

May 2025

MARSHALL BREEDING'S

p. 16

PLUS: Pam Muñoz Ryan,
Scopes Trial Collection,
Brewery Partnerships

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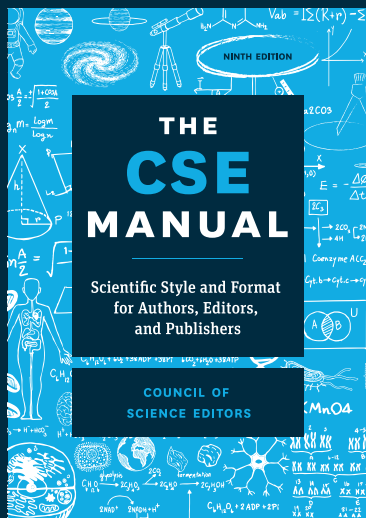
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Braving Uncertainty



Sanhita SinhaRoy

Spring can be so erratic. Making things feel even more unpredictable this year is the chaos in Washington, which has had—and will continue to have—implications for libraries and library workers for years to come. While the impact on grants and funding is still unknown, the political climate will impose changes on collections and services, writes Marshall Breeding (cover story, p. 16). In his annual Library Systems Report, the longtime consultant analyzes the current state of the library technology industry and trends he sees developing. “Technologies that can help library professionals perform their work with fewer resources may be more welcomed than ever,” he writes.

In their respective columns, ALA President Cindy Hohl and Interim Executive Director Leslie Burger convey the urgent need for continued advocacy. To help with this work, both point to ALA’s Show Up for Our Libraries campaign (p. 9), launched in January.

Acclaimed children’s author Pam Muñoz Ryan (Newsmaker, p. 14) needs no reminding of the importance of libraries. She talks with Julia Smith, *Booklist* senior editor of books for youth, about the changes she has seen throughout her writing career and how “librarians create a safe place where readers can dream and hope and lay down their pain.”

On a lighter—certainly hoppier—note, Rosie Newmark explores the growing partnerships between libraries and local craft breweries (“Brewing Connections,” p. 10). These hands-on collaborations allow library staffers to help create signature drinks for fundraising and awareness campaigns—and expand the library’s visibility among a younger adult crowd.

Finally, in “On the Origin of Scopes” (Bookend, p. 40), we look at a library exhibit at University of Tennessee, Knoxville, that commemorates the centennial of the Scopes Monkey Trial. As Editorial and Advertising Specialist Carrie Smith writes, “Then, as now, the trial served as a prism for societal debate around education and intellectual freedom.”

There’s much to think about and plenty more coming our way. Let’s brace for challenges together.

Sanhita

The chaos in Washington will have implications for libraries and library workers for years to come.

american libraries

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Information Warriors, Unite

Librarians must continue to uphold, protect, and defend democracy



Cindy Hohl

In our role as stalwart information warriors, we shall hold the front lines of democracy to ensure that intellectual freedom and the First Amendment are held in the highest regard.

Our profession, and our humanity, are in jeopardy.

As we saw with the White House's executive order calling for the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) to be eliminated, libraries—and everything we value as information professionals—are under attack.

Make no mistake: The American people need to brace for more waves of uncertainty and oppression. And in our role as stalwart information warriors, we shall hold the front lines of democracy to ensure that intellectual freedom and the First Amendment are held in the highest regard. With a network that's 125,000 libraries strong, we must take action for our freedoms. We must espouse the rights of Americans as we uphold the Library Bill of Rights and the core values of our field. Upholding, protecting, and defending humanity are not negotiable.

We have already witnessed 100 days of perilous actions taken against the people of this country under the guise of administrative efficiency. This chaos has resulted in mass firings, the temporary closure of a presidential library, a chilling effect on free speech on campuses, and overall turmoil. Making threats, wielding ultimate power, weaponizing authority, inflicting suffering on others—these are not acts of leadership but crimes against humanity and the American way of life.

We must ask ourselves: What will we allow in this moment? Because whatever we allow now is what will continue. And when barriers to truthful reporting arise, we must seek the truth and hold accountable elected officials, the same officials we trusted to be our collective voice.

Are you prepared to defend access to accurate information for the public good? Are you ready to ensure sound policies to protect collections, data, records retention, and preservation of information, both in print and electronically?

In January, ALA launched Show Up for Our Libraries, a campaign to harness the power of advocates to persuade policymakers about libraries' crucial role. Contact your representative, senators, and state officials to share stories about why libraries matter and ask for their support for library funding. Strong communities have strong libraries, and we must solicit support to help create healthy communities in every state.

Did you ever think America in the 21st century would be so fractured, vulnerable, and fragile?

If we have learned nothing from history, now is the time to remember: There was a time in this country—after Indians were “discovered”—when we were called “merciless Indian savages” in the Declaration of Independence and then forcibly removed from our homelands and placed onto reservations in remote areas without access to the natural resources we needed to survive.

The plan was to punish us for surviving. It was to punish us for escaping attempted genocide. After we were granted citizenship in 1924, our children were forced into boarding schools, where they underwent racist assimilation tactics and where the bodies of the children who never made it out still lie buried. The federal government later gave tribes blood quantum cards to limit our citizenship. They were devised to prove our savage ancestry, similar to the way horses and dogs are classified by their identity and worth.

Hearing that people are again being forced to show cards to prove their right to be here sounds all too familiar.

I believe we can do better. This is the very moment when all eyes must open wide in America, because we have been here before, and we must stop it now. **ALA**

CINDY HOHL is Dakota of the Santee Sioux Nation and works in Missouri on the ancestral homelands of the Kaw/Kansa, Kickapoo, Očeti Šakówin, Osage, Otoe-Missouria, Shawnee, and Wyandot.

Upholding Our Values

The future of libraries is at stake



Leslie Burger

It is not a time to be meek, indirect, or retreat. Our survival—as institutions foundational to our democracy, education, and learning—is at risk.

We have all been impacted in both anticipated and unpredictable ways following the sweeping changes in Washington, D.C., since the January inauguration. These actions—including the March 14 executive order calling for the elimination of the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS)—have been an affront to our profession and the people we serve.

Across the board, the work of federal agencies, many of which directly or indirectly support libraries, has either been discontinued or altered. Although it is too soon to determine the overall impact of proposed changes to library funding—including IMLS grants and E-Rate discounts—we anticipate there will be more proposals to significantly reduce or outright eliminate programs.

There are also multiple attacks on library values and policies. In particular, diversity, equity, and inclusion are being challenged in executive orders (and likely via legislation) in the months to come. This is a real and present threat and danger for all of us.

The American Library Association (ALA) has always done its best to avoid partisan politics, choosing instead to work across the aisle to develop partnerships and relationships with individuals and organizations that share our values and support the important work of libraries. Libraries are inherently nonpartisan institutions.

But this time a different approach may be needed. ALA will continue to evaluate and respond to the widespread impact of budget cuts at the local, state, and national levels. We will continue to monitor proposed state legislation restricting access to library materials through censorship, book bans, and suspension of business relationships with ALA.

Our Association will most certainly be called upon to build strong coalitions with organizations that share our values and advocate for the

freedom to read, support education, and advance broadband access to bridge the digital divide.

We remain committed to federal programs that support access to libraries and lifelong learning, workforce development, education, and efforts to further equity, diversity, and inclusion for all. We know that when we work with others, we amplify our voice and have the potential for greater success.

ALA is dedicated to stepping up its advocacy work throughout the Association during these tumultuous and frightening times. We rely on our exceptional Public Policy and Advocacy Office staff members to guide our actions, partnering with our multiple member-leader groups. Typically, we are measured and deliberative in our response and advocacy, but those tactics may no longer work in this new environment.

Our new advocacy campaign, Show Up for Our Libraries, is a call to action for all of us who work in and use libraries. It is not a time to be meek, indirect, or retreat. Our survival—as institutions foundational to our democracy, education, and learning—is at risk.

I call on all of you to be vigilant and to respond quickly and directly to these challenges and threats.

ALA is here to support you. I call on each of you to respond to our requests for calls, letters, visits, and other tactics that help us reach state and federal legislators and decision makers.

ALA needs you. We all have a role, and the people who use your libraries need you.

We are strong, but we are stronger together. Our collective power—and the relationships we build—will enable us to achieve better results.

As we approach ALA's 150th anniversary, I am reminded that we have survived many challenges. This may be the toughest one yet. **AL**

LESLIE BURGER is interim executive director of the American Library Association.

Silence Is Not a Solution

I was honored to have my United for Libraries talk featured in the January/February 2025 issue (“Into the Future,” p. 28). Regrettably, I feel the selected quotations—lacking full context, and in combination with the writers’ framing—suggest the opposite of what my conclusions were.

My talk, “Rising to the Challenge: The Trustee’s Role in the Culture Wars,” explains how antilibrary activists are spreading misinformation and waging a harassment campaign against noncompliant or marginalized library workers on the grounds that marginalized people and perspectives should cease to be visible in public and how unreasonable that mindset is in a diverse society. My conclusion is that trustees and librarians must courageously speak up in defense of libraries and marginalized people instead of passively accepting, normalizing, or buying into misinformation and escalating intimidation tactics.

The article seems to position me as arguing against resisting or speaking up against these things, regardless of how threatening, outrageous, or upsetting antilibrary rhetoric becomes. That is not my stance.

As a trans person and librarian, I am frustrated by the widespread platforming of calls to restrict access to library books and spaces as though they are legitimate. After years of sustained



attacks, I do not believe silence is a viable strategy. Librarians must stop evoking “neutrality” and “intellectual freedom” as justifications for not definitively shutting down misinformation targeting libraries, librarians, marginalized people, and minors.

Instead, we need to insist upon the inherent dignity of marginalized people; resist antilibrary misinformation, radicalization, and efforts to manipulate us; stop platforming harmful rhetoric; and accurately and openly describe antilibrary backlash for what it is: unfounded, violent, unacceptable, undemocratic.

We must summon the reserves of our moral courage, stand firm, and use our voices. Silence is not an adequate response to suppression.

Heath Umbreit
Boston

Revisiting Concepts

I often tell colleagues that if you wait long enough, what took place in the past will come back to us in the future. Reading “Words Matter” (Jan./Feb., p. 34) about creating

harmful-content statements was just such an event. I was looking for acknowledgment of the work that librarian Sanford Berman did in the 1960s and 1970s to create a more inclusive and accurate cataloging system through the Library of Congress. Much of his work appeared in *The Unabashed Librarian* magazine published by the late Marvin Scilken. I remember reading his discussions of the need to change the words in our catalogs to reflect more correct usage. It was not until I got to the Librarian’s Library column by Reanna Esmail, “A Storied History” (Jan./Feb., p. 44), and saw Berman’s 1971 text, *Prejudices and Antipathies: A Tract on the LC Subject Heads Concerning People*—republished in 2013—that my concern was somewhat alleviated. Berman was not given all the recognition that he should have been as a leader in the field during his career. Perhaps a new cadre of librarians will revisit his work because of this renewed focus on inclusivity.

Arthur Friedman
Rego Park, New York

CORRECTIONS

In “Into the Future” (Jan./Feb., p. 28), the job titles listed for Stephanie Chase and Maura Deedy were incorrect. Chase is executive director of Libraries of Eastern Oregon and founding principal of the Constructive Disruption consultancy. Deedy is founder and principal of Local Librarian Consulting.

🐦 I got my *American Libraries* magazine in the mail and seeing all of the super cool things that libraries are up to gives me a lot of hope for the future. So this is everyone’s reminder to go get a library card and use your local library as much as you can because they’re awesome 💖

@SPOOKYSUNFLOWERS
.BSKY.SOCIAL, in response to the Jan./Feb. issue

✂ Feeding the body and feeding the mind!

@MRS_MISTY_479,
in response to “Crafting Charcuterie” (Jan./Feb., p. 16)

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Trump Moves to Cut IMLS

On March 14, President Donald Trump issued an executive order calling for the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) to be eliminated, reducing its functions and associated personnel “to the minimum presence and function required by law.”

The American Library Association (ALA) responded in a March 15 release, stating in part: “To dismiss some 75 committed workers and the mission of an agency that advances opportunity and learning is to dismiss the aspirations and everyday needs of millions of Americans. And those who will feel that loss most keenly live in rural communities.”

The Public Library Association, Association for Rural and Small Libraries, and Urban Libraries Council issued a joint statement on March 19 warning of the cuts’ impact on public libraries across the US and calling on members of Congress to push the White House to rescind the order. IMLS funding is closely tied to the needs of state and local libraries, the statement notes. It cites examples such as upgraded internet

speeds for library patrons in Montana; Braille books in Louisiana; and education kits for homeschool families in Mississippi.

The Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) also issued a statement on March 19: “The elimination of IMLS funding would substantially diminish academic libraries’ capacity to enhance knowledge creation, innovation, and equitable access to information,” said ACRL President Leo Lo. “This move undermines our collective commitment to education, research, and intellectual growth.”

The first Trump administration made four consecutive attempts to eliminate IMLS and funding for the Library Services and Technology Act, the only library-specific federal funding. Library advocates counteracted those threats, and during that time period Congress increased funding for IMLS by \$26 million.

ALA released an FAQ that explains potential effects of the order and actions library supporters can take at bit.ly/ALA-IMLSFAQ. ●

ALA Files Amicus Brief Affirming Universal Service

In January, ALA filed an amicus brief affirming the constitutionality of the Federal Communications Commission’s (FCC) Universal Service Fund (USF) and its E-Rate program, which helps power broadband-enabled services and access through US public libraries and schools. More than half of all public libraries each year apply for E-Rate funding.

The brief is part of the record the US Supreme Court will review in two consolidated cases that will determine the future of funding for universal broadband access. Read the full brief at bit.ly/ALA-amicus-brief.

“The E-Rate program supports the broadband capacity that libraries need to deliver essential services to their communities, providing opportunities in education, employment, emergency communications, and entrepreneurship,” said ALA President Cindy Hohl

in a January 17 statement. “E-Rate and the other three USF programs are critical to fulfilling ALA’s vision of broadband as a human right. The court should not pull the plug on this powerful program.”

Annual Registration Opens, Speakers Announced

ALA announced the first of several speakers for its 2025 Annual Conference and Exhibition, to be held June 26–30 in Philadelphia. The Opening General Session speaker will be Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer, whose memoir, *True Gretch* (Simon & Schuster, January), was recently adapted for young adults. Actor George Takei returns to Annual to discuss his new memoir, *It Rhymes with Takei* (Penguin Random House, June), and actor Geena Davis, author and illustrator of *The Girl Who Was Too Big for the Page* (Penguin Random House, April), will close out the conference.

Additional speakers will be announced, along with information about education programs, authors events, and the exhibit hall. Register at alaannual.org.

Children’s Literature Lecturer Announced

The Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC) announced that author Cynthia Leitich Smith will deliver the 2026 Children’s Literature Lecture. Libraries can apply to host the lecture at bit.ly/CLL-host-26 through April 30.



Cynthia Leitich Smith

This annual honor recognizes an author, illustrator, editor, critic, librarian, historian, or teacher of children’s literature who has made significant contributions to the field. Smith, of the Muscogee Nation, is a bestselling author of more than 20 books for children and young adults and winner

Book Bans Are Real

The US Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights issued a press release on January 24 that called book banning a hoax and announced the office had dismissed 11 complaints "relating to so-called 'book bans'" and an additional six pending allegations of book banning. On January 26, ALA's Public Policy and Advocacy Office issued a statement in response.

"In their cruel and headlong effort to terminate protections from discrimination for LGBTQIA+ students and students of color, the Department of Education advances the demonstrably false claim that book bans are not real," the statement reads in part. "Book bans are real. While a parent has the right to guide their own children's reading, their beliefs and prejudices should not dictate what another parent chooses for their own children."

The statement notes that federal judges have consistently ruled that removing books from school library shelves based on the objections of a person or group, or because of a prejudice against a group, is unconstitutional censorship that violates students' First Amendment rights.

Read the full statement at bit.ly/BookBansAreReal. ●

of the 2020 American Indian Youth Literature Award. She is the curator of Heartdrum, an imprint of HarperCollins Publishers focused on Native authors for children and young adults, and Native writing intensive coordinator for We Need Diverse Books.

ALA, AASL Decry Censorship on Military Installations

The US Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA), which operates more than 160 schools serving the children and dependents of active-duty military personnel across the world, announced in February that it would remove and review "books potentially related to gender ideology or discriminatory equity ideology topics" in DoDEA schools. This announcement came shortly after the schools ended programs, activities, and holiday observances related to those topics.

Additionally, ALA received confidential reports that library workers on military installations were forced to remove

books from shelves, take down displays about Black History Month, and cancel cultural events.

On February 14, ALA and the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) released a statement in response, which says, in part:

"By ordering the removal and suppression of learning materials and activities in its schools and libraries, DoDEA is engaging in censorship of legitimate views and opinions that violates the First Amendment rights of those who serve our nation and their families, thereby denying them the very freedoms they have pledged to protect with their lives.... Military personnel, with input from school librarians and teachers who serve them, should be trusted to select the resources that meet their families' information needs."

ALA, Gallup Release Diversity Study

ALA, in partnership with Gallup, released a new report in February that

CALENDAR

JUNE

Rainbow Book Month

bit.ly/RBMonth

JUNE 24-27

Rare Books and Manuscripts Section 65th Annual Conference

New Haven, Connecticut
rbms.info/conferences

JUNE 26-30

2025 Annual Conference

Philadelphia
alaannual.org

AUG. 18-22

IFLA World Library and Information Congress

Astana, Kazakhstan
bit.ly/IFLA25

SEPT.

Library Card Sign-Up Month

bit.ly/LibCardSU

OCT.

TeenTober

ala.org/yalsa/teentober

OCT. 5-11

Banned Books Week

bannedbooksweek.org

OCT. 8

Banned Websites Awareness Day

ala.org/aasl/bwad

OCT. 16-18

2025 AASL National Conference | St. Louis

bit.ly/AASL25

OCT. 19-25

National Friends of Libraries Week

bit.ly/ALA-NFLW

OCT. 20-26

International Open Access Week

openaccessweek.org

NOV.

International Games Month

bit.ly/ALA-igm

NOV. 12-14

Core Forum

coreforum.org

highlights opportunities to improve diversity across the library field. *Empowering Voices, Inspiring Change: Advancing Diversity within Librarianship* draws on qualitative research based on interviews



with 50 library professionals representing various genders, races, tenures, ages, and locations.

The report highlights the importance of mentorship, a pos-

itive workplace culture, and supportive leadership, as well as micro- and macro-level approaches to foster and support diversity, among other takeaways. These findings lay a foundation for innovative projects, continuing education, professional development opportunities, and research initiatives that speak to the varied identities within the library profession. Read the full report at adobe.ly/4h8NIFA.

Sara Jaffarian Award for School Librarians Opens

School librarians are invited to apply for the Sara Jaffarian School Library Program Award. This annual award, administered by ALA's Public Programs Office and AASL since 2006, recognizes outstanding humanities programs for children in kindergarten through 12th grade.

Nominations for programs taking place during the 2024–2025 school year will be accepted until May 1. Librarians are encouraged to self-nominate. Applications, guidelines, and previous winners are available at ala.org/jaffarian.

Four Board Members Elected

ALA Council announced on February 7 that it has elected four new members to serve on the ALA Executive Board for the 2025–2028 term.

They are K. C. Boyd, school librarian at Jefferson Middle School Academy in Washington, D.C.; Tatanisha Love, school library media specialist at

Southwest Academy in Baltimore; Janice Moore Newsum, professor emerita at University of Houston; and Ziba Pérez, young adult librarian at Los Angeles Public Library.

Visit bit.ly/ALA-exec-25 for more information.

2025 Louise Seaman Bechtel Fellowship Awarded

ALSC and the Professional Recognition and Scholarships Committee awarded the 2025 Louise Seaman Bechtel Fellowship to Aryssa Damron, librarian at Van Ness Elementary School in Washington, D.C. The Bechtel Fellowship is designed to allow qualified children's librarians to spend up to four weeks reading and studying at the Baldwin Library of Historical Children's Literature, a part of the George A. Smathers Libraries at University of Florida in Gainesville. Damron will pursue how the body of children's literature by Margaret Sidney, author of the Five Little Peppers series published from 1881 to 1916, aligned with and reflected her desire to prepare and train citizens of the future.

GNCRT Announces Top Graphic Novels of 2024

On February 11, the Graphic Novels and Comics Round Table (GNCRT) unveiled the 2024 Best Graphic Novels reading lists and top 10 lists for children and adults. These lists highlight the best graphic novels published in late 2023 through 2024. The recognition is intended to increase awareness of the graphic novel medium, amplify voices of diverse comics creators, and aid library staff in the development of graphic novel collections.

The children's list, for ages 5–12, includes *Wildful*, *Poetry Comics*, *Plain Jane and the Mermaid*, *The Girl Who Sang: A Holocaust Memoir of Hope and Survival*, and *The Circuit Graphic Novel*, among other titles. View the full list at bit.ly/GNCRT-children-25.

The adult list includes *Barnstormers: A Ballad of Love and Murder*, *Beneath*

ALA Launches Public Supporter Program

On February 10, ALA launched For Our Libraries, a new supporter program that invites the public to donate to the Association as it continues the fight to protect libraries and library professionals. Contributions to this effort can help advance ALA's key initiatives, including advocating for library funding at the federal, state, and local levels; providing grants for small and rural libraries; fighting for the right to read without censorship; and advocating for broadband funding for all.

Supporters who donate a minimum of \$10 monthly receive benefits, including a tote bag, access to virtual author events, and an online subscription to *Booklist Reader*.

Learn more at bit.ly/AL-Supporter.



the Trees Where Nobody Sees, Feeding Ghosts: A Graphic Memoir, The Hidden Life of Trees, and The Jellyfish, among others. View the full list at bit.ly/GNCRT-adult-25.


Nominations for the 2025 lists are open. Submit children's titles at bit.ly/GNCRT-children-nom and adult titles at bit.ly/GNCRT-adult-nom by September 15.

List of Feminist Books for Young Readers Released

Rise: A Feminist Book Project for Ages 0–18 announced its top 10 feminist books for young readers for 2025. The project is a subgroup of the ALA Social Responsibilities Round Table's Feminist Task Force. The Rise project recommends books with significant feminist content for children and teens.

Read the complete list at bit.ly/AL-Rise-25. 

New Initiative Asks Advocates to 'Show Up for Our Libraries'

 n January 22, ALA launched Show Up for Our Libraries, a campaign designed to harness the power of library advocates to influence policymakers to protect the freedom to read and ensure federal funding for libraries.

The campaign calls for supporters to move from awareness to action in their advocacy efforts. "We must face whatever threats come our way by showing up together—library workers and public supporters in our communities—to advocate for our patrons, our profession, and our core values," ALA President Cindy Hohl said in a January 22 statement.

ALA kicked off the campaign with a call for library advocates to get their elected leaders on the record about how they plan to protect the freedom to read and how they will support federal funding for libraries.

The Show Up website (bit.ly/ALAShowUp) includes storytelling templates, social media assets (using #ForOurLibraries), a guide for setting up a congressional tour of a library, and other free resources. ●

Continuing ed resources don't have to cost a fortune.

Last year, library patrons completed **2,410,822 lessons** in UniversalClass for Libraries.

From computer basics to coding to crafting. Patrons can earn accredited CEUs in 600+ topics.

Provide something every patron will love, at a price your library will love.

Explore the 600+ course collection!




libraries@transparent.com

TRENDS



Johnson City (Tenn.) Public Library Marketing Coordinator Hannah Kiger (top) pours barley into the first batch of the 1895 lager at Johnson City Brewing Company in April 2020.

Brewing Connections

Libraries and local breweries craft partnerships

BY Rosie Newmark

While creating one of their in-house brews, employees at Johnson City (Tenn.) Brewing Company brought in some unexpected assistants to pour barley into the batch: library staffers.

The pre-Prohibition-style lager they crafted together was called 1895, a nod to the founding year of Johnson City Public Library (JCPL), located just a few blocks from the brewery's downtown taproom. Inspired by beers of the late 19th century, it features three flavors:

coffee (for its connection to books), black currant (for a vintage flair), and blood orange (for an eerie association with mysteries and thrillers). The signature beverage was made in partnership with JCPL to promote its 125th anniversary in 2020.

"They really gave us a lot of creative control," says JCPL Marketing Coordinator Hannah Kiger, who, along with JCPL Director Julia Turpin, offered the hands-on assistance. "It's one of my favorite partnerships we've ever done, because it felt truly like a collaboration."

The beer's debut was celebrated with a socially distanced release party and curbside pickup. Johnson City Brewing Company rereleased the lager in 2024 to celebrate the brewery's 10th anniversary. Kiger notes that the brewers told her 1895 is a favorite among their staff.

JCPL already had a relationship with the brewery, which hosted book clubs and other library events, making it a natural fit for promoting the milestone anniversary, especially among millennials and Gen Zers, says Kiger.

The partnership marks a growing trend of libraries working with local brewers to create signature drinks for fundraising and awareness campaigns that expand the library's visibility to younger adult crowds.

Public libraries do a great job reaching kids, teens, and older adults, says Kiger, but adults who visit breweries tend to be in their 20s and 30s, an age group that can get "lost" in the library world. "That's a demographic we do not know that well because of the way

programming is set up.... This was a way to try to reach [them].”

A ‘win-win’

Columbus (Ohio) Metropolitan Library (CML) partnered with two local breweries to celebrate its 150th anniversary in 2023: BrewDog created Shelf Life, a non-alcoholic hazy IPA, and Land-Grant Brewing Company created Read Ale, a fruit-tinged red ale with notes of honey, caramel, and toffee.

Gregg Dodd, CML’s director of marketing and communications, says that because much of the 150th anniversary programming revolved around youth, the library wanted to broaden its offerings for adults, particularly nontraditional patrons ages 21–35.

“We worked with these local breweries knowing that they attract that customer base that we were after,” Dodd says, “and it was an absolute win-win.”

CML’s foundation raised about \$2,000 through a portion of sales from both beers at the breweries. Dodd says they were thrilled with

“We worked with these local breweries knowing that they attract that customer base that we were after.”

GREGG DODD, director of marketing and communications at Columbus (Ohio) Metropolitan Library

that outcome, adding that expanding CML’s marketing footprint was more significant to the library than raising money. The profits benefited the library foundation, music programs, summer reading challenge, and other 150th celebration activities.

The library event, which included a tasting and beer unveiling, had the largest turnout for a collaboration that Land-Grant Brewing had seen in its nine-year history, employees told Dodd. He adds the event reinforced that libraries have strong support and people have enthusiasm for community partnerships.

Books and beverages

Over the past two Septembers, Anchorage (Alaska) Public Library (APL) has commemorated Library Card Sign-Up Month by teaming up with a local kombucha brewer to produce a vanilla chai to complement APL’s fall-themed library card sets.

Zip Kombucha, which sells its fermented tea at a local taproom and in stores across the state, took inspiration from mystery novel puns and created To Chai For. Zip sold the spiced brew on tap throughout September 2023 and September 2024, with part of the proceeds going to APL. Patrons also received a discount by showing their library cards.

Alaska has one of the country’s highest statewide rates of binge drinking, and drug overdose deaths hit a record high in 2023, according to its state health department. Mindful of Alaska’s substance misuse challenges and the rise of sober lifestyles, APL opted

BY THE NUMBERS

Workers’ Rights

8

Date in April that National Library Workers Day was celebrated this year. Since 2004, it has been commemorated on the Tuesday of National Library Week.

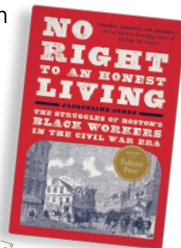
25,000

Number of library workers represented by the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME). AFSCME represents more library workers than any other union in the US.

2024

Year that Jacqueline Jones’s *No Right to an Honest Living: The Struggles of Boston’s Black Workers in the Civil War Era*

won the Pulitzer Prize for History. Jones’s book documents the systemic barriers Black Bostonians faced in employment equality, despite the city’s abolitionist reputation.



22

Number of photos from the 1939 Harlan County (Ky.) Mine Strike available at University of Kentucky Libraries’ Bert T. Combs Appalachian Collection. The photos, taken during the Harlan County War—a multiyear conflict between miners and coal companies—show workers clashing with Kentucky National Guardsmen, who were deployed to intervene.

\$1 million

Grant amount that University of California, Santa Cruz’s library received from the Mellon Foundation in 2024 to establish an archive chronicling the life and work of Dolores Huerta. The labor activist is most famous for cofounding United Farm Workers alongside César Chávez. ●



Continued on page 13 ►



Fourth-grade students at George A. Jackson Elementary School in Jericho, New York, work on podcasts. The project was spearheaded by their librarian and teachers.

Amplifying Voices

Turning the school library into a podcasting hub

At George A. Jackson Elementary School in Jericho, New York, educators wanted to help students discover the power of their voices. During the 2023–2024 school year, as part of a unit about natural hazards and disasters, 4th-graders used library and classroom time to create podcasts about their research. After National Public Radio (NPR) recognized one of the projects as a winner in its 2024 Student Podcast Challenge, the initiative has continued to grow.

BY Danielle Melia, Lauren Kawasaki, and Reshma Seth

George A. Jackson Elementary School's (GJES) library wants to provide a dynamic and inclusive learning environment. That makes podcasting a perfect fit. It gives students a platform to express their creativity, explore new ideas, and collaborate with peers while learning real-world skills.

Our podcast project started as a collaboration between librarian Danielle Melia and coteachers Lauren Kawasaki and Reshma Seth. We wanted our 4th-graders to work in pairs to create an episode related to our unit on natural hazards. Students developed episodes to answer thought-provoking questions like

“Are there any volcanoes in outer space?” “Could a tsunami occur in New York?” and “Why do wildfires last so long?”

We encouraged students to focus on accuracy, research, and storytelling in their scripts. Journalism students from the local high school taught them how to use the podcasting software Soundtrap. The younger kids learned about recording, editing, and composing their own background music through hands-on demonstrations.

The students recorded their podcasts in the high school journalism classroom, which made them feel like real journalists. Hearing their personalities come to life reminded

us how opportunities like these can build confidence and celebrate individuality.

We submitted the podcasts to National Public Radio's (NPR) 2024 Student Podcast Challenge. In August, we were thrilled to hear that two of our students, creators of “Will Erosion Cause the Montauk Lighthouse to Fall into the Ocean?” (bit.ly/GJES-Pod), were among the 4th-grade winners.

Inspired by the positive response, we secured a \$700 grant from our Special Education PTA during the 2023–2024 school year to purchase sound shields and microphones for the GJES library. This school year, all 5th-grade students made environmental-themed podcasts. They were introduced to the topics by our science teacher, created music with the music teacher, and designed cover images with our art teacher.

The library again played a central role. Once students selected topics, they researched them at the library, where staffers helped them find, evaluate, and cite reliable sources. Throughout the project, we ensured students could access resources that met their learning needs. This included using Schoastic's BookFlix digital literacy tool to organize and differentiate

materials, helping students engage with information in a way that best suited them.

With the success of this project, we've begun using podcasting as an entry point for other types of learning. We're developing ways to use podcasting to explore social-emotional learning themes school-wide, for example, with the support of our principal. Additionally, teachers across grade levels can take advantage of the equipment and create their own projects that align with students' interests and learning goals.

Hearing their personalities come to life reminded us how opportunities like these can build confidence and celebrate individuality.

For elementary school librarians interested in offering podcasting, our advice is simple: Start small. Begin with one class, figure out logistics, and use the results to inspire others. Each year is an opportunity to build on successes, allowing the initiative to grow naturally.

Empower students to take ownership. Remember that you are learning along with them, which they appreciate. Students will discover new ideas, materials, and their own exceptional ideas; let them steer the project forward. **AL**

DANIELLE MELIA is library media specialist at George A. Jackson Elementary School (GJES) in Jericho, New York. **LAUREN KAWASAKI** is a 5th-grade classroom teacher and **RESHMA SETH** is a special education teacher at GJES.

◀ Continued from page 11

for a nonalcoholic kombucha, which contains only trace levels of alcohol from the fermentation process.

During tasting events held both years, patrons could purchase from a selection of Zip kombuchas and then request a book pairing from APL's librarians based on their selection. For example, To Chai For was paired with the mystery novel *Death by Intermission* by Alexis Morgan.

"The most important thing for us was drawing it back to our collection and drawing it back to the library," says Misty Rose Nesvick, APL's communications coordinator. "So not just, 'Hey, it's fun and it's a kitschy flavor,'" but rather offer an event that allowed people to connect with the library whether they ordered the drink or not.

Each year, APL has reached its goal of 1,000 card sign-ups and raised more than \$1,000 for two groups: the Anchorage Library Foundation, which supports library infrastructure and long-term planning projects, and the Friends of the Library, which helps purchase books and funds programs like summer reading and author visits.

Nesvick says the goal of the partnership wasn't to pay for itself or bring in major funds for the library, adding that APL spent about \$8,000 on advertising and promotion. Staffers, she says, measured success through different objectives: Did we engage millennials with the tasting event? Did we check out books and sign people up for library cards? Did we raise awareness among our target age group?

Social media engagement and community feedback demonstrated



Alaska-based brewer Zip Kombucha created To Chai For, a vanilla-spiced fermented tea, in partnership with Anchorage Public Library for Library Card Sign-Up Month.

the partnership's impact, Nesvick says. Locals shared their excitement online by checking in to the taproom on social media, posting stories about drinking the kombucha, and expressing their appreciation for seeing their library collaborate with a local business.

APL also provided promotional support for Zip through social media, fliers, and radio ads. In return, the company donated labor, ingredients, and materials to create the product. Nesvick advises other libraries seeking partnerships to look for similar exchanges.

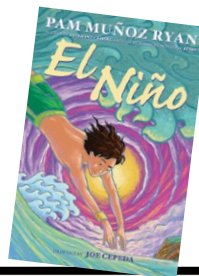
For libraries considering collaborations, JCPL's Kiger suggests partnering with businesses with similar missions. For the library and its brewing company partner, she says they share a passion for collaborating with neighboring organizations and nurturing a third space for locals to gather and socialize.

"It didn't feel like a transactional kind of partnership," Kiger says. "It was really about shared values." **AL**

ROSIE NEWMARK is a freelance writer for *American Libraries*.

Pam Muñoz Ryan

Acclaimed author explores love, death, and grief in new book



Acclaimed author Pam Muñoz Ryan has been a fixture of the children's literature scene for more than 25 years, winning the Pura Belpré Award in 2002 for *Esperanza Rising*, a Newbery Honor in 2016 for *Echo*, and the Children's Literature Legacy Award in 2024. We spoke with Muñoz Ryan about her career and latest book, *El Niño* (Scholastic Press, May), which blends the legend of an underwater kingdom with a young boy's journey of understanding love, death, and grief after losing his sister.

BY Julia Smith

At the heart of your new novel is an underwater realm called the Library of Despair and Sorrow. Why do you view sadness and suffering as "more precious than gold," as you describe in the novel? I think it acknowledges our humanity. It says to the reader, "We all have feelings of sadness, despair, or sorrow at different points in our lives, and they're real, and they don't have to be ignored or suppressed." When we hold hands with these emotions,

we're really acknowledging our humanity. I also liked the idea that people had a place, even for a moment, where they could lay down their pain if they needed or wanted to, just so that they could take one tiny step forward, and that while they did so, someone was there comforting their sadness.

Why choose a library as your treasury for these emotions? I think of libraries as safe harbors, and I think of them as being so ecumenical—meaning that they address the needs of all people—that it doesn't matter your socioeconomic status, it doesn't matter your countenance or your history or disposition. It addresses the needs of everyone. As I said in my speech [at a Scholastic event] at ALA's 2025 LibLearnX conference, librarians create a safe place where readers can dream and hope and lay down their pain. It's a protected place where readers can glean information and resources and find avenues of possibility, where at least within the confines of a book, a reader might glimpse their own feelings, making them feel found when they thought they were lost, making them feel seen when they thought they were invisible, making them laugh when they thought all they could do was cry.

That's why I chose a library.

What role have libraries played in your life? As a young girl,

I didn't discover the library until the summer before 5th grade. My family had moved across town, and I began escaping to a small branch library in my new neighborhood. It was a refuge from my younger sisters and younger cousins, and it was air-conditioned—a big plus in the San Joaquin Valley heat [in central California]. Books captured me. A few years later, my mother, who was a secretary for the school district, became the librarian's assistant at a high school library. She was in charge of all the text-

books, which was a big task at that time, especially at the beginning of the school year.

MORE ONLINE

For the extended interview, visit bit.ly/AL-Munoz-Ryan after May 1.

Before school opened each summer, I would go to work with her for a few days to unpack boxes of books and organize them according to classes. I still remember that time with my mom in the cavernous and empty library, just the two of us sorting mountains of books.

You received the 2024 Children's Literature Legacy Award. In the ever-shifting publishing landscape, what is different now from the early days of your writing career?

I've certainly seen a lot of changes in diversity in books, and there seems to be a bigger level of acceptance. Here's my feeling as a writer: Whatever I present, I want to open the reader's eyes just a little wider. All the campaigns that have gone through the publishing world, from multicultural literature to #WeNeedDiverseBooks to #OwnVoices, I think they have all contributed to helping nurture that awareness. **AL**





“The cool thing now is that I can think of 15, maybe 20 other books by trans writers coming out this spring, which means that I just get to be myself.”

Author **TORREY PETERS**, in “In Her Brilliant New Book *Stag Dance*, Torrey Peters Is Happy to Get Weird,” *Vogue*, March 14.

“No one is being protected here. Third-graders aren’t wandering the library stacks, pulling books with dense prose from the shelves in search of a prurient passage. Using that as a strawman in a quest to make all of us think twice about our choices, controlling what we access and how we think about the issues of the day—particularly those related to race, sexuality, and gender—is the real objective.”

JOHN KENYON, executive director of Iowa City UNESCO City of Literature, “Anti-Library Bills Seek to Stifle Thought, Not Protect Children,” *The Gazette* (Cedar Rapids, Iowa), February 25.

“A COMPLETE LIST OF INSTITUTIONS THAT SEEM TO ACTUALLY UNDERSTAND WHAT THIS MOMENT DEMANDS (1) PUBLIC LIBRARIES, (2) INDIE BOOKSTORES, (3) COSTCO.”

Journalist **PHILIP EIL**, @phileil.bsky.social on Bluesky, March 12.

“My children’s books are typically about things that I needed when I was growing up. I needed to understand that I was beautiful, and I belonged.”

Author **ADIBA NELSON**, in “Pima County Library’s First Black Author in Residence,” KGUN-TV (Tucson, Ariz.), February 10.

“People were crying. It was surreal. We were with a gentleman who had just come in from Canada who said, ‘I don’t understand what’s happening in your country.’”

JENNIFER MCGRATH, a visitor to John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum, in “JFK Library Reopens to Bewildered Visitors after Sudden Federal Layoffs,” WBUR-FM (Boston), February 19.

“‘Why does Ian know words that I didn’t even teach him?’ I’m like, ‘We live on top of the library.’”

MIGUELINA MINIER, parent and affordable housing lottery recipient, in “For a Mother and Son, Life Above a Brooklyn Library,” *The New York Times*, February 24.



2025 LIBRARY SYST



Companies see platform upgrades, new leadership, and AI enhancements

BY Marshall Breeding

The library technology industry showed its maturity in 2024. Businesses have become increasingly stable and robust products delivered rich functionality. But decades of consolidation have created a narrower slate of competitors, resulting in a smaller number of products available for each type and size of library. The marketplace is seeing more specialized solutions but fewer options.

Companies continue to tailor products to the diverging service needs and collections of public, academic, school, and special libraries. Library services platforms (LSPs) designed for academic libraries, for example, are not well suited for public libraries. This stratification further narrows customers' choices.

The expectation is that a handful of established players will continue to drive sales and development of library management systems. But we can also expect an uptick in migrations, as many libraries continue to operate legacy systems that will soon need to be replaced. Outdated functionality and security concerns are driving these migrations, as libraries seek to shore up vulnerabilities in a climate of mounting cyberattacks.

While the main players haven't changed, there is increasing demand for these big companies to develop additional layers of technology that efficiently address collection discovery, resource sharing, digital preservation and management, and community engagement. Companies must meet libraries' growing expectations that technologies go beyond core systems.

Businesses with consistent ownership can better focus on long-term strategies. Private equity involvement in the library technology industry continues to diminish as more companies fall under permanent financial stewardship. Ex Libris, Innovative, and ProQuest each exited cyclical investment ownership in recent years when they became part of Clarivate, a public company since 2019. EBSCO has a long history as a family-owned business that embraces a buy-and-hold strategy for its acquisitions. Constellation Software, the epitome of a buy-and-hold-forever strategy, acquired SirsiDynix in 2024. OCLC and Equinox Open Library Initiative, both nonprofit organizations, cannot be sold.

That said, expect at least a few mergers and acquisitions over the next year or so. Smaller, founder-owned businesses or those still within the portfolios of private equity investors may seek new arrangements. It's more likely, however, that mid-sized and larger companies will take an interest in start-ups from outside the library world to fill service gaps or enhance their product suites with artificial intelligence (AI) or analytics.

MAJOR BUSINESS EVENTS

There were a few shifts in the industry last year, thanks to business transitions and leadership changes.

SirsiDynix became part of Harris Computer, owned by Constellation Software. OCLC bought CloudLibrary, an ebook and digital lending service, from Bibliotheca. Private equity group Blackstone acquired Civica, while Soutron Global acquired MINISIS, a

company specializing in library, archive, and museum management solutions.

New CEOs lead Axiell, Clarivate, and EBSCO Information Services. These transitions aren't seismic but should lead to sustained stability in the library technology sector.

INDUSTRY GIANTS AMONG US

CLARIVATE is a large public company with three major business units and a broad spectrum of products. The products and services of the ProQuest, Innovative, and Ex Libris brands—along with other scholarly communications offerings—are part of the Clarivate Academia and Government unit. This report focuses solely on Clarivate's library products.

In August 2024, Clarivate announced it would appoint Matti Shem Tov to succeed CEO Jonathan Gear, who had held the role since July 2022. Shem Tov led Ex Libris as president and CEO beginning in 2003 and was named CEO of ProQuest in 2017; he exited the company when it became part of Clarivate but now returns. Bar Weinstein, who served as Ex Libris president from 2017 to 2021, rejoined the company as president of Academia and Government in April 2023. Having these familiar figures at the helm of the biggest library tech company will have a significant impact on the industry.

Although the brands and product lines of Ex Libris and Innovative persist within Clarivate, they are being increasingly merged and coordinated under the Academia and Government division. Ex Libris' portfolio is geared toward academic and national libraries, while

Innovative's integrated library systems (ILSes) Sierra and Polaris and patron-oriented product suite Vega address the interests of public libraries. Sierra, used by both major public and academic libraries, remains fully and indefinitely supported. Yariv Kursh, senior vice president of Clarivate, serves as the general manager responsible for these library products. For 2024, Ex Libris reported 887 employees and Innovative reported 321 employees.

EX LIBRIS continues to attract new implementations for Alma, its flagship LSP that launched in 2012. Last year, the platform saw 99 contracts representing 147 libraries, bringing total implementations up to 2,745 libraries.

The British Library (BL) in London—which, at more than 170 million items, is considered one of the two largest library collections in the world—selected Alma last year. The LSP replaces its Aleph ILS (a legacy product that Ex Libris supports but does not make new sales for), which had been in place since 2003. The selection of Alma marks an important step in BL's recovery from a devastating ransomware attack in October 2023.

Other national libraries that contracted with Alma and Primo last year include Croatia's National and University Library in Zagreb, which will support a network of 82 libraries across the country, and the National Library of Spain, headquartered in Madrid. Over the years, 44 national or state libraries have selected Alma. The platform recently rolled out an improved user interface for staff.

Last year, 28 libraries signed for Leganto, a course content management system that is now in use at 372 institutions. A new feature, the student

savings dashboard, highlights the dollar value of using library-provided class materials through Leganto instead of purchasing them.

Rapido and RapidILL provide resource sharing capabilities for libraries and consortia. New organizations implementing Rapido include the National Library of Australia in Canberra and a consortium of academic libraries in the Catalonia region of Spain. More than 1,000 libraries use Rapido or RapidILL.

In 2024, Ex Libris announced several plans for new or enhanced products that integrate generative AI. The organization introduced Alma Specto, a product for managing, describing, preserving, and accessing digital collections that uses AI to extract and organize metadata from materials. Ex Libris is partnering with seven libraries to develop this product, which is expected to be released to customers by the end of 2025.

On the discovery side, Ex Libris released the Primo Research Assistant in beta. It uses retrieval-augmented generation, an AI model that can provide reliable search results by combining knowledge bases (in this case, the Ex Libris Central Discovery Index) with the capabilities of large language models.

The company is also developing Library Open Workflows, a tool that customers can use to integrate non-Ex Libris external systems and interfaces into its platform. This approach doesn't rely on coding but uses a visual drag-and-drop interface to create automated workflows and centralize operations.

INNOVATIVE, Clarivate's other flagship library brand, continues to gain ground with Polaris. The ILS saw

ABOUT THE REPORT

The 2025 Library Systems Report documents ongoing investments of libraries in strategic technology products in 2024. It covers for-profit and nonprofit organizations that offer resource management products—especially integrated library systems and library services platforms—and comprehensive discovery products.

The vendors included have responded to a survey requesting details about their organization, sales performance, and narrative explanations of accomplishments. Additional sources consulted include press releases, news articles, and other publicly available information. Most of the organizations provided lists of libraries represented in the statistics reported, allowing for more detailed analysis and validation.

Additional personnel information, sales statistics, and vendor-provided narratives are available at Library Technology Guides (librarytechnology.org). •

86 contracts signed in 2024, bringing total installations up to 704 libraries. DC Public Library and Jacksonville (Fla.) Public Library are among the large-scale systems choosing Polaris. Abroad, the platform was selected by Shellharbour City Libraries in Australia and Catalonia's Department of Education, for its network of 2,245 school libraries.

Innovative continues to develop and support the Sierra ILS. Version 6.3, released in 2024, includes native SMS integration. The brand is also seeing success with its Vega suite of patron-facing services. Last year, 62 libraries signed contracts for Vega Discover, bringing total implementations to 152. Additionally, 26 libraries selected Vega Program for events management, and five libraries selected Vega WebBuilder, a tool for managing library websites.

EBSCO INFORMATION SERVICES

is a large private company owned primarily by the family of its founder, Elton

B. Stephens. As the largest business within EBSCO Industries, a diversified holding company, EBSCO Information Services emphasizes reliable content resources and open and interoperable technology.

In a major leadership change, the EBSCO Industries board appointed Annie Callanan as CEO of EBSCO Information Services following the June 2024 retirement of Tim Collins, who had served in the role for four decades. Prior to joining EBSCO, Callanan was CEO of Taylor & Francis (2017–2023) and CEO of Quantros (2014–2017), a health care software company. It's too early to tell what this change means for the company, but Callanan's background in publishing and technology seems suited to EBSCO's core business activities.

In recent years, EBSCO's library technology offerings have increasingly focused on open source, open infrastructure, and interoperability. The company has become a major competitor



to Clarivate's Alma through its participation and investment in FOLIO, an open source LSP. More than 200 libraries have implemented EBSCO FOLIO, a product that combines open source FOLIO modules with the company's proprietary suite of software and content components. EBSCO signed 159 agreements for EBSCO FOLIO in 2024. Major institutions choosing EBSCO FOLIO include Columbia University in New York City, Virginia Military Institute in Lexington, and Southern New Hampshire University in Manchester. Meanwhile, implementation of an EBSCO-supported FOLIO for the Library of Congress is underway. EBSCO has also supported—in partnership with UK-based software company Knowledge Integration—the development of OpenRS (Open Resource Sharing Coalition), which was rolled out to the MOBIUS Consortium in June 2024.

EBSCO Discovery Service, now used by more than 16,000 libraries, received major enhancements last year, including a redesigned interface that has been deployed to about 85% of its subscribers. EBSCO also upgraded Explora, a search interface for its databases that launched in 2015 and is oriented to public and school libraries. The updated Explora provides a more visual search experience through curated topic pages and other features.

In October 2024, EBSCO launched Mosaic by GOBI Library Solutions, a new product that modernizes the selection and acquisition of library materials. GOBI, a critical acquisitions tool for thousands of libraries, will continue to be supported and developed in parallel.

Given its emphasis on trustworthy content, EBSCO has taken a somewhat cautious approach to incorporating generative AI. In June 2024, the



company launched two beta programs for customers using EBSCO Discovery Service and EBSCOhost: Natural Language Search and AI Insights, a feature that generates high-level summaries from full-text articles. Initially released to a limited number of libraries, these features have received positive feedback and are expected to be available for general use later this year.

OCLC is a large nonprofit company based in Dublin, Ohio, that employs 1,334 people. The company is a membership organization governed by a board of trustees and advised by a leaders council. Its executive team is led by Skip Prichard, who was appointed CEO in July 2013.

OCLC engages in educational and advocacy activities on behalf of its members and the global library community, and the tech-oriented products and services covered in this report represent only a small dimension of the company's offerings. OCLC's revenue for the fiscal year ending June 2024 totaled more than \$238 million.

Last year, OCLC entered the ebook lending arena when it acquired CloudLibrary from Bibliotheca for \$25.5 million. At the time of sale, about 500 libraries were subscribed to CloudLibrary. The ebook platform was originally launched by 3M Library Systems in 2011 and later became

part of Bibliotheca when 3M was acquired by One Equity Partners in 2015. OCLC enters an ebook market dominated by OverDrive, which has more than 92,000 library and school subscribers in 115 countries. Other initiatives offering e-lending services to libraries include the Palace

Project from Lyris and New York Public Library's SimplyE ebook and audiobook platform.

In June 2024, OCLC acquired JJH Consulting, a small firm known for aiding higher education institutions in optimizing their enterprise resource planning systems (such as through the Workday platform). The firm was purchased from founder and owner John Hrusovsky for \$1.8 million and subsequently relaunched as Synexis Consulting with Hrusovsky as managing director.

WorldCat, the global bibliographic database at the core of OCLC's services and products, grew by more than 52 million records and fielded more than 33 billion searches in 2024. OCLC has prioritized improving the quality of the database and last year leveraged its workforce and processes to improve 121 million records—in addition to the 2.3 million records enhanced by libraries. WorldCat Discovery, a product that enables users to access library resources spanning many formats, significantly increased the content in its indexes and saw a 14% increase in searches.

Last year, the organization launched OCLC Resource Sharing for Groups, a service that expedites interlibrary loans and prioritizes requests for members within a consortium. The Big Ten Academic Alliance put this service into operation in June 2024.

OCLC's WorldShare Management Services LSP, used mostly by academic libraries, continued to expand its reach in 2024, signing 64 contracts for 83 library locations. Total installations stand at 782 libraries. Notable systems selecting the LSP include the WISPALS Library Consortium in Wisconsin, the libraries of the Fundación Universitaria San Pablo (part of the CEU Universities in Spain), and Heidelberg University Library in Germany. Recent enhancements include a refreshed user interface for staff, new capabilities for managing licensed electronic resources, and expanded APIs for acquisition features.

Wise, OCLC's strategic product for public libraries, combines patron engagement capabilities with traditional library management features. The platform has long been in use by a majority of public libraries in the Netherlands; a 2024 contract with the country's unified library system now expands its reach. The system covers 102 libraries serving a population of 14.4 million.

Choreo Insights, an analytics solution that OCLC rolled out in 2024, provides cross-institutional collection analysis. The service, which had 50 commitments in 2023 prior to launch, signed 23 new subscribers last year, increasing total subscribers to 65 libraries.

OCLC uses AI across many of its products, in experimental and beta as well as production-ready features. For example, the company leverages AI for its worldcat.org book recommendations and to improve the efficiency of its resource sharing networks. Last year, OCLC used machine learning technology to identify 5.4 million duplicate records in WorldCat in English and other European languages. A more ambitious project to detect duplicates in non-Latin script languages is now underway.

CONSTELLATION'S GROWING PRESENCE

SIRSIDYNIX entered a new phase in its business history in December 2024, when it was officially sold to Harris Computer, an operating company of Constellation Software. After being held by Vista Equity Partners (2006–2014) and ICV Partners (2014–2024), SirsiDynix exits private equity ownership, which has tended to focus on shorter-term profitability and valuations at the expense of investments in long-term product development.

SirsiDynix will operate as an independent company—maintaining its existing management team, workforce, product lines, and support structures—while benefiting from Harris Computer's financial stability, best practices, and access to development capital. SirsiDynix marks the operating company's second investment in the library technology industry. (In 2018, Harris Computer acquired ResourceMate, an automation system for smaller libraries, from Jaywil Software Development.)

The sluggish development pattern of private equity-held businesses was evident in the rollout of BLUEcloud, a suite of web-based applications envisioned to modernize Symphony and Horizon ILS products. SirsiDynix initially announced BLUEcloud in 2013 but still has not completed the suite to

the extent that it could replace Horizon's and Symphony's native interfaces.

In 2024, SirsiDynix announced that its BLUEcloud Accelerate initiative would dedicate significant resources toward the rapid completion of the suite and that development of BLUEcloud applications would continue under new ownership. The company recently went live with its redesigned mobile app, BLUEcloud Mobile2, a project necessitated by a high-profile business dispute with the development partner of its original app.

SirsiDynix ranks as the largest standalone company entirely dedicated to library technology products. In 2024, the business reported 2,104 installations of Symphony and 645 installations of Horizon, as well as ongoing sales of BLUEcloud components to new and existing customers. SirsiDynix also offers the CloudSource line of discovery products, which specializes in promoting open access scholarly resources and is used by more than 500 libraries. Last year, SirsiDynix announced the release of CloudSource+, an extension of the CloudSource OA platform.

Constellation Software, a publicly traded company based in Toronto, is involved in software and services across many verticals, with total annual revenues exceeding \$8 billion. Through acquisitions made by its operating companies, it has gradually become one of the largest owners of library automation businesses.

In addition to SirsiDynix, Constellation owns the library tech companies

The marketplace is seeing more specialized solutions but fewer options.

Baratz, BiblioCommons, EnvisionWare, Prima Informática, ResourceMate, and Softlink—most of which are managed by the operating company Volaris Group. Constellation buys companies from founders, private equity firms, and other investors, and these businesses then operate independently. Constellation has acquired more than 500 entities since 1995, almost exclusively within the technology sector. (Former owner ICV Partners, by contrast, held no tech companies other than SirsiDynix.)

SOFTLINK, headquartered in Australia and acquired by Volaris Group in 2013, offers technology products for multiple library types. The company's Softlink Education division offers Oliver, an ILS used by school libraries globally. The company's Softlink Information Centers division offers illumin, a tool for managing institutional knowledge bases for reference and research, and the Liberty library management system, used by law, corporate, government, and other special libraries. Softlink recently launched Liberty Digital, a management system for materials such as digital archives, multimedia content, and ebooks. This new product includes AI-enhanced features for search and streamlining operations.

In September 2024, Softlink acquired Aurora Information Technology, a vendor popular among public libraries in Australia. About 50 municipal and regional systems—including the City of Sydney Library—use its Aurora library management system. This acquisition strengthens Softlink's position in the Australian public library sector.

SOLUÇÕES SOPHIA, previously known as Prima, is based in São Paulo, Brazil. The company was acquired by Volaris Group in 2018. Its major

Companies must meet libraries' growing expectations that technologies go beyond core systems.

products include the SophiA ILS for public libraries and the Philos ILS for school libraries. These platforms are mostly used in Brazil but also see sales in other Portuguese- and Spanish-speaking countries. In 2024, five contracts were signed for SophiA, bringing implementations up to 2,469 libraries. Philos saw 811 installations at school libraries, with 16 contracts signed.

BIBLIOCOMMONS became part of Volaris Group in March 2020, when cofounders Beth Jefferson and Patrick Kennedy were looking to exit and sell the business. The company does not offer its own library management system but rather specializes in public-facing software that helps patrons access collections and services.

The BiblioCore discovery service replaces the native catalog of a library's ILS with a contemporary interface. The service has been implemented by more than 550 libraries, spanning approximately 2,300 locations. BiblioCore supports all major ILS products, including CARL•Solution, Evergreen, Horizon, Polaris, Sierra, and Symphony.

Last year, BiblioCommons unveiled the BiblioCommons Analytics Platform, a tool that can measure user actions beyond the standard data. Another new capability, Browse and Discover, allows patrons to explore the catalog for items of interest through customizable interfaces. This feature is modeled after user experiences typically offered

by streaming services and e-commerce sites. BiblioCommons also developed additional capabilities for consortia, such as enabling participating libraries to feature local items in results.

In 2024, new sales of BiblioCore were made to public libraries, including Sonoma County (Calif.) Library, which serves half a million people. Five library systems implemented BiblioWeb, an application for building websites with customizable widgets.

BARATZ, a Madrid-based company offering the Absys family of library automation products, was acquired by Constellation Software operating company Total Specific Solutions in 2021. The AbsysNet ILS is favored by large-scale consortia and regional networks of public and government libraries in Spain, as well as other Spanish-speaking areas.

Last year, AbsysNet saw 12 contracts representing more than 1,000 library locations, increasing total installations to 2,681. Baratz signed another 34 contracts for its AbsysCloud ILS, bringing total installations up to 393. AbsysCloud, though based on AbsysNet, includes new content services, collaboration tools, and patron engagement features. Baratz also offers the ODA discovery interface, introduced in 2023, as its new-gen catalog and discovery service. ODA is in use at three libraries.

In February 2024, Total Specific Solutions acquired DIGIBÍS, also based in Madrid, and integrated the business

into Baratz. DIGIBÍS specializes in software solutions for digital materials and digitization and is used by libraries, archives, and museums. Last year, the Museo del Prado in Madrid launched a new digital library comprising 1.7 million web pages and 11,500 publications through DIGIBÍS.

COMPANIES THAT SPECIALIZE

SOUTRON GLOBAL, a mid-sized company based in San Diego, offers technology products for special libraries. In 2024, Soutron acquired MINISIS, a well-established provider of resource management products for

libraries, museums, and archives. The sale was supported by Soutron's principal investors, Bloom Equity Partners and Atlasview Equity Partners.

MINISIS was founded by Christopher Burcsik in 2000. The original MINISIS tools were developed in the 1970s by the International Development Research Centre, part of the Canadian government, which Burcsik's company took private. MINISIS Cultural Asset Management System (CAMS), a collection management tool for libraries, museums, and archives, has been installed at 55 organizations as of 2024. CAMS is a fully web-based application and the forward migration path for MINISIS customers using previous versions of the product.

Last year, the Soutron ILS saw 18 new sales, bringing total installations to 357.

Recent upgrades to the platform include more flexible record structures and a new administrative console for system configuration. The Soutron API was also enhanced for additional functionality.

TIND, a small firm of 18 employees, was formed in 2013 as a spin-off of CERN, the nuclear research center in Geneva, Switzerland. The company offers commercial products based on open source software originally developed at CERN.

With six new contracts in 2024, TIND ILS is currently installed at 21 libraries. The Center for Research Libraries recently migrated to the ILS from FOLIO. The digital archive product TIND DA saw 11 sales last year, including to San Francisco Public Library, increasing total installations to 31.

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In 2024, two new libraries selected research data management platform TIND RDM, bringing total installations up to nine institutions. University of Georgia in Athens selected both TIND RDM and TIND IR, an institutional repository product.

KEYSTONE SYSTEMS, founded in 1995, fills an important niche by providing systems and services for organizations that serve people with visual disabilities. Many state libraries in the US have divisions that use Keystone Library Automation System (KLAS) to manage collections and fulfillment requests of accessible materials. The company employs 14 people and is based in Raleigh, North Carolina. Its KLAS ILS is installed at 119 institutions, including two that signed contracts in 2024.

THE OPEN SOURCE SCENE

BYWATER SOLUTIONS continues its expansion as a provider of services for open source software, including the Koha ILS and discovery interface Aspen Discovery. The company, founded in 2009, now employs about 50 people. Most of ByWater's customers are public libraries, with some academic, school, and special libraries in the mix.

Aspen Discovery was developed primarily for public libraries and is interoperable with all major ILS products, including Koha and Evergreen and proprietary ones like Polaris, Sierra, and Symphony. A large portion of public libraries that implement Koha also opt for Aspen.

Last year, ByWater Solutions added 37 contracts for Koha, increasing total



installations to 1,653 library locations. The company now supports 767 installations of Aspen Discovery, including 32 new contracts spanning 75 library locations. In addition, 18 libraries use the company's Metabase analytics portal, including eight new customers.

In 2024, ByWater Solutions contracted with SHARE, a resource sharing environment for the members of the Illinois Heartland Library System, to implement, support, and host Aspen Discovery. With 262 members representing 480 library locations, the system is the largest consortium in North America.

ByWater Solutions is also a shareholder in PTFS Europe, the largest provider of open source support for library software in Europe. This arrangement began in October 2023, following the retirement of two of PTFS Europe's principals.

GROVE, a new firm that develops and supports Aspen Discovery, was established in July 2024. The company is headed by Aspen creator Mark Noble along with Jordan Fields, both of whom departed ByWater Solutions last year.

EQUINOX OPEN LIBRARY INITIATIVE, a nonprofit organization providing support services for the

Evergreen ILS and other open source products, offers many educational opportunities for libraries interested

in moving away from proprietary software. The company currently employs 17 people.

Equinox is one of the major developers of Evergreen and recently added new capabilities to the platform, such as

multifactor authentication for

the staff interface, accessibility

upgrades for the patron catalog, and new RESTful API endpoints. The company also provides services for other open source products, including Aspen Discovery, Fulfillment, Koha, and VuFind.

In 2024, Equinox signed five contracts representing 65 library locations for Evergreen, increasing installations to 895. Additionally, three contracts were signed for Koha (bringing total installations to 41) and two contracts spanning 51 library locations were signed for Aspen Discovery (increasing installations to 234).

The Missouri Evergreen consortium, which already contracts with Equinox for Evergreen, will be supported by the company on Aspen Discovery starting this year. Equinox has also led development on Fulfillment, an open source resource sharing system based on the same technology as Evergreen. In 2024, Fulfillment was implemented for a statewide service in Connecticut.

A FOCUS ON PUBLIC LIBRARIES

THE LIBRARY CORPORATION (TLC) has passed an impressive

milestone: 50 years in business. The company was cofounded in 1974 by Annette Harwood Murphy, the current president and CEO, and has thrived by adapting to changes in technologies and focusing on the interests of its customers. TLC is privately owned and independent from private equity or other investors. The company has 126 employees, a significant increase from the 103 employees reported for 2023. The company has expanded, in part, through the acquisitions of the CARL Corporation in 2000 and Tech Logic in 2005.

TLC continues to enhance its Library•Solution and CARL•Solution ILS products with modernized interfaces and features. In 2021, the company launched its mobile app, TLC•Go!, to support both Library•Solution and CARL•Solution customers. The app is now used by 14 libraries and was recently enhanced to allow for seamless integration with streaming content platform Hoopla.

In 2024, the company signed 12 contracts for Library•Solution—including eight for school districts, representing 303 school libraries—bringing total installations to 474 libraries. These figures encompass a version of Library•Solution for school libraries, branded as Library•Solution for Schools. Public libraries implementing Library•Solution include Ackley (Iowa) Public Library and Chattahoochee Valley Libraries in Georgia.

CARL•Solution, an ILS used mostly by larger public libraries and consortia, saw no new sales in 2024 but holds steady at 18 installations.

In May 2024, TLC announced that its cataloging utility, ITS•MARC, had grown to more than 84 million bibliographic records. The 20 libraries that

participate in adding records to this service contributed 7.6 million records toward that figure.

AUTO-GRAPHICS has seen many different cycles of technology since its founding in 1950, from hot-metal typesetting to early databases and CD-ROM catalogs to web-based platforms. The company, though relatively small at 30 employees, is publicly traded. Paul R. Cope currently serves as president.

Auto-Graphics reported no new sales for its VERSO ILS, currently installed at 545 library locations, or for its SHAREit interlibrary loan platform, used by more than a dozen statewide interlibrary loan services. Enhancements made to VERSO in 2024 include improved cataloging workflows, upgrades to SMS circulation notices, and a new catalog function based on the Z39.50 protocol that improves search capabilities and integrates with the CILL module and SHAREit.

BIBLIONIX, based in Austin, Texas, specializes in web-based products for smaller libraries. Its Apollo ILS fills an important niche for libraries that serve smaller populations and find larger-scale products unaffordable or too complex for their needs. In 2024, 40 public libraries selected Apollo, increasing total installations to 990. Improvements recently deployed in Apollo include a

new scheduling function for rooms and events and a filter on catalog searches that allows users to exclude or include only children's materials.

Through the company's FlexShare program, libraries using Apollo can allow neighboring libraries' patrons to search and check out materials. The company reports that 479 of its Apollo customers offer some type of expanded catalog that provides access to at least one other library.

Last year, Biblionix made six new sales for Artemis, an ILS for school libraries that launched in 2022. This increases total installations for Artemis to 15.

MAKING WAVES ABROAD

AXIELL, based in Lund, Sweden, offers several library management systems that are used throughout Europe. These products have only a small presence in the US. The company saw two key leadership changes in 2024: Maria Wasing assumed the role of president and CEO of Axiell on January 1, and Sebastian Svärdebrandt, who has a background in cloud services and cybersecurity, was appointed chief information officer in June.

The momentum continues for Quria, the company's LSP for public libraries

Libraries will have to carefully parse which technologies can amplify their work and which may do harm.

that launched in 2017. Last year, Axiell made 109 sales for Quria, increasing total installations to 276. New clients include the 12 municipalities of Sweden's Kalmar County and German cities Mönchengladbach and Gelsenkirchen.

Quria is part of Axiell's broader Library Experience Management ecosystem, providing a comprehensive solution for libraries through its interoperable components. This framework includes a new module called Quria Case Management, which facilitates secure and GDPR-compliant communications between libraries and their users for queries and requests.

V-smart, the library management system that Axiell acquired from Infor in 2022, was selected to support a network that includes the National Library of Greece and other academic libraries. Also in 2024, the Axiell Spark library management system (previously known by the name OpenGalaxy) was selected by UK's LibrariesWest consortium, which includes seven municipal library services representing more than 140 locations.

Axiell is currently developing a new AI tool for curators and collection managers that can analyze and enrich metadata and thesaurus records. The tool is expected to be 10 times faster than manual processing methods.

SYSTEMATIC, founded in 1985 and based in Aarhus, Denmark, catapulted into the library tech arena when it launched the Joint Library System, now branded as Cicero, to support all 2,428 public and school libraries in Denmark. The company is

primarily involved in the health and defense sectors, with a global workforce of 1,100 employees; its Systematic Library and Learning division employs 74 people.

Systematic has continued to develop and market Cicero to libraries outside of Denmark. Libraries selecting Cicero in 2024 include Stockholm Public Library in Sweden and Bücherhallen Hamburg in Germany, each with 32 public library locations. Last year, 17 smaller municipalities in Norway selected Cicero.

KOMBIT, the organization that manages IT projects for Denmark's municipalities, announced in early 2025 that Systematic's contract to develop and implement the next version of the Joint Library System for the Denmark library system had been renewed until 2038. The project is valued at more than \$30 million.

CIVICA is an information technology company specializing in software for public sector organizations. As of May 2024, Civica is owned by Blackstone, a large-scale investment firm with more than \$1 trillion in assets under management.

Spydus is Civica's ILS for public libraries. Its latest version, Spydus 11, is a fully web-based platform hosted on Microsoft Azure. In 2024, the company released a patron-facing mobile app for Spydus that includes catalog search, account management features, and notifications.

The Spydus ILS has a strong presence in Asia, Australia, Ireland, New Zealand, and the UK. Last year, Civica made 43 sales of Spydus, including 10 new contracts, increasing total installations to 875. Civica has begun an initiative to market Spydus to public libraries in North America.

NASEEJ, based in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, is known for its technology products for libraries, colleges and universities, and other cultural institutions throughout the Middle East. Historically, the company has distributed content products and library management systems from global providers, such as EBSCO Information Services, Innovative, ProQuest, and SirsiDynix. Since 2021, Naseej has focused on the development of the MEDAD LSP, which integrates open source products such as FOLIO and Drupal.

MEDAD, a comprehensive solution hosted and fully supported by Naseej, does not require technical expertise to implement. The company offers three options that can be used separately or as a suite: the MEDAD Library Management LSP; MEDAD Library Portal, a website management tool; and MEDAD Digital Repository. More than 70 organizations have installed one or more MEDAD components to date.



SERVING SMALLER LIBRARIES

BOOK SYSTEMS, based in Huntsville, Alabama, was founded in 1989 by Bill Jones and his son, Mark. Today, the company is privately owned by Scott Burton and employs 56 people. Book Systems is a pioneer in the library technology industry, with an established track record of developing and supporting products that smaller libraries can afford.

The company's Atrium ILS has been implemented primarily in school, smaller public, and academic libraries, as well as libraries in churches and prisons. In recent years, a growing number of libraries using Concourse, the company's legacy system, have opted to migrate to Atrium. In 2024, 147 libraries selected Atrium, increasing total installations to 5,087. Of these, 3,465 are school libraries and 1,036 are small public libraries.

Book Systems recently launched Atrium Gallery, a catalog interface that emphasizes a visual and streamlined user experience. The company also reported that Stax, a new mobile app for library staff to optimize circulation operations, will integrate with point-of-sale platform Square.

LIBRARYWORLD was founded in 1985 under the name CASPR by current CEO Norman Kline. The business offers a fully web-based and affordable ILS in its core product, LibraryWorld, which has been installed at 2,700 libraries.

The LibraryWorld platform includes the standard modules of an ILS but is optimized for the needs of smaller

libraries. Last year, the company made enhancements to the interface, giving users the ability to browse fields with an alphabetical list or search terms. LibraryWorld's other ILS product, WikiLibrary, launched in 2021 as a lower-cost option. It is now installed at 122 library locations.

In 2025, LibraryWorld plans to release its new Kids Catalog, an interface with playful graphics designed to help young patrons browse topics.

MANDARIN LIBRARY AUTOMATION, based in Boca Raton, Florida, offers the Mandarin M5 ILS used by smaller libraries of all types. In 2024, the company reported one new sale for Mandarin M5 and 698 total installations.

The company offers upgrades to libraries using its legacy products, Oasis and Mandarin M3, at a minimal cost. Last year, M5's public catalog was updated with a mobile-responsive web interface.

MEDIA FLEX provides comprehensive services for OPALS, a web-based ILS for schools and other small libraries. The company, based in Champlain, New York, was founded in 1985.

OPALS has been implemented by more than 1,000 libraries. Although OPALS is based on open source software, Media Flex provides libraries with a fully hosted product that requires no local technical expertise.

LOOKING AHEAD

AI, especially generative AI, increasingly pervades education, publishing, health care, and social media. Expect the library technology industry's

development and integration of this technology to come at full speed.

Libraries will have to carefully parse which technologies can amplify their work and which may do harm. They are already working closely with vendors to ensure that products and services with AI features deliver appropriate results. Having the ability to automatically generate descriptive metadata at a speed and scale not previously imagined is an attractive prospect, but these tools must be accurate.

For more than a decade, libraries have looked to linked data to connect to the broader information ecosystem. Now, this solution may pale in comparison to the changes and opportunities driven by AI. Going forward, organizations with the technical prowess to deliver functional AI tools may gain a competitive advantage in the library technology industry. Expect companies to increasingly invest in building or buying components and services to power the next iterations of their interfaces and management systems.

That said, not all libraries and patrons are drawn to environments where AI shapes the delivery of information. Some may prefer the more straightforward approach of traditional platforms.

But consider that, at least for the short term, the political climate and other societal forces are impacting library funding and often imposing changes in collections and services. Technologies that can help library professionals perform their work with fewer resources may be more welcomed than ever. **AL**



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

Meet the 2025 I Love My Librarian Award Honorees

ALA honors 10 librarians
for outstanding service

BY Chase Ollis

The 2025 recipients of the I Love My Librarian Award (ILMLA) are 10 standout librarians. They include a bookmobile librarian serving a community in crisis, a school librarian bridging gaps for low-income students, a youth detention facility librarian creating a more inviting and inclusive space, and other notable community figures.

On January 24, the American Library Association (ALA) presented the awards as part of the LibLearnX conference in Phoenix (watch at bit.ly/ILMLA25-video). Among the recipients were four academic librarians, three public librarians, and three school librarians, each nominated by community members for their expertise, dedication, and impact. Awardees received \$5,000, as well as complimentary registration and a travel stipend to attend LibLearnX.

Since the ILMLA's inception in 2008, 170 librarians have received the honor. For this year's awards, nearly 1,300 nominations from across the country were submitted.

"These 10 honorees are inspiring examples of what is possible in our profession," ALA President Cindy Hohl said at the ceremony. "Their stories are a testament to the profound leadership, compassion, and expertise of our nation's librarians."

This year's recipients are:



Abby Armour

**Director of Mukwonago
(Wis.) Community Library**

Shortly after she began her role as director of Mukwonago Community Library (MCL), Armour learned its holdings included more than 12,400 Native American artifacts that had been

gifted to the library in the 1960s by a local collector.

In 2022, Armour began guiding efforts to repatriate items from the collection under the 1990 Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA). Last year, MCL returned items, taken decades ago from a burial site near Sacramento, California, to the Wilton Rancheria Tribe. It is the first public library in Wisconsin, and the third in the US, to repatriate belongings under NAGPRA.

"While this isn't a typical library responsibility—far from it, I never thought I would be doing this—I'm proud we're doing the right thing," Armour said in her acceptance speech. "And I very much encourage other libraries to engage with their local tribes as well."

Armour is also credited with expanding access to library materials and services. She has grown MCL's Library of Things collection, called The Thingery. She used grant funding to add smart lockers outside the library for 24/7 hold



ALA Past President Emily Drabinski (right) presents a plaque to Abby Armour at ALA's LibLearnX conference in Phoenix.

native speakers of 53 different languages. At Suncrest Elementary School, Chung's mission has been to make sure students in the district can access reading materials that will turn them into motivated readers.

In 2023, she received grants from ALA's American Association of School Librarians and Your Community Foundation of North Central West Virginia to support literacy development for students learning English. Chung used the funds to purchase books and audiobooks in students' native languages and make them available across the district via an interlibrary loan system.

In accepting the award, Chung said that staff members, administration, and students "all feel that the library is a place by and for the students—students who see themselves reflected in the school library, students who see themselves as being valued, heard, loved. And children who feel valued, heard, and loved tend to do better academically."

In 2024, Chung used a \$50,000 grant from the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation and the West Virginia Public Education Collaborative to fund the Building Bridges to Literacy project. The project is designed to motivate students to read, engaging reluctant readers with a library collection and resources geared toward students' needs and

interests. The project also brings in outside partners, including students from University of Pittsburgh's School of Computing and Information to help develop materials, as well as staffers

pickups—one of the first libraries in the state to do so. She has also facilitated MCL's participation in the Library Memory Project, which provides programs to patrons with dementia and cognitive decline.

"I can safely say," one of her nominators wrote, "that in my more than 40 years of library service, I have rarely encountered anyone as enthusiastic, as forward-thinking, as risk-taking, competent, and yet professional as Abby Armour."

Charlotte Chung

Library media specialist at Suncrest Elementary School in Morgantown, West Virginia

In the Monongalia County school district, students across its 19 schools are



Charlotte Chung

from Morgantown Public Library to collaborate on book selection.

“Students adore her, and staff members look to her as a resource,” her nominators wrote. “She has created a welcoming, supportive library environment. Thanks to Mrs. Chung, the library has truly become the heart of our school.”

Missy Creed

Consumer health librarian at Ohio State University in Columbus

As the consumer health librarian at Ohio State University’s Health Sciences Library and the sole librarian within its Library for Health Information (LHI), Creed works both in and outside the library’s walls to get reliable health information to community members.

In nominating her, one person wrote, “What I find so special about Missy’s work is her steadfast commitment to reaching underserved populations in Central Ohio. She truly enjoys and embraces any effort to get appropriate information into the community’s hands.”



Missy Creed



Jessica Gleason

In 2024, Creed conducted about 60 outreach events across Central Ohio. She was a fixture at community health fairs and vaccination clinics, providing more than 1,000 individuals from medically underserved communities with trustworthy and digestible health information across a broad spectrum of topics. Recently, the National Network for Libraries of Medicine named LHI an ambassador library in its Partner Outreach Program, which funds small outreach events for five years.

“I’m inspired daily by the resilience and openness of the participants at our health fairs and community events,” Creed said in her acceptance speech. “Thank you for trusting me with your health stories and allowing me to be part of your journey toward informed health decisions.”

Creed also works behind the library desk at Ohio State’s Wexner Medical Center, providing confidential reference services to the public and medical center staff.

“As I accept this award,” Creed said, “I do so on behalf of all who believe in the transformative power of access to information.”

Jessica Gleason

Bookmobile librarian at Wailuku (Hawaii) Public Library

In August 2023, wildfires tore through western Maui, killing more than 100 people and devastating the town of Lahaina. More than 2,200 structures were destroyed—most of them residential—and the town was left without its library. But then Gleason rolled in with the Holoholo Bookmobile (*holoholo* means traveling for pleasure in Hawaiian), helmed by driver Michael Tinker and decked out in colorful art, a bright yellow awning, and full shelves.

Within a month of the fires, Gleason had identified locations where the bookmobile could reach the most people. She worked with shopping centers, schools, churches, hotels, and government officials to provide books, internet access, and programming, as well as essentials such as meals and clothing for families in need.

As one of her nominators wrote, “Amid all the uncertainty, fear, and grief in

the aftermath of Maui's 2023 wildfires, Jessica has been a steady presence and force for positive action among her colleagues and her community members."

Gleason held *keiki* (children's) story-times in Maui's Napili Park and brought library materials to senior housing centers and the Maui Community Correctional Center, anticipating patrons' needs and providing joy and a sense of normalcy.

"[Librarians] are part of a fabric of helpers that provide a safety net for all the people, and increasingly for those who are traumatized, vulnerable, and marginalized, and need compassion, empowerment, and support," Gleason said.

She also urged her fellow librarians to attend to their own well-being. "We have to take care of ourselves first. So that we can continue to show up for one another and the people we serve."

Peggy Griffith

Administrative librarian at Ferris School in Wilmington, Delaware

At Ferris School, Griffith creates opportunities for youth in rehabilitation. Overseen by the Delaware Department of Services for Children, Youth, and Their Families, Ferris is a detention and



Peggy Griffith



Candice N. Hardy

detail, and unwavering focus on the well-being of those she serves and works with makes her a shining example of what it means to truly care for the people we work with, especially children."

Candice N. Hardy

Director of the Learning Resources Center at Miles College in Fairfield, Alabama

Hardy directs the Learning Resources Center (LRC) at her alma mater, Miles College (MC), a historically Black college. There, she instills the same values in the students that she received at MC.

Hardy prioritizes nurturing students' growth as informed, empowered citizens. For instance, she led efforts ahead of the 2024 US general election to organize a campuswide voter activation day, drawing hundreds of students to engage with civic leaders and organizations and learn about the voting process.

In early 2024, Hardy helped create a new exhibit space at LRC. Its inaugural exhibition, *Roots and Renaissance: An African American Journey through Art*, featured works from 25 local Black artists, curated by the Fairfield Black Art Collective. Hardy has leaned into programming to engage and educate students beyond the classroom, including author visits, a film screening and panel on the last ship that brought enslaved people from Africa to the US, and career readiness services.

On stage at LibLearnX, Hardy addressed her fellow librarians. "Your tireless efforts to your communities have not gone unnoticed," she said. "If I were to write a letter to a rising librarian, it would sound like this: Dear Librarian, you rock. Go the extra mile."

One of Hardy's nominators wrote, "Ms. Hardy deeply cares about every student who walks through the door of the library. She goes out of her way to make sure that everyone feels welcome."

treatment facility for boys ages 13–18 who have committed serious or repeated offenses.

"For these young people, the library isn't just a space to read; it's a space for hope, growth, and connection," Griffith said in her acceptance speech. "It's where they can build skills, discover new worlds, and realize that their story isn't over—it's still being written."

Griffith has cataloged existing library materials, replaced damaged or outdated resources, repurposed old furniture to make the space more inviting, and created library curriculum content for teachers.

As students transition back into the community, Griffith provides the teens with personalized letters of encouragement and resources for résumé assistance and connecting with social workers. She also encourages the teens to get library cards.

"For the teens I serve," said Griffith, "a library card can feel like a fresh start, and a librarian can be someone who believes in them when no one else does."

According to one of her nominators, Griffith's "compassion, attention to

Analine Johnson

Library media specialist at Lyndon B. Johnson High School 9th-Grade Campus, United Independent School District in Laredo, Texas

For 25 years in her role, Johnson has supported and built futures for at-risk readers and students in need, particularly those contending with poverty and language barriers. She helped raise more than \$20,000 for her school to assist students from low-income backgrounds in purchasing their first books. She also created an after-school literacy program to support recent immigrants and emerging bilingual students.

"The library became my safe space," a student said in her nomination. "Mrs. Johnson gave me the courage to believe in myself."

Across the street from her campus, at Cielito Lindo Park, Johnson spearheaded the addition of the Lil Library Box—a collaboration between Johnson's school, district council members, and the Laredo Parks and Recreation Department. With student helpers, she maintains its trove of free titles. Walking distance from several campuses in the school district, the Lil Library Box encourages children to read during the summer months and realizes a dream of Johnson's—to help kids build their own home libraries.

In her speech, Johnson highlighted school libraries' essential role in leveling the playing field for all students. "There are countless inexpensive ways to put books into the hands of our children and community to bridge gaps," she said. "I remain dedicated to expanding the reach of

Analine Johnson



Theresa Quiner

book-rich environments, mirroring the environment in which I was fortunate to grow up."

"Analine Johnson is a librarian who changes lives," one of her nominators wrote. "She has built libraries that are more than just spaces for books—they are places where dreams are nurtured, confidence is built, and futures are shaped."

Theresa Quiner

Director of Kuskokwim Consortium Library in Bethel, Alaska

In the remote Alaskan city of Bethel, disconnected from the road system and accessible only by plane or boat, Quiner is helping her local community thrive.

Kuskokwim Consortium Library (KCL) doubles as a satellite library for the University of Alaska Fairbanks and a community library for the city of Bethel and its primarily Indigenous Yup'ik and Cup'ik population. Despite its remote locale, with a service population

of about 6,500, KCL sees more than 300 patrons a day on average.

Quiner understands and meets the community's needs with abundant and relevant programming, including classes that teach camp cooking, canning, and other necessary skills for living in rural Alaska.

"Living in rural Alaska isn't always easy," Quiner explained. "It's really cold. It's very remote and it's very expensive. What people don't see, unless they take the time and open their minds and their hearts, is that in Bethel people take care of each other. The community is stronger and tighter-knit in a much more powerful way than anywhere else I have lived."

To serve the most vulnerable, Quiner has formed local partnerships, including with the Bethel Housing and Homelessness Coalition and the Tundra Women's Coalition, which supports women and children who are victims of battery and sexual assault.

"Our community thrives because the dedicated members who serve here put their heart and soul into making Bethel a great place to live," one of her nominators wrote. "Theresa exemplifies this notion of community involvement, and her hard work and dedication to the citizens of Bethel are what makes her a cherished member of this community and a most deserving recipient of this honor."

Jamar Rahming

Executive director of Wilmington (Del.) Institute Free Library

Rahming's 2018 appointment as executive director of Wilmington Institute Free Library (WIFL) sparked a transformational rebirth for the 102-year-old institution. He has put a focus on community partnerships and fundraising that has helped to turn WIFL into a thriving educational, cultural, and literacy center.

In accepting his award, Rahming explained, "I wanted to engage my community in such a manner that nobody would ask, 'Why does the library exist?'"

Since 2018, library staffers have stocked bookshelves for children inside local barbershops; hosted Pitch or Ditch, a *Shark Tank*-style competition series in which minority-owned businesses pitch local leaders and entrepreneurs for capital; and partnered with local nonprofit Harper's Heart to open a diaper bank and community closet on the library's second floor.

Early in his role, Rahming said, he learned that most of the community he served rarely left city limits. "I decided that it was time to bring the world to them, to serve as the living room of the community, and to create cosmopolitan, transformative life experiences for an urban Black community."

His efforts have brought well-known authors and cultural icons to participate in library programs and events. The growing list includes actor LeVar Burton, dancer Misty Copeland, actor Jenifer Lewis, singer Dolly

Jamar Rahming



Parton, and the cast of the TV sitcom *A Different World*.

Rahming is "the epitome of a librarian who goes above and beyond, not only in his work but in his mission to transform lives through learning, inclusivity, and community engagement," said one of his nominators. "His leadership has fundamentally reshaped [WIFL] and has positively impacted countless lives."

Nelson Santana

Associate professor and deputy chief and collection development librarian at Bronx (N.Y.) Community College

More than half the student body at Bronx Community College (BCC) identifies as Hispanic, and more than one-third as Black. Santana empowers students by ensuring the library's collection reflects the diverse population it serves and elevating activist histories.

Taking the stage at LibLearnX, Santana highlighted his view of the profession. "Librarians and library workers are not first responders," he said, "but I believe that we are saving lives through our work."

As a scholar, Santana's focuses are Latin American migrant activities, the role of libraries and archives in communities of color, and how libraries impact students' lives. He uses this research trifecta to raise awareness of and empower historically disenfranchised groups while engaging students outside the classroom.

In 2022, with funding from



Nelson Santana

ALA's American Rescue Plan: Humanities Grants for Libraries program, Santana launched the exhibition *Transnational Dominican Activism: Documenting Grassroots Social Movements* about activism spearheaded by the Dominican populations in New York City; Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic; and Santiago, Chile, between 2009 and 2020.

In 2023, he collaborated with another professor to secure an ALA Building Library Capacity Grant to support the BCC Reads initiative, a campuswide common-read book program that showcases challenged titles, starting with Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye*.

"Professor Nelson Santana represents the very best of what a modern librarian can be—innovative, inclusive, scholarly, and deeply committed to student success," wrote one nominator. "His work has not only enhanced our library's resources and services but has also elevated the academic experience for our entire college community."

Carnegie Corporation of New York sponsors ILMLA, with additional support from New York Public Library. Previous ILMLA recipients are listed at ilovelibraries.org/love-my-librarian. **AL**

CHASE OLLIS is a communications manager in ALA's Communications, Marketing, and Media Relations Office.

Crip Time in the Library

Respecting the ways people with disabilities may experience time

BY Brea McQueen



BREA MCQUEEN is student success librarian at Miami University Hamilton in Ohio, a disability activist, and a scholar whose work focuses on the intersections of disability and librarianship.

At this point in the year, almost everyone on campus seems to be thinking about the end of the term. But this span of time doesn't necessarily look or feel the same to everyone. Some of us who have disabilities move through time a little differently, experiencing it as particularly nebulous and abstract.

I am open with students about my disabilities, especially as an academic with ADHD. I want them to feel comfortable talking with me about their challenges, and I want to show students there isn't one correct way to study, manage time, or succeed.

The phrase *crip time*, coined by scholar and author Alison Kafer, acknowledges that folks with disabilities may experience spans of time in nonlinear ways that don't align with the normative, societal understanding of time.

As an example, crip time can be seen in time blindness for folks with ADHD, who are often running late for—or losing track of time during—an activity. Time blindness can also mean feeling stuck in waiting mode, unable to start tasks if another is coming up later.

Crip time can also describe the unpredictable or frequent sick days that folks with chronic pain or fatigue may need, as well as the schooling, careers, and passions put on pause by folks who have spent weeks, months, or years receiving medical treatment or waiting for diagnoses.

Understanding crip time allows us to see how normative standards of time can be inaccessible to many people with disabilities. For workers in academic libraries, inaccessible expectations of time can include the strict structure of the 9-to-5 workday, rigid tenure and promotion timelines, expectations of committees' output, the pace of scholarly publishing, and even the structure of instructional sessions.

In the common one-shot instruction model, for example, librarians try to equip students with the tools they need to be skillful researchers and understand fundamental concepts of information literacy in one session. This model is less than optimal for anyone experiencing crip time.

When I am designing my instruction sessions, I aim to combat the prevalence of chrononormativity and create more accessibility by building in flexibility and forgiveness. This can include the following:

- Short, frequent breaks to let students catch up if they need time to process the information—and to let me take a breather.
- Supplemental digital materials or printed handouts that walk students through the content if they are unable to attend because of an illness

or need to engage with the information in multiple ways or multiple times.

- One-on-one appointment options, giving students the opportunity to work with me in the moment and at the speed that's best for them.

When we acknowledge time's relationship to productivity and capitalism, and the impact on individuals of what social scientist Ulrike Felt calls *chronopolitics*—the politics of time governing academic knowledge generation, epistemic entities, and academic lives and careers—accessibility is even more critical.

Chrononormative frameworks ensure that only people who are nondisabled have the greatest opportunity to succeed. By continuing to prioritize strict timelines over inquiry and exploration at one's own pace, we further eliminate space for those who, while just as skilled and talented as their peers without disabilities,

must operate with the disadvantage of crip time.

We need to openly discuss, explore, and understand the different ways people experience time and how their experience impacts their access to information, services, and working environments.

When we understand these experiences and create flexibility in response, everyone can succeed.

Adapted from "Crip Time in the Academic Library" (Choice: Toward Inclusive Excellence blog, July 10, 2024). [AL](#)

Normative standards of time can be inaccessible to many people with disabilities.

Into the Fray

A paraprofessional's guide to a book censorship controversy

BY Cinzi Lavin



CINZI LAVIN is a former paraprofessional of Goshen (Conn.) Public Library and a current paraprofessional at the Hotchkiss Library of Sharon in Connecticut. She is an award-winning musical dramatist and author of three novels.

In the summer of 2023, a controversial book—*Gender Queer: A Memoir* by Maia Kobabe—was removed from the shelves of the small Connecticut library where I worked as a part-time paraprofessional. The removal was done in transgression of the library board's book reconsideration policy. The book's catalog record also vanished. Local media outlets reported that after a meeting with the town's first selectman and the head of the library board, our then-director, who was a few weeks into the role, removed the book.

Our small staff was upset and bewildered. For me, working in libraries has been a meaningful part of my life. I've been brought to tears by adults gratefully describing having just learned to read, and it is pure magic handing a child their first library card. But as the granddaughter of Europeans who fled to the US to escape fascism just before World War II, I found that the fight against this injustice in our library became very personal.

In contacting the American Library Association (ALA) and Connecticut Library Association (CLA) for guidance and resources, I learned that our situation was unfortunately commonplace.

Word circulated about the book's removal. Library board meetings were crowded with patrons who claimed the book was pornographic—although only a court of law can make that determination—and residents questioned why library policy had not been followed.

The library's Friends group proudly donated a new copy of the book, but library board members' discussion centered on where it should be located. Shortly after one suggested state police should be consulted on whether the book belonged on the shelves at all, I resigned. Fortunately, the book has since been returned. However, it is now located in the adult section rather than in its original place in the young adult section.

I offer the following considerations to other small libraries, particularly those with mostly part-time or nonlibrarian staffers, facing similar challenges:

Educate yourself. Create a network of informed community members that will foster mutual support. I organized several virtual meetings with CLA to answer residents' questions and discuss objectives. ALA and CLA offered connections to other libraries that experienced similar challenges and could offer support and provide examples of landmark court cases and anticensorship tactics that had been successful elsewhere. Study censorship laws, and inform colleagues, patrons, Friends organizations, and community leaders—even the library board.

Be proactive with journalists.

This situation led to a media circus, complete with misinformation. Provide facts before they can be distorted by politically motivated narratives. We didn't do this, and retraction requests were unsuccessful. Offer contacts, such as leaders in your state library association, who can serve as subject matter experts about library issues.

Be prepared for collateral damage. Several library staffers resigned or faced scrutiny from the board. The director who removed the book has since resigned as well. This has also happened at other

institutions fighting against book bans.

Remain neutral.

Whatever your politics or viewpoints, treat everyone with respect. Although staffers had varying opinions about the book, we had strong professional appreciation for one another and library policy. One patron

made remarks to me about the book that I felt were inflammatory, but I reminded myself that he was entitled to his opinions. There were enough problems, I realized, without needless interpersonal disputes.

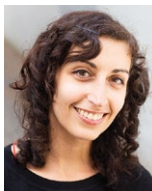
Through this controversy, I learned the power of bringing injustice to light. The most moving thing of all was seeing people—of all political beliefs—standing together to defend intellectual freedom.

In my new role at a nearby library, my biggest problem these days is managing crowded bookshelves. But I do so with the profound realization that my colleagues and I support not only our patrons but also the ideals of democracy itself. **AL**

Through this controversy, I learned the power of bringing injustice to light.

Championing Children and Teens

Resources to support youth library workers



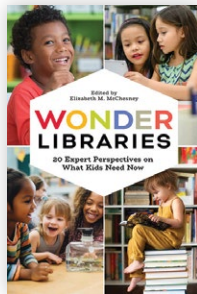
RACHEL ROSENBERG is a children's librarian in Vancouver, British Columbia.



Using Literature to Support Children's Mental Health

Edited by Kim Becnel and Robin A. Moeller

There has been a huge increase in young people reporting symptoms of depression and anxiety in the past two decades, and this collection of essays supports librarians who want to do something to help. It prescribes selection criteria, book recommendations, and discussion questions that align with potential mental health concerns in youth, including obsessive-compulsive disorder, grief, climate fears, and effects of racism. It also explores concepts such as *bibliotherapy*, which uses reading and storytelling as a part of healing. This title is a good primer for library workers who are still learning how to provide readers' advisory to children and teens. ALA Editions, 2025. 152 p. \$49.99. PBK. 979-8-8925-5576-0.



Wonder Libraries: 20 Expert Perspectives on What Kids Need Now

Edited by Elizabeth M. McChesney

In the preface, McChesney explains that "childhood is more than a stage a person moves through; it is a magical and fleeting period in human development to be protected and stewarded as a time of awe, wonder, learning, and risk-taking, and as the foundation for radically loving one another." Teachers, pediatricians, psychologists, and other experts give examples of how librarians can provide community engagement outside the library as well as inside, such as by creating children's reading nooks within laundromats and leading storytimes in pediatric clinics. Each chapter ends with practical steps for library workers.

ALA Editions, 2024. 144 p. \$49.99. PBK. 979-8-8925-5580-7.



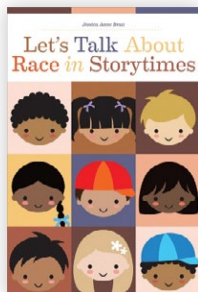
The Playful Library: Building Environments for Learning and Creativity

By Megan Lotts

More libraries are grasping the significance of engaging children through playtime. Our first way of connecting with babies is through silly behaviors such as making noises and wild gestures, and the benefits of games do not go away simply because a child grows up. In Lotts's reflective text, she defines play and how it benefits the library by fostering originality and connection, as well as engaging and exciting people of all ages. She uses examples from her work as an academic librarian at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, New Jersey, such as creating library zines and promoting the library through a show-and-tell activity. The book is a wonderful starting point to get library staffers thinking creatively.

ALA Editions, 2024. 136 p. \$54.99. PBK. 979-8-8925-5571-5.

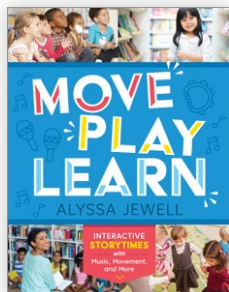
BY Rachel Rosenberg



Let's Talk about Race in Storytimes

By Jessica Anne Bratt

Speaking about race during children's programming can feel overwhelming, but it is crucial. In addition to book recommendations and sample scripts for developing antiracist storytimes, Bratt offers support for library staffers seeking to nurture children in appreciating diversity and identity, explaining bias, and examining author Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's concept of "the danger of a single story." The section on how to be a "co-conspirator" in antiracism efforts is especially impactful, reminding readers that true allies take on this task to lessen the work shouldered by people of color. Although this title focuses exclusively on Black literature, its techniques can be applied to incorporate the stories and perspectives of all people of color. ALA Editions, 2022. 112 p. \$49.99. PBK. 978-0-8389-3789-1.



Move, Play, Learn: Interactive Storytimes with Music, Movement, and More


By Alyssa Jewell

For those planning infant or children's storytimes for the first time, the guidance in *Move, Play, Learn* ensures that programs are interactive enough to keep the attention of children and parents. The book has all sorts of helpful features, such as 20 ready-to-use storytime plans, YouTube suggestions, song and book lists, and interviews with storytime professionals. I wish this book had existed in my early years as a children's librarian; it contains all the information that took me years to learn through training and trial and error. ALA Editions, 2019. 144 p. \$47.99. PBK. 978-0-8389-1912-5.



Recycle and Play: Awesome DIY Zero-Waste Projects to Make for Kids

By Agnes Hsu

DIY projects that recycle everyday materials are essential because public libraries usually have limited budgets for programming. This trove of craft projects for kids features 50 learning activities, all of them using recycled materials like paper tubes and cardboard. Aimed at adults who work with ages 3–6, the book includes easy projects like ice cream stamp art and more in-depth options like an egg carton alligator that eats letters of the alphabet. Hsu's templates provide short, clear directions and large, bright photos, along with information on the types of learning they support. Hsu also makes suggestions for adapting these activities for older kids. Quarry Books, 2022. 136 p. \$24.99. PBK. 978-0-7603-7318-7. (Also available as an ebook.) 

PEOPLE

Announcements

ON THE MOVE

Amy Abele was named director of Ogema (Wis.) Public Library in June.

July 8 **Maureen Amyot** became director of the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners.

Tammy Bartlett started as director of Blackfoot (Idaho) Public Library March 3.

In October **Alexis Burbank** became librarian at Albert Church Brown Memorial Library in China Village, Maine.

Kim Crail joined Goleta (Calif.) Valley Library as supervising librarian in December.

January 6 **Angiah Davis** became department head of Georgia State University Library's Clarkston campus.



January 27 **Mark E. de Jong** became director of Henry E. Eccles Library at US Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island.

Elissa Gasper became manager of Metter-Candler County (Ga.) Library January 13.

In February **Cassandra Gauthier** was appointed branch librarian at Genesee District Library's Flint Township-McCarty branch in Flint, Michigan.

In December **Brandon Locke** became program manager of the Center for Advances in Libraries, Museums, and Archives at University of Washington's Information School in Seattle.

Michael Massaro joined University of San Diego's Copley Library as engineering and computer science embedded librarian January 2.

Ainsley Nobara became executive director of the Washington Library Association February 10.

Kudos

In February, the James Irvine Foundation awarded **Skye Patrick**, county librarian of LA County (Calif.) Library, its 2025 Leadership Award. The award honors individuals tackling critical issues and informing policy across California.

Kristen Timoteo was named the 2024 Library Employee of the Year by the Georgia Public Library Service in December. ●

January 13 **Emily Rimland** became head of Library Learning Services at Penn State University Libraries in University Park, Pennsylvania.

Joan Ruelle was named dean of libraries at Salisbury (Md.) University February 5.

PROMOTIONS

June 1 **Dawn Behrend** was promoted to dean of university libraries at Lenoir-Rhyne University in Hickory, North Carolina.

In February **Arielle Petrovich** was promoted to assistant librarian and university archivist at University of Central Florida Libraries in Orlando.

RETIREMENTS

In July librarian **Shelia Bumgarner** retired from Charlotte (N.C.) Mecklenburg Library, after 36 years with the Robinson-Spangler Carolina Room.

Claire Connley retired as director of Nampa (Idaho) Public Library in January.

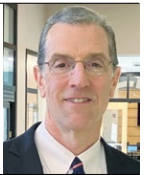
In February **Shelly Doty** retired as head of library access services at Boise

(Idaho) State University's Albertsons Library.

Pat Fittante retired as children's librarian at Escanaba (Mich.) Public Library December 21.

January 30 **Lisa Harral** retired as director of Blackfoot (Idaho) Public Library after 45 years with the library.

James Lonergan retired as director of the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners in June.



Carey McKinnon retired as supervisor of the Los Olivos, Santa Ynez, and Solvang branches of Santa Ynez (Calif.) Valley Libraries December 14.

January 2 **Kim Ranger** retired as liaison librarian at Grand Valley State University in Allendale, Michigan.

In December **Ellen Thiele** retired as librarian at Robey Memorial Library in Waukon, Iowa.

Bridget Turner retired as librarian at Homewood (Ala.) Public Library December 29.

In December **Michael York** retired as state librarian of New Hampshire after 25 years in the role.

AT ALA

Maren Flessen became editorial assistant in the Books for Youth department at *Booklist* January 8.

September 1 **Donna Hunter** moved to the Communications, Marketing, and Media Relations Office as marketing specialist.

February 11 **Anne Manly** was promoted to deputy director of foundations and corporate relations in the Development Office. [AL](#)

In Memory

George Lindell Abbott, 83, librarian emeritus at Syracuse (N.Y.) University Libraries (SUL), died September 20. Abbott held several roles in his four decades at SUL—including cataloging department typist, building manager for Bird Library, and head of media services—before retiring in 2005. A longtime ALA member, Abbott served on the Christopher J. Hoy Scholarship jury and was active in the Association of College and Research Libraries and the Library and Information Technology Association (LITA). He chaired exhibits for the LITA National Conference, helped establish ALA's Retired Members Round Table, reviewed LIS programs as a member of the Committee on Accreditation, and was part of the team that developed the *Bibliographic Control of Nonprint Media* (American Library Association, 1972). Abbott was also a member of the Association for Educational Communications and Technology, International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions, Special Libraries Association, and Society of Motion Picture and Television Engineers. He received the Watson Davis Award for Service from the Association for Information Science and Technology in 1987.

Pansy Hundley, 87, retired librarian, author, and historian, died January 11. Hundley served as head librarian at Charles J. Rike Memorial Library in Farmersville, Texas, from 1982 to 2010. She recommended books in a weekly column of the local newspaper, *The Farmersville Times*.

Don Roalkvam, 76, member of the Indian Trails (Ill.) Public Library District Board of Trustees for more than 20 years, died in January. Roalkvam served at various points as board president. He was also 2007–2008 president of the Association for Library Trustees and Advocates (ALTA), instrumental in merging ALTA and Friends of Libraries USA to form the ALA division now known as United for Libraries, and a member of the United for Libraries Board from 2015 to 2017. He represented Illinois on ALA Council and served for many years as a board member of the Illinois Library Association's (ILA) Trustee Forum, including as secretary. Roalkvam was named ILA Trustee of the Year in 2007.

Michael Ruzicka, 50, librarian and *Booklist* staff member, died February 10. Ruzicka had been the office manager at *Booklist* since 2016. Prior to joining ALA, he was a librarian at the Chicago School of Professional Psychology, librarian at

the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, and cataloging librarian at Battle Ground Academy in Franklin, Tennessee. He also worked as a video processor at Vanderbilt University in Nashville and reference specialist at Samford University in Birmingham, Alabama. Ruzicka was previously an owner and manager of Lodestar Books, a bookstore in Birmingham.

Civia Tuteur, 87, retired Chicago Public Library children's librarian, died September 27.

Michael Van Fossen, 78, librarian and educator who retired from University of North Carolina (UNC) at Chapel Hill in 2012, died December 27. Van Fossen worked for 23 years as an international and state documents librarian at UNC's Davis Library. He also taught at UNC's School of Information and Library Science and served as a subject librarian for international studies, political science, and the curriculum in peace, war, and defense. Van Fossen was active in the North Carolina Library Association, where he served on the executive board of its Government Resources Section, as an associate editor and indexer for *North Carolina Libraries*, and as chair of the journal's 2007 Style Manual Revision Committee.

Margaret "Peg" Whitcraft, 97, retired school librarian, died December 21. Whitcraft was a longtime librarian at Upper Moreland High School in Willow Grove, Pennsylvania, where she served as supervisor of libraries.

George M. Woolsey, 84, retired cataloger, died October 13. Woolsey served as catalog assistant at Elmhurst (Ill.) University's A. C. Buehler Library for 30 years. Prior to that, he was a catalog librarian at Harvey (Ill.) Public Library for 13 years. Woolsey was an active member of the Association for Library Collections and Technical Services and the ALA-affiliated Online Audiovisual Catalogers.

Arthur Price Young, 84, author and retired librarian, died October 15. During his career, Young served as a reference librarian at SUNY Cortland, assistant dean of libraries at University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa, dean of libraries at University of Rhode Island in Kingston, dean of libraries at University of South Carolina in Columbia, and dean of libraries at Northern Illinois University in DeKalb. He retired in 2006. Young was also a member of the Organization of American Historians and ILA, where he served as 2001–2002 president. ●



On the Origin of Scopes

In July 1925, the US was transfixed by *State of Tennessee v. John Thomas Scopes*, also known as the Scopes Monkey Trial. Held in Dayton, Tennessee, the proceedings examined whether high school teacher John T. Scopes violated the law by teaching evolution in a state-funded school. Then, as now, the trial served as a prism for societal debate around education and intellectual freedom.

“There’s just so much surrounding the whole story,” says Jennifer Beals, assistant dean and director of the Betsey B. Creekmore Special Collections and University Archives at University of Tennessee, Knoxville (UTK), who curated the library’s exhibit commemorating the trial’s centennial.

UTK’s Scopes trial archive includes transcripts, photos, and ephemera from locals and attorneys involved in the case. The exhibit highlights the history of Tennessee’s Butler Act (which prohibited teaching that humans evolved from “lesser animals”), campus and community reactions, pop culture reflections, and the media circus surrounding the proceedings.



Among Beals’s favorite items are poems written in response to the trial and photographs of Joe Mendi (left), a “show business monkey” who was brought to Dayton to entertain the crowds.

The trial remains a touchstone for how society parses tensions between conflicting beliefs. “When you look at [the 1955 play] *Inherit the Wind*, which was using the Scopes trial as a vehicle to talk about the McCarthy [hearings], it’s very multilayered,” Beals says. “What always strikes me is how everything changes and yet nothing changes.” **AL**

THE BOOKEND showcases librarians, their work, and their workspaces. For consideration, email americanlibraries@ala.org.

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