

Solving Problems with FOSS

What works and doesn't work
in Vermont's Libraries

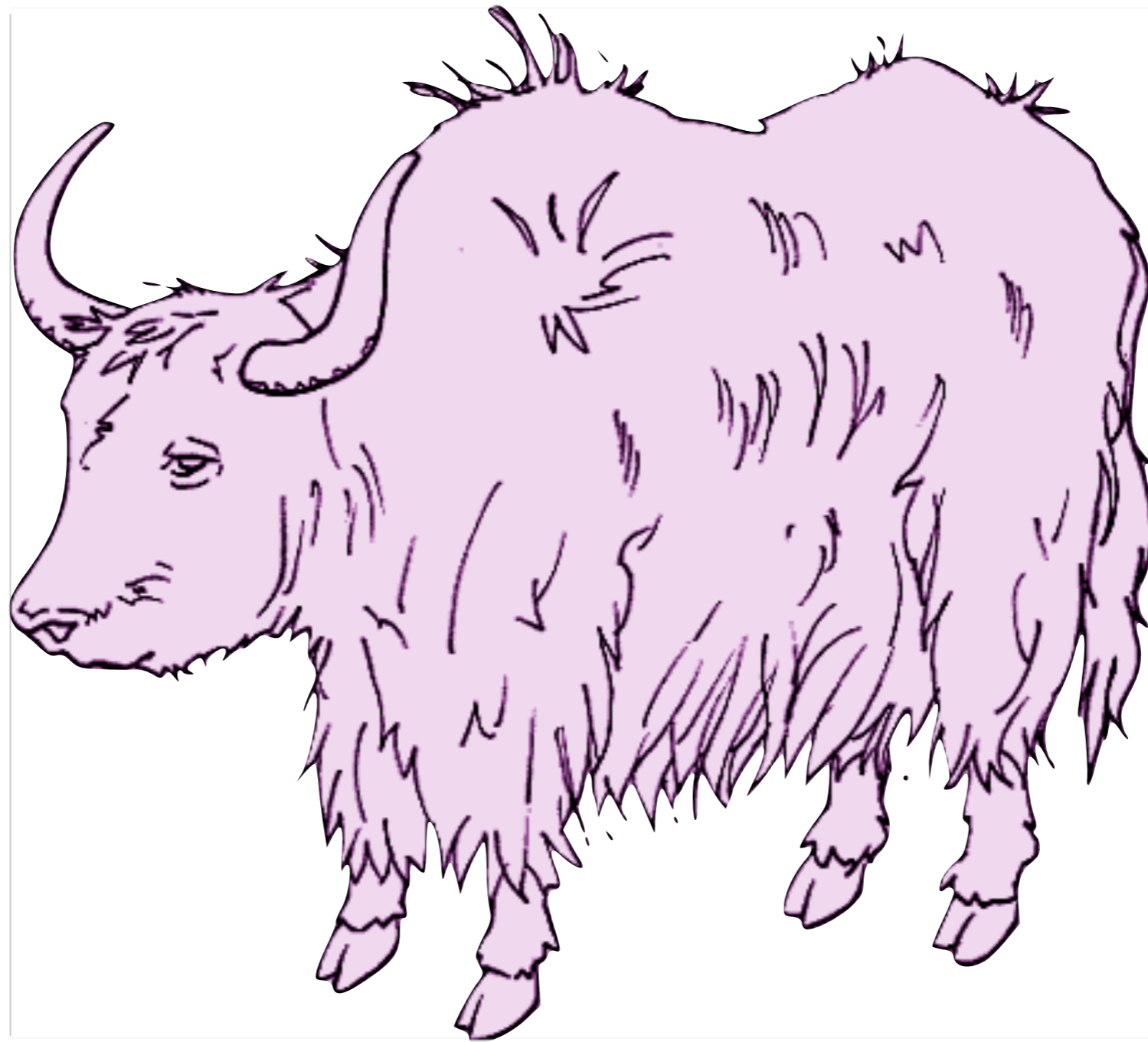
Jessamyn West - librarian.net/foss





I'm only sort of a librarian

Hi -- I'm a sometimes librarian most-times technology educator who is going to talk to you about FOSS in Vermont Libraries. This is a photo of Stan who I call "my tech guy" demonstrating how our barcode scanner works on a Coke can. I work most days at the Randolph Technical Career Center...



a word about perfection

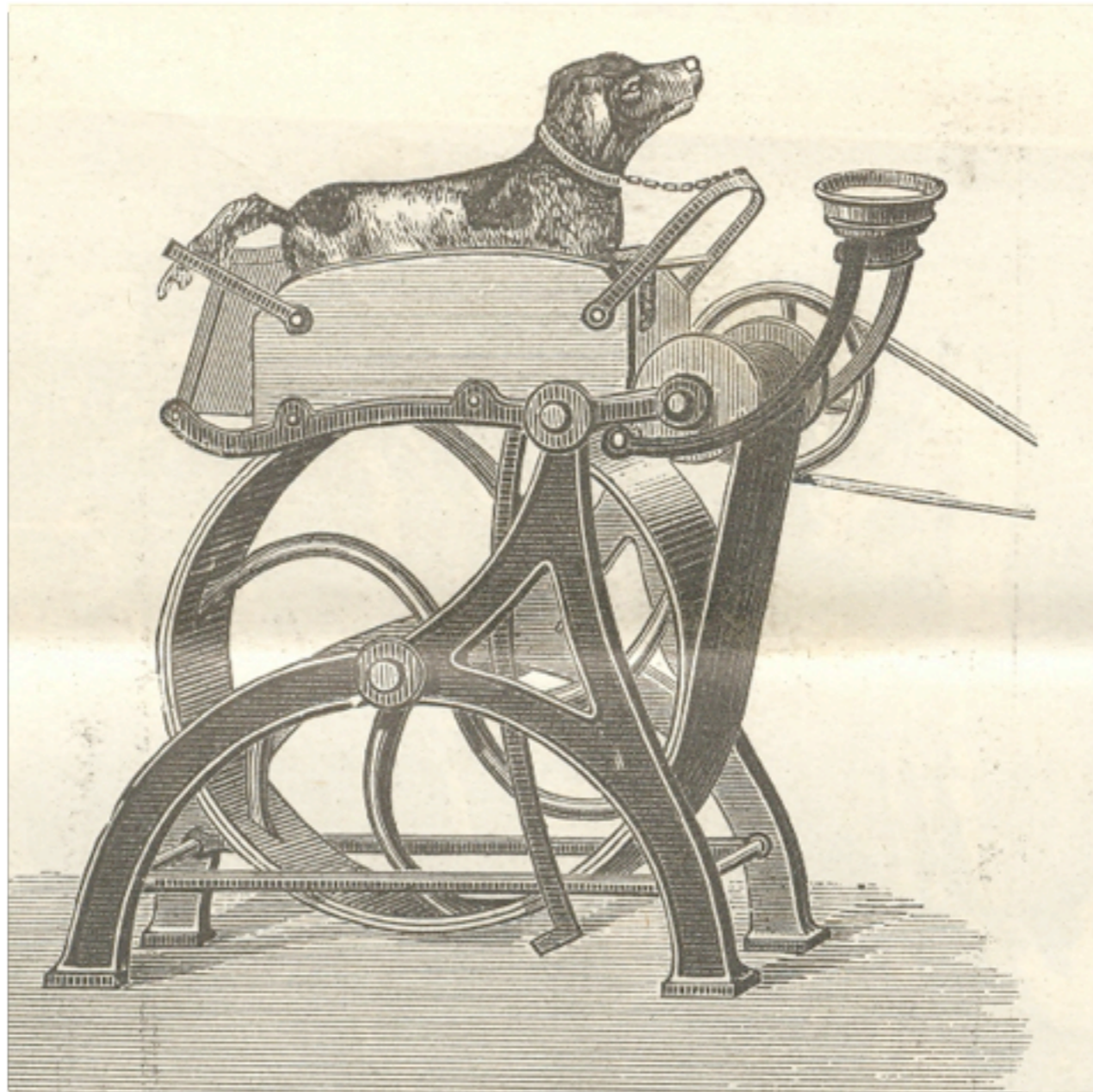
Even the Dalai Lama eats the occasional yak and I am not the Dalai Lama. You'll get keynote and like it. Absolutists are also important to the open source cause, but I am not one of them.



A big fan of open

„how open source...“

keynote is not impress



rural, cheap, local

When you hear rural cheap and local, I know what you're thinking... dog engine. "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 buy health insurance premiums"



a word about failures

My story is one of failure, though I don't mean failure in a BAD way...



I mean opportunities

Really one of my favorite things about FOSS type projects is how much we have ownership of them from start to finish. So when they fail we can say "hey we know what happened, we can fix that" This is because there's no black box of mystery surrounding the parts we'd really like to change.



a word about the video

So, many people in the FOSS community know me because of this video... this is from 2007. A few things happened after that video. while I'd like to say that the library was happy and healthy using open source tools. – the librarian got divorced, my funding got cut, Google came after me for copyright, the cds canonical said they were sending never arrived?



a word about Koha

We got Koha running in the basement of a tiny library. You can see it at the URL on the links list. It's not live yet.



about our organizations

There is not one umbrella group for FOSS, or even for most library topics in Vermont. {A story about how library catalogs work} There is a statewide catalog you can use to search all public libraries, however, when you want to automate your catalog, you have to extract those records and jam them into your own catalog software... {formation of GMLC}

HELP

Vermont Department of Libraries

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](#)

Copyright © 1997–2005 Sirsi Corporation. All rights reserved.
GL3.0 (480)

models?

As a result, we don't have models for what good design looks like, but we do have an idea that one of our values is, or should be, "cheap" The good news is, cheap is easy. Not minding bad design is only a bonus.

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

Vermont



Information

[2007 Vermont Public Library Foundation Grants](#)

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

[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 \(part of the University of Vermont\)](#)

[Census 2000](#)

leadership?

This was how the DoL website looked until 2008. They're under the Dept of Administration in Vermont

ongoing big projects

- ▶ MassLNC & MASScat
- ▶ Upcoming VT DoL statewide catalog
- ▶ NELINET thingdoo?
- ▶ FOSS catalogs in GA, MI,
- ▶ **GMLC - Koha/VOKAL**



(links available on web page). I work in GMLC mostly just a little ... "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."

why did this work?

- ▶ “genuine option” idea
- ▶ i.e. hand was forced
- ▶ economic slowdown
- ▶ a few people felt up to it
- ▶ we can make it look easy
- ▶ promised support (yay ByWater!)





relationships make or break

Often it's knowing who to talk to and knowing how to ask nicely. And knowing limits.



given this, what works?

the long game

- ▶ Open Office
- ▶ FOSS CMSes for websites
- ▶ Audacity
- ▶ Firefox sells itself



Hey, we have all year, all our lives.



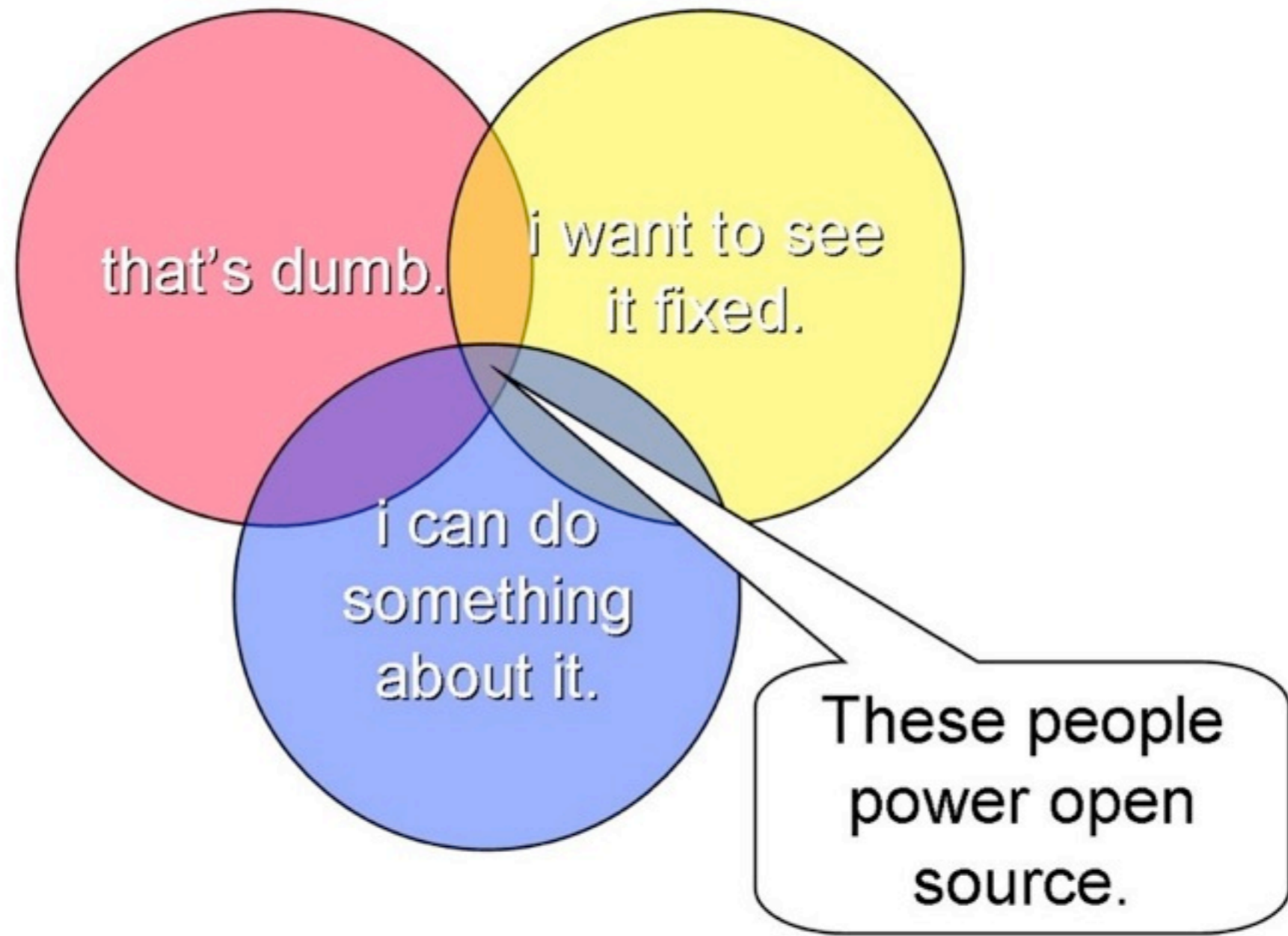
F is for...

free, and fussy and




not entirely without drama...

LibLime's fiasco helped us understand what forking meant.



Hey, that's me!



- 
1. Of each element of a task—ask: **Does this suck?**
 2. Of the whole of a task—ask: **Is this awesome?**



vermont open source

Search

[Advanced Search](#)

SafeSearch: [Moderate](#) ▾

Web > Images [+ Show options...](#)

Results 1 - 18 of about 1,340,000 for v



Vermont's Open

674 x 349 - 157k - png
ncose.org



Open Source

480 x 640 - 79k - jpg
mondoglobo.ning.com



The Vermont Open

639 x 428 - 165k - jpg
ncose.org



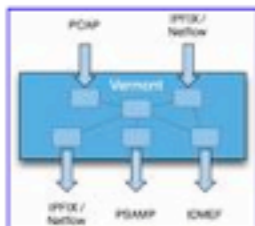
"Evolution -

347 x 400 - 14k - jpg
[evolutionopensource...](http://evolutionopensource.com)



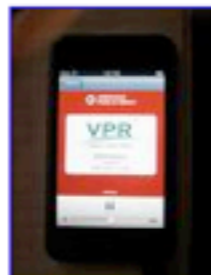
Vermont Adopts

240 x 180 - 16k - jpg
govtech.com



is an

230 x 204 - 26k - png
vermont.berlios.de



Open Source

240 x 320 - 83k
vermont3.com



the field of open

300 x 225 - 14k - jpg
thinkorsink.net



Dean, " an

500 x 375 - 42k - jpg
wired.com
[Find similar images](#)



vermont

480 x 360 - 14k - jpg
wow-tube.com

thanks!

Hey that's me, hey there's you. Hey this is US.