On the cover: Librarian Brad MacDonald serves health sciences students from his home office. Story on page 6.
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Yesterday VLA President John Moorman called to invite me to participate in a VLA Annual Conference session this fall titled “A Day in the Life of a Library Director.” This attention from a distinguished colleague was most welcome, and, since I was in the process of moving out of an office I have occupied for twenty-five years, it is only natural that I stopped a while to think of some of the unusual things I have done at Ferrum over the decades.

At a small college library, directors have to fill many roles and respond to a wide variety of circumstances. I’ve had to arrange and supervise the removal of every square inch of carpet in the building in one day after a burst pipe flooded the building in 1990. I’ve had to drive all over the state and retrieve gift books from basements, attics, and storage lockers. I’ve had to serve as the judge for coon mule jumping contests, help football coaches break up fights, and take graduation speakers to the airport. I’ve even had the chance to help a family of ducklings make their way from a nest in the center of campus to the college pond. But I’ve never had a day quite like November 4, 1985, the date of the only parking ticket I ever got at Ferrum College.

Some readers will recognize the date as that of the worst flood in the Roanoke valley in the twentieth century. It was a long day for me: for hours I didn’t know where my wife and children were or if they were safe; it took a couple of hours to find a road open to get home when I finally left the library; we lost fences, trees, and about half of the soil in our vegetable garden. But I won’t dwell on these parts of the experience.

It all started when the late Wes Nelson, a fellow librarian and tireless volunteer for the fire and rescue squads, burst into my office at midmorning. He had to get to the rescue squad building, and Route 40 was flooded by three feet of rushing water between there and the library. Wes remembered that I had a pick-up outfitted for off-road driving, and asked if I thought I could get him to where the squad’s crash truck was garaged. An accident victim was trapped across a flooded creek on the road down near Prillaman Switch.

We dashed to the parking lot and got going straight away, but slowed down when we encountered a woman student stranded in a small car in the middle of the stream that had now almost completely blocked the highway. I maneuvered the truck as close as possible to her car, and she was able to climb into the bed in spite of the downpour. We rushed on to the squad building, dropped off Wes, and got the soaked student into the cab of the truck.

I was able to successfully ford the stream again, and we were soon outside the library. With the parking lot full and water from the pond almost up to the road, I simply drove the truck up on the sidewalk, and rushed the student into the dry building where she could warm up and call a tow truck.

Mission, as someone said, accomplished.

When I was finally able to head for home that evening, I noticed a soggy paper under one of my wipers. I recognized it as a parking ticket, but it was too wet to read in bad light. I set it aside to dry, intending to take care of it the next day.

The rain had mercifully stopped by the next morning, though it was no easy thing finding a road open between our farm and the college. I opened the building as usual, made sure Wes had returned from his rescue work safely, and retreated to my office to make a call. Surely the ticket could be written off.

The administrator who headed up parking and public safety at that time had been my assistant on a variety of campus projects, and I had taken a leading role in getting him promoted.

Perhaps when he had been a student, a librarian had required him to pay an unfair fine. I’ll never know. I do know that he insisted I pay the fee because, after all, I had parked on the sidewalk. The facts that I parked there during the worst natural disaster to hit our
area in my lifetime and that I had just returned from a daring white-water rescue were insufficient to warrant mercy in the case. I began to feel myself tremble with anger, and I drew in a deep breath ready to launch into a self-righteous tirade. Something, however, made me keep cool. I slowly realized that the cost was too small to warrant much emotion, just or not.

I hung up the telephone, stapled a five-dollar bill to the ticket, and dropped it in the campus mailbox. After all, five bucks is quite a deal for a story worth telling for the next twenty-five years.

This issue of Virginia Libraries is also a good deal, with articles on running a successful youth reading program in a public library, responding to staff discord in a library setting, and providing reference services for college students from a home office by using a variety of media. There are also book reviews and an inspiring president’s column. Keep reading, but don’t park on the sidewalk.

1. Virginia Libraries seeks to publish articles and reviews of interest to the library community in Virginia. Articles reporting research, library programs and events, and opinion pieces are all considered for publication. Queries are encouraged. Brief announcements and press releases should be directed to the VLA Newsletter.

2. Please submit manuscripts via email as attachments in Microsoft Word, rich text, or plain text format. Articles should be double-spaced with any bibliographic notes occurring at the end of the article. Please avoid using the automatic note creation function provided by some word processing programs.

3. Articles in Virginia Libraries conform to the latest edition of the Chicago Manual of Style and Webster’s Third New International Dictionary, Unabridged. Accepted articles are subject to editing for style and clarity. Authors will be consulted on points of fact.

4. All articles submitted for consideration are reviewed by the editors and may be refereed by the editorial board. Articles that are not selected for publication will be returned within three months.

5. VLA holds the copyright on all articles published in Virginia Libraries. Contributors of articles receive one copy of the issue in which their work appears.

6. Illustrations are encouraged and should be submitted whenever appropriate to accompany a manuscript. Hard copy illustrations will be returned if requested in advance. Digital images should have a resolution of at least 300 dpi. Authors are responsible for securing legal permission to publish photographs and other illustrations.

7. Each contributor should provide a brief sketch of professional accomplishments of no more than fifty words that includes current title, affiliation, and email address. Unless specified otherwise, this information will be shared with readers of Virginia Libraries. Physical addresses should also be provided for the mailing of contributor’s copy.

8. Articles should generally fall within the range of 750–3,000 words. Please query the editors before submitting any work of greater length.

9. Email manuscripts and queries to Cy Dillon, cdillon@ferrum.edu, and Lyn C. A. Gardner, cgardner@hampton.gov. Please be sure to copy both editors.

10. Virginia Libraries is published quarterly. The deadlines for submission are: November 1 for Number 1, January/February/March; February 1 for Number 2, April/May/June; May 1 for Number 3, July/August/September; and August 1 for Number 4, October/November/December.
President’s Column

by John Moorman

As I was pondering what to put in this issue’s President’s Column, several things came to mind. I could talk about the recent Virginia Library Association public library postcard campaign, discuss the state or lack thereof of library funding, or muse on how the association should take advantage of new technology to communicate better with its members and the public that we serve.

Then an email came from Diantha McCauley, director of the Augusta County Public Library and second vice president of VLA, that one of her library users had her essay selected as a winner in the March Women’s Day essay contest, “How the Public Library Can Save You Money.” As the essay was not published in the paper issue due to lack of space, I am using my column to share this essay with you. Congratulations go to Tammy Thomas of Stuarts Draft, Virginia, for her essay “School’s In,” which follows (with the kind permission of Woman’s Day and the author).

“My public library literally helped put me through college! I was 34, and I had chosen to forgo school years before in order to work part-time and raise my children. But now that my sons would be entering high school, I started thinking that I wanted to be an English teacher. I had always enjoyed reading and writing, and loved volunteering at my sons’ school. Still, money was tight, and becoming a teacher seemed like an impossibility. Yet I couldn’t let go of the dream. I went to an open house at a nearby community college, just to get more information. I ended up taking a leap of faith and enrolling. I applied for financial aid and student loans for the tuition costs, and then collected the syllabi for my classes. That’s when I realized that I had made a serious miscalculation: I hadn’t counted on the cost of textbooks. They could cost anywhere from $50 to $250 each per semester, and I always needed at least three. For a family on an extremely tight budget, this expense was a real problem.

“I looked around for used books, but even those were more than I could comfortably afford. So I decided to go to the Augusta County Library on a mission to keep my college dream alive. I got mixed results. While the library did have many of the books on the recommended reading list, they didn’t have the textbooks.

“I decided to talk to the reference librarians to see if they had any suggestions. They explained that they might be able to get some of the books from college libraries in the state by means of an interlibrary loan. The suggestion was a lifesaver! From the time I started college until the time I graduated, I relied on interlibrary loans to help me get almost all of my textbooks. This saved me thousands of dollars.

“In August 2000, I began my career as an eighth-grade language arts teacher, and I now also chair our school’s English department. I’ve also just completed my master’s degree in education administration, using interlibrary loans for my books, of course! My relationship with the public library has continued to grow. As a teacher, I view the library as a great community partner. Every year I arrange for the librarians to come to my school and tell my students about the wonderful books and programs available to them. In the summer, I have my summer-school students participate in the library’s summer reading program. The children enjoy hearing about exciting new books, and they love winning prizes for the hours they invest in reading. The library has been a wonderful resource for enriching my students’ learning experience, and a great tool for a teacher with limited means. Last summer I volunteered at the library, which is suffering from funding cuts, to help repay the librarians for all they have done for me, my family, and students. It is my hope that students, like me, will develop a lifelong love for their library.”

Thanks go to Tammy Thomas and Woman’s Day for this excellent example of what libraries can accomplish for their users. As we work on our daily tasks, sometimes we lose track of the bigger picture. Users such as Thomas remind us of our value to their lives and provide us with encouragement when we cannot see the forest for the trees.
Library Information Services for Distance-Based Customers: An Emerging Mandate for the Digital Age

by Brad S. MacDonal'd

Those of us who have worked in libraries since before the advent of the World Wide Web, digitized journal collections, electronic book downloads, and online social networking have adapted to monumental changes in the ways in which we strive to serve our customers. User expectations in the so-called digital age pose special challenges for academic and public libraries in particular. One such challenge is an emerging demand for information services by customers who prefer to work from off-site, most notably students who are enrolled in distance-based education programs. This article describes a recently implemented distance learning library services model at a small Virginia college.

Background

According to a 2010 report by the Babson Survey Research Group, there are over 4.6 million online postsecondary students in the United States. The same report cites a growth rate of 17% for online education, which dwarfs the 1.2% growth of the overall higher education population. This means that more and more students are able to complete their college degrees without ever setting foot on a bricks and mortar campus. U.S. Department of Education data indicate that by 2007, 97% of public two-year institutions and 89% of public four-year institutions were already offering college-level distance learning courses. However, until recently distance learners have represented a somewhat underserved population. Mandates to provide library support specifically for distance-based learners have come from the American Library Association, the Association of College and Research Libraries, and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, the major accrediting body for Virginia colleges and universities. Libraries are therefore exploring innovative ways in which to serve this rapidly growing virtual community.

In January of 2009, a dedicated Distance Learning Library Service was implemented in support of the more than 50 distance education courses being taught by over 30 faculty members at the College. The philosophical premise of the initiative is that distance learners deserve access to essentially the same library and information resources as those enjoyed by on-campus students, including a synchronous means of communication with a professional librarian.

Program Implementation

An initial obstacle to any online distance-based library service is user authentication. Many colleges and universities rely upon digital courseware to deliver their distance education content, and this represents a logical means of authenticating customer identity. In our case, a special course “shell” was created using the Blackboard learning management system.

Brad S. MacDonal'd has worked in reference services in a variety of settings including public, community college, and four-year college libraries for more than 18 years. He has also completed two tours with the U.S. Peace Corps in the coastal Philippines and the remote highlands of Papua New Guinea.
Each student, staff, and faculty member already has a unique login to this courseware, thus the distance education library support page is accessible to anyone who is directly affiliated with the College. A Blackboard menu button labeled “Library Help,” which directs users to the Distance Learning Library Services site in Blackboard, is added to each distance education course offered by the College.

Many distance-based learners are nontraditional students, often holding full time jobs as they matriculate and earn their degrees. Since our service was to be managed by a single off-site librarian, it was decided to spread service hours over a split shift, with both morning and evening coverage provided during weekdays. The live service is presently offered between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and noon and again from the hours of 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. during weekdays. Traditional students are likely to utilize the service during morning hours whereas nontraditional, working students are more likely to require library assistance in the evenings. For one semester, we experimented with coverage on Sunday evenings but discovered, somewhat to our surprise, that there was little demand for the service during that time.

**Scope of Service**

The Distance Learning Library Services user site is designed to be as comprehensive as possible. In addition to providing an interface for reference services, the site includes a section for frequently asked questions, links to local and regional online library catalogs (including WorldCat), a variety of program-specific subject guides and pathfinders, and a section of online tutorials for using each subscription database offered by the College. An “Electronic Resources Gateway” link takes users to more than 50 online databases, primarily subscription-based electronic...
journal and e-book resources. We also provide extensive information on using the American Psychological Association citation style format, which our students are required to follow for each paper or project they produce while at the College. Finally, there is a section for submitting requests for articles to be scanned from our physical journal collection or to be received via Interlibrary Loan. For this, the distance learning librarian liaises with services already in place at the College’s campus library.

Reference Services and Individual Research Support via Email

The distance learning library service provides both synchronous and asynchronous support. Customers are at liberty to select the method of contact that best accommodates their level of need. Most users who are not time constrained will choose to contact the service using email. A dedicated email address was created for the service, and, during hours of live coverage, turnaround time is generally under five minutes. Often at the beginning of the evening shift there will be one or two email requests that have come in during the afternoon.

An email request for research assistance involves the completion of a simple online form, available at the Distance Learning Library Services site. Users enter their contact information and are asked to respond to a variety of questions about the nature of their research. They will indicate primary keywords and terms associated with their topic, what resources they have thus far explored, and what special requirements they face—for example, citing no articles older than five years. This information is sent directly to the distance learning librarian’s email account where questions are fielded in the order in which they are received.

Email has the advantage of allowing document file attachments and saved computer screen shots. The librarian maintains a folder of responses to routine questions, generally in the form of graphic documents saved in Web layout, which demonstrate solutions to common queries. For example, we are often asked how to limit a search in a particular database to only research articles, peer-reviewed sources, or by publication date. Using screen shots and descriptive text, an email attachment can walk a user through a very clear and concise step-by-step process. As unique requests come in and more pathfinders are created, the pool of these tutorials continues to grow. Frequently, an attached pathfinder along with a personal message and follow up perfectly addresses a user’s need.

**The user simply begins typing inside the chat box in order to initiate a live reference exchange.**

Live Chat

An innovative approach to real time reference support is the use of Internet-based live chat or instant messaging. There are a number of available programs that can provide this function. We have selected a program called meebo® (http://www.meebo.com) which has the advantage of supporting most common instant messaging programs and of being free of charge. Downloading a meebo® “widget” allows the embedding of a chat interface directly into a website or, in our case, a Blackboard shell. This download allows a user to see an open chat window built directly into the distance learning library site. The user simply begins typing inside the chat box in order to initiate a live reference exchange. A built-in chime alerts the librarian that a remote user has opened...
a chat session. The small, moveable chat window on the desktop does not interfere with the librarian's ability to work with other software and applications. A chat interface makes a handy means of sharing links to websites or persistent links to subscription journal articles. Some messaging programs include a method of conveying actual files so graphical pathfinders may be sent directly to the users. Texting and messaging is the preferred method of contact for some students and will likely become more popular as the mobility and functionality of networkable devices continue to improve.

**Screencasting**

Possibly the most innovative and effective approach to distance library support today is the use of screencasting software. Simply, a screencast is a digital recording of computer screen output with accompanying customized audio narration. There are a number of open source screencasting programs available. We have selected a program called Jing® which is a free download from TechSmith®, makers of the popular Camtasia® and Snagit® capture programs (http://www.jingproject.com/). TechSmith® also offers an inexpensive Pro Version of Jing® that provides enhanced functionality, but for our purposes, the freeware version has worked perfectly.

Using Jing® software and a microphone headset, the librarian is able to create up to three minutes of streaming video with audio narration. Typically, a screencast consists of an online search that is personalized to a student's specific need. It will often involve locating scholarly information on the Web or navigating one of our subscription databases. The librarian conducts the search while giving a step by step narration, tailored to the student. Sometimes a student has provided enough detail on the reference assistance request form in order for the librarian to conduct a sample search on the actual research topic.

Anyone who has worked with Camtasia® or other screencasting programs knows that file sizes can be unwieldy on a local network and can strain available bandwidth. The beauty of Jing® is that screencast files may be stored off site and therefore do not tax the library's server or network capacity. One of Jing's file saving destinations is to Screencast.com (http://www.screencast.com) where 2GB of storage space is available at no charge. Once a screencast file is stored at Screencast.com, a unique filename similar to a URL is generated. This file link can be emailed to the customer who simply clicks it in order to view the screencast, using speakers or headphones for the audio portion. For tutorial purposes, the file link can also be embedded in a website or an online course so the screencast may be viewed by an entire class.

In effect, this process is like freezing a live search that a reference librarian might demonstrate to a customer in a bricks and mortar library setting. An added advantage is that a student is able to view a screencast over and over again to ensure a complete understanding of the process being demonstrated. Diligent deletion of obsolete screencast files prevents usage from exceeding the free 2GB file storage limit. For a small fee, online storage capacity can be greatly expanded. Of course, screencast files may also be saved locally.
Discussion

Any new library service or initiative takes time to become established. The marketing of distance library services at the Jefferson College of Health Sciences has been somewhat challenging. A series of email messages are sent to each distance education faculty member, explaining the scope of the service and encouraging the promotion of the “Library Help” menu button which is automatically inserted into Blackboard course shells. More than one year after implementation, we still occasionally see faculty referring their distance education students to the campus librarians. Similarly, requests to faculty for copies of their major research assignments each semester have met with only partial compliance. It is hoped that in time, a more collaborative spirit may be cultivated as faculty and students become familiar with the availability and scope of the relatively new service.

The distance learning librarian is a telecommuting position, managed from a home office located about 90 miles from campus. Managing this service from a remote site has both pros and cons. On the plus side, there is no need for the facility to provide scarce office space for the librarian, and even severely inclement weather does not prevent the service from functioning. There is also a distinct advantage in the distance librarian being able to see exactly what the user is seeing, since both parties are accessing online information largely independent of the library’s local area network. When providing telephone support from the campus library, it is common for a librarian using an internal network to have a different online experience from a remote customer who is using an external ISP. The problem is obviated when the librarian is also using an external provider.

The distance learning librarian represents a “human” factor in what can often be the very impersonal world of distance education. While teaching faculty are primarily an email presence and tend to come and go from a distance-based student’s virtual orbit, the online librarian represents a constant. Students who use the service for one class tend to come back for help with future classes, and the use of telephone and live chat make these some of the more personal interactions they may experience as distance learners.

A clear disadvantage of being based off-site is the lack of “face time” with faculty and administration and the inability to attend many of the various meetings and other functions that take place on campus. To ensure the program remains vital in the minds of the campus community, it must be continually marketed. Strategies include presentations on distance learning library services offered during faculty in-service days, short pieces about the service in the campus newsletter, a brochure describing the service, and periodic email reminders to distance education faculty. Evaluating the effectiveness of the service has also proven to be rather difficult as there tends to be a very low return rate for student satisfaction surveys in general. This represents an area where alternative strategies will need to be explored.

Conclusion

Students are increasingly selecting academic programs that mesh with their busy lifestyles, and, therefore, the demand for distance-based academic library support will doubtless continue to increase. Public libraries face similar challenges as patrons come to expect instant responses to their information requests and as they warm to the idea of electronic books and magazines. Mobile devices are already ubiquitous and their capabilities are rapidly evolving. Many pundits claim that the very survival of our profession hinges upon our ability to successfully compete in the digital forum. Every library should have a fundamental plan for providing some level of remote service to their customer base. Inexpensive or free tools are in place for the provision of basic, high quality distance library services at most libraries today. Vendors are beginning to market their own turn-key subscription-based versions of virtual reference services. Managers of all libraries will be forced to explore creative staffing models in order to address a trend that will certainly only continue to grow.

Notes

library services to young adults, typically defined as youth ages 12–18, have been improving and expanding rapidly since 1957, when the Young Adult Services Division (YASD) was established as a separate division within the American Library Association. YALSA (Young Adult Library Services Association) remains the active group in setting the standards for services to teenagers in libraries across the United States.¹

The initiatives outlined by YALSA include providing “library programming that meets the needs of young adults.” By “needs,” YALSA is, in part, referring to the 40 Developmental Assets for Adolescents Ages 12–18, as developed by the Search Institute, a non-profit, non-sectarian organization that promotes research on the needs of young people and develops programs to help youth succeed (see www.search-institute.org). The American Library Association encourages all of its member libraries to use the 40 Developmental Assets as a guideline for creating programs, special spaces within library buildings, and collections of library materials for teens (see http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/yalsa/profdev/programmingyoung.cfm).

So, how do our programs at Culpeper County Library match up with the Assets? To find out, let’s look at some of the needs of adolescents that we are trying to satisfy with our teen gatherings. The following list, selected directly from the 40 Developmental Assets (see http://www.search-institute.org/content/40-developmental-assets-adolescents-ages-12-18) are the ones we focus on:

1. Support:
   - Other Adult Relationships: Young person receives support from three or more nonparent adults

Laini Bostian is Youth Services Coordinator at Culpeper County Library in Culpeper, Virginia. She runs Young Adult programs at the Library, and is an active member of the Healthy Culpeper Teen Empowerment Coalition. This article was inspired by coursework for Adolescents in Libraries, an online course taught by YALSA Instructor Beth Gallaway. Bostian can be contacted at lbostian@cclva.org for questions or comments.
2. Empowerment:
   • Community values youth: Young person perceives that adults in the community value youth.
   • Safety: Young person feels safe at home, school, and in the neighborhood.
3. Boundaries and expectations:
   • Adult Role Models: Parents and other adults model positive, responsible behavior
4. Constructive use of time:
   • Creative activities: Young person spends three or more hours per week in lessons or practice in music, theater or other arts
5. Commitment to Learning:
   • Reading for Pleasure: Young person reads for pleasure three or more hours per week
6. Social Competencies:
   • Interpersonal Competence: Young person has empathy, sensitivity and friendship skills
7. Positive Identity:
   • Self Esteem: Young person reports having a high self esteem

Each young adult program at the library fulfills at least three of these assets. When teens attend any library sponsored event, they are welcomed into an environment in which they feel safe, encouraged to enhance friendship skills, and given clear boundaries and expectations by event leaders. Recently, we actually asked teens participating in programs at the Culpeper County Library if we were in fact meeting these needs for them.

The seven teens who regularly attend our Random Writers group were asked to complete surveys. Most teens attending this particular program come to share writing they have done outside of the group with other teens for feedback, though some attend just to listen to the writing their peers read aloud. On the completed surveys, program attendees indicated that they feel supported by the library staff member who runs the group (Asset 1), that attending the group encourages them to produce more writing (Asset 4), that they check out books more when they come to the library to attend such a program (Asset 5), that their understanding of interpersonal relationships is improved by the nature of the meetings (Asset 6), and that their self esteem is improved by being a participant in the group (Asset 7). One teen chose to explain the way that library programs impact his life in his own words, in lieu of
completing a survey. He wrote the following passage:
She [the coordinator of Young Adult Programs] is supportive and kind in her endeavors. I believe that she places a high value on people of all ages. The programs she runs provide a caring, joyful place to meet with others of my own age and temperament to discuss and improve upon various social, analytic, and creative skills. They provide a safe environment where adolescents can grow and be motivated to learn and have new experiences.
The feedback provided by our teens, via surveys and written input, is encouraging. Here it should be clarified that one need not start a young writer’s group in order to offer teens such rewarding and assets-based experiences. Programs such as Anime Night, Book Talking, and Game Night are also valuable. When surveyed, eleven teens attending an Anime Night program at Culpeper County Library “strongly agreed” that assets one, five, six, and seven were being fulfilled for them. All of the teens strongly agreed that the adult who coordinates teen events creates an environment where new people feel welcome and participants are considerate of one another’s feelings. There were some interesting anonymous comments written on the surveys, such as these remarks about our Anime Night programs:
- It [Anime Night] makes me want to talk to others.
- It makes me feel like I can express my opinion without being judged.
- It keeps me preoccupied and gives me something to think about for the month until next time.
- I don’t interact much or at all with other people unless it’s over a computer.

Let the fun begin! Culpeper youth enjoy a variety of activities that target some of the 40 Developmental Assets described by Search Institute.
• It’s an open group, and it’s a lot of fun to be with other Otakus!

The comment regarding not interacting much “at all with other people unless it’s over a computer” was interesting because all of the teens in attendance did interact on some level, and because it brings to light the idea that an event requiring less interpersonal communication than most programs do might fulfill a very specific social need.

One of the “assets” our library staff consider especially important is empowering youth. Offering teens the opportunity to participate in the planning process is a wonderful way to help boost self esteem and encourage a buy-in to future programs. Most teens, when offered ideas and choices, will actually choose or invent situations in which they will feel empowered, creative and safe.

At a recent planning meeting for 2010 Teen Summer Programs at the Culpeper County Library, 15 teens were given a list of possible programs to choose from. The programs included Game Lounge, Improv Night, Halloween in June, Anime Night, Pen and Paper Role Playing (specifically Mouse Guard) among others. After looking through the list, the teens began to brainstorm, in itself evidence of the creativity they possess and want to apply, and came up with Space Café.

What exactly is Space Café? The teens at the planning meeting combined the suggested events, Paper and Pencil Role Playing and Halloween in June, and invented the Space Café. They want an event where they can come in costume and eat sweets. They also want to create characters for themselves and confront challenges while in character, in the same way they would in a role playing game. Thus, Space Café will be an LARP (Live Action Role Playing) event.

Teens can begin participating in the Café now by creating characters, in this case aliens, and home planets. Once they have created characters online, the teens can participate in the Space Café Forum, which is a bit like Facebook for aliens. The best thing about the forum is that the kids are doing a lot of creative writing there. They have even created their own Wiki pages about the history of their planets.

The actual LARP event will take place on Saturday, June 26th. All those who wish to participate must contact the Culpeper County Library Youth Services Department by June 21st.

In June, we will transform the Library’s Meeting Room into an intergalactic meeting place for the teens who are currently creating characters online at http://www.obsidianportal.com/campaigns/space-cafe. There will of course be plenty of alien food (cake and candy) and all teens present will be dressed in costumes as the aliens they are representing. There will be at least two GMs (Game Masters) present to give teens the opportunity to be challenged while in character. Will this program support the assets? Look them over again and judge for yourself. I say, you betcha! Are libraries across Virginia running assets-driven programs for young adults? Visit your local library and find out. I’d venture you’ll discover the answer is another resounding “yes!”

Notes
You Gotta Have Work Friends

by Heather Groves Hannan and Janna Mattson

It seems like such a simple concept, repeated often by our mothers and grandmothers: “you catch more flies with honey.” Robert Fulghum stayed on the New York Times Best Seller list for nearly two years expanding upon this concept of playing nice in the sandbox in his book All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten:

Wisdom is not at the top of the graduate school mountain, but there in the sandpile at Sunday School. These are the things I learned: Share everything. Play fair. Don’t hit people. Put things back where you found them. Clean up your own mess. Don’t take things that aren’t yours. Say you’re sorry when you hurt somebody.1

He is correct. We do not learn these things in graduate school because we should know them already. So why do interpersonal skills seem elusive so often in the library world? As library students, we learn how to conduct a successful reference interview, choosing phrases “in ways to avoid patron angst.”2 It would be difficult, however, to find a graduate library science program that includes lessons on interpersonal skills with co-workers. The most well-trained reference staff may create “negative tension that is noticeable by patrons and make the desk itself unapproachable”3 if that staff lacks interpersonal skills.

The authors will outline a workplace incident during which a new librarian observed an argument among library staff, how her supervisor chose to address the problem, and ultimately how library staff used the incident as a learning opportunity to improve interpersonal skills at work.

A new academic librarian, “Marion,” only a couple of months into her new job at a university library, witnessed an argument between staff members during a meeting that came as an unwelcome surprise. The meeting attendees, including those that were arguing, were people she did not know particularly well and had not worked with before. Since the university has a distributed library system consisting of five libraries in three different counties, librarians on different campuses often go for weeks or months without working directly with their peers. This is an additional challenge to the development of library staff relationships. Finally, Marion’s supervisor was not in attendance at this meeting.

The argument seemed to Marion to be about something relatively benign, but clearly the arguing staff members were bigger stakeholders in the issue. Both sides had valid points, but the objective of the meeting was lost because of the extremely uncomfortable dynamics in the room. When other staff members started to stand up and head for the door, Marion decided to as well, but everyone was stopped by a senior staff member who wanted to resolve the issue at hand. A rushed decision was made and all of the meeting attendees seemed disgruntled and unhappy. Marion also felt frustrated that she had not spoken up, perhaps offering the valuable opinion of a new staff member with “fresh eyes.”

Clearly some old office politics were rearing their ugly heads here and Marion was not the only one made uncomfortable by them. Bob Keiserman points out in his article “People Matters” that “Allowing conflicts to fester only promotes sabotage within your organization and the breakdown of optimum service to those using your library.”4 Marion knew this instinctively, but was unsure of her ability to do anything about bad office dynamics between other staff members. However, her silence could be construed as acceptance, and she felt that she had become part of the problem. Lorraine Pellack points out that the “workplace climate is not only the responsibility of the reference supervisor or manager; it is also the responsibility of each individual librarian in the unit.”5 If the ultimate goal of library staff is to provide the best service possible

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to patrons, any negative action or failure to respond to that action is a step away from that goal.

So how does a new librarian balance personal responsibility while wading through complicated office politics? In this particular case, Marion did not want to be perceived as a whiner or gossip, but felt that the incident had to be addressed. There was simply no good reason for the lack of civility displayed in the conference room. In fact, any potential learning opportunities or new ideas that could have been revealed during the meeting quickly evaporated as soon as the staff members engaged in the hostile exchange. Pellack discusses the notion of what professionalism is in libraries and argues that it “should also include standards for behavior among co-workers.”6 This standard of behavior is perfectly defined as collegiality, which “takes courtesy to respect, community to trust, acknowledgement of an individual’s presence to acknowledgement of that individual’s contributions, and conversation to consultation and sharing of knowledge.”7 What happens when collegiality is missing in the library conference room? Clearly it can have a negative impact on staff morale and library services. In a case like this, mentoring was definitely needed either from a trusted peer or Marion’s supervisor. Marion chose the latter.

A seasoned academic library supervisor, “Pat,” many years into her career, listened intently as Marion shared what she had witnessed at the meeting. Marion shared her feelings of regret for not speaking up, her feelings of responsibility for workplace climate, but more importantly Marion shared her desire for guidance to deal with this type of situation in a more informed and empowered manner the next time. As Pat pondered her response to Marion, she remembered a quote by Peter Drucker that seemed to fit the moment:

No organization can depend on genius; the supply is always scarce and unreliable. It is the test of an organization to make ordinary human beings perform better than they seem capable of, to bring out whatever strength there is in its members, and to use each one’s strength to help all the others perform. The purpose of an organization is to enable common people to do uncommon things.8

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Marion did not want to be perceived as a whiner or gossip, but felt that the incident had to be addressed.9

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Pat understood that how she responded to and handled this contentious situation would reflect her perceived effectiveness as a leader by not only Marion, but Pat’s entire team. As Michael Kinsman has shared, “Because the line supervisor is the one member of management to whom most people report, workers come to view that relationship as their official relationship with the company.”9 The ball was squarely in Pat’s court, but what can a middle manager influence and what are the limits?

Numerous researchers have identified key influence tactics commonly used by supervisors, namely reason, assertion, exchange/bargain, courting favor, as well as coercion and partnership or building an alliance.10 Any influence tactic when used by a supervisor is intended to change the behavior of a subordinate. However, with the situation just described there was both a need for influencing the behavior of a subordinate and the necessity of influencing the behavior of colleagues and upper management. Ultimately, Pat needed to try to accomplish two things: bring out the strengths of her subordinate and employ the use of appropriate tactics to influence positive organizational citizenship by those outside her scope of authority.

Initially the anxiety of the situation needed to be addressed. If a subordinate’s anxiety was left to fester and not engaged constructively, it could adversely impact her success on the job and future career advancement. Chuck Reynolds points out that supervisors must recognize how crucial it is for them to coach, and he shares what he calls “five ways managers can coach more effectively.”

Listen to understand—acknowledge concerns

Give affirmation—show appreciation for the effort and confirm your confidence in their abilities

Engage the subordinate—ask what they think and provide opportunities for creative and innovative problem-solving

Help the subordinate make a plan—from a list of possibilities, ask which two or three are the most practical

Think holistically—consider the whole person.11

Additionally, Pat needed to make sure Marion understood how workplace conflict is created and how it can be used in both effective and ineffective ways. Kathy Washatka, owner of The Washatka Group, a consulting firm that specializes in leadership, describes the nature of group work:

One of the most challenging aspects of being a supervisor is helping people who are struggling in their relationships with each other. Any-
time there is more than one person in a room, there is the potential for disagreement. With today's emphasis on working in teams, that potential increases because people work together more closely and they become dependent on each other to complete their projects.12 Pat needed to help Marion see that conflict is a process. One individual may perceive a difference that matters to them and respond in a way that will achieve the individual's desired outcome. An overview of this phenomenon is articulated below from the article "Conflict at Work and Individual Well-Being":

How individuals respond to conflict issues depends on their concern for their own outcomes and for the opposing party's outcomes. According to Dual Concern Theory (see Carnevale & Pruitt, 1992; Pruitt & Rubin, 1986; see also Blake & Mouton, 1964; Thomas, 1992), conflict management is a function of high or low concern for self combined with high or low concern for other. High self concern and low concern for the other results in a preference for forcing—trying to impose one's will onto the other side. Forcing involves threats and bluffs, persuasive arguments, and positional commitments. Low self concern and low concern for the other results in a preference for yielding, which is oriented towards accepting and incorporating the other's will. It involves unilateral concessions, unconditional promises, and offering help. Low self concern and low concern for the other results in a preference for inaction and avoiding, which involves a passive stance, attempts to reduce and downplay the importance of the conflict issues, and attempts to suppress thinking about them. High self concern and high concern for the other, finally, produces a preference for problem solving, which is oriented towards achieving an agreement that satisfies both own and the other's aspirations as much as possible. Problem solving involves an exchange of information about priorities and preferences, showing insights, and making tradeoffs between important and unimportant issues.13

Marion witnessed a situation of high self concern and low concern for other parties, which resulted in individuals trying to force their will onto others. Certainly, Marion was an eye-witness to someone using persuasive arguments and positional commitments.

After coaching Marion through her initial anxiety, Pat made a phone call to the university's Human Resources Office. Though Pat's organization provides supervisors with relationship-building workshops, it also provides one-on-one support through human resource (HR) employee specialists. HR specialists are trained to encourage positive, empowering conversations that will lead to building strategies employees might make use of in responding to future high conflict situations. In addition to engaging the HR specialist to work with an employee, the HR specialist will serve as a resource to the supervisor, since s/he will need to dissect the employee's situation as well as the motivations of those outside the scope of the supervisor's authority. Partnering with an objective third party to discuss the issue and assist with role-playing activities to practice positive communication techniques and vocabulary is a vital component to reaching a constructive response.

As Pat chatted with her assigned HR specialist, she came to the realization that this difficult situation was going to take time to resolve and, as the supervisor, she needed to recognize her role and know her limits. Once she had done what she reasonably could do, she needed to accept the outcome and not beat herself up if the results were not totally satisfactory to each party. Plus, she must not let her subordinate's problem become her problem. A supervisor's job is to problem-solve, not to simply take on the team's problems. Pat decided she would do two things, arrange for "empowerment" sessions for her staff and role-play the critical conversations she would need to have with her colleagues and upper management. Empowerment sessions, led by HR, included both librarian and classified staff, but not Pat. Pat felt it was important that library staff talk freely without worry of repercussions. These sessions included role-playing and problem solving exercises that emphasized the use of firm but non-judgmental language and tactics when dealing with difficult personalities.

These sessions ... emphasized the use of firm but non-judgmental language and tactics when dealing with difficult personalities.
often challenging and difficult personalities helped to boost morale. Second, the empowerment sessions instilled confidence in the library staff that they have the authority to decide if a situation has become too hostile, and that they may choose to leave. Third, the session not only helped staff find ways to deal with difficult co-workers, but these skills also could be applied to effectively managing difficult exchanges with library patrons.

This quotation from Chucky Reynolds, President and Chief Performance Officer of Excel Group Development in Toronto, sums up effective leadership quite well: “The best leaders cannot make a chair, computer or desk appreciate in value over time. However, a great leader can enhance the value of her people by coaching them to be more effective, engaged and productive.”

The suggestions proposed by Pat as well as those developed in the HR workshops put the power of evaluation in the hands of those who most need it—the employee and the supervisor. By accepting what is achievable, recognizing one’s limits, and taking appropriate action as well as setting achievable goals toward measurable progress, the supervisor will be empowering the team member, as well as him- or herself. When library staff are empowered with the idea that they are the first step to creating collegiality in the organizational culture, it takes the feeling of helplessness to the implementation of positive action. While an individual may not have control over another person’s actions or words, the individual has control over how s/he reacts. Instilling a sense of personal responsibility in library staff is crucial to the success of fostering a positive work environment.

**Notes**

3. Pellack, 60.
5. Pellack, 59.
6. Pellack, 55.

Dr. Pierce, who chairs the history department at The University of North Carolina Asheville, has accomplished something in writing this book that most historians aim for but few accomplish. He has written a carefully researched scholarly work about a colorful and revealing aspect of American social history without ruining the dozens of great stories he passes on of the drivers, mechanics, car owners, and promoters who made stock car racing the South’s most characteristic pastime. This means Real NASCAR can be read by racing fans who will share stories about Bill France and Curtis Turner at lunch tables and bars all over America at the same time it becomes a key text in the reading lists of university courses on Southern culture.

The narrative flows as easily as a great popular sports biography so that the casual reader will have no idea that 26 pages of notes and a seven-page bibliography discretely follow the text (as does a helpful index), though he or she will realize that some of the best anecdotes come from first-person interviews conducted by the author or from relatively obscure popular books. From the driver whose pet monkey rode shotgun to the sometimes-bizarre rule interpretations that changed the outcomes of races, every reader will find bits that make the book memorable. The great stories are not, however, carelessly arranged. Pierce maintains control of the chronology so that he can relate the sequel to one of France’s many multi-year feuds with drivers, owners, or promoters without losing the book’s flow through the years from the rag-tag races of the mid-thirties to the corporate NASCAR of the 1970s.

To the more academic reader, Pierce’s meticulous scholarship will be welcome and provide leads to primary material that will allow serious students to explore the subject of stock car racing from the ground up, just as Pierce has. Besides the entertainment value of the stories of the characters who made up the world of racing, Pierce does much to reveal the character of Southern society in the twentieth century. His discussion of the lives of working class people is at the heart of the book, and is what makes the volume worth so much more than a memoir by a well-known driver or owner. Pierce’s explanation of the place of moonshiners, transporters, and bootleggers in the South during and after prohibition is an impressive piece of social history that adds to the book’s value as a text for history students.

Real NASCAR’s particular value derives from Pierce’s accomplishments as a historian, and to a certain extent its few annoying qualities are because of the same historian’s habits. It is easy enough to forgive the surest stylistic mark of academic history, the presence of at least one sentence beginning with “Indeed, ...” in every chapter, and the academic’s tendency to make awkward use of the glib catchphrases—the book could have done with fewer sentences trying to accommodate “hell of a fellow”—of popular dialog is also relatively easy to ignore.

It is the historian’s insistence on piling up and pointing out evidence that creates the only significant problem with the presentation. General readers and academic historians alike are apt to tire of the constant emphasis on the role of the money and men associated with illegal alcohol production, transportation, and sale in the founding and development of NASCAR and all stock car racing in the Southern states. I realize that this is one of the main points of the book, but the constant reminders that Junior Johnson or Curtis Turner or Clay Earles had ties to the business of white liquor go far beyond the point of making a point. The index lists only seven instances of “Bootlegging: connections to NASCAR,” but there are literally dozens of passages where the reader is unnecessarily reminded that some NASCAR figure or other was connected with the business of white liquor. At a certain point in the book many readers will find themselves wishing that they could simply grant Pierce his point and read the rest of the book without...
having the obvious links between bootlegging and NASCAR pointed out again and again.

That said, Real NASCAR is a book I would recommend for every student of or participant in Southern culture. Since I fall in the second category, be assured that my lunch conversations will be improved for weeks by the memorable stories Pierce has to tell.

—Cy Dillon, Ferrum College


Historians traditionally view the Deep South of the antebellum era as an isolated backwater. The cotton moguls who controlled the plantation-based economy were reactionary and defensive, seeking to protect their dwindling influence in an age of westward expansion and European industrialization. Mr. Schoen offers fresh insight into the Cotton South, offering arguments that southerners were very proactive in embracing free trade theory, forging international relationships with Great Britain (and later other foreign powers), and, initially at least, working within a federal framework despite their own conscious obvious misgivings.

Focusing on the “Cotton States” (South Carolina and Georgia, and later Alabama and Mississippi) of the Deep South, the book moves primarily in chronological order. Within each chapter, Schoen moves back and forth somewhat within his proposed time frames (for example, 1789–1820, 1796–1818), but does manage very well to preserve the narrative thread. In each chapter/time period, he discusses the economic gains received and sought by the South.

Starting with the Constitutional Convention, he depicts the South as a group reluctantly willing to compromise on key issues as long as avenues of economic prosperity were left open. The South, still reeling from post-Revolutionary War debts, seemed most concerned with tariff laws. Indeed, Schoen focuses primarily on Congressional tariffs throughout the War of 1812 and the Jackson presidency. His strongest point is perhaps the South’s ironic embrace of Jefferson’s embargo, and its feelings of betrayal upon the repeal and subsequent war.

After 1815, Southern lawmakers became bent on protecting exports to Britain and increasing revenues as much as possible. Cotton became the ascendant export (as much as 80% of national exports), and the South knew it. Consumed by greed, “King Cotton” began to narrow its political and constitutional interpretations to keep tariffs low and protect its free labor source, slaves.

Schoen focuses much more on the issue of slavery in the years between the Van Buren and Buchanan administrations. He recounts familiar slavery apologist arguments within the new light of the South’s economic progression. He points out that while Great Britain had largely abolished slavery and abolitionism had found ground in the Republican Party, the South faced no definite immediate threat. He instead shows how Southern lawmakers fractured their own hopes of free trade by pursuing slave ownership rights within the states created by westward expansion.

The South had become so convinced of its own international privilege with Great Britain that it saw confederacy as a lucrative proactive attempt at expanding economic prosperity just as much as the traditional view, the final reaction of a desperate people. He closes the book with discussion of the South’s presumptuous suppositions of the value of an alliance with Great Britain juxtaposed against the backdrop of Fort Sumter and formation of the provisional Confederacy in Montgomery, Alabama.

By his own admission, Schoen bases his work largely on research within public records. The choice does not diminish his work in any way, but leaves the reader with lingering questions about the personal appetites of the general and local populace. The book itself is a very invested read. The focus on international and interstate trade and economics might seem confusing and dry to the casual reader. Beyond that, the scholar and academic will find the work most fascinating.

—Joseph Yamine, Ferrum College


It is difficult to imagine the Chesapeake region where families, including children, drank alcohol with every meal, including breakfast, funerals, barbecues, weddings, political affairs, church, court, and...
Alcohol was also used in cosmetics, cleaning, polishing, gluing, bathing, and for many other purposes. Servants and slaves drank alcohol provided by the masters and made by themselves. In her work *Every Home a Distillery*, author Sarah Hand Meacham describes a lesser-known history of the Colonial Chesapeake, its culture of alcohol.

In late seventeenth-century England the annual consumption of ale was 999 U.S. pints per person. Those living in the Colonial Chesapeake came from a culture of drinking alcohol, for water in England was contaminated with blood, excrement, and other pollutants, as was the water of the Chesapeake. On either side of the Atlantic, only those who could afford a milking cow had milk, and the milk was usually made into butter and cheese. Without refrigeration, fruit juice and milk would spoil quickly. Coffee and tea were and would remain very expensive throughout most of the eighteenth century. There were very few, if any, non-alcoholic beverage options.

Meacham researched travel journals, English housewifery literature, early cookbooks, planters' journals, newspapers, almanacs, court records, letterbooks, import records, account books, husbandry literature, alcohol production literature, and family and individual papers discovering that women in the Chesapeake made alcohol and kept taverns during the Colonial period. She includes an essay on these sources used in the book as well as recipes for persimmon beer, cider, and quince wine among others, providing readers with a taste of the variety of flavors.

Once women were able to purchase alcohol, they produced less of it. Meacham argues that the influence of the Royal Society of London in the United States assisted in the regendering of the production of alcohol through scientific production and states that women likely welcomed this change. She illustrates the regendering through the change in cookbooks, records, and wills. For example, prior to the mid-eighteenth century, women's cookbooks contained a significant number of beverage recipes. For some of them up to a third of the cookbook was devoted to alcohol production. She explains through an examination of public records such as wills and inventories that in the earlier period women often owned the implements for produc-

As the availability of non-alcoholic beverages, especially coffee and tea, increased, they become fashionable and drinking alcohol came to be seen as a choice rather than a necessity. Drunkenness became more prevalent as a social problem in records during the latter part of the eighteenth century. Planters began to fear that their slaves and servants would revolt against them. Drunkenness is then perceived as detrimental to work and society. Desiring a sober workforce, Americans' attitudes began to change toward the drinking of alcohol, leading the way for the nineteenth-century temperance movement.

The regendering of alcohol production may not have been misogynistic as Meacham argues; however, the evidence of misogyny during the evolving masculinization of it is implicit: “The new science authors emphasized that men should ‘master’ women’s ‘mystery.’ ... In answer to those who pointed out that ‘every old woman can brew,’ Morrice argued that women, ‘not knowing the proper heats that are necessary,’ ‘are giving goods instead of grains to the pigs.’ Women, the new experts asserted, could no longer differentiate between barley and beer” (p. 97–98). Interestingly, she makes no mention of the scientific developments that may have coincided with the regendering of alcohol, such as medicine (e.g. the transition from midwives to doctors) which has been argued to have been a misogynistic transition.1 Discussion of this parallel movement may be out of the scope of her book, but it would have been interesting for the purpose of understanding the social context in Chesapeake society.

Meacham's work is an original one, based upon the research of primary sources, showing that the Chesapeake Bay region had to rely upon its own resources and...
people within its communities rather than imports. Every Home a Distillery is an important contribution to the study of women's history and the colonial history of the United States. It is recommended for researchers and general readers alike.


—Leah Thomas, Cataloging Coordinator, Library of Virginia


This handy field guide is a long-awaited revision of the first edition published in 1980 by Martof, et al. Much has changed in the field of herpetology in this region in the past thirty years including the addition of thirty new species and a number of new discoveries regarding the natural history of amphibian and reptile species.

The new edition has a layout and table of contents similar to its predecessor, although the text in each section has been updated and restyled by the new group of authors. Two of the authors of the first edition were deceased before the writing of the new version began. An introductory section points out the amazing diversity of form and function of the herpetofauna (amphibians and reptiles) in our region. It also points out that this group of animals is part of a “hidden biodiversity” with many species poorly known to the public. Unlike many mammals and birds,

most of these species are secretive and rarely seen. In addition, there is also a large segment of the public with a negative bias against some types of herpetofauna, particularly snakes, which can lead to ignorance and misinformation regarding these species. This field guide provides a wealth of information regarding reptiles and amphibians which may help generate more interest in these species.

Following the introduction, a description of the region encompassed by the guide is included that describes the physiography, vegetation, and climate. This section is followed by a brief history of herpetology in the Carolinas and Virginia. After a listing of species by class, order, family, and genus, species accounts are provided including a description of the natural history of the species along with a map and color photo.

A glossary and list of useful references in the area of herpetology is included at the end of the book.

In 2008, The Society for the Study of Amphibians and Reptiles revised many of the scientific names of herpetofauna species. The authors of the new edition prefer to use the older more established names, although they also provide the equivalent newer scientific name in the species accounts. For many users of this field guide, the change in scientific names is irrelevant since common names are often preferred.

This is the only book that includes a comprehensive guide to all amphibians and reptiles specific to the Carolinas and Virginia. It provides the most updated information available on these species and will be a useful resource for the general public, natural historians, and herpetologists for years to come.

—Todd Fredericksen, PhD, Ferrum College


Most every American knows about the Civil Rights movement, including bus boycotts and sit-ins, of the 1950s. But what most don’t know is that neither the movement nor the boycotts were the first of their kind. Another that picked up a groundswell of support in its day is the one that Blair L. M. Kelley unfolds in Right to Ride: the push for black rights and desegregation—of streetcars rather than buses—in the South following the infamous Plessy v. Ferguson “Separate but Equal” ruling of 1896.

Put simply, Homer Plessy was one-eighth black and seventh-
eights white when he tried boarding a whites only car in Louisiana in 1892. According to a law passed in the state two years before, Plessy was considered black. He was arrested and jailed, and later sued the railroad companies under the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Amendments. "Separate but Equal" was the result, and the ruling emboldened the next few years' worth of Jim Crow segregation laws and mindsets.

But the fight against segregation did not end there. Virginia readers of Right to Ride will take note that much of the book is devoted to the resistance in Richmond: the one-time capital of the Confederacy, a city where tradition was (and often still is) all-important, and apropos to the subject matter as Kelley points out, the first city in America to have an electric streetcar system. Streetcar segregation was nothing new; in 1883 the Supreme Court nullified the Civil Rights Act of 1875, allowing businesses to set fast their own regulations, and the resulting few-and-far-between lawsuits were ineffective overall. Though while color lines might be drawn, much discretion was left to the conductors themselves, and a black man or woman bearing a train's first class ticket—if they were considered "well dressed" and "well behaved" by the conductor—could actually find a first class seat. It was not unknown for pre-Plessy Richmond streetcars to mix black and white passengers, and in fact many prominent whites in the city were proud that the streetcars allowed blacks to travel farther over its historic seven hills to find work, education, and "moral uplift." Many among the rising black middle class felt the same way and expressed civic pride in both their streetcars and city.

After Plessy, however, the color line quickly became more strictly delineated and rigid. "Richmond's streetcars were symbols of the city's modernity and urbanity," Kelley writes, and an increasing number of Richmond's whites were alarmed by the rise of the presence of the city's blacks in its affairs—both politically and as a physical presence on the streetcars. For blacks, their decreasing rights grew increasingly intolerable. A large portion, as much as half, were denied the right to vote, for instance, through intimidation, fraud, and poll taxes; likewise, blacks were denied first the right to sit in certain sections of the cars, and even for a time refused a seat at all. But these were the "New Negroes," the first post-slavery generation of adults, and they were willing to fight for what they called their citizenship.

What followed was one of America's first mass-organized civil rights movements, with the streetcars becoming a symbol for their shrinking freedoms. As their descendants would do with buses in the middle of the 20th century, those at the century's beginning fought the Jim Crow laws either by staging sit-ins on the cars themselves—always in the white sections—or by boycotting the cars entirely. Kelley’s book doesn’t simply contain reports of black meetings or activism, but also has numerous harsh and sublime contemporary examples of laundresses walking across the city with loads of dirty clothes on their heads, cooks carrying their food to its location, and laborers worn out by the time they reached work and struggling to get home on their feet.

There was much solidarity among Richmond’s black residents for the “Walk,” and even some white residents, including a few prominent ones, took their side. On the segregationist side, the streetcar companies went so far as deputizing their conductors or nearly so, including giving them the right to carry guns to threaten or shoot anyone causing their individual definition of trouble. (As Kelley wrote, “The only safe plan was to stay off the cars and stay out of trouble’ represented not just political conservatism but practical advice.”)

Kelley also is not shy about explaining that the tragedy was not just the suffering that Richmond’s blacks endured, but for another reason: the title of Chapter 5, “Who’s To Blame?,” refers not only to the racist laws and rules but also the schisms in the black communities themselves, which at best impeded progress and at worst undermined the desegregationists’ goals.

There were different approaches to resistance—or the lack thereof. Two examples were leaders among Richmond’s working class, Maggie Lena Walker and John Mitchell, Jr. Both had attended school together, both were editors of weekly newspapers, and the latter served on the city council. Walker took a more liberal, fighting stance, and realized that the way to win was also to involve the city’s black women in the fight—that black women were the most downtrodden of all, with the most to gain and lose.

Mitchell could be equally liberal when it came to resisting white incursions on African Americans’ liberty and economy. Yet he also separated “Genteel Negroes” from “common” ones, that the former were the ones who should be
“uplifted,” and likewise believed that it wasn’t the upper-class whites who had an “aversion” to blacks, but the lower-class elements. He also believed that white men cohabitating with black women should be punished, and urged blacks to try to cultivate as much “true gentility” with whites as possible to befriend them.

But in the end, particularly in an era when it was even more widely acceptable to meet desegregation with physical violence than the 1950s, the movement ultimately fractured and fell apart, and Jim Crow laws of the 1920s and ’30s were ever harsher than those of Walker’s and Mitchell’s time. Unsuccessful, this early effort has remained mostly forgotten until this detailed and panoramic resurrection by Kelley. The final chapter, subtitled “On the Meaning of Failure,” concludes this failure was the result of numerous reasons from inner dissension to the economic realities of poor blacks who could no longer afford the boycott. The finale isn’t simply a chronicle, though, but a between-the-lines “What if?,” implying that the long-term tragedy was that the Civil Rights movement didn’t truly get underway a half-century earlier. These people planted the roots of the more famous bus boycotts, and Kelley’s must-read telling of their stories finally does them more indelible justice than the old, fading newspaper accounts from either side that were the only authoritative source of the story until now.

—Danny Adams, evening services library assistant, Ferrum College