a big fan of open

how open source solves problems
in rural libraryland

hi.

My name is jessamyn, you may know me from such education films as "look there's a girl installing ubuntu" and "how to teach librarians how to use firefox for half a decade"
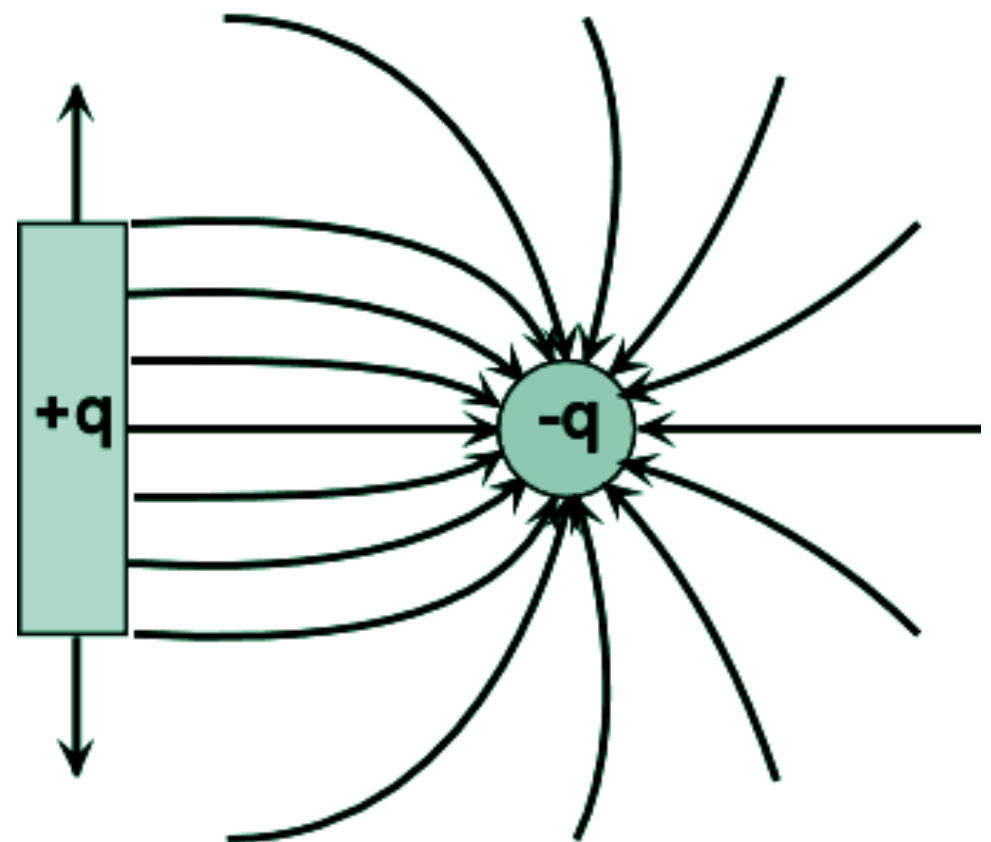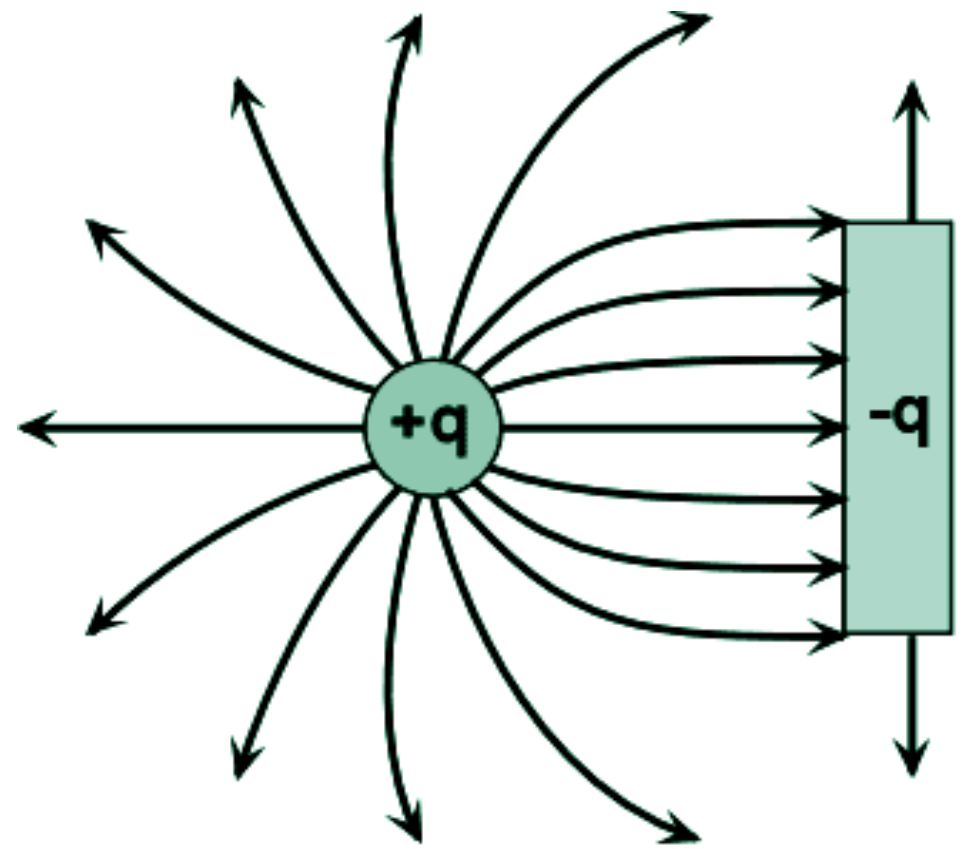
what draws me to open source...

I am
1) cheap
2) political
3) rural/local

rural because we can sort of do our own thing, political because I like the self-organizing aspect and because open source is where all the freaks hang out and cheap because it's easier to feed a free kitten than it is to raise money at a bake sale to bay health insurance premiums

admitting a few things...

Before we get started, I feel like I need to confess a few things

I am not a purist...

I tried to make this presentation using all open source software. I've got a thinkpad running Ubuntu, I could make my presentation using OpenOffice Impress, find some free templates (isn't this one nice?) with pictures of trees on them and go to town. I was thwarted by quotes, among other things. Did I spell big wrong?
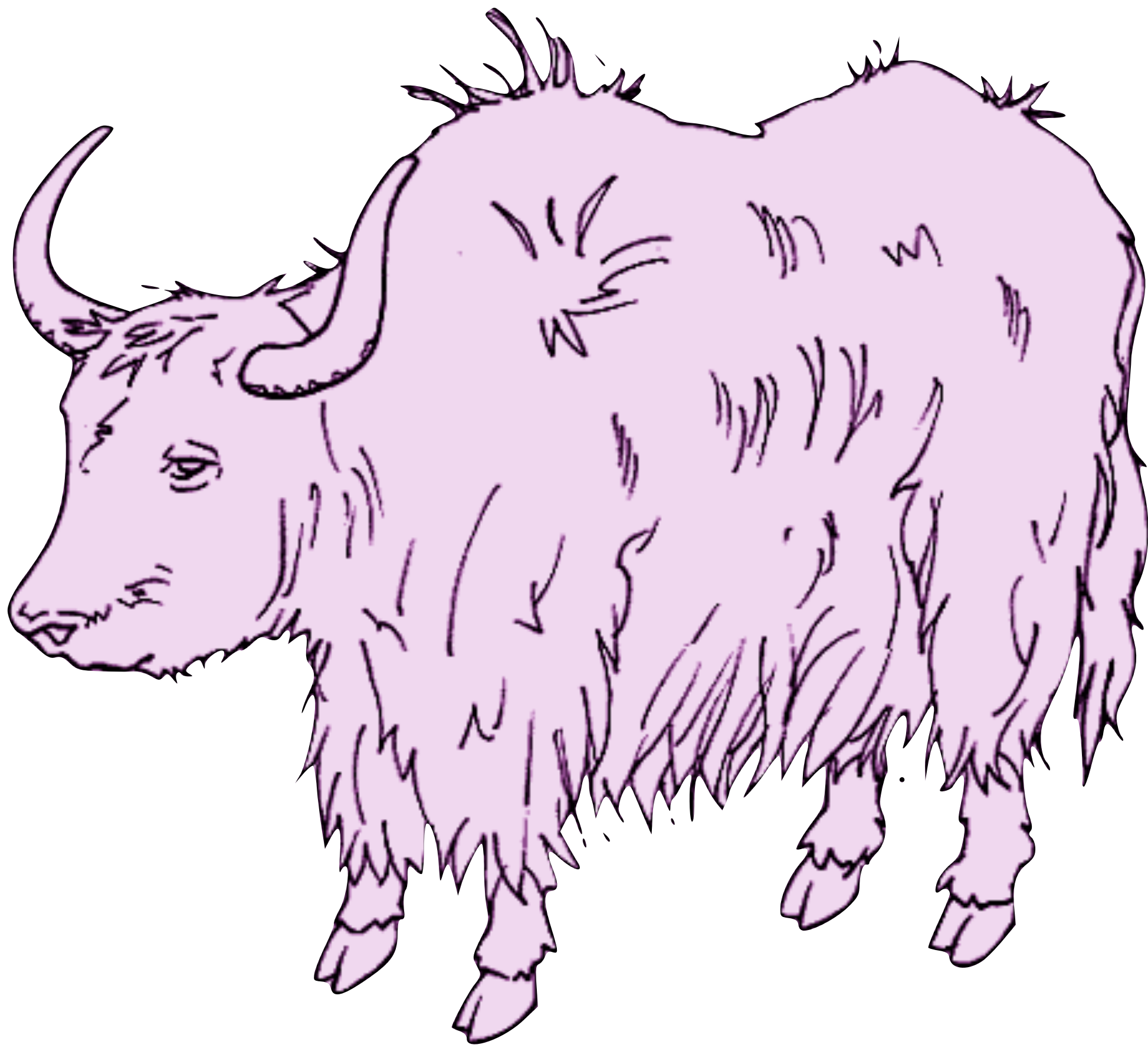
Tuesday, May 19, 2009

Even the Dalai Lama eats the occasional yak and I am not the Dalai Lama. You'll get keynote and like it. Absolutists are also important to the open source cause, but I am not one of them.

Green Mountain Library Consortium

VOKAL/KOHA PROJECT

vokal/Koha Project

In late 2007, the Stowe Free Library, the Carpenter-Carse Library (Hinesburg), and the Kimball Public Library (Randolph) joined with Sheila Kearns of the Vermont Department of Libraries to explore a replacement ILS for Follett, the system currently used by all three libraries. After exploring many options, the group settled on Koha, an open source ILS solution originally created in New Zealand.

May 2009

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

« Apr

my library is using Koha...

Tuesday, May 19, 2009

Also, my library that I work at (more on that in a sec) is automating using Koha. I'm a big fan of Evergreen. I like trees generally. A few libraries including my local were getting together to find a substitute for their aging Follet systems.

Ubuntu @ the Library

Block

Please see this video with original audio at the Vimeo link to the right. Sorry!

I made it myself!

0:23 / 4:36
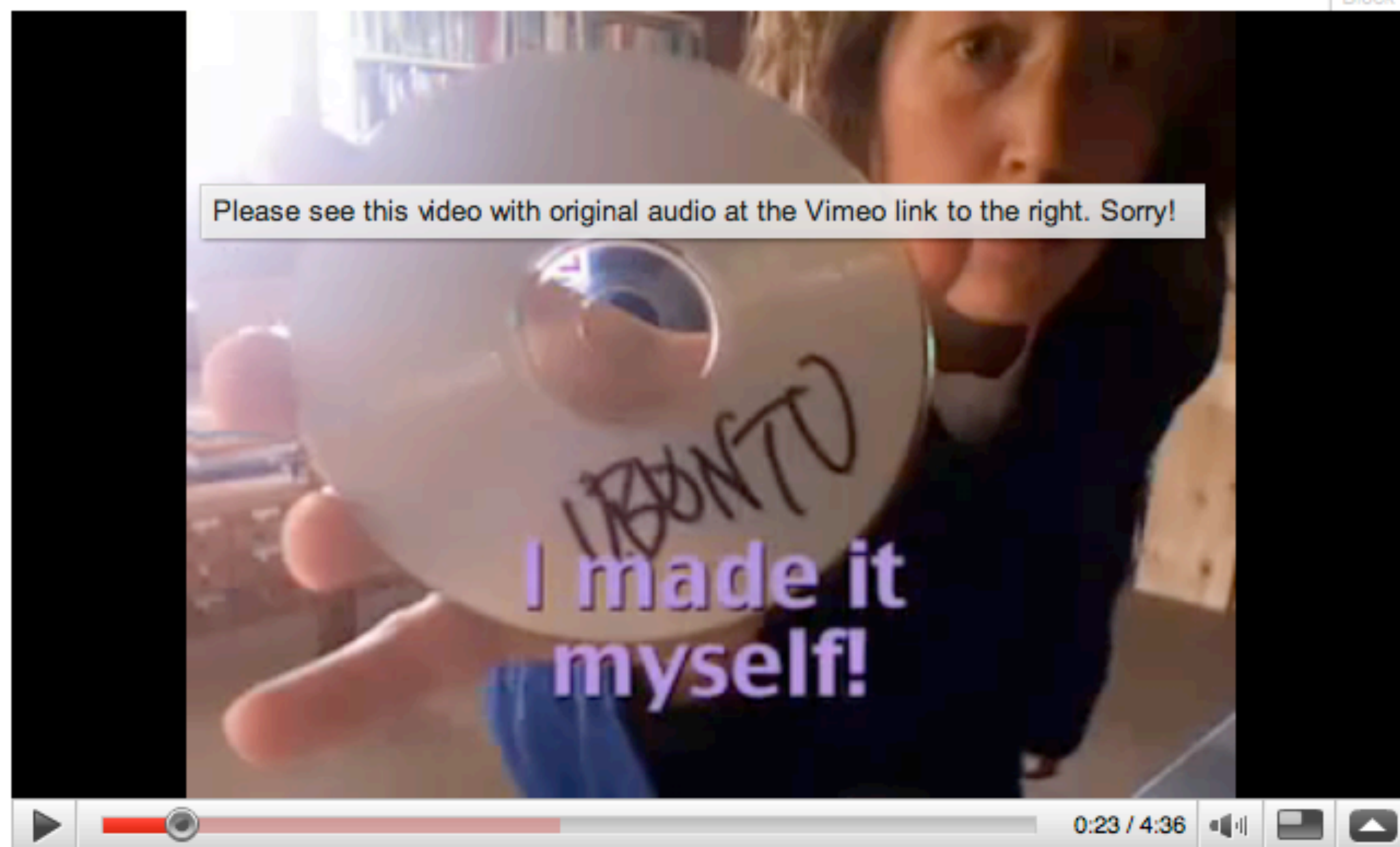
★★★★★ 335 ratings   118,412 views

♥ Favorite   ➜ Share   ✛ Playlists   ⚑ Flag

MySpace   Facebook   Twitter   (more share options)

Local hero and "Internet folk hero" are very different.

The library that I installed Ubuntu at, in Washington Vermont... well it had some problems. The librarian who worked about 16 hours a week divorced her husband and had bigger issues than remembering the admin password which she lost (yes I know how to reset it). My travel budget got axed so I couldn't go there anymore [about 52 miles round trip], Ubuntu said they'd give me 300 free burned copies of the software to take to the conference and they flaked and this video which was so popular on YouTube got me smacked with a copyright takedown notice.

Welcome to the Calef Memorial Library

3964 VT Route 110, PO Box 141
Washington, Vermont 05675
802-883-2343

Librarian: Roberta Carrier
Email: washington@vals.state.vt.us
Hours: Monday 11-4, Tuesday 2-7, Thursday 2-7, Saturday 9-1

read more about us at the *Central Vermont Library histories* page

I'm not usually modest, but I can't single-handedly change the world

but.

but, some things do change the world, slowly or quickly. Or at least our world.

Out in Vermont where I live [this is not clip art, this is the view outside my window] we don't have any consortia and we don't have very much money.

Welcome to the Vermont Automated Libraries System (VALS)
at the Vermont Department of Libraries

Vermont   *Information*

## 2007 Vermont Public Library Foundation Grants

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[Law/Legal] [Legislation] [Jobs] [Searching/Reference Tools] [Telephone/E-mail Directory]
[Vermont Home Page] [Weather] [Web-based library catalogs] [Blog-DOL]

Vermont Government and Library Information

About the Vermont Automated Libraries System (VALS) and the Department of Libraries (DOL)
Bar Examinations - Essay Questions and Model Answers
Burlington Free Press and Rutland Herald Indexes (via the University of Vermont)

Tuesday, May 19, 2009

this was until very recently my department of libraries home page
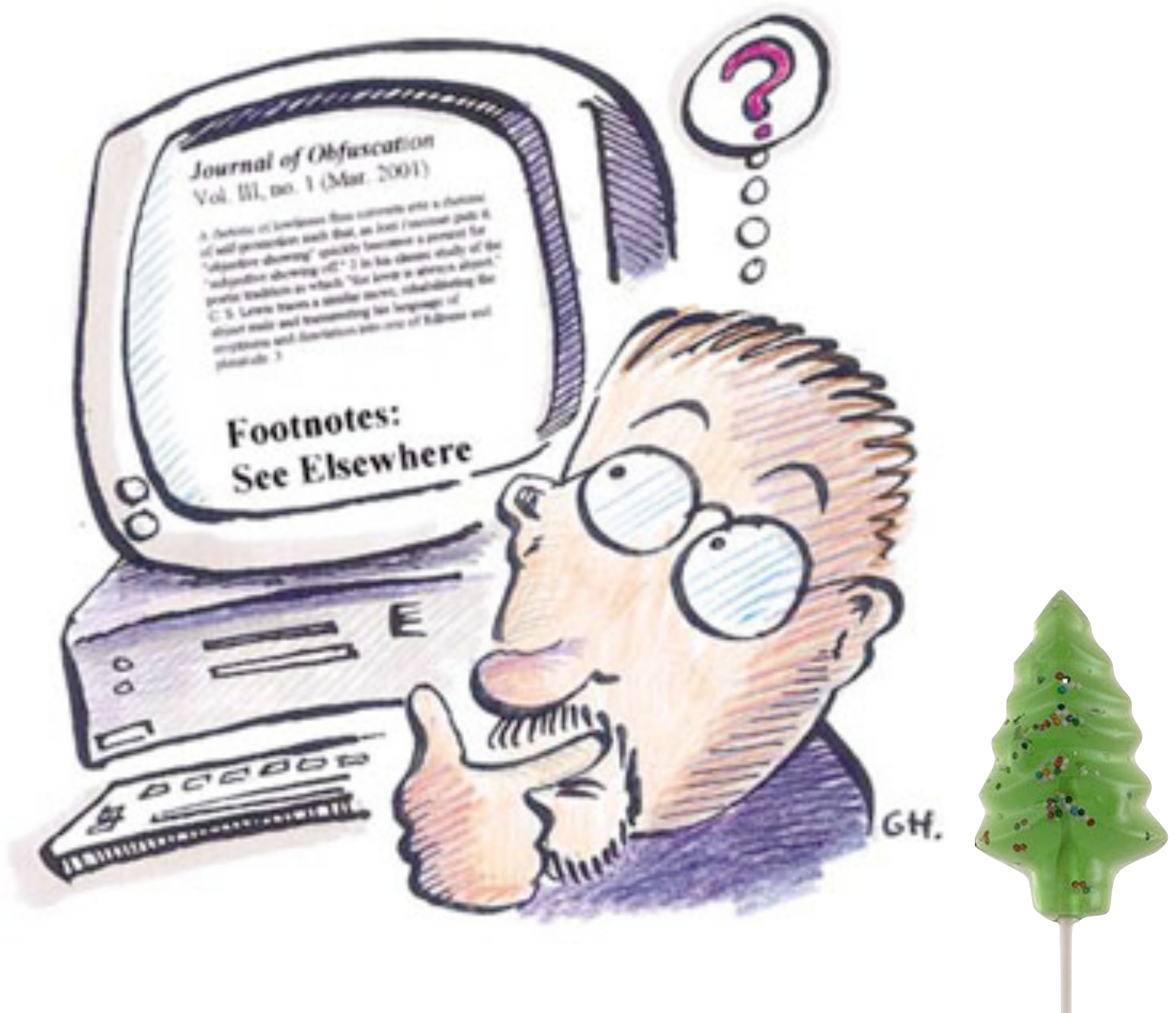
When I was working at a public library I heard the then-head of the DoL talking to some local legislators about how it used to be that librarians would have to clean toilets and now we have to fix computers and while there's a small degree to which I blame the Gates Foundation for this technostress-by-proxy I still felt that this was the wrong attitude. It was clear that small libraries go nowhere by going through channels or waiting for large organizations to get around to remembering us.

click

I did make small inroads at that library by requesting that Firefox be put on the Gates Foundation PCs (we were still under our support agreement, my systems librarian had to call them to make sure it was okay) and I enjoyed buttonholing the Sirsi people at a conference and asking why their product didn't work with Netscape at all (back when questions like that were not ridiculous) but getting things changed was slow.

Vermont Department of Libraries

HELP   QUIT

Keyword   Browse   Numeric   Other Libraries   My Account

Enter a word or phrase to search:

Search by:

Author   Title   Subject   Series   Periodical Title   **Keyword**

Keyword Searches: This search displays records with the word or phrase anywhere in the "Search by" field (author, title, or subject). The Keyword button searches the entire record.

Add Limits

Clear Search

Review the searches for this session:

Previous Search   Next Search

Contact the library

Tuesday, May 19, 2009

This is still how we have to look for books in the ILL system. This is a combination of lack of time/apathy on our part but also not-super-simple-to-mess-with software.

SO.

So what did we do?

Last year sometime a group of librarians who were tired of waiting for people to retire got together to work on a few projects. Downloadable audiobooks (do not get me started) and a joint but not joined catalog project. We started with three libraries and now we have 29. That's a double digit percentage of VT's public libraries. This is a photo of our first meeting. We're called the Green Mountain Library Consortium

We have one techie who is sufficiently offline that this is the best photo I have of him. People chip in to a group pool so we could send him to Koha camp. We also hired a designer. We have work parties for people to bring their servers and install Debian. Then another party to install Koha etc.
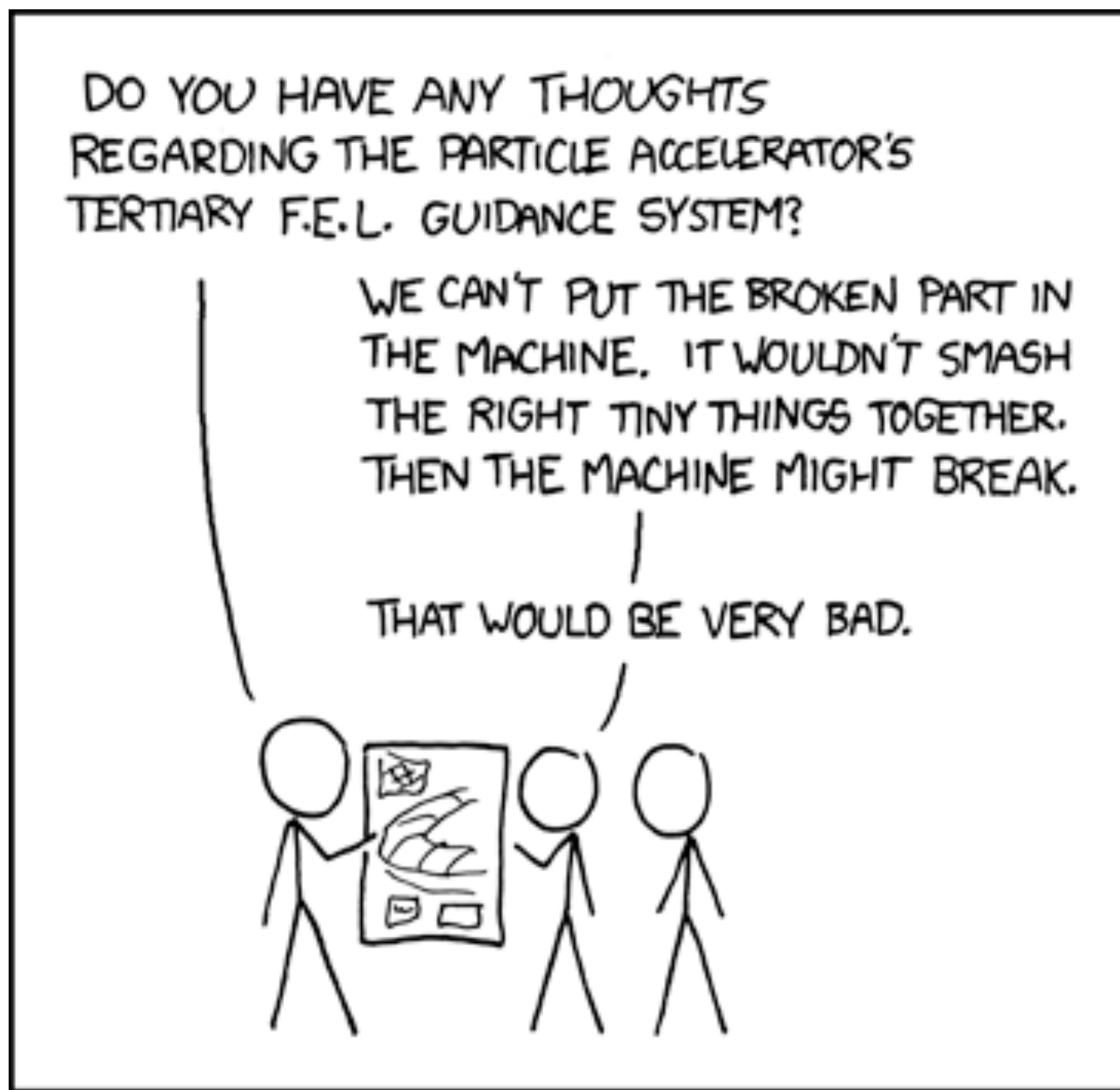
At the time I wasn't even working at a library —— I mostly teach adult education classes and was a roving tech support lady to a set of tiny libraries —— so my main role was to help convince people that this would not be unspeakably hard [you can't say easy but you can say "simple"] and that if it was, they could blame me personally. Not having someone to blame is one of the things that makes people ootchy about open source. This was good for morale.

Enter patron card number or partial name

START: [   ] Submit

Check Out   Check In   Catalog   Patrons

MORE ACTIONS

Circulation

- Check out to. [   ] OK
- Check in
- Transfers

Patrons

- Search. [   ] OK

Search

- Search catalog [   ] OK

Lists

Cataloging

- Add MARC Record
- Authorities
- Serials

Acquisitions

Reports

Koha administration

- System preferences

Tools

About Koha

Green Mountain Library Consortium

News

Library News Item 1

This news item has something or other to do with the library, or maybe the consortium. Delenit, euismod nonummy consequat nulla, facilisis feugiat blandit luptatum adipiscing autem vel. Quis aliquam, eros nibh minim dolore odio ullamco per vel molestie, ipsum accumsan enim volutpat erat hendrerit. Et qui consequat, enim quis, eum facilisi diam esse duis nibh ea accumsan loborus facilisis aliquip nulla elit ea

Posted on 4, 29, 2009 Edit | Delete | New

Another News Item

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Posted on 4, 6, 2009 Edit | Delete | New

Tuesday, May 19, 2009

Already our catalog looks better than any other catalog in the state. We've got a few live versions but most of them are launching this summer. It's still the end of winter at my place. We had a frost this week.

3 VSR3 0000000 2 8

3 VSR3 0000000 3 9

TUNBRIDGE PUBLIC LIBRARY

We're at the barcoding stage now, at my library. We've put stickers on maybe 80% of the collection, that's like 6500 books! I like how we've got 99,999,999 possible barcode numbers. Even with all the setbacks [the librarian realized we'd be losing ~20 cents a sticker if we barcoded a book she later weeded so she's been in a weeding frenzy and insists we wait til she's weeded sections before we sticker them] we'll still get it done in less than nine months, pretty sure.

SERVICES

- **DOLcat Online Catalog**
- **Other Vermont Library Catalogs**
- **Vermont Online Library (VOL) Information Databases**
- **Other**

RESOURCES

- **For General Users**
- **For Librarians**
- **Law-Related**

Welcome to the Vermont Department of Libraries

Welcome to the Vermont Department of Libraries web site. The Department is part of the Agency of Administration and provides a variety of library and information services to state government, libraries statewide, the general public, and Vermonters with special needs.

The Department is organized as follows:

- **Office of the State Librarian/Assistant State Librarian**
- **Library Development and Support Services**
- **Library Technology**
- **Reference, Law and Information Services**
- **Special Services**

Mission Statement

Guided by 22 V.S.A. §601-635, the mission of the Department of Libraries (DOL) is to collect, organize, and disseminate information and library materials in a variety of formats to the three branches of State government, libraries statewide, the general public, and Vermonters with special needs, to support and strengthen local libraries, to foster new means for statewide cooperation and resource sharing among all types of libraries, and to increase public awareness of libraries and their services and to act as an advocate on their behalf

- We provide access to information in a variety of formats to the three branches of Vermont State Government in order to contribute to effective and efficient government,
- We provide consultation, training and other services to librarians, public library board members and elected officials and offer resources, services and grants to qualifying libraries in order to strengthen their capacity to deliver quality library service,

News

- VT Dept. of Libraries Staff Receive Awards
- VT Librarians to be Trained as Local Economic Development Ambassadors
- VT Dept. of Libraries Consultant Receives Award from the VT Library Association
- 2009 Certificate of Public Librarianship Recipients
- State Librarian's Request to Public Library Directors

> View All News Stories

Tuesday, May 19, 2009

The DoL finally got some new blood and they're looking at our project as an inspiration for finally getting a real union catalog statewide. They're looking at a few options, all of them open source (hint to Equinox folks, call my state librarian, if you haven't already). Meanwhile the DoL's budget has been slashed making this even more of a genuine option for us.

and.

And we're doing things. Moving forward. All of us.

The best thing all these sorts of projects is that I don't have to feel that by coming here I'm like the Mac person at a Windows Vista rally. Our projects have more in common than they have differences. Both philosophically and practically. And all of this rolls into why this sort of thing plays well in rural america
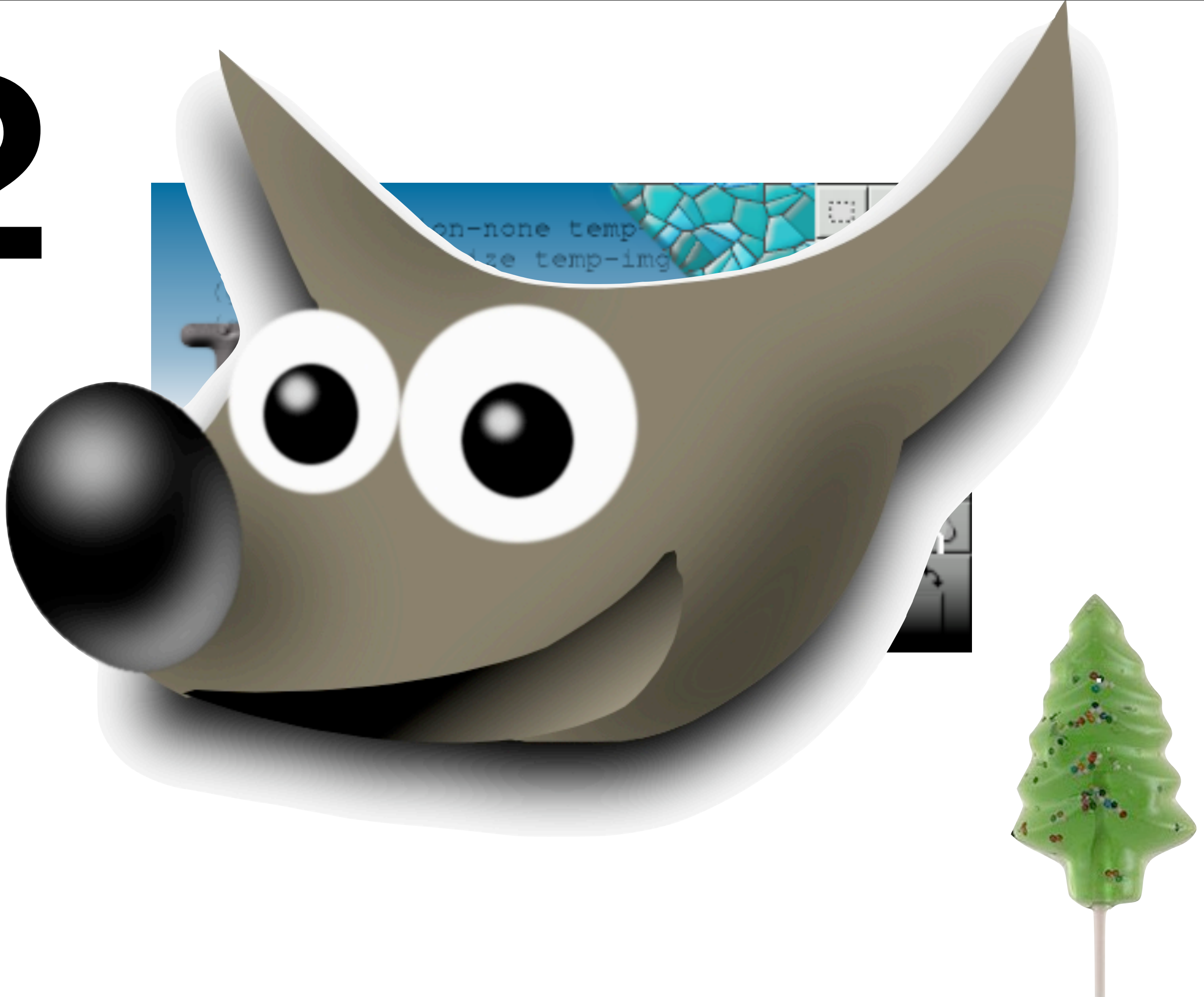
1

We like to hire known people who do good work, not marketing agencies who sell you things you don't need. It's easier to convince people that this is a project worth doing and paying for when they see that it pays Richard, and me, and Stan and Stephanie and when they have a problem, we actually track it and fix it, not toss it in the bottomless pit suggestion box.
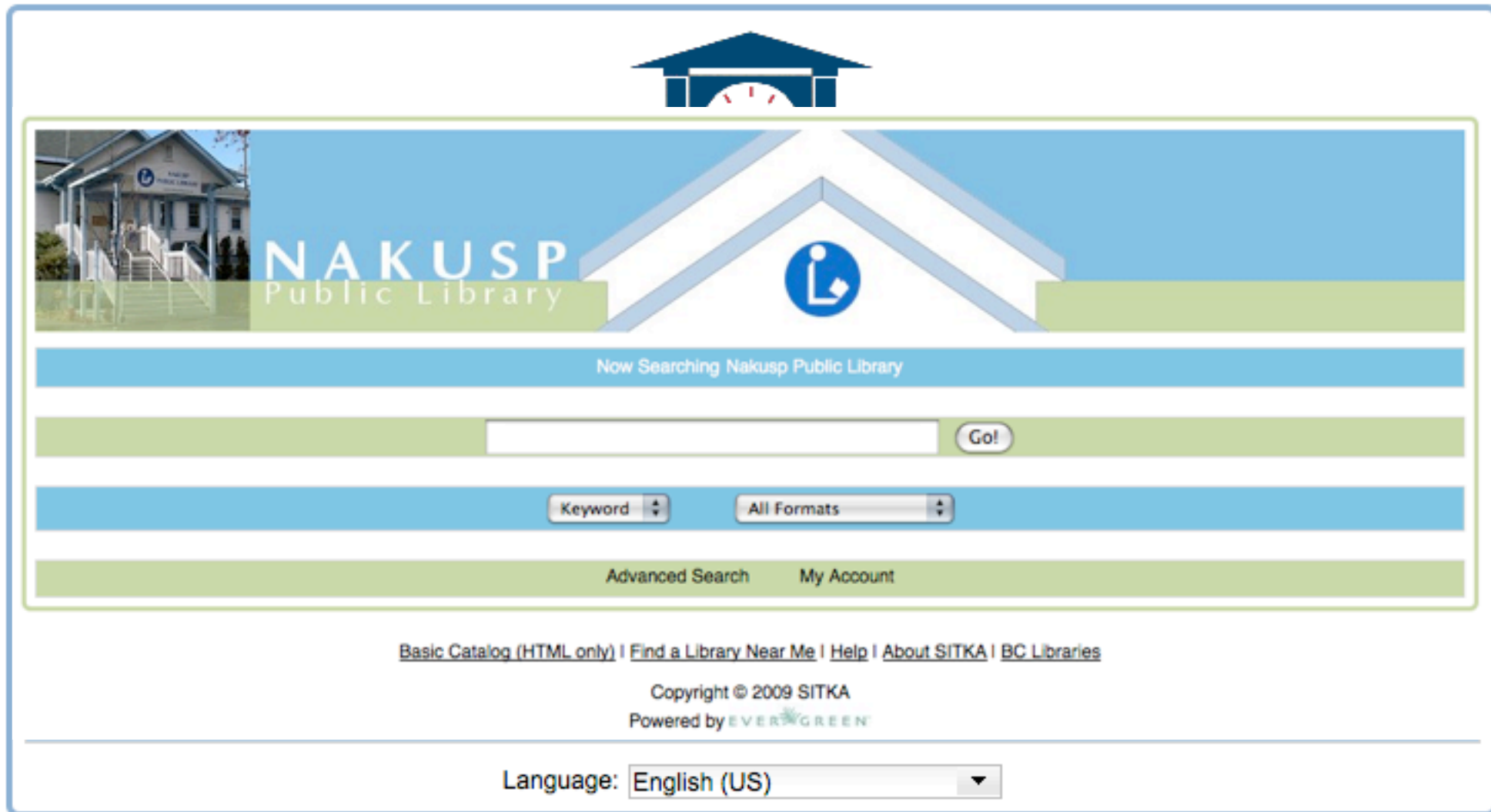
2

We believe in the things we work on, and we can show you why without resorting to rhetoric. Back when I was newer to open source, it had a bit of a crusade feeling to it. You used Gimp because it was open source and had street cred, not because it was easy to use, or good to look at it. Though I admit, there's an appeal to knowing if you didn't like how it looked, you could fix it.

3
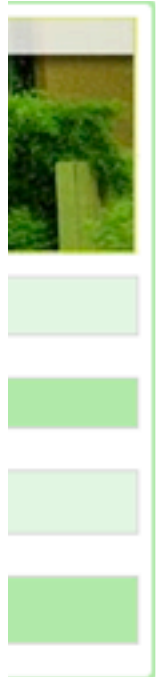
We believe in local, customized and personalized projects that reflect [or can be tailored to reflect] the people who use them. One of my favorite things about following the Evergreen Explosion is seeing how different places – from Georgia, to Vancouver BC to Michigan to Armenia -- have customized their own versions and how it makes every library large and small feel like the tools are theirs. Just being able to highlight your own logo and not the ILS companies logo is a huge deal.

And that combination is just the thing that can convince me and many other people in similar situations of the worthwhileness of doing a project AND this combo will play okay at town meeting with Farmer Bob who ultimately is going to have to use and pay tax moneys for this.

thank you!

Thanks for helping me help him. Thanks for doing what you do. Have a safe trip home.