

# american libraries DIRECT

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## Mary Ghikas named ALA executive director

The ALA Executive Board has appointed Mary Ghikas (right) ALA executive director through January 2020, effective immediately. Ghikas has been serving as interim executive director since August 1, 2017, after the [retirement of Keith Michael Fiels](#). She was most recently senior associate executive director of member programs and services. The search process for the executive director will restart in spring 2019 after the position description requirements have been finalized....



*AL: The Scoop, Jan. 25; American Libraries feature, July 28, 2017*

## The library humor cartoons of Richard Lee

Sarah Brewer writes: "The ALA Archives holds many treasures in unexpected places. The Issue Photographs files of *American Libraries* magazine is one such place, holding materials like original art and illustrations, such as original cartoons by Richard Lee, the recently retired director of Waukegan (Ill.) Public Library. Lee's cartoons for *American Libraries*, supplementing Will Manley's column, are a treasure trove of classic and original library humor and were mostly published in the 1990s and 2000s, though many of the jokes are still relevant to libraries today."...



*ALA Archives blog, Jan. 25*



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## Burger King explains net neutrality

Rachel Kraus writes: “Burger King might seem like an unlikely source for a pretty darn good net neutrality explainer, but its [new video](#) (2:50) is just that. In ‘Whopper Neutrality,’ Burger King rolls out a change in Whopper prices that gets customers angry. If they want their burgers immediately, they’ll have to pay more money; if they pay the basic Whopper price, they’ll have to wait. The restaurant charges Whoppers in tiers of ‘MBPS,’ or ‘Making Burgers Per Second,’ with fast lanes and slow lanes.”...



*Mashable, Jan. 24; Burger King YouTube channel, Jan. 24*

## How Canadian libraries are reinventing themselves

Brian Bethune writes: “On any given day, in one of the world’s busiest urban library systems, 50,000 people come through the doors of the Toronto Public Library’s 100 branches, while 85,000 make an online visit. Canada’s librarians have, with remarkable adroitness, turned their institutions into a key bridge over what they call the digital divide and an essential community hub in modern urban settings.”...



*Maclean's, Jan. 25*

## Rev. Wyatt Tee Walker dies

The Rev. Wyatt Tee Walker (right), a leader in the civil rights movement who helped the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. assemble his famous “Letter From Birmingham Jail” and led a march that helped integrate the Petersburg, Virginia, public library in 1960, has died. Walker, the Rev. R.G. Williams, and three local students had already spent more than 24 hours in the city jail for trespassing at Petersburg’s segregated public library, when in the early evening of [March 8, 1960, they marched](#) with more than 200 protesters....



*Associated Press, Jan. 23; Petersburg (Va.) Progress-Index, Feb. 28, 2010*



## Gimme a C (for collaboration)

Judi Moreillon writes: “Through school–public library collaboration, librarians support one another in nurturing their communities’ literacy ecosystems. Patricia Jimenez is the school librarian at Sunnyslope High School in the Glendale (Ariz.) Union High School District. At the time of their



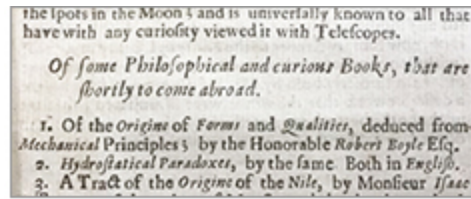
collaborative work, Emily Howard was the young adult librarian at the Cholla branch of the Phoenix Public Library. Together, Jimenez and Howard developed a series of programs based on their determination to take literacy ‘where teens are.’”...

*Knowledge Quest blog, Jan. 25*

## Book reviews from the Royal Society

Abbie Weinberg writes: “Book reviews have been a staple of many academic journals for a long time. In my recent work, I have been searching through the early issues of one of the first scientific journals, the *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society*

(many of which are [freely digitized and searchable](#) by the Royal Society) and I was bemused to discover that book lists and reviews were part of this early journal almost from the get-go. The first indication comes in volume 1, January 8, 1665–1666, pages 145–146.”...



*The Collation, Jan. 18*

## Dita Polachova Kraus, the librarian of Auschwitz

Nadine Wojakovski writes: “Dita Polachova (right) was raised in a loving home in Prague, the only child of book-loving parents who filled their shelves with German, Czech, and French books. Little did she know that by the age of 14 her life would be saved by a dozen tattered books that comprised



possibly the smallest library in the world, in Auschwitz-Birkenau. Polachova and another boy became the children’s block librarians, entrusted to look after a few random books found among the luggage of the arrivals in Auschwitz.”...

*The Jewish Chronicle, Jan. 26*



## The first encyclopedia: Pliny’s *Historia naturalis*

Alexandra K. Newman writes: “In most ways other than its name, Pliny’s *Historia naturalis* is the first attempt at creating an encyclopedia in the Western world—it aspires to be a comprehensive summary of knowledge about a particular subject, organized into easily navigable headings that are laid out in the *summarium* (a proto-index) at the beginning of the work. That Pliny made an effort at predicting the research interests of his readers was just short of revolutionary in 79 AD, when the *Historia* was first published.”...



*Unbound, Jan. 23*

## Being a librarian makes me a better writer

Xhenet Aliu writes: “There are many ways in which librarianship and writing are complementary, which might explain—along with the steadier paychecks than freelancing or adjuncting brings in—why a number of writers have worked as librarians.

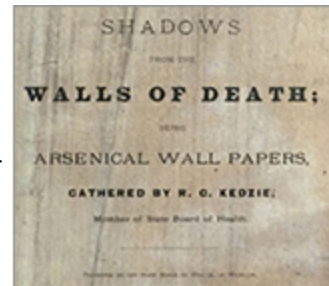
Librarians and writers are both in the business of discovery—in general, librarians mostly look outward for it and writers dig down deep into what’s found, which is a pretty nice symbiosis between a day job and whenever-else-you-can job.”...



*Literary Hub, Jan. 23*

## Don’t touch this book

Alexander J. Zawacki writes: “*Shadows from the Walls of Death*, printed in 1874 and measuring about 22 by 30 inches, is a noteworthy book for two reasons: its rarity, and the fact that, if you touch it, it might kill you. It contains just under 100 wallpaper samples, each of which is saturated with potentially dangerous levels of arsenic. As part of his campaign to raise awareness about poison papers, author Robert M. Kedzie produced 100 copies of *Shadows* and sent them out to public libraries across Michigan.”...

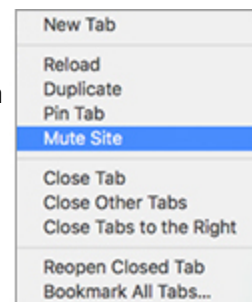


*Atlas Obscura, Jan. 23*



## Google Chrome update mutes autoplay

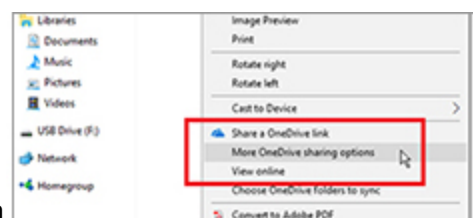
The latest Google Chrome update, [announced January 24](#), includes an update that allows users to mute super-annoying autoplay audio on websites forever. Previously, a Chrome user could right click on a website’s tab to reveal a menu that included “Mute Tab.” With the update, right clicking on the tab now reveals “Mute Site.” This small update, however, will make a big difference. Many websites autoplay videos and blast us all with undesired sound. Now, any site can be permanently shut up....



*Mashable, Jan. 25; Chrome Releases, Jan. 24*

## How to share personal files in Windows 10

Lance Whitney writes: “If you want to share documents or photos or videos with others, you can simply email the files. But what if you want to more easily share the same files over and over again and with multiple people? You can share the file using an online file storage site, such as [Microsoft OneDrive](#),



Dropbox, or Box. And with the [Windows 10 Fall Creators Update](#), you can speedily send any file to these online services and make it shareable. Let's look at all the ways to share files."...

*PC Magazine, Jan. 25*

## 25 bookish lip balms

Nikki Vanry writes: "Books are fun. A bag full of beautifully scented chapsticks and lippies? Also fun (especially during a moisture-wrecking winter). So I decided to combine the two and found so many great, puntastic bookish lip balms to choose from—like 'As I Shea Dying' and 'Tarte of Darkness.' These bookish treats are less than \$5 each and I certainly won't judge you if you decide buy all 25 of them: one for almost every day of the month."...



*Book Riot, Jan. 24*

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