

# american libraries DIRECT

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## Saving our library murals

Located at the entrance of Bates Hall, Boston Public Library's massive mural (right) depicts the nine muses of inspiration from Greek mythology. Painted by French muralist Pierre Puvis de Chavannes and installed at the library in the mid-1890s, the mural was recently restored in a two-year project—prompted by the discovery of bubbling on one of the panels in 2014. The mural itself was not painted directly on the wall but on linen canvas that was shipped from France to Boston and then adhered to the walls....



*American Libraries Trend, Nov./Dec.*

## Open source software

Marshall Breeding writes: "Open source software is a key option libraries should consider when implementing strategic technologies. Even though a greater number of libraries are adopting proprietary systems, open source products provide a viable alternative and exert competitive pressures, both in cost and innovation. Open source ILS products, such as Koha and Evergreen, have cultivated vibrant communities that work diligently toward the continued enhancement and support of these products." ...



*American Libraries column, Nov./Dec.*



## Rejecting the resilience narrative

Meredith Farkas writes: “My first job as a librarian was at a small library where we were constantly working to find inventive no-cost solutions designed to resemble what big, well-resourced libraries were doing. Our being able to do more with less felt like a badge of honor. But that badge of honor also signals that you might keep getting less and doing more. Resilience promotes the idea that library staffers can overcome anything and that those who cannot are at fault for their situation.”...



*American Libraries column, Nov./Dec.*

## ALA President’s Program to consider library neutrality

A panel at the February 11 ALA President’s Program at the 2018 Midwinter Meeting in Denver will discuss whether libraries have ever been content neutral. Moderated by ALA President Jim Neal, panelists Em Claire Knowles, James LaRue, Chris Bourg, and R. David Lankes will debate the issue, and commentary will be provided by Emily Drabinski, Kathleen de la Peña McCook, Emily Knox, and Kelvin Watson....



*Conference Services, Nov. 8*



## ALA Library Conference in Sharjah

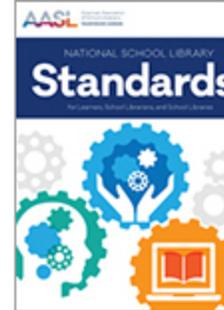
The vital role of libraries in society in the face of rapid technological development was the main topic in focus at this year’s ALA Library Conference held November 7–9 at the Sharjah International Book Fair in the United Arab Emirates. ALA has also called upon librarians in the Arab world to adapt to the modern technological changes. ALA International Relations Office Director Michael Dowling said, “This year the [focus was on school libraries](#) as key to students’ success. The conference stressed that schools must have good library programs. A number of award-winning school librarians also shared their experiences, which can inspire other school librarians.”...



*Gulf News (Dubai), Nov. 9; The Gulf Today (Sharjah), Nov. 10*

## AASL releases new National School Library Standards

Designed to empower leaders to transform teaching and learning, the new [National School Library Standards for Learners, School Librarians, and School Libraries](#) from AASL, published by ALA Editions, reflect an evolution of the AASL standards. Featuring a new streamlined AASL Standards Integrated Framework for learners, school librarians, and school libraries, this version emphasizes the importance of [all three standards sets](#). The refreshed standards consist of [six shared foundations](#) that are expressed by learners and school librarians alike. Then there are “domains,” which reflect the development of aptitude....



*AASL, Nov. 10; Knowledge Quest blog, Nov. 9; American Libraries column, Nov./Dec.*

## Former library director elected mayor of Decorah

Voters in the city of Decorah, Iowa, have elected their first-ever female mayor. [Lorraine Borowski](#) (right), who retired June 30 after 16 years as director of the Decorah Public Library, received nearly 70% of the vote on November 7, defeating long-time Decorah city council representative Gary Rustad. Borowski spent 20 years attending city council meetings, which she videotaped for public access broadcasts. She is a former president of the Iowa Library Association and was honored as ILA Member of the Year in 2016....



*Radio Iowa, Nov. 8; Decorah (Iowa) Newspapers, June 7*

## Big tech threatens democracy

Sen. Al Franken (D-Minn.) writes: “As lawmakers grapple with the revelations regarding Russia’s manipulation of social media during the 2016 election, many are shocked to learn the outsized role that the major tech companies play in so many aspects of our lives. Not only do they guide what we see, read, and buy on a regular basis, but their dominance—specifically in the market of information—now requires that we consider their role in the integrity of our democracy.”...

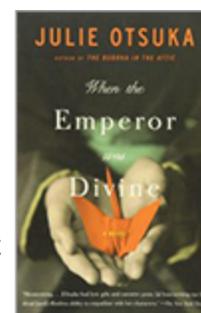


*The Guardian (UK), Nov. 8*



## 12 novels on Japanese-American incarceration in WWII

Brian Niiya writes: “When we think about literary works that incorporate the wartime incarceration of Japanese Americans, most of us probably think of either one of the bestsellers by non-Japanese authors (*Snow Falling on Cedars*) or older classic works by Japanese-American authors (*No-No Boy* and *Farewell to Manzanar*). But there are a good number of more recent works by Japanese-American authors, many of which are not as well known as they should be. We’ve put together a list of 12.”...

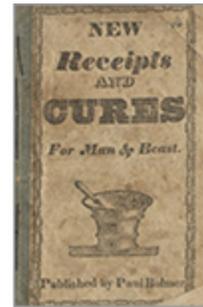


*Densho Blog, Nov. 9*

## Historical cures uncovered during cataloging

Becky Filner writes: “The New York Academy of Medicine Library is currently undertaking the cataloging of a collection of rare pamphlets from the 17th century through the early 20th century. Through this process, we’ve come across many fascinating (and sometimes perplexing) items. Here I will highlight four pamphlets from the 18th and 19th centuries that prescribe surprising cures for ailments.”...

*Books, Health, and History, Nov. 10*



## HistoryIT is throwing open the archives

Erin Stewart Brown writes: “History is in danger, according to Kristen Gwinn-Becker, and she intends to save it. The 40-year-old software engineer and history PhD, who grew up in Levant, Maine, founded [HistoryIT](#) with no lesser mission in mind. Headquartered on the Portland waterfront, Gwinn-Becker and her team of 30-plus historians, archivists, and technologists are rescuing history by bringing it into the digital realm, one irreplaceable archive at a time.”...



*Down East, Nov. 9*



## Halifax libraries use light therapy lamps for depression

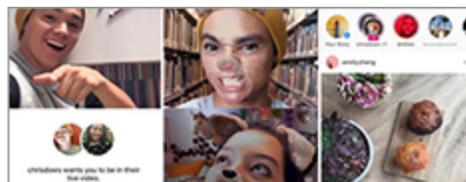
Halifax (N.S.) Public Libraries now have light therapy lamps at each of their 14 locations in the municipality, and another nine smaller, more portable lamps that you can check out, just like a book. “Light therapy lamps mimic daylight,” Halifax Public Libraries Director of Public Service Kathleen Peverill said. Seasonal Affective Disorder is commonly thought to be caused by a lack of sunlight, and sitting in front of light therapy lamps like the new ones at the libraries can help ease the symptoms....



*Metro Halifax, Nov. 9*

## Instagram tips for the photo obsessed

Chandra Steele writes: “Are you snap happy? Then you probably have Instagram on your phone. Whether you’ve been with Instagram since the beginning or just started gramming, PCMag has rounded up a few tips that could make your photos stand out and garner you acclaim—or at least a like or two more than before. These tips were tested on iOS, but most apply to Android, too.”...



## The best USB portable phone chargers

Jason Cipriani writes: "With so many different phones, charging terminology, cables, and ports, trying to find a versatile yet portable battery pack can be a daunting task. We decided to do the legwork for you, acquiring a wide range of power banks from different manufacturers, some offering unique features. We then spent weeks testing them. While we've made some top picks, be sure to read through each review to help you find the best USB portable charger for your needs."...



PC World, Nov. 10

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