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## EDITOR'S NOTE

*AL Direct* is off for two weeks. Look for our next issue January 6.

## ALA's \$20,000 donation helps Louisiana libraries reopen



After the Category 4 Hurricane Laura in August and Category 2 Hurricane Delta in October, all 13 locations of the Calcasieu Parish Public Library in Louisiana were damaged, and three branches—Epps and Moss Bluff in Lake Charles, and Fontenot in Vinton—were rendered uninhabitable. A \$20,000 donation from [ALA's Disaster Relief Fund](#) will allow CPPL to acquire three portable buildings that will be hooked up to utilities for a return to full, staffed service in

January. In addition, new technology kits will enhance mobile printing, copying, faxing, scanning, and Wi-Fi service....

*ALA Chapter Relations Office, Dec. 15*

## Booklist's 2020 Top of the List and Editors' Choice announced



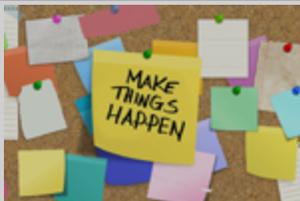
Every January, Booklist publishes Editors' Choice: lists of the best adult and youth books, and audiobooks of the past year. From these lists, editors further select the Top of the List: the single best title in seven categories—adult fiction, adult nonfiction, youth fiction, youth nonfiction, youth picture book, and adult and youth audiobooks. For the first time, Booklist also named Top of the List winners for Graphic Novels for Adult and Youth. [See the choices in](#)

[all nine categories](#)....

*Booklist, Dec. 14*

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## What 2020 has taught me about advocacy



School librarian Courtney Pentland writes: “I feel a bit like I am preaching to the choir here because I know school library professionals understand the importance of advocating for their school libraries. I also know that it is really easy to fall into the trap of not wanting to toot your own horn. Now is not the time for modesty or hoping that others will sing our praises. Now is the time to toot that horn loudly and in very specific directions.”...

*Knowledge Quest, Dec. 14*

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## 5 lessons learned about virtual school during the pandemic



Anya Kamenetz writes: “For this story I talked to educators in six states, from California to South Carolina. For the most part they say things have improved since the spring. But they are close to burnout, with only a patchwork of support. They say the heart of the job right now is getting students connected with school and keeping them that way—both technologically and even more importantly, emotionally. [Here are five lessons learned so far.](#)”...

*KQED MindShift, Dec. 5*

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## Library budget meeting turns into heated censorship debate



A board meeting on December 9 turned into a heated debate over books available at Lincoln Parish Public Library in Ruston, Louisiana. Some parents are upset over children’s books that contain LGBTQ+ characters and what they feel are suggestive sexual themes. After discussing many issues like censorship and what constitutes an age-appropriate book, the library board voted to review its existing unattended child policy and voted to keep all

the books on the shelves....

*KTVE/KARD-TV, West Monroe, La., Dec. 9*

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## Library did not violate policy with BLM statement

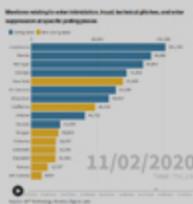


An investigation conducted at the request of the Douglas County (Nev.) Public Library Board found that [proposing a diversity statement including #BlackLivesMatter](#) didn't violate its policies but did reveal communications issues. Attorney Molly Rezac said the written report conducted by a Reno law firm would be distributed on December 8. Rezac said that DCPL Director Amy Dodson posted the proposed diversity statement to social media on June 24 but took it down within hours on the advice of the Douglas County District Attorney's Office....

*The Record-Courier (Minden-Gardnerville and Carson Valley, Nev.), Dec. 8; Latest Library Links, Sept. 1*



## Swing states saw the most election disinformation in 2020

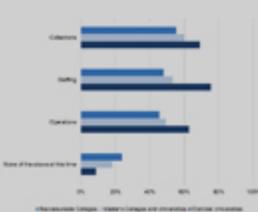


Tate Ryan-Mosley writes: "Data shows that during the election, disinformation was highly targeted locally, with voters in swing states exposed to significantly more online messages about voter intimidation, fraud, ballot glitches, and unrest than voters in other states. In a data set provided by Signal Labs, we looked at mentions of over 30 terms related to voter suppression or intimidation, fraud, technical errors, and unrest that focused on a

particular polling location."...

*MIT Technology Review, Dec. 16*

## The impact of COVID-19 on academic libraries



Jennifer K. Frederick and Christine Wolff-Eisenberg write: "Since 2010, Ithaka S+R has fielded a triennial survey to examine the priorities and strategies of library directors. Historically, the three-year time frame has been appropriate for tracking trends. But after releasing the most recent iteration in April 2020, we recognized that both the COVID-19 pandemic and increasing movements for racial justice were [having an immediate impact on](#)

[academic libraries](#)."...

*Ithaka S+R, Dec. 9*

## Google to convert ebooks to audiobooks with AI

Michael Kozlowski writes: "Major publishers are releasing more audiobooks than ever before. It is a costly endeavor, so only the most popular ones will be professionally narrated. Google recognizes that many frontlist and backlist titles will never be



converted to a proper audiobook, and they have developed a beta system that will employ AI and auto-generated narrators. This will basically provide indie authors and all sorts of publishing companies to make audio editions automatically.”...

*Good E-Reader, Dec. 8*



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## [Internet Archive to host legendary Hollywood research library](#)



Wendy Hanamura writes: “Need to know what an Igloo really looks like? How about a Siberian hut? Or the inside of a 15th Century jail? For 50 years in Hollywood, generations of filmmakers would beat a path to the Michelson Cinema Research Library, where renowned film researcher Lillian Michelson could hunt down the answer to just about any question. But ever since Lillian retired a decade ago, the Michelson Cinema Research Library has been languishing in cold storage, looking for a home. Lillian Michelson, 92, announced that she is donating her library and life’s work to the Internet Archive.”...

*Internet Archive blog, Dec. 15*

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## [25 films added to National Film Registry](#)



On December 14 Librarian of Congress Carla Hayden announced the annual selection of 25 of America’s most influential motion pictures to be inducted into the National Film Registry of the Library of Congress. Selected because of their cultural, historic, or aesthetic importance to the nation’s film heritage, the 2020 titles include blockbusters, musicals, silent films, documentaries, and diverse stories transferred from books to screen, including *Lilies of the Field*, *The Joy Luck Club*, *Shrek*, *Sweet Sweetback’s Baadasssss Song*, and *The Blues Brothers* (left)....

*Library of Congress blog, Dec. 14*

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## [Best of the 2020 best-of lists](#)

Feeling overwhelmed by all the best-of lists of books for this year? Why not try a compilation of the best of the best-ofs? Jason Kottke rounds up lists from multiple publications ([New York Times](#), [NPR](#), [Time](#)) and multiple genres ([cooking](#), [science](#), [art](#)), while LitHub



[crunches the numbers](#) (Brit Bennett's *The Vanishing Half* appeared on 25 lists)....

*Kottke.org*, Dec. 8; *New York Times*, Nov. 20; *NPR*, Dec. 8; *Time*, Nov. 11;

*Smithsonian*, Nov. 27; *Hyperallergic*, Dec. 5; *LitHub*, Dec. 15

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