

# american libraries DIRECT

American Library Association • October 18, 2019



For daily ALA and library news, check the *American Libraries* [website](#) or subscribe to our [RSS feed](#).



## Chef, actor to highlight Midwinter Meeting

Celebrity chef Jeff Henderson (left) will be ALA President's Program Speaker at the Midwinter Meeting in Philadelphia on January 26. From humble beginnings in South Central Los Angeles, to spending time in prison as a drug dealer, to becoming an award-winning celebrity chef, Henderson is a role model for anyone in need of encouragement. Actor and author [Echo Brown](#)



(right) will be an Auditorium Speaker on January 25. Her first book, *Black Girl Unlimited: The Remarkable Story of a Teenage Wizard*, available January 2020, is an attempt to come to terms with her difficult and traumatic childhood....

*ALA Conference Services, Oct. 17*

## Can my library ban guns?

Few librarians enter the profession expecting to confront life-or-death situations in the workplace. But as the parallel epidemics of opioid abuse and gun violence touch nearly every community in this country and strain health systems, law enforcement, and, increasingly, public libraries, library



professionals may find themselves taking on [unexpected roles](#). In the first installment of a new column exploring legal issues in public libraries, expert Mary Minow weighs in on the liabilities and protections around administering Narcan and restricting guns in libraries....

*American Libraries column, Oct. 17; American Libraries feature, Jan./Feb.*

## Librarians: Point of contention in Chicago teachers' strike

No deal had been reached late October 17 as negotiations between the Chicago Teachers Union and the Chicago Public Schools continued and [thousands of striking teachers](#) marched downtown. Teachers say 1,300 classrooms are overcrowded. They also want more librarians, nurses, and counselors. Mayor Lori Lightfoot [did say](#) before she was elected that she would “provide each school with basic educational support positions like librarians, nurses, and social workers.” That is still a point of contention. Andrea Park, teacher at Robert Fulton Elementary, said, “My school does not have a librarian. We have a library with books, but there is no librarian. So guess what. I have to be the librarian.”...



*WBBM-TV, Chicago, Mar. 11, Oct. 17*



## St. Paul sees circulation boost after dropping late fees

Nine months in, the Saint Paul (Minn.) Public Library’s fine-free experiment appears to be thriving. “By every measure we had hoped for,” Library Director Catherine Penkert said, “it is working.” Case in point: More than 65,000 items have been checked out this year by people with cards that were previously blocked due to late fees. Circulation in the second quarter of 2019 also increased across the board compared to the same time period a year ago—particularly in branches that serve lower-income areas like Rondo (18.4%) and Arlington Hills (19.3%). Plus, new library card registration increased 8.2%....



*KARE-TV, Minneapolis, Oct. 15*

## Idaho library: Someone is hiding left-leaning books

At least one individual is intentionally hiding books within the Coeur d’Alene (Idaho) Public Library—specifically, books promoting LGBTQ rights, gun control, and impeachment; histories of the women’s suffrage movement; and new titles critical of President Donald Trump. “It feels childish,” Library Director Bette Ammon said. “It’s such a waste of time, and it doesn’t accomplish what they set out to accomplish.” The books are hidden in nooks and crannies throughout the building and are only recovered days later, most often in the fiction section. The frequency of the strikes ranges from five times a week to 10 times a month.”...



*Coeur d’Alene (Idaho) Press, Oct. 16*

## Supreme Court rejects challenge to Islam in public school

The US Supreme Court rejected an appeal that could have been a contentious showdown

on the role of religion in public life. The justices [turned down](#) the appeal from a Christian former high school student that challenged, on First Amendment grounds, coursework from her world history class in La Plata (Md.) High School that referenced Islam. Caleigh Wood had argued that school officials endorsed Islam over Christianity and compelled her to believe in Islam. With the rejection of Wood's appeal, the Fourth Circuit Court [decision stands](#) that the materials did not "impermissibly endorse any religion and did not compel Wood to profess any belief."...



*Bloomberg Law, Oct. 15*

## [King County will no longer purchase Macmillan ebooks](#)

King County (Wash.) Library System has decided it will no longer purchase embargoed ebook titles from Macmillan, starting November 1 when the publisher's new [restrictive library ebook policy](#) goes into effect. "Despite months of discussion and advocacy, Macmillan continues its position to embargo multiple copies of ebooks," writes KCLS Executive Director Lisa Rosenblum (right) in a note sent to fellow library directors. "Instead we will divert our ebook funds to those publishers who are willing to sell to us." Rosenblum said King County's decision was ultimately driven by two reasons: one "pragmatic" and the other "principled."...



*Publishers Weekly, Oct. 15; AL: The Scoop, July 25*



## [The slow fire of paper acidification](#)

Chloe Vassot writes: "'Slow fire' refers to the continuous acidification and subsequent embrittlement of paper that carries the seeds of its own ruin in its very fibers. In a [1987 documentary](#) on the subject, Deputy Librarian of Congress William Welsh (right) takes an embrittled, acid-burned book and begins tearing pages out by the handful, crumbling them into shards with an ease reminiscent of stepping on a dried-up insect carcass. The destruction is inevitable. Depending on how a book was made and how it's been stored, embrittlement can happen in as little as 30 to 100 years."...



*Literary Hub, Oct. 17*

## [Stephen King home to become archive and retreat](#)

Authors Stephen and Tabitha King have long resided in a Victorian mansion in Bangor, Maine, but that iconic house will soon have a new purpose—as an archive and writers' retreat. The Kings [announced](#) in September their intention to turn the home into an archive for Stephen King's writing, and on October 16, Bangor City Council [approved](#) the Kings'

rezoning request, paving the way to turning the building into a nonprofit. Until recently, [King's archives were housed](#) at the University of Maine's Raymond H. Fogler Library. Those archives will move to the Bangor mansion, where they'll be available by appointment to scholars....



*Tor.com, Oct. 17; Bangor (Maine) Daily News, Sept. 23; Rolling Stone, Oct. 17*

## 36 sets of code that changed the world

To shed light on the software that has tilted the world on its axis, the editors of *Slate* polled computer scientists, software developers, historians, policymakers, and journalists. They were asked to pick: Which pieces of code had a huge influence? Which ones warped our lives? About 75 responded with all sorts of ideas, and *Slate* has selected 36. It's not a comprehensive list—it couldn't be, given the massive welter of influential code that's been written. Like all lists, it's meant to provoke thought—to help us ponder anew how code undergirds our lives and how decisions made by programmers ripple into the future....



*Slate, Oct. 14*



## Georgetown Optician releases “Quietest Library” ad

There will be no chitter chatter in this sanctuary of silence. No clicking pens or clacking heels or coughing fits. This is, after all, the Quietest Library on Earth. Presiding over this place, described as a “temple of hush,” is a zero-tolerance “quiet guard” ready to pounce on every rustling candy wrapper.



What are these patrons to do? Plot a revolution using only their eyes, according to a brilliant ad campaign from Design Army and director Dean Alexander for Georgetown Optician. The ad was filmed in the stunning George Peabody Library in Baltimore....

*Adweek, Oct. 17*

## 50 fictional librarians, ranked

Emily Temple writes: “Here at Literary Hub, we love librarians. I mean, really everything about them—their knowledge, their kindness, their demon-slaying abilities. If you love them too, then you probably feel a little jolt of extra excitement whenever they show up in pop culture. Or, okay, maybe you aren't a total



nerd, but here you are looking at my ranking of 50 fictional librarians, so I think it's a fair bet that you are. Now that you're here, please enjoy this totally unscientific, clearly incomplete,

undoubtedly age-biased ranking of the best fictional librarians from film, literature, television, and the internet.”...

*Literary Hub, Oct. 16*

---

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

**Editor, *AL Direct*:** George M. Eberhart, [geberhart@ala.org](mailto:geberhart@ala.org)

Send news and feedback: [aldirect@ala.org](mailto:aldirect@ala.org)

Direct ad inquiries to: Michael Stack, [mstack@ala.org](mailto:mstack@ala.org)

AL Direct FAQ: [americanlibrariesmagazine.org/al-direct](http://americanlibrariesmagazine.org/al-direct)

All links outside the ALA website are provided for informational purposes only. Questions about the content of any external site should be addressed to the administrator of that site.

*AL Direct* will not sell your email to outside parties, but your email may be shared with advertisers in this newsletter should you express interest in their products by clicking on their ads or content. If the advertisers choose to communicate with you by email, they are obligated to provide you with an opportunity to opt-out from future emails in compliance with the CAN-SPAM act of 2003 and the European Union's General Data Protection Regulation of 2018. Read the [ALA privacy policy](#).

[American Libraries](#)

50 E. Huron St.  
Chicago, IL 60611  
800-545-2433, ext. 4216

ISSN 1559-369X

**ALA PUBLISHING** | AmericanLibraryAssociation