

american libraries

July/August 2022

THE MAGAZINE OF THE AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

2022 ANNUAL CONFERENCE WRAP-UP

p. 12

NEWSMAKER:

Celeste Ng p. 10

International
Innovators p. 22

PLUS:

Exhibit Hall
Highlights



Track your progress. Discover new stories. Inspire a year of reading.

Filled with journaling prompts alongside weekly book recommendations drawn from *Booklist*'s top selections and ALA awards, this engagement calendar published in collaboration with Sourcebooks makes a perfect gift for showing your appreciation to valued colleagues, volunteers, board members, and bibliophiles.

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CONTENTS

July/August 2022

American Libraries | Volume 53 #7/8 | ISSN 0002-9769



COVER STORY

12 **2022 Annual Wrap-Up**

Library workers together again in Washington, D.C.

By Alison Marcotte

FEATURES

18 **A Marketplace of Ideas**

Vendors appreciate a return to in-person networking at a smaller Annual Conference

By Marshall Breeding

22 **2022 International Innovators**

ALA Presidential Citations honor forward-thinking global libraries

Edited by Sallyann Price

UP FRONT

2 **From the Editor**

That's a Wrap
By Sanhita SinhaRoy

5 **From Our Readers**

ALA

3 **From the President** Our Brave Communities

By Lessa Kanani'opua Pelayo-Lozada

4 **From the Executive Director** Calling a Thing a Thing

By Tracie D. Hall

6 **Update**

What's happening at ALA

TRENDS

NEWSMAKER

10 **Celeste Ng**

Acclaimed author imagines a future with disturbing echoes of past and present hate

By Alison Marcotte

11 **Noted & Quoted**

PEOPLE

24 **Announcements**

THE BOOKEND

26 **Reunited, and It Feels So Good**

ON THE COVER: Celeste Ng. Photo by EPNAC

ADVERTISER INDEX

Cambridge University Press 9 | American Library Association Editions Cover 2 | Graphics Cover 3 | JobLIST Cover 4

That's a Wrap



Sanhita SinhaRoy

Of the more than 14,000 people who attended the American Library Association's 2022 Annual Conference and Exhibition in D.C., many I'm sure will agree: It was refreshing to be back in person. Whether you were there, participated virtually, or sat this one out, we have a recap of conference highlights just for you (cover story, p. 12).

Among the many impressive conference speakers was bestselling author Celeste Ng (Newsmaker, p. 10). In our Q&A, she talks with writer Alison Marcotte about the power of story and how book bans attempt to rob people of the ability—and necessary hope—to effect change.

Library technology consultant Marshall Breeding was back in the exhibit hall, noting that "the theme of equity, diversity, and inclusion was prevalent across many products and services this year." Read his roundup of vendor offerings and industry insights in "A Marketplace of Ideas" (p. 18).

Also in the exhibit hall: authors, books, products, and bunnies. (Yes, bunnies.) *American Libraries* Art Director Rebecca Lomax photographed the excitement from the show floor for our Bookend (p. 26).

Want more conference stories? Check out our team's reporting—30 online-exclusive posts—covering Annual speakers and programs, at bit.ly/AL-AC22.

Concluding her series on literacy, ALA Executive Director Tracie D. Hall looks at the topic as it intersects with race, gender, and class, calling on all of us to make the ability to read a right, not "an advantage of the privileged" ("Calling a Thing a Thing," p. 4).

Finally, in her inaugural column ("Our Brave Communities," p. 3), ALA President Lessa Kanani'opua Pelayo-Lozada recalls how library workers have been asked to be courageous during a time of extreme demands. From the pandemic to book challenges to virtual learning and more, library workers must tap into those narratives of hope, resilience, and healing to inspire "a path forward together."

Whether in person or online, we at ALA are grateful that our paths continue to cross with yours.

Enjoy the rest of your summer.

Sanhita

From coverage of speakers and programs to industry insights from the show floor, this conference wrap-up issue has something for everyone.

american libraries

THE MAGAZINE OF THE AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

ALA American Library Association

Address: 225 N. Michigan Ave., Suite 1300
Chicago, IL 60601
Website: americanlibraries.org
Email: americanlibraries@ala.org
Phone: 800-545-2433 plus extension
Career Ads: JobLIST.ala.org

EDITOR AND PUBLISHER

Sanhita SinhaRoy *Catching up with familiar faces*
ssinhaRoy@ala.org | x4219

MANAGING EDITOR

Terra Dankowski *The Q&A at R. L. Stine*
tdankowski@ala.org | x5282

SENIOR EDITOR

Amy Carlton
acarlton@ala.org | x5105

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Interviewing John Cho and R. L. Stine
Diana Panunzial
dpanunzial@ala.org | x4218

Sallyann Price

sprice@ala.org | x4213 *Meeting new people*

EDITORIAL AND ADVERTISING ASSOCIATE

Carrie Smith
casmith@ala.org | x4216

Seeing my ALA colleagues
ART DIRECTOR
Rebecca Lomax *Reconnecting my mom with a former coworker who was presenting*
rlomax@ala.org | x4217

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Reconnecting face-to-face
Lucas McGranahan,
Joanne Trestail

ADVERTISING

Michael Stack mstack@ala.org | 847-367-7120
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PUBLISHING DEPARTMENT

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Associate Executive Director
Mary Jo Bolduc
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Melissa Kay Walling, Director

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Our Brave Communities

Using the power of stories to convey the importance of libraries



**Lessa Kanani'opua
Pelayo-Lozada**

Storytelling demonstrates what statistics cannot: the impact we make on our patrons and students, and how essential our spaces are to making community members feel represented.

Over the past few years, we have been asked to be brave as we do things that once would have been unthinkable. We have had to be brave while defending intellectual freedom and the right to read. We have had to be brave taking on the role of disaster workers in response to COVID-19. And we have had to be brave in reimagining equity and access to information for all—in the library, outdoors, and in the virtual world.

Being brave has not been easy, but we have done it and have faced the unknown for ourselves and our communities. This bravery inspired me to run for president of the American Library Association in summer 2020. I wanted to be brave for our library community, and I also wanted to center our stories. Everyone needs to understand how essential libraries and library workers are to our communities and our world.

As a former children's librarian, I know that stories are the foundation of almost everything, and I invite you all to share your stories. Tell them to anyone who will listen. Tell them to anyone who can and will advocate on behalf of our libraries and communities, because storytelling demonstrates what statistics cannot: the impact we make on our patrons and students, as well as how essential our spaces are to making community members feel represented and able to live out their dreams.

When I visited Park View Middle School in Cranston, Rhode Island, librarian Stephanie Mills shared with me the stories of her students and how they embraced virtual and hybrid spaces to keep connected with one another, books, and the library. Students themselves described books with queer characters that helped make them feel seen and reading stories with characters who swear, reflecting their realities. To them—students who use our resources, sometimes multiple times a day—the library, whether virtual or physical,

is their grounding point. It can remain so if we continue our work throughout their lives.

I was humbled to hear students sharing their stories and their joy for the library, which reminded me of how we, a collective of library workers and library lovers, create and ensure access to these spaces for all. As ALA president, I am reminded of how great our Association can be, and how it can grow into what we all need it to be as we reimagine what life in our communities and our libraries could look like. To improve, though, we must honor one another with our stories and the lessons we have learned these past few years. As members of ALA, we are partners in this work.

When many of us were together in Washington, D.C., for Annual Conference just a few weeks ago, the stories flowed for both the in-person and the virtual participants. Connecting with one another and knowing we are not alone during these difficult times was a highlight for me, as I'm sure it was for others. And the stories of success, hope, and joy sent me home with a full heart, ready for action.

As your ALA president, I ask you to join me in sharing and creating new stories for libraries and library workers. Together, we will work to reimagine our American Library Association–Allied Professional Association to be the hub for library workers, not only in continued education and certifications but also in workplace aid and support. We will speak from the intersection of our personal and professional identities to share the impact our stories have on libraries. And together, we will look toward new partnerships with allied groups that share our core values and find alignment with libraries.

We will create a path forward together, rooted in the stories of our brave communities. **ALA**

LESSA KANANI'OPUA PELAYO-LOZADA is adult services assistant manager at Palos Verdes Library District in Rolling Hills Estates, California.

Calling a Thing a Thing

How race, gender, and class hierarchies conflate literacy and privilege



Tracie D. Hall

What is our ethical responsibility to the women whose low literacy and educational access are overlooked because of the overlapping of race, gender, and class?

In this third and final installment of my columns on the pervasiveness of adult low literacy, I feel an urgent need to call out how race, gender, and class coincide—and collide—when it comes to reading ability. This topic is especially critical at a moment marked by de facto and de jure attacks on women's bodies and economic autonomy.

The nonprofit ProLiteracy, one of ALA's long-time partners, makes the connection between reading and health care agency (bit.ly/ProLit-women). It points out that women with low literacy skills are at higher risk of "financial, health, and partner vulnerabilities throughout their lives," potentially limiting their independence.

That cyclical relationship—limited education and reading ability leading to limited economic opportunity leading to limited health care options and outcomes—is something women in the US and globally experience acutely, and it has only worsened since the pandemic.

Researcher Amanda Fins noted in her 2020 National Women's Law Center snapshot of poverty among US women and their families (bit.ly/NWLC-2020) that in 2019, nearly one in nine women (or 13.9 million) lived in poverty. Following the pandemic and the economic fallout, she wrote, "Women are bearing the heavy burden."

When I was a youth services librarian, my second shift on the reference desk spanned the afterschool hours. I noticed a young woman enter the library's vestibule day after day and wait. One day she entered and stood just inside the door. I greeted her, and she warily asked, "How much does it cost?" I barely had time to explain that using the library was free before a little boy ran up, handed her his books, and they were out the door.

She would come back, and eventually I learned she had arrived from the Horn of Africa to be the boy's live-in caregiver; this was the first public library she had ever visited. She had

stood outside for weeks because she thought she needed to pay to come in.

It had been the prospect of education that led her family to agree to send her to the US to care for the son of a wealthier family that had immigrated to the United States from their community. But as the boy grew, the promise of her furthering her own education became more distant. She was 18 when we met, and her dream was to attend college. But like many others—disproportionately women—caught in a cycle of extractive labor, she had surrendered her passport and other forms of ID to the family she worked for. She felt she couldn't enroll in school, apply for a second job, or seek critical services (medical or social) without their awareness or sanction. "I'm stuck," she said to me one day as we talked through scenarios that could lead her to college.

With social responsibility as one of ALA's core values, and with the library and information science sector being more than 80% female, what is our ethical responsibility to the women whose low literacy and educational access are overlooked because of the overlapping of race, gender, and class?

The first step is to recognize that we need more library-based adult literacy programs. Some libraries we can learn from and already recognized by the larger literacy community for doing this work include Charlotte Mecklenburg (N.C.) Library, Houston Public Library, and Nashville (Tenn.) Public Library.

Self-help coach and author Iyanla Vanzant speaks of the responsibility to "call a thing a thing." She exhorts us to "look a thing dead in the eye, acknowledge that it exists, call it exactly what it is." When we call out and seek to make literacy a right instead of an advantage of the privileged, we do just that. **AL**

TRACIE D. HALL is executive director of the American Library Association. Reach her at thall@ala.org.

What a special article about the #newberymedal in @amlibraries magazine. I always love reading these special award-winning books.

@SHANNONMILLER in response to "100 Years of the Newbery Medal" (June, p. 28)

I love the feeling I get whenever a new magazine arrives in the mail. There is something special about the experience of holding a physical copy in my hands that I don't get when I read something digitally. Forgive me, but I'm a little old school.

@JEURONDOVE in response to our June issue

Knowledge Is Power

I appreciated American Library Association (ALA) Executive Director Tracie D. Hall's latest column, "Fugitive Literacies" (June, p. 6). I had just finished writing to ALA's Office for Intellectual Freedom regarding censorship efforts by the Missouri Department of Corrections (MDOC) when I came across this column, and I find it's relevant to what we are experiencing.

Four libraries in Missouri participate in reference-by-mail services for people who are incarcerated, including Brentwood (Mo.) Public Library, where I work. We collectively answer about 500 letters per month, and when we do, the connection between full literacy and productivity is clear, as Hall writes. That's why we are happy to provide people who are incarcerated with the opportunity to learn and become more literate through our services. However, there have been efforts by MDOC to create additional barriers (NPR's affiliate in Kansas City, Missouri, has documented these efforts: bit.ly/AL-KCUR-prisons).

The impact of Hall's message is felt, and her message is heard.

Asha Norman
St. Louis

Which Words to Wield?

In an era of redoubled efforts to censor collection development in libraries, I'm dismayed by Ebony A. Johnson's letter to the editor and what I see as a censorious

attitude toward "militarized" language (May, p. 7).

I agree that words matter, but communication is not a one-sided affair; the context of speech always necessitates paramount consideration. Time, place, and intent are relevant, and both speakers and listeners have a responsibility to consider these factors. Umbrage is taken, not given, and a reactive stance toward militarized terms—that have been laundered by centuries of colloquial use—is a bridge too far.

My question here is the same question I ask of all censorship: Where do you draw the line? Do you get upset at the photographer who shoots pictures or the athlete who shoots hoops? Do you wince if patrons ask where they can find the magazines? Should we not reload that webpage? What if someone gets triggered? Can something no longer be offensive? This is the unwieldy nature of censorship: There is no satisfying a philosophy based on erasure. An inch is given and a mile gets taken until we're left with a husk of what was formerly called liberal discourse.

Ultimately, what we engender with this attitude is sanitized speech through a policing of words in a milieu that generally eschews such an approach. I have absolutely no problem if Johnson

chooses to omit militarized language to realize a personal mission. My issue lies in shaming others into following suit.

Ross Sempek
Twin Falls, Idaho

CORRECTIONS

By the Numbers (March/April, p. 17) misnamed Joy Harjo's signature project. The correct title is "Living Nations, Living Words."

The photo caption in "Period. End of Story." (May, p. 16) misidentified the library where the Aunt Flow period product dispenser and signage were located. The image was from a restroom in the Hillyard branch of Spokane (Wash.) Public Library, not in the Miller branch of Jersey City (N.J.) Free Public Library.

Our 2022 Library Systems Report (May, p. 24) incorrectly stated that the Folger Shakespeare Library had chosen TIND ILS to replace its Aleph software; the system that Folger migrated from was Voyager. "Crunching the Numbers" (June, p. 57) incorrectly stated that demo-

graphic profile tables from the 2020 Census will be released throughout 2022. These tables and the Demographic and Housing Characteristics file will be released in May 2023. The column also misidentified the American Community Survey as the American Community Service.



WRITE US: The editors welcome comments about recent content, online stories, and matters of professional interest. Submissions should be limited to 300 words and are subject to editing for clarity, style, and length. Send to americanlibraries@ala.org or *American Libraries*, From Our Readers, 225 N. Michigan Ave., Suite 1300, Chicago, IL 60601.

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ALA Distributes \$1.5 Million in COVID-19 Emergency Relief

On June 1, the American Library Association (ALA) announced it is distributing grants of \$20,000 to 77 libraries that are continuing to experience substantial economic hardship because of the coronavirus pandemic, for a total of \$1.5 million in funding. The ALA COVID Library Relief Fund grantees are academic, correctional, public, school, and tribal libraries from 32 states and Puerto Rico.

Ak-Chin Indian Community Library in Maricopa, Arizona, has seen a 50% reduction in funding from prepandemic levels. Its grant will fund two part-time staff members to open the library again on Saturdays and restore programs that had been canceled.

The media center at Hager Elementary School in Ashland, Kentucky, which has suffered budget cuts of 30%—and where 70% of students are eligible for free or reduced lunch—will be able to create a makerspace and grow its STEM collections for grades K–3 using its grant.

The library at Jackson Correctional Institution in Black River Falls, Wisconsin, has faced budget cuts and staffing

challenges and didn't have access to the public library system during the pandemic. The library will purchase materials on sustainable resources including composting, hydroponics, aquaponics, and urban land redevelopment and fund book groups and representatives from these sustainability industries to present opportunities in those fields.

The ALA COVID Library Relief Fund is supported by Acton Family Giving. "We truly appreciate the continued generous support from Acton Family Giving to help so many libraries provide needed services to traditionally underserved communities across the country," said then-ALA President Patricia "Patty" M. Wong in a June 1 statement. "These grants will allow so many libraries to have a critical impact on those who depend on them during these challenging times."

"It is an honor to help underwrite the gap-bridging efforts proposed by the ALA COVID Library Relief Fund recipients," said ALA Executive Director Tracie D. Hall in the same statement. For more information about the relief fund, visit bit.ly/ALA-COVIDRelief2022. ●

ALA Unites with More Than 25 Groups against Book Bans

A coalition of more than 25 organizations, including the American Federation of Teachers and the Authors Guild, has joined ALA's Unite Against Book Bans campaign to raise awareness about the recent rise in book challenges in public libraries and schools.

The growing coalition includes advocacy groups, education leaders,



businesses, nonprofits, and civil rights groups

that represent a wide range of communities and individuals. These groups are uniting around the principles of reading as fundamental to learning, the right of readers to access books, and the need to work together to protect that right.

ALA's Office for Intellectual Freedom tracked 729 challenges to library, school, and university materials and services resulting in more than 1,597 individual book challenges or removals in 2021. This is the highest number of attempts to ban books since ALA began tracking this data 30 years ago.

In response to this alarming rise in challenges, ALA launched #UniteAgainstBookBans, a public-facing national campaign that empowers readers everywhere to push back against censorship.

For a full list of the organizations that have joined the campaign, visit bit.ly/ALA-UABB.

Loud Mouse Authors Lead Library Card Sign-Up Month

Tony Award-winning performer, actor, singer-songwriter, and philanthropist

Idina Menzel and her sister, author and educator Cara Mentzel, have been named honorary chairs of this year's Library Card Sign-Up Month. In September, Menzel and Mentzel will join ALA and libraries nationwide to promote the benefits of having a library card. The sisters' debut picture book *Loud Mouse* also comes out the same month.



Cara Mentzel (left) and Idina Menzel

During Library Card Sign-Up Month, Menzel and Mentzel will encourage individuals and families to explore library offerings, such as new children's books, access to technology, and educational programming.

ALA Launches Relief Fund to Help Ukraine Libraries

In collaboration with the Ukrainian Library Association (ULA), ALA launched the Ukraine Library Relief Fund on May 4 to gather resources for the Ukrainian library community as it faces the challenges of an ongoing war.

Many libraries in Ukraine have been severely damaged or destroyed, and librarians are improvising to continue bringing services to people. ALA has received reports from Kreminna City Library, which offers services a few hours a week as street fighting goes on outside, and from Kharkiv, where a library was organized in the metropolitan transit system for families taking shelter.

Funds raised will help purchase resources such as computers and software and will support immediate repair needs such as glazing windows and fixing roofs damaged by bombing. ULA will provide some support for library workers who are in harm's way, wounded, or displaced and in need of financial assistance. ALA will send donations to ULA once a month. The fund has raised \$12,000 in the months of May and June.

"The Ukrainian Library Association expresses our sincere gratitude to the American Library Association and American library community for the unity and support of Ukraine and Ukrainian librarians," said ULA President Oksana Brui in a May 4 statement.

For information on how to donate to the Ukraine Library Relief Fund, visit bit.ly/ALA-ULAFund. ●

Posters featuring Dee, the titular *Loud Mouse*, singing "Find your voice at the la, la, la, library—get a library card" are available for purchase at the ALA Store. Free Library Card Sign-Up Month graphics will also be made available this summer along with media tools such as a press release template, proclamation, and sample social media posts. For more information, visit ala.org/librarycardsignup.

AASL Announces Best Digital Tools for Teaching and Learning

On April 24, the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) released its annual list of Best Digital Tools for Teaching and Learning.

The list honors digital tools that foster innovation and collaboration and

encourage exploration and participation. The technology resources are also evaluated for their application of AASL's National School Library Standards.

For the full list of tools, visit bit.ly/AASL-Tools22.

Virtual Symposium Hosted by Freedom to Read Foundation

The Freedom to Read Foundation (FTRF) hosted a free virtual symposium, "Where Intellectual Freedom and Social Justice Meet: A Call to Action," on July 12–13 (bit.ly/FTRF-symposium).

The first day focused on exploring the core values of intellectual freedom and social justice. Keynote speakers and panelists addressed topics such as library policies, community values, alternatives to neutrality, and challenges facing the

CALENDAR

JULY 26–29

IFLA World Library and Information Congress

Dublin, Ireland
2022.ifla.org

SEPT.

Library Card Sign-Up Month
ala.org/librarycardsignup

SEPT. 14–17

Association for Rural and Small Libraries Conference

Chattanooga, Tennessee
arsl.org/2022-conference

SEPT. 18–24

Banned Books Week
bannedbooksweek.org

SEPT. 21

Banned Websites Awareness Day

ala.org/aasl/advocacy/bwad

SEPT. 29–OCT. 1

ALSC National Institute

Kansas City, Missouri
ala.org/alsc/confscce/institute

OCT.

TeenTober

ala.org/yalsa/teentober

OCT. 5–9

National Joint Conference of Librarians of Color

St. Pete Beach, Florida
jclcinc.org

OCT. 13–15

Core Forum | Salt Lake City
coreforum.org

OCT. 16–22

National Friends of Libraries Week

bit.ly/alafolweek

OCT. 24–30

International Open Access Week
openaccessweek.org

NOV.

International Games Month
bit.ly/ALA-igm

NOV. 4–6

YALSA's Young Adult Services Symposium | Baltimore
ala.org/yalsa/yasymposium

library community. Participants had the opportunity to ask questions of the panelists and engage in both small-group and large-group discussions.

The second day focused on empowering participants to take action. Panelists drew on their knowledge and experience to offer strategies for community change, building consensus, developing strong policies, and building coalitions and public outreach. Participants were invited to form breakout groups to plan specific strategies to shift narratives and communicate the ways in which social justice and intellectual freedom support each other.

A special edition of the *Journal of Intellectual Freedom and Privacy* around the theme “Social Justice and Intellectual Freedom: Working within a Divided Nation” will collect papers addressing the intersection of intellectual freedom and social justice, the challenges arising from their interaction, and ways to forge a deeper understanding of how they coalesce.

For more information on how to submit a paper, visit bit.ly/FtRF-Papers.

Spectrum Doctoral Fellows Announced

On June 16, ALA announced the recipients of the newest round of Spectrum Doctoral Fellowships: Catalysts for Change. This project was made possible in part by the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

The seven 2022 Spectrum Doctoral Fellowship recipients are: Toni Anaya at Emporia (Kans.) State University; Tessa R. Campbell and Mandi Harris at University of Washington in Seattle; Shannon Crooks at Syracuse (N.Y.) University; Lydia Curliss and Twanna Hodge at University of Maryland, College Park; and Cearra Harris at University of South Carolina in Columbia.

Through Catalysts for Change, ALA—in partnership with University of South Carolina’s School of Information Science—has selected this cohort of racially and ethnically diverse doctoral

Coalition Condemns Attempts to Censor Books in Virginia

In solidarity with Virginia librarians, booksellers, publishers, and civil liberties organizations, ALA issued a statement on June 1 condemning a Virginia political candidate’s legal action that seeks to halt distribution of the books *Gender Queer* by Maia Kobabe and *A Court of Mist and Fury* by Sarah J. Maas in the state. This action, based on the claim that the books might be “obscene for unrestricted viewing by minors,” threatens Virginians’ freedom to read, according to the coalition’s members.

Signed by the Virginia Library Association, Barnes & Noble Booksellers, the Authors Guild, the Freedom to Read Foundation, and the American Civil Liberties Union, among others, the statement “strongly urge[s] Virginians—and all Americans—to stand against any attempt to use government action to dictate what we can read and how to think about what we read.”

The lawsuit’s goal is to prevent people “from making a personal choice to read these books at all,” the news release states. “The petitioners’ subsequent statements to the press make it clear that they intend to use this action as a means to criminally prosecute librarians, booksellers, and publishers.”

“[ALA] stands shoulder to shoulder with the Virginia Library Association and the Virginia Association of School Librarians against this blatant attempt at censorship,” said then-ALA President Patricia “Patty” M. Wong in the June 1 statement. “The attempt to use the government’s power to halt distribution of these books not only curbs Virginians’ freedom to read, it would undercut the mission of libraries and undermine the democratic principles that hold our nation together.”

For more information and to read the full statement, visit bit.ly/ALA-VLALetter. ●

students focused on advancing racial equity and social justice in library and information science (LIS) curricula.

The project is designed to develop future LIS faculty committed to fostering racial equity and building capacity and cooperation among partnering LIS degree programs. The goal is to expand social justice curricula and increase support for doctoral students and faculty in the field who are Black, Indigenous, and people of color.

In addition to providing tuition and stipend support to each fellow, the Spectrum Doctoral Fellowship includes participation in specialized coursework to establish an understanding of social justice and antiracism. Fellows also receive support from a diverse national

network of peers, advisors, and mentors and their degree programs. To further mentoring and networking, fellows, advisors, and faculty will convene at three doctoral institutes.

OCLC and Core to Provide Free Access to Software

On June 25, at ALA’s 2022 Annual Conference and Exhibition in Washington, D.C., OCLC and Core announced they are partnering to provide free access to OCLC’s WorldShare Management Services (WMS) sandbox, which will allow Core members seeking professional development opportunities a chance to work hands-on with the cloud-based library management system.

This partnership aims to provide learning opportunities for early-career library workers, those seeking professional development in systems, and library administrators learning about systems.

WMS is a library services platform that allows users to draw on OCLC's shared data network and technology for efficient workflows. For more information, visit bit.ly/Core-OCLC.

A Call to Action on Climate Change for Libraries

Many library leaders feel overwhelmed about the threat of climate change and even paralyzed about where to start. On June 22, ALA Council's Committee on Sustainability released a new briefing, *Sustainability in Libraries: A Call to Action* (bit.ly/ALA-Sustainability), intended to focus attention on how the library community can



has adopted the triple bottom line definition of sustainability as a core value of the profession; how libraries can take the lead on climate adaptation; why climate justice work is also equity, diversity, and inclusion work; how many in the library field are already answering the call for leadership in this area; and simple, practical steps that can help libraries get started.


Sustainability was a focus of ALA President Wong's platform during her year in office. She wrote in her November 2021

accelerate its understanding of and action on climate change mitigation and adaptation measures.

Readers will learn why ALA

American Libraries column (bit.ly/AL-WongSustainability): "This is a time to stand together in solidarity ... to meet the enormous challenges of the climate crisis and summon the effort to deal with its impact. Climate change is a unifying issue for libraries across the globe, and we must commit to doing all we can to prepare our communities for its effects."

The authors of the briefing—members of the new ALA Council Committee on Sustainability—represent public, school, and academic libraries. They work with the ALA Special Task Force on Sustainability, the Sustainability Round Table, the Sustainable Libraries Initiative, and ALA's Executive Board.

This briefing also is free to download through the new LibGuide on sustainability (bit.ly/ALA-SustainabilityLibGuide), curated by ALA Librarian and Archivist Colleen Barbus. 

Cambridge Frontlist

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Celeste Ng

Acclaimed author imagines a future with disturbing echoes of past and present hate



Celeste Ng's third novel, *Our Missing Hearts*, tells a story that may not feel as speculative as we might wish: When an economic crisis hits the United States, fear and racism poison society, and people look for a scapegoat. Under the guise of national security, a law called PACT—the Preserving American Culture and Traditions Act—passes. As a result, books by and about Asian Americans are banned, mail at the post office is read by the government, and hate crimes against Asian Americans are ignored and even encouraged. The government removes children from their homes if their parents protest PACT.

Ng, who spoke at the American Library Association's 2022 Annual Conference and Exhibition in Washington, D.C., talked with *American Libraries* about the novel, which calls to mind the not-so-distant past—and the anti-Asian American hate we are seeing today.

BY Alison
Marcotte

In *Our Missing Hearts*, libraries are one of the last remaining sources of truth, as an underground network of librarians tries to connect families with their taken children. How did you come up with this plot line?

It came out of my love and respect for libraries. Before the pandemic, I would often go to Cambridge (Mass.) Public Library and write. I often sat where the reference librarians were. And I was repeatedly struck by how dedicated and patient they were. People come in, they need help doing their taxes, and the librarians help them figure out the right forms and how to file them online.

It struck me that, if you need information, there are very few people whose job is to hold on to it for you and get it to you. I thought, "Who would be the right people in this world who would try to match up people who want that information with the people who have it?" And the answer, of course, was librarians.

One of my favorite lines is when a librarian says that today, people don't burn books; they pulp them and turn them into toilet paper. The librarian jokes, "Much more civilized,

right?" You show the absurdity of how we lie to ourselves and deny what's happening. And it's sadly more and more relevant. This has long been a concern, and something librarians have been working on: the freedom of getting information.

It's something I had hoped would remain in the imagined realm but, unfortunately, is becoming all too real, as school libraries are attacked for allowing people to find information they want and need—information like, "I think I might be LGBTQ," or "I want to learn about this aspect of our history."

Your book is also about hope and humanity. It had been in the works for a while, but it wasn't until the pandemic that it started to come together. I was trying to convince myself that humanity was still out there, and that it was still important to imagine a better future rather than resign ourselves to where we were. That resignation is natural when things go

badly, right? But it feels very important to me, especially in the face of problems that feel pervasive and eternal and insurmountable, like racism and gun control, to still imagine that we can make things better.

Your writing highlights the power of story to effect change. Why is this important? That is something we

don't give enough importance to—the power of reading stories, of being able to find insights and patterns in them. Sometimes it's because you see yourself and you get recognized there, and that's really powerful. Sometimes it's a story that reminds you of how things can be different. That's one of the reasons the movement to ban books is so dangerous. In a way, the banning acknowledges the power of story. But it also suggests that we don't have context to think about the story, and that there's something about those particular words or pages that's dangerous.

If you can get those stories and get the context that goes with them, you can learn so much. It's important to be able to tell your own story in the context, too. **AL**

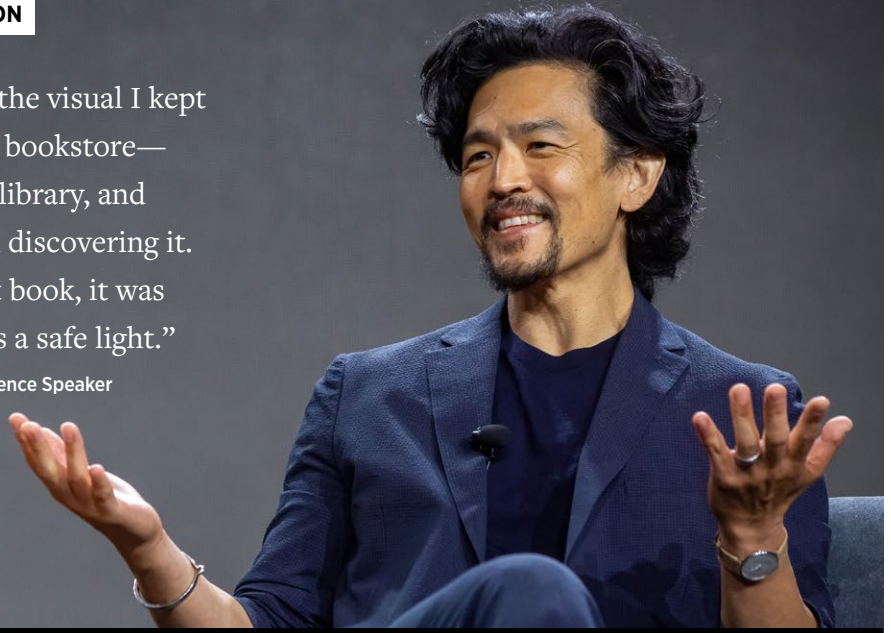


Photo: Kieran Kesner

**FROM THE AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION'S
2022 ANNUAL CONFERENCE AND EXHIBITION**

“When I was writing my book, the visual I kept having was not of my book at a bookstore—it was in the clear jacket at the library, and I imagined a kid walking in and discovering it. Because when I found the right book, it was like a light coming to me; it was a safe light.”

Actor and author **JOHN CHO** during his Conference Speaker session on June 25.



“I don’t really see why anyone would want to write for adults. My audience—and librarians must know this—the 7- to 11-year-olds, they’re the best audience there is for authors. It’s the last time in their lives they’ll ever be enthusiastic.”

Children’s horror author **R. L. STINE** in his Conference Speaker session on June 25.

“[There are] people who are threatened by change and offended by it, for whatever reason, and fearful of it, but as authors, we’re not going to stop writing our stories. The books are wonderful and people are buying them.”

Children’s author **CHRISTINA SOONTORNVAT** during the ALA President’s Program on June 26.

“We have problems to solve. And we owe ourselves and the next generation optimism that we’ve got the strength, resolve, and energy to do it. If you are going to be in public service, you owe it to the present and the future to believe you can make positive change. It’s okay to be impatient while you’re doing that.”

Federal Communications Commission Chair **JESSICA ROSENWORCEL** in the Opening General Session on June 24.

“What we all understand is that we have this privilege, and when we understand we have this privilege, especially as librarians or as journalists, it means we have a profound responsibility. That’s what’s motivated me in my entire life as a journalist, being the first Latina in all of the newsrooms where I’ve worked.”

Journalist and author **MARIA HINOJOSA** in her Conference Speaker session on June 25.

“WHEN THE INTERNET FIRST STARTED COMING OUT IN THE 1900S, WE WERE ALL HANGING OUT [AT INGLEWOOD (CALIF.) PUBLIC LIBRARY]. [LIBRARIANS] HELPED ME START MY FIRST AOL ACCOUNT, WHICH I STILL HAVE AND NEVER CHECK.”

Actor and author **TIFFANY HADDISH** in her Conference Speaker session on June 26.

2022

Annual

WRAP-UP

Library workers together again
in Washington, D.C.

BY Alison Marcotte

From June 23 to 28, the American Library Association (ALA) held its 2022 Annual Conference and Exhibition, its first major in-person conference since the pandemic began. Participants' eagerness to gather and reconnect was palpable and seen in the numbers: The conference drew 7,738 in-person attendees; 5,431 exhibitors, authors, illustrators, press representatives, and staff members; and 834 virtual attendees for the Digital Experience. A total of 14,003 people registered. Washington, D.C., served as a historic backdrop for the conference, as the Supreme Court struck down *Roe v. Wade* on June 24 and protests erupted nationwide.



Outgoing
ALA President
Patricia "Patty"
M. Wong (left)
and Federal
Communications
Commission
Chair Jessica
Rosenworcel



Philip Lee,
cofounder and
publisher of
Readers to Eaters



Authors Maya Prasad (left) and Susan Azim Boyer

Major themes that resonated throughout the conference included book bans and censorship; issues around diversity, equity, and inclusion; examples of successful library programming during the pandemic; library funding strategies; patron and library worker safety; information access; and technology trends and challenges. Conference speakers included actors John Cho and Tiffany Haddish, comic book artist Kevin Eastman, Librarian of Congress Carla Hayden, journalist Maria Hinojosa, and authors Celeste Ng and R. L. Stine. Speakers for the Digital Experience, the virtual version of the conference, included authors Jodi Picoult and Jennifer Finney Boylan and actor Channing Tatum.

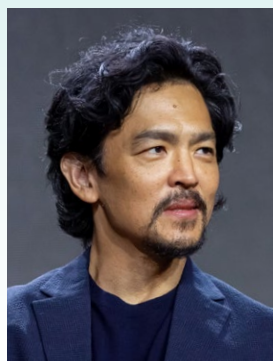
Closing the digital divide

The conference kicked off Friday with a conversation between Opening General Session speaker Jessica Rosenworcel, chair of the Federal Communications Commission, and outgoing ALA President Patricia “Patty” M. Wong about the state of broadband and digital equity in the US. Rosenworcel said the E-Rate program, which provides internet access at a discount to schools and libraries, is “a quiet powerhouse.” She added: “It has done more to connect libraries and schools in this country than any other single program, and I’m absolutely committed to making sure not just that it sticks around but that it thrives.”

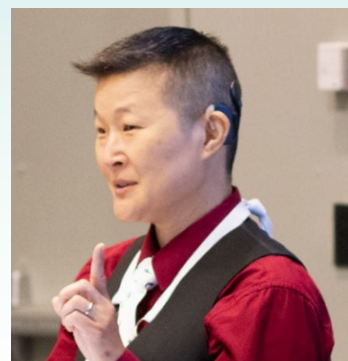
Underrepresented voices

Panelists at multiple sessions discussed the importance of shining a light on insider narratives. At the program “Engaging Historically Underrepresented Young Adult Readers,” authors Susan Azim Boyer, Katelyn Bury, Maya Prasad, and Vanessa L. Torres shared their experiences growing up with a lack of positive depictions of themselves in books.

Books written by outsider authors (those who have not lived the cultural experiences represented by their protagonists) run the risk of including harmful depictions of groups of people.



Actor John Cho



KayCee Choi, manager of Dallas Public Library's Grauwlyer Park branch

“Outsiders tend to fall back on the stereotypes because they don’t have that specific, authentic knowledge,” Boyer said. The panel offered strategies for how librarians can engage marginalized readers.

Cho’s talk also touched on representation. In his debut middle-grade novel, *Troublemaker*, the actor said he wanted to bring out the loving relationship between main characters Jordan and his dad. “Especially in cinema, I’ve found that a lot of Asian characters tend to have to escape their culture to find love. I’m keen on telling stories of connection and love, so this book was an excuse to do that,” he said.

At the panel “Advancing the Asian American Story,” authors, publishers, and literacy advocates said that while Asian American representation in children’s books has improved, there’s more work to be done.

“I’m happy to see books that reflect the Asian American experience,” said Philip Lee, cofounder and publisher of Readers to Eaters, which promotes food literacy through stories about diverse food cultures. “This is not a trend; this is a movement.” What’s next, he said, is for characters to have more nuance: “I want books that reflect kids much more than just racially.”

At “Deaf Culture: A Strategy for Inclusive Deaf Community Engagement,” panelists emphasized the need for materials and programming on Deaf history and culture in libraries. “Deaf

culture includes customs, folklore, history, language, traditions, and values,” said Alec McFarlane, organizational development specialist for the National Literary Society of the Deaf. To underscore this point, Laurent Holt—fourth great-grandson of Laurent Clerc, one of the most well-known figures in American Deaf history—was invited to say a few words about his ancestor.

“Our hope for the future is more Deaf librarians ... and better relationships with the Deaf community,” said KayCee Choi, manager of Dallas Public Library’s Grauwylar Park branch. “Our library provides Wi-Fi hotspots and laptops to the community, so why not also provide Deaf services?”

Library workers’ and patrons’ well-being

At the session “Queering the Library: Strategically Creating Space for the LGBTQ+ Community,” Prince George’s County (Md.) Memorial Library System (PGCMLS) librarian Rebecca Oxley told attendees, “Please check on your queer colleagues. We are not okay.”

Oxley and PGCMLS librarian Teresa Miller created an LGBTQ+ work team to increase resources and programming for the community—both patrons and staff—and to integrate changes into the library’s culture.

At “Creating the Future Library Workforce,” Catherine Murray-Rust, retired dean of libraries at Georgia Institute of Technology, talked about how library workers are frequently overstretched and undercompensated. She encouraged audience members to form a plan for change. “One of the most important parts of any library isn’t the building or the collection—it’s the people who work in it,” she said.

The right to read

Censorship was on many attendees’ and panelists’ minds. Throughout the country, high-profile challenges and attempts to ban or destroy diverse materials, including in bookstores and libraries, have triggered heated arguments.

Conference speaker and author Celeste Ng (see p. 10) spoke about her forthcoming novel, *Our Missing Hearts*, in which book banning is widespread in a fictional and dystopian but eerily familiar world.

Speakers noted that banning books that feature diverse characters can be like cutting a lifeline—the only connection that some readers may have to books.



Above: ALA Executive Director Tracie D. Hall; right: Rebecca Oxley, librarian at Prince George’s County (Md.) Memorial Library System



Catherine Tong, Bridget Kowalczyk, and Tiffany Bradford-Oldham, presenters at “Inspiring the Next Generation to Champion Social Justice through Speech and Debate”



Julie Stivers, librarian at Mount Vernon (N.C.) Middle School

PGCMLS’s Miller strongly advised pushing back against any counterarguments that LGBTQ+ content or discussion is inherently “adult” or “inappropriate,” and to remind leadership that queer kids exist, kids with same-sex parents exist, “and those kids deserve to see themselves represented in the library.”

During “Defending the Fifth Freedom: Protecting the Right to Read for Incarcerated Individuals,” ALA Executive Director Tracie D. Hall reported that the US has the highest incarceration rate in the world, and that the most extensive book bans in the country right now are happening in the prison system.

“The Association’s membership is called on at this moment to interrupt the systemic information poverty that is going on in American’s detention facilities,” Hall said.

Successful programming and strategies

During “The Value of Manga in School Libraries,” Mount Vernon (N.C.) Middle School librarian Julie Stivers talked about her experience leading anime- and manga-centric clubs for middle and high school students. Incorporating this

Council matters

Resolutions calling on President Biden to cancel student loan debt for all borrowers (VMD#2) and condemning the destruction of libraries, schools, and cultural institutions in Ukraine (CD#57) were adopted. A resolution in defense of the right to engage in political boycotts (CD#55) was defeated. Councilors voted to refer a resolution in support of continuing virtual access to ALA membership meetings to ALA's Budget Analysis and Review Committee (CD#59).

The Jason Reynolds/Simon & Schuster travel grant (CD#48), which sponsors five Black school or youth services librarians to attend Annual, was approved.

Committee on Organization chair Jim Neal gave a report on the committee's activities (CD#27.1) and presented a proposal recommending changes in the Committee of ALA's Office for Diversity, Literacy, and Outreach Services meant to expand its capacity and foster continuity. The proposal passed.

The Working Group to Condemn White Supremacy and Fascism as Antithetical to Library Work (CD#34) will provide a report to Council at the January 2023 meetings, working group cochair Nichelle Hayes said.

Sara Dallas, chair of the Core Values Task Force, proposed an action related to the revision of ALA's Core Values based on feedback and review (CD#30). Council voted unanimously to extend

the term of the current task force by one year; expand its membership by five members; broaden its charge to include revising the current Core Values in conjunction with the Library Bill of Rights, Code of Ethics, and the Libraries: An American Value statement; and provide a report at Annual in 2023.

The current wave of book challenges was top of mind as Intellectual Freedom Committee (IFC) Chair Martin Garnar reported on the activities of IFC, its Privacy Subcommittee, the CRT and Diversity Training Toolkit Subgroup, and the Working Group on Intellectual Freedom and Social Justice (CD#19.2–19.4). Garnar and Steven Yates, chair of the Committee on Library Advocacy, asked Council to support ALA's public-facing Unite Against Book Bans (uniteagainstbookbans.org) advocacy campaign. Later in the meeting, Freedom to Read Foundation President Barbara Stripling briefed Council on troubling trends such as obscenity litigation, criminal prosecution of librarians, and organized attempts to subvert the accessibility and visibility of materials (CD#22.1).

Committee on Legislation chair Joseph Thompson reported on legislative accomplishments in the last year (CD#20.1), including a \$1 million federal budget increase to the Innovative Approaches to Literacy program, and advocacy priorities looking ahead to midterm elections and the next

budget cycle, including ebook access, the E-Rate program, and digital inclusion efforts.

Anna Kozłowska—chair of the Office for Diversity, Literacy, and Outreach Services Advisory Committee's Services to Refugees, Immigrants, and Displaced Persons subcommittee—asked Council to update its 2007 Resolution in Support of Immigrant Rights (CD#58), which passed as amended to recognize the distinct needs of immigrant youth.

A resolution barring ALA from holding conferences in states with restrictive abortion policies (CD#61), in light of the US Supreme Court's recent decision and its impact on states, was rejected by a nearly 3-to-1 margin after extended debate.

Memorial tributes were read honoring: Ross J. Todd (M#8), Donald C. Adcock (M#9), Virginia "Ginny" Bradley Moore (M#10), Nancy Kandorian (M#11), Alvin Leroy Lee (M#12), Donna Scheeder (M#13), Margo Crist (M#14), Alexandra Sax (M#15), Sarah Van Antwerp (M#16), Ann Pechacek (M#17), Sandra Payne (M#18), Judith S. Rowe (M#19), Tracey Hunter-Hayes (M#20), and Claudia J. Gollop (M#21).

Tribute resolutions were read honoring: Elyse Wasch (T#2), David S. Ferriero (T#3), the 30th Anniversary of the Friends of Libraries Section of the New York Library Association (T#4), and the centennial anniversary of the Hawai'i Library Association (T#5). ●

material into programming, rather than letting it sit on the shelf, is vital for students to have a comfortable space, she said. "Our libraries must be incubators of joy and belonging. How does a manga club do that?" Stivers asked. "My students have said, 'When there is a common interest, we just click together' and 'I feel safer here than anywhere else.'"

In "Inspiring the Next Generation to Champion Social Justice through Speech and Debate," instructors for San José (Calif.) Public Library (SJPL)'s Speech and Debate program for 3rd- to 5th-graders shared insights into their curriculum and success.

"People give speeches because they have something important to say," said Catherine Tong, an instructor for the program and the former high schooler (now a student at University of California, Berkeley) who initially pitched the idea to SJPL. "Speaking with purpose and for a cause they believe in helps [students] overcome fear."

Tina Chenoweth, interim manager of the Charleston County (S.C.) Public Library (CCPL) Bees Ferry West Ashley branch, shared how she launched her Animal Crossing virtual library program during the initial lockdown of 2020 in the session "Building Community Relationships through Collaborative



Brooke Windsor, teen services librarian at Stratford (Ontario) Public Library

Online Gaming: Animal Crossing’s Enduring Success.” She discussed what programming and activities she facilitated on the virtual island in Animal Crossing and what librarians should consider when conducting their own videogame program.

The virtual library “still functioned in the sense of a library,” said Shannon Talian, session moderator and CCPL circulation manager. It had a garden, makerspaces, a bulletin board, and a book club that eventually moved to Discord, a social media platform where users can create their own communities and interact. In the virtual library, patrons could play book bingo, participate in fishing tournaments, exchange in-game items, and more.

In “Outside and Around Town: The Magic of *Harry Potter and the Stratford Adventure*,” Brooke Windsor, teen services librarian at Stratford (Ontario) Public Library, stressed the power of fandom in bringing a community together. During the pandemic, she developed a game that invited players to visit Stratford’s local businesses to complete challenges and win prizes. *Harry Potter and the Stratford Adventure* was a hit that more than 70 patrons participated in during its three-week run.

Binghamton (N.Y.) University Libraries (BUL) subject librarian Jennifer Embree talked about how she and her colleague, librarian Neyda Gilman, built BUL’s Sustainability Hub, an initiative to create a physical space on campus and virtual resources for those looking to engage on the topic of sustainability.

“All of these groups of people would be doing this work, but they weren’t talking to each other,” Embree said during the session “Sustainability Hubs in Practice: How Libraries Can Develop Dynamic Spaces and Services to Help Foster an Action-Based Sustainability Culture in Communities.”

The space started as a corner of the library, with poster sessions and student artwork. But when COVID-19 hit, Embree and Gilman began to reevaluate their approach to sustainability work, applied for ALA Resilient Communities



Veronda Pitchford (left), assistant director of consortium Califa, and Callan Bignoli, director of Olin College Library in Needham, Massachusetts

and Carnegie-Whitney grants, and reached out to potential partners. The duo used funding to create an Equitable Sustainability Literacy Guide and outfit a larger space in BUL’s science library with bulletin boards, a bookshelf of curated sustainability titles, citizen science kits, and—its most popular offering—a seed library.

Technology trends and challenges

The Top Technology Trends panel, a longstanding feature of Annual, explored the theme of “Silver Linings.” Discussion quickly turned to the controversy of hoopla, an ebook subscription service that recently came under fire for hosting content that advances white supremacy, COVID-19 misinformation, and conversion therapy.

“At a recent meeting in Massachusetts, they relied on the Library Bill of Rights” to justify providing access to these materials, observed Callan Bignoli, director of Olin College Library in Needham, Massachusetts. But that approach contradicts the collection development policies and diversity statements of most libraries, reducing the agency that libraries have in collection development, the panelists noted. “That cannot stand,” Bignoli said. “We can’t give away one of our most [important] community functions to any vendor.”

Veronda Pitchford—assistant director of Califa, a nonprofit library consortium that represents more than 200 libraries in California—cited a recent feature from Pinterest allowing the searching of images by hair texture as an example of improved technology inclusiveness. More important than any individual feature, however, is the notion of inclusive coding, she said. “Co-creation is important to me—moving from designing for to designing *with*.” The distinction allows users to shape the products they use by identifying the features they need, she said.

Additional silver linings identified by the panel included how telemedicine can be accessible to many public libraries

that have a space that can be adapted to a telehealth kiosk, and the *moral entrepreneurship* movement in technology (bit.ly/AL-MoralEntrepreneurship).

During the session “Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Libraries: From Training to Innovation,” Clara M. Chu, director of the Mortenson Center for International Library Programs at University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, talked about how AI is a part of everyday life, yet libraries have been slow to adopt it.

Chu, joined by Soo Young Rieh, professor and associate dean for education at University of Texas at Austin, and other collaborators developed a one-week professional development workshop designed to bring library workers up to speed on AI through collaborative learning and a clear-eyed look at the technology’s shortcomings.

Building and funding a library

At “Everybody Wants a New Library: Planning, Funding, and Constructing Inspiring Spaces,” panelists discussed the challenges—particularly with funding—related to building new libraries.

Holly Ritchie, director of Manassas Park (Va.) City Library, said the bulk of funding for a new building scheduled to open in August came from the municipal budget, which required public hearings and opportunities for feedback from city residents. “These are a perfect opportunity for your supporters to show their support,” she said.

Presenters shared tips that made their libraries’ funding campaigns easier at “Transformational Capital Campaigns: Maverick Approaches That Lead to Organization-Changing Projects.” For instance, to overcome the awkwardness of asking for money, Amanda McKay, director of Effingham (Ill.) Public Library, started with the easiest possible visit—to a former library board president. “I knew she would say yes if I could just get the words out,” she recalled. “It was an awkward conversation that she was incredibly

gracious to listen to me stammer through.” McKay eventually managed to ask for \$100,000 to be a lead donor for the campaign, and the former president immediately said yes. “It was hard not to back-pedal,” McKay said. “You have to just say the words and stop talking and let them answer.”

During “Ethnographic Design: Creating Culturally Centered Library Spaces,” architect Joe Huberty of Engberg Anderson Architects and David Vinjamuri, adjunct associate professor of marketing at New York University, discussed how they apply ethnographic design in new libraries and remodeling projects to avoid building a “cookie-cutter library” that doesn’t ultimately resonate with the community.

Tracking how spaces within the library are being used can help illuminate ways to engage the community and reveal unmet needs. Julie Retherford, director of Chetco Community Public Library (CCPL) in Brookings, Oregon, shared an example from her library’s recent renovation, noting that the library had a teen area—marked by a neon sign that said TEENS—but it was underused. Teens did not feel especially welcome in the library because most of the space was focused on serving older adults and people with children, she said. And because teens are at school most of the day, the space had to be flexible enough to meet the needs of other users, like freelancers and people who work remotely. To resolve the situation, CCPL converted it to a more open space and added study areas.

“Are people doing what we think they’re doing [in our spaces]?” Vinjamuri asked attendees. “If the library’s not accomplishing your strategic objectives it’s because your space is not telling people to do those things.” **AL**

ALISON MARCOTTE is a freelance writer for *American Libraries*. Terra Dankowski, Greg Landgraf, Diana Panuncial, Sallyann Price, Sanhita SinhaRoy, and Carrie Smith contributed reporting for this story.



Clockwise from top: Holly Ritchie (left), director of Manassas Park (Va.) City Library, and Jon D. Solomon, director of Riverside (Calif.) County Library System; Clara M. Chu, director of the Mortenson Center for International Library Programs at University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign; Julie Retherford, director of Chetco Community Public Library in Brookings, Oregon



A Marketplace of Ideas

Vendors appreciate a return to in-person networking at a smaller Annual Conference

by Marshall Breeding



Daphene Keys, public services librarian at Houston Community College, with the Baker & Taylor mascots

The American Library Association's (ALA) 2022 Annual Conference and Exhibition returned to Washington, D.C., June 23–28, and the mood in the exhibit hall was only slightly subdued compared with previous in-person conferences. This year's attendance of just over 14,000 people—though well below the 21,000 reported in 2019 in the same venue—was strong considering the ongoing pandemic. The Friday night opening of the Library Marketplace seemed frenetic, as usual.

ALA mandated COVID-19 vaccinations and face masks for conference attendees, which lent some confidence for personal interactions on the exhibit floor. While some vendors noted lighter traffic than in past years, there appeared to be a sense of appreciation for the return of a live marketplace—and a consensus that virtual conferences have not been able to create the exposure and networking opportunities that connect vendors with current and potential clients.

The theme of equity, diversity, and inclusion was prevalent across many products and services. On the business front, a hot topic was vendor consolidation, epitomized by the acquisition of ProQuest by Clarivate and the recent lawsuit OCLC has filed against Clarivate (bit.ly/AL-LTG-OCLCsuit).

An emphasis on books

As in previous years, book vendors—ranging from boutique presses to international conglomerates—attracted the most attention in the exhibit hall. Publisher aisles were packed, with attendees lining up for author signatures and clamoring for advance copies of new titles, posters, and other reading-related giveaways. In addition to eight stages dedicated to book talks, the Live from the 25 podcast booth featured live author interviews.

Nearby, vendors promoted many products and services to help libraries manage their inventories of books. Companies including **D-Tech**, **Lyngsoe Systems**, **mk Solutions**, and **Tech Logic** demonstrated equipment for sorting, self-service, and logistical support geared to public libraries looking for efficient and affordable solutions for busy circulation operations. **FE Technologies** presented its Anytime Library, a standalone dispenser that allows borrowers to check out and return materials, while **EnvisionWare** demonstrated its 24-Hour Library, a self-service, offsite vending machine that allows patrons to place or pick up holds. **International Library Services**, which specializes in outreach kiosks, showed off its new AutoLend Library, a versatile standalone device for self-service borrowing, returns, and pickup.

Baker & Taylor, once again an independent company following its separation from Follett Corporation in 2021, continues



Author Jarrett Melendez (left) signs copies of his graphic novel *Chef's Kiss* at the Oni Press booth.

to be a major distributor of library materials through its Title Source 360 ordering system. The organization highlighted related services, such as its new BTCat cataloging platform; its suite of Academic Services, including its digital content platform Axis 360; and its Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Analysis tool.

BetterWorldBooks has partnered with the Internet Archive to offer services for libraries wanting to responsibly dispose of books weeded from their collections. **Iron Mountain** presented services for libraries that require collection relocation or out-sourced storage of physical materials.

Ebooks were also top of mind as the pandemic has driven usage of digital offerings. **OverDrive**, the leading provider in this market, featured its "Access for All" initiative, which aims to reduce barriers to content for underserved populations.

Bibliotheca continues to bridge print and digital formats with its cloudLibrary platform and focus on self-service, sorting, and unattended library services. **Midwest Tape's** booth featured hoopla, its streaming service for digital audiobooks, ebooks, music, and video.

Big business reigns

The super-sized library vendors, with their towering and well-staffed booths, were the landmarks of the Library Marketplace. Many of these companies make large financial contributions to ALA, the conference, and its programs.

The scholarly publishing sector was represented by major companies including **Elsevier**, **Sage Publications**, **Springer Nature**, and **Wiley**. Each demonstrated the advantages of its delivery platforms and analytics tools to measure the impact of authors, articles, and journals. These businesses continue to expand and diversify into new product and service areas—not just within the library technology industry but also in the broader research and scholarly communications space.

Gale highlighted its training and education programs offered through public libraries, such as its online diploma program Gale Presents: Excel Adult High School. For academic libraries, the company showed how its multidisciplinary collections of primary source materials are now complemented by the Gale Digital Scholar Lab, a turnkey platform for humanities research.

ProQuest's booth reflected its expansion and new ownership by Clarivate. In addition to ProQuest content and workflow products, the company now subsumes the offerings of **Ex Libris** and **Innovative Interfaces**. Ex Libris showed its flagship Alma library services platform, Leganto course list manager, Esploro research services solution, and Rapido and RapidILL resource sharing products. Innovative's Sierra and Polaris integrated library system (ILS) products were on display, though the focus was on Vega LX, a suite of components for patron discovery and engagement.

EBSCO Information Services emphasized its offerings for EBSCO FOLIO, an open source library services platform, in addition to its core products EBSCO Discovery Services and research platform EBSCOhost.

At the **OCLC** booth, staffers offered a busy slate of programs and demonstrations for its cataloging and resource sharing services, as well as OCLC Wise, a user-centered platform for public libraries, and WorldShare Management Services, a library services platform used mostly by academic libraries. The organization previewed its new interface for WorldCat.

A focus on the ILS

SirsiDynix featured its Symphony ILS and its growing suite of BLUEcloud applications, which offer modern, web-based interfaces for staff and patron services. Special attention was given to CloudSource OA, a new discovery and resource management subscription for open access content.

The Library Corporation continues as a mainstay of the conference and demonstrated its Library•Solution and CARL•X ILS platforms. **LibLime** showed off its Bibliovation ILS, which is now compliant with FedRAMP (the Federal Risk and Authorization Management Program) through its Amazon-based hosting services.

On the open source front, **ByWater Solutions** presented its services for the Koha ILS, Aspen Discovery, and the Libki

While some vendors noted lighter traffic than in past years, there appeared to be a sense of appreciation for the return of a live marketplace.



A demonstration of equipment for sorting books at the Tech Logic booth.

reservation system for computers and other equipment.

Index Data staffers were on hand to talk about their services for open source platforms FOLIO and ReShare, as well as other community-based projects.

Among the smaller booths demonstrating ILS products, **TIND**, a spin-off of CERN, shared information on its cloud-based TIND ILS as well as its institutional repository, research data management, and digital archive offerings. Simplicity, an ILS from new company **Millonex**, saw its debut at the conference. Simplicity features modern interfaces for mobile and desktop devices.

The **Media Flex** booth featured the open source OPALS ILS used by schools and other small libraries. Similarly, **Book Systems** demonstrated its Atrium ILS for small-to-midsize school and public libraries. **Insignia Software** showed its ILS and discovery interfaces geared for school and public libraries, as well as its digital asset manager.

Enhancing patron experience

BiblioCommons demonstrated an array of patron-facing services, including its BiblioCore discovery interface, BiblioWeb platform for website building, and BiblioEmail marketing tool. BiblioCommons products integrate with all major ILSes used by public libraries.

Communico brought a trailer-sized “tiny library” to the exhibit floor to highlight its suite of patron-facing components oriented primarily to public libraries. These included Create (a website builder), Attend (an event management tool), Reserve (a module for scheduling rooms and equipment), and Broadcast (a digital signage solution). Also specializing in patron-facing interfaces for public libraries, **Library Market** showed off its LibraryWebsite, LibraryCalendar, and LibraryBrand, a marketing tool with a focus on customized branding.

SOLUS showcased its Library App, a mobile-friendly interface for catalogs and websites. Multiple ILS vendors have partnered with the company, which, most notably, has created a



Peter Collins, director of resource sharing at OCLC, presents to attendees.

comprehensive digital presence for The Libraries Consortium, a 23-member, London-area organization.

Springshare showed its ever-expanding portfolio of tools and technologies, including the widely popular LibGuides, LibGuides CMS, LibAnswers, LibCal, and LibConnect, the company's newest offering for customer relationship management.

Plug-ins, analytics, and cataloging

The exhibition included an array of vendors promoting niche technologies. **Atlas Systems** highlighted its popular platforms ILLiad (for managing interlibrary loan requests) and Aeon (for requests, fulfillment, and tracking items in special collections). **OpenAthens**, an authentication and access management service, showed how its product can connect with SAML (Security Assertion Markup Language) sources and simplify remote access. **StackMap**, a digital mapping and wayfinding tool, enables libraries to visually map locations of items found in the catalog and integrates with any ILS.

Booths also featured products and services focused on data and analytics. **LibraryIQ**, a sister company of Library Systems & Services, provides a comprehensive analytics package that aggregates data from different sources into a single dashboard. **Counting Opinions** helps libraries collect, store, and analyze operational data and easily create reports and visualizations.

On the cataloging side, companies including **Backstage Library Works** and **MARCIVE** presented information to help libraries with projects related to their MARC bibliographic databases.

A hub for learning

Another subset of marketplace products focused on the library as a nexus for education and skill-building. **Mango Languages**, as in previous years, assembled a prominent booth to feature its language-learning programs and apps that can be made available through libraries and related organizations. **Brainfuse** featured its HelpNow online learning environment, which provides tutoring and homework help for a wide range of subjects.

Library Ideas demonstrated its suite of content and learning services, including Freegal Music, Rocket Languages, iVOX (an immersive storytelling tool), and Freading (an ebooks platform). **The Evolve Project**, an organization that works with libraries to conceive makerspaces, helped organize the Tech Test Pilot Playground, a section of the exhibit floor for attendees to try out gadgets and learning toys or complete a make-and-take project.

Google's digital upskilling arm, **Grow with Google**, offered information on how libraries and nonprofits can freely access the company's training resources to help community members with career advancement and small business development. The popular **NASA** booth featured short videos and presentations about selected space expeditions and related findings and research. And the **Library of Congress** booth highlighted its unique collections and programs; during the conference, LC held offsite open-house events, giving attendees a rare opportunity to see behind-the-scenes operations.

The Mobile App Pavilion gave developers a chance to show off their library- and literacy-related apps. Nonprofit service **Sourcery** helps researchers gain access to articles not available online. The mobile app developed by **Little Free Library** allows individuals and organizations to register their Little Free Library and find others nearby. Mobile apps were by no means confined to the pavilion, as they are mostly seen as a mandatory feature of any product or service these days.

Curating the future

Coherent Digital, a company founded in 2019, presented its expanding set of collections that curate, index, and organize "wild" content that is available on the web but may not be readily available for researchers. For example, its Policy Commons database includes 3.2 million documents from research centers, think tanks, and nongovernmental organizations.

Nonprofit **LYRASIS** presented its ongoing services related to open source projects, along with its recently launched Palace Project, a collaboration with the Digital Public Library of America that offers a library-centered e-content platform and marketplace designed to simplify user access to digital materials.

The Library Marketplace at ALA's Annual Conference continues to be the largest and most comprehensive opportunity for libraries to learn about the products and services available to them and meet the experts and entrepreneurs behind these innovations. While this roundup represents the range and variety of what was featured, it naturally omits many interesting and important organizations that participated in this year's event. ^{AL}



MARSHALL BREEDING is an independent consultant, speaker, and author. He writes and edits the website Library Technology Guides.

2022

INTERNATIONAL INNOVATORS

ALA Presidential Citations honor forward-thinking global libraries

EDITED BY
Sallyann Price

Two libraries earned this year's American Library Association (ALA) Presidential Citation for Innovative International Library Projects. The winning entries include a program that teaches information literacy through calligraphy and a community center that's creating a new model for library governance.

The citations began as an initiative of 2007–2008 ALA President Loriene Roy. Presented by the International Relations Round Table, the awards recognize exemplary services and projects that draw attention to libraries creating positive change, demonstrating sustainability, and providing a model for others to follow.

This year's winners are Run Run Shaw Library at City University of Hong Kong (CityU) and La Bulle, a library and community space in Annemasse, France. [AL](#)



LA BULLE

Annemasse,
France

Supported by the municipality of Annemasse, a suburb of Geneva on the French side of the border with Switzerland, La Bulle (meaning *the bubble* in French) was envisioned as a cultural third place for the community, encompassing a library, toy library, and gathering space. The center, developed over five years with community input, is governed collaboratively by three groups: local citizens, a committee of elected representatives (including local councilors who handle culture and sports, youth services, urban policy, civic participation, and digital services), and a professional team comprising trustees and employees, including librarians. Together these groups vote on key decisions and design services for a community that is becoming increasingly young and diverse. ●

Five years of planning and community input went into the development of La Bulle, which includes a library, toy library, and community space.



Students from universities in several countries participate in calligraphy tutorials through City University of Hong Kong and learn how to parse historical East Asian texts.

CALLIGRAPHY CONNECTIONS

Run Run Shaw Library at
City University of Hong Kong

In the years since CityU launched a major online database of historical Chinese texts in 2012, librarians have found low levels of interaction with physical materials. The Calligraphy Connections project, ongoing since 2014, leverages students' interest in calligraphy as both a means of communication and a form of creative expression to drive engagement with undervalued historical East Asian texts. In the first phase of the project, students from universities in several countries participate in weekly tutorials in both creating calligraphy and parsing historical texts over the course of a semester. In the second, students participate in workshops and seminars with universities in other countries, and their works are collected for a roving exhibition. ●

PEOPLE

Announcements

ON THE MOVE

Jenny Bloom started as director of Locust Valley (N.Y.) Library June 13.

In April **Katharine Clark** joined Middleton (Wis.) Public Library as deputy director of public services.



Maggie Gall-Maynard joined Dayton (Ohio) Metro Library's West Carrollton branch as teen librarian June 19.

Amy Harris Houk was appointed assistant dean for teaching and learning at University of North Carolina at Greensboro Libraries April 1.

May 31 **Andrew Medlar** joined Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh as president and director.



April 18 **Nicole Steeves** started as director of library technology at Chicago Public Library.

In February **Jill Tominosky** joined Guilderland (N.Y.) Public Library as local history librarian.

March 1 **Susan Van Alstyne** became director of Taylor Memorial Library at Centenary University in Hackettstown, New Jersey.



April 1 **Shelbi Webb** joined University of North Carolina at Greensboro Libraries as diversity resident librarian.



PROMOTIONS

San Francisco Public Library promoted **Rebecca Alcalá-Veraflor** to chief of branches April 26.

Kudos

Victor A. Caputo, director of The Bryant Library in Roslyn, New York, received the 2022 LDA Award for Excellence in Library Achievement from the Nassau County Library Association and Suffolk County Library Association.

Lewis Giles, assistant director of library services at University of North Texas Dallas College of Law, received the American Association of Law Libraries' Robert L. Oakley Advocacy Award.

Gerald Holmes, reference librarian, diversity coordinator, and associate professor at University of North



Carolina at Greensboro Libraries, received the Faculty Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Award in May.

In May the National Genealogical Society awarded **Cheryl Lang**, recently retired manager of the Midwest Genealogy Center at Mid-Continent Public Library in Independence, Missouri, the Filby Award for Genealogical Librarianship. ●

May 16 **María R. Estorino** became interim vice provost for university libraries and university librarian at University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Taylor Greene was promoted to manager at Leisure World Library in Seal Beach, California, April 22.

April 4 San Francisco Public Library promoted **Naomi Jelks** to racial equity manager for public service.

Virginia Tech University Libraries in Blacksburg promoted **Edward F. Lener** to director of collections and technical services in May.



June 1 **Megan Martinsen** was promoted to head of the Digital Scholarship Services Unit at Georgetown University Library in Washington, D.C.

May 1 University of Missouri in Columbia promoted **Deborah Ward** to vice provost for libraries and university librarian.

RETIREMENTS

Deborah Jakubs retired in May as Rita DiGiallonardo Holloway University Librarian and vice provost for library affairs at Duke University in Durham, North Carolina.

Vanessa Morris retired as manager of Leisure World Library in Seal Beach, California, April 22.

Steven V. Potter retired as director of Mid-Continent Public Library in Independence, Missouri, effective June 30, after 34 years with the library.

In June **Kathleen R. Smith** retired from Locust Valley (N.Y.) Library.

AT ALA

Human Resources Assistant **Adriane Alicea** left ALA June 1.

May 16 **Alison Armstead** became program coordinator for continuing education in the Public Library Association (PLA).

Nellie Barrett, program officer at PLA, left ALA May 27.

May 5 **Karen Gianni** joined the Office for Intellectual Freedom as program

In Memory

Virginia Massey Bowden, 82, emeritus director of University of Texas Health Science Center's Medical School Library in San Antonio, died May 2. She worked at the library for 33 years, transforming it into an automated and computerized building that she helped design.

Jenny Colvin, 43, associate director for outreach and access services at Furman University Libraries in Greenville, South Carolina, died May 12. She chaired ALA's Over the Rainbow Book List Committee and was active with the South Carolina Library Association and the Partnership Among South Carolina Academic Libraries. She hosted the *Reading Envy* podcast for 246 episodes.

Claudia J. Gollop, former associate dean at University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill's School of Information and Library Science until her 2020 retirement, died May 3. Gollop's research focused on consumer health information acquisition and dissemination, and her 1997 article "Health Information-Seeking Behavior and Older African American Women" has been cited more than 150 times. She received numerous awards during her career, including the 2018 Association for Library and Information Science Education Award for Professional Contribution and the 2009 Roadbuilders' Award in Library Education from the North Carolina Library Association's Round Table for Ethnic and Minority Concerns.



Nancy A. Kandoian, 70, librarian at the Lionel Pincus and Princess Firyal Map Division of New York Public Library (NYPL) for 44 years, died May 16. She was a longstanding member of ALA's Map and Geospatial Information Round Table and helped to shape the field of map cataloging.

William E. McGrath Jr., 95, professor of library and information science at State University of New York at Buffalo until his 1996 retirement, died April 10. He published papers on librarianship, more than 70 papers on statistical

analysis and mathematics, and biographies of illustrator Grace Drayton and botanist Albion Reed Hodgdon. McGrath began his career as a science librarian at University of New Hampshire in Durham. He previously served as director of libraries at South Dakota School of Mines and Technology and University of Southwest Louisiana (now the University of Louisiana at Lafayette) and as dean of libraries at University of Massachusetts Lowell.

Louis John Reith, 82, rare books cataloger at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C., for 28 years until his 2013 retirement, died May 27. Reith was a scholar in the history of Germany, Czechoslovakia, and central Europe, and published articles in the *American Historical Review*, *Church History*, the *Sixteenth Century Journal*, and other journals. Prior to working at Georgetown, he served as a cataloger at Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne, Indiana; East Carolina University in Greenville, North Carolina; and St. Bonaventure (N.Y.) University.

Marion Hanes Rutsch, 62, librarian at Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic School in Bethesda, Maryland, until her 2003 retirement, died May 6. She previously worked at NYPL's Hunts Point branch and developed storytime curricula for public libraries in the D.C. area. Rutsch served on several children's book award committees, including the Newbery Medal Selection Committee in 1995, and chaired the Caldecott Award Selection Committee in 2014 and the Notable Children's Books Committee in 2004.

Donna Wills Scheeder, 74, longtime librarian at the Library of Congress until retiring in 2015 as deputy chief information officer of the Congressional Research Service, died March 7. She was 2015–2017 president of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions and 2000–2001 president of the Special Libraries Association (SLA). She was awarded SLA's John Cotton Dana Award in 2004 and named to the SLA Hall of Fame in 2009. ●


coordinator for the Freedom to Read Foundation.

April 21 **Stan Kessler** rejoined ALA as IT data analyst.

Kathi Kromer, associate executive director for public policy and advocacy, left ALA June 10.

April 21 **Mike Larson** joined ALA as director of accounting.

Donna Mangrum joined ALA as membership accounting coordinator May 2.

May 16 **Jon Martin** joined the Chapter Relations Office as program manager. 



Reunited, and It Feels So Good

The exhibit hall at this year's Annual Conference in Washington, D.C., boasted the usual fan favorites—books, author talks, new product demos, robots, mascots, and all the swag fit for a canvas bag. Attendees weren't exactly sure what to expect from ALA's first major in-person conference since the start of the pandemic, but the energy was palpable, the reunions were touching, and the smiles were evident—even under the masks. Here are some memorable moments, clockwise from top:

Steph McHugh (left) and Mary Hamer (right), media specialists and librarians at Yorkville (Ill.) Community Unit School District 115, pose with author Rosemary Wells during a signing of her book *If You Believe in Me*.

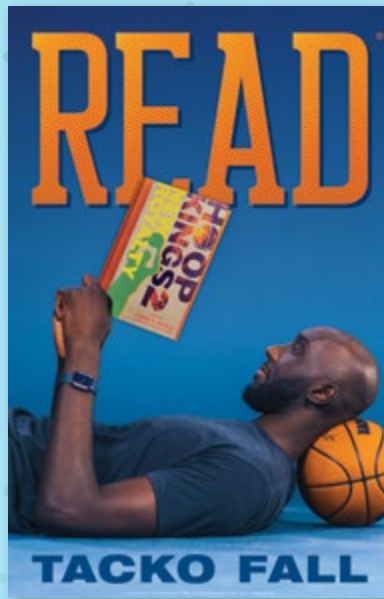
Shayna Szabo, youth services librarian at LA County (Calif.) Library, pets Oliver, a rabbit from Peacebunny Island, an island on the Mississippi River where rabbits are trained to become comfort and emotional support animals.

María Daniela “Dani” Thurber, reference librarian in the Hispanic Reading Room of the Library of Congress and immediate past president of the District of Columbia Library Association, makes a conductive bracelet at the Tech Test Pilot Playground.

Luke Sutherland, access services specialist at Montgomery College Library in Takoma Park, Maryland, creates a page for the #alaac22 collaborative zine in the Zine Pavilion. **AL**



IDINA MENZEL POSTER



TACKO FALL POSTER



MARCEL THE SHELL POSTER

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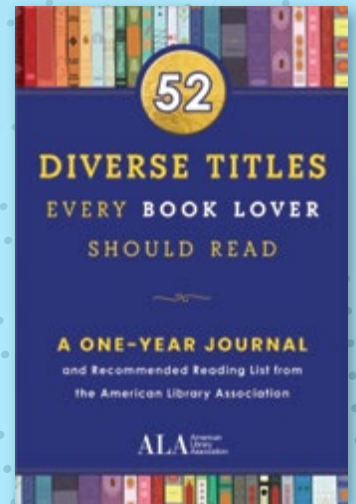
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