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Trending..The Latest From PLOnline

- E-books. Downloads. Self-checkout. 3-D printers. The list of new technologies public librarians have to keep up with is considerable and always changing. It's too easy to focus solely on how to stay on the cutting edge rather than take the time to think about what makes these tools useful in the first place, what frames a public library's entire reason for being: communication. But all librarians use writing to do more than remind patrons of fines. To keep up with the latest, you have to go back to the basics of stringing words together to make your meaning clear. Writing is all over new technology, so much so that we don't even think about it or notice it until it's glaringly unprofessional or outright unhelpful. Still not convinced good writing is useful anymore? Read the entire article "[Essential Librarian Skills: Writing.](#)"
- As you settle into becoming a manager, you will be faced with many new tasks. Once you have started to manage your people, your stress, and your priorities, you then need to start setting the vision. The purpose of public libraries can be hard to pin down because it is so broad. We want to be everything to everyone. I struggle with the simultaneous goals: circulation, programming, outreach—you know the deal. I once read about a visioning technique where you discover your purpose by imagining your library receiving an award: What is it for? You can do this at the department, branch, or system level. In one year, what should your library receive recognition for? Lives have been changed, the community has grown, what did *you* do to contribute? Read "[Tips for Managers-Part II.](#)"
- Many of us are familiar with the concept of **crowdfunding**. Companies like Kickstarter allow anyone the opportunity to solicit funds by posting a proposal online and inviting others to donate money to support the idea. Tens of thousands of people have contributed to the creation of new technology, music, software programs. Even canceled-but-beloved television shows like *Reading*



- After more than twenty years as a financial journalist for the *Wall Street Journal*, and authoring three books for adults, Karen Blumenthal turned to writing biographies and retellings of pivotal events in American history for young people. Her titles include [Six Days in October: The Stock Market Crash of 1929](#) (2002); [Let Me Play: The Story of Title IX](#) (2005); [Bootleg: \[The Lawless Years of Prohibition\]](#) (2011); [Tommy: The Gun That Changed America](#) (2015); and the biographies [Mr. Sam \[Walton\]](#) (2011); and [Steve Jobs](#) (2012). Her newest title is [Hillary Rodham Clinton: A Woman Living History](#) (2016). Karen lives in Dallas, Texas, where she serves as president of the Dallas (Texas) Public Library Friends group. Cathy Ritchie, Adult Materials selector for the Dallas Public Library, spoke with Karen on August 2, 2016 at the J. Erik Jonsson Central Library of the Dallas Public Library. Read the [interview here](#).
- I like to think that I've done a lot of good things at my library, but one of my proudest accomplishments is my ping pong club. It all started when I was a librarian at my first library almost ten years ago. My gym had a few ping pong tables, and I thought that it would be fun to have a table at the library for patron use. I sent in my proposal, and the Young Adult coordinator and the Children's coordinator came over to look at our space. But for whatever reason, the idea fizzled. When I was promoted to assistant manager at another library, the manager had misgivings, so I still wasn't able to do it. Finally, I became manager, and—success—I got a ping pong table! Sometimes I like to joke around that the only reason I wanted to become manager is because I wanted a ping pong table. Getting started was actually pretty simple: I was able to get a donation of a used table. Read "[Ping Pong at the Library](#)."



Midweek Media MashUp

A Choice Selection of Links for Your Perusal

- [The Anti-To Do List](#)
- [The Cooper Hewitt Museum Just Put 200,000 Items Online](#)
- [Positive Link Between Video Games and Academic Performance](#)
- [The Mysteries of the Least-Known Brontë Sister \(Emily\)](#)
- [Law Makes It Possible for New York Libraries to Combat Overdoses](#)
- [The Big Indie Books - Fall 2016](#)

Ask Us Anything

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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