

## Crowdfunding Saves School Librarian's Job

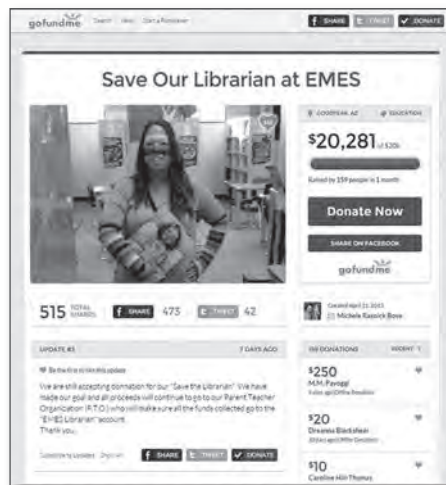
The goodwill of a community paid off—literally—to save a beloved school librarian's position at Estrella Mountain Elementary School (EMES) in Goodyear, AZ, when a crowdfunding campaign secured the money to keep her on staff for a year.

Lara Morris, who has been a media specialist at EMES for three years, was facing the loss of her job after major state cuts to charter school funding were instituted for future school terms. Through the GoFundMe site, contributions by parents, colleagues, and anonymous donors met the \$20,000 target needed to secure Morris's position for the next school year.

The goal was reached within 25 days—and has now been exceeded, by \$281. Donations are still being accepted, according to the site, and are being directed toward a library fund through the school's parent teacher organization.

The Liberty School District had been experiencing major budget cuts since the beginning of the recession. EMES has status as an International Baccalaureate School (IBS), and access to library resources is an integral

part of its curriculum. "The library at our school is set up in an open format," said Michele Bove, EMES's IBS program coordinator. "Teachers can send their students, [in small groups



or individually], to the library for research on the computers or to find a [print] resource."

After hearing about GoFundMe from the school's Spanish teacher, Bove immediately launched the campaign to save Morris's position. "When we first did it, even [Morris] said, 'I don't want to be this charity case,'" Bove said. "But we as teachers decided, 'We don't want to be without you. We will do whatever it takes.'"

"If you look at the numbers, Arizona ranks somewhere around 48th

[in the nation] in terms of expenditure per student," said Rodi Purcell, whose son is currently a student at EMES. "Where is the money, and why it is not being used for education?"

EMES principal Sharon Marine pointed to Arizona governor Doug Ducey's plan to use \$24 million to move prisoners to private facilities and build new prisons, beginning in 2016. "He has decided to build more prisons...but that doesn't make sense because he's cutting back the education money," Marine said.

The best way to enact change, said Marine, is for the community to vote and to be aware of what is happening in their schools.

"We have meetings all the time with parents, but until it really affects somebody, people don't really get involved," said Marine.

## Developer Maps Library Photo Archives

Portions of the New York Public Library's (NYPL) "Photographic Views of New York City, 1870's–1970's" collection have been available online for several years. But views of the collection have mushroomed since May 21, thanks to the launch of OldNYC.org, a website that overlays

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## The Annual Architectural Issue

*Library Journal's* annual Year in Architecture roundup will be published in the November 15 issue. The 2015 compilation covers library building projects (public and academic; new builds, remodels, additions) completed during the previous fiscal year (July 1, 2014–June 30, 2015). Will your library grace our cover this year? Check our website for specifics on the online submission process. For more information, contact Bette-Lee Fox at [blfox@mediasourceinc.com](mailto:blfox@mediasourceinc.com).



## Interview

### Charles Brown

When Charles Brown took over the directorship of the New Orleans Public Library (NOPL) in November 2011, the library system, like the city, was still struggling



to get back on its feet in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina in 2005. On May 2, New Orleans voters went to the

polls for a special election and approved a property tax increase that will net the library system \$8.2 million a year.

#### Could you tell us about working on the campaign leading up to the election?

My role was very much an informational one: speaking with a large number of community organizations, from the downtown rotary to small neighborhood groups around the city, and a number of media appearances promoting the effort. But I cannot give enough credit to the staff, working in their respective neighborhoods where they're known and where people value the library, I think that really made a big difference.

#### What advice would you offer libraries facing similar situations?

Two things that helped were gaining respect and credibility with elected officials and ensuring strong board support. The chair of our library board [Bernard Charbonnet Jr.] was essential in terms of working with the city council and the mayor in...getting this item on the ballot. I was able to make the case for it and—I hope—get the respect and credibility of the elected officials, but he's the individual who "closed the deal" in terms of actually getting the issue on the ballot. I give him full credit for ensuring that that happened. This whole process has been very much a collaborative effort.

photo locations on a Google Maps interface, enabling visitors to explore the collection by zooming, dragging, and clicking around an online map of the city. The new site was independently created by software engineer Dan Vanderkam using the Google Maps applications programming interface (API), data provided by NYPL, and open source photo and text extraction programs that he wrote himself and has made available on GitHub.

Within a week and a half of OldNYC's May 20 launch, the site had been shared on Facebook more than 24,000 times and had drawn coverage from major news outlets. Vanderkam told *Hotline* that millions of photographs have been viewed on the site.

OldNYC.org is the second site that Vanderkam has developed for navigating a library's collection of digitized photographs. In December 2008, when he was living in San Francisco and working for Google, Vanderkam searched the San Francisco Public Library's (SFPL) online San Francisco Historical Photograph Collection for old photographs of his neighborhood. Using nearby intersections as search terms, he managed to track down a photo that had been taken from his own roof 63 years earlier.

But he also noticed a problem—one of the streets that defined the photo's location and made it searchable was actually mislabeled.

"It was one intersection over," he said. "It struck me...that using keyword search is not the right way to browse this [collection]. Really, the right way is a map, where you can look at your block and then start looking around it for other areas that you're familiar with."

During the next 18 months, Vanderkam built OldSF.org in his spare time, using Google's Geocoding API to map about 13,000 photos from SFPL's collection. By the time he felt the site was ready to go pub-

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lic in 2011, he was living in New York.

With OldSF.org working smoothly, Vanderkam assumed that it would be a relatively simple matter for him to use the Geocoding API and Google Maps interface to create a similar New York City site for NYPL's collection. And things seemed to be going well when NYPL Labs emailed him a spreadsheet with cross street information and other metadata for all of

the collection's 30,000-plus images that had been digitized.

He had a version of the new site up and running within two weeks, "but it was pretty bad," he said.

Unlike SFPL's collection, NYPL's original photographs are all preserved on uniform 15" × 11" manila mounts or acid-free archival boards, typically with the address or location inscribed on the front of the mount and

the context, date, creator, and other information captioned on the back. While Vanderkam was able to map the images and display them, the images themselves—particularly in thumbnail form—tended to be overwhelmed by a huge manila background.

After considering the use of a complex computer vision algorithm with edge detection to pick out the photos, Vanderkam decided that a simpler approach would be to write his own algorithm that defines the mounting paper background in each image file, blacks that out, and then records what remains as an image. The approach proved effective, even for image files that included multiple photographs on a single mount.

Later, Vanderkam decided to try using optical character recognition (OCR) on the captions on the back of the mounts, which are saved in separate image files. Upon discovering that the open source Ocropus OCR program worked best when he manually cropped out the large, blank background surrounding the captions, he wrote a separate program that applies the canny edge detector and a rank filter to these images to automate the cropping process.

Separate from the complexity of the photo and caption extraction processes, another key difference between OldNYC and OldSF is the addition of comment widgets to the New York site, Vanderkam said.

The city's ever-changing landscape has also posed some problems that Vanderkam is still working to address. For example, in the 1940s, intersections between 1st Avenue and Avenue C and between 14th Street and 23rd Street were eliminated with the construction of Stuyvesant Town and Peter Cooper Village, a massive development of 110 residential buildings and park space.

"That is one thing that I would like to fix," Vanderkam said. "Figure out how to geocode addresses that no longer exist."

## 2015 Boston Globe–Horn Book Award Winners



Marla Frazee's *The Farmer and the Clown* (Beach Lane: S. & S. Children's Publishing) has won the 2015 Boston Globe–Horn Book Award for best picture book, while Katherine Rundell's *Cartwheeling in Thunderstorms* (S. & S. Books for Young Readers) took best fiction title, and Candace Fleming's *The Family Romanov: Murder, Rebellion and the Fall of Russia* (Schwartz & Wade: Random House Children's Bks.) was named best nonfiction book.

Roger Sutton (pictured, r.), editor in chief, *The Horn Book*, and Rebecca Stead (pictured, l.), the 2010 Boston Globe–Horn Book Fiction Award winner for *When You Reach Me* (Random), revealed the 2015 winners and honorees on May 27, during *School Library Journal's* Day of Dialog, held at the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York City.

Picture book honorees included Jon Agee's *It's Only Stanley* (Dial Books for Young Readers) and Oliver Jeffers's *Once upon an Alphabet* (Philomel). Gregory Maguire's *Egg & Spoon* (Candlewick) and Neal and Brendan Shusterman's *Challenger Deep* (HarperTeen) were the fiction honor titles. Nonfiction honor winners were Phillip Hoose's *The Boys Who Challenged Hitler: Knud Pedersen and the Churchill Club* (Farrar Books for Young Readers) and Jacqueline Woodson's *Brown Girl Dreaming* (Nancy Paulsen: Penguin Young Readers Group).

## James Patterson Launches Children's Book Imprint

Author James Patterson, a fierce advocate of reading and school libraries whose books help define the term *page-turner*, will launch a new children's book imprint. Jimmy Patterson will be an imprint of Little, Brown, a division of the Hachette Book Group and Patterson's longtime publisher. The aim is to leave kids hungry to read more. "My passion is to get kids reading," the best-selling scribe said.

The first Jimmy Patterson book will be *Treasure Hunters: Secret of the Forbidden City* (Sept. 14), the third story in Patterson's "Treasure Hunter" series. Other authors will be invited to publish as well, and eight to 12 books will be released each year—all of which Patterson said he will personally approve. An executive editor is also being hired, according to a spokesperson.

Profits from the books will go toward Patterson's current efforts including ReadKiddoRead, a nonprofit website that offers lesson plans for books, reading lists by age, and book reviews. School libraries will also continue to benefit—Patterson has pledged approximately \$1.5 million to them over the years.

In addition to publishing new titles, Patterson is working to get children's books more exposure—and into kids' hands. He has reached out to Walmart, he said, asking the retailer to increase its stock of children's titles, as well as McDonald's, requesting that the fast food restaurant chain put out more reading material geared to children.

Patterson recalled a childhood in Newburgh, NY, filled with "The Hardy Boys" mysteries and comic books. Since his mother was an elementary school teacher for 47 years, Patterson

said, he has a deep respect for educators—from teachers to librarians. But he believes that well-meaning educators sometimes push the spinach, so to speak, foisting reading materials onto kids that can end up turning them away from the printed page.

"Unfortunately, that's how we expose kids to reading, by giving them material that's not interesting to them. I don't think it's a case of dumbing down. I think this is an issue of what's appropriate."

## Boston Public Library's Redesign in Progress

The average age of users in the newly renovated second floor of Boston Public Library's (BPL) Johnson Building has come down at least a decade, according to BPL president Amy Ryan, and it's easy to see why.

Philip Johnson's massive addi-



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tion to BPL's iconic Beaux-Arts style McKim Building opened in 1972. According to the BPL website, the two requests for the exterior were that the building should "observe the existing roof line of the McKim Building and to use material [Milford granite] that would harmonize with the exterior of the existing Central Library building." The result was an architectural statement very much of its era: a

Brutalist monolith, experimental in structure and stark in aesthetic.

Now, stepping into the transition hallway from the pillared, gold and white marble of the McKim Building, the first hint of transformation appears in the form of blue carpet. Moving into the Johnson Building proper, that hint blossoms into a visual assault of red, blue, purple, and green. Brightly colored carpet, walls,

shelving, and even ceilings seem overwhelming at first glance but settle into a color-coded system, with signage pointing the way.

The massive granite atrium and skylight, refurbished after the second floor opened, provides natural light and a soothing neutral counterpart to the bright colors.

Computer screens in two different sizes are mounted on the end panels: the smaller ones with keyboards are traditional OPACs, while larger format touch screens showcase BPL's digitized collections of maps, prints, and rare books.

Besides the shift in service philosophy, another goal was to remind people of the city outside. This connection was accomplished through the use of symbolic representations of local icons, names of spaces, a much improved connection to the street, and echoes of the parent McKim Building.

The floor is organized to manage services to all ages. Visible connections among areas allow a sense of continuity while still providing functional separation.

The Children's Library is zoned by age groups, from the youngest users to tweens. Attention to the user experience is evident, with a sensory learning wall, tunnels through the stacks scaled for children, and the internally lit lion cubs that are a nod to the well-loved stone lions on the stairway in the McKim Building. A story time throne is flanked by brightly colored "Storyscape" facades reminiscent of Back Bay brownstones. A tween space has more grown-up furniture and a blackboard.

Teen Central, across the way, is furnished in industrial chic, with stainless steel mobile shelves, booths and leather easy chairs, and repurposed transit signs. The digital Maker space is staffed by a "technology curator" and equipped with options ranging from comic book software to recording

## Branching Out



The **Naper Boulevard Library** (pictured) of the Naperville Public Library, IL, reopened in late May following renovations that began in December 2014. The 32,000 square foot, three-story 1992 building now encompasses an updated computer lab, featuring 24 adult computers and eight machines for children; a remodeled program room; fresh flooring; energy-efficient lighting; a recharged children's space; updated restrooms; and more electrical outlets, according to the *Naperville Patch*. The \$1 million enhancements to the Prairie-style structure, designed by PHN Architects, include the installation of a modular circulation desk and a permeable paver patio.

Very big doings in West Lafayette, IN, with plans moving forward for Purdue University's 164,000 square foot, \$79 million **Thomas S. and Harvey D. Wilmeth Active Learning Center**, expected to open in 2017. Designed

by BSA LifeStructures, with Mid States General and Mechanical Contractor Corporation, the building is named for brothers Harvey (1918–2007) and Tom (1913–2015) Wilmeth, alumni of Purdue's College of Engineering, in recognition of their support of the school's libraries. The Wilmeth Center will house 27 collaborative learning classrooms and consolidate six engineering and science libraries.

Work will begin this summer.

The **University of New Orleans (UNO)** has embarked on a joint project among the Department of Computer Science, the Department of Film and Theatre, and the Earl K. Long Library to create an interdisciplinary digital media laboratory. A \$110,000 grant from the Louisiana Board of Regents will facilitate the construction effort, which will be located on the third floor of the library. The grant will cover ten high-performance computers, a 3-D printer, and motion capture equipment. Each workstation will come equipped with industry-standard software for 3-D modeling, photo and video editing, and game development. According to UNO assistant professor of computer science Stephen G. Ware, "This lab is a place where students will make their creative visions into digital and physical realities." The lab is expected to be in use by the fall 2015 semester.

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equipment. Next door is the lounge, with four different gaming systems. Two 80" screens allow either competition or large multiplayer games.

Work spaces in the adult area are called the Boston Common (large work tables with task lighting and power connections) and the Boylston Common (a laptop bar that spans the space in front of a window overlooking Boylston Street). The massive arched windows, part of the original Johnson design, were reglazed, removing the heavily tinted glass, and the mullions were replaced with fewer, smaller-profile pieces.

The renovation of the Johnson Building will ultimately transform the entire structure, with the removal of the massive granite plinths on the street already accomplished. The decision to retain the existing building was determined partly by economics and partly because much of the Johnson Building is protected by

The **University of Chicago Press** and **Chicago Distribution Center (CDC)** signed **McGill-Queen's University Press**, Montreal and Ontario, as a new CDC client. Beginning in September, the latter's books will be distributed by CDC.

The **American University of Sharjah**, United Arab Emirates, selected **OCLC's World-Share Management Services** as its new library management solution.

Fort Lauderdale's **Broward County Library**, the 1996 *Library Journal* Library of the Year, received three awards from the **Florida Library Association: 2015 Library of the Year**, the **Betty Davis Miller Youth Services Award for Teen Programming**, and the **Libraries Mean Business Award**.

The **University of South Carolina**, Columbia, acquired the papers of crime fiction author,

screenplay writer, and political activist **Dashiell Hammett (1894–1961)**. The collection includes his letters, photographs, and publications.

The **Elgin County Library, Ont.**, has selected **Innovative Interfaces Inc.'s (III) Sierra Library Services Platform**. It migrated from a Symphony system provided by SirsiDynix.

The **Private Academic Library Network of Indiana (PALNI)** has awarded two grants for the first PALNI Library Innovation grant period: to the members of **DePauw University**, Greencastle, to fund their *Exploring Arduino Programing and Its Applications in Academic Libraries Project*, and to members of the **Christian Theological Seminary**, Indianapolis, for their *PALNI Collaborative Archives Mapping Project*.

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the Boston Landmarks Commission. The budget for the second floor was \$16.1 million, and the budget for the entire renovation is \$75.5 million.

The rest of the project, including the first floor and mezzanine, is scheduled to be completed in the summer of 2016. Boston can look forward to a new community learning center, a business and digital innovation center, and expanded technology.

## School Librarians Join with Teachers Union

The Chicago Public School system (CPS) is currently in negotiations with the Chicago Teachers Union (CTU) over a possible contract extension after the current contract ends on June 30. Such disputes are not uncommon, but this is the first year that librarians in Chicago are officially part of talks with CTU.

Although school librarians have been able to provide input during negotiations in years past, they have not had formal representation on the ne-

gotiation committee until now.

The negotiations are the latest altercation in a strained relationship between the government and the union. Citing a deficit of more than \$1 billion, CPS will not be offering union workers, including teachers and librarians, a contract extension that would have come with a pay raise of three percent. Instead, the administration of Mayor Rahm Emanuel is demanding that teachers, clinicians, and paraprofessionals take a seven percent pay cut and occasional increases in insurance premiums.

CTU maintains that the deficit has been manufactured by the Emanuel administration. "This makes no sense—they are penny wise and pound foolish," CTU president Karen Lewis told the *Chicago Tribune*.

"The District's top priority is to ensure our students and teachers have the resources they need to succeed in the classroom," responded CPS spokesman Bill McCaffrey in a statement, according to CBS Chicago. "The financial crises facing CPS is real—

we face a budget deficit that exceeds \$1.1 billion, while Illinois is second to last in education funding."

While CTU and the librarians' committee are working together in the talks, Megan Murray Cusick, CTU Librarians Committee chair and a school librarian, explained that the librarians also have specific demands of their own. "First and foremost, what we're asking for is a school librarian in every Chicago public school," Cusick said. "It shouldn't come down to whether a school has fundraised; it should be standard." Other demands are that librarians not be used as substitute teachers or be forced to teach additional course loads as their positions in schools get cut.

Negotiations began in November 2014. With the contract deadline looming and a recent shift in gubernatorial leadership, "Everything is evolving and shifting as we speak, including a new state Board of Education superintendent," said K.C. Boyd, a librarian at a Chicago high school and a 2015 *Library Journal* Mover & Shaker.

A CTU spokesperson had no comment on the negotiations.

Some speculate that the budget crisis is in retaliation for a seven-day CTU strike in 2012—and payback for the union's support of Emanuel's challenger, Jesus "Chuy" Garcia, in a runoff election last year. Boyd and Cusick are focusing on where money might be found.

The Emanuel administration stated that it is waiting to receive word from the neighboring town of Springfield before it releases next year's budgets, which will affect the direction of the talks. For Cusick and Boyd, the next step is to get the word out. Community organizations have been sponsoring citywide forums at which union and district representatives have been invited to speak about where the negotiations stand and what the major issues are.

## People

**Beau Cunyngnam** was appointed Director of Lebanon Public Library, IN. He was previously Assistant Director of Tipton County Public Library, IN.

**Antony Deter** was named Director of Dixon Public Library, IL. He was previously Librarian at Morrison Community School District, IL.

**MaryEllen Firestone** retired as Director of the East Brunswick Public Library, NJ. She began her career with the library in 1990.

**Carol Hixson** has been named Dean of the Florida Atlantic University Libraries, Boca

Raton, effective August 11. She is currently Dean of the Nelson Poynter Memorial Library at the University of South Florida, St. Petersburg.

**Jon McDaniel** announced his retirement as Director of Forsyth County Public Library, Cumming, GA, effective December 18. He has been in the position for almost 20 years.

**Leslie Simpson** retired as Director of Joplin Public Library's Post Memorial Art Reference Library, MO. She has been with the library for 34 years.

## In Memoriam

**Barbara Semonche**, former Director of the University of North Carolina School of Journalism Library, Chapel Hill, died on May 13. She was 82 years old.

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