

american libraries DIRECT

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2018 holiday gift guide for librarians

Lara Ewen writes: “Books make wonderful gifts, but librarians and voracious readers often have daunting to-be-read piles already. This year, why not forego the obvious choices and give your favorite bibliophile something a little different? From bedside lamps and elegant bookends to writing implements, art, and even library-themed fashion accessories, you can show you care, whether you’ve got only a few dollars or are ready to splurge. You might even find something special just for you.”...



American Libraries feature, Nov. 29

Landing on Mars at a NASA social

Sally Stieglitz writes: “A dancer, a meteorologist, a musician, and a librarian walk into NASA’s Jet Propulsion Laboratory in La Cañada Flintridge, California. This is not the setup for an elaborate joke but rather part of the diverse combination of participants in a stellar NASA outreach program that invites social media influencers from all walks of life to cover key NASA space exploration events—like the *InSight* Mars landing on November 26. For librarians, the NASA Social program offers unique benefits, including the opportunity to take part in lifelong learning.”...



AL: The Scoop, Nov. 30

Senate committee approves libraries appropriations bill

Sara Friedman writes: “Despite President Trump’s desire to eliminate the Institute of Museum and Library Services, the US Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions

Committee sent a loud signal to the administration that the agency should remain operational with the unanimous approval of the [Museum and Library Services Act](#) on November 29. The legislation reauthorizes the Library Services and Technology Act, while making changes to modernize the agency. ALA President Loida Garcia-Febo expressed her appreciation to the committee for supporting the legislation.”...



THE Journal, Nov. 29



ALA awards 250 libraries funds for CS Education Week

On November 29, the ALA [Libraries Ready to Code](#) initiative, sponsored by Google, awarded 250 school and public libraries with \$500 in microfunding to help plan and implement coding activities during [Computer Science Education \(CS Ed\) Week](#) 2018 (December 3–9). Libraries across the US will be able to access the pool of microfunds to implement digital skills programming. ALA will collaborate with PLA to administer the new digital skills initiative. Funding will become available as the [Grow with Google tour](#) comes to your state....



ALA Washington Office, Nov. 29; Google: The Keyword, Nov. 29

Big opportunities for small libraries

The Institute of Museum and Library Services has launched a new special initiative, [Accelerating Promising Practices \(APP\) for Small Libraries](#), and is accepting grant applications now through February 25. This new funding opportunity is designed specifically to strengthen the ability of small and rural libraries, archives, and related organizations to serve their communities, and award sizes range from \$10,000 to \$50,000. Three categories of APP grants are available: Transforming School Library Practice, Community Memory, and Digital Inclusion....



Institute of Museum and Library Services, Nov. 29

Librarian is Baltimore's longest-tenured employee

In her time working for Baltimore's Enoch Pratt Free Library system, Sadye Whitt (right) has seen 10 mayoral inaugurations, five library administrations, thousands of book acquisitions, and countless technological changes. That's what happens when you've worked for the city longer than anyone else—



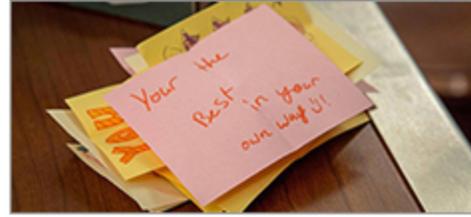
56 years, to be exact. Whitt, 77, was first hired by the Enoch Pratt library department on

April 3, 1962, according to city records. Soft-spoken, she much prefers her position in acquisitions to interacting directly with patrons....

Baltimore Sun, Nov. 20

Boise library assistant practices guerrilla kindness

Library Assistant Paige Thomas works at the Collister branch of the Boise (Idaho) Public Library. She decided to start a program called “Guerrilla Kindness,” which allows visitors to write positive notes that are then tucked into library books for others to find. The notes are one way Thomas is infusing kindness into an increasingly uneasy, demoralized world. Her request is simple: Write down something positive and tuck it into the cardboard box at the circulation desk when checking out books. Thomas slips the notes into books waiting to be checked out....



Boise Idaho Statesman, Nov. 21



A cemetery of banned books in Kuwait

Kuwaiti artist Mohammad Sharaf has created a cemetery of books to protest the government’s ban on thousands of pieces of literature in recent years. The art installation, named “A Cemetery of Banned Books,” consisted of more than 200 headstones and was erected close to the location for Kuwait’s annual book fair. It was removed by authorities several hours later. Sharaf was inspired by news that more than 4,000 books—among them Victor Hugo’s *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* and Naguib Mahfouz’s *Children of Gebelaw*—had been [banned](#) by Kuwait in the last five years....



Euronews, Nov. 28; Media Court, Kuwait Ministry of Information, Sept. 6

Eight ways for small libraries to save money on programs

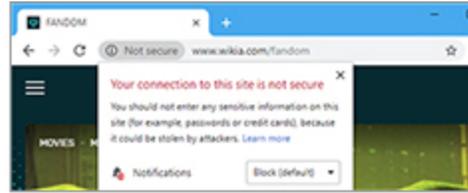
Chelsea Price writes: “Meservey, Iowa, is a tiny, rural town of just 240 people. We have a church, a bar, a post office, and my little library. There isn’t much to do in town as far as entertainment goes, so the library tends to serve as a community hub—we are one of the only local sources of free events and programs. As you might imagine, our programming budget is quite small. I’m very limited on what I’m financially able to do, as there’s not much wiggle room for pricey performers or large events. But during my four years as director, I’ve found ways to get a lot of bang for my programming buck. Here are a few things I’ve learned.”...



Programming Librarian, Nov. 15

Why isn't the internet secure with HTTPS?

Chris Hoffman writes: "HTTPS is now considered the new baseline standard. Everything should be secure by default, so Chrome only warns you that a connection is 'Not Secure' when you're accessing a site over an HTTP connection. However, the word 'secure' is also gone from Chrome's HTTPS notice because it was a little misleading. It sounds like Chrome is vouching for the contents of the site as if everything on this page is secure. But that's not true at all. A secure HTTPS site could be filled with [malware](#) or be a fake phishing site."...



How-To Geek, May 15, Nov. 30

The worst poem ever published

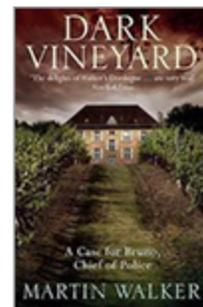
Oliver Tearle writes: "William McGonagall. Julia A. Moore. Alfred Austin. Bad poetry has its own canon, a sort of a dark reflection or negation of other, more salubrious works. It takes a certain peculiar combination of self-belief, metrical tone-deafness, artistic ambition, and utter lack of self-awareness to produce a remarkably bad poet. One poet who should be in the bad canon, but is often overlooked alongside McGonagall and others, is Theo Marzials (1850–1920, right), whose 'A Tragedy' ranks as one of the worst."...



Interesting Literature, Nov. 30

Eight novels for the literate oenophile

Jay McInerney writes: "Wine has permeated western literature since the time of Homer. Writers like Hemingway and Waugh and Lawrence Durrell created an indelible link in my own mind between wine and literature. Perhaps it's just a coincidence that I wrote my first novel while working as a clerk at a wine and liquor store. For those who wish to combine the appreciation of literature and wine I recommend dipping into the following eight novels—ideally with a glass of Condrieu or Meursault in hand."...



Literary Hub, Nov. 30

AL Direct is a free electronic newsletter emailed every Tuesday and Friday to personal members of the [American Library Association](#).

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