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Fighting fake news in the pandemic

Sarah Ostman writes: "Have you heard that essential oils or colloidal silver can cure COVID-19? Or that the virus was developed as a bioweapon in a lab? Have you received any messages that 'a friend of a friend' has insider information that the nation is going into lockdown? The coronavirus pandemic is rife with misinformation. Use your library's digital reach to help people sniff out fake news. But a word of warning: Try not to overload your social media followers—or yourself—with too much news. Here are resources that can help you and your patrons as you sort through the coronavirus news."...



AL: The Scoop, Mar. 20

Virtual library services during COVID-19

The ALA Executive Board has recommended that libraries close to protect the health of their staff and their communities. Yet we know the work of libraries stretches beyond physical walls, and librarians continue to serve their communities by providing factual information, virtual services, broadband access, and digital resources. We are encouraging libraries to share how they are continuing to serve their communities virtually during the pandemic; please share your story using this form or on social media using the hashtag [#LibrariesStrong](#)....



American Library Association, Mar. 19

Libraries react to Macmillan embargo lift

Timothy Inklebarger writes: "Macmillan Publishing CEO John Sargent took libraries by surprise on March 17 with the reversal of [his company's embargo on ebooks that began](#)

[late last year](#). In an acknowledgment of the tough road ahead with the COVID-19 pandemic, Sargent said in a letter to librarians, 'There are times in life when differences should be put aside.' He added that Macmillan would return to the pricing model in effect prior to the November 1 embargo. 'In addition, we will be lowering some ebook prices on a short-term basis to help expand libraries' collections in these difficult times. Stay safe,' he wrote." Penguin Random House has also added new [temporary pricing options](#) for digital content purchased by school and public libraries....



AL: The Scoop, Mar. 20; July 25, 2019; Good e-Reader, Mar. 18

[Booklist announces free online access for all](#)

As of March 19, all *Booklist* and *Book Links* content on www.booklistonline.com is freely available until further notice. Free online access includes more than 25 years of recommended print and audiobook reviews, features, interviews, spotlights, and classroom connections; *Booklist* and *Book Links* [replica digital editions](#) that can be read on desktop or mobile devices; [advanced search functionality](#); and readers' advisory and collection development tools. To learn how to put Booklist Online to work, please view this informative [video tutorial](#) (17:03)....



Booklist, Mar. 19; Booklist Online YouTube channel, Feb. 27

[Chicago Public Library keeps some locations open](#)

Jodi S. Cohen and Logan Jaffe write: "The Chicago Public Library system plans to keep 20 of the city's 81 libraries open, with fewer services, despite pleas from workers that all sites be closed as the novel coronavirus continues to spread. Three of the libraries—Harold Washington Library Center, Sulzer Regional Library, and Woodson Regional Library—will also open on the weekend. Staff members from all the libraries will rotate between the sites staying open starting March 23. Patrons will be unable to check out books, pay fines, or print from the computers, according to the president of the union that represents library employees. Library staff and their union had hoped the system would close after Tuesday's primary. The ALA executive board has [recommended](#) that all public and academic libraries close. At least seven Chicago library branches didn't open or closed March 18 because not enough staff showed up to work."...



ProPublica, Mar. 18; AL: The Scoop, Mar. 17



[Is it COVID-19, flu, or allergies?](#)

Elizabeth Millard writes: “Coughing, sneezing, [runny nose](#), congestion, body aches, chills: Obviously, you know you’re under the weather when symptoms like these appear, but how can you tell which storm it is? Certain signs could point to the [common cold or flu](#), while others may be more serious and present as early signs of [COVID-19](#), the respiratory illness caused by the novel coronavirus ([shortness of breath](#) is a key factor here). It’s even more confusing as we head into spring. Some might simply be an indication of [seasonal allergies](#). Here, a doctor explains how to figure out what your body may be dealing with.”...



Prevention, Mar. 17; Aug. 21, 2018; Aug. 13, 2019; Women's Health, Mar. 19

Students need Wi-Fi hotspots

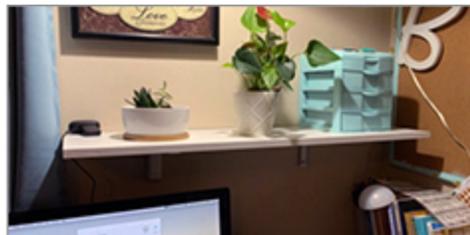
FCC Commissioner Jessica Rosenworcel writes: “Students are being told in record numbers to head online for education. It’s time for a nationwide plan to ensure they can all get there. Not every child has broadband at home. In fact, [statistics at the FCC](#) suggest that one in three households has no broadband access. Students in these households fall into an especially cruel part of the digital divide, known as the homework gap. The FCC should use its power in this emergency to provide schools with Wi-Fi hotspots to loan out to students who lack reliable internet access at home. It has the authority to do so.”...



The Verge, Mar. 17

Advice for those working at home

Bobbi L. Newman writes: “At this point, [your library should be closed](#). Some of us are working from home. Some of us are just home. [Staff should not be required to report to work to get paid](#). All of us should be getting paid. Keep a regular schedule. Get up and get ready every day. This provides some order and calm into your day. There is [some evidence](#) that getting dressed improves mental health. Get a journal or even a calendar. The days are probably going to start blurring together. Get some nature every day. If you can walk outside safely (at least 6 feet from people), do that. Get regular exercise. Take a break from social media.” Jessamyn West [explains](#) in a podcast what the widespread closure of libraries could mean and describes some creative ways libraries are reaching out digitally....



Librarian By Day, Mar. 18; AL: The Scoop, Mar. 17; Book Riot, Mar. 17; Odyssey, Mar. 12, 2019; EdSurge, Mar. 17



Serving homeless patrons during the lockdown

Sarah Ostman writes: “Pandemic-induced closures of public libraries nationwide are an inconvenience to many, but one group is perhaps affected more than others: people experiencing homelessness. It may not be possible to offer in-person services for patrons experiencing homelessness during a shutdown, but libraries can help by making information more accessible. Stevie Pinkerton, a homeless man living in Denver, said he relies on bathrooms at Denver Public Library’s Central branch and the local rec center, but will be forced to figure something else out now that the library is closing. Here are some simple steps library workers can take to help homeless members of their community find the resources they need.”...



AL: The Scoop, Mar. 18

Digital education resources from the Smithsonian

Meilan Solly writes: “Students, teachers, and caregivers alike are seeking out online educational tools during the pandemic. To help support this search, the Smithsonian Institution has launched a [central portal](#) highlighting an array of distance learning resources, from [STEM webcasts](#) to [American history podcasts](#) and comprehensive [lesson plans](#). Offerings range from low- or no-tech (interviewing family members for [oral history projects](#)) to high-tech (diving into an [interactive exploration module](#)). To help readers sort through the 1.7 million multimedia experiences available, *Smithsonian* magazine has curated the following list of eight online tools.”...



Smithsonian magazine, Mar. 17



Distance read-alouds

Sam Northern writes: “Many students are now learning at home due to COVID-19. For my elementary school students, storytime is an important and exciting part of the day. How will students hear books read aloud by their teachers and school librarians now? Educators can simply record themselves reading aloud stories and post the videos to YouTube and Facebook, right? Wrong. Even during difficult times, we must respect the work and intellectual property of authors and illustrators. Scrolling through Twitter these past few days, I have come across several posts from authors granting permission of the recording of their books being read aloud.”...



Knowledge Quest blog, Mar. 19

Literary Hub launches Virtual Book Channel

Jonny Diamond writes: “As public life comes to a halt, virtual literary communities are

emerging in unexpected ways, from Zoom to Instagram. So we are launching The Virtual Book Channel to amplify those voices and provide a platform for writers to reach their readers. The channel will feature original programming—*Shelter in Place* (Maris Kreizman’s virtual book party), *Playback* (a five-minute self-interview series for writers with new books coming out), and *Rekindled* (previously scheduled book tour conversations made virtual)—along with emerging digital contributions from existing reading series, bookstores, and poets. Episode one of *Shelter in Place* debuted March 20 at 1 p.m. Eastern time at LitHub.com.”...



Literary Hub, Mar. 20

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