic interaction. For example, in the early days of electronic commerce, developers took the idea of the shopping cart and checkout process to make online sales easier. Currently, our online catalogs, indexes, and databases are still very much based on their former physical counterparts in the print world, even though in many locations, such objects as card catalogs no longer exist and today’s students will have no mental model that allows them to transfer experiential knowledge of how to seek and find information. As a result, it’s important to observe students’ search habits and better identify the mental models that they may have, then compare these to the assumptions that librarians and database developers make about their users.

From September to October 2008, Holman organized the observation of students conducting real research through a combination of methodologies. One dealt primarily with mental models and concept mapping; students would diagram their searches. The contextual inquiry portion relied on three tenets: that the researcher would observe the subject in a natural habitat; that the subject would be conducting real research; and that the researcher and subject would form a partnership, with the researcher acting as the apprentice, learning from the subject how to perform the task. The researchers were observers only; while there was dialogue with the subject, it was all within the context of the work at hand, and the researcher did not ask a set of predefined questions. Modifications were made to the requirement for a natural habitat: the study was conducted not in the student’s home or in the library, but in the usability lab so that software could record subjects via screen captures as well as audio and video (scrubbed for confidentiality). After completing an hour of research, the students did answer a set of questions that would help to identify their mental models.

Taking part in the study were twenty-one first-year students at the University of Baltimore (UB); twenty were in learning communities. The University of Baltimore was an upper division and graduate school, with two-thirds of the population being graduate students. Recently, as part of the university
system of Maryland, the first class of freshmen in twenty-five years was enrolled in fall 2007. This caused a huge shift, as many of the faculty had never taught undergraduates, let alone eighteen-year-olds. Thus, the university did a lot of studies of Millennials. Starting from scratch, with very small classes of freshmen, UB built learning communities and required students to enroll. These communities combined social sciences, humanities, and skills courses, an interdisciplinary mix tied together around a theme like American citizenship.

The students chosen for the study fell very much within the demographics of first-year students in ethnic background, gender, and age. Background information about their online activities and computer use revealed that all had at least one computer at home, and some had two or three; 91 percent had a profile on a social network; 51 percent spent at least an hour a day online at a social network site; 75 percent conducted at least an hour of web surfing a day; and 95 percent had at least an hour a day of Internet use. Most of the observed students were part of an economics class with a rich, complex assignment. Two students were researching artists, two in a speech class exploring a cultural issue, one exploring psychology careers, and one performing a research-oriented take-home exam.

Together, these students performed 210 searches in twenty-one different tools. Search engines accounted for 130 searches, while another 80 searches took place in databases. Those who began with a search engine comprised 76 percent (sixteen students); those who started with a database comprised 14 percent (three students); while 10 percent (two students) began with an encyclopedia, one of which was Wikipedia. Among the search engines, Google accounted for 72 percent of use, while Academic Search Premier took 73.8 percent of the database use, perhaps because it was the first database listed or the students had used it in high school. Eight students conducted forty-four more searches directly within a site such as CNN rather than a search engine. The 224 total searches covered fourteen individual sites.

The students engaged in four primary types of search. The simple search had the largest adherents, with students employing one- or two-word concepts such as a name or a phrase like “three strikes law.” The topic and focus search employed simple Boolean searches or searches for a bigger specific concept. Phrase searches used longer descriptive phrases, questions, or sentences or a more complex Boolean combination. Nine students made use of subject headings either in Google or databases.

When narrowing their searches, the students’ mistakes outweighed effective use. Spelling errors and Boolean mistakes topped this list. Many students made misspellings galore and relied on the erratic (and often unavailable) “did you mean” tool, often seeming not to see their spelling errors, and instead perpetuating their mistakes or assuming no information existed. Rather than reading or browsing the content of a site, many students would immediately search within the site or page. Indeed, they often counted the number of times a word or phrase appeared on a page as a means by which to judge whether they’d found a relevant article or “good” site. Others, searching in databases, got rapidly frustrated as they mixed search systems ineffectively, for instance performing subject searches within the journal title finder. Rather than evaluating their search habits, they would
change search terms for the same null result. Many had problems navigating within the databases and couldn’t return to articles they’d found earlier, or would simply give up. Rather than asking a librarian or continuing to search, they would stop and do something else. Within the search engines, they didn’t really understand how these searches worked, other than having some notion that the sites pulled keywords, resulting in their shuffling words around; they would get hits, but not understand why. When they received a lot of hits, they would usually look at the first five to find some information they liked. Visual relevance was used as a means of judging a site’s accuracy. One student chose a student newspaper over a government resource paper because it looked more like a website, saying the government document did not “look real official.” Another didn’t know who Chevron was or what its bias might be toward energy policy, simply feeling that the site looked good and must thus provide useful facts. As for Wikipedia, so many teachers in high school had drummed in the axiom “Don’t use Wikipedia” that the students would either avoid it entirely, or use only its external links and sources.

The study also examined how the students felt about libraries and library tools. Some said they prefer libraries and searching books and newspapers “the old-fashioned way.” Others are frustrated and see the Internet as much easier, liking the ability to find a lot of information fast and print it out to read later. Regarding library sites and databases, some complained about all the outside links and passwords, wanting simply to click right into a source. Indeed, one of the better searchers actually saw the library as putting up barrier after barrier to him, asking why the library couldn’t be easy to use like the Internet, “rather than hiding things with call numbers and class systems. I just want to get to the information.”

All of these students thought themselves to be very competent, proficient searchers. When they had frustrations with the databases, they saw this as a problem with the database or library, not themselves. They were certain that it was the vendor or library putting up obstacles. They didn’t want the perfect search or query; if they could get five to ten articles on the first Google results page, that was fine with them.

Based on these results, we as libraries need to focus not on building the perfect search, but on figuring out how we can help with the next step when a student gets one or no results. Rather than strategize the first step, which students are convinced they know how to do, we should talk more about visual relevancy versus content, and what it means to be biased or credible. We also need to put pressure on databases to develop better algorithms; the databases did a very poor job of handling spelling errors, for example, only helping one out of eleven students. Databases clearly have a long way to go with their algorithms before they get to Google-level ease. We also need to pursue one-stop searching across platforms and formats, providing the student with a single Google search box—which, according to this study, is precisely what they want.

—Lyn C. A. Gardner, Hampton Public Library

### They were certain that it was the vendor or library putting up obstacles.

Top 25 Websites for Teaching and Learning

Presenter: Heather Moorefield-Lang, Virginia Tech

The American Association of School Librarians (AASL) Teaching and Learning Task Force used the Web 2.0 tool WikiSpaces to meet and select twenty-five Web 2.0 websites that foster innovation, creativity, and active participation and collaboration in teaching and learning for teachers and students. The Top 25 Awards were selected from ninety-nine websites and presented at the 2009 ALA annual conference. The websites were judged according to Standards for the 21st-Century Learner categories: Organizing and Managing, Content Collaboration, Curriculum Sharing, Media Sharing, Virtual Environments, Social Networking, and Communication. Standouts on the list include:

1) Animoto—helps create a video in five minutes that contains photos, graphics, music, text, etc.; use Animoto to introduce services and replace the looping PowerPoint.

2) Polleverywhere—a voting platform to engage the learner and ask provocative questions in classrooms and libraries; a participant votes by sending a text message via cell phone or by voting on the web; use to involve and connect learners to complex issues.

3) Good Reads—a social network for book lovers to keep track of the books read, make recommendations, see what friends are reading, and form book groups.

The Task Force welcomes nominations for the 2010 awards. More information and links to the winners, bookmarks, press kit, and a wonderful video (A Vision for K-13 Students) may be found at: http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/aasl/guidelinesandstandards/bestlist/bestwebsitesstop25.cfm. Link to the
Copies of Jefferson Cup History Donated to VLA by O’Brien Associates

Five hundred attendees of the 2009 Virginia Library Association Annual Conference in Williamsburg received complimentary copies of The Jefferson Cup Award Turns 25 by Donna J. Hughes. This valuable premium was made possible by the donation of the books from O’Brien Associates of Richmond, the school and library book specialists with a fifty-six-year history of supporting VLA.

Hughes is a past chair of the Jefferson Cup Committee, and her book is the ultimate authority on the history of VLA’s best-known award, recognizing outstanding books of history, historical fiction, and biography. The volume contains details on the kinds of awards presented and the guidelines for their selection, a short narrative history of the award, a compilation of the Jefferson Cup Committee members and chairs since 1983, and an illustrated description of award winners, honor books, and books worthy of note from each year of the award’s existence. Adding to the careful documentation, the full-color cover image of each winning book makes this reference work stand out from other bibliographies.

It is no accident that such a valuable volume, and one so important to VLA history, was underwritten by O’Brien Associates. Since its founding in 1953, this family-owned and -managed company has been an ally and supporter of VLA. Like the Jefferson Cup Award, the business has a rich heritage: Mark and Reed, sons of VLA patron and George Mason Award-winner Lawrence O’Brien, are the current leaders of the company. Many librarians around the commonwealth also remember founding partner Don O’Brien, who was Mark and Reed’s uncle. As with a number of the vendors we see annually at our conference, O’Brien Associates have earned the trust of the library community by providing their customers with outstanding service, high-quality products, and competitive pricing.


—Karen Dillon, Carilion Clinic, Health Sciences Libraries

2009 winner Tonya Bolden poses with the Jefferson Cup Committee.