

VAAS Newsletter

SUMMER 2016

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VAAS Officers:

- James Conley, President
- Kevin Fleming, Vice President
- William Brown, Secretary
- Lauren Howard, Treasurer



**VERMONT ACADEMY
OF ARTS & SCIENCES**
SINCE 1965

Join us for the next Fellows Induction Dinner on September 17 at noon at the Windjammer in Burlington. More information on p. 7.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Entering the office of President of the Vermont Academy of Arts and Sciences following the highly energetic term of Connell B. Gallagher, retired librarian and archivist from the University of Vermont, certainly does cause one to pause and reflect. Retired VAAS board member Dan Bean has so aptly described Connie's work for our organization in our last Newsletter [Winter, volume 30, number 1]: "Connie is the backbone of the Fellows search, write-ups, decisions, and presentations. He has kept our little group organized and on track for more years that I care to count. . . We owe him a big debt of gratitude for his efforts." As is evident, Connie Gallagher has utilized his extensive expertise and level of comfort within the cultural milieu of Vermont to search out for due recognition those individuals meriting election as Fellows of VAAS.

At our June 11 meeting of the governing board and based on the key research on each of ten candidates forwarded to our deliberations by Connie Gallagher, the following were elected Fellows: Doreen Kraft,

Executive Director of the Burlington Jazz Festival and other musical events; Mary Jane Dickerson, a poet and creator of the Sundog Poetry Center; Mark T. Nelson, Professor and Chair of Pharmacology at the University of Vermont; Erik Nielson, a full-time professional composer of classical music who lives in Brookfield; Donna M. Rizzo, a scientist whose work focuses on improvement of water quality and an award-winning teacher, mentor and advisor; and Susan S. Wallace, a brilliant scientist who is doing wonderful research on cancer. The VAAS Fall Luncheon at which the newly elected Fellows will be recognized has been scheduled for Saturday, September 17, at the Windjammer in South Burlington.

In the meantime, extended discussion at the June board meeting focused on the challenge our organization faces to achieve enhanced recognition of our activities within the state and attain more efficient levels of communication among any and all interested parties. A basic example of our striving for more visibility and a technologically sound status concerning our efforts will be the

updating and continuous maintenance of our website. In this regard, our outgoing president has made contact with Richard Watts, Director of the Center for Research on Vermont in the Department of Media and Policy Studies at the University of Vermont, to search out ways for cooperative efforts in accomplishing the goals of both organizations to pursue the enhancement of the intellectual climate of Vermont. Of particular interest is Prof. Watts' publication, "Vermont Research News," a bi-monthly curated collection of Vermont research in the Vermont laboratory with the goal of showcasing "...research that provides organized knowledge to the world and research that adds to understanding of the state's social, economic, cultural, and physical environment."

Such an agenda aligns neatly with the purpose and aspirations of our own VAAS. The board members who had gathered at Norwich University in June emphatically voiced the need for both increased membership and enhanced interconnection among active members in pursuit of these goals.

James Conley, President, VAAS

BOOK REVIEW – RIGHTFUL HERITAGE: FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT AND THE LAND OF AMERICA, by Arthur H. Westing

Rightful heritage: Franklin D. Roosevelt and the land of America, by Douglas Brinkley. New York: HarperCollins, viii+744 pp. 2016. ISBN 978-0-06-208923-6. \$35.

Some years ago on I suggested on these pages that our two greatest presidents were (1) Abraham Lincoln for emancipating all the people of this country, and (2) Theodore Roosevelt for doing the same for all our other living things [VAAS Newsletter 23(4):2. Winter 2010]. My assertion regarding Theodore Roosevelt had been clearly substantiated by Douglas Brinkley's masterful 2009 biography of that truly great "wilderness warrior". Now this same author has produced yet another monumental biography, this one centered on the outdoor legacy of Franklin Delano Roosevelt (1882–1945) — one in which the author now suggests that not TR, but rather FDR was our greatest environmental president. As important and far-flung as FDR's heritage in this domain was, I trust that it will become clear why I cannot agree with Brinkley's assessment.

Described in minute detail in this new book are the number and extent of the many national outdoor reserves (parks, monuments, wildlife refuges, and forests) that were added to those of TR during the reign of FDR (1933–1945). Also outlined was FDR's support of automobile tourism and construction of scenic highways, as well as of his central role in establishing (for better or worse) the Tennessee Valley Authority and other ecologically hugely disruptive hydroelectric projects. But in my view, FDR's most important contribution to environmental conservation (and, of course, one of his major responses to the Great Depression) was his creation in 1933 of the Civilian Conservation Corps. In time the CCC gave jobs to more than three million unemployed unmarried men who then, during the nine years of that agency's existence, did much to restore our nation's degraded wilderness areas by rehabilitating the dust bowl and other eroded grasslands and woodlands, in the process

planting countless numbers of trees — and, incidentally, also making seemingly endless miles of hiking trails and overnight shelters for all of us to appreciate the beauty of nature. Moreover, it was the CCC that was responsible for developing Killington, Stowe, and other ski areas in Vermont, thereby transforming the State into the ski capitol of the East.

The book contains 20 chronological chapters divided into four parts (1882–1932, 1933–1936, 1937–1939, 1940–1945) enhanced by an epilogue (13 pages devoted largely to FDR's elaborate funeral events) plus six tabular appendices that enumerate in detail the many advances in environmental protection that were achieved during FDR's four terms in the White House. The book emphasizes the divergent (and balancing) roles played by Harold Ickes, FDR's preservation-minded Secretary of Interior, and Henry Wallace, his sustainable-use-minded Secretary of Agriculture.

So, to conclude: I must certainly agree with Brinkley that FDR made many important and lasting contributions to the environmental conservation of this country. However, unlike Brinkley, the reason I consider TR's contribution to nature to have been more significant than those of FDR rests on essentially two factors: *First*, TR was breaking new ground in his many heroic political actions (moreover, with positive global ramifications) in the face of indifference or even significant antagonism to protect our nation's environment. On the other hand, FDR was able to build on previously well-prepared ground. *Second*, TR recognized that, while a significant portion of our nation's extensive wilderness areas had to remain forever inviolate, he also very clearly saw the need for substantial portions of the nation's undeveloped lands to be subjected to wise use, that is, to be managed humanely and sustainably for timber, livestock, and hunting. On the other hand, FDR, an avid bird watcher, functioned on the basis of what I consider to have been a more simplistic intuitive urge to protect

Book review, continued

undeveloped land without a real appreciation of society's unavoidable need to sustainably exploit a substantial fraction of it for agriculture, pasturage, horticulture, and silviculture — for example, his favoring of the National Park Service over the Forest Service (although not so his wife, Eleanor). Thus, in fact, I am in sympathy with Aldo Leopold, one of my environmental heroes, who at the time was challenging some of FDR's aggressive protectionist vision.

Arthur H. Westing, westing@sover.net

(Former VAAS Trustee)

WESTING ASSOCIATES IN ENVIRONMENT, SECURITY, & EDUCATION, 134 Fred Houghton Rd, Putney, VT 05346, USA

VAAS AWARDS \$200 AT VERMONT HISTORY DAY

by **Bill Brown**

Vermont History Day 2016 was held, with a great deal of anticipation and excitement, at the Union High School District 32 ("U-32") in East Montpelier, and was a huge success, with some 200 participants, ages 11 to 16, and 72 judges. VAAS Trustee William Brown attended and selected one project as the recipient of the 2016 VAAS History Award. The VAAS Award went to two students for a group project. The students were Sadie Kobak and Sarah Perham of the Mount Holley school for the Junior Group Exhibit project "Andrew Carnegie Explores New Ways to Make and Use Steel". The \$200 award was given to their teacher for equal distribution.



VAAS 2016 Intercollegiate Symposium a Success!

by Christina Chant

Castleton University hosted this year's Intercollegiate Student Symposium with great success, drawing over 50 submissions from four schools (Norwich University, Castleton State, Marlboro College, and Green Mountain College). The half-day event, held on April 9, 2016, was sponsored by the Vermont Academy of Arts and Sciences (VAAS) and showcased undergraduate student scholarship in twelve academic disciplines including Art, History, Theater, Psychology, Philosophy, and Environmental Studies. In addition to traditional research papers, the symposium also featured the display of artwork, including installation and sculptural art. For the first time, the Symposium used student chairs for every panel, which worked well. The day started with a delicious breakfast provided by funds from the VAAS, then the festivities began. After an exciting morning of student work, everyone headed over to eat lunch. After lunch, each student presenter was awarded a VAAS certification for participation.



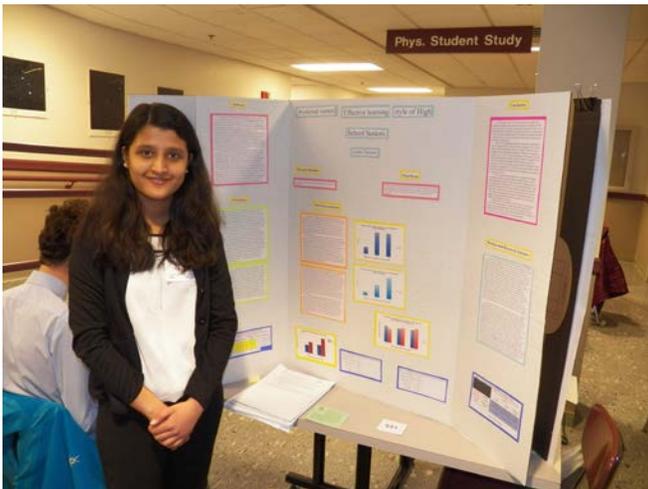
VAAS NEEDS YOU!

VAAS is always interested in learning how we can best serve you. We appreciate all of the constructive criticism, suggestions, comments, accolades, and requests that you might have for us. In addition, depending on the submission and the rest of the content, we can publish information that other members may find useful or interesting (such as conference or program announcements). If you have ideas for outreach programs, things you'd like to see, ideas, or information you'd like to pass on to us, please e-mail Christina Chant at cchant@smcvt.edu, with "Suggestions for the VAAS" in the memo line. We look forward to hearing from you!

WINNER OF THE VAAS VERMONT STATE SCIENCE FAIR PRIZE: ANISHA NEUPANE

On March 19, 2016, the Vermont State Science Fair was held at Norwich University. It was a major event with two floors of exhibits from middle and high school students from all over the state. Trustees Judy and Lauren Howard judged all the senior exhibits to determine the best project for the \$200.00 cash award presented annually by the Vermont Academy of Arts and Sciences. This year's winner was Anisha Neupane from Burlington High School. Her project was titled "Preferred versus Effective Learning Style of High School Seniors". She tested 60 seniors to find out what learning style was most effective: Auditory only; visual only; or both together. Her results were subjected to statistical analysis. Although women seemed to prefer visual learning, there was no statistically significant difference between the various methods. Anisha will become a Psychology major in college this fall.

Submitted by Lauren D. Howard, Fellow of VAAS



FREE BOOK!

A copy of *Woodland Secrets for Southeastern Vermont and a Bit Beyond* (3rd edn [with corrections], October 2015, 68 pp) by former Trustee, Arthur H. Westing, is available gratis to members of VAAS in electronic (pdf) format for their personal use (contact Arthur directly at westing@sover.net for your copy).

Hard copies in booklet form are available at nominal cost. Please contact Arthur at the above e-mail address if you would like to order a hard copy.

MEET YOUR NEW VAAS PRESIDENT!

by James Conley

Having grown up amid the smoke and soot of an earlier era in the Monongahela River Valley near Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, I felt blessed when coming out of graduate school from Loyola University of Chicago in the early 1970's to begin my academic career in Classics – Greek and Latin – at Saint Michael's College, in a far cleaner atmosphere here in Vermont.

Upon being chosen for membership on the governing board of the Vermont Academy of Arts and Sciences [VAAS] several years ago, I immediately noticed the dedication of the other members to the various duties and assignments connected with the efficient functioning of the board. Now that I have recently been elected president of this governing body and given my having experienced the strong examples of leadership evidenced by recent presidents and fellow members of the governing board, I fully realize that I must “step up” and seek to maintain the high level of dedicated service the organization deserves.

My academic career during four decades at Saint Michael's College has been focused on teaching and research in the Department of Classics; any outreach beyond the College has been connected with the regional Classical Association of New England [CANE]. Now, upon reflection concerning the duties and responsibilities of the office of president of VAAS, I must seek to enhance further the interconnectedness and cooperation so essential to the proper functioning of our body.



ATTENTION CURRENT AND FORMER BOARD MEMBERS! Please turn over to Connell Gallagher any VAAS archives you may have from your time on the board. He and Paul Krapcho have been going through the VAAS archives at UVM and are hoping to arrange and describe what they have there. Send directly to Connell at cbgallag@uvm.edu. Thank you in advance!

New Fellows Selected for Induction at Upcoming 2016 Fellows Luncheon

by Christina Chant

At the last meeting of the Trustees, the VAAS had the pleasure of selecting for nomination six new Fellows. The Fellows include Mary Jane Dickerson (Poet and Teacher), Doreen Kraft (Arts Administrator), Mark T. Nelson (Professor of Pharmacology), Erik Nielsen (Composer), Donna M. Rizzo (Professor of Environmental Engineering) and Susan S. Wallace (Professor of Microbiology). VAAS Fellows "...must be living and of mature experience; Must be exemplary in repute; Would respect being a Fellow of the Academy; Would bring prestige to the Academy; Must have made an extraordinary contribution in or to the arts, humanities, sciences or teaching; Contributions must have made a substantial impact on the life and conditions in Vermont, or if such impact be elsewhere, credit therefore rebound to Vermont, its institutions, people or influence, and such contribution must have been culminated, at least in its effect, since 1964."



Doreen Kraft has been a leader in the Burlington art scene since 1983, making the Queen City one of the most arts-friendly places in the nation. She has done this by broadening the scope of the BCA and by bringing all forms of art to a wide range of audiences including schools, hospitals and the public streets. Her nominator noted that she has "initiated, advocated and encouraged all kinds of endeavors to engage Vermont youth in the making of and interest in the arts, and that [she has] instilled in a larger public an appreciation of not only art but also of the artist."



Mary Jane Dickerson has had a long and fruitful teaching career at UVM, and the Trustees were impressed by the work she did to advance courses in African American literature, and with the receipt of the Kidder Award for her impact on students. They were also very impressed by her activities in bringing poetry to the people of Vermont since her retirement. Her two books, the creation of the Sundog Poetry Center, her continued work with new poets, and the sponsoring of Vermont poets to read at independent bookshops in the state were all noted by the board.



Mark Nelson has spent many years teaching at UVM and has received many awards for teaching and research. He has also published a significant number of articles in such important scientific journals as *Science* and *Nature*. The Trustees were especially impressed by his unique expertise to perform key measurements on singular vascular cells in the brain in order to understand the pathogenesis of small vessel disease there.



Donna Rizzo was nominated because of the quality of her teaching and service as evidenced by all of the awards she has received at UVM. The Trustees were also excited to hear about her research, particularly her work on the problem of pollution in ground water. Her nominator mentioned that she is "...a superb teacher and mentor, inspiring many students, especially women, to carry on careers in engineering" and that "[she is] a critical part of Vermont EPSCoR that is focusing its attention on the health of Lake Champlain."



Susan Wallace has served for a number of years as the Chair of the UVM Department of Microbiology and Molecular Genetics, and has conducted award winning research on cellular DNA damage and the repair process and how this relates to an increased risk for cancer if the repairs do not happen.



Erik Nielsen impressed the Trustees with the quality and the quantity of his compositions, and particularly by the number of Vermont commissions he has received. He has created works for chorus, orchestra, wind ensemble, solo instruments, chamber music, dance, film and electronic music.

Congratulations to the newly chosen Fellows!

VERMONT ACADEMY OF ARTS & SCIENCES

The Academy will celebrate the induction of our six 2016 Fellows on Saturday September 17, 2016 (for details, see p. 6). Please join us. Guests welcome!

Luncheon Reservation Form

Lunch at the WINDJAMMER Restaurant, 1076 Williston Road, South Burlington VT 05403.

Saturday, September 17, 2016 at 12:00pm. (802) 862-6585.

Lunch will be served with vegetarian, meat and fish choices and salad bar. The salad bar is fulsome. Please let me know if you would like to have a vegetarian entree in addition. Please mark the number of dinners for each option.

Lunch is \$25 each for VAAS paid-up members and \$30 for nonmembers.* Choices:

Salmon_____ Chicken Teriyaki Breast_____ Vegetarian_____

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

Make checks payable to VAAS (Vermont Academy of Arts & Sciences). DEADLINE for luncheon reservations is Friday Sept. 9, 2016. Mail checks to: Connell Gallagher, P.O. Box 240, Underhill, VT 05489. Phone: (802) 899-3034; email: cbgallag@uvm.edu.

* The Academy is underwriting part of the luncheon for paid-up members. New members will receive this savings as well by joining before the reservation deadline. Just add \$25.00 (or \$35 if a family membership) to your check, or write a separate membership check for \$25.00/\$35.00. **New Fellows and a guest are free.**

Edited by Christina Chant, St. Michael's College
Have a great rest of your summer and a good start to the fall!



Don't forget to pay your dues! Check your mailbox or contact us to make sure you are current. We greatly appreciate your support.

VERMONT ACADEMY OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

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TO:

Come visit us at www.vaas.us!