



**Sustainable  
Libraries  
Initiative**

October 2025



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Libraries  
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# SLI Newsletter

The latest news and updates from  
the Sustainable Libraries Initiative

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## Congratulations!



**University of Maryland**  
College Park, Maryland



**School Librarian Cohort**  
New York

on becoming **certified sustainable!** We commend you for your  
commitment and achievement. Learn more with the links below!

University of Maryland Libraries Press Release

University of Maryland Libraries Final Presentation

Press Release: Ten NY School Librarians Certified Sustainable

Collection of Final Presentations from SLCP School Librarians

# MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

**Name:** Kennebunk Free Library

**Location:** Kennebunk, Maine

**Membership:** SLCP Public Library



The Kennebunk Free Library in Maine has a unique program to combat loneliness, build community connections, and help animals in need: a cat foster program!



Kicking off in June 2023, the library built a community partnership with the Animal Welfare Society of Maine. In exchange for cats to provide patrons with companionship during their library visits, the library serves as a satellite adoption site that encourages patrons to "adopt don't shop" and provides the animal with a much more comfortable environment than in a traditional shelter setting, allowing their personalities to shine.

In July of 2025, the library celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> adoption: Milo, pictured top left.



In total, the library has fostered 55 cats and counting! Glory, pictured bottom right, is currently in residence.

Using social media platforms, the library keeps patrons up to date on the current feline resident and all adoption success stories.

The program also caught the attention of News Center Maine, who did a feature on the library celebrating its success and further spreading the word on where those in the Kennebunk community can go to make a new furry friend. In the video, the library's Assistant Director Allison Atkins remarks,



**"There are lots of stereotypes about librarians that are not true, but the librarian and cat stereotype is absolutely true."**



For more information on this program, check out the links below. If you have your own great idea you're proud of, fill out the linked form to submit your idea for future editions of the newsletter!

[Kennebunk Free Library Website](#)

[Keep up with the cats on Kennebunk's Instagram!](#)

News Center Maine: Video Report on the Program

Want to be featured? Complete the submissions form!

## SLI UPDATES

### **Advisory Board Member Hazel Onsrud Invited to *The New York Times* Climate Forward Event**



The *New York Times* hosts an annual Climate Forward event that invites global leaders in sustainability to converse on the future of climate action. This year, SLI Advisory Board Member Hazel Onsrud of the Curtis Memorial Library in Maine was honored as a changemaker in the lineup, alongside a small number of other professionals in a variety of industries. Take a look into the event overview with the link below.

### **SLCP Certified Curtis Memorial Library Featured on *NBC News* for Its Library of Things**



Curtis Memorial Library in Brunswick, Maine has been highlighted yet again for its extensive library of things: this time by NBC News!

Watch the video report with the link below to take a peek into the library and the work organized by Adult Services Librarian Hazel Onsrud.



### **ALA President Sam Helmick writes Sustainability Column for *American Libraries Magazine***

Speaking on sustainability as one of ALA's core values, ALA President Sam Helmick highlighted the National Climate Action Strategy for Libraries co-created by the Sustainable Libraries Initiative, the SLI Roadmap to Sustainability mobile app, and the series of SLI webinars on the WebJunction platform. Read Sam's column linked below!



New York Times: Climate Forward Event

NBC News: Curtis Memorial Library, Library of Things

Sam Helmick — Sustainability at Our Core

## Climate Resilience & Sustainability: Webinar and Resources

SLI President Rebekkah Smith Aldrich presented a program for the *Documentary Heritage & Preservation Services for New York* in August. The link below provides a recording to the webinar, *Climate Resilience & Sustainability: Collections Care for the Future*, as well as links to several related resources. Individuals from any location are welcome to view these materials.

## Upcoming Conferences

### Iowa Library Association Annual Conference

- October 1-3, 2025
- Sioux City, Iowa



Come find our booth on the exhibit floor!

### Virginia Library Association Annual Conference

- October 1-3, 2025
- Richmond, Virginia



Visit our booth (#105) in the exhibit hall, come see us at the poster session, or attend our program, *From Anxiety to Action: How the Sustainable Library Certification Program Builds Stronger Communities*, presented by SLI advisory board members Lisa Kropp and Jennifer Ferriss.

### New York Library Association Annual Conference

- November 5-8, 2025
- Saratoga Springs, New York



Come find our booth on the exhibit floor and attend our preconference *From Anxiety to Action: How the Sustainable Library Certification Program Builds Stronger Communities*, presented by SLI advisory board members Lisa Kropp, Jennifer Ferriss, and Matthew Bollerman pm Wednesday, November 5<sup>th</sup> at 9:30 am.

## Upcoming Webinars

To better serve you, we've curated a series of valuable upcoming sessions. Participants in the certification program may attend some of these sessions to fulfill certain action items. All links to register can be found below.

### **Strategic Climate Communication: Insights and Tools for Effective Strategies**

- Thursday, October 23 @ 2:00 pm EDT

Communicating effectively on climate change can seem like a daunting task - especially in this polarized environment. Effective climate communicators know that the first rule of communication is to know your audience. In this session, Mallika Talwar from the Yale Program on Climate Change Communication (YPCCC) will share how local institutions such as libraries can leverage public opinion data and messaging insights to better understand their communities and craft communication strategies that resonate with diverse audiences. We will explore how YPCCC's research and tools can be applied to effectively educate, engage, and empower local audiences to take action on climate change.

### **Naturalist-in-Residence**

- Thursday, December 18 @ 2:00 pm EST

Join Red Hook Public Library's Director, Alex Geller, for an engaging presentation on how to develop a Naturalist-in-Residence program for your library. Inspired by artist- and writer-in-residence models, Red Hook's Naturalist-in-Residence brings a local ecologist into the library and around the community to lead hands-on workshops and presentations to connect your community with its natural surroundings.

In this session, Alex will walk participants through the development and evolution of Red Hook's Naturalist-in-Residence program, from initial concept to successful implementation. You'll gain practical insight into program structure, budgeting, community partnerships, and how to identify and work with naturalists in your area. Learn how to adapt the model to your community's landscape, whether you're in a small town, suburban neighborhood, or urban environment.

# MEMBER NEWS

*We welcome our new members to the Sustainable Libraries Initiative! Thank you for your joining our community of practice, and demonstrating your commitment to making the world a better place. We're happy to have you!*

## Sustainable Library Certification Program Members:



Blue Hill Public Library  
Blue Hill, Maine

Buck Memorial Library

Buck Memorial Library  
Bucksport, Maine



Ellsworth Public Library  
Ellsworth, Maine



Freeport Community Library  
Freeport, Maine



Friend Memorial Library  
Brooklin, Maine



Harrison Village Library  
Harrison, Maine



Jesup Memorial Library  
Bar Harbor, Maine



Kristyna Acerno, School Librarian  
West Islip, New York



McGill University Libraries  
Montreal, Quebec, Canada



Northeast Harbor Public Library  
Northeast Harbor, Maine

Salisbury  
Free  
Public  
Library

Salisbury Free Public Library  
Salisbury, Vermont



Southwest Harbor Public Library  
Southwest Harbor, Maine



Witherle Memorial Library  
CASTINE, MAINE

Witherle Memorial Library  
Castine, Maine



Westfield Memorial Library  
Westfield, New Jersey

### **Sustainable Libraries Initiative Members:**

#### **Public:**

- |                           |                        |
|---------------------------|------------------------|
| • Amsterdam Free Library  | Amsterdam, New York    |
| • Reading Public Library  | Reading, Massachusetts |
| • Thomas Memorial Library | Cape Elizabeth, Maine  |

#### **Personal:**

- |                 |                       |
|-----------------|-----------------------|
| • Ellen Morse   | Baltimore, Maryland   |
| • Lara Spahr    | Baltimore, Maryland   |
| • Sandy Hunting | North Beach, Maryland |



# FOR YOUR CALENDAR

**October 9**

**SLCP Meetup: Water**  
1:00 pm EDT

This month's meetup topic discusses the use of water in the library space! Whether it's finding ways to reduce your water use, make the swap to more efficient fixtures, or investigate alternatives to irrigation - using water more sustainably can be a challenge.

REGISTER NOW



**November 13**

**SLCP Meetup: Materials and Waste**  
1:00 pm EDT

Come join in on our monthly casual community discussion, this time on how libraries are properly managing waste and materials in the library space!

REGISTER NOW



**December 4**

**SLCP Meetup: Collective Impact**  
1:00 pm EDT

This month's meetup topic discusses how to incorporate the principles of social equity and find solutions to complex social issues within your library! Come listen to your peers, ask questions, and learn more!

REGISTER NOW



**January 8**

**SLCP Meetup: Social Cohesion**  
1:00 pm EDT

This month's meetup topic discusses how to incorporate the principles of social equity and find solutions to complex social issues within your library! Join SLI staff and guest speakers in a group discussion. All are welcome!

REGISTER NOW



October SLCP Meetup: Water

November SLCP Meetup: Materials and Waste

December SLCP Meetup: Collective Impact

January SLCP Meetup: Social Cohesion

PrintReleaf empowers SLCP members to offset the paper and fiber-based materials consumption of your library, in order to sustain and grow our global forestry system. SLCP members can [submit your paper purchases](#) here.



Thanks to the SLI's partnership with CCP Solutions, Sustainable Library Certification Program members have [collectively offset the equivalent of 26.76M letter pages of paper consumption by reforesting 3.21K trees!](#)  
Keep up the good work!



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