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Other duties as assigned

Maybe it existed only in our collective imagination—the era when librarians focused solely on providing access to written information, and when their greatest on-the-job challenge consisted of keeping the stacks in order. Whether that halcyon time ever actually took place, it's definitely not here now.

Social worker, EMT, therapist, legal consultant, even bodily defender: These are the roles that many librarians feel they're being asked to assume. *American Libraries* asked seven librarians—public, academic, and school; urban and rural—about the many directions in which their profession finds itself pulled....



American Libraries feature, Jan./Feb.

2019 Midwinter Meeting

With its thriving tech scene, picturesque outdoors, and iconic Space Needle, Seattle has long led in inspiration and innovation—concepts that have historically driven librarianship. The ALA Midwinter Meeting and Exhibits returns to the Emerald City January 25–29, giving library professionals the

perfect opportunity to discuss the ideas, trends, and research that will shape the future of information services. And don't miss out on Seattle's [excellent dining opportunities](#). Finding these restaurants is easy with the online [Seattle Dining Map](#)...



American Libraries features, Jan./Feb.

Immerse yourself in wellness

ALA President Loida Garcia-Febo writes: “In these uncertain times, we all benefit from kindness, mindfulness, and wellness. This year, I want to help library workers manage the stress and anxiety experienced both in daily life and in their interactions with patrons and coworkers. The ALA–Allied Professional Association [wellness site](#) has been revamped and is chock-full of resources, including new information on eight wellness areas for library workers.” ALA had its own [year of wellness](#), as Treasurer Susan H. Hildreth reports....



American Libraries columns, Jan./Feb.; ALA-APA: Eight Elements of Wellness



Judge shuts down Houston drag queen lawsuit

Chief US District Judge Lee H. Rosenthal issued a final ruling in the lawsuit against the Houston Public Library’s drag queen story hour on January 3, 10 weeks after it was filed. The judge granted the city’s request to terminate the case, stating the



conservative Christian men who filed the lawsuit did not have standing to sue in the court’s jurisdiction and failed to establish that the freedom of religion clause had been violated by the storytellers. In Louisiana, a federal judge [effectively overruled](#) the Lafayette Public Library’s ban on patrons using meeting spaces unless they fill out a form stating they are not planning or performing their own unofficial drag queen story times. A ruling in a lawsuit on whether the library can itself host such an event is expected next week....

Houston Chronicle, Jan. 3; KATC-TV, Lafayette, La., Jan. 3

Salt Lake County gives away free gun locks

Salt Lake County Library Services’ popular free gun lock program got its start in reaction to a tragedy. Five Herriman (Utah) High School students [died by suicide in 2017–2018](#). That spurred the city to offer a series of “[Question, Persuade, and Refer](#)” classes to better equip attendees to help others get through mental health crises. Leslie Schow (right), manager of Salt Lake County’s Herriman branch, offered to host the classes. Then a volunteer brought three cases of free gun locks and asked Schow if the library could pass them out....



Salt Lake Tribune, Jan. 2; Apr. 4, 2018

Literacy float wins Rose Parade

A float celebrating literacy and sponsored by a San Diego–based company won top honors in the January 1 Rose Parade. The UPS Store’s entry, “Books Keep Us On Our Toes,” was awarded the Sweepstakes trophy by judges who deemed it the most beautiful in design,

floral presentation, and entertainment among the parade's 46 floats. It depicts an ostrich named Olive chasing her dreams of becoming a ballerina by reading a book and listening to Tchaikovsky's *Swan Lake* on a gramophone....

San Diego (Calif.) Union-Tribune, Jan. 1



Thief allegedly steals 6,000 items from Sacramento library

Shahin Sadighian was arrested December 26 on suspicion of stealing 2,689 books and 3,846 DVDs from the Fair Oaks branch of the Sacramento (Calif.) Public Library. Investigators with the county sheriff's department served a search warrant and recovered more than \$100,000 in library property from his house. Library Director Rivkah Sass (right) said that staff saw the man in a surveillance video walking throughout the library with a backpack, primarily on Saturdays. The suspect would check out one or two items but never a whole stack....



KOVR-TV, Sacramento, Calif., Dec. 27



One easy New Year's resolution for library advocates

New York Public Library President Anthony W. Marx writes: "As we prepare to start a new chapter in 2019, there is no doubt that we are a society in crisis—a crisis that runs deep, is fracturing our nation, and generating the political dysfunction that grabs headlines and monopolizes our attention.

There's one thing every American can do to get started—a very simple resolution that we can all commit to in 2019: We can go to our local libraries, get library cards, and start our journeys towards healing our democracy."...

Salon, Jan. 1



Never shut up about library programs

Nadine Kramarz writes: "Recently, my library hosted a 'Business Before Breakfast' event with our local chamber of commerce. I spent all morning showcasing our databases, quoting how much money we saved our patrons, and talking about the programs and spaces that the library made available to the community. In every conversation that I had with event attendees, they all said the same thing, 'I didn't know that the library had/did that!' Librarians are trained educators whose programs build a variety of literacies, but if people do not know about the library's resources, they will not use them."...





A better count in 2020

Mike Maciag writes: “Community groups, nonprofits, and governments are working in many ways to ensure that people are counted in the 2020 Census. But with several looming uncertainties, the stakes are even higher this time around. Americans will be able to complete the census online for the first time, making it more convenient for many households but leaving others without internet access behind. Relying more on technology, the Census Bureau will devote fewer resources to field operations. The role for libraries could be even larger this time, given that the federal government is shifting online.”...



Governing, Jan.

World reading habits in 2018

Brendan Brown writes: “We may be watching more Netflix than ever, but the world continued to read victoriously in 2018. Global English Editing has compiled an infographic on world reading habits in 2018, following on from our [2017 edition](#). We show who read the most, what we read, as well as many other fascinating insights into the reading landscape. India, Thailand, and China won gold, silver, and bronze, respectively, for reading the most throughout the year.”...



Global English Editing, Dec. 28; May 12, 2017

Six books on climate change written by women

Sarah Boon writes: “To make the most of the next decade and address the global warming crisis, we need to learn as much as we can about climate-related problems and figure out what can and can’t be done to address them. An approach centered on individual experience and knowledge will make these issues more manageable. I recommend the following six books by women. I’ve chosen women writers because they are often overlooked when it comes to popular science writing. Additionally, they provide a diverse perspective on the climate issues they address.”...



Literary Hub, Jan. 4

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Editor, *AL Direct*: George M. Eberhart, geberhart@ala.org

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Direct ad inquiries to: Michael Stack, mstack@ala.org

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50 E. Huron St.
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800-545-2433, ext. 4216

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