

# NHLTA Library Trustee

The Newsletter of the New Hampshire Library Trustees Association

www.NHLTA.org

## NHLTA 2019 Award Winners

Once again NHLTA received an impressive group of nominations for our annual awards, demonstrating how fortunate New Hampshire is to have such fine public libraries and library supporters.

Library supporters turned out in full force for the award presentations, starting on October 10 as a standing-room-only crowd (which included NH State Senator Lou D'Allesandro) applauded as NHLTA President Susan Gaudiello presented the **Goffstown Public Library** the award for NHLTA **LIBRARY OF THE YEAR!**

Even though Goffstown is a small town, its proximity to Manchester means it must frequently confront a broad variety of cultural issues. This past year, the library partnered with other town groups in a series of Courageous Community Conversations which focused on race and diversity. Townspeople could attend one or all of the series, or read from the suggested reading list the library had prepared to accompany the discussions. Multiple copies of the books were available and book discussions were held as part of the Conversations series. The library's community outreach included all its programs from teen and STEAM activities to The Human Library to participating in town events such as Friday Night Under the Lights and the Pumpkin Regatta. The result? A 21% increase in program attendance this past year and a yes vote on a warrant which will allow the library to begin a much-needed expansion. In the words of Goffstown Selectwoman Kelly Boyer, "Goffstown Public Library strives to not only make Goffstown a better place but to include every resident in the process."



Another overflow crowd gathered in Hopkinton on November 10 to honor **Donna Dunlop**, the **LIBRARY DIRECTOR OF THE YEAR**. Susan Gaudiello presented the award, and NH State Library's Lori

Fisher was on hand to communicate Congresswoman Annie Kuster's congratulations. Donna is known for her community-building efforts, and her skills were put to the test on the night of

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ABOVE: State Senator Lou D'Allesandro congratulates the Goffstown Library Trustees and Library Director on their award for NHLTA Library of the Year.

BELOW: Lori Fisher, Donna Dunlop, Susan Gaudiello





Susan Gaudiello  
NHLTA President

## Winter 2020

Last spring, the keynote presentation at the NHLTA Conference focused on advocacy and telling your library's story. That community-level advocacy is the most frequent kind of "promotion" undertaken by library trustees, whether you are supporting your budget proposal at Town Meeting or educating residents about the resources available at the library.

NHLTA also engages in legislative advocacy, keeping an eye on state legislation that might impact public libraries and seeking the support of our Congressional delegation on matters at the federal level. Our priority at this time is two bills being introduced in the NH State House that directly affect public libraries' operations. While the measures don't have bill numbers at the time this newsletter goes to print, that information will be available in early January.

Here's a quick summary of the two bills, as they presently exist in draft form.

### *LSR#2393 Relative to employees of public libraries*

This bill, introduced by Rep. Woodcock of Center Conway, introduces a six-month probationary period for new hires. Present law does not allow for a probationary period, since RSA 202-A:17 states "No employee of a public library shall be discharged or removed from office except by the library trustees for malfeasance, misfeasance, or inefficiency in

office, or incapacity or unfitness to perform the employee's duties..." and gives any employee being dismissed the right to a public hearing.

### *LSR#2400 Requiring criminal background checks for persons brought into a library to interact with minors in library-sponsored events*

Sponsored by Rep. Flanagan of Brookline, this bill would clearly have a significant fiscal and administrative impact on children's programming at libraries. The bill as drafted mirrors the criminal record check provision for school staff, requiring fingerprint checks for all presenters where minors (under age 18) might be present. According to the State Library annual statistics, there are over 35,000 children's programs delivered in NH public libraries every year. According to the NH Department of Safety, the current cost of a criminal record check is presently \$48.25 for employees and \$21.25 for volunteers.

NHLTA will keep members posted as the bills move through the legislative process, and may request your involvement, in the form of communications with your local representatives if necessary.

In the meantime, remember to polish up your library "elevator speech." And, best wishes for success with your budget and any warrant articles at your Town Meeting.

Susan Gaudiello, President

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NH State Library

#### **Christine Friese, Assistant**

**Director, Portsmouth Library**

NH Library Association

### **MISSION**

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

# NHLTA 2019 Award Winners

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August 4, 2018 when the library was struck by lightning, resulting in smoke and water damage to the library, its furnishings and its 40,000 books. During the ten months it took to rebuild the library, Donna worked with town officials to establish a temporary library in the senior center, and with generous neighboring communities to provide borrowing privileges for Hopkinton residents, offering as many services as possible while the library building was inaccessible. In the words of the president of the Hopkinton Friends of the Library, “Donna made the change seem more like a ‘library vacation’ rather than the heartbreak that it was for our town.” Donna also created a blog that explained what had happened and kept the town informed with weekly updates and photos of the rebuilding. In her many interviews after the fire, she spoke about not just the crisis her library faced, but the essential role of libraries in all of our communities.

The **NHLTA SPECIAL LIBRARY SERVICE CONTRIBUTION AWARD** is presented to an individual or group (not staff) which has provided outstanding

service to New Hampshire public libraries for at least three years. This year’s recipient **Carolee Davison**, has worked tirelessly on behalf of the Chichester Public Library for more than 40 years – as a volunteer, a trustee, and now as an alternate trustee helping to transform what was once a dusty corner in the attic loft of the (then) select board’s building into a thriving community library. Her community engagement – through the town, the Grange and church organizations has helped raise awareness of the library, contributing to the town’s support of the library. Carolee is the driving force behind the Down Cellar bookstore, the library’s major fundraiser. On November 9, Susan Gaudiello presented Carolee with her well-deserved award.



LEFT: Ed Moran presents Tammy Hooker with the Trustee of the Year award

BELOW LEFT: Carolee Davison

**Tammy Hooker’s** volunteer service is well-known in Hooksett; in 2017, she was named the town’s Volunteer of the Year. According to her fellow trustees, she pours her “passion, creativity and tremendous capacity for work” into the Hooksett Public Library. This dedication has now earned her the **Lillian Edelman Trustee of the Year** award, which Ed Moran presented to Tammy on November 14. A member of the board of trustees for more than ten years, currently its secretary, Tammy serves as host of the library’s annual mother-daughter teas, sorts books for the Friends’ Annual Sale and has performed (in costume) as the Easter Bunny and Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer. Most recently, she was responsible for the library’s Summer Concert on the Porch series, which drew an audience of more than 100! Tammy’s efforts at the Hooksett library have had a lasting effect on the town and its residents – Congratulations!

The **SUE PALMATIER AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING SUPPORT BY A “FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY” GROUP** will be presented to the **Friends of the Lincoln Library** at an event on February 4, 2020. The 100 members of the Friends have supported Lincoln Library for the past 16 years, bringing a wide variety of entertainment to the library, funding the reupholstering of reading chairs, organizing community sight-seeing trips, revitalizing the gardens surrounding the library, providing puppets for the children’s area and much, much more.

**Editor’s note:** This year’s NHLTA Spring Conference will feature a presentation on Goffstown’s Courageous Community Conversations as well as a workshop on Recovering from Library Disasters which will include Hopkinton’s experience.

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Libraries’ Presidential Forum

# 2020 Census and New Hampshire Libraries

By Christine Friese,  
NHLA 2019 President,  
on behalf of the NHLA  
Complete Count  
Committee

The 2020 Census is coming (April 1, 2020 is Census Day, no joke) and New Hampshire libraries are stepping up to help ensure that ALL New Hampshire residents are counted.

Next year's census is the first one to have an internet option and the Census is encouraging everyone to go online. Libraries will be the place in many towns and cities where our residents will turn with questions and concerns, such as:

- Do I HAVE to fill in the census? If not, what will happen?
- Must I do it online? I don't have a computer, internet access or computer skills
- Can a librarian help me fill in the census? (NO! but census workers can help)
- My neighbor doesn't speak much English and is concerned about what to do.

The New Hampshire Library Association will be spreading the word to libraries over the coming months that libraries need to talk about just these kinds of questions. The more you talk with your libraries and others in your town, the more prepared your library and your town will be to see that EVERYONE is counted. Why is this important? The two most cited reasons are legislative districting and money. There is a lot of federal money that is portioned out according to population. To give just one example:

In 2010, the most undercounted group in the country was children under five years of age.

Over the past 10 years, school lunches, Head Start and after school programs have received less federal money than they should have, because the population assumptions were wrong.

We want to bring in every dollar to which New Hampshire is entitled. Please help your library and your community think through some of the following questions:

- Do most people in your area have computers, internet access and the skills needed to fill in the census?
- Is the library a good place to invite a census worker to schedule help times or is another building in town a better fit? If your town is small, can you help the census representatives find the movers and shakers they need to reach?
- Does your town/city have a Complete Count Committee helping to get everyone counted? Who is involved?
- Are there groups that may have language barriers?
- Are there students or senior housing units that the library can assist?
- What can the library do to inform the public about the importance of the Census?

To learn more now about the timeline and find answers to the frequently asked questions visit [www.2020census.gov](http://www.2020census.gov). To understand the role that libraries and other community groups can help, visit [www.2020census.gov/partners.html](http://www.2020census.gov/partners.html). There will soon be a Census section on the NHLA website as well with links to useful information.

## New NHLTA Board Member Nancy Court

Nancy is a trustee of the Hall Memorial library which serves the towns of Tilton and Northfield; she has lived in Northfield with her husband, David, a blacksmith, for 48 years. Their daughter works in theater in New York City. As a library patron since early childhood, one of her favorite things about being an elementary school teacher was getting to share her love of books with her students. Nancy has been a member of NHLTA's education committee for the past year, helping to plan the annual conference and workshops. She states that she is "honored to have been asked to join this board" – we are honored to have her join!



## Participating in meetings electronically

Worried about having a quorum for a meeting when fellow trustees are out of town? RSA 91-A:2 states that members may participate by means of telephone or other means of electronic communication provided that all members are able to communicate with each other, all votes are taken by roll call and all participating members are audible to the public who are in attendance at the meeting's location. [www.gencourt.state.nh.us/rsa/html/vi/91-a/91-a-mrg.htm](http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/rsa/html/vi/91-a/91-a-mrg.htm)

## Background Checks

Should our library require background checks as part of our Personnel Policy?

**B**ackground checks of library staff, volunteers, and program presenters are a hot topic right now. Understandably, library trustees want to be sure that the people they trust with their patrons, particularly their young patrons, can be trusted to act appropriately.

New Hampshire law on background checks is sparse. The only real instances of where a background check would be required for anyone working or volunteering at libraries is when the library is at a school. That requirement is found within RSA 189:13-a, which requires a background check for anyone working or volunteering at a school. Library trustees are not subject to background checks; as elected officials, their qualifications are set by statute. However, should a library trustee wish to volunteer with the library, they would have to undergo a background check pursuant to the policy adopted by the trustees as a whole.

While there is no legal requirement that other libraries obtain background checks on anyone, however, it is possible for a library's board of trustees to adopt a policy pursuant to RSA 202-A:11 which does require that background checks be performed on all library staff, volunteers, and program presenters. It's important that the trustees outline the background check requirements in their policies clearly. There's nothing worse for staff than trying to explain a policy which is not clearly written and does not seem to apply to everyone equally.

Part of that policy must include who is responsible for paying for the background check. There is not a New Hampshire law which dictates that it must be the library or the potential employee or volunteer. (It is probably good practice for the library to pay the background checks. Few volunteers will be willing to pay to volunteer).

Background checks should be conducted through the New Hampshire Department of Safety. Although there are numerous private companies offering background check services, none of those private companies have a strict mandate to ensure that the records are accurate, unlike

the Department of Safety. In addition, there are innumerable stories of private background check companies erroneously listing people with common names as having criminal convictions when they did not. Therefore, only the Department of Safety should be used to obtain background checks on potential employees and volunteers.

The Department of Safety does have a fee for its background check process, known as a "criminal records check." There are two separate forms of which libraries should be aware. The first is the Criminal Record Release Authorization Form, also known as the DSSP 256. This is the standard "background check form." However, there is a separate form, the Reduced Fee Request Form, which is authorized under New Hampshire Administrative Rule Saf-C 5703.07, and allows volunteers for public (and non-profit) entities, who will work with the elderly, disabled, or children, to pay the reduced fee for the background check. That form will reduce the cost to \$10 from \$25.

Note that there are rules about background checks obtained from the Department of Safety. Administrative Rule Saf-C 5704.06 dictates that the entity or person receiving the information, i.e. the library director, must maintain the confidentiality of any criminal history records that it receives from the Department of Safety. The record must be destroyed within 60 days if a criminal record exists and immediately if no such record exists. Criminal records checks cannot be kept in personnel files and it is best practice to note in the personnel file that a criminal records check was conducted and that it was destroyed pursuant to New Hampshire Rule Saf-C 5704.06 on a particular date, so that there is no confusion at a later time about whether a criminal records report was destroyed.

The decision to adopt a background check policy is something that is entirely up to the individual boards of trustees for libraries. It is important to remember, however, that any policy should be comprehensive and apply fairly and equally. Trustees should not attempt to adopt a policy which targets presenters on specific topics or volunteers who only come in on weekdays. Trustees should keep in mind that equal treatment is key to ensuring that these policies are both lawful and acceptable by their community's standards.



By Natch Greyes,  
Municipal Services  
Counsel,  
NH Municipal  
Association (NHMA)

Library trustees are not subject to background checks; as elected officials, their qualifications are set by statute

# From Closet to Community Cornerstone: Building a New Library in a Small Town

By Noreen Gaetjens,  
Chair, Madbury Public  
Library Board of  
Trustees

## The Early Years: Out of the Closet and Into the Little House

Founded in 1775, Madbury is a small town located in the southeastern section of New Hampshire; its population is approximately 2000. Madbury is governed by an elected board of selectmen and the annual town meetings are well attended and spirited. Residents enjoy the natural beauty and rural character of the town and there is a strong tradition of volunteerism with citizens participating in many civic organizations and town boards.



The small ranch house which has served as Madbury's library since 2003

In 2001, dedicated volunteers, responding to residents' desire for a community educational facility and central meeting place, spearheaded efforts to establish Madbury's first public library. At town meeting, residents voted overwhelmingly to support the new library.

Originally housed in a closet of the town hall, the library moved in 2003 to a small ranch house which had been the home of the police department. The library soon became an important presence in our town. Thanks to our dedicated staff and active Friends group and despite serious space limitations, patrons enjoy an impressive number of programs and activities.

## Saving and Planning: A Dream Takes Shape

The little house was intended to be an interim home for the library. In 2002, voters at town

meeting approved opening a Library Building Capital Reserve Fund and have supported this fund for 17 years.

The Friends of Madbury Library, a 501(c)3 entity, played a key role in the quest for a new facility. In 2014, the Friends and trustees formed a Development/Capital Campaign Committee to begin planning and fund-raising efforts. Through community forums, visits to area libraries and discussion with trustees and directors who had recently undertaken renovation or building projects, a plan was developed for moving forward.

We were fortunate to have a resident with extensive fund development experience join our group. Her advice to "smile and stay positive" and not be discouraged by "naysayers" was valuable as we moved forward.

The Capital Campaign began with a goal of \$250,000. Meetings were arranged with prospective donors and a presentation was prepared for neighborhood gatherings. Promotional materials were displayed at all town events with Committee members on hand to speak with residents. We applied for and received matching challenge grants from the McNinch and Samuel P. Hunt Foundations which were a great incentive to donors. Communication was very important during the planning process and updates were included on the library website, social media, the Friends' Facebook page and area newspapers.

The NHLTA was a wonderful resource. Conferences and workshops provided timely and expert advice to our trustees and Friends. In addition, we engaged in many phone conversations with trustees and library directors throughout the state as we developed design proposals and capital campaign outreach efforts.

## The Fun Begins: What Will the New Library Look Like – Dreams and Reality Checks

Funding for the new building would be through a public/private partnership. In 2015, a Steering Committee was formed consisting of trustees, Friends, the library director, a selectman and residents with construction expertise. It proved

to be an important and wise decision to include a selectman on this committee to represent the town's concerns as we moved forward with planning.

Recognizing the need to begin with a design and cost estimate, we sent out requests for qualifications and proposals. Four firms were selected for interviews and after careful consideration we selected Placework, formerly known as Manypenny Murphy Architecture, to design our new library. We chose this firm because they devoted considerable time to learn about our community and understood our desire to build a library that would be unique to Madbury, reflecting the town's rural character and our appreciation of the natural environment. The architects were enthusiastic, innovative and sensitive to economic and budgetary concerns.

Design parameters included: informal spaces for socializing and quiet areas for reading and study; a spacious children's room with outdoor access for garden and play spaces; adequate parking and accessibility for all patrons. A priority was to incorporate sustainability principles with a well-sealed and insulated building envelope, high efficiency heating

and cooling systems and the use of natural renewable materials where possible.

## Design and Cost Estimates

Small towns have unique concerns when undertaking new building construction projects and historically Madbury residents have preferred to avoid bonding capital projects. Although the Library Capital Reserve Fund was supported for many years, it was clear there was a need to increase the amount requested and begin serious private fund raising in order to proceed. There would not be a bond for the project.

Initially we hoped construction expenses would not exceed \$1M. However, upon completion of the design development phase, the cost estimate was \$1.3M. Recognizing that costs would continue to rise the board of selectmen presented a plan at the March town meeting to add additional funds to the capital reserve. The Campaign Committee orchestrated a successful get-out-the-vote effort and residents approved the warrant articles by a wide margin. The Campaign Committee also agreed to increase the private contribution goal to \$350,000.

*continued on next page*

Architect's rendering of Madbury's new library



### **Moving Forward: Time to Hire A Construction Company**

In April of 2018, we selected Chapman Construction/Design to serve as construction managers. Working with the Chapman team and our architects we made thoughtful design revisions to keep within the \$1.3M budget. Unfortunately, when the project was put out to bid in November cost estimates were \$300,000 higher than expected due to significant increases in construction materials and labor.

Once again, we were faced with asking voters at Town Meeting to increase the public contribution to the project. Recognizing that a new library building had been a priority of residents for many years and that further delays would result in even higher costs, the board of selectmen recommended and voters at the 2019 town meeting approved the additional funds.

### **At Last We Are Building A Library!**

Thanks to overwhelming support of residents and donors from across the country, construction

began this spring with tree clearing and our official ground-breaking on April 13th. It has been an exciting summer watching the building take shape.

We celebrated reaching our \$350,000 Campaign goal in October and look forward to opening the doors to our beautiful new library early in December. The past five years have brought many challenges and many rewards. It has been a privilege to work with an amazing group of dedicated volunteers to bring this wonderful gift of a new library to current and future residents of our special town.

**Editor's note:** Madbury celebrated its new library with an Open House on December 8.

*Think* you can't afford to attend NHLTA's Spring Conference or another workshop that would enhance your trustee skills? Think again!

NHLTA's **Mildred McKay Scholarship Fund** is available to NH public library trustees and staff. Just submit the simple application available on NHLTA's website.

## Fall Workshop: The Trustee/Library Director Relationship

More than 30 trustees from 25 libraries gathered at the Epsom Public Library in November 5 for a presentation by NHLTA Board member and Langdon Public Library Director Lara Berry. This topic had been requested several times in conference evaluations, and we felt it merited a more intensive presentation than is available at the annual conference.

In addition to a review of New Hampshire RSAs, with a focus on trustee and director responsibilities, there was a lively exchange among the participants on a variety of topics. The key take-aways were captured in the workshop evaluations in response to the question: "What did you learn at the workshop that you plan to act upon at your library

or share with other trustees?" Here's a sampling of the responses:

- Policies are the responsibility of the trustees with input from the director as guidance. For the performance review of the director, get feedback from the entire board but have a small group of trustees provide that feedback to the director.
- Share more of the budget preparation and process.
- A better understanding of the Board of Trustees' role in the administration of the library – especially the partnership between the board and the library director.
- Importance of bylaws and updating the director's employment agreement.
- The board acts with a single voice

when working with the director, not with individual trustee voices.

- It's important to know RSAs and to make sure library policies are in place and updated regularly.
- If the library has a website, the trustee minutes must be published online by law. See page 11 for more info.
- Make sure director's job description is accurate.

One attendee's comment sums up NHLTA's goal in offering these free workshops to members: "This was my first meeting. It will not be my last. I feel as though I have learned important information to be shared at our next trustee meeting. Hopefully this will encourage other trustees to become a part of the future workshops."

## ALA announces facilitation skills training for small and rural library workers

By Brittany Overton, Director, Minot-Sleeper Library

The American Library Association is offering new tools for librarians of small and rural libraries to boost facilitation skills to engage their communities. The series, Libraries Transforming Communities: Facilitation Skills for Small and Rural Libraries, includes a five-part online course and a step-by-step facilitation guide. In-person training at ALA's Annual Conference in Chicago in 2020 will also be available to select librarians through a competitive, peer-reviewed application process. Registration and travel stipends will be granted to those chosen to take part in the conference session.

With librarians being equipped with facilitation skills, they are able to engage their communities in ways that create community-wide change.

"Whether hosting a storytime or leading a town hall meeting, library workers today need communication skills to fulfill their broad mission as community educators and leaders," said ALA President Wanda Brown. "Since launching ALA's Libraries Transforming Communities initiative in 2014, library employees from small and rural communities have been asking ALA for facilitation training to help them become better conveners, and we're proud to deliver with this special project."

As a member of the advisory board for Libraries Transforming Communities: Facilitation Skills for Small and Rural Libraries, I hope that NH library trustees will encourage their directors to take part in this exciting, new learning opportunity. To sign up for notifications of when online learning materials become available, visit: [www.surveymonkey.com/r/X5Q8MXM](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/X5Q8MXM).



### SAVE THE DATE: Libraries' Presidential Forum

**Date:** Saturday January 11, 2020

**Time:** 9 A.M. – 1 P.M. (EDT)

**Where:** Concord City Auditorium,  
2 Prince St, Concord, NH 03301

**RSVP:** <http://bit.ly/2020LibrariesForum>

Join the New Hampshire Library Association (NHLA) in partnership with the American Library Association (ALA) for the inaugural Libraries' Presidential Forum, where candidates will discuss how their platforms intersect with our libraries' and communities'

priorities. For more information about the event, and to see which candidates will attend, visit their website at <http://bit.ly/2020LibrariesForum>.

RSVPs are required for all who wish to attend the free event. Seating is limited, so sign up soon!

Send requests for special accommodations or general information to Lori Fisher, NHLA Advocacy Committee Chairperson, at [advocacy@nhlibrarians.org](mailto:advocacy@nhlibrarians.org) or (603) 271-2393.

# NH Library Trustee

The Newsletter of the  
New Hampshire Library Trustees  
Association

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# NHLTA Fall Regional Meetings

## Seacoast

Langdon Public Library in Newington hosted a small but enthusiastic group from Stratham, East Kingston, Kingston, Hampton Falls and Lee on September 9, 2019. After a universal lament on the paucity of volunteers, the conversation turned to ways of communicating with the town – especially in SB2 towns. There were several recommendations for the Carriage Towne News, based in Kingston. Maintaining a library e-newsletter, adding library news to the local school's email blast and neighborhood Facebook pages were mentioned. This led to a discussion of social media: Twitter, Instagram and Facebook, which each have their own uses. It's good to promote events on Facebook; put public relations type pictures on Instagram, which is more visual; and then use Twitter for news, such as new items added to the catalog. Much as everyone complains about Facebook, it was felt that it is essential, and that it is best not to engage with Facebook postings.

Holding community events was suggested as a way to connect with the community – Hampton Falls held a Wellness Fair last year and is planning an Earth Day celebration to mark the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. There were reports of varying success with communicating with select boards, with a recommendation that producing a short newsletter/fact sheet specifically for the select board with quick facts or quotes from residents was a good way to stay in touch. Attending select board meetings and having selectmen sit in on trustee meetings were also mentioned.



Moultonborough Area Regional Meeting

## Moultonborough

On September 25, representatives from Meredith, Tamworth, Ashland, Gilford, Northfield, Wolfeboro, Moultonborough and Ossipee met at the Moultonborough Public Library. After a tour of the facility and a wonderful dinner provided by the Friends, there were conversations regarding budget preparation and different ways of funding. (Several NH libraries get private funding; Moultonborough's budget is a separate warrant article from the town budget.) Prompted by the presence of the librarian's golden retriever, there was discussion of service dogs and programs where children read to animals. Security systems with interior and exterior cameras were also mentioned. Alexis Jackson announced that Gilford Public Library had recently become a certified passport center and could now accept and process applications, which generates revenue for the library while providing a convenience for local residents.

## Monadnock

The Monadnock Regional Trustee meeting on October 25, 2019, was all about relationships. The meeting was graciously hosted by the trustees of the Dublin Public Library in their freshly painted and renovated meeting room.

The group talked about relationships with town management and the many ways that trustees have established relations to achieve harmony. Suggestions included designating a trustee liaison to attend select board meetings. One town has a designated select board member liaison who attends trustee meetings. The importance of a letter of agreement or a MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) was emphasized, for the distribution of appropriated



Langdon Area Regional Meeting

funds, payroll services, building maintenance and any other items defining library trustee and town responsibilities. Samples can be found on the NHLTA website.

Trustee board member relationships were discussed. In addition to the Trustee Code of Ethics and the ALA Golden Rules for Board Members, the NHLTA website also provides access to the Library Board Self-Evaluation: ALA Handbook. Pat MacIsaac, trustee, Jaffrey Public Library, attested to the effectiveness of this tool and highly recommended trustee boards use it. Celeste Snitko, trustee, Dublin Public Library, brought up the subject of “lifetime” appointed trustees as required by the term of the bequest or endowment that established the library. The majority of public libraries in NH have elected trustees although some have a combination of appointed and elected.

The group shared experiences relating to the subject of relationship with the director and staff, including the hiring process and the merits of using a search committee. There are charts available on the NHLTA website: Working as a Team and Responsibilities of Trustee & Director that describe specific duties of governance (trustees) and administration (director), plus materials to assist with the search and a list of places to advertise jobs.

The subject of relations with library patrons and the community produced some interesting ideas and programs. Nikki Andrews, trustee, Gregg

Free/Wilton Public Library, described the hiking group that goes on easy-to-moderate hikes on local trails in the area and the return of the Folk Café, acoustic music performances which are coordinated by their Friends group. Rick Wood, trustee, Tuttle Library, Antrim, described the weekly Tech Help program that provides help with email, social media devices and even a Virtual Reality tour using the new VR headset.

Steve Ullman, trustee, Tuttle Library, Antrim, recommended the book: *Palaces for the People* by Eric Kinenberg. “There’s a term you don’t hear these days, one you used to hear all the time when the Carnegie branches opened: Palaces for the People. The library really is a palace. It bestows nobility on people who otherwise couldn’t afford a shred of it. People need to have nobility and dignity in their lives. And you know, they need other people to recognize it in them too.”



Monadnock Area Regional Meeting

## Posting meeting minutes online

If your organization maintains a website, it is now required by law to post minutes online or to state on the website where minutes can be obtained.

### **RSA 91-A section II-b (a)**

If a public body maintains an Internet website or contracts with a third party to maintain an Internet website on its behalf, it shall either post its approved minutes in a consistent and reasonably accessible location on the website or post and maintain a notice on the website stating where the minutes may be reviewed and copies requested.

## North Country Workshop October 5

Our annual trustee workshop “north of the Notch” was well attended by trustees from 16 communities. Generously hosted by the Gorham Public Library, the event was held on a Saturday in early October (a day the library is normally closed). In addition to an informative presentation and discussion, everyone who attended enjoyed a scenic drive, along with the thousands of leaf peepers and people heading to the Fryeburg Fair. Next year we’ll reconsider the timing of the event!

As usual, topics ranged from budgeting to working with the director to compliance with NH library laws. The participants ranged from newly elected or appointed trustees and alternates to those with many years of experience to share. As one trustee commented, “This was so helpful and I look forward to sharing the information with other trustees at our next meeting. It was also a wonderful opportunity to meet other library trustees from neighboring towns. The social/relational part of the gathering can’t be understated.”



**New Hampshire Library  
Trustees Association**  
25 Triangle Park Drive  
Concord NH 03301

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## 2020 CALENDAR

- |                  |                           |  |
|------------------|---------------------------|--|
| <b>January 8</b> | <b>10:30 am</b>           | <b>NHLTA Board of Directors meeting</b><br>NHMA Building, 25 Triangle Park Drive,<br>Concord |
| <b>March 4</b>   | <b>10:30 am</b>           | <b>NHLTA Board of Directors meeting</b><br>NHMA Building, 25 Triangle Park Drive,<br>Concord |
| <b>April 1</b>   | <b>10:30 am</b>           | <b>NHLTA Board of Directors meeting</b><br>NHMA Building, 25 Triangle Park Drive,<br>Concord |
| <b>May 12</b>    | <b>8 am–3 pm</b>          | <b>Spring Conference and Annual Meeting</b><br>Grappone Conference Center, Concord           |
| <b>June 3</b>    | <b>10:30 am–<br/>2 pm</b> | <b>NHLTA Board of Directors meeting</b><br>NHMA Building, 25 Triangle Park Drive,<br>Concord |
| <b>June 13</b>   | <b>10:30 am</b>           | <b>NHLTA Trustee Orientation Workshop</b><br>Baker Free Library, 509 South Street, Bow       |

## SAVE THE DATE!

**NHLTA 2020 Spring Conference**  
**Tuesday, May 12, 2020**

*2020 Vision for Library Trustees*

KEYNOTE ADDRESS  
“Trends Shaping the  
Future of Public Libraries”

**PETER PEARSON**  
*Consultant, Library Strategies*  
*President, United for Libraries*

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