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Trending..The Latest From PLOnline

- Do community members rush into your library, grab a few items, and leave quickly? Or do they view spending time there as time well spent? The answer to that question may determine whether you are participating in the experience economy, as described by Joe Pine in a recent interview. Pine and co-author James Gilmore updated their now-famous 1999 work, *The Experience Economy*, in 2011 and it continues to have relevance as libraries seek to compete for people's time. Read "[Investing in Your Library's Experience Economy](#)."
- UX, or user experience, is a hot topic in the library world, but what does it mean in practical terms? This is the first post in a series of articles that aims to demystify the concepts of user experience, design thinking, and human-centered design for public librarians. A common misperception is that you need a lot of time and money to embark on a program of integrating these ideas into your library—far from it. The key is to shift your thinking and consider every aspect of service from the user's point of view. Everything from your voicemail message to your policy manual plays a part. Read "[Improving Your Library's UX](#)."
- **PL Online's Alex Lent Talks to Chuck Flaherty, retired director Brookline (Mass.) Public Library --How/when did you become a library director? Can you walk us through your career?** I was a history major and got my MLS from Simmons College. I was hired as Adult Services librarian at the Framingham (Mass.) Public Library in October 1974, in charge of adult programming. When the assistant director left in the summer of 1976, I was promoted—I was in the right place at the right time. That fall, I wrote a grant application, and in December we received funding under the Public Works Employment Act to build a new main library. Two months later, the director had a heart attack. I was twenty-six years old, acting director, and didn't know which end of a hammer to point at the wall. Six months later, the director returned, but I remained heavily

retired from Brookline two years ago and have had two interim-director assignments since then. Read the entire interview "[Hire Good People - Advice from a Retired Library Director.](#)"

- [Literacy for Incarcerated Teens](#) (LIT), a New York-based nonprofit, knows firsthand how limited resources have been to support literacy in New York's juvenile detention facilities. It also knows how important literacy and reading can be in the lives of incarcerated youth. In the United States, 250,000 juveniles do not have regular access to library services while either incarcerated or detained; since 2009, LIT has supported and funded resources to thousands of these young people. Read "[Literacy for Incarcerated Teens.](#)"

Author Interview! PL Talks With Ben Winter

Ben Winters' unsettling new novel, *Underground Airlines*, takes place in an alternative United States where the Civil War never occurred and slavery still exists in four states. The book centers around Victor, a former enslaved person who took a job as a Federal bounty hunter in exchange for his freedom. Tasked with tracking down a recently escaped slave known only as Jackdaw, Victor travels to Indianapolis in order to insinuate himself into the local chapter of the Underground Airlines, the abolitionist movement. Yet as he untangles Jackdaw's flight to freedom, Victor realizes that none of the people around him—from Jackdaw to Victor's enigmatic boss—are what they seem. NPR dubbed *Underground Airlines* "indisputably a winner" and Ann Patchett praised it in *Time*, noting that it "kept me up at night and changed the way I saw the world once I was finished." Ben Winters spoke to Brendan Dowling via e-mail on August 16th. Read the entire interview [here](#).

Midweek Media MashUp

A Choice Selection of Links for Your Perusal

- [Providing Washers and Dryers at Schools Boosts Attendance](#)
- [How Teacher Diversity Benefits Students](#)
- [Psychologists See Humor as a Character Strength](#)
- [Is It Time for a Shorter Work Week?](#)
- [Can 3-D Printing Build a Better Wheelchair?](#)
- [New PLA Podcast! We talk to Holly Hibner and Mary Kelly about weeding library collections, awful library books, and more.\(18:03\)](#)

If you have questions about PLOnline, *Public Libraries*, PLA or anything else, send them in. Just hit reply and send your question on its way! We'll get back to you as soon as possible. Thanks for reading!

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