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American Library Association • May 26, 2017

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Comics, education, and libraries

Amie Wright writes: “The [Toronto Comic Arts Festival](#), held May 13–14, has become a can’t-miss event for comics enthusiasts and artists. Unlike the comics conventions in San Diego and New York—known for their cosplaying and mass-market comics—TCAF is held in partnership with the Toronto



Public Library. One of its distinctive features is its [Librarian and Educator Day](#). This year, the event featured a keynote by Charlie Adlard (UK comics laureate and artist of *The Walking Dead*).”...

AL: The Scoop, May 24

Comics, the king of libraries

Heidi MacDonald writes: “Graphic novel collections have become a staple of libraries across North America. But with greater popularity comes greater scrutiny and new issues. As demand for graphic novels and comics grows, attempts to censor and remove certain titles from library shelves are also increasing. Self-published graphic novels and digitally published comics are becoming more popular. But libraries, bound by acquisitions guidelines that require validation of books’ quality, are struggling to include them.”...



Publishers Weekly, May 12



Summer food programs and intellectual freedom

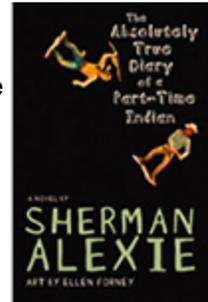
John Mack Freeman writes: “With summer comes vacations, busier public libraries, and an influx of children and teens looking for things to do and materials to use. In addition, [many libraries](#) have begun to be involved with summer food programs. While these programs often come about as part of a push toward meeting area needs and community engagement, there is an argument to be made that engaging in summer food programs helps libraries fulfill their mission as agents and protectors of intellectual freedom.”...



Intellectual Freedom Blog, May 24; Paste, May 15

Minnesota principal defends *Absolutely True Diary*

Following receipt of a [letter](#) from National Coalition Against Censorship member organizations, the principal of New London–Spicer (Minn.) Middle School [responded](#) that she will recommend keeping Sherman Alexie’s *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* in the 8th grade curriculum. The book was [challenged](#) by parents who said it contained “gratuitous and unnecessary” profanity and references to sexual acts....



Comic Book Legal Defense Fund, May 12, 25; National Coalition Against Censorship, May 19



New Chicago museum celebrates American authors

Admirers of the great American novel have a treat in store, as the first museum devoted to US writers opened in Chicago in mid-May. Seven years in the making, the [American Writers Museum](#), 180 North Michigan Avenue, offers an entertaining and sometimes surprising tour through the whole tradition, from early colonists to modernists such as Truman Capote and Tennessee Williams. Along the way, visitors can learn about their lives and words, and just how the US has seen itself over the years....



The Guardian (UK), May 24

Margarita Engle named Young People’s Poet Laureate

The Poetry Foundation named poet, novelist, and journalist Margarita Engle (right) as the new Young People's Poet Laureate, a title given biennially in recognition of outstanding achievement in poetry for children. She is the first Latino to receive the honor. Engle will succeed current laureate Jacqueline Woodson on June 12, promoting a love of poetry among young readers. Paige Bentley-Flannery suggests [three ways](#) libraries can get the word out...



Publishers Weekly, May 16; ALSC Blog, May 26

Writing: The most underestimated 21st-century skill

David Stuart Jr. writes: "I struggle to imagine putting together a solid argument for why we wouldn't want all of our students to be capable writers when they graduate. Writing well is an obvious good. While much fuss was made about newfangled 21st-century skills, one very old skill that seems to be only increasing in importance is writing. Unless you're a future miner, writing matters—especially if you want access to the salaried jobs that typically coincide with a middle-class lifestyle."...



David Stuart Jr., May 2

A fun, free way to learn how to code

Codecademy has a bold mission—to rethink education from the bottom up—and it's working on that on the web and out in the world through a handful of nonprofit initiatives. On the web, Codecademy offers courses to make learning to code and designing websites fun and easy. You can choose to learn specific languages, such as JavaScript, or even learn the (IBM) Watson API. Even better, all the classes are free, though a new paid plan offers additional learning tools and live support....



PC Magazine, May 23



The emotional labor of librarianship

Julie Jurgens writes: "Librarianship isn't what you might call a physically demanding profession. Youth librarians do exert quite a bit of energy—I regularly hit 6,000 steps during a day of book talks, and if I'm not sweating at the end of my toddler time I feel like I've failed as a presenter—but compared to my stint as a family farm hand or my time as a motel housekeeper, it's definitely on the lower end of physically demanding work. But what about the mental and [emotional work](#) that librarians have to do?"...



Hi, Miss Julie, May 24; HuffPost, Apr. 7

LC puts Sanborn Fire Insurance maps online

The Library of Congress has placed online nearly 25,000 [Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps](#), which depict the structure and use of buildings in more than 12,000 US cities and towns. Maps will be added monthly until 2020, for a total of approximately 500,000. The online collection now features maps published prior to 1900. The Sanborn maps are a valuable resource for genealogists, historians, urban planners, teachers, or anyone with a personal connection to a community, street, or building....

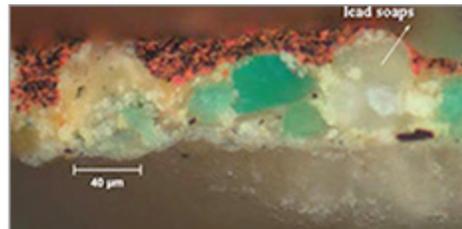


Library of Congress, May 25



Soap is threatening the world's paintings

Sarah Cascone writes: "A team of researchers are working to find a solution to an unlikely scourge that is marring the surfaces of canvases around the world: soap. Conservation scientists say that tiny formations of lead-based soaps—each about a tenth of a millimeter in diameter—are threatening to mar paintings by artists ranging from Rembrandt van Rijn to Georgia O'Keeffe. A team of experts has spent years researching why these microscopic white pockmarks appear, but they can't figure out how to stop them."...



Artnet News, May 24

What does and does not protect your smartphone

Brian X. Chen writes: "Carrying a smartphone without a case is like driving a car without bumpers—and no one wants a new gadget to shatter, crack, or get dented. Yet some products that purport to protect your smartphone are useless. It's unclear, for example, whether a screen protector—a thin plastic or glass film for your phone display—actually prevents glass from shattering upon impact. So here's a reality check on what does and doesn't protect your phone."...



New York Times: Personal Tech, May 24

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ISSN 1559-369X

ALA PUBLISHING | AmericanLibraryAssociation