

# american libraries DIRECT

American Library Association • October 25, 2019



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## [New ALA report cites abusive pricing by major publishers](#)

ALA released a [report](#) charging that current practices by content publishers and distributors in digital markets limit libraries' ability to deliver core services. The report was submitted in response to an inquiry from the US House of Representatives Committee on the Judiciary [Subcommittee on Antitrust](#), Commercial, and Administrative Law. It underscores practices by companies like Amazon and Macmillan Publishers "that threaten Americans' right to read what and how they choose and imperil other fundamental First Amendment freedoms." The report urges lawmakers to curb what ALA calls anticompetitive practices of digital market actors....



*AL: The Scoop, Oct. 24; Publishers Weekly, Oct. 24*

## [Referenda Roundup 2019, so far](#)

As Election Day approaches, *American Libraries* is tracking library referenda across the country, a large selection of which will appear here and in our January/February 2020 issue. In this initial installment, you'll find information on referenda voted on earlier this year; shortly after November 5, this list will receive extensive updates....

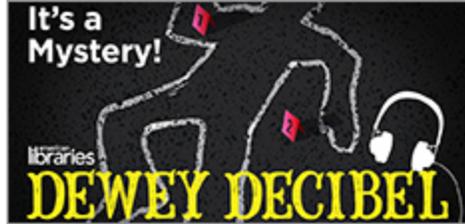


*American Libraries feature, Oct. 24*

## [Dewey Decibel](#) podcast: It's a Mystery

Everyone loves a good mystery, especially during Halloween season. In [Episode 43](#), *Dewey Decibel* talks with library workers who were involved in three very different cases.

Host Phil Morehart speaks with Rebekah Heath, a research librarian and amateur sleuth who helped uncover the identities of the victims of the [Bear Brook Murders](#) in Allenstown, New Hampshire. Next, library workers from La Porte County (Ind.) Public Library and Derry (N.H.) Public Library discuss two unsolved mysteries that listeners can help unravel....



AL: *The Scoop*, Oct. 25



## [Julia Alvarez, Olympic ice dancers at Midwinter](#)

Poet, novelist, and essayist Julia Alvarez (right) will be the Arthur Curley Memorial Lecture speaker at the ALA Midwinter Meeting in Philadelphia on January 25. Alvarez, originally from the Dominican Republic, has taught and mentored writers in schools and communities across America and was a writer-in-residence at Middlebury (Vt.) College. Her book *In the Time of the Butterflies* was selected by the National Endowment for the Arts for its national Big Read program. Also appearing as Midwinter Auditorium Speakers will be Olympic medalist ice dancers [Maia and Alex Shibutani](#)....



ALA Conference Services, Oct. 24

## [Noncitizens are eligible to work for the 2020 Census](#)

The federal government is widening its recruiting efforts for 2020 Census jobs to include certain noncitizens for their non-English language skills, Census Bureau official Tim Olson announced on October 22. In general, Congress [does not allow](#) government agencies to hire noncitizens using federal tax dollars. But if a citizen with needed language skills cannot be hired, there are some exceptions that allow for the temporary employment of green card holders applying to become US citizens, refugees or people granted asylum who have declared plans to become citizens, and people born in American Samoa. ALA is hosting a free webinar for library staff, "[Connecting Your Community to 2020 Census Jobs](#)," on November 6, and it offers a guide on preparing for the 2020 Census, "[How Can My Library Increase Awareness of 2020 Census Hiring?](#)"...



NPR, Oct. 25; ALA Public Policy and Advocacy Office, Oct. 24

## [US postage stamp to honor librarian Anne Spencer](#)

A poet, librarian, and civil rights activist from Lynchburg, Virginia, will be honored in the US Postal Service's 2020 Forever stamp series. Anne Spencer, who died in 1975, is included in the recently unveiled "Voices of the Harlem Renaissance" series. Spencer was Lynchburg's [first African-American librarian](#). She was the first librarian of the Dunbar branch of the Jones Memorial Library, where she served from 1923 until 1945. The branch

was located inside Paul Laurence Dunbar High School and served the African-American residents of Lynchburg....

*Associated Press, Oct. 25; Little Known Black Librarian Facts, Aug. 14, 2011*



## Librarian Emma Boettcher returns to Jeopardy!

In the first two weeks of November, record-breaking *Jeopardy!* contestant James Holzhauer (left) will return to the show to take on the University of Chicago librarian who ended his winning streak earlier this year. Holzhauer, who saw his 32-game winning streak come to an end in June and finished \$58,484 short of Ken Jennings's all-time winnings record, will face [Emma Boettcher](#) (right) in *Jeopardy!*'s annual Tournament of Champions. In addition to Boettcher and Holzhauer, the field includes the 13 other players who've won the most games since the previous tournament. The 10-day event concludes with a \$250,000 grand prize for the winner....



*InsideHook, Oct. 24; American Libraries Newsmaker, June 11*



## Tai chi classes for homeless persons

On a quiet morning outside the Main Library in Salt Lake City, about 70 homeless people are kicking and slicing at the air as they practice the ancient martial art of tai chi. The participants take part in the free program run by a retired couple, Bernie and Marita Hart, who started the classes three years ago by approaching homeless people in tents and pushing grocery carts near the Salt Lake City Public Library to encourage people to join them. People gather at the library an hour before the class begins, hugging friends and chatting about their week. The Harts are pursuing research grants as they hope to offer more workshops at homeless shelters downtown....



*Associated Press, Oct. 23*

## Fugitive libraries

Shannon Mattern writes: "Efforts to position the American library as a democratic (or even radical) space have to acknowledge the institution's own deep history of racial inequity. Even as we celebrate the library as a public commons, we should recognize that not everyone participates in that



space, or not in the same way. By choice or by necessity, many marginalized communities have established their own independent, itinerant, fugitive libraries that respond to conditions of exclusion and oppression. Understanding the politics and practices of these fugitive libraries would improve the discussions about ‘libraries of the future.’”...

*Places Journal, Oct.*

## Update your disaster plan

Heather Acerro writes: “Do you know what to do if your auditorium space [turns into a lake](#)? Overnight, on September 22, some 3,500 gallons of water poured from the mechanical room on the third floor of the Rochester (Minn.) Public Library. Staff opening the building the next day found several inches of standing water in the central core of all three floors of the building. The library’s physical materials collection was largely unaffected, but staff areas and meeting rooms were severely damaged. We are still in the midst of cleanup and repair so we aren’t finished learning our lessons, but we do have a few pointers to share based on our experiences.”...

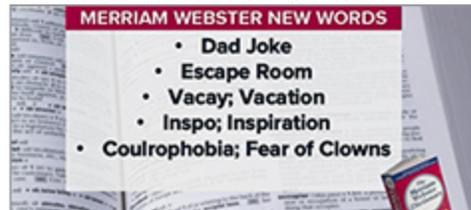


*ALSC Blog, Oct. 25; Minneapolis Star-Tribune, Sept. 24*



## How are words added to the dictionary?

Melissa Baron writes: “Last month, Merriam-Webster announced that 530 [new words](#) have been added to the dictionary. Among them are new meanings of existing words, such as ‘they’ as a nonbinary pronoun, ‘free solo,’ ‘Bechdel Test,’ and ‘dad joke.’ How, exactly, are these new words added? I had a lot of questions about this process, so I reached out to Merriam-Webster to see if they could help me understand how far a word has to travel before the dictionary gives it a real home. Peter Sokolowski, a lexicographer at Merriam-Webster, chatted with me about the research process for identifying new words.”...



*Book Riot, Oct. 23; Merriam-Webster, Sept. 17*

## Six photo editing tips

J. D. Sartain writes: “You have many choices among photo editing software programs, whether it’s Adobe Photoshop, Corel Painter, Paintshop Pro, or GIMP.net—all of which now have very similar feature sets. These basic photo editing tips will help you work in pretty much any application available.



The number one, most important tip I can share with you is this: *Never* edit your originals.

Always make a copy and save that copy as a layered file, if possible, because layers can be adjusted and edited individually.”...

*PC Magazine, Oct. 24*

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

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

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