



JONES, LEBSOCK AND NYSTROM RECEIVE AWARDS Francis Foster and George Garrett Recognized

The Library of Virginia is pleased to announce the winners of the 7th Annual Library of Virginia Literary Awards. The winner in the fiction category is Edward Jones for *The Known World*, published by Amistad, an imprint of HarperCollins Publishers. The non-fiction winner is Suzanne Lebsock for *A Murder in Virginia*, published by W. W. Norton & Company. Debra Nystrom won in the poetry category for *Torn Sky*, published by Sarabande Books.

Edward Jones was born in Washington, D.C., and earned his master's of fine arts degree from the University of Virginia. He has taught creative writing at the University of Virginia, George Mason University, the University of Maryland and Princeton University. He has won the PEN/Hemingway Award and was a finalist for the National Book Award for his debut collection of short stories, *Lost in the City*. Jones recently was awarded one of 23 MacArthur fellowships, a five-year grant to individuals who show exceptional merit and promise for continued and enhanced creative work. The awards are commonly called the MacArthur genius awards.

The Known World received the 2004 Pulitzer Prize for fiction. It also won the National Book Critics Circle Award and the 2004 People's Choice Award for Fiction and was a finalist for the National Book Award. *The Known World* is set in antebellum Virginia and centers on a black farmer and former slave who later in life becomes a slave owner himself. Jones's novel explores the hypocrisy and tragedy of the slave system and the anomaly of a former slave owning slaves.

Non-fiction winner Suzanne Lebsock earned her bachelor's degree from Carleton College and her master's and doctorate from the University of Virginia. Her first book, *The Free Women of Petersburg: Status and Culture in*

a Southern Town, won the Bancroft Prize in 1985. The recipient of a coveted MacArthur fellowship in 1992, she is one of the foremost scholars in the field of American women's history. Lebsock is currently Board of Governors Professor of History at Rutgers University. She is also the author of *Virginia Women, 1600–1945: "A Share of Honour,"* published in 1987 by the Library of Virginia.

In *A Murder in Virginia*, Lebsock examines issues of race and gender in the aftermath of a gruesome murder that took place in June 1895 on a quiet farm in Lunenburg County. When a white woman of some means was murdered in her farmyard in 1895, four poor African Americans (three of them women) immediately fell under suspicion.

Lebsock takes us deep into the whirlwind that surrounded this case, as blacks organized to secure justice for the accused. *A Murder in Virginia* won the 2004 Parkman Prize from the Society of American Historians.

The poetry winner, Debra Nystrom for *Torn Sky*, earned her bachelor's degree at the University of South Dakota and her master's of fine arts in the Goddard/Warren Wilson College program. Her first book of poems, *A Quarter Turn*, appeared in 1991. Her poetry has been published in numerous anthologies and journals, including the *American Poetry Review*, the *Yale Review*, *Ploughshares*, *TriQuarterly*, and the *Threepenny Review*. She has received a Boatwright Prize from Shenandoah and the Balch Prize for Poetry from the Virginia Quarterly

Review and has been awarded two individual artist's grants from the Virginia Commission for the Arts, a Yaddo Fellowship, a postgraduate fellowship in poetry from the University of Virginia and numerous Pushcart nominations. Nystrom lives in Charlottesville and is associate professor of creative writing at the University of Virginia.

Debra Nystrom's *Torn Sky* gives voice to the harsh histories of the American West as well as the memories, losses and survivals in the landscapes of the familiar—home and family. Her poems resonate with compassion, spirituality and an elegant resilience.

Hollins University professor R. H. W. Dillard presented the Literary Lifetime Achievement Award to George Garrett, his friend and mentor. Regarded by his peers as a poet and writer of immense talent, the multi-talented Garrett also is beloved as a ...see **Awards**, pg. 2



George Garrett, winner of the Literary Lifetime Achievement Award; Debra Nystrom, winner of the Poetry Award; Elizabeth Varon, winner of the People's Choice Fiction Prize; Suzanne Lebsock, winner of the Non-fiction Award; Edward Jones, winner of the Fiction Award; and Dr. Francis M. Foster Sr., winner of the Semper Virginia Award, pose at the 7th Annual Library of Virginia Awards Celebration on October 16.



THE LIBRARY OF VIRGINIA

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“Ask a Government Information Librarian”

Beginning in November 2004, the staff of the State and Federal Documents Program of the Library of Virginia will participate in a national pilot project to provide virtual reference service for patrons seeking government information. The Library of Virginia and the University of Virginia are the only Virginia libraries participating in the pilot program.

Sponsored by the Illinois State Library, with project coordination by John Schuler, Documents Librarian, University of Illinois at Chicago, the program invited a select number of federal and state depository libraries to participate in the six-month trial. The project sponsors are working with OCLC to establish a collaborative, multi-state virtual reference service using OCLC's QuestionPoint software. Initially conceived with 10 participating libraries covering 40 hours of live, national, reference service, enthusiastic response of the government documents community has led to participation by 33 libraries, including libraries on the West Coast and Hawaii, and possibly as much as 66 hours of live chat and 24 hour e-mail service. It is expected that each participating library will only have to staff the “virtual” national reference desk about three hours per week, a minimum commitment for maximum reward.

The target audience for the program is individuals interested in working with a librarian to locate, use or seek specific government information about programs, services and policies. Library participants share the belief that government information is a core source of reliable information for researchers. The World Wide Web offers a chance for local depository libraries to work across state lines and encourage wider public access to all kinds of government information, both electronically and in more traditional collections. The QuestionPoint service trial will allow depository libraries to meet their charge to deliver government document information to the public and to augment the visibility of government documents service at participating libraries.

The QuestionPoint service will work through a web site and e-mail link for asking questions. Participating libraries will develop a rotating schedule for responding to Internet chat questions or refer specialized questions to a specific participating library. The QuestionPoint chat box will appear on the “Government Records and Resources” page



on the Library of Virginia's web site during the pilot project trial.

In preparation for implementing the trial project, Government Documents staff members at the Library of Virginia have participated in several conference calls, and received QuestionPoint software training provided through the web and teleconferencing capabilities. All software and teleconferencing calls have been supported through the Illinois State Library.

The project will try to answer several questions during its six-month duration, such as: Is this a model for a multi-state collaborative project? Does the service work as well for dial-up users as for those with more bandwidth? And most important, does this collaborative approach effectively improve government information services to the public in anyway?

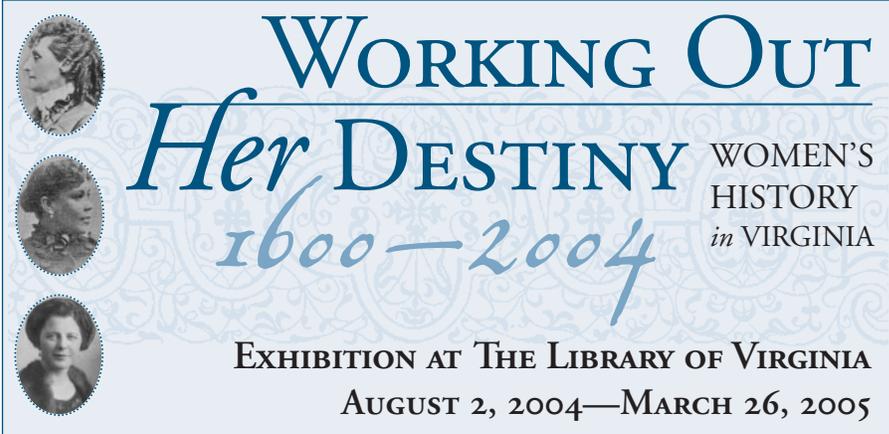
—submitted by Mary S. Clark,
Collection Management Services

Awards... generous teacher and mentor, one who has often gone out of his way to assist the careers of young writers.

Retired Richmond dentist Dr. Francis M. Foster received the first annual Semper Virginia Award, given by the Semper Virginia Society, the Library of Virginia Foundation's new membership group established to support the continuation of excellence at the Library of Virginia. As treasurer and an original member of the Virginia Center for the Book Board at the Library of Virginia, Dr. Foster was a driving force behind the Virginia Authors Room at the Library of Virginia involving the community in plans for this space dedicated to the state's literary heritage.

Virginia author David Baldacci served as host for the October 16 gala celebration and May-Lily Lee, senior producer and host of *Virginia Currents*, Dr. William G. Thomas, director of the Virginia Center for Digital History, and Elizabeth Seydel Morgan, a Virginia poet, read selections from each of the nine finalists' books. Virginia authors Dean King and Phaedra Hise presented the People's Choice Awards to Edward Jones for *The Known World* and Elizabeth Varon for *Southern Lady, Yankee Spy*. The People's Choice Awards were presented by the Library in partnership with the James River Writers Festival. The winners were chosen by readers who voted in bookstores and libraries in Virginia and online through the Library's and James River Writers Festival web sites.

The 8th Annual Library of Virginia Literary Awards Celebration will be held at the Library of Virginia on October 15, 2005. For a complete list of this year's nominees and a nomination form for next year's awards, please visit the Library's web site at <<http://www.lva.lib.va.us/whatwedo/awards/index.htm>>.



WORKING OUT
Her DESTINY
1600—2004
WOMEN'S
HISTORY
in VIRGINIA
EXHIBITION AT THE LIBRARY OF VIRGINIA
AUGUST 2, 2004—MARCH 26, 2005

Recent Scholarship from the Library's Collections

Researchers throughout the commonwealth, across the country, and around the world mine the Library of Virginia's rich and varied collections for pathbreaking research. In the last two years, Archives Research Services has received more than eighty permission-to-publish requests from authors to use archival materials in traditional ways (including books, articles, exhibits, historic markers and dissertations) and not-so-traditional ways—such as web exhibits, advertisements, school-curriculum CDs, a lapel button and an even musical theater production. Pick up *Israel on the Appomattox*, settle in your seat for *Christmas of Swing* or stroll through an exhibit on the American Revolution's forgotten patriots and you'll find some of the unique materials housed in the Archives.

Authors requesting permission to publish include academics from a wide variety of institutions; art and theater historians; archaeologists; and archivists (the Society of American Archivists will feature some of the Library's drawings and plans—by Charles Gillette of the Executive Mansion—in its new guide, *Managing Architectural Records*). Recently-published books featuring the Library's collections include innovative biographies and scholarly studies from Oxford University Press, Norton and Knopf; carefully researched family histories, local histories and church histories; a documentary history of the Supreme Court; and collections of the papers of Nathanael Greene, John Marshall, Thomas Jefferson and Dolley Madison.

These raw materials of the past allow researchers to delve into difficult and elusive topics. One forthcoming documentary reader, *American Women's Letters, 1776 to the Present*, contains a 1929 letter from the Executive Papers. Maggie Shrader was writing from the town of Pocahontas, in Tazewell County, to Governor Harry F. Byrd asking him to release her 16-year-old daughter, Martha, from a state-run hospital, called the State Colony for Epileptics and the Feeble-Minded.

"I am a poor brokenhearted mother," she wrote, "I know you can help me." She enclosed a four-page letter that her daughter had recently written home as proof that she was not feeble-minded. Martha asks her mother to come visit her and to bring Christmas presents, and reports the weather is fine. Then

she breaks down. "I am so homesick I don't know what to do," she confessed. "Mama I declare I do wish I could come home. I do hate to be sterilized but if it is the only way to come home I absolutely would be willing for them to cut my head off."

Tazewell was one of the poorest areas in the state. In 1930, 2,464 men worked in the coal mines there, along with nine women. The colony was nearly 180 miles away, in Amherst County, two miles from Lynchburg, near the town of Madison Heights. Doctors there performed an average of four eugenic sterilizations a week; in 1929, the colony held 1,044 patients, 575 women, only one from Tazewell County—Martha Shrader. We don't know the entire story, but by April 18, 1930, when the Tazewell County census was taken, she was home with her parents, Maggie and Lewis. On May 9, 1930, she married coal miner David Hamitt.

Another recent permission request illuminates life in Great Depression-era southwestern Virginia. The trials of Edith Maxwell are the subject of a University of Illinois Press book, titled *Never Seen the Moon*, forthcoming in 2005. On November 19, 1935, a jury of 12 men in Wise County convicted Edith Maxwell of murdering her father and sentenced her to 25 years in prison. Maxwell's case briefly became national news, as newspapers, including the *Washington Post*, produced a stream of articles to encourage people to raise money to appeal the verdict.

At age 21, Edith Maxwell lived with her parents and two younger sisters in Pound, about 10 miles from Wise. After attending East Radford Teachers' College for three years, she taught 40 pupils in a one-room school. One night in July 1935, she returned home after dark with Raymond Meade. Her father, Trigg Maxwell, a blacksmith and pipe inspector, was drunk and threatened to beat her for being out late.

Later that night Trigg Maxwell died, and the circumstantial evidence suggested that Edith Maxwell had killed him. Researcher Sharon Hatfield used records from the Governor's Office to trace her case and tease out the details of family life in a small town, where alcohol and violence may have led to murder. Petitions, letters, postcards and telegrams received by the governor, along with materials ...see **Collections**, pg. 6

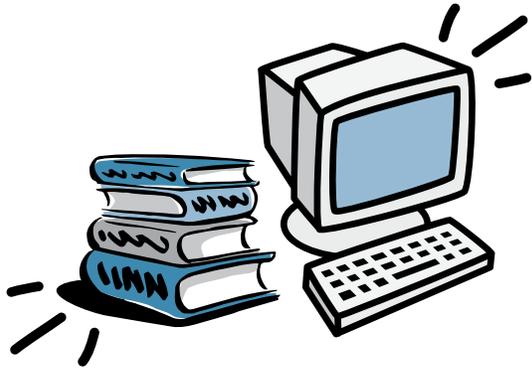
BOARD PROPOSES NEW REGULATION

The Library Board has adopted a proposed new regulation to provide direction on the appropriate destruction of public records containing social security numbers whether these records are in analog or digital format. This regulation is intended to help prevent the crime of identity theft where an imposter obtains and uses another person's personal information in a way that involves fraud or deception. A Notice of Intended Regulatory Action on these new regulations will be filed and the Notice and proposed regulation will appear in the *Register* and on the Virginia Regulatory Town Hall later this fall. For more information about the proposed new regulation regarding the destruction of public records containing social security numbers, please contact Robert Nawrocki, director, Records Management and Imaging Services, 800 East Broad Street, Richmond, VA 23219; 804-692-3505; <rnawrocki@lva.lib.va.us>.

Library Acquires Records from Loudoun Mutual Insurance Co.

In mid-September, archivists from the Library of Virginia traveled to Waterford in Loudoun County, Virginia, to retrieve an extensive business records collection. In the quaint Northern Virginia town, they met with Chris Shipe, President/ CEO of the Loudoun Mutual Insurance Company. The company's 1948 headquarters, a Colonial Revival building on a hill above Waterford, housed nearly 200 years of insurance records, ledgers, maps and architectural drawings documenting the history of Loudoun and the surrounding counties.

Over three days, the archivists carefully boxed and packed the 110 cubic feet of loose material and 121 volumes for transfer back to Richmond. They also created a preliminary database on-site for collection control. Over the coming year, the records will be rehoused and described by Private Papers archivists from the Library's Description Branch. The material will not be ...see **Loudoun**, pg. 6



Did you know...?

When the elections are over, if you are still curious about how the vote went, you can visit the Federal Election Commission at <http://www.fec.gov/elections.html> or the Virginia State Board of Elections at <http://www.sbe.state.va.us> to see how Virginians voted. In case you are more curious, and you want to research who gave what to whom you can go to the Center for Responsive Politics' Open Secrets web site at <http://www.opensecrets.org>. This directory of political candidates traces contributions from individuals and special interests. Its counterpart for Virginia is The Virginia Public Access Project at <http://www.vpap.org/index.cfm>. There you may track down campaign contributions and expenditures reported by candidates for state office. The database can be also searched by donor and vendor.

THOMSON/PETERSON'S TESTING AND EDUCATION REFERENCE CENTER

The Library of Virginia now provides online access to the electronic database, the Testing and Education Reference Center. In one convenient resource, users can search for a learning institution, prepare for tests, prepare admissions materials and more. All results can be collected and stored in personalized toolboxes created right from the Testing and Education Reference Center, allowing users to keep the information they need where it can always be found quickly and easily. This electronic collection is available to all visitors to the Library of Virginia building and available by remote access to Virginia resident Library of Virginia cardholders. To check it out, go to the "What We Do" section of our web site and scroll down to "Services for Teachers and Students," or click on "Databases" on the Reading Room Public Access Computers.

The Center includes information on private high schools, undergraduate and graduate programs as well as executive education programs, searchable by location, major, tuition, sports and more. It also features interactive online practice tests for preparatory examinations including entrance exams and certification and licensing tests, including:

- ACT (American College Test)
- CLEP (College Level Examination Program)
- GED (General Education Development)
- GMAT CAT (Graduate Management Admission Test)
- GRE® CAT (Graduate Record Examination General Test)
- SAT (Scholastic Achievement Test).

The Testing & Education Reference Center also includes PDF versions of respected college and career handbooks. Among these useful publications are:

- ACT Assessment® Success
- AP Success Series
- Civil Service Handbook
- Clerical Exams
- EMT Basic Certification Exam
- LSAT Success
- Master the ACT Assessment
- Master the GMAT CAT
- Military Flight Aptitude Tests
- Postal Clerk and Carrier
- State Trooper Exam

Further, the Testing & Education Reference Center includes "Essay Edge" and "Resume Edge" to help users organize and write application essays and resumes.

RECENT ACQUISITIONS

Encyclopedia of the Great Depression, Robert S. McElvaine, editor in chief. New York: Macmillan Reference USA, 2004.

Encyclopedia of the Great Depression and the New Deal, James Ciment, editor. Armonk, N.Y.: Sharpe Reference, 2001.

The worldwide Great Depression, lasting from 1929 to the early part of World War II, stands as one of the most devastating economic and social events of the 20th century. Two reference works attempt to facilitate an understanding of that time.

The recently published two-volume *Encyclopedia of the Great Depression* captures the enormity of the economic downturn in a collection of 542 articles. As editor in chief, Robert S. McElvaine, the Elizabeth Chisholm Professor of Arts & Letters and Chair of the Department of History at Millsaps College, has alphabetically arranged the entries from 270 international scholars. Varying in length from 300 to 5,000 words, these articles, many of which are accompanied by photographs, manage to convey the impact of the Great Depression to the reader.

Volume one includes an outline that groups the entry titles under these conceptual parts: Agriculture; Biographies; Business; Culture; Economic Conditions; Environment; Events; Government; Intellectual Trends and Developments; International Situation; Labor; Law, Justice and Crime; New Deal; Places; Politics (The Left, The Right); Protest; Race and Ethnicity; Religion; Society (Commentary, Lifestyles, Programs); Sports and Leisure and Women and Gender. Also included in the first volume are separate lists of articles and contributors. A detailed cross index can be found in volume two, along with a timeline that begins with the economic Panic of 1893 and concludes with the 1941 release of the motion picture *Citizen Kane*.

McElvaine states in his preface that this encyclopedia was written with the intent "to provide the widest audience, both the general public and students of history, with accessible information and analysis, reflecting the latest scholarship, on an extensive variety of topics related to the Great Depression." In this task, the *Encyclopedia of the Great Depression* has succeeded.

The *Encyclopedia of the Great Depression and the New Deal*, complements McElvaine's publication. The editor, James Ciment, has produced reference works about such topics as American immigration, post-World War II conflicts, African American history and American third political parties. In this work, Ciment provides a brief historical essay about the Great Depression in his introduction, along with an explanation of the arrangement of the encyclopedia. The two volumes are divided into six independent sections. Volume one contains thematic essays, general entries, government and international affairs. Volume two continues with biographies and historical documents. The documents in each section

are arranged chronologically, beginning with Hoover's November 23, 1929, Appeal to Governors for Stimulation of State Public Works, and ending with Roosevelt's December 8, 1941, War Message to Congress.

Independently, the *Encyclopedia of the Great Depression* and the *Encyclopedia of the Great Depression and the New Deal* provide a valuable overview of the Great Depression. Together, they depict most of the major details of that politically, socially and economically turbulent era.

FROM THE VIRGINIA AUTHORS ROOM

The Virginia Authors Room, a browsing and circulating collection of titles by writers who have resided or currently live within the state, is located on the second floor of the Library of Virginia. One of these authors whose work can be found in the Virginia Authors Room is Curtis J. Badger, a native of Virginia's Eastern Shore where his family has lived since the late 1600s. Badger is a naturalist, newspaper columnist, magazine contributor, guidebook writer and nature essayist.

Salt Tide: Cycles and Currents of Life along the Coast (Woodstock, Vt.: Countryman Press, 1999), and *Bellevue Farm: Exploring Virginia's Coastal Countryside* (Mechanicsburg, Pa.: Stackpole Books, 1997), are collections of essays in which Badger writes about Virginia's barrier island ecosystems, local lore and his family history. In *Clams: How to Find, Catch and Cook Them* (Mechanicsburg, Pa.: Stackpole Books, 2002), the author, a veteran clammer, gives a natural history of clams, the best ways to clam and recipes.

A Naturalist's Guide to the Virginia Coast (Mechanicsburg, Pa.: Stackpole Books, 1996), is a guidebook that gives wildlife viewing opportunities, hiking suggestions, maps, and information on when to visit places from False Cape State Park to Assateague National Seashore. The University of Virginia Press has recently reprinted this title.

In his newest work, Virginia's *Wild Side: Fifty Outdoor Adventures from the Mountains to the Ocean* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2003), Badger discovers "the great wealth of wonderful places Virginia has to offer." Among the experiences the author writes about are joining the Tour de Chesapeake in Mathews County, hiking the Chessie Trail along the Maury River and looking for salamanders on the slopes of Whitetop Mountain.

Library of Virginia Foundation Launches New Giving Society: The Semper Virginia Society

The Library of Virginia Foundation is delighted to announce The Semper Virginia Society—a new membership society designed to foster a close relationship with the Library's supporters and the mission of the Library of Virginia. The Library of Virginia is the guardian of the world's most comprehensive collection of materials about Virginia and early America and The Semper Virginia Society has an important role to play in helping to maintain and grow these collections and to work to preserve these exceptional books, maps, art and artifacts. In addition, membership gifts will help make possible a vast array of programs and lectures at the Library of Virginia to provide open access to information and educational and cultural opportunities.

By becoming a member of The Semper Virginia Society you will both support critical Library programs, as well as receive benefits and special invitations to events that only members can enjoy. There are a variety of membership levels including a program crafted for corporate donors that includes benefits tailored for the corporate community.* All members are valued contributors to the Library and important members of the community of supporters who believe the Library is an essential component of the fabric of Virginia's history and culture. To that end, membership levels are named for noteworthy Virginian authors whose work has made an enduring and significant impact on Virginia. Benefits vary according to the membership level, and the levels and the benefits associated with each level are listed below.

MEMBERSHIP LEVELS

CAPT. JOHN SMITH CIRCLE [\$35–\$99]

[Jamestown Leader and Historian, who wrote the first history of Virginia] **Benefits include:** Subscription to Quarterly Events Calendar & LVA Newsletter • Advance Notice of Lectures, Readings, and Events • Recognition in LVA's Annual Report

SIR FRANCIS WYATT CIRCLE [\$100–\$249]

[Poet and Colonial Governor of Virginia] **Benefits include:** All of the above, plus a special gift with membership

MARY JOHNSTON CIRCLE [\$250–\$499]

[Novelist, Short Story Writer and Cookbook Editor] **Benefits include:** All of the above, plus Discount of 10% on LVA Publications • Subscription to Quarterly VA Authors Reading List

CLEMENTINA RIND CIRCLE [\$500–\$999]

[Editor and first female Printer] **Benefits include:** All of the above, plus Invitations to special Receptions & Openings • Priority seating at Lectures & Events • Ability to rent LVA facilities for meetings, events, etc.

ANNE SPENCER CIRCLE [\$1,000–\$2,499]

[Poet, Librarian and Teacher] **Benefits include:** All of the above, plus Behind-the-Scenes VA Treasures Tour • Discounted rate of 10% on LVA usage for meetings, events, etc.

SHERWOOD ANDERSON CIRCLE [\$2,500–\$4,999]

[Novelist] **Benefits include:** All of the above, plus choice of LVA Publication with Bookplate/Discount of 20% on all LVA Publications

ELLEN GLASGOW CIRCLE [\$5,000–\$9,999]

[Novelist] **Benefits include:** All of the above, plus 2 Complimentary Tickets to LVA Celebration Gala • Invitation to Special Pre-Gala Reception with VA Authors • \$500 Credit given for LVA Usage for meetings, events, etc.

DOUGLAS SOUTHALL FREEMAN CIRCLE [\$10,000 OR MORE]

[Editor and Author] **Benefits include:** All of the above, plus one free rental of LVA facilities • 4 Complimentary Tickets to Celebration Gala • Accommodations in Historic Richmond Hotel for Celebration

To join The Semper Virginia Society or for additional information, please contact Heather Krajewski at 804-692-3591 or <hkrajewski@lva.lib.va.us>.

*For information about the Corporate Partners Program of The Semper Virginia Society, please contact Rick Golembeski at 804-692-3813 or <rgolembeski@lva.lib.va.us>.

Day Receives Yoshiyama Award for Craig County Library Effort

Caitlyn Day, the young woman who spearheaded recent efforts to establish a public library in Craig County, was one of 10 high school students to receive a 2004 Yoshiyama Award. This award recognizes exemplary service and community involvement rather than academic achievement.

Day was selected by a diverse committee from 151 eligible nominations submitted by teachers, community leaders and others directly affiliated with youth organizations. In choosing Day, the committee cited her efforts to establish a ...see [Loudoun](#), pg. 6

Loudoun... open to researchers during this time, but we encourage interested parties to monitor the agency's web site for information. In addition, some material, because of its condition or importance, will be conserved and/or microfilmed in house.

Incorporated by act of Assembly in 1849 as the Mutual Fire Insurance Company of Loudoun County, the company still insures thousands of clients in the region, including the descendants of its first client. The materials, spanning the years 1865–1954, document the value of farm commodities in the post-Civil War era, the introduction of the automobile and a host of other topics. Further, they demonstrate the importance of local business and organizational records and what they can reveal about our history.

In 1911 the Library acquired the business records of William and David Allason of King George, Stafford and Frederick counties, marking the inception of the Library's diverse business records collection that now includes the records of more 350 businesses, ranging from those of the Carter family's Shirley Plantation to a single daybook kept by a tailor in New Kent County.

The Library of Virginia encourages others with similar records to contact us regarding donation. Through the generosity of citizens like Chris Shipe and his co-workers at the Loudoun Mutual Insurance Company, the Library of Virginia is aided in its efforts to preserve our collective past.

—submitted by Vincent Brooks,
Collection Management Services



In 1935, a photographer for the Department of Education snapped a picture of students at Disputanta School in Prince George County. Researchers today use images like this one, from the School Buildings Service Photographs Collection, to study Virginia's architectural and cultural history.

Collections... concerning the trials, tell Edith Maxwell's story. After several appeals, defense lawyers cast enough doubt on the conviction that Edith Maxwell was pardoned late in 1941 and left Virginia. Her inmate photograph will be reproduced in the new book

The Library's resources are being tapped in other innovative ways. A scholar in Italy is writing a book on Writers' Project interviews with British immigrants, using the Library's online WPA Life Histories. A digital interactive exhibit mounted by the Foundation for Historic Christ Church on the houses of Robert Carter explores the histories of 22 homes (and features Mutual Assurance Society policies housed at the Library). Materials from the Library's collections also appear on the web site for the Dolley Madison Project at the Virginia Center for Digital History, and the

letters written by Walter Reed appear on a web exhibit and digital archive on Yellow Fever mounted by the Health Sciences Library at the University of Virginia.

At the Library of Virginia, more than 96 million manuscript items tell the stories of the famous and the not-so-famous; they illuminate events and allow us to see the past in a different way; and they answer researchers' endless and always-changing questions. The Archives staff helps people explore the rich documentary heritage of Virginia; we've all learned that treasures come in many different guises, from a tiny letter to a table-sized map to a recording of the Old Dominion Barn Dance. In the end, they are all part of a story that matters to someone.

—submitted by Jennifer Davis McDaid,
Archival and Information Services



Librarian of Virginia Nolan T. Yelich and Dr. Franklin E. "Bud" Robeson flank new Library Board members Chip Woodrum, Lewis F. Powell III and Stephen E. Story during a recent tour of the Library.

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www.lva.lib.va.us

Library Acquires VEPCO Company Records

In October 2003, following Hurricane Isabel when the lights were out for much of central Virginia, the Description Services Branch at the Library of Virginia was in the midst of a mildly ironic task—the processing of the records of the Virginia Electric and Power Company (VEPCO). While Dominion Virginia Power line crews and other power company employees toiled through the night to repair the electrical disaster caused by Mother Nature, the VEPCO business records were unveiling reminders of the anguish created from past storms. Photos revealed the Richmond and Petersburg flood devastation following Hurricane Camille in August 1969 and Hurricane Agnes in 1972. Legal files detailed the events resulting in the deaths of linemen restoring power during storms in the 1910s and 1920s. These archival files seemed to commiserate silently with the plight of the victims of Hurricane Isabel.

Now, a year removed from Hurricane Isabel, the Description Services Branch has completed the project to process these disaster-related documents along with the rest of the vast volume of materials that comprise the VEPCO business records. The enormous amount of material consists not only of the records of VEPCO, but also contains the files the company inherited from its many predecessors and subsidiaries including the Virginia Railway and Power Company and the Virginia Passenger and Power Company. The files span the period from about 1849 through 1995. The types of material include advertisement posters, executives' correspondence, stock ledgers, general legal counsel files, board of directors' minute books, photographs, railroad and trolley line right-of-way plats, company newsletters and pamphlets and even antiquated lightbulbs and insulators. Over time, probing researchers will uncover these materials' worth as an invaluable tool to study the development of public transportation and electric service in Virginia, the social effect of the company on the people of Virginia and the rise of a business world shifting from agricentric to meeting the demands of the emerging modern world.

Within the VEPCO collection rest a number of items documenting the emergence of public transportation and electrical service in Virginia. An expansive assortment of photographs provides visual evidence of the construction of power grids and electrical substations across Virginia. Right-of-way plats found in the collection denote the location of proposed streetcar lines throughout

the Richmond area. There are also publications containing information about legal cases in Virginia localities concerning the regulation of jitney buses. Correspondence in the general counsel's files notes a number of accidents between automobiles and streetcars: two modern transportation forms often violently gnashing metal in their effort to share the same roads.

While the archive does much to reveal the increased role of transportation and the electrical industry in Virginia, the VEPCO records also humanize the efforts of the people behind these industries. The lawsuit files of the Virginia Railway and Power Company general counsel allude to the often dangerous conditions faced



VEPCO advertisement (ca. 1960s)

by trolley drivers, linemen and other laborers. Trolley drivers, for instance, were on many an occasion trapped under cars, electrocuted, or seriously maimed following streetcar accidents. Medical examination certificates found within the Virginia Railway and Power Company Relief Association files relate the diseases and injuries inflicted on the employees and the amount of work time and pay missed because of their afflictions. Examples of the hard work performed by the welders, telephone operators, customer service technicians, line crews, executives and other employees of VEPCO also survive in the photograph files.

Aside from the collection's obvious worth as a resource from which to study the day-to-day conditions experienced by employees, other files document the societal changes effected by the increased role of women in the business world. Of particular note are a large group of advertisements from the 1950s and 1960s for electrical appliances that visually exhibit the dichotomy between the women's movement and the struggle of the business community to embrace this change (see image). One image shows a woman puckering with eyes closed and suggests, "Get Her an Electric Dryer and See What She'll Do." Further proof of the influx of women into the industry can be located in the photographs of women welders during World War II.

The VEPCO files denote a business shift in the 1950s not only to include women, but also away from rural agriculture and toward Virginia suburbs, business offices and urban industry. Broadside advertisements from the mid-1950s encourage farmers and other Virginians to purchase electrical appliances or update their homes with electric wiring. Over time these advertisements become more and more focused on the suburban home and the urban business office. Few advertisements from the late 1960s and early 1970s concern farming or rural agribusiness interests.

A project to conserve and rehouse the more than 500 minute books and ledgers in the collection is currently underway and should conclude in the early fall. These volumes comprise minutes and other information concerning more than 130 of the predecessor and subsidiary companies that melded over time to form the Virginia Electric and Power Company. Study of these minutes and companies will enhance research within a number of fields, most notably the courses of industrial, corporate, social and women's history. These ledgers together with the other files in the VEPCO archive are a superb addition to the business records collection at the Library of Virginia.

Researchers interested in locating files in the VEPCO archive should consult the online finding aid at the Library of Virginia web site. Go to the homepage at www.lva.lib.va.us, click on "What We Have," perform an accession number search for "37345," and then click on the appropriate links to view the finding aid.

—submitted by Alex Lorch,
Collection Management Services

Day... public library in Craig County, a rural county of 5,500 people. Day helped organize the Craig County Friends of the Library Inc., a nonprofit community organization with a goal of opening the first public library in Craig County — the only county in Virginia without a library. She has taken the lead in collecting books, organizing fundraisers, speaking with other groups to gain support and renovating the building. She also helped contact state and federal legislators.

The Hitachi Foundation named 10 high school seniors as recipients of the 2004 Yoshiyama Award. The 2004 Yoshiyama Award recipients will participate in a leadership retreat and be honored at a luncheon to take place at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C., in October. Each will receive a \$5,000 gift.

The Hitachi Foundation is a nonprofit, philanthropic organization incorporated in the District of Columbia in 1985 with an endowment from Hitachi Ltd. in Tokyo. The Foundation's purpose is to enhance the well-being of economically and socially isolated people throughout the United States. For additional information about the Yoshiyama Award or The Hitachi Foundation, visit their web site at <www.hitachifoundation.org>.

Library of Virginia Develops *Old Dominion Songsters* Exhibition

The Library of Virginia is pleased to announce the development of the traveling panel exhibition *Old Dominion Songsters: Traditional Blues in Virginia*. Using rare photographs and images of important blues recordings, *Old Dominion Songsters* offers biographies of Virginia blues legends such as John Jackson, William Moore, John Cephas, Carl Martin and Stephen Tarter. Further, the exhibition examines the social milieu of blues music in Virginia, including the house party tradition, music in the mountains and its connection to old-time music and the migration of artists to northern cities.

Old Dominion Songsters developed out of an ongoing project sponsored by the James River Blues Society and led by Library of Virginia historian and blues guitarist Gregg Kimball. Begun in 2001, the *Old Dominion Songsters* project honors the founders of

Virginia blues and highlights the importance of the East Coast or Piedmont blues tradition and guitar style. In addition to publishing a brochure on Virginia blues, the Society has launched an ongoing campaign to erect state historical markers. Two artists—Luke Jordan in Lynchburg and Carl Martin in Big Stone Gap—have been honored with markers. The Library of Virginia's 2002 exhibition, *Virginia Roots Music: Creating and Conserving Tradition*, also contributed to the content of *Old Dominion Songsters*. The exhibition, which premiered at the Fredericksburg Area Museum and Cultural Center on September 10, 2004, was supported by the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities and Public Policy, BB&T, Blues in the 'Burg Inc., the Library of Virginia and The James River Blues Society of Lynchburg.

BOARD SETS MEETING SCHEDULE

The Library Board has set its meeting schedule for 2004–2005. All meetings will be held at the Library of Virginia, 800 East Broad Street, Richmond, Virginia. The meetings are open to the public. The next meeting of the Board will occur on November 15 at 10:30 AM. Subsequent meetings will be held on January 27, 2005; March 14, 2005; and June 13, 2005.



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