



Welcome to the Vermont State Archives and Records Administration (VSARA)

**Upcoming...**

- Records Officer/Liaison Orientation

**First Thursdays**

Afternoons 1:30 – 3:00 pm

November 6

December 4

January 8

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**General Record Schedules**

- Tax Assessments and Tax Appeals

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**Fast Fact**

- How much new information is created per person each year?

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**Contact us!**

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[vermont-archives.org](http://vermont-archives.org)

**Conference Report**

**Archivists Storm the Capitol: The 2014 CoSA/NAGARA/SAA Joint Annual Meeting**

This August our nation's capitol welcomed what was perhaps the largest gathering of archivists in American history! Washington, DC is home to many of the most unique and interesting repositories in the country, so it was the perfect place for the joint annual meeting of the Council of State Archivists (CoSA), the National Association of Government Archives and Records Managers (NAGARA), and the Society for American Archivists (SAA). Several VSARA staff members played active roles in this year's conference. ([continued on p. 2](#))



**VSARA in the News**

**National Board Names Vermont State Archivist as President**

Tanya Marshall, Vermont State Archivist and Director of the Vermont State Archives & Records Administration, was recently elected as president of the National Association of Government Archives and Records Administrators (NAGARA). ([continued on p. 3](#))

**From the State Archives**

**Vermont State Archives to Celebrate Archives Month**

Each year October is celebrated as National Archives Month. In honor of the occasion, Secretary of State Jim Condos and State Archivist Tanya Marshall are sponsoring an open house and book talk at the Vermont State Archives and Records Administration. The Thursday, October 23 event features historian Gary Shattuck, who will discuss and sign copies of his new book, *Insurrection, Corruption & Murder in Early Vermont*. ([continued on p. 4](#))



**Best Practices Corner**

**Electronic Records Day, 10/10**

Friday, October 10<sup>th</sup>, marks the third Electronic Records Day—or, 1010, for a little binary joke! The Council of State Archivists (CoSA) created Electronic Records Day to raise awareness of the crucial role electronic records play in our world. As we continue to increase our reliance on technology, the challenge to manage and preserve access to this digital information only becomes more difficult—and more important. ([continued on p. 5](#))





**Upcoming...**

- Records Officer/Liaison Orientation

**First Thursdays**

**Afternoons 1:30 – 3:00 pm**

November 6  
 December 4  
 January 8

We strongly encourage newly appointed records officers and liaisons to attend one of our orientation sessions, held once a month. At these events we provide informal, basic training in records management and State Records Center Procedures and give you the opportunity to tour our facilities and meet our staff.

We now offer orientation sessions on the first Thursday of every month, at 1:30pm. If you can't make it to one of our scheduled open houses, and have two or more people in your office who'd like to visit VSARA, let us know and we'll be happy to schedule a visit at another time.

To register for an orientation session or get more information,

email us at [rim@sec.state.vt.us](mailto:rim@sec.state.vt.us)

or

call Sally Blanchard at 828-5385.

**Conference Report**

*(continued from front page)*

Senior Archivist Rachel Muse served as NAGARA program committee co-chair. She put in many hours helping to design the schedule of events, and then shepherding a number of sessions along during the conference. As part of her new role at VSARA, Rachel networked with archivists who work primarily on access and outreach issues, and took part in SAA's Access to Electronic Records Working Group.

Records Analyst Sally Blanchard attended a workshop on the Program for Electronic Records Training, Tools, and Standards (PERTTS) Portal, a service hosted by CoSA for accessing information and records resources and training. She also presented a poster on VSARA's Records Officer and Liaison Program, describing the Records Analysis Unit's outreach efforts to inform and connect with liaisons. Sally especially enjoyed responding to the many questions and comments from enthusiastic poster session attendees.



*United States Capitol at sunset*  
[image courtesy of VSARA staff]

Archivist Mariessa Dobrick also presented a well-received poster, describing the unique challenges and opportunities for providing access to the Vermont State Hospital Records. She attended educational sessions on topics ranging from working with born-digital collections to managing archival projects. Mariessa moderated the joint VSARA-Library of Virginia session entitled "Discovering Our Shared History in Chancery Court Records: The Vermont and Virginia Approach."

Susan Swasta, archivist for VSARA's court records project, presented Vermont's approach at this session. The Virginia and Vermont archivists compared the way their two very different state archives handle processing and providing access to chancery court records.

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### General Record Schedules

- Tax Assessments and Tax Appeals

The VSARA Records Analysis and Policy Development Unit would like to announce our latest General Record Schedules (GRS) available for agency use in managing tax records.

State and local government in Vermont are both responsible for the [assessment of taxes](#), as well as [settling claims and complaints](#) based around them. Our two latest GRS provide guidance on the maintenance of records tied to these activities.

General Record Schedules set minimum retention requirements for records related to certain activities or functions of state government.

Retention periods and directives are determined based upon a review of state and federal legal requirements.

Agencies using GRS should review any legal requirements or administrative needs that are unique to them, since this may mean that records need longer retention than the time set in the schedule.

VSARA records analysts are always available and willing to assist in determining if and how GRS can be used by your agency.

Visit [our website](#) to learn more about using this and other available GRS.

### Conference Report

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VSARA presentation at Session 709  
[image courtesy VSARA staff]

appraisal and scheduling at a panel session entitled "Appraising Government Records: What Constitutes Value?" Other perspectives were provided by Virginia and North Carolina. And -- most notably -- Tanya's long-time participation in NAGARA culminated in her election as [NAGARA President](#).

VSARA's full-time Archives and Records staff deeply appreciate the rare professional opportunity of attending the 2014 joint conference. We have been energized and inspired by learning what our colleagues are doing throughout the country. Now we're ready to dive into new projects of our own! 📁

Susan illustrated the relevance of these little-known records to the history of Vermont, and described VSARA's success in opening them to researchers through the partially NHPRC-funded project.

State Archivist Tanya Marshall spent the entire week in Washington, attending business meetings and workgroup sessions for both CoSA and NAGARA. She spoke on

Vermont's experiences in records



Waiting for a plenary session to start

[image courtesy VSARA staff]

### VSARA in the News

*(continued from front page)*

NAGARA represents Federal, state and local archivists, records managers and other government record administrators throughout the United States. Dr. Bruce Dearstyne, former NAGARA Executive Director, worked with Marshall during her first semester of graduate school. Dearstyne stated that he is "thrilled to see Tanya elected as the association's president. She represents the next generation of leadership with a vision for how archives and records programs can excel in the years ahead.

Secretary of State Jim Condos congratulated Marshall on her election. "Tanya's talents have long been known here in Vermont; anyone who has worked with Tanya knows her commitment and passion for government records," Condos stated. "Vermont is truly fortunate to have a leader in the field working for the state of Vermont." *(continued on p. 4)*





### Announcements

- Reference Room Early Closure

The Vermont State Archives Reference Room will be closing early at 2:00 PM on Thursday, October 23<sup>rd</sup>, in order to prepare for the Archives Month Open House event. For more information, please see the article on this page.

The Reference Room will reopen during normal operating hours on Friday, October 24<sup>th</sup>, from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM. If you have any questions or concerns, you may contact the Reference Room at [archives@sec.state.vt.us](mailto:archives@sec.state.vt.us).

### From the State Archives

*(continued from front page)*

Shattuck's book explores the infamous "Black Snake Affair" and its larger historical context. When the 1808 Embargo Act and War of 1812 trade restrictions banned American exports to France and Great Britain, Vermonters resorted to smuggling goods into Canada. Federal authorities seized the Black Snake, a smuggling boat, in a raid that left three men dead. A fourth would later die in Vermont's first execution by hanging.

The author is a retired attorney, a graduate of Vermont Law School, and is currently pursuing a master's degree in military history. His extensive historical research led him to court records, newspapers, publications, and other sources at VSARA, as well as other archival repositories. Shattuck will share the story of how his book came into being, highlighting the use of archival records. Some of those very records will be on display, along with other VSARA collections.



*Archival records on display*  
[Image courtesy VSARA staff]

An open house and tours of the Archives, beginning at 4 PM, will precede the 6 PM book talk. Secretary Condos noted that the event supports VSARA's mission to provide, protect, promote, and preserve Vermont public records for the benefit of its citizens. He encourages Vermonters to participate in this celebration of their state's archives and history.

The October 23 event is free and open to the public. Directions and additional information can be found at [www.vermont-archives.org](http://www.vermont-archives.org), or by contacting VSARA at [archives@sec.state.vt.us](mailto:archives@sec.state.vt.us) or at 802-828-2308. 📱

### VSARA in the News

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*State Archivist Tanya Marshall*  
[Image courtesy VSARA staff]

In addition to NAGARA, Marshall also serves on the board of the Council of State Archivists (CoSA) and is a member of CoSA's State Electronic Records Initiative (SERI) steering committee. Marshall is also the recent recipient of the Society of American Archivists' (SAA) prestigious "Emerging Leader Award." 📱



### Fast Fact

- How much new information is created per person each year?

"Almost 800 MB of recorded information is produced per person each year. It would take about 30 feet of books to store the equivalent of 800 MB of information on paper."

Lyman, Peter and Hal R. Varian, "How Much Information", 2003.

<http://www.sims.berkeley.edu/how-much-info-2003>.

### Best Practices Corner

*(continued from front page)*

CoSA has put together some important tips for government agencies working with electronic records:

1. **Consult your records retention schedule.** Know when you can dispose of the records.
2. **Plan ahead in Electronic Records Management system design.** Make sure it incorporates retention guidelines.
3. **Have standards**—for metadata, for systems, for imaging. This will ensure that your records are authentic and your recordkeeping practices consistent.
4. **Organization is key.** Who is in charge of the record? Which copy is the official copy?
5. **Make the rules**—for naming conventions, file organization, etc.
6. **Back up your files.** Know how the system works, how to retrieve individual items, and if it can restore lost records.
7. **Understand metadata.** It's data about your data, and helps your records live long and prosper!
8. **Keep the content, context and structure of your records** (hint: with metadata)
9. **Do you have built-in strategies?** For migration to new technology, archival transfer, etc.?
10. **Does delete really mean delete?** All copies of a record that exist will have to be included in e-discovery.
11. **Think before you scan.** In order to achieve the most efficient and useful results, consider standards, storage, metadata, and record worthiness before you turn on the scanner.



Binary – the code behind our data  
[Image by DARPA, courtesy of Wikimedia Commons]

For more information and useful tips about Electronic Records Day, visit [CoSA's website](#). Vermont also maintains its own [best practices and guidelines](#) for many issues relating to electronic records, such as file formats, metadata, and imaging projects.

### Contact us!

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Look for more features on records management standards in future issues. 📄