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LC's new digital strategy

Greg Landgraf writes: "[Letters to Lincoln](#) is just one of the many projects that are part of the Library of Congress's new [five-year digital strategy](#) announced October 1, 2018. It falls under [Enriching the Library Experience](#), the library's FY2019–2023 strategic plan, which outlines such broad goals as expanding access to its collections and modernizing operations. 'The strategic plan has the vision of what we'd like the library to look like five years from now,' says Kate Zwaard, LC's director of digital strategy. 'The digital strategy breaks it down into specific initiatives.' LC created [Library of Congress Labs](#) in September 2017 to test projects that use LC's digital collections in innovative ways.'..."



American Libraries feature, Mar./Apr.

Examining equity gaps in our libraries

Meredith Farkas writes: "Narratives about libraries often portray them as 'the great equalizer,' but achieving equity means more than just opening the doors to everyone. ALA's [Access to Library Resources and Services guide](#) says that 'equity extends beyond equality ... to deliberate and intentional efforts to create service delivery models that will make sure that community members have the resources they need.' Libraries rarely design services to specifically exclude certain patron groups, but exclusion is often the unfortunate result of not considering the unique needs and circumstances of all community members.'..."



American Libraries column, Mar./Apr.

Library tech leaders' recommended tips and tools

Building prototypes with apps. Building bridges with translating tools. Building empathy with virtual reality. Librarians are experimenting with the latest technology to construct a better world—and help patrons access it. *American Libraries* spoke with three library tech leaders—panelists from the LITA Top Tech Trends panel at the 2019 Midwinter Meeting and Exhibits—about what apps, devices, software, and best practices their libraries have implemented and how others can, too....



American Libraries feature, Mar./Apr.

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AI and machine learning

Jason Griffey writes: “Artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning are everywhere. For example, Google’s Android operating system records, measures, and collects information and sends that data to servers. These servers use billions of data points collected from tens of millions of users as input for their machine learning systems. When you ask an Android phone to show you pictures from the beach, a complex set of data moves back and forth between your phone and Google’s servers, comparing your photos to the billions in its data set. The search results include pictures that the AI decided were most likely to be related.”...



American Libraries column, Mar./Apr.

Tomi Adeyemi to speak at ALA Annual Conference

Tomi Adeyemi (right) is a Nigerian-American writer and creative writing coach based in San Diego. After graduating Harvard University with an honors degree in English literature, Adeyemi received a fellowship that allowed her to study West African mythology and culture in Salvador, Brazil. She will be speaking at the ALA Annual Conference in Washington, D.C., on June 24. Adeyemi’s debut novel, *Children of Blood and Bone*, was a finalist for the 2019 William C. Morris YA Debut Award....



ALA Conference Services, Mar. 4

2019 Audie Awards

The 2019 Audie Awards, presented by the Audio Publisher’s Association to honor excellence in audiobooks and spoken entertainment, were announced March 4 at the Audies Gala in New York City. The ceremony was hosted by *Queer Eye* fashion expert and upcoming author and audiobook narrator Tan France. Taking the prized audiobook of the

year award is Tomi Adeyemi's *Children of Blood and Bone*, narrated by the prolific Bahni Turpin. Adeyemi's debut novel in audio is no stranger to top spots this year; it was also selected as *Booklist's* [Top of the List](#) youth audiobook....



The Booklist Reader, Mar. 5; Booklist, Jan. 1

Citizen-advocate webinars

ALA membership gives you access to participate in live [webinars](#) with strategic advocacy consultants at the Congressional Management Foundation. CMF conducts webinars exclusively for citizen advocates who are affiliated with ALA and other organizations that participate in CMF's advocacy training program, "The Partnership for a More Perfect Union." Register to participate in CMF's next webinar on March 21, "[How to Effectively Follow Up After Engaging a Member of Congress.](#)" If you haven't engaged your member of Congress yet, watch the recording of January's webinar: "[What to Expect in a Meeting with a Member of Congress.](#)"...



Congressional Management Foundation



Texas Senate adds librarians to teacher pay-raise bill

A proposal to pay every full-time teacher and librarian \$5,000 more a year flew through the Texas Senate on March 4, but it will likely crash land in the House where lawmakers are looking for a more precise way to hand out raises to teachers and others who work schools. Shortly before calling for the vote, Senate lead budget writer Jane Nelson (R-Flower Mound, right) amended the bill to include \$53 million in pay raises for the state's 5,000 public school librarians, who had been [excluded](#) in the first draft. The House is expected to unveil an omnibus bill March 5 to overhaul how the state funds education...



Austin Texas Tribune, Mar. 4; Austin American-Statesman, Feb. 22

Honeybees find a home atop Redwood City library

Some 120,000 honeybees are making their home in two colorfully wrapped beehives on the roof of the Redwood City (Calif.) Public Library. Each hive typically holds 40,000 to 60,000 bees. Beekeeper Kendal Sager, owner of [Sager Family Farm](#), manages the two beehives on the roof; she also manages about 30 other hives throughout the Bay Area. The hives have been on the roof for about a year. One produced no honey, while the other produced a modest 40 pounds of honey—about three gallons, or 72 jars. Half of those jars sold out at the library store, and Sager sold the rest....





Reading in the age of constant distraction

Mairead Small Staid writes: “Early in *The Gutenberg Elegies*, Sven Birkerts summarizes historian Rolf Engelsing’s definition of reading ‘intensively’ as the common practice of most readers before the 19th century, when books were often read aloud and many times over. As reading materials proliferated, more recent centuries saw the rise of reading ‘extensively.’ We read materials once and move on. The deep, devotional practice of ‘vertical’ reading has been supplanted by ‘horizontal’ reading, skimming along the surface. This shift has only accelerated dizzyingly in the time since Engelsing wrote in 1974, since Birkerts wrote in 1994, and since I wrote, yesterday, the paragraph above.”...



The Paris Review, Feb. 8

Simple tips for reading old handwriting

Lisa Lisson writes: “Reading old handwriting in genealogy documents can be tough for a variety of reasons. Faded ink. Poor penmanship. Unusual script. Add in unfamiliar language and new-to-you abbreviations, and interpreting your ancestor’s document just got more tedious. Here are some tips for reading old handwriting. With practice, you will become more skilled and confident when you read that old handwriting.”...



Are You My Cousin?, Feb. 25



Zines on the rise in public libraries

Jessie Schiewe writes: “Zines—self-published, small-circulation periodicals—got their start in the science fiction community in the 1930s when fans started writing and disseminating their own stories. Public libraries are getting in on the zine-love and many are adding them to their collections. There are now around two dozen public libraries with zine sections nationwide in both rural and urban areas, including New York City, San Diego, San Francisco, Las Vegas, Denver, Austin, Los



Angeles, Portland, Minneapolis, Baltimore, St. Louis, Jacksonville, and Cleveland. Zines are an easy sell to public libraries because they are cheap and not difficult to acquire.”...

OK Whatever, Mar. 4

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

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