



The Newsletter of the New Hampshire Library Trustees Association

CONGRATULATIONS 2017 NHLTA AWARD WINNERS

LIBRARY of the YEAR: *Hampstead Public Library*

LILLIAN EDELMANN TRUSTEE of the YEAR: *Terri Jillson White*
Abbott Library, Sunapee

LIBRARY DIRECTOR of the YEAR: *Lori Fisher*, Baker Free Library, Bow

**SUE PALMATIER AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING SUPPORT BY A
“FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY” GROUP:** *Wilmot Public Library*

***DOROTHY M. LITTLE AWARD:** *Adele Knight*, Dublin

**This person has demonstrated sustained, extraordinary public library advocacy and activism on a local, regional and state level and is involved in library service in any capacity.*

Congratulations to these special individuals and groups who have contributed to the excellence of New Hampshire libraries and have given exemplary service in connecting the library to their communities. In-depth reports of the presentations along with photos will be published in the Winter edition of the newsletter. 📖

WORKSHOP IN THE NORTH COUNTRY

By Liz Tentarelli, NHLTA Director

It's a long drive from the North Country to the annual NHLTA conference, so NHLTA is going to the North Country! Gorham Public Library has kindly agreed to host a workshop on Saturday, Oct. 21, from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. The session will provide an orientation for new trustees and a refresher for seasoned trustees who will have the opportunity to share their experiences. After a short break, the final hour will be devoted to personnel management skills, including hiring and evaluation of staff and the role of volunteers.

The following topics will be presented, and there will be time available to answer your questions.

- NH Laws Relative to Public Libraries
- Library Trustees: A Job Description

—continued on page 3—

NHLTA HISTORY CHRONOLOGY The Early Years

By Mark Branoff, NHLTA Director

This year, 2017, marks the 60th Anniversary of the New Hampshire Library Trustees Association, officially founded in 1957. In recognizing the anniversary, a listing of major NHLTA historical events follows. The chronology will continue in future editions of the NHLTA newsletter.

1954

First Governor's Conference for NH Public Library Trustees. The conference was organized by the NH State Library, when Mildred P. McKay was State Librarian. All public library trustees were invited to attend the all-day conference, which consisted of lectures and discussion groups on the library issues of the day. The Governor's Conferences preceded the formal organization of the NHLTA.

1956

Second Governor's Conference for NH Public Library Trustees.

1957

Third Governor's Conference for NH Public Library Trustees. A Constitution and Bylaws were presented and adopted, and a slate of officers was elected. NHLTA was officially founded at the third Governor's Conference. The conference theme was: *What services should a library provide for a community, and how should they be financed?* Annual NHLTA meetings were set thereafter.

—continued on page 4—

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Ask Margaret	11	McKay Scholarships	10
Calculating the Value of Libraries	5	My Bookshelf	8
ComicFest at Nashua Library	10	Qualifications to be a Trustee	10
Durham's New Library Director	9	Regional Trustee Networking	3
Frost Free Library Celebrates	8	Tiny Libraries in Wilmot	6
Holderness Library Grand Opening	9	To See Ourselves as Others See Us	7
Letter from the President	2	Webinar in the Works	9

Letter from the President . . .



Fall 2017

In the summer newsletter I commented about the public library's contribution to a sense of community in a town or city. There is another "community" that can make a major contribution to the success of our public libraries, and that is the community of trustees.

NHLTA exists because we value the shared knowledge of public library trustees. We work to capitalize on this asset through our educational programs and networking opportunities. Many of our workshops are presented by seasoned trustees, including the fall workshop described in this issue. In addition, NHLTA Board members are available to offer their knowledge and support through the "ask us" feature on the NHLTA website, or by contacting the board member nearest to you via the emails posted on the website. Many articles in this newsletter are submitted by trustees, again with a goal of sharing what they have learned with their colleagues around the state. And, in the past several months, we have launched a series of regional meetings that have met with great success. While the North Country meeting in Lancaster included a formal presentation on creating library policies, most of the sessions are true networking get-togethers, with the topics of discussion determined by those in attendance. Trustees share their concerns and their successes, offering one another important tips learned "on the job." Already libraries have contacted us offering to host future regional meetings, so we are confident the trustee community will continue to grow and strengthen through this in-person network. Using social media is fine, but there's nothing like a face-to-face conversation!

Associations form so that people with a common interest or goal can come together, increase their knowledge and gain strength from that common purpose. On NHLTA's 60th anniversary, we celebrate the value of our *ASSOCIATION*.

Best regards,

Susan Gaudiello, President
s.gaudiello@nhlta.org

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NH Library Association

"The NHLTA assists Trustees to be knowledgeable and effective in order to serve, improve and promote NH Public Libraries."

REGIONAL TRUSTEE NETWORKING

By Adele Knight

An article in the Summer newsletter announced that the NHLTA would be hosting a series of regional meetings around the state to foster networking among trustees. To date, three have been held. One was hosted in Lancaster last June (note the article in the Summer issue); two others in Dublin and Wilmot are featured below. More gatherings are scheduled for this fall including two that were held in September at the Rodgers Memorial Library in Hudson and at the Moultonborough Public Library. It's not too late to join the October meetings at the following locations:

- October 12, 6:00 p.m. (library tour at 5:30 p.m.) Durham Public Library, 49 Madbury Road
- October 25, 7:30 p.m. Epsom Public Library, 1606 Dover Road, Route 4

Information and RSVP contacts are on the NHLTA website at www.nhlta.org. If you would like to host a gathering, contact Liz Tentarelli at l.tentarelli@nhlta.org.



Tom Ladd, librarian, consultant, and trainer, facilitated the discussion on policies and other topics at the Lancaster Public Library.

Photo by Marty Davis, NHLTA Director.

Monadnock Area Trustees


Two library directors and 13 trustees representing Antrim, Chesterfield, Dublin, Frankestown, Goffstown, Jaffrey, Marlborough, New Ipswich, and Wilton met at the Dublin Public Library on June 15th to network with each other and discuss library issues that were important to them. NHLTA Directors Adele Knight and Connie Kirwin facilitated the meeting. Long range planning was a topic that garnered lots of interest and questions. Several trustees from small libraries, already feeling the pinch of limited budgets and limited resources, pondered how they could include their already overworked directors in the planning process. Other

participants spoke about the actual nuts and bolts of planning, i.e., mission statement, vision statement, goals and objectives, etc. Reaching specific patron populations was also on the agenda, and it was determined that programming was key. Before the meeting concluded, everyone was asked to share information about a favorite program. Interests varied and some helpful ideas were elicited, which is what makes networking such a valuable exercise. Several trustees offered their libraries as hosts for future meetings, so please stay tuned for the invitations in the months ahead.

Regional Meeting in Wilmot

On July 13, NHLTA director Liz Tentarelli facilitated a regional trustees meeting in Wilmot. Attendees were able to visit the Wilmot Library's new Creativity Lab, where young and old alike have the space and the tools for many new activities. Four directors and 16 trustees from Andover, Bristol, Danbury, New London, Newbury, Springfield, Warner, and Wilmot attended.


The lively discussion covered working with volunteers, renovations and repairs, historic preservation issues and additions, and finding contractors for projects. Attendees also shared ideas about programs and community engagement, makerspaces, and technology. Several towns were pleased to hear about the STEM kits available from the state library and delivered by the van service, as an alternative to investing in equipment. Trustees discussed the various items their libraries currently have available for borrowing by patrons, from telescopes to ukuleles to themed cake pans.

NHLTA thanks the Wilmot Library, and particularly trustee Jackie Thompson, for hosting the event. 

Workshop in the North Country continued from page 1

- Establishing Policies for the Library
- Budgets: The Process from Adoption to Management
- Trustee Meetings and the Right-to-Know Law
- The Trustee as Library Advocate
- Personnel Management: Trustees as Employers

As with all NHLTA workshops, there is no fee for trustees to attend; however, online registration is required. Please go to the NHLTA website: www.nhlta.org. Deadline is Wednesday, October 11. Details of the schedule and driving directions will be sent in October to those who register.

Bring a bag lunch, if you wish. Beverages will be provided by NHLTA. If you have questions, please contact Liz Tentarelli at l.tentarelli@nhlta.org or Susan Gaudiello at s.gaudiello@nhlta.org. 

It was decided that full voting membership would be open to any past and present trustees of these libraries. Associate membership would be open to all past and present librarians of these libraries; to all Friends of libraries; and to representatives of institutions with special library interest. Annual dues were two dollars.

1958

Morning, afternoon and evening sessions were featured at the NH Library Trustees Association Annual Conference at Laconia Public Library on May 8, 1958. The Conference theme was: *To Make Each Community Aware of Its Library*. All librarians and trustees were invited to attend.

1959

Governor Wesley Powell opened the April 30, 1959, NH Library Trustees Association Annual Conference at the NH Historical Society, Concord. NHLTA President Dr. Alice Normandin of Laconia presided. One hundred and twenty-five trustees attended. A business meeting occurred before the luncheon at the St. Paul's Church Parish House, at which Atty. Mayland Morse, Jr., of Concord, was elected the new NHLTA President. Talks and discussions included *Care and Feeding of Library Trustees*, *What is Trustee Responsibility for the Choice of Books and Periodicals*, *Best Library Services in a Really Small Library*, *Is There a Need for Rethinking Public Library Laws?*, *Power of Trustees*, *Use of Trust Funds*, and *State Aid*.

1960

How can the independent public library provide better service through cooperation? was the question again at the 1960 annual meeting, repeated from the 1959 annual meeting.

1961

A survey of NH public libraries was completed by Professor John Holden and the UNH Department of Government. Dr. Holden presented a general review of the unpublished survey at the 1961 NHLTA annual meeting, and NHLTA members presented various aspects of the survey in panel discussions.

1962

At the 1962 NHLTA annual meeting, members were still discussing the problems and challenges of the Survey presented at the 1961 annual meeting. Several NHLTA members had been working on Governor Wesley Powell's sixty-member *Governor's Committee for Better Libraries* for the past 16 months. The committee recommended legislation to create a state-wide library system. Herbert Kimball, committee chairman, presented *Changes Are Due in New Hampshire Libraries* at the 1962 annual meeting.

The General Court passed laws making the state-wide library system a reality, with NHLTA support.

1963

NHLTA sent its first delegate to the July 1963 annual meeting of the ALA Division, American Library Trustees Association, in Chicago. At the September 1963 NHLTA annual meeting, *Public Library Responsibility to Students* was considered by NHLTA, as it was similarly considered at the July ALA Division meeting.

1964

With the cooperation of the State Library, NHLTA was more active in 1964 than in any prior year.

An NHLTA committee started advising the State Library on material to be included in the mimeographed newsletter, *Trustee Topics*. The State Library distributed the newsletter to all NH public library trustees.

An NHLTA Awards Committee reviewed nominations for librarians, trustees, friends, citizens and public officials for awards.

At the NHLTA 1964 Annual Meeting, the members voted to establish the Mildred P. McKay Library Scholarship Fund, honoring the retirement of McKay, who served as NH State Librarian from 1942 to 1964. Income from this fund is to be used to award scholarships annually by NHLTA to deserving New Hampshire students attending library courses, institutes and workshops.

1965


New Hampshire Library Trustees Handbook, 1st edition, published in 1965. Barbara Holden of Newport, NH, chaired the committee on the handbook's development. The handbook sold for one dollar per copy.

In September 1965, NHLTA formally established the Mildred P. McKay Library Scholarship Fund with the NH Charitable Fund, now known as the NH Charitable Foundation. NHLTA secured donations for the new scholarship.

1966

First McKay Scholarships awarded by NHLTA.

1967

Larger McKay Scholarships awarded to four recipients by NHLTA. 

CONTRIBUTE TO THE NHLTA NEWSLETTER

We are seeking articles and photos of events, programs, announcements or a recent success. Send your library news to the Editor, Adele Knight at a.knight@nhlta.org.



CALCULATING THE VALUE OF LIBRARIES

Michael York
NH State Librarian

New Hampshire’s devotion to its libraries can be seen in every corner of the state. Whether a community’s library is large or small, in a new building or an historic one, open seven days a week or a just a few, we Granite Staters love our libraries and we make great use of them. In fact, just last year we made 7,329,879 visits to them, all throughout New Hampshire.

Because our public libraries do not charge membership fees to those who live in their particular towns or cities, it can be easy to forget about the actual monetary value they provide to patrons. But it’s important to remember that every time a patron checks out an item from a public library, uses a computer station, attends an event or uses any other service a public library provides, that person is saving money that may otherwise have come out of his or her pocket.

Many libraries have “Return on Investment” calculators on their websites that allow you to figure out what it would have cost you to purchase the items you can check out from that library at no charge, while others post those savings on your checkout slip. It can be really eye-opening to see how quickly that value adds up.

Here’s an example: You and your family are planning to take a short vacation, so you stop by your library for a couple of hot new bestsellers (average retail: \$27 each). While you’re there, you explore the travel section and grab a guidebook (\$12). Your youngest is learning to read and picks out three picture books (\$20 each) and your teen grabs five magazines (\$3.50 each), plus you get an audiobook (\$20) that you can all enjoy in the car.

What would that cost you if you’d purchased all of those items? \$163.50—and that’s what you checked out during this one visit. If you use your library on a regular basis, the annual savings can be astronomical—especially if you regularly borrow movies (\$4.50 for three days’ rental), use a computer (\$12 per hour at a copy center), do research using a database (\$20 per month to subscribe), take advantage of museum pass program (\$9 per person per visit) or attend an event hosted by the library (\$12 elsewhere).

These estimates are just the calculable hard costs of what libraries provide. There are other benefits that don’t come with a price tag: the person who relies on a library’s computers to find a job; the grandparent who takes his granddaughters to Story Time so that they can develop both a love of reading and learn to share; the student who would not be able to complete her degree and start a solid career if she had to purchase all of the books she needed to complete her coursework; the teens for whom libraries are a place to develop new interests both independently and with their peers. It’s impossible to tally the positive impact each of those examples—and many others—have on our communities and our state.

The next time—and every time—you visit your public library, take a moment to add up how much you’ve saved by taking advantage of the services you’ve received. With all that libraries have to offer, you’re sure to realize what a great investment they are. 📖



TINY LIBRARIES SPRING UP IN WILMOT

Wilmot Library Trustees Press Release



Tiny libraries are springing up all around Wilmot, offering area residents and visitors the opportunity to find good books for summer reading in a variety of interesting locations.

“Summer reading makes you feel like you’re on vacation wherever you are. That’s

what happens when you can escape into a good book,” says Rosanna Long, Director of the Wilmot Public Library (WPL), sponsor of the tiny library project.

Jackie Thompson, Chairman of the library’s Board of Trustees, brought the idea to the board after reading about it in the news. Local woodworker Doug MacDonald volunteered to construct the little library outposts, donating both his time and materials.

To launch the project, “we put six tiny libraries on display for adoption during Town Election Day this past March,” explains Long. “All were adopted by the end of that day and we had a wait list for more.” MacDonald went back to his workshop and provided three more for a current total of nine.

Each of the tiny libraries has been painted and decorated by its adopter and has its own personality. For instance, one has a bowl of dog biscuits inside for visiting pooches and one offers a handy reading bench next to it.

All books in the tiny libraries have been donated as well. Visitors are invited to read them on the spot or take them home. Readers may replace a book they take with one of their own if they wish, but it is not required. Volunteers look forward to replenishing books as needed.

Why introduce tiny libraries to Wilmot? Long explains that, “Wilmot has a strong sense of community and town pride despite being spread out geographically. This project is purely for fun, scattering little pieces of the Wilmot Public Library around town like confetti. And the project seems to have appealed to people beyond the usual core of library volunteers,” reflects Long. “I’m excited that new people are involved, expanding the reach of our library community.”

“Watching children discover a tiny library and find a book they love during a walk, bike ride or car trip around

the town loop brings me so much joy,” reports Rhonda Gauthier, a Campground Road tiny library adopter. “I also really enjoy being able to share books that I have already read and loved.”

Currently, the tiny libraries are located on the Wilmot town green, Pancake Road, at Wilmot Learning Place preschool, the WCA’s Timothy Patten Park Beach on Shindagan Rd., the intersection of Sawyer and North Wilmot Roads, three spots on Campground Road and on the top of Bog Mountain, a short uphill hike from Stearns Road.

The Bog Mountain tiny library has already gotten a lot of attention. It has been the subject of several social media postings in response to a picture of Kai Dude trucking the little library up the trail to the summit.

One posting was authored by Wilmot Selectman Gary Palumbo who, accompanied by his son Brad, noted “What a lovely day for reading on the summit of Bog Mountain. Thanks for the tiny library. Brad’s been wanting to read *Huckleberry Finn*”! Even book authors have commented. Well known N.H. author and outdoorsman Dan Szczensny enthusiastically posted how proud he was that the Bog Mountain summit tiny library contains one of his books, “Today a new high—I’m proud to say Buffalo and Tough Cookie’s adventure can now be enjoyed at the top of a mountain! Thank you so much for the honor. What a treat!” 📖



TO SEE OURSELVES AS OTHERS SEE US: A Conversation (Once Removed) Between Trustees and Directors

Contributed by George Needham
Director, Delaware County District Library, Delaware, Ohio

George Needham was the keynote speaker at both the NHLA Annual Conference and the NHLTA Annual Conference this past May. As he was ending his NHLA address, he mentioned that he would be speaking at the NHLTA conference later in the month, and asked if there was anything that the public librarians would like to share with their trustees. The floodgates opened.


Here are the ideas that the librarians shared, edited somewhat for clarity and to match how George presented them at NHTLA:

- Take time to read the library literature, especially the NH Trustee Handbook.
- Take advantage of what NHLTA has to offer.
- Understand your role as a trustee.
- Use your library.
- Meet and listen to the staff.
- Spend some time (with your director) visiting the various departments of the library.
- Advocate for your library.
- Know your community and share that knowledge with your director and staff.
- Get to know local elected and appointed officials, and introduce them to the library.
- Technology is not optional for libraries any more.
- Trustees are advocates, not adversaries.

When George presented these points to the trustees on May 23rd, he started with the obvious observation: “I was preaching to the choir. These trustees were already active in the library community, or they wouldn’t be taking the time to attend a statewide conference. However, even with that understanding, a conversation ensued on these topics.” When he asked the trustees what they would like to tell their directors, it took a little time to coax out their comments, but once they started, they built up a pretty good list.

- If you as a director aren’t from the community you serve, take the time to get to know the local elected officials and the people who work at the town hall.
- Treat all local residents with respect, listening to them carefully to take advantage of their knowledge.
- Coordinate all library-related political action with the trustees.

- Be honest and open with your board, and trust them to act in the library’s best interest.
- To prevent adversarial relationships, encourage teamwork among the trustees and the director, including open disclosure of important issues.
- Send out your reports early enough for the trustees to have time to read them.
- Along the same lines, do not spring a new idea on your trustees at a board meeting and ask them to vote on it immediately. People need time to digest and consider new ideas.
- Make it clear that you are listening to the trustees’ ideas, but indicate if/when you will not be acting on them (at least immediately). Don’t let them think that you are agreeing if you aren’t, or if you are unsure.
- Customer service is a key issue. Is it being discussed in your board meetings?
- And what’s the best way for a trustee to bring a customer service issue to the director’s attention?
- Encourage public participation in your board meetings by staff, patrons, and community members. (Taking a different view, one trustee noted that she’d been in her position for more than 20 years and only once in that time had a member of the public ever shown up for a board meeting.)
- Consider offering video access (via local cable, YouTube or Facebook Live) to your board meetings.
- One trustee summed up the relationship by saying “The Board does policy. The Director does procedure.”

George summed up the conversations by saying, “It seems to me, reviewing these lists, that there is plenty of fertile common ground here. Getting to know local elected and appointed officials seems to be something trustees and directors could do together. Honesty all the way around can prevent problems down the road. Clearly delineated roles for all parties—director, trustee, board chair—can prevent hard feelings and worse. And as an old proverb has it, ‘A powerful memory cannot compare with the palest ink’—make sure that these agreements are in writing and part of your policy manual.” 

FROST FREE LIBRARY CELEBRATES 150 YEARS!

Frost Free Library Press Release

Marlborough's Frost Free Library is celebrating its 150th Anniversary with a plan for accessible, community flex-space. Trustee Bob Sweet is spearheading this project and the Friends of Frost Free are holding conversation cafés to collect community input on what is needed for accessible space for the community today and in the future. The library's official 150th celebration was held on August 19, 2017, with a family concert made possible by a NH *Humanities to Go* grant.

The Frost Free Library building was a gift from Rufus S. Frost (whose great-grandson, Rufus S. Frost III, chairs today's Board of Trustees) and was built with granite from the Marlborough quarry. On August 26, 1867, land, building, books, charter deed and funding were formally presented and accepted by the town. Membership was limited to residents age 12 and over and only one book could be checked out at a time. In 1968, the library added on to the original Greek revival structure—doubling its size. Over the years, the library has had several recognitions: *National Library Week* honors in 1959, *Outstanding Library* in 1969 and *Adventure Time Joint Library Enterprise* in 1972.

Although many question the necessity of libraries in today's technological age, the Frost Free Library, like other community libraries in New Hampshire, continues to evolve with the needs of its changing community, providing connection—both human and digital—for enlightenment, education, entertainment, and employment. Offering Wi-Fi and public computer access bridges the widening digital divide for low-income and underemployed families who do not have home access to the internet or up-to-date computer and printing equipment.

Many generous community members have stepped in to meet needs for furniture and updates as the library continues to grow and change. The Elizabeth Richards Concert Series has provided entertainment for more than 50 years thanks to the combined efforts of local business partners and generous library patrons. Members of the Marlborough community work together as conscientious caretakers of this community asset. Its future as a community anchor, nurturing growth, change and engagement, is in good hands. 📖



MY BOOKSHELF

By Adele Knight

I have read some interesting books this year and would like to share some of the titles and authors with you.



When Books Went to War by Molly Guptill Manning was excellent. Faced with an enemy that banned and burned over 100 million books, librarians were aghast and campaigned to get 20 million books donated for our military. This turned into a greater endeavor by the War Department and publishers, who gathered over 120 million lightweight pocket-size paperbacks which were carried everywhere by our troops.

Cost by Roxanna Robinson delves into the effects of heroin addiction and its effects on a family. It is a tough read at times, but certain timely.

The Hello Girls by Elizabeth Cobbs, a story about the importance of telephone operators during the war, and *The Radium Girls* by Kate Moore, an account of women facing deplorable conditions in industry, both reflect on the hardships and discrimination that women were subjected to and were able to overcome, albeit a long, relentless process.

In her memoir, *My Beloved World*, Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor writes about growing up in a poor and difficult environment but, through hard work and determination, rising through the ranks of the judicial system.

Beartown, a novel about teenage boys who, through playing hockey, became an inspiration to a small Canadian town. Frederick Backman's portrayal of the characters was so insightful that I looked to see what other books he might have written. *A Man Called Ove*, which I had heard about but had not yet read, did not disappoint nor did *Marie Britt Was Here*. Again, his portrayal of his characters really drew me in.

Although I do not usually read mysteries or books about private detectives, I really got caught up in a recent book group selection—*Maisie Dobbs* by Jacqueline Winspear. Again, I thought I would find out what else this author had written. Well, she has written 13 altogether. Her latest just hit the shelves.

If you have read some interesting books and would like to share the titles with other newsletter readers, please forward your comments to a.knight@nhlta.org. 📖

Membership Renewals Due

Second invoices were mailed August 15. All trustees, alternate trustees, former trustees, members of Friends groups, interested individuals, and library directors are encouraged to become members. NHLTA provides educational opportunities through workshops, conferences, quarterly newsletter, regional meetings, LISTSERV® networking, and resource materials on the NHLTA website: www.nhlta.org.

GRAND OPENING

Holderness Free Library Addition

By Carol Snelling, *NHLTA Director*



The Holderness Free Library held their Grand Opening celebration on August 2nd. Pictured is the painting of a bookshelf that was commissioned by the Holderness Library Trustees to honor their major donors. Michael York, NH State Librarian was in attendance and addressed the crowd noting that new libraries and additions were springing up all over the state. This library has truly become the town's center of activities. 📖



WEBINAR IN THE WORKS

“The Other Money” with Terry Knowles

By Liz Tentarelli, *NHLTA Director*

Terry Knowles, who has impressed audiences year after year at our annual conferences, will record a webinar on *The Other Money* later in September. Terry's expertise comes from her years on the staff of the Charitable Trusts Unit in the NH Attorney General's office. The mission of the Charitable Trusts Unit is to protect the public's interest in the property and assets committed to charitable purposes in the State through effective registration, education, and enforcement. From that perspective Terry will help trustees understand their important role in the fiscal health of their libraries. She will explain the differences between public and private funding sources and how each must be handled by trustees.

Even if you've heard Terry before, you'll want to view her webinar to be sure your library is doing it right. Look for it on the *NHLTA.org* website in early October. 📖

DURHAM'S NEW LIBRARY DIRECTOR HAS COME HOME TO NH

By Katrinka Pellecchia, *NHLTA Director*

Pelham native Rose Bebris has come home to New Hampshire to serve as the new director at the Durham Public Library. A life-long lover of libraries (she started volunteering when she was “about 10”), she worked at the Nashua library while attending UNH, and then worked at libraries in Pelham and Hudson before moving to Arizona, eventually becoming director of the Florence Community Library in Florence, a town of 27,000 about 60 miles southeast of Phoenix. She served there for 12 years, earning a Master's from the University of Arizona during that time. Married, with small children, Rose looks forward to working with the Durham and UNH communities. “Libraries have the absolute magical ability to serve everyone,” she says. “There is something here that is going to enrich in some way the life of anyone who walks through their doors.” 📖

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

QUESTION: What exactly is required in the Annual Report?

ANSWER: RSA 202-A:12 is very specific, for example, the Board Treasurer would report on items (a) – (d). The Library Director would report on (e) – (g). The Board Chair would report on the second part of (f) with an itemized list of programs, workshops, classes, one-on-one tutoring on e-devices, etc., and any other services (PAC usage, meeting room usage by groups like knitting, quilting, book club, etc.) offered by the library that further the education of the public.

RSA 202-A:12 Annual Reports. – Every library regularly open to the public, or to some portion of the public, with or without limitations, whether its ownership is vested in the town, in a corporation, in an organization or association, or in individuals, shall make a written report to the town or city at the conclusion of each fiscal year of

- (a) all receipts from whatever sources,
- (b) all expenditures,
- (c) all property in the trustees' care and custody, including a statement and explanation of any unexpended balance of money they may have,
- (d) and any bequests or donations they may have received and are holding in behalf of the town, with such recommendations in reference to the same as they may deem necessary for the town to consider,
- (e) the total number of books and other materials and the number added by gift, purchase and otherwise; the number lost or withdrawn,
- (f) the number of borrowers and readers and a statement of the use of the property of the library in furthering the educational requirements of the municipality and such other information and suggestions as may seem desirable,
- (g) submit a similar report to the state librarian at such time and on such forms as the commissioner of cultural resources may require.

NOTE: The content provided by these FAQs is for informational purposes only and is not a substitute for legal advice.

QUALIFICATIONS TO BE A TRUSTEE

Is your board at full capacity? Do you need to recruit a new member? The following characteristics are important to keep in mind when you talk to that potential new trustee:

- Resident of the municipality that the library serves (RSA 669:6)
- Knowledge of the services provided by the library
- Commitment to the library's role in the community
- Knowledge of the community's social, educational and political structure
- Ability to work well with others, listen effectively, and plan for the future
- Willingness to devote time and effort to the duties of trusteeship
- Participate with local, state and national government and library leaders to improve library service at all levels.

Since elections are open to anyone who is a resident, it is helpful to actively recruit people eager to fulfill the mission of your library and become assets to your board. 📖

Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.

— Nelson Mandela

SAVE THE DATE

NHLTA Spring Conference Annual Meeting

May 14, 2018

NEW LOCATION

Radisson Hotel Manchester
700 Elm St, Manchester

MCKAY SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

By Mark Branoff, *NHLTA Director*

Scholarships are available from NHLTA's Mildred P. McKay Scholarship Fund. Scholarships are awarded for graduate courses, certificate courses, conferences (including NHLTA's Annual Conference) and workshops.

Criteria for eligibility and an application can be found on NHLTA's website, www.nhlta.org. Past McKay Scholarship recipients may also apply for another scholarship for that next course, conference or workshop. 📖

ComicFest AT NASHUA PUBLIC LIBRARY

On Saturday, July 22, the Nashua Library held a ComicFest, an amazing program of panels, workshops, cosplay, and special guests. Highlights included Lady Gwyn, host of the Radio Westeros podcast; John Cimino with a rare and valuable Spider-man costume from the 1960s; a cosplay contest and The Cosplay Dating Game hosted by Doughrito and Peregrine McDermott; Artists Alley with 25 vendors; Steampunk 101; Super Smash Bros. Tournament; Superhero Trivia; to name a few events and characters. Everyone who attended had an awesome time as you can see by the photos. 📖



ASK MARGARET

By Margaret L. Byrnes, *Attorney at Law*
NH Municipal Association (NHMA)

Where does the Right-to-Know end and the oath of confidentiality begin?

The purpose of the Right-to-Know Law is “to ensure both the greatest possible public access to the actions, discussions and records of all public bodies, and their accountability to the people.” RSA 91-A:1. As the New Hampshire Supreme Court has said many times, a court will interpret the law in favor of openness and access. If a public body or agency seeks to withhold information or conduct conversations behind closed doors, the body or agency has the burden of proving it is justified in doing so under the law.

However, despite this mandate of openness, under certain circumstances, a public official is required to keep information confidential—or else face removal from office.

RSA 42:1 requires all town officers to take the oath of office found in Part 2, Article 84 of the New Hampshire Constitution. The next section, RSA 42:1-a, I, provides that a town officer who violates the oath can be removed from office by petition to the superior court. Paragraph II goes on to say that a violation of the oath of office occurs when a town officer divulges information to the public that he or she learned through his or her official duties or official position in the municipality, under narrow circumstances found in II (a) and (b).

A. Public Body Voted to Withhold Information

For a municipal officer to violate subparagraph A, three elements must be met: (1) the officer learned the information in a properly-held nonpublic session, (2) the public body properly sealed the minutes of that session, and (3) the information divulged from that nonpublic session would do one or more of the following: (a) constitute an invasion of privacy, (b) adversely affect the reputation of a person, other than a member of that public body, or (c) render some action ineffective if disclosed. (Note that “reputation” and “render a proposed action ineffective” are also proper purposes for sealing nonpublic session minutes under RSA 91-A:3, III.)

Therefore, assume the library trustees hold a proper nonpublic session to discuss an investigation of misconduct and potential dismissal of a library employee. The minutes are sealed, perhaps because they are “likely to adversely affect reputation” under RSA 91-A:3, III. One of the trustees,


feeling his fellow trustees are not being fair to the employee, takes to Facebook and posts the details of the charges and why he believes they’re unfounded. With this post, the library trustee has likely violated his oath of office—since the information would likely constitute an invasion of privacy or adversely affect the employee’s reputation (or both)—and he could be removed from office through a court action.

RSA 42:1-a should also serve as a reminder that public bodies must think carefully about which non-board members will be present during a nonpublic session. Only officers who have taken the oath of office under RSA 42:1 are subject to removal for releasing confidential information under RSA 42:1-a, II (a) and (b). The Right-to-Know Law does not address *who* may be present in a nonpublic session, and so it is at the discretion of each public body, when conducting each nonpublic session, to determine whether other individuals should be present, such as a department head when an employee’s performance or misconduct is being discussed.

B. Officer Knew or Should Have Known

Subparagraph B covers divulgence of *any* information, not necessarily information learned in a nonpublic session, but only under particular circumstances. Under this paragraph, three things must be true: (1) the officer knew or should have known that (2) the information was exempt under RSA 91-A:5 and (3) divulging the information publicly would do one or more of the following: (a) constitute an invasion of privacy, (b) adversely affect the reputation of some person other than a member of the public body or agency, or (c) render proposed municipal action ineffective.

Municipal officials are expected to know the Right-to-Know Law. It is not a defense to the “knew or should have known” requirement that the officer did not know certain types of records were exempt from disclosure—in other words, it is not a defense that the officer does not know what the law says! It could be a defense if, at the time of disclosure, it was unclear, or the facts did not tend to show, that the information disclosed fell under an exemption.

Ask Margaret is a regular column in the NHLTA quarterly newsletter. If you have a generic question that would be of value to other trustees, please contact the editor, Adele Knight (a.knight@nhlta.org.) 



**New Hampshire
Library Trustees Association**

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2017 CALENDAR

October 4	9:30 a.m.	NHLTA Board of Directors Meeting NHMA, 25 Triangle Park Drive, Concord
October 12	6:00 p.m. (5:30 p.m. library tour)	NHLTA Regional Trustees Meeting Durham Public Library, 49 Madbury Road, Durham
October 21	11:00 a.m.	NHLTA Orientation & Personnel Management Workshop Gorham Public Library, 35 Railroad Street, Gorham
October 25	7:00 p.m.	NHLTA Regional Trustees Meeting Epsom Public Library, 1606 Dover Road, Route 4, Epsom
November 1	10:30 a.m.	NHLTA Board of Directors Meeting NHMA, 25 Triangle Park Drive, Concord

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The New Hampshire Library Trustee is published four (4) times a year by:
New Hampshire Library Trustees Association
25 Triangle Park Drive, Concord, NH 03301

This publication serves as a means of providing information and news to library trustees in New Hampshire. Subscriptions are included as part of the annual membership dues for the New Hampshire Library Trustees Association. The content published is for informational purposes only, and is not and should not be considered a substitute for legal advice.

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