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Virginia Libraries is a quarterly journal published by the Virginia Library Association whose purpose is to develop, promote, and improve library and information services and the profession of librarianship in order to advance literacy and learning and to ensure access to information in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

The journal, distributed to the membership, is used as a vehicle for members to exchange information, ideas, and solutions to mutual problems in professional articles on current topics in the library and information field. Views expressed in Virginia Libraries are not necessarily endorsed by the editors or editorial board.

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Items for publication and editorial inquiries should be addressed to the editors. Inquiries regarding membership, subscriptions, advertising, or claims should be directed to VLA, P.O. Box 8277, Norfolk, VA 23503-0277. All personnel happenings and announcements should be sent to the VLA Newsletter, Kevin Tapp, Box 7024 Radford University, Radford, VA 24142, ktapp@radford.edu.

The guidelines for submissions to Virginia Libraries are found on page 23.
Profiles of Virginia goes beyond Census statistics, beyond metro area coverage, beyond the 100 best places to live. Drawn from official census information, other government statistics and original research, you will have at your fingertips data that’s available nowhere else in one single source. A remarkable compilation that offers overviews and insights into each corner of the state.

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The careful layout gives the user an easy-to-read snapshot of every single place and county in the state of Virginia, from the biggest metropolis to the smallest unincorporated hamlet. Here is a look at just a few of the data sets you’ll find in each profile: History, Geography, Climate, Population, Vital Statistics, Economy, Income, Taxes, Education, Housing, Health & Environment, Public Safety and more. The richness of each profile is astounding in its depth, from history to weather, all packed in an easy-to-navigate, compact format.

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Provides extensive climatological data on all of Virginia’s weather stations, including statistics on maximum and minimum temperatures, precipitation, extreme temperatures, humidity and more.

Comparative Ranking Charts
Put cities side-by-side for easy comparisons & rankings
Selected statistics are pulled for 100 of Virginia’s largest towns and cities. Each of 22 different data points has its own two-page spread with the cities listed in alpha order so researchers can easily compare and rank cities. Among the statistics selected for this section are Employment, Income, Unemployment Rate, Population Characteristics, Taxes, Cost of Living, Education, Health Care, Public Safety, Air Quality and more.

I have a friend who’s an avid reader and an up-and-coming science fiction author. He lives in New York City, home to eighty-six branches of the New York Public Library. I recommend a lot of books to him, always with some variant of the phrase, “I’m sure you could find a copy of this at the library, or they could send for it.” Yet he still prefers to use online bookstores such as Amazon and Barnes & Noble, who will deliver to his doorstep, often within the same day. He also swears by Netflix for television programs as well as movies. He even shops for groceries online.

On a recent visit, I asked him why he didn’t use the library. He told me he’d been there—one. Apparently, the library can’t beat door-to-door service, even if the latter costs more. He’d rather resell his books on the Amazon Marketplace—usually for a slight loss—than take the trouble to visit the library and carry the books home, despite the convenience of being able to place holds online and visit the library only when the items arrive.

He did make a suggestion, though—one that reminded me of a thought that has recurred to me ever since we began allowing holds and book requests to be placed from home through our online catalog. What if the library mailed books to your door? Recorded Books has been doing this for years. Netflix is doing it now. It would follow a model many have grown enthusiastic about. In addition, the library would have even more protection against lost materials: in order to pay the cost of the service, the patron would have to submit a credit or debit card, and would have to click through an agreement of responsibility for any lost or damaged materials or fines (due-date checked by postmark, as established by Recorded Books). The library could invest in sturdy, reusable shipping containers in a variety of sizes, enclosing the return postage card with the item, as we do with audio materials mailed to the blind. I’m not saying we should expect to do this for every patron. There are still plenty of people who come in to use the library; that’s where our circulation statistics come from now. But circulation statistics have been falling. It makes sense to offer the option.

After all, boxes and postage are cheaper than bookmobiles, if not as sexy, and bookmobile circulation is still important in many rural areas. The trick is to see what we want to do for our users through the thick fog of established practice. Already, Find It Virginia! has given libraries a presence in many homes around the Commonwealth, and sets a good example of the potential success of libraries without walls. At Ferrum College, we are delighted to see the use of our proxy server increase as more students and faculty use library resources off campus. Our mission should be getting information to the public, rather than building gate count. Funding agencies—and the taxpayers—will understand the value and power of various methods of home delivery if we are articulate and concrete enough in our assessment of our efforts.

There are actually a lot of ways in which libraries could be stepping forward, meeting the needs of their users in a new environment, following the successful models of online businesses and behavior in a Web 2.0 world (see Tim O’Reilly’s article, http://www.oreillynet.com/pub/a/oreilly/tim/news/2005/09/30/what-is-web-20.html, for more information about the concept). Many libraries seem to be once more lagging behind the technology curve and becoming less relevant to the audience we most want to entice. Take a look at LibraryThing (http://www.librarything.com, or view a sample discussion group devoted to Nero Wolfe, at http://www.librarything.com/talktopic.php?topic=142). Scan some of the discussion boards at the websites of A&E (http://
are considering a blog with library news, facilitating user comments on books in the catalog, discussion lists for fan topics, or some combination of all three. Let your users share their passions and help revive the enthusiasm of others. They’ll be energized by the chance to share their opinions about favorite books as well as discuss their particular fandom without having to come to the library for face-to-face book groups, which can be intimidating. Let the anonymity of the web work for you—it frees people to join in the discussion. And lest you fear that this might give your patrons too much freedom, you can review the comments either before or after they’ve been posted.

Stepping up to the plate, some Virginia libraries have adopted or are considering a blog with library news, facilitating user comments on books in the catalog, discussion lists for fan topics, or some combination of all three. Let your users share their passions and help revive the enthusiasm of others. They’ll be energized by the chance to share their opinions about favorite books as well as discuss their particular fandom without having to come to the library for face-to-face book groups, which can be intimidating. Let the anonymity of the web work for you—it frees people to join in the discussion. And lest you fear that this might give your patrons too much freedom, you can review the comments either before or after they’ve been posted.

Becoming more inviting to the wired generation is not just good sense, it’s survival. We’re far from the only game in town, and if we want to remain relevant, we need to shed our fears—including both our fears of technology (remember, Web 2.0 is the world of perpetual beta) and our fear that a new approach would cost too much. The fact is, it will cost too much not to. In an era when book and music sales are down across the board, when reading is in decline, and when a substantial portion of the literate community would rather spend time online than take a trip to the library, we need to reach out to the patrons that we aren’t serving—particularly the ones who would have been some of our strongest advocates in an earlier age.

When patrons come to your library to learn more about 1607 and Jamestown, will you have the best video reference on what happened to the 30,000 Native Americans who were living in Colonial Virginia?

Their true story is told in the poignant documentary film *The Powhatan Mystery*. Produced by the award-winning company Jackson Associates, this 20-minute video reveals the struggles and events that overtook the Virginia Indians during the 1600s. Designed for elementary students to adults, it explains what happened to the local native peoples as the English settled at Jamestown, and Colonial Virginia grew into a nation. Sales price for public performance rights (for public audience showing) is $125.00. Free Teacher Resource Guide with Virginia Standards of Learning is included.

Narrated by the Wes Studi (*Dances with Wolves, Geronimo, The Last of the Mohicans*). To order, contact Jackson Associates, P.O. Box 115, Studley, Virginia 23162 or call (804) 381-1968.
President’s Column

by Pat Howe

It’s almost that time of year when librarians of all kinds from across the nation descend on Capitol Hill. The event is National Library Legislative Day. During this time, people who care about libraries participate in advocacy and issue training sessions, interact with Capitol Hill insiders, and visit congressional offices to ask Congress to pass legislation that supports libraries.

As I prepare for this event again, I’m reminded of my experiences last year when a delegation from VLA visited every Virginia congressional office and a senator’s office. Our delegation included academic, public, and school librarians and a library teen group. To prepare each of us for our visits, ALA’s Washington office provided us with background kits describing the key issues impacting libraries, such as LSTA funding, restoring funds for EPA libraries, E-Rate, Net Neutrality, the Improving Literacy through School Libraries program, and the “orphan works” copyright issue. We asked our representatives to support or cosponsor bills that would be beneficial to libraries.

In addition, we spoke about the significant contributions libraries make in our communities. We shared stories of activities in our libraries and how legislative policies affect our libraries and the people who use them. We gave our congressional representatives ALA packets of information and handouts about our individual libraries. As a follow-up, we sent a thank you letter including a summary of requested legislative supports to the congressional offices.

We advocate because we care about intellectual freedom and free and equal access to information....

Some of the legislative issues for this year include:
- The Freedom and Innovation Revitalizing U.S. Entrepreneurial (FAIR USE) Act of 2007, which would allow permanent exemptions to the Digital Millennium Copyright Act’s prohibition on circumventing technological locks where use of a copyrighted work is noninfringing, e.g. educational use in a classroom. It would also enhance libraries’ preservation efforts.
- Repeal of the Real ID Act of 2005, which creates a national ID card. This act increases the opportunity to access library use records and threatens an individual’s right to privacy and confidentiality.
- Safe use of the Internet with regards to “Interactive Web Applications (IWAs), a term coined by ALA for those countless websites and applications that utilize the technology often referred to as “Web 2.0.”
- Net Neutrality legislation that preserves the competitive online markets for content and services. Bandwidth and access should be offered on equal terms to all willing to pay.
- Funding for the Improving Literacy through School Libraries (LSL) program, which is designed both to improve student literacy skills and academic achievement by providing schools with up-to-date library materials and to ensure that school library media centers are staffed by well-trained and professionally certified school library media specialists.
- Funding for LSTA, which provides grants to state library agencies.

In addition to National Library Legislative Day, VLA representatives will be participating in ALA-sponsored advocacy training opportunities during the ALA Annual Conference in Washington, D.C. The first is a preconference on “State Level Telecommunications Policy for Librarians.” Motivated by the desire to stimulate economic development and the conclusion that high-speed broadband connectivity is a key factor in such development, states are looking at legislative and regulatory approaches to the deployment of high-speed services to underserved areas. This can have potentially major implications for library Internet connectivity in the state.
The second opportunity is a session on federal advocacy and media training. Session leaders will deliver a multimedia training workshop tailored to library issues on federal library legislation and conduct a media skills workshop including library message development, the different types of media interviews, and tips on how to be effective advocates.

So far, I’ve written about advocacy efforts on the national level, but VLA is also very active on the state level. The efforts of VLA’s Legislative Committee began as early as the August 2006 meeting with state officials and legislators about VLA’s legislative agenda. Our legislative liaison, Phil Abraham, also met with legislators to discuss our priorities and testified before committees and subcommittees about our legislative agenda throughout the legislative session.

Why do we put this effort into advocating for libraries? The top priority of VLA’s designated agenda affirms VLA’s leadership role for legislative and advocacy activities that support libraries and library staff in the Commonwealth. We advocate because we care about intellectual freedom and free and equal access to information in all formats for all people in our communities. We believe in literacy and in helping people develop the skills they need to locate, evaluate, and effectively use that information. We believe that libraries serve the informational needs of all people in our communities without regard to age, ethnic origin, religion, personal beliefs, physical disabilities, or economic status. We advocate because we want to ensure that libraries continue to be a primary force in our democratic society. So, in May, I will make my way, along with the VLA delegation and hundreds of other librarians, trustees, and friends, to Capitol Hill to speak on behalf of libraries and the communities they serve.

During the February VLA Council meeting, a donation to the sponsorship of National Library Legislative Day was presented to Erin Haggerty, grassroots specialist at the ALA Washington Office of Government Relations. Pictured from left to right are Jessica Schwab, VLA co-coordinator for National Library Legislative Day; Erin Haggerty; and Pat Howe, president of VLA.
Richard Groover, assistant professor of biology at J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College, has also worked with the Virginia Department of Conservation, directed Maymount Park in Richmond, and written for a number of publications. He is the owner of Jackson Associates, a documentary film and video production company in Richmond.

VL How did you, a college biology professor, get started as a producer of historical documentary films?

RG During my previous employment with the Virginia Department of Conservation, I was often assigned to produce audio-visual products, and video productions eventually became part of the mix. Over the years I improved my skills. After leaving that agency, I started my own production company, but I could not make enough money to justify that as my only employment. So I returned to teaching biology, which I had done years before in graduate school. My formal education is in biology. When I became a full-time professor at J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College, they were nice enough to allow me to continue making the films. History topics interest me and they are easy to produce, so I most often do the films on history topics. Plus, they sell easily. I do have a few ideas for films that are more science-oriented.

VL Would you give us an idea of how many films you have produced and the awards those pictures have won?

RG I have produced three documentaries under the banner of my company, meaning I own the rights to them. These films won awards from the United States International Film and Video Festival out of Chicago, Telly Awards, and the Rochester Film Festival. I have completed several documentaries or educational films for clients, such as the National Park Service and the Virginia Environmental Endowment; the VEE film won an International Television and Video Association award in Virginia. I have produced several TV commercials for state agencies that won public relations awards. In 2005, I won another Telly Award for my first dramatic short film, which runs about six minutes.

VL Which film do you feel is your best?

RG As an actor once said, “Your latest work is always the best.” However, each one of them has its own merits. The Forgotten Fourteen, the story of the fourteen African-American soldiers who each won the Medal of Honor in a single battle, is so important because it tells of the courage and heroism of those men as they won an important battle for the United States Army during the Civil War. As is the case with The Powhatan Mystery, I enjoy telling the story of things most people are unaware of. The Powhatan Mystery relates what happened to the Virginia Indians after 1607. Most people don’t really know what did happen to them, and it is important that we do know, especially as we are focusing on the Jamestown events. Weather Chronicles, another film, takes the viewer through a number of Virginia’s weather conditions.
of weather events that affected history or famous people.

VL Please identify the audiences your productions target.

RG For *The Powhatan Mystery*, the target audience, as with most of my films, is students from middle school to college. Usually my films are intended to support topics the teachers are covering, and Standards of Learning are incorporated in the content wherever I can. The films are also enjoyed by the general public, especially people who watch the History Channel.

VL How do you use libraries in researching your subjects?

RG My products are content-driven, so facts and correct information are my life's blood. Libraries are my IV; sorry to get a little biological on you. The scripts are the most important elements for me. They must be as accurate as I can make them, and the libraries are always where my journey begins. Books also provide pictures or diagrams that I can locate for visuals for the voice-over scenes. Without libraries I could not make the films I make.

VL Is there a particular library that has been especially valuable to you?

RG I would have to credit the Library of Congress and the Library of Virginia. But other libraries are also home to my research, such as the library at J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College, the Main Street Library in Richmond, and the Pamunkey Regional libraries in Hanover County. I have been through all of those doors a number of times.

VL How long have you taken to produce your recent documentary on Native Americans?

RG For *The Powhatan Mystery* I started the project in 2000, so six years. Usually it only takes three or four years, but my interest for this one began earlier than usual because I wanted to release the film in 2007 for the commemoration of the Jamestown Settlement. Both ladies were very kind to let me interview them on camera, and they are in the film. Dr. Michael Mortlock at the University of Richmond is a very fine scholar who helped me with research. Dr. Eirlys Barker at Thomas Nelson Community College was one of the scholars who reviewed my script before Wes Studi was filmed or read his voice-over lines. The list of scholars is large and I appreciate how they help me.

VL “Visuals” are obviously important in documentary films. How do you typically discover the ones you use?

RG As I said earlier, lithographs, maps, paintings, etc. set me in the direction of possible visuals. They often inform me as to where I have to go for permission to use those visuals. I have also purchased a number of nineteenth-century books that have visuals that I can use without copyright infringement. There are many good sources; you just have to spend hours digging.

VL What topics are you considering for future efforts?

RG Unfortunately, I have had a few great ideas stolen by unethical filmmakers. You can’t copyright an idea, so I cannot tell you. There are three I am considering, but that is all I will say at this time. As I mentioned, that other Native American film needs to be finished. It is a very powerful story that is focused on the Indian wildfire fighters who every year are saving our national forests from being almost totally destroyed. 

... facts and correct information are my life’s blood. Libraries are my IV....
American Sign Language @ DPL

by Otis D. Alexander

The Danville Public Library continues to connect to the community with numerous intellectual, cultural, and social action programs that will better serve its customers. In January 2007, the DPL partnered with the Danville Department of Social Services to offer instruction in American Sign Language (ASL), which is the primary sign language used by the Deaf community in the United States as well as in the English-speaking areas of Canada. This was the library’s second free ASL workshop offered to the community. The first was presented in spring 2006 and taught by Ricky Wilson, who is capital “D” Deaf and a former student at Gallaudet University. Gallaudet is the only university in the world where all programs and services are specifically designed to accommodate deaf and hard of hearing learners.

With a growing number of Deaf library customers, the leadership at DPL felt that the staff should at least be able to communicate effectively at a base level utilizing ASL. There is definitely a need for public servants to have an accurate understanding of sign language. In addition, Glenn Radcliff, director of Social Services, was contacted by the library director to collaborate on the much-needed project. Radcliff agreed that “Service-oriented agencies need to know how to communicate at many levels when serving the public, for we do not know who is going to come through our doors.”

Radcliff had some of his staff members participate in the workshop, which consisted of eight one-hour sessions. It is estimated that more than 500,000 to 2,000,000 people in the United States are familiar with some aspect of ASL. (This estimate does not include Canada.) As indicated above, the Danville Public Library has more and more members of the Deaf community using its facilities.

The first session of eight classes, beginning January 8, was conducted by Dominic Davis, a secondary education major with minors in communication disorders and English at Northern Michigan University, while the second session was presented by Mary Womack, a registered nurse who studied ASL at the Danville Community College. Her session started on January 15 and ended January 29, 2007.

According to Davis, the best way to learn ASL is through a course taught by a Deaf person requiring constant interaction with the instructor. Womack agreed, even though neither instructor is deaf.

The workshops included total communication—a combination of ASL, finger spelling, facial signals such as raising and lowering of eyebrows while signing, body language, informal gestures, verbal

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communication finger spelling, the whole word approach, and body language including facial expressions.

Each participant in the workshop was encouraged to stand before the class and demonstrate either by finger spelling his or her name or simply asking questions using the whole word approach. By the third class, Circulation Supervisor Donna Cisneros was actually able to communicate effectively with the instructor as well as teach a class during his absence. She had never studied ASL prior to the workshop. Children’s Information Specialist Shirley Hughes says that she would like to see ASL incorporated into children’s programming as an activity for enrichment.

In the future, we hope that the library will be able to partner with the Danville Police and Sheriff’s Department. Mastery of ASL will humanize the contact between Deaf citizens and the city’s law enforcement officers. Taken with our other efforts, this will begin to demonstrate to the Deaf community that our library and city government really care about them and will do all that we can to anticipate their information needs and desires. Of course, all of the participants will be encouraged to get library cards.

Note

“Big ‘D’ Deaf” refers to a culture comprised of those who self-identify as part of the Deaf community, which is centered around the celebration of American Sign Language and relationships among Deaf people. Members of the Deaf community embrace their identity and resist labels that imply that they are “impaired” or less than whole people. Deaf persons are not identified based solely on the level of hearing loss, and there are some who self-identify as Deaf who might have more auditory functioning than others who “mainstream” through medical or other means. The Deaf community can include not only the clinically deaf and those with partial hearing, but also those who went to deaf schools, are children of deaf parents, or are sign language interpreters, among others. The community views being Deaf as an identity similar to ethnicity rather than as a physical impairment.—Ed.
Excessive Secrecy Dulls the Democratic Dream

by Paul McMasters

It is a disturbingly routine occurrence these days: a report from the press, watchdog group, congressional committee, or inspector general disgorges yet another instance of federal government mistakes, misconduct, or worse. Each instance raises the prospect of significant damage to national security, public health and safety, personal privacy, or civil liberties. The cumulative effect of these revelations raises the concern that our government is unacceptably dysfunctional.

It is true that federal officials shoulder a massive burden in the service of all Americans, and the vast majority of their responsibilities are carried out professionally and effectively. But there are those, especially in the elected or appointed ranks, who fail their constituents miserably when they put politics or personal ambition ahead of good government or are simply not up to the leadership demands of their positions.

In such an environment, the promise—and necessity—of good government fails. The list of recent failures is long and wretched: the response to Hurricane Katrina, prosecution of the war in Iraq, and a host of social and economic imperatives that have not been adequately addressed.

Similar failures have plagued past administrations and no doubt will visit future ones. But that constant is exacerbated by the current administration’s expanded notion of executive prerogative, including excessive secrecy and the right to remap the boundaries of democratic traditions and principles without deference to other branches of government.

These conditions make even more urgent the ultimate check on government error and excess: transparency. Yet that important tool has been marginalized by a massive shift in information policy that wields secrecy as an instrument of control rather than as a component of security. This reflexive approach fails to balance the needs of democracy with the needs of security, interferes with the most efficient functioning of government, and denies Americans their rightful role as informed partners in their own governance.

Some elected officials, of course, have a visceral aversion to sharing information with the citizens who put them in office. But over the past six years especially, there has been an unrelenting campaign to put more and more information beyond the reach of policy makers, the press, and the public—even historians.

President Bush and his advisors came to office determined to reduce the flow of government information to the public. They had barely settled into their desks at the White House before the president halted the release of thousands of documents from the Reagan presidency, the first such release scheduled under the 1978 Presidential Records Act. There followed a steady stream of policies, memos, and actions restricting the flow of information within the federal government and to the public.

The Bush presidency’s hard-line stance on the sharing of information wasn’t necessarily the product of a sinister plot. Rather, it was a firm commitment to expand executive power by shrinking the information it shared. The terrorist attacks of 9/11 and the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq made the increased secrecy even more palatable to the public as well as Congress.

The new information policy succeeded beyond the fondest hopes of its authors, thanks in significant part to the extraordinary cooperation of a media corps that has been allowed to practice its craft freely and unimpeded.

Paul McMasters recently retired as the First Amendment Ombudsman for the Freedom Forum and is a former president of the Virginia Coalition for Open Government. This article is based on his remarks upon receiving the American Library Association’s James Madison Award last month at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C.
measure to the administration’s determination and inventiveness—and to the fact that there were no real sentinels at the gate. Congressional oversight was feckless. The courts were deferential to the administration’s arguments. The press was intimidated. And the public was otherwise occupied.

In very little time, the initial strategy of controlling information to expand executive power evolved into a paradigm shift in government information policy. Not that the techniques and tactics were all that new, but previous administrations had employed them—if at all—in episodic and undisciplined fashion. This administration, however, perfected each and molded them into a nearly impenetrable barrier to meaningful access.

In its first six years, the Bush administration built a reputation for being the most effective, sophisticated, and disciplined in history in its ability to master the message every hour of every news cycle. This policy went far beyond the delay and denial of access to information, which was a most remarkable achievement in itself. It also included the control, manipulation, and compartmentalization of government information of just about every shape and color.

As implemented by the current administration, this information policy comes at a high price. It invites the politicization of intelligence. It embraces the rewriting of scientific information. It sanctions the use of propaganda and disinformation. It selectively leaks classified information for political purposes. And it goes beyond the management of information to the punishment of those who disagree, who blow the whistle, who protest or who dissent—or who attempt oversight.

Finally, this new policy creates the democratic irony of the government dramatically decreasing the amount of information it provides to ordinary citizens while dramatically increasing the amount of information it demands about those same citizens and amasses in government databases and dossiers.

That such a policy has unfolded in increments, that it has been tremendously successful, that it has hardly been challenged other than by a small community of access advocates, that it is now firmly entrenched in government culture, does not minimize the damage. The threat to relevant political discourse and effective government function is chilling. This policy encourages governmental failures on an unimaginable scale, including war, natural disaster, and unrecognized human suffering.

Evidence of the injury to democratic interests abounds. Information vital to public and historical understanding (information available in other countries, even former enemies, for years) is routinely denied to Americans. Efforts to declassify information are dogged by clandestine efforts to reclassify the same material. Government officials increasingly invoke the state secrets privilege to avoid subjecting policies and actions to judicial scrutiny. Too many officials casually disregard the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act. Whistle-blowers are punished for revealing government mistakes or abuse. Journalists are threatened with prison for ferreting out what officials won’t give up.

It is important to confront the possibility that Americans—leaders and citizens alike—will become far too comfortable with the ignorance that excessive secrecy creates, the darkness that ignorance creates, and the distrust and apathy that darkness creates. As the darkness descends on democracy, attempting to adapt is fraught with its own dangers. Like creatures in a cave, we lose our vision. Our senses are dulled. Our instinct for survival is redirected.

There are things we can and should do, of course. Passing more laws is a good step forward, but federal agencies have a record of ignoring the laws already on the books. Demanding more oversight is important, but as we’ve seen in the past few years, that is not always consistent or reliable. Getting candidates for public office on the record in support of openness is good, but they often forget or forgo those pledges. Nourishing the new access coalitions is important because they coordinate, target, and make more effective FOI advocacy, but they can’t do it alone. The ultimate solution, of course, is to persuade the public—permanently—of how essential openness is to the success and vitality of the democratic experience.

Excessive secrecy in government is neither an answer nor a policy. It is a concession to fear and a threat to real freedom. It strikes too near to the heart of democratic rights and values as well as good government.

Unless and until all Americans, from the top levels of government to the grassroots level of the citizenry, agree that governmental transparency is not a frill but a core component of democracy, government officials will not be accountable. Government itself will not function in the best interest of its citizens. History will not be served. And the democratic dream we all share will not be realized.
During the summer of 2006, the Bateman Library of Langley Air Force Base was overrun by pirates. Why a pirate theme? Because I’d wanted to do a pirate summer reading program for years and, quite frankly, I pulled rank on my staff. I’d played pirates as a kid; the picnic table was my ship and the benches were the planks. I must have looked quite ridiculous climbing and jumping around in my mom’s high heels and dresses shouting “Arrr!” and wielding a sword (stick), but I loved it. That love of playing pirate never died, and I relived the fantasy by choosing the Captain Book & the Bookaniers (Upstart) theme for our summer reading program.

It was pure serendipity that our theme coincided with the release of Pirates of the Caribbean 2: Dead Man’s Chest. As a result, there were many pirate toys, books, and paraphernalia available for us to decorate the library and provide prizes for enterprising readers. I’m afraid I drove the staff crazy with all of the goofy pirate jokes I found: “Why couldn’t the teen get into the movie? It was rated Arrr.”

Planning the Program

Several of us put our heads together to decide how to conduct the program. Because we have a small staff with too many projects, we needed something fairly self-directed. During early planning meetings, we discussed the lessons learned from previous summer programs. We’d held Saturday and Wednesday night program meetings for the 2005 program and had poor attendance. The amount of staff time spent planning and conducting each program day was too much for the number of attendees. We determined to reduce the number of program meetings and increase the visual impact of the theme with displays and decorations.

We reduced the number of meetings to three, plus a final pirate bash to close out the program. During the first meeting, aspiring pirates made their own treasure chests out of shoe boxes; during the second, they made their own pirate flags. The skull with blue eye shadow and red lipstick was not...
quite as threatening as Blackbeard’s, but it had panache. The third program was a treasure hunt in the library. The treasure (pirate information) hunt required research on subscription databases, in pirate books, and on the web.

**Reading Incentives**

Many summer reading programs give children incentives to read. Sometimes it feels like we just reward children who come to the circulation desk and look like they know what a book is. We wanted to do something different. What resulted was unlike anything we’d ever done before. The concept was to have incentives, but make the little pirates “buy” them with money earned from time spent reading. With donations, corporate sponsorship, and our programming funds, we purchased plastic coins (doubloons) and a ton of booty. We made reading log sheets with rows of skull and crossbones flags; each flag represented fifteen minutes of reading. Four flags (crossed out or colored) equaled one hour; each hour of reading earned a doubloon. When children came into the library, we checked their reading logs (titles), marked out their flags (hours), and paid them their doubloons. The display case full of booty was positioned prominently at the front of the library. Every item was tagged with a price—a sword was ten doubloons, gold earrings were seven doubloons, a Captain Jack Sparrow action figure was twenty-five doubloons, etc. Our twofold reward program was fascinating to watch in action—some children spent their doubloons in true pirate fashion (as soon as they got them), while others saved for larger and more expensive prizes. Love of reading paired with fiscal responsibility seemed to delight most parents as they watched their children make purchasing decisions. There were a few surprises as well. One older sibling willingly
shared his doubloons and purchased a sword for his little brother (he also read to his brother regularly). One young lady pirate purchased a pair of real earrings for her mother. Staff members cleaned out their old costume jewelry and donated to the treasure chest.

Cross-Promotion and Publicity

We kicked off our program earlier than in previous years by promoting the Hampton Blackbeard Festival, held during the first weekend in June, with posters from the event’s planning committee. This was a great way to get military families involved in the community and start the buzz about all things piratical. In early June, the Mariners’ Museum opened a great pirate exhibit, *Swashbuckler: the Romance of the Pirate*, to coincide with the opening of *Pirates of the Caribbean 2*. It seemed that everywhere you looked, you saw pirate things—pirate ships in Virginia Beach and Lynnhaven Inlet, Pirate’s Cove Adventure Golf in Williamsburg, even M&M’s (both the candies and their website had a pirate theme in accord with the movie).

Decorating the library was fun; several staff members got into the spirit of the event when we hung the Johnny Depp/Captain Jack Sparrow poster (inspirational, I guess). Two people had trunks that we used as treasure chests—one for an adult pirate book display and the other to display pirate treasure and store the doubloons. Microsoft Publisher and Google Images were useful for creating banners. We even burned the edges of the paper to get the right look. Everyone saw the banner that was placed on the floor in the library lobby (cold laminate protected and held it down). Some décor was also an activity. We filled a wine bottle with the pirate-colored M&M’s (both plain and peanut) and set it on the circulation desk as a guessing game for adults. A small cardboard treasure chest was used to collect the guesses. The closest guess without going over won the candy-filled bottle. Staff wore blinking skull and crossbones pins and skull and bones necklaces. We purchased three templates from Sherwood Creations, Inc., a company that specializes in patterns for plywood cutouts. The library has huge windows, so we used the patterns and black craft paint to paint the pirate ship and two pirates as silhouettes on the entrance and front windows. Skeletal pirates came from Oriental Trading; posters from K-Mart; and other décor from Big Lots, the Dollar Tree, the Hampton History museum gift shop (during the Blackbeard Festival), and various websites.

Cooperative Programs

The library falls under the 1st Services Squadron, which includes divisions such as dining, fitness, child and youth care, bowling, golf, arts and crafts, the community center, and outdoor recreation. The Marketing Department wanted to have more joint programs, so I asked everyone from these activities to attend a meeting to plan a pirate summer. Unfortunately, not everyone was as enthusiastic about pirates as I was, but I tried to coerce them anyway. The result
was, as expected, a lot of work for the library staff members—maybe I wore them down with corny pirate jokes: “Why did the pirate go on vacation? He needed some Arrr & Arrr.”

The members of the 1st Services Squadron came together for several joint programs:

• Bowling. Every Sunday from June to August, family bowling was encouraged with pirate booty to reward strikes. Several of the snack bar items were renamed (Capt. Book’s Fish & Chips). The Langley Bowling Center staff was the most enthusiastic of our base partners. They decorated with palm trees, parrots, and pirate paraphernalia and proudly displayed our program posters.

• Youth Centers. On June 21, Barbara Wright from the Mariners’ Museum presented two pirate programs. A member of the museum’s Education Department, Barbara is a wonderful speaker and presenter. She dressed like a pirate and told the children what life as a pirate was really like. Her PowerPoint slideshow and realia made it a fascinating event.

• Outdoor Recreation and Community Center. On August 4, the Youth Center held pirate card-board boat races. Groups created pirate ships and then sailed or paddled them across the pool before they sank. Participants got prizes like the Titanic Award.

• Library and Marketing Department. In June and July, the 1st Services website and the Bateman Library held two coloring contests, offering pirate pictures for the purpose. Entries were displayed in the library. Booty, such as a 3-D pirate ship coloring kit, went to the best specimens. All participants received two doubloons.

• Langley 1st Services Treasure Map. Readers collected stamps and were entered in a drawing to win prizes. The best idea to get base activities to participate was to have something that required very little effort for nonlibrary staff members. I created a treasure map (base map) that marked participating activities with an “x.” We purchased rubber stamps and colorful ink pads and provided them to each participating activity. Stamps from stampin.com and Cornish Heritage Farms included a pirate, ship, treasure chest, anchor, “x,” and even a shark. The bowling alley chose the “x” for strikes and the shark for their snack bar. Readers were
given a map with instructions to go to each location to collect a pirate stamp; those with the most stamps had their names entered in a drawing for two tickets to Pirate Expeditions in Virginia Beach. Pirate Expeditions kindly donated the tickets.

- Library, Outdoor Recreation, and Volunteers. Together, we offered pirate games, a pirate feast, and a water battle.

**The Final Program: Pirate Cove**

Our final activity was the end of program party. I put out a call for volunteers in the base newspaper and found several kindred spirits. Outdoor Recreation reserved two picnic shelters and a large part of Eagle Park for us. We had the volunteers sign up for each part of Pirate Cove and for special events; each had different duties and areas of responsibility. Each volunteer and staff member received a colorful skull and crossbones bandanna as identification.

The shops open throughout the Pirate Cove event included:

- Tattoo Parlor. Temporary pirate tattoos and pirate face paint designs were applied to budding pirates. Mustaches were quite popular.
- Milliner’s Shoppe. Pirates made newspaper hats.
- Pirate Library. A treasure chest full of donated books was available for pirates to plunder. Bookmarks and stickers were available too.
- Blacksmith. A pirate volunteer fashioned balloon swords for pirates; swordplay ensued.

One of the pirate booty displays. The price tags indicate the cost in doubloons.
• Portrait Painter. We staged a pirate skeleton and chest for photo opportunities.

• Ye Olde Game Place. Pirates played Pin the Patch on the Pirate and the Skull & Crossbones Bean Bag Toss (both remnants from my tenth birthday party—thanks Mom!). The prizes were paper eye patches.

• The Tavern. Volunteers grilled hot dogs, which were served with buns, fresh fruit, and Goldfish® Crackers. We served a Treasure Island cake decorated by the local FarmFresh.

Events interspersed throughout the program included:

• Peg Leg Race. Volunteers roped off and conducted a three-legged race. Little pirates’ legs were tied with bandannas. Peg legs received bead necklaces for prizes.

• Buried Treasure. Volunteers buried doubloons in the volleyball sand court. We banded everyone together and set them loose all at once to find the treasure. Little pirates used plastic drinking cups to hold their loot.

• Water Battle. The grand finale was a water battle. Two volunteer pirate captains cut pirate ship shapes from 4’ x 8’ pieces of cardboard prior to the event. Other volunteers filled water balloons.

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**Pirates were relentless—why not librarians?**

The captains recruited teams and faced off to do battle for dominance of the high seas. Water balloons flew back and forth, soaking pirates and ships alike. Water pistols shot victims with reckless abandon. Suddenly, with brilliant strategy, the female pirate captain bellowed to her crew and they lifted their ship, rammed it into the other ship, and captured their rival captain. The battle was over, and so was our pirate summer reading program.

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**The End?**

Was it successful? One mother told us that her son never read before this program; because he liked pirates, he was now reading. I’d say that was a mark of success. We had other parents tell us that their children enjoyed the program and were excited about reading more. We feel that we had a very successful program and had a great time as well, decorating and creating the program partly from scratch. Nobody on the staff wants to hear another pirate joke, though. (“How much did the pirate pay for pierced ears? A buccaneer.”)

Pirates were relentless—why not librarians? This year we’re following the statewide program focusing on Jamestown’s 400th Anniversary. We’re in the planning stages right now, deciding how to handle colonial-themed events.

Wasn’t Captain Christopher Newport a pirate?

*With many thanks to the pirate crew: Vickie, Cheryl, Raquel, Angela, Lorraine, Brenda, Rebecca, Jim, and the volunteers.*
Ongoing Children’s Programming at the Ruth Camp Campbell Memorial Branch Library

by Diana Devore

The Science Saturday Program

The Science Saturday Program at the Ruth Camp Campbell Memorial Branch of the Blackwater Regional Library began in September 2004. The program was initiated to give schoolchildren a chance to explore a variety of science topics in a hands-on environment.

Now in its third year, Science Saturday has evolved from a children’s program to a family program. The community support has been exceptional; a majority of the presenters have been volunteers. The concept of the program is to choose a science topic, find a knowledgeable presenter, and have an art project to reinforce the concepts learned during the presentation. Local experts on bats, birds, astronomy, archeology, rivers, miniature horses, bees and honey, snakes, fish, trees, and swine have given enjoyable and interesting talks complete with live animals, videos, and handouts. All of the programs have had a high level of audience participation.

Chemical engineers from Hercules Incorporated/Eastman Chemical Company led a “Fun with Chemistry” demonstration. Substances were tested to see if they were acids or bases, and mini-rockets were launched. The children were able to practice predicting, observing, testing, and adjusting their hypotheses. The National Weather Service in Wakefield showed footage of actual storms and taught participants how to be safe if caught in bad weather. An SPSA (Southeastern Public Service Authority) representative taught

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the importance of “Recycling, Reusing, and Reducing.” Birdfeeders were made from two-liter soda bottles, and sun catchers were created from discarded CDs. David Wright from Tidewater Community College gave a dynamic presentation, “Physics is Phun.” He had exploding Twinkies, singing water goblets, and a bed of nails, among other demonstrations. Specialists from the Department of Forestry and the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries enlightened participants about trees and fish.

Two highly attended programs were the Virginia Aquarium and Marine Science Center’s “Ocean in Motion” and NASA Langley Research Center Aerospace Education Service’s “Living and Working in Space.” After a presentation about habitats, conservation, and food chains, participants visited mobile touch tanks and an aquarium truck provided by the Marine Science Center. NASA offered a slide show of past, present, and future space travel vehicles and demonstrated how astronauts work, eat, sleep, and play in space.

The benefits of this program have been numerous and varied. The children (and adults) have been given opportunities to explore several science topics and to meet people dedicated to science and education. The topics range from the accessible, such as plants and horses, to the inspirational, such as space and oceans. It has been exciting to see the interaction between science professionals and eager, curious children. It is gratifying to have the community and educators so willing to donate their time and talents to the Science Saturday program.

Children’s Garden Project
The Children’s Garden Project was initiated in March 2005. Created to inspire the long-term involvement of young library patrons, the garden is a joint effort between the Ruth Camp Campbell Memorial Library Branch of the Blackwater Regional Library, the City of Franklin Public Works Department, and the local Boys and Girls Club. The library provides the garden site, resources, and guidance. The Public Works Department prepared the site and has supplied topsoil, compost, and mulch. The Boys and Girls Club supplies the labor needed to plan, plant, and maintain the garden.

Now in its third year, the garden project is thriving. The children have been involved in all aspects of the garden, including deciding what to plant, weeding and maintaining the garden, harvesting the produce, and making accessories to beautify the garden area. A team of children from the Boys and Girls Club, ranging in age from five to seventeen, meet at the garden weekly.

While planting, the children compare seed sizes, study how deep to plant, and note length of time until germination. They keep a journal to note progress and problems as they arise. The garden has evolved into an outdoor classroom where subjects such as weather, insects, wildlife, birds, and art have been introduced.

The younger children have made decorative stepping stones and birdhouses to enhance the garden. The first year, teens built rustic trellises on which to grow cucumbers, pole beans, and other climbing plants. This project allowed the teens to learn basic woodworking skills, safe tool usage, and teamwork. To reinforce their new skills, the teens built an Adirondack-style garden bench the following year.

Plans for this year include planting a climbing vine on an arbor; making mosaic gazing balls; and planting a red, white, and blue garden to join gardeners across Virginia in commemorating the 400th Jamestown anniversary. The garden project continues to be enjoyed and supported by the community, the Friends of the Library, library staff, and the Boys and Girls Club.
Funny Business @ Your Library

by Denise Morgan

How many library managers does it take to change a light bulb? At least one task force and a light bulb strategy focus group.

Sample the reading on the topic of institutional change and you will usually see a distinction between “management” and “leadership.” Managers, like those caricatured above, keep the physical and human resources working. Leaders see a vision and move the organization forward by communicating that vision to others. Managers plan, budget, and control for short-term predictability. Leaders imagine, recruit, and energize for change farther down the road.

In “Laws for Positive Leadership,” Victor Parachin listed ten rules to manage by. You may be surprised that the tenth is “Maintain a sense of humor…. People who take themselves less seriously are far more pleasant to associate with.” Where subject matter expertise (e.g., strategy) is clearly important for leaders, interpersonal skills are gaining recognition as well.

For instance, we all make mistakes. Rather than ignoring them, or becoming defensive, sometimes it helps to confront them with humor. For instance, one executive inadvertently sent out a blank issue of his electronic newsletter. Within the hour, he followed up with an explanation and introduced a Blank Book Title Contest that elicited 350 responses. These authors also cite George Barbour, who summarized humor’s potential as a managerial tool by identifying four functions of humor: it facilitates learning, helps change behavior, promotes increased creativity, and helps us feel less threatened by change.

Decker and Rotondo cite a study by Wayne Decker of particular interest to managers and leaders. “Decker found that subordinates rating their supervisors as having a good sense of humor reported higher job satisfaction and rated other supervisor qualities more positively than did those who rated their supervisors as being low in sense of humor.”

Employees who are better trained, more focused, and more creative will give better customer service. Organizations often find that happy employees beget happy customers. That should make everyone smile!

While you may have heard of laughing hyenas, only people actually laugh. (Animals make other kinds of noises.) Laughter is what happens when an event or a story meets someone’s criteria for being funny. Medical science has proven what Reader’s Digest has said all these years: laughter is the best medicine. It has the effect of reducing blood pressure and stress while exercising your respiratory system. You may have heard of laughing clubs that exist for this purpose. Several websites explain the concept, including http://www.globalideasbank.org/site/bank/idea.php?idealId=2254.

However, maybe you feel a little self-conscious sitting in the lunchroom laughing by yourself for twenty minutes a day. So how can you empower your inner Seinfeld?

1. Start small. At the next staff meeting, present someone with an award. Perhaps she or he was courageous in the face of a screaming baby, leaking roof, or balky computer. A certificate suitable for framing is easy to create and present with a flourish (and maybe a Tootsie Pop). Recently, our most ruthless weeder were given such certificates, along with (you guessed it) Baby Ruths.

2. Keep your eyes open. Truth really is stranger than fiction. When you work in a public library, you will be amazed at

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some of the circumstances of public service. For instance, one of our staff members found several thousand rupees (worth some $125) in a book while emptying the book drop. The name of the book: When Genius Failed. Then there was the time another worker found a self-improvement book in the bin. Inside was a visitor’s pass for the local Adult Detention Center.

3. What to do with all those funny customer service stories? Our Fairfax County Public Library has an in-house publication that uses some of these anecdotes. Formal stories include reports about retirements and system news, but the stories from the front lines are very popular. Perhaps your library has a similar way to spread this cheer.

4. Keep up with your professional reading. Certainly you don’t think I mean only professional journals. The Warrior Librarian Weekly has lots to offer, including humor listed alphabetically and in Dewey order. WLW and other links are at http://www.mjfreedman.org/freedmantf/librarianhumor.html.

It’s time for you to spread your wings a bit. You know your audience, and you have some material. How can you bring a little more frivolity into your library?

Recall that I proposed you start with the familiar. Those who have a background in scouting will have an advantage with my favorite kinds of comedy: skits and song parodies. Nevertheless, if you or your kids skipped Girl Scouts or Boy Scouts, there’s no need to panic! You can become quickly conversant with these art forms by visiting your shelves at 369.4. You will see that the manuals for leaders have some examples. Note that the “songs” are brief and that the tunes are widely known and easy to sing. Since the late 1960s, kids have crooned “Jingle bells, Batman smells, Robin lays an egg” to that jolly holiday tune. You can do the same thing. Let me share three pieces of advice from my own experience:

- Choose an upbeat tune that everyone knows. There may not be time to practice together before the presentation. If you distribute the lyrics in advance, the “chorus” will have a chance to get their giggles out before the big event. I try to find the real lyrics to the tune online. I use it as a guide for my rhyme scheme and rhythm.
- A three- or four-verse maximum works best, with lots of references to pet projects, hobbies, skills, mannerisms, and events that all will recognize.
- Generally, the time to present the “suitable for framing” gift of lyrics to the honoree is before the singing starts. If the song is good, the laughs take over.

Skits are sometimes easier to prepare. You can build a David Letterman-style top-ten list on an appropriate theme. Maybe you can come up with questions for a quiz show format in which a “contestant” represents the guest of honor. You will know the talents of the folks who perform with you. Perhaps some are willing actors, but not great improvisers. Some only need you to create a scene so they can devise their own lines.

One of my fondest memories is being recruited to appear in my first such entertainment. A colleague started a conversation about how important it was to have a good sense of humor. I agreed. Next, she allowed that it must be a blessing to be as tall as I am. Suspicious but grinning, I asked how I could help her. It seems that she wanted me to wear a suit of leather and chain mail. “Okay,” I said expectantly. “And why would you want me to do that?” Her answer? To play Genghis Khan in a spoof of The Mikado to honor a staff member with a similar name. Not only did I get to sing, but I also had a chance to lurch around in a studded leather helmet!

And what is a skit without props? I keep a few in my office because they make me smile: a plastic Viking helmet with impressive horns, several kinds of flamingos, and a stash of oversize paper money for those whose super efforts earn them “the big bucks.” I get many such items from the local dollar store. Another great source is the Oriental Trading Company, http://www.orientaltrading.com. We once got sixteen suitably ostentatious feather boas there for a parody of “Hey, Big Spender.”

Few of us are stand up comics. Since I usually forget the punch line, or confuse the sequence of events, I do not often tell jokes. Who better than Toastmasters magazine for advice on “How to Tell a Joke”? Two suggestions from Larry Getlen are:

- When you hear a joke you love, write it down promptly. Better yet, use your cell phone and tell it to your voice mail. That counts as your first attempt. Then rehearse until you get the timing perfect.
- Be aware of the sensitivities of your audience. Nothing is worse than the sound of no one laughing at your hilarious story or favorite joke—unless it’s finding out later that listeners were offended.

Now you are sent forth. Begin by...
collaborating with colleagues—you could each sign up for a different joke-of-the-day website. Start your next meeting with a kazoo overture. Oh, and when you close the library tonight, try yodeling after you lock the doors.

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The Big Read in Ashland

by Lynda Wright

Pamunkey Regional Library and Randolph-Macon College received a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts to bring The Big Read to the central Virginia town of Ashland this winter. The featured title was Ray Bradbury’s Fahrenheit 451, a futuristic novel where firemen don’t put out fires but start them in order to burn books. The book was selected for its provocative themes of censorship, isolation, and the future of society. The Ashland area programming for Fahrenheit 451 included book discussions, lectures, public readings, film viewings, and a hands-on activity with a fire extinguisher.

Pamunkey Regional Library has ten branch libraries serving the central Virginia counties of Goochland, Hanover, King and Queen, and King William. Ashland is a town of 7,000 in the western part of Hanover County, home to Randolph-Macon College, a coed, residential college of 1,100 students.

Patty Franz, supervising librarian at Pamunkey Regional Library, and Virginia Young, director of the McGraw-Page Library at Randolph-Macon College, each had their own motivations for participating in The Big Read. “It is part of our job as a public library to promote reading,” said Franz. In Pamunkey’s case, The Big Read fit many of the library’s goals, especially “to cultivate and nurture a love of reading” and to provide a community “commons.”

At Randolph-Macon College, administrators were concerned that an annual higher education assessment tool, the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), revealed that R-MC students fall below average in their recreational reading habits. The library has sponsored several programs in the past to promote reading among the college students. The Big Read gave Franz and Young the opportunity to bring the “town and gown” together around a common goal.

The Big Read is an initiative of the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) in partnership with the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) and Arts Midwest, designed to restore reading to the center of American culture. Based on the one-book, one-community reading programs popularized in the 1990s, The Big Read provides the opportunity and resources to bring various segments of a community together to read and discuss a single book. The NEA created The Big Read program in response to the findings of its 2004 report Reading at Risk: A Survey of Literary Reading in America. The report noted a sharp decline in literary reading that cut across age groups, ethnic groups, educational levels, and genders. The twelve Big Read selections are all classic American novels, chosen to appeal to both teen and adult readers in a community.

Young and Franz chose Fahrenheit 451 hoping that the science fiction classic would appeal to male readers. Reading at Risk reports a sharper decline in literary reading among males. In fact, reading groups at both Randolph-Macon College and Pamunkey Regional Library typically attract a larger female audience—women outnumbered men by almost three to one at the Randolph-Macon Big Read events.

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Fahrenheit 451 opens with firemen responding to a call. The Randolph-Macon College kick-off event began with the Ashland Fire Department providing hands-on training and practice in using a fire extinguisher. Free copies of the novel, buttons, bookmarks, and snacks attracted participants from all segments of the Randolph-Macon community: faculty, staff, and students. Young noted that due to the heavy reading demands on students during the semester, extracurricular reading is not widely embraced; the hands-on activity offered a welcomed change of pace for the students. Young was encouraged by the enthusiasm with which the Randolph-Macon community received free copies of Fahrenheit 451.

The town of Ashland hosted its own kick-off event featuring music, refreshments, and civic leaders reading excerpts from the novel. Ashland’s mayor, Faye O. Prichard, who had requested a community reading program, was one of the featured readers. During the course of The Big Read, over 900 copies of Fahrenheit 451 were distributed throughout the community. Book discussions, related lectures, and viewings of the 1966 film directed by François Truffaut were held at various times and venues during February and March. All events were advertised and open to both the town and college communities. Three area high schools also participated in The Big Read, incorporating Fahrenheit 451 into various courses.

“Book choice is critical.”
“Book choice is critical,” said Young. While she was enthusiastic about *Fahrenheit 451*, she expressed concerns about the potential of some of the other *Big Read* titles to engage a community. When Young described some of the book selections as “predictable,” she echoed the sentiments of some critics of the program. While Franz called the book choices “safe,” Sara Nelson of *Publishers Weekly* described them as “homework.” Young would like to see more current literature represented. Franz, too, mentioned contemporary authors, noting that the author’s presence at a reading or discussion is a thrilling experience for readers. (See box for a full list of *Big Read* book selections.)

Seventy-two communities nationwide were selected to participate in *The Big Read* from January through June 2007. The Ashland partnership is just one of three *Big Read* grant recipients in Virginia. Newport News Public Library is featuring Zora Neale Hurston’s *Their Eyes Were Watching God* in April and May 2007. The Virginia Foundation for the Humanities in Charlottesville is promoting F. Scott Fitzgerald’s *The Great Gatsby* as a *Big Read* for all of Virginia. Approximately one hundred communities across the country will be selected to participate in *The Big Read* for the September through December 2007 grant cycle. In addition to a direct grant, the NEA provides *Big Read* recipients with a wealth of resource materials including publicity, reader’s guides, teacher’s guides, and audio commentary created for each novel. For more information, please visit [http://www.neabigread.org/books.php](http://www.neabigread.org/books.php).
Virginia Reviews

Reviews prepared by staff members of the Library of Virginia
Sara B. Bearss, Editor


This new edition of *First People*, like its 1992 predecessor, is a well-crafted, workmanlike monograph that will appeal to the general public and particularly to the amateur archaeologist and historian. Its brevity makes it an excellent introduction to the fundamental ideas of Indian research. This overview is full of basic information on the precontact history of Virginia’s Indian tribes and articulates the archaeological research methods used to obtain the precontact and historical material. To that end, *First People* includes a glossary, list of resources, and discussion of specific actions that readers can take to assist in preserving these ancient and fragile archaeological sites.

Keith Egloff and Deborah Woodward focus on the ways archaeology enables us to decipher Virginia’s Indian cultures and those cultures’ evolution toward greater complexity from their arrival in Virginia as long ago as 15,000 B.C. to contemporary Indian life. They explain that because this work is written from an archaeological perspective, the anthropological theory of “cultural and natural areas” is invoked to classify and differentiate the various Indian groups in Virginia and to explain the diversity of cultures within the same time period. This concept assumes that a society develops in harmony with its environmental setting and is “inclined to spread over an entire [setting] area before expanding to a new environment.”

Throughout this second edition, the authors’ respect for their audience is apparent. This volume subtly updates the original edition of 1992 with information on the Werowocomoco village archaeological site and the tribes’ quest for federal recognition. It also uses a more attractive format. Egloff and Woodward inform their readers of their interpretive conclusions while introducing those readers to the controversial nature of all archaeological and historical research and interpretation. They also include short imaginative sections that allow the readers to envision Indian life at various points of cultural and political evolution. Throughout, photographs, charts, and drawings inform the text. This monograph deserves its place on many a bookshelf.

—reviewed by Patricia Ferguson Watkinson, research archivist


Karen Ordahl Kupperman’s *Jamestown Project* places seventeenth-century England and the fledging English colony in Virginia in a global perspective. Beginning at the fracturing of Europe and Elizabeth I’s rule, Kupperman sets the stage for England to become a global power. She recounts England’s alliances with the Ottoman Empire and against Spain and other Roman Catholic countries as well as the English thirst for a share of the African and Mediterranean trade. She shows how the English learned international trading and saw the advantage that other coun-

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tries had by having gotten to Africa and the Ottoman Empire first.

Helping the reader to understand the intentions behind establishing Jamestown, Kupperman explores the different perspectives of the people involved or affected by the colony. She draws not only from writings of the time but also from recent archaeological digs and scholarship. Kupperman examines the motives of the key players involved in the endeavor and its forerunners, such as Sir Walter Raleigh, John Smith, and Pocahontas, while also telling the stories of less famous individuals, particularly men left behind by their ships or captured by the American Indians and American Indians captured by Europeans. Evidence about any one person of lesser name is scarce, but by poring over the documents and contemporary publications Kupperman was able to glean much information about how common sailors and settlers and American Indians must have interacted with one another.

Kupperman's examination of how often and skillfully many individuals moved between cultures is fascinating. These men were highly adaptable and skillful in their socializations. Kupperman depicts a world with a great deal of movement between cultures as people traded, toured, and were captured by enemies. She examines the Europeans who came to America, particularly the Spanish and French with whom England was in direct competition. She also tells of the Indians who came to Europe and what they learned of European culture and languages, as well as what kind of information they probably brought back to America. Particularly interesting was the practice used in many instances worldwide of trading young men or boys to learn respectful languages. These interpreters were very valuable for communication between the societies.

Kupperman describes the establishment of Jamestown and follows the colony through its first fifteen years. She portrays the adventurers and the investors, reiterating that for most of the men involved, Virginia was never their only project. These men were traders and fortune seekers; they were often military men. Many of them had taken part in defeating and settling Ireland. Indeed, the colonists used many of the same tactics they had used in Ireland, often finding them just as inadequate for controlling the American Indians. Exploring the arguments between the colonists and the Virginia Company of London, Kupperman examines letters to demonstrate that they were not usually at cross-purposes, and how many of their problems came from the ever-present belief that a profit could be turned with little effort. She shows the difficulties that both sides faced in raising money and searching for profit to the detriment of settlement and sustenance. The English brought their experiences at trading and colonization with them to the New World and discovered that only a permanent large settlement would make Jamestown successful. The Jamestown Project is a must-read book for any colonial Virginia scholar as well as for any person interested in an in-depth study of Jamestown’s origins.

—reviewed by Maria Kimberly, project editor


By his own admission, Christopher E. Hendricks, a professor of history at Armstrong State University in Savannah, has long had an interest in town planning, beginning with staring at framed town views that hung in his father’s office at Wake Forest University. His master’s thesis explored the development of the Moravian towns of Salem, North Carolina, and Gracehill, Northern Ireland. The present volume is based on his 1991 dissertation on backcountry towns in Virginia and North Carolina. Hendricks asserts that successful towns in Virginia’s backcountry resulted from “careful planning and thoughtful design, not chance,” to attract settlers and make use of natural resources. Unlike earlier studies that focused on economic models to gauge success, Hendricks’s book offers a means to understand the personal element that determined if a town succeeded or failed. Hendricks suggests that, despite critics who decried the lack of urban centers in Virginia, generally attributing that dearth to the ready accessibility of river transportation, in fact Virginia was well populated with towns. The problem, he writes, is one of hierarchy, with cities being the top tier and villages occupying the bottom rank, as defined by population and economic activity. In Backcountry Towns of Colonial Virginia, Hendricks seeks to provide a regional town survey of twenty-five towns to analyze and interpret what he perceives as a significant urban movement and to identify what factors these towns had in common.

Hendricks defines the backcountry as land west of the fall line and...
then subdivides the region into the Piedmont, Southside, Great Valley, and Mountains. After the experiments with legislated towns had failed by 1700, town development became more of an individual, entrepreneurial endeavor, although the Virginia General Assembly remained active in setting up the government and controlling land ownership. Geography shaped settlement patterns and town development. The county court was the most common location for a town in colonial Virginia, with justices choosing a site and organizing construction of a courthouse and a jail. Trade also was a determining factor in town development.

In subsequent chapters, Hendricks studies in detail the development of twenty-five urban centers in the four backcountry subregions. In his concluding chapter, he notes that by 1800, towns were firmly established in the Virginia backcountry, with the exception of Southside Virginia. The most successful towns were those established in the Valley and Piedmont. The Valley and Piedmont towns were located along major transportation thoroughfares (the Great Wagon Road and the rivers) and, with a steady supply of immigrants and market and trade connections, encouraged settlement nearby. The Mountain towns studied by Hendricks were related to the springs and developed as the outgrowths of a service industry, albeit one that was seasonal.

The value of Hendricks’s book rests on recognizing that the development of urban centers in Virginia resulted from a variety of factors, including individual entrepreneurship, trade, geography, government administration, and market development. By expanding the definition of an urban center to include the variety of towns that were established in colonial Virginia, we see that in fact Virginia was a populated by a dense, interrelated network of towns that encouraged settlement into the frontier.

—reviewed by Barbara C. Batson, exhibitions coordinator


The man who wrote ... that “all men are created equal” remained a Virginia gentleman slave owner all his life.

HATZENBUEHLER REVIEW

Students of Thomas Jefferson have sought the foundations of his intellectual life in the European Enlightenment, in his youthful studies at the College of William and Mary, or in the writings of English or Scottish intellectuals; they have likened him to the French philosophes, declared him unique, or proposed that he was quintessentially American. Ronald L. Hatzenbuehler, on the other hand, looks deeply into Jefferson's life in his native Virginia to discern the beliefs, practices, and formative ideas and experiences that also shaped Jefferson's ideas.

Hatzenbuehler examines Jefferson as the lifelong planter and the youthful Virginia statesman who wrote A Summary View of the Rights of British America, the Declaration of Independence, and Notes on the State of Virginia. He investigates Jefferson's evolving attitudes toward the American nation from his deep personal investment in Virginia politics as he took part in forming the nation's first political parties. He also explores the ways in which Virginia influences may have caused Jefferson to act as president in ways that appeared to contradict his previous political principles, such as purchasing Louisiana from France and quietly urging his political allies to approve the purchase without thinking too hard about the constitutional issues that the purchase raised. After Jefferson retired he created a university for young Virginia gentlemen.

Hatzenbuehler finds that in many respects Jefferson was more thoroughly Virginian than American in his perspectives and objectives and that viewing the major themes and events of his life in that light provides a fresh perspective on Jefferson's intellectual creativity and on the limitations of his intellectual outlook.

As Jefferson used the word, his country was Virginia, and it was Virginia that meant most to him. However much he might have contributed to the creation of the United States, he remained in many essential ways a member of the white Virginia gentry class into which he had been born and into which he also married. As a member of that class of elite Virginians, Jefferson inherited and held onto ideas about family and society, about race and class, about economics and politics and history that shaped his views of himself, his family, and the rest of the world. The man who wrote on behalf of the United States that “all men are created equal” remained a Virginia gentleman slave owner all his life and by middle age had abandoned whatever antislavery ideals he had held as a young man. Thomas Jefferson remained a Virginian, perhaps as much or more a Virginian than an American.

—reviewed by Brent Tarter, editor, Dictionary of Virginia Biography

America’s most celebrated (and deprecated) polymath had an important yet seldom recognized interest in applied historical knowledge. So argues the author of this account of Thomas Jefferson’s failed effort to control his historical legacy. Jefferson took the study of history seriously, seeing it as a means of inculcating certain moral truths about society (but only if interpreted accurately). Personalizing such beliefs, Jefferson sought to ensure that future Americans would continue to view him as a primary author of American liberty and disregard the Federalist interpretations that had bedeviled him throughout his political career.

Francis D. Cogliano shows how Jefferson’s careful cultivation of his historical image, through the preservation of his papers, his well-known epitaph, and the design and improvements of his plantation seat Monticello, served twin purposes of arguing for the superiority of his republican ideals and placing him at the center of their formation. Neither the papers nor Jefferson’s estate provided the kind of historical boost he expected, in large part because of his indebtedness. Papers were scattered to different repositories, making it difficult to publish the collection he had envisioned, a vision in any event not shared by his nineteenth-century editors. Monticello passed into other hands and was degraded over the years. The twentieth century saw the revival of both as historical artifacts. Founded in 1944, the Thomas Jefferson Papers project is now slated for completion in 2026 (thus making the publication of the man’s papers a process almost as long as his life). Monticello was transformed from a self-conscious shrine to an active interpretation of Jefferson’s private life. In both cases, newly available information clouded what Jefferson might have intended as more benign legacies. Although more successful in using his epitaph to shape his self-image as a champion of human liberty, Jefferson has emerged as such a lightning rod for discussions of race, sex, and American foreign policy (subjects of subsequent chapters) that his faults often outweigh his accomplishments.

Although perhaps best suited for specialists, Cogliano’s work offers all interested readers a succinct tour through the ideological battles that have defined Jefferson past and present. Ironically, Jefferson’s success in forging a historical record of himself more complete than that of any other founder has provided endless ammunition to his critics. But perhaps he could take solace in being the most studied of all the founders, a historiographical achievement, if not a historic one.

—reviewed by William Bland Whitley, assistant editor, Dictionary of Virginia Biography


Onuf divides his collection into four sections examining Jefferson and historians, Jefferson’s world, education and religion, and race and slavery. The first section chronicles how the Sage of Monticello is often perceived as a symbol of the United States’ success or failure in living up to the various notions of Jeffersonian republicanism and the platitudes of the Declaration. Onuf demonstrates how historians have tried to use Jefferson to stand in the dock for various ideological positions, rather than trying to understand Jefferson as a historical figure.

The second section examines Jefferson’s political world. Onuf contends that Jefferson’s famous statement, “We are all federalists, we are all republicans,” was not an appeal to defeated, but loyal, oppositions, but rather was Jefferson’s contention that he was a federalist in the original 1787 sense of the word, a supporter of a limited, federated government and an opponent of the consolidated government that had emerged under his Federalist opponents in the 1790s. Onuf also examines how Jefferson’s purchase of Louisiana defines Jefferson’s presidency and reveals how it created fissures in the Union.

In section three, Onuf demonstrates how Jefferson considered himself a “true Christian” as a believer in Jesus’s role as a great teacher, rather than the supernat- ural Son of God who emerged over 1,800 years of religious distortion and misinterpretation. Onuf reveals how Jefferson believed an educated...
public was necessary for the survival of the republic. He also reexamines Jefferson’s role as founder of the United States Military Academy at West Point, New York.

Last, Onuf tackles Jefferson and race. Like many other historians, Onuf contends that Jefferson did father children by his slave Sally Hemings. He addresses Jefferson’s views on slaves and Jefferson’s racial views in the context of the times. Onuf notes that the only slaves Jefferson freed were his own children, and he adds that these children could merge into white society, but only by denying their heritage as Jeffersons.

For too long, Jefferson has been seen in stark black and white on many of the subjects Onuf’s essays cover. But, as with anyone else, Jefferson was too complex a person to fit neatly into that dichotomy. Onuf adds the necessary shades of gray to strengthen our understanding of this Founding Father.

—reviewed by Trenton E. Hizer, senior finding aids archivist


Founded as Fort Henry, a frontier trading outpost planted on the banks of the Appomattox River in the mid-1640s, Petersburg in the decade before the Civil War was a thriving commercial and industrial center with a direct outlet to the sea via a railway to the James River plus connections by rail to northern and southern markets as well as to Norfolk and to Lynchburg. Benefiting also from a network of good roads and boosting a tobacco manufacturing capacity second only to Richmond’s, Petersburg was the northernmost American city capable of producing cotton as a cash crop. Flour mills factored into an economy that supported a battalion of commission merchants, energetic middlemen who serviced the agricultural needs of consumers and provided supplies and equipment for farmers and planters. Of all Virginia’s municipalities, only Richmond’s population exceeded that of the Cockade.

Behind this veneer of refinement the labor of a burgeoning slave class kept the engine of commerce humming.

GREENE REVIEW

City. In the midst of this prosperity some two hundred retailers catered to the wants and whims of city residents, and four banks basked in the expectations of an unfettered future. Unspoiled by mammon, Petersburg’s genteel white society was admired for its social graces and welcoming hospitality. Behind this veneer of refinement the labor of a burgeoning slave class kept the engine of commerce humming. Free blacks, who constituted a quarter of Petersburg’s free persons, the highest of any southern city, tended their businesses and trades, partaking in at least a small measure of the city’s overall wealth.

The worsening sectional crisis darkened the city’s otherwise bright prospects. White Petersburgers, like most other white Virginians, rejected calls for secession by southern nationalists, but as peace efforts collapsed and events in South Carolina and Washington, D.C., lurched toward armed conflict, support for unionists and moderates eroded. On April 17, 1861, Virginia joined the Confederacy. While Petersburg’s volunteers and militia groups gathered arms and boarded trains, and home guards marched in the streets, private citizens, some celebrating, others grim with misgivings, prepared for war. The common council, mindful of internal as well as external threats, created a Committee of Safety for the purpose of guarding against persons disloyal to Virginia and the newborn Confederacy.

The fate of Petersburg and its inhabitants, black and white, during the ensuing four years is examined in exhaustive detail by A. Wilson Greene, whose skillful writing vividly depicts the wide range of wartime experiences on the home front and the resulting disillusionment as the realities of warfare set in: the shock and grief when the first Union prisoners and the dead and wounded Confederates appeared in the city after the First Battle of Manassas; the anger and privation resulting from the dreadful mixture of inflation and shortages made worse by greedy speculators; the rise of crime, particularly in the black community in the absence of white masters, resulting in harsher measures by officials and greater tension between the races; and the rising anxiety and fear of military invasion. Transformed by the influx of rough strangers and rowdy soldiers, the city by the autumn of 1862 already resembled a garrison town and was under martial law.

In 1863 the completion of a line of Confederate forts, batteries, and infantry works around Petersburg was a priority. The area’s growing strategic importance as a key transportation hub and as a backdoor approach to the ultimate objective—Richmond—made the city an inevitable target for massive Union operations. In June 1864 the Union launched two assaults and
thus initiated a dogged ten-month-long effort to capture Petersburg and then seize the Confederate capital. Protracted trench warfare, frequent bombardment, and a series of Union operations and raids in the area strained daily life to the breaking point. The ring around Petersburg gradually tightened, cutting off supplies. Amidst the cannonades, the common council struggled to function effectively. Dead horses and mules littered the streets; households ran out of coal. The beleaguered city’s seven military hospitals shifted patients to private homes for protection against the shelling. Suspended above all was the gloomy prospect of impending defeat. On April 2, 1865, the Army of Northern Virginia barely escaped destruction, and the next day victorious Union regiments, enthusiastically welcomed by African-Americans, hoisted their battle flags above the court and custom houses. Occupied until the following August, the charming antebellum city had suffered greatly, many of its fine and common dwellings battered, numerous commercial buildings standing in ruins, its residents emotionally spent.

Certainly the Petersburg campaign has received its share of analysis, but Greene’s book, one of more than a dozen titles in the Nation Divided: New Studies in Civil War History series, is a long-awaited study of a long-neglected subject: the Petersburg home front. S sensitively written and thoroughly researched, it is an absorbing study of the chaotic intersection of military and civilian life in a city that played a pivotal role in the last year of the life of the Confederacy. Civil War Petersburg will engage and inform Civil War enthusiasts as well as other students of Virginia history.

—reviewed by Donald W. Gunter, editor, Dictionary of Virginia Biography

Virginia Bookends

Begun in 2001, Wesley E. Pippenger’s series Index to Virginia Estates, 1800–1865, tackles the mammoth task of indexing all items recorded in city or county will books during the first sixty-five years of the nineteenth century. Genealogists and students of local history alike find the series invaluable. Volume 8 (Richmond: Virginia Genealogical Society, 2007. xxx + 702 pp. ISBN 1-888192-37-2. $50.00) covers the counties of Charles City, Chesterfield, Dinwiddie, Greensville, Henrico, James City, Prince George, Surry, and Sussex and the cities of Petersburg, Richmond, and Williamsburg. Organized alphabetically, each one-line entry includes the personal name, city or county, type of account (will, inventory, sale, trust account, license, guardian or executor’s bond, power of attorney), year, and source citation.

—bookend notes prepared by Sara B. Bearss