

**Baltimore Library,
 Haven in Troubled Times**

Baltimore erupted in angry protests on the afternoon of Monday, April 27, following the funeral service for Freddie Gray, an African American man who died in police custody earlier in the month. Locals clashed violently with Baltimore law enforcement, burned cars, and looted businesses. The intersection of Pennsylvania and West North avenues saw the city’s worst damage, with a CVS pharmacy, a Subway restaurant, and a check cashing business all burned.

As reports of teenagers looting at the nearby Mondawmin Mall spread Monday afternoon, many local businesses locked their doors. The Pennsylvania Avenue branch of the Enoch Pratt Free Library (EPFL), located across the intersection from the CVS, was directly in the path of the crowd of protesters. EPFL CEO Carla D. Hayden (1995 *Library Journal* Librarian of the Year) called several members of the leadership team and after consulting with security officers and branch managers decided to keep the buildings open. As for the Pennsylvania Avenue location, Hayden left that to the discretion of branch manager Melanie Townsend-

Diggs. Together, Townsend-Diggs and Hayden agreed that the library would lock its doors if there appeared to be any danger to patrons or staff but would allow them to remain in the library.

“We had about 20 customers inside along with staff, about 30 people total, and we just locked the door,” Townsend-Diggs recalled. “We didn’t make a big to-do about it, but we... told the customers...that we had an emergency situation.” Patrons continued to use the computers and browse the stacks. After hearing explosions from the street, Townsend-Diggs decided to bring everyone to the library’s lower level, adding, “It was just a matter of keeping everybody calm and comfortable and safe.”

By 7 p.m., Gov. Larry Hogan had declared a state of emergency, and activated the National Guard. Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake declared a weeklong curfew, and it was announced that schools would be closed on Tuesday.

The big question, EPFL director of communications Roswell Encina said, was, “Do we open on Tuesday? And everybody’s decision was a



resounding yes.... The next question was, should we open the Pennsylvania Avenue branch?” Townsend-Diggs said yes, so Encina and library leadership joined her in solidarity.

Townsend-Diggs even received a call from Scott Bonner, director of the Ferguson Municipal Public Library, MO, who made national news last fall when he decided to keep the library open in the wake of that city’s civil unrest. “I told him that he was an inspiration to us,” Townsend-Diggs said.

Although a number of businesses had been destroyed, when the EPFL team arrived on Tuesday morning, not a single window was broken—every one of the 22 branches was in-

≡ INSIDE ≡

- K|N’s Open Access Network.....2**
- Vetting Transgender Picture Books4**
- NO Votes To Reinvest in Libraries5**
- MO Drops FY16 Library Aid.....6**
- Remembering Ismael Alicea8**

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tact. “The Pennsylvania branch has a big mural out front, of a little girl reading,” Encina told *Hotline*. “The branch did a contest to name the girl, and the community named her Penny, after Pennsylvania Avenue. So

we’re thinking that symbolized something...there’s this little girl—let’s not bother her. And they respected that. That morning, Penny was still towering over the intersection.”

As of Wednesday, April 29, although many businesses were still closed, the intersection had opened to traffic again, and residents were beginning to clean up. Social media has been supportive as well, with donations pouring in from well-wishers across the United States and Canada—more than \$6,000 as of press time, which will be earmarked for the Pennsylvania Avenue branch.

Interview

Deborah Jiang-Stein



Deborah Jiang-Stein was born in prison to a heroin-addicted mother. Today, she is the author of the memoir *Prison Baby* (Beacon, 2014) and founder of the unPrison

Project, a nonprofit dedicated to providing life skills and mentoring to incarcerated women, which recently announced its partnership with the Children’s Book Council (CBC) to build libraries in prison nurseries.

You now run an organization that helps incarcerated women plan for a successful life upon release. What do you focus on to aid success?

The focus of the unPrison Project is on three things: life skills (e.g., noncognitive life skills, anger management, persistence); reading and literacy for the incarcerated and for their children; and a mentoring program with a curriculum for women (and men) in prison to learn the craft of how to message their story, so that it’s a tool for teaching others. I’ve received training for ways to reframe and use my story, and I’m now teaching others what I was given.

How did your collaboration with the CBC come about?

I’ve seen some of the prison nurseries, and I’ve noticed very few children’s books remain and circulate. A visiting room could be a classroom. I reached out to several literacy organizations, and late last year, the CBC and I connected. Within months, the CBC was on board. Things happened very quickly.

Open Access Network: Knowledge Made Public

The Open Access Network (OAN), a project set to establish a business model for OA in the humanities and social sciences, was the topic of a key session at “Knowledge Made Public,” a May 5 conference held at the City University of New York (CUNY) Graduate Center Library. The session featured a presentation by K|N Consultants principals Rebecca Kennison and Lisa Norberg, joined by Martin Burke and Jessie Daniels of the CUNY Graduate Center and Ken Wissoker, editorial director at Duke University Press, for an informative discussion of OAN, K|N’s newest initiative.

As OA practices are beginning to take hold in the culture of academic publishing, the fields of humanities and social sciences (HSS) have typically lagged behind those of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) disciplines. Because HSS research is rarely funded as fully as STEM, the article processing charges that OA journals charge researchers to make up the difference in subscription revenue can be prohibitive. OAN proposes to provide a sustainable solution to OA publishing and archiving “that is comple-

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Transgender Picture Books: Calling for Better Ones



After accepting a solo elementary school librarian position at the Corlears School in New York City, Kyle Lukoff increased the collection of picture books featuring transgender protagonists by 400 percent. That is, he purchased four books with transgender characters—the library, with approximately 7,000 titles, previously had none. Picture books are a significant percentage of the collection, and Lukoff tries to acquire books that are artistically compelling, well written, entertaining, and/or informative. However, he compromised that goal in this case. These books were important because of their subject matter, but he was not convinced that they measured up to other titles in the competitive picture book market—and that’s a problem.

As of this writing, there are few picture books that address specifically transgender issues. Of those that do exist, most don’t succeed with this challenging format.

One of the more well-known titles, Marcus Ewert’s *10,000 Dresses* (Triangle Square, 2008), is also the most successful. A young girl named Bailey dreams about expressing her creativity through designing dresses, but she’s constantly referred to as a boy by her family before finding an ally in a neighborhood girl. The attempt to show, not tell, information about transgender identities is admirable, but many audiences will require more of an explanation. Still, this picture book is one of the better selections.

Jennifer Carr’s *Be Who You Are* (AuthorHouse, 2010) is a sweet and supportive story about a child coming out as transgender, but the text does little to advance the narrative. The overall tone and message are touching, and the story is suitable to read with young children, but the didactic themes could be leavened with more artistic intent.

Despite the growing awareness of trans issues, transgender people—particularly youth, women, and people of color—still endure particular oppressions. Seventeen-year-old Leelah Alcorn, whose suicide note went viral via Tumblr, provides a recent example of the urgency of these concerns, but the crisis of murder and suicide among trans people goes far beyond her case. It also bears noting that none of the above titles address the ways that race intersects with transgender identities.

Children deserve books that are well done, not just well intentioned. However, stated Lukoff, exacting literary standards should not preclude providing services to vulnerable populations. It is vital for transgender children to see books that acknowledge and affirm their identities. It’s just as important for nontrans children and their families to include transgender people in their sense of the world. Lukoff looks forward to the day when he can be excited about trans-themed picture books because they’re as engaging as any title that earned a *School Library Journal* starred review.

mentary, not competitive, with other OA funding approaches.”

The foundations of OAN emerged from a white paper published by K|N calling for academic institutions to join forces in order to support scholarly research and output of all kinds. Institutions would pay on a sliding scale based on a proposed formula derived from the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education and a multiple of the number of FTE students, scholars, and faculty per year. Payments would be deposited into a centrally managed fund. Institutions, scholarly societies, and other stakeholders would partner to apply for funding through a competitive grant process; funds would be used for direct support of the distribution, access, and long-term archival preservation of the work.

K|N believes that OA done at scale could help address the rising costs of higher education and the challenges of lifelong learning. Most important, the model would enable scholarly societies and university presses to provide their members with the services they require without reliance on subscription revenue.

OAN would be rolled out on an incremental, phased basis, Kennison and Norberg explained. Phase one would demonstrate proof of concept by converting selected HSS publications to OA. Phase two would expand the practical implementation of the model, to demonstrate that it can operate at scale. And phase three would comprise full implementation, with established funding and reviewing processes open to all.

QUESTIONS & CONCERNS

Once Kennison and Norberg had presented the project, the panelists were given the floor to comment. Burke, an associate professor of history, raised questions about management and decision-making, the

role of traditional for-profit publishers, and how OAN would function in the current political economy. K|N responded that OAN's development would be an iterative process, with the goal of an eventual model that is transparent, fair, and equitable to players of all sizes.

Daniels, a professor of public health, sociology, and critical psychology, brought up the "free rider" problem—institutions that produce scholarly research but don't subsidize academic publishing. Kennison suggested that the focus should not be on worrying about who was getting a free ride but on developing a model that would encourage more institutions to pay.

Wissoker commended the scalability of the proposal and wondered about incentives for innovation if all presses were paid equally, or in alternate formats. Kennison pointed out that OAN's potential partnerships

meant that all players in the system would be important and that innovation happens in many places.

Throughout the session, Kennison and Norberg stressed that OAN is a work in progress; K|N is soliciting conversation and engaged feedback from a variety of stakeholders as it refines its framework.

New Orleans Votes To Reinvest in Libraries

New Orleans voters went to the polls on May 2, approving a raise in property taxes that will add up to \$8.2 million a year for the New Orleans Public Library (NOPL). Some 75 percent of voters approved—a margin of more than 9,000 votes. Starting in January 2016, the 25-year, 2.5-mill property tax increase will allow some branches to extend operating hours to seven days a week and will help rebuild the 7th Ward's

Nora Navra Library, damaged by Hurricane Katrina.

The current 3.14-mill, \$8.7 million tax, which will expire at the end of 2021, would have left NOPL struggling to close a \$3 million budget gap. The library supported itself for the past three years with funds from a reserve account that accumulated while many branches were closed after Katrina. These reserves, however, which have made up about a quarter of the system's budget—just over \$13 million in 2015—would have been exhausted by mid-2016. The resulting shortfall would have resulted in reduced hours and closings of up to half of NOPL's 14 branches, including five restored branches that opened in the past three years.

Much of the new property tax's success had to do with the very vocal support of New Orleans elected officials, including Mayor Mitch Landrieu, *Library Journal* 2008 Pol-



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itician of the Year. NOPL also found an ally in John Chrastka, founder and executive director of library political action committee EveryLibrary (and a 2014 *LJ* Mover & Shaker). The non-profit helps libraries strengthen their positions in civic campaigns through fundraising and strategy. Library director Charles Brown had contacted Chrastka after EveryLibrary had successfully helped Santa Clara County District Library, CA, win an annual \$6.2 million parcel tax in 2013.

Although support for the special election was widespread, the Bureau of Governmental Research (BGR), a private nonprofit public policy research organization serving the New Orleans metropolitan area, was more critical, citing the lack of a detailed strategic plan for the money and a long-term vision for NOPL from Brown. However, maintained Chrastka, "The contingency plan was very clearly laid out by the staff and the Board of Trustees."

Despite such objections, voters came out overwhelmingly in favor of the strategy. Overall, Chrastka told

Hotline, "It was a...well-thought-out and responsible plan. It was arrived at in an open and transparently consultative process across the city of New Orleans."

MO Drops FY16 Library Aid Almost 80 Percent

Difficult budget decisions, including probable cuts, await libraries throughout Missouri after the legislature drastically slashed state aid in two critical areas as part of a \$26 billion 2016 spending plan adopted by the General Assembly and signed by Gov. Jay Nixon.

Aid to libraries determined on a per capita basis for FY16 was set at \$723,776, a 79 percent reduction compared to the \$3.5 million budgeted for the previous year. A separate appropriation for Remote Electronic Access for Libraries (REAL), which helps pay for statewide library Internet service and support, absorbed a 52 percent decrease, down from about \$3.1 million to \$2 million.

The appropriation works out to 13¢ per capita for the state's 141 library districts, which Missouri State Librarian Barbara Reading called the state's lowest expenditure since 1997. In 2014, Missouri spent about 50¢ per capita on library aid.

R. Crosby Kemper III, executive director of the Kansas City Public Library, said his system stands to lose about \$150,000 in state aid from an operating budget of approximately \$16 million. That amount, he said, would be the equivalent of three or four librarians or roughly 15 percent of the materials budget.

The REAL program, meanwhile, helped pay for MOREnet, the Internet service provider for many of Missouri's schools, libraries, health-care agencies, and other institutions. MOREnet's rates continue to rise, Reading said, as the state will provide less money.

Library advocates' expectations were tempered from the start by several factors, including a wrangle with the governor over \$5.9 million in withheld state aid from FY15.

The governor blamed revenue shortfalls for making those withholds necessary, insisting the state would not spend money it did not have. Starting last November, Missouri's library community worked to convince Nixon to free up that funding, which included the entire \$3.1 million REAL appropriation and about \$2.8 million in per capita aid.

Finally, and with no prior indication, Nixon on April 3 announced that \$43 million for more than 20 state programs (including REAL and per capita library aid) was being released from state coffers, citing a sudden surge in revenue.

Yet the celebration would be short-lived. Release of the FY15 money coincided with hearings on the FY16 budget. Both houses of the General Assembly were determined

People

Colin B. Bailey was appointed Director of the Morgan Library & Museum, New York. He previously held the same title at the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco.

Steve Carmody was promoted to Head of the West Branch of Aurora Public Library, IL. He was previously Spanish Materials Librarian at the Main Branch.

Teresa Harris was named Curator of Avery Classics at Columbia University's Avery Architectural & Fine Arts Library, New York. She was previously Project Coordinator for the Marcel Breuer Digital Archive at Syracuse University Libraries, NY.

Rebecca R. Jessop was named Foundation Director of Harford County Public Library,

Belcamp, MD. She was previously Coordinator of the Harford County Cultural Arts Board and Director of Special Events and Community Outreach for the Center for the Arts.

Jeanette Larson, a retired Librarian, formerly with the Austin Public Library, TX, received the 2015 Distinguished Service Award from the Texas Library Association.





LYRASIS elected four new Board of Trustees members for three-year terms: **Jo Budler**, State Library of Kansas; **Joe Lucia**, Temple University, Philadelphia; **Gina Millsap**, Topeka & Shawnee County Public Library, KS; and **Kathlin Ray**, University of Nevada, Reno.

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to pass a spending plan earlier than in past years, guaranteeing them adequate time to override any line-item vetoes Nixon chose to make.

The Senate's version of the budget bill set the REAL amount at \$3.1 million, giving library officials a reason to hope that the figure could remain at FY15 levels once the budget disparities were ironed out in conference committee negotiations. Instead, the two sides settled on a figure of \$2 million for REAL. That version was the one signed into law by Nixon.

Colleagues Remember Ismael Alicea

Ismael Alicea (1954–2015), a longtime member of the REFORMA Northeast Chapter and retiree of the New York Public Library (NYPL), died on Monday, April 13. He is remembered by several of his colleagues:

HARRIET GOTTFRIED

Ismael's career began in 1972 as a page at the Donnell Library Center in

Manhattan. Because of the pleasure he found in this job and the encouragement he received from supervisors and colleagues, Ismael (Ish) enrolled in the Pratt Institute School of Information and Library Science. He was employed by NYPL during the week and attended classes on the weekends. He worked his way up, filling many positions including that of part-time clerk, library technical assistant, and community liaison assistant, until he earned his MLS degree in 1982 and began working as a librarian, chiefly in Bronx branches.

I first worked with him when I was an outreach programming specialist. He had been promoted to the position of outreach specialist for the Bronx, responsible for connecting with all age level librari-

ans in the branches to identify different populations and meet their needs.

Ish was truly dedicated, enjoying and valuing the work he did. In 1998, he became the coordinator of outreach services. He was as gifted a supervisor as he was a colleague. Encouraging



Ismael Alicea in 2009 with then New York mayor Michael Bloomberg

and supportive with a charming sense of humor, he was a pleasure to work for. A hardworking, creative, and committed professional, Ismael Alicea was a librarian's librarian.

BRIGID CAHALAN

When I walked into the Donnell Foreign Language Library on my first day of work in 1980, I met Ismael Alicea, a fellow information assistant. I was quite impressed that he knew the entire Dewey decimal number for baseball: 796.3557. Also, that he participated in selecting Spanish books for this, the largest collection of circulating Spanish-language books in the NYPL system.

He was a master at weeding the Spanish collections throughout the system, knowing at a glance which books must be replaced and which were dispensable. Over the years, his duties included working with nursing homes, homeless shelters, adult new readers, ESOL students, and all those groups at risk of being underserved

News in Brief

Beaches Branch Library, part of the Jacksonville Public Library System, FL, received the 2015 Friend of the Beaches Award from Beaches Watch, Inc.

Red de Lectura Pública de Euskadi (Public Reading Network of Euskadi) announced that its union catalog, which includes the collections of more than 240 libraries in the Basque Country of Spain, will be accessible through WorldCat this year.

DePaul University Library, Chicago, joined the U.S. Government Publishing Office's Federal Depository Library Program, providing public access to an online collection of thousands of federal government documents.

The **University of Waikato**, Hamilton, New Zealand, implemented ProQuest's Intota, a cloud-based library services platform, into its library.

The **Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS)** has awarded grants to the **California Association of Museums**, Santa Cruz, and the **Association of African American Museums**, Washington, DC, to strengthen leadership, management, and collaboration.

SAGE Publishing selected the **Copyright Clearance Center's RightsLink for Open Access** to manage its article processing charges for its open access publications.

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by the library. Each task was accomplished efficiently, with concern, attention, and gusto.

When he became an administrator, he used the opportunity to highlight Spanish-language materials, especially from the Caribbean. He initiated several bibliographies: Puerto Rican books, Dominican books, and a major bibliography covering all countries.

Though he celebrated his own culture and native language, he also encouraged and delighted in our offering ethnic celebrations from every other culture: Irish, Italian, African American, Vietnamese, Cambodian, and Russian, to name a few.

Perhaps my favorite memory is of Ismael joining the rest of us preparing refreshments for every meeting, whether staff or public. He did things right and was sure to have a vase of fresh flowers, a pot of coffee (don't forget the hot water for tea!), and special pastries, which he personally would pick up. No detail was too small, so everything would be perfect.

MANUEL FIGUEROA

Ismael was an active member of the REFORMA Northeast Chapter for many years. I believe he may have been one of the founding members. On October 30, 2009, Ismael was awarded REFORMA Northeast Chapter's Pura Belpré Librarian of the Year Award for his achievements working to improve library and information services to the Latino and Spanish-speaking community.

I am extremely saddened to hear of this tragic news. Ismael was a wonderful person, colleague, friend, and mentor. I am fortunate to have known him while working at NYPL, and I have many fond memories of him. His passing is a great loss for everyone whose life he touched in one way or another. May he rest in peace.



After two years of construction, the new **Manhattan Beach Library** (pictured), CA, opened in April. Replacing its 43-year-old predecessor, the 22,000 square foot, two-story facility features a point-supported double-glass curtain wall, which offers unobstructed views of the South Bay and the Channel Islands. The \$19 million project was designed by Harley Ellis Devereaux Architects and built by construction firm C.W. Driver. Seeking Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design (LEED) Gold certification, the new library houses an automatic book-sorting machine (the first in the County of Los Angeles library system), a fireplace, nine public access computers in the adult section, a dedicated children's area with an interactive learning wall, a teen zone with a pop-up LED gaming and movie station, and a 100-seat meeting room.

The 15,971 square foot **Roslindale Branch Library** of the Boston Public Library (BPL) could see a \$6 million renovation as soon as 2016, per the *Jamaica Plain Gazette*. According to BPL spokesperson Rosemary Lavery, the project "has been placed in the out-years of FY17–FY20" and could begin at any time during that span, if the budget is approved. Though not the first renovations undertaken at the 1961 branch, which was previously a firehouse, the proposed effort

"would address accessibility issues; create an efficient circulation station with self-checkout and pickup areas; create or update adult, teen, and children's areas; create a multipurpose room; update furniture and fixtures; create new restrooms; and review and update as necessary mechanical and plumbing systems."

The **Boca Raton Public Library Downtown Library** has been awarded Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design (LEED) Silver certification from the U.S. Green Building Council. Completed in June 2013, the 42,000 square foot building is twice the size of the original structure and includes among its sustainable features an energy-efficient HVAC system, low-flow plumbing fixtures, and efficient irrigation methods.

The **Northfield Public Library**, MN, has hit a cost estimate snag in its renovation plan, according to the *Northfield News*. The two-story, 12,320 square foot Georgian Revival-style Carnegie building achieved city council approval in February for a \$2.6 million construction effort, but subsequent estimates from the architect have exceeded that amount. Original design plans may be scaled back and the time line delayed, but staff are hopeful that the project will move forward, despite "this bump in the road." Actual costs are dependent on the final bid process.


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