

## INSIDE

### Presidential Papers Go Online

Researchers can now explore the papers of Chester Alan Arthur, Andrew Johnson and William McKinley on the Library's website.

**PAGE 3**

### Reopening Plans Proceed

Two new committees are contributing to a plan for the first stage of a return to Library buildings, to begin when conditions allow.

**PAGE 4**



### Harjo to Serve Second Term

Librarian of Congress Carla Hayden has appointed Joy Harjo to a second term as U.S. poet laureate.

**PAGE 5**

### VHP Marks War's End

The Veterans History Project has released an online feature commemorating the 75th anniversary of World War II's end.

**PAGE 5**

### Q&A: Joshua Kueh

The Southeast Asia reference specialist in the Asian Division discusses the circumlocutious route that brought him to the Library of Congress.

**PAGE 6**



Shawn Miller

When the Library is open, staff of the Collections Management Division sort and shelve thousands of volumes daily.

## Preservation Directorate Plans for Safe Reopening

New practices are being developed to prevent transmission of virus as books change hands.

**BY WENDI A. MALONEY**

One of the main functions of the Preservation Directorate is to ensure the safe handling of books and other Library materials. That seemingly straightforward task suddenly became more complicated with the outbreak of the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic.

Before the Library closed to the public in March to help limit transmission of the virus, staff from within the directorate's Collections Management Division (CMD) gathered every morning in the stacks of the Adams and Jefferson buildings. Their job: to sort and reshelve

more than a thousand volumes, including newly acquired items and books returned after use by researchers and others.

Eventually, the Library will once again reopen its doors. When that happens, the directorate must make sure all those books are safe for staff to handle and virus-free before they get into the hands of new users.

"One of the things we are working on right now is how we safely restart operations by making sure that everything is safely handled and that staff have the right train-

**PRESERVATION, CONTINUED ON 7**

# NOTICES

## DONATED TIME

The following employees have satisfied eligibility requirements to receive leave donations from other staff members. Contact Lisa Davis at (202) 707-0033.

Sharif Adenan  
Lynette Brown  
Eric Clark  
Sharron Jones

Terri Harris-Wandix  
Adam Rosenberg  
Donna Williams

## WEEKLY VIRTUAL SUPPORT GROUP LAUNCHES

The Employee Assistance Program has started a virtual support group on Webex for Library staff. Half-hour sessions take place on Thursdays at noon and cover uncertainty and stress arising from the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic, strengthening support networks during social distancing and talking to children about the pandemic.

Join at <https://bit.ly/35uLbNa> using the meeting access code 901-990-307, or join by phone at (510) 210-8882 using the same access code. No registration is required.

Questions? Call (202) 707-6389, option 3, Mondays through Thursdays from 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. or (800) 869-0276 at other times.

## THE FUTURE OF DEMOCRACY

**May 13, 2 p.m.**  
[www.loc.gov/engage](http://www.loc.gov/engage)

The John W. Kluge Center will host its first virtual event, "A Conversation on the Future of Democracy," featuring Yuval Levin in discussion with John Haskell, the center's director. They will speak about Levin's new book, "A Time to Build: From Family and Community to Congress and the Campus, How Recommitting to Our Institutions Can Revive the American Dream." Levin is a distinguished scholar at the American Enterprise Institute.

Get free tickets at <https://bit.ly/2KWl9gd> and go to [www.loc.gov/engage](http://www.loc.gov/engage) on or after May 13 at 2 p.m. to view the event.

## BUILDING ACCESS UPDATE

The C Street West doors are closed as of May 4 at the request of the U.S. Capitol Police to support its workforce during the pandemic. Staff should enter and exit Library buildings through the Independence Avenue doors or the Madison Building garage.

# GAZETTE

LIBRARY  
OF CONGRESS

[loc.gov/staff/gazette](http://loc.gov/staff/gazette)

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### MISSION OF THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

The Library's central mission is to engage, inspire and inform Congress and the American people with a universal and enduring source of knowledge and creativity.

### ABOUT THE GAZETTE

An official publication of the Library of Congress, The Gazette encourages Library managers and staff to submit articles and photographs of general interest. Submissions will be edited to convey the most necessary information.

Back issues of The Gazette in print are available in the Communications Office, LM 143. Electronic archived issues and a color PDF file of the current issue are available online at [loc.gov/staff/gazette](http://loc.gov/staff/gazette).

### GAZETTE WELCOMES LETTERS FROM STAFF

Staff members are invited to use the Gazette for lively and thoughtful debate relevant to Library issues. Letters must be signed by the author, whose place of work and telephone extension should be included so we can verify authorship. If a letter calls for management response, an explanation of a policy or actions or clarification of fact, we will ask for management response.—Ed.

### Library of Congress Gazette

Washington, DC 20540-1620

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### GAZETTE DEADLINES

The deadline for editorial copy for the May 22 Gazette is Wednesday, May 13.

Email editorial copy and letters to the editor to [mhartsell@loc.gov](mailto:mhartsell@loc.gov) and [wmal@loc.gov](mailto:wmal@loc.gov).

To promote events through the Library's online calendar ([www.loc.gov/loc/events](http://www.loc.gov/loc/events)) and the Gazette Calendar, email event and contact information to [calendar@loc.gov](mailto:calendar@loc.gov) by 9 a.m. Monday of the week of publication.

Boxed announcements should be submitted electronically (text files) by 9 a.m. Monday the week of publication to [mhartsell@loc.gov](mailto:mhartsell@loc.gov) and [wmal@loc.gov](mailto:wmal@loc.gov).

**Read the Gazette in color  
at [loc.gov/staff/gazette](http://loc.gov/staff/gazette)**

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# Three New Sets of Presidential Papers Go Online



Andrew Johnson (from left), Chester Arthur and William McKinley.

Prints and Photographs Division

BY MICHELLE KROWL

The presidencies of Andrew Johnson, Chester Alan Arthur and William McKinley all began or ended with the trauma of a presidential assassination. The papers of each president, however, offer different types and levels of documentation as to how each man faced the challenges of his respective administration and how each chose to govern. Researchers can now explore all three of these collections online at [loc.gov](http://loc.gov).

Vice President Andrew Johnson (1808-1875) of Tennessee succeeded to the presidency following the assassination of Abraham Lincoln in April 1865. With the end of the Civil War in sight, Lincoln's death on April 15 plunged the country into further turmoil. The task of guiding the nation through the uncharted waters of Reconstruction fell to Johnson.

Long affiliated with the Democratic Party, Johnson had been added to Lincoln's unionist presidential ticket in 1864. But fundamental ideological and political differences between Johnson and members of the Republican Party over Reconstruction arose quickly, and Johnson's disputes with Congress led to his impeachment in 1868.

Johnson's perspectives on and activities during Reconstruction are represented in his papers, especially in the series containing correspondence, messages, execu-

tive documents and amnesty records. Although the bulk of the collection dates from 1865 to 1869, Johnson's papers also document his political career in Tennessee, his service as the state's military governor (1862-1865) and his business affairs, including his tailor shop.

Chester Alan Arthur (1829-1886) also became vice president as part of a presidential ticket that combined divergent views of government – Arthur and James A. Garfield represented opposite wings within the Republican Party in the 1880 election. A mentally disturbed office seeker assassinated President Garfield in July 1881 to install the more patronage-friendly Arthur as president. Garfield lingered for 80 days before dying.

While most Americans presumed Arthur would follow a path of political cronyism, he surprised his detractors by serving out his term with admirable competence. Although Arthur ordered that most of his personal papers be burned shortly before his death in 1886, the Arthur Papers offer correspondence, financial records, scrapbooks, papers relating to the 1880 presidential election, Arthur's presidency, his service as collector of customs for the Port of New York and his work with the New York Republican State Committee.

Of note is a series of 23 letters written to Arthur between 1881

and 1883 by Julia Sand, a reclusive New York woman with an intense interest in politics who appointed herself as Arthur's conscience and offered words of advice, criticism and praise he seemed to value.

Unlike Johnson and Arthur, William McKinley (1843-1901) gained the presidential chair through election in his own right in 1896. McKinley's papers date primarily from his time as president and are especially strong on the presidential elections of 1896 and 1900, the gold standard, tariffs, progressivism, the Spanish-American War, the Philippine-American War and territorial expansion.

Since McKinley preferred to communicate in person, much of the correspondence in the collection consists of letters he received and are reflective of conversations he had and issues brought to his attention by associates and the public. Letterpress copybooks capture communications his secretaries sent on McKinley's behalf, while his own voice can be found in his speeches and messages.

Despite warnings from friends who worried for his safety in unsettled times, McKinley was shot by an anarchist on Sept. 6, 1901, while attending the Pan-American Exposition in Buffalo, New York. McKinley's papers include documentation of the days until his death on Sept. 14, when Theodore Roosevelt became the 26th president. ■

# Plans for Reopening Proceed, Services Continue

Over the past week, the Library has continued to develop plans for resuming work in Library buildings, Librarian of Congress Carla Hayden told staff in an April 30 video address (<https://bit.ly/3fknt10>), her sixth to staff since the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic broke out.

She thanked employees for relaying their concerns about reopening to Library leaders “so that we can make sure that we incorporate what you are thinking and concerned about in the planning.”

The Library has established two committees to craft a plan for the first stage of returning to Library buildings, to begin only when local conditions allow, the Library announced last week. The plan prioritizes protections to prevent exposure to COVID-19 at work.

The Human Capital COVID-19 Committee will determine human capital policies, and the Facilities Security Committee will implement health and safety measures, coordinating with the Architect of the Capitol and the U.S. Capitol Police. Sandra Charles, the Library’s chief medical officer, is advising both committees about medical and public health components of the planning, and service units from across the Library are represented on the committees.

So far, the planners have determined that only 5 percent of the workforce – those who perform work that cannot be done remotely – will return during stage one of reopening. Measures to protect returning workers will include entry prescreening, social distancing, mandatory use of face masks and other health precautions. Staff will also need to limit the number

of locations they access within Library buildings.

While planning proceeds, work continues at the Library, Hayden said, pointing to a milestone in the Copyright Office: On April 27, the office launched a limited release of an online pilot for its document recordation system. The pilot will accept electronic submissions of copyright-related documents, including transfers of ownership, after decades of processing such documents solely on paper.

Hayden called the pilot a “momentous” step in modernizing the Copyright Office’s information technology systems, accomplished in partnership with the Office of the Chief Information Officer.

Also last week, the Employee Assistance Program launched weekly virtual support groups for staff. The half-hour sessions will be held on Thursdays from noon to 12:30 p.m. and will cover topics such as coping with stress related to COVID-19, strengthening support networks in times of social distancing and talking to children about COVID-19. For instructions on how to participate, see page 2.

As of May 8, three new cases of COVID-19 were reported to the Health Services Division (HSD). The total number of staff cases reported is now 33. Twenty-five of these staff members have recovered; eight still have symptoms or are in isolation or quarantine. Two of the newly reported cases involve employees who have been in the Library recently, and contact tracing has been done for eight primary contacts.

HSD is communicating with all staff members who become ill. In cases in which ill individuals were present in Library buildings, HSD is also notifying their close work contacts and cleaning and disinfecting the areas affected. The same process is being followed when contractors in Library buildings become ill.

More information about the Library’s evolving response to the pandemic, including guidance for staff, can be found on the Library’s coronavirus intranet page (<https://go.usa.gov/xdtV5>) and on the public-facing staff page the Library created (<https://go.usa.gov/xdtVQ>) to assist those without access to the Library’s network. ■

## WHEN HUMANS ARE AWAY ...



A mother duck and her ducklings seen outside the Madison Building’s sixth floor this week. The Humane Rescue Alliance has since removed the brood to the Capitol Reflecting Pool.

Courtesy Integrated Support Services

# Harjo to Serve Second Term as Poet Laureate

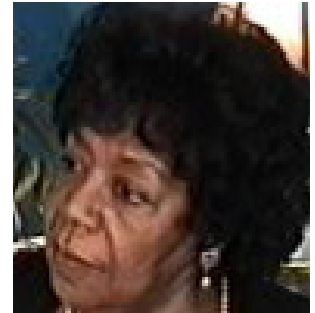
Librarian of Congress Carla Hayden has appointed Joy Harjo to serve a second term as the nation's 23rd poet laureate consultant in poetry. In 2020-21, Harjo will launch a new Library of Congress collection and online map featuring Native American poets and poetry.

"Joy Harjo is such an inspiring and engaging poet laureate," Hayden said. "I'm thrilled she said yes to a second term to help the Library showcase Native poets from coast to coast. Her profound musical and literary talents are a gift to the nation."

Harjo's second term will begin Sept. 1 and will focus on her signature laureate project, "Living Nations, Living Words: A Map of First Peoples Poetry." Developed with the Library's Geography and Map Division, the digital project will be created using StoryMaps, a web mapping application geared toward storytelling, to showcase contemporary Native American poets from across the country.

The project will include poets' biographies and recordings of them reading and discussing poems. It will also help to build a new collection in the Library's American Folklife Center featuring the recordings of Native American poets.

"It is an honor to serve a second term as poet laureate, especially during these times of earth transformation and cultural change," said Harjo, who is the first Native American poet to serve in the position. Poetry has the potential to help us move collectively into fresh cultural vision, she said, adding, "To get there in understanding, we begin with the roots. In this country, the roots are found in the poetry of the more than 500 living indigenous nations." ■



Veterans History Project

Gladyce Nypan (from left), Jerome Yellin and Mary Crawford Ragland.

## VHP Marks Anniversary of Allied Victory in Europe

The Veterans History Project (VHP) this week launched "End of World War II: 75th Anniversary," a new online feature highlighting stories relating to the war's end. The feature is part of VHP's "Experiencing War" website.

Seventy-five years ago, on May 8, 1945, Americans on the home front and the front lines celebrated the Allied victory in Europe – known as V-E Day – and began to look toward the inevitable end of the war. When Japan formally surrendered to Allied forces on Sept. 2, nearly four long years of deprivation, heartache and loss drew to a close.

For the new feature, the VHP staff curated the personal stories of 15 World War II veterans as conveyed in first-person narratives. Many are being released online for the first time.

While for many, "war's end" might conjure up images of jubilant crowds in New York City's Times Square and nurses being kissed by sailors, the stories in the feature complicate this perspective, revealing a deeper, more nuanced view of the end of the war.

At the time of the Japanese surrender, Jerome Yellin, a fighter pilot with the 78th Fighter Squadron, was completing his 19th mission over Japan. He landed on Iwo Jima to find out the war had already been over for three hours. The loss

of so many comrades in battle – 16 from his squadron – took a toll on Yellin, and he later battled post-traumatic stress disorder.

Gladyce "Pepper" Pederson Nypan cried when the war ended, but her tears were of sorrow, not of joy. As she journeyed home after mustering out, she realized she might never again see the women with whom she had developed incredibly close bonds in the Marine Corps.

Mary Crawford Ragland served in the Women's Army Corps with the 6888th Central Postal Directory Battalion, an African American unit known as the "Six Triple Eight." In Birmingham, England, and Rouen, France, Ragland and her comrades cleared a massive backlog of personal mail sent by service personnel that had become stuck in limbo between the European theater and the home front.

The year 1945 brought jubilation – the Six Triple Eight marched in a victory parade down the Champs-Élysées in Paris – but it also exposed Ragland to the horrors of the war, including the destruction of French villages and newly liberated concentration camps.

Go to <https://go.usa.gov/xvvb7> to access these veterans' collections as well as other World War II-era narratives. ■

# QUESTION & ANSWER



Oliga Onyshchenko

## Joshua Kueh

*Joshua Kueh is a Southeast Asia reference librarian in the Asian Division.*

### **Tell us a little about your background.**

I grew up in Malaysia, where I attended a mission school administered by Irish Catholic priests. After completing secondary school, I spent a year in Argentina as an exchange student. Then I packed my bags for further studies in the states – Missouri, Virginia and D.C., in that order. As the mention of all these places suggests, I've had a relatively peripatetic existence, though the D.C. metro area has been home for quite some time now.

At university, I studied trans-

regional history and Spanish literature. This led to adjunct teaching positions at Georgetown University and the Catholic University of America and a stint at the Foreign Service Institute as a cultural and language instructor and occasional guest lecturer.

### **What brought you to the Library, and what do you do?**

As a graduate student in the D.C. area, the Library was one of my favorite places to conduct research. So, when the opportunity arose to apply for a Southeast Asian reference librarian position, I threw my hat in the ring. The chance to work with the collections in the Library was a major draw for me and, thankfully, I was selected for the job.

As a reference librarian for Southeast Asia, I provide reference services for topics related to the region. I also help develop and conduct outreach for the Southeast Asia collection in the Asian Division. One of the most rewarding things about this work has been learning about rare materials in the division and collaborating with colleagues across the Library to preserve these amazing items and share information about them through digitization projects, blogs, displays and research guides.

### **How has the coronavirus pandemic changed your work?**

The major change from teleworking for me has been learning to work with collections without being able to touch or see them. This has meant shifting the emphasis of my work toward more web archiving and blog and

research-guide writing. One might say the balance has moved toward more contemplative aspects of work. Without as many reference questions to answer, there has been more time to get to know the collections better.

Creating a working space amid my home environment has been interesting. My wife is also teleworking, and our children participate in distance learning. With remote meetings taking place at any given time in the house, one has to remember not to accidentally wander into certain spaces. There is also the issue of reminding enthusiastic musicians in the house to limit recorder-playing to certain places and times of day.

### **How are you adjusting generally to the new circumstances?**

All things considered, I'm doing all right. I'm learning new routines and ways to engage with others. The Library-wide Webex events of the Library Collections and Services Group – which I highly recommend – are reference points in the work week for me. They help to keep the days and hours from blending together and introduce an element of community and stability.

### **What do you enjoy doing outside work?**

I enjoy playing music and watching martial arts movies.

### **What is something your co-workers may not know about you?**

I am a massive Manchester United fan, and I spend entirely too much time following the team. I try to watch every game when I can and have an embarrassingly large collection of United kits. ■

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## CFC SPECIAL PANDEMIC SOLICITATION

The Office of Personnel Management has authorized launch of a Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) special solicitation to allow federal employees and retirees to make a supplemental donation to CFC charities during the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic. To donate, visit the CFC online portal (<https://go.usa.gov/xvdf3>) now through June 30. An FAQ document (<https://go.usa.gov/xvdfY>) provides details about the initiative.

Questions? Contact Tonya Dorsey ([tdor@loc.gov](mailto:tdor@loc.gov)), the Library's CFC program manager.

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## HAVING TECHNICAL ISSUES?

It is important to report any technical issues you experience to the Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO). The OCIO service desk is staffed around the clock with technicians ready to help. Contact [ocioservice@loc.gov](mailto:ocioservice@loc.gov) or (202) 707-7727.

OCIO has developed fact sheets and frequently asked questions to help teleworkers accomplish their work. They are available on the Library's public-facing web page (<https://go.usa.gov/xdtVQ>) in the technology resources section.

## PRESERVATION, CONTINUED FROM 1

ing and protection,” said Jacob Nadal, head of the Preservation Directorate.

No studies to date specifically answer the question of how transmissible COVID-19 might be from common library materials, such as paper, book cloth or polyester book jackets, Nadal said. In the absence of such definitive details, the Library is participating in a multi-institutional study organized by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). The partners are working with scientists at the Battelle Memorial Institute to determine best practices based on science to protect staff and researchers as institutions restore operations.

In the meantime, a main source of authoritative data, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), has offered preliminary guidance applicable to libraries. On March 30, two CDC scientists addressed library-related issues in a webinar (<https://go.usa.gov/xvRcJ>) sponsored by the IMLS.

The Preservation Directorate plans to collaborate with the Library’s Health Services Division (HSD) to turn the results of the IMLS study and the CDC’s guidance into workable practices, Nadal said. Together, he noted, HSD and the directorate’s preservation and conservation specialists have significant expertise at the intersection of collections care and personal health and safety.

“We are going to make well-informed decisions based on sound research as we plan our return to service, and we are going to make sure we have multiple layers of safety practices to keep everyone healthy,” Nadal said.

He predicts that time may well turn out to be the best disinfectant. “A lot of what we’re doing now is making sure that we plan the return of material in such a way that we’re past a risk, any kind of likely risk, of the material carrying the virus,” Nadal said.

The Preservation Directorate is still

studying exactly what the protocols are going to be, he emphasized, but a period of quarantine for circulating materials is its “starting assumption.”

Nadal said the directorate is now identifying spaces to enable quarantine and discussing how to train and protect staff who will handle materials.

“Every health expert has emphasized hygiene as the critical protective measure, and we’ll make sure that staff have the time to practice all the hygiene guidelines, so that it’s easy to wash hands before and after handling collections,” he said.

CMD had a safe-handling warmup of sorts in March when the Library announced expanded telework for staff to address the pandemic.

Previously, after CMD logged newly arrived books into the Library’s online cataloging system, teleworking catalogers could check out up to 50 at a time to catalog from home. The check-out process involved standing in a small room across from a CMD staff member and passing books back and forth, a practice deemed too risky once COVID-19 began to spread.

In response, the Preservation Directorate devised a system to allow a larger pool of catalogers – more are teleworking during the pandemic – to electronically check out up to 60 books at a time, which CMD charges to their accounts.

The directorate worked with Integrated Support Services in March to schedule times for catalogers to pick up their books to avoid having too many people in Library buildings at any one time.

The system, Nadal said, not only enhanced safety, but also “dramatically opened up the volume of material that we got out to people to let them telework in safety.”

The directorate is working in other ways as well to safeguard the Library’s holdings during the pandemic. Its Preservation Emergency Response Team remains on call 24

hours a day, seven days a week, to address threats to the collections, and team members regularly check on the Library’s stacks, collection areas and off-site facilities.

“We’ve maintained that sort of essential presence in terms of being able to look out for issues and risks for the collections,” Nadal said.

Otherwise, he said the directorate’s large staff – it has five divisions, including CMD – has identified creative ways to continue contributing in the current environment despite a lack of access to labs and collections. “I am really impressed by the goodwill and make-it-work attitude that people have shown,” Nadal said.

“This is a difficult, anxious time that we’re wading through,” he said he tells his staff. “And some of the biggest moments for Preservation are still ahead of us. It’s important for everyone to take good care of themselves now, so we are ready to go as we start the project of reopening the Library.” ■

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## STAFF INNOVATOR APPLICATIONS INVITED

Library Collections and Services Group (LCSG) staff, including in the Law Library and Library Services, are invited to apply for a 120-day detail as a staff innovator, a pilot initiative of LCSG and LC Labs. The detailee will design and execute a project that takes an innovative approach to a Library collection, workflow or service.

**Apply by May 29:** <https://go.usa.gov/xvEAK>

LC Labs is holding a virtual open house on May 13 from 2 to 3 p.m. to answer questions about the detail. Call in via [locgov.webex.com/meet/jame](https://locgov.webex.com/meet/jame) or +1 (510) 210-8882 using the access code 904 592 889 #. Questions can also be sent to [LC-Labs@loc.gov](mailto:LC-Labs@loc.gov).

Contact Eileen Jakeway of LC Labs at [ejakeway@loc.gov](mailto:ejakeway@loc.gov).