

Phase Three to Begin on June 1

The Library announced last week that phase three of its plan to restore on-site operations will start on June 1. Library leaders based the decision on continued improvements in local conditions related to COVID-19, the broad availability of vaccines in the local area and nationally and the effectiveness of policies and procedures the Library has implemented to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission in Library buildings.

On June 1, four of the Library's reading rooms will reopen to a limited number of registered readers, as reported in the [May 7 Gazette issue](#). To support the reopening, some additional Library employees will begin to return to on-site work, but the increase in on-site staff during phase three, part one, will include less than 5 percent of the Library's workforce.

Everyone entering Library buildings will have to follow the Library's health and safety protocols. As of today, fully vaccinated people need not wear masks on-site when they can maintain a distance of 6 feet or more from others. But masks are required if that distance cannot be maintained for more than 15 minutes in the absence of barriers, such as plastic dividers.

Unvaccinated people must continue to wear masks. Signage will clearly indicate this requirement, and masks will be offered to visitors whose vaccination status is uncertain.

As a part of its strategy for a gradual, safe and efficient return to on-site services, the Library has developed new informational webinars to help staff prepare for

PHASE 3, CONTINUED ON 4



Photographs from the Farm Security Administration/Office of War Information collection were some of the first images uploaded to the Library's Flickr account.

Prints and Photographs Division

Social Media Connects Library with New Audiences

The Library set an early example for agencies in adopting social media.

BY LEAH KNOBEL

Social media is now a feature of everyday life: It allows users from around the globe to create and share content on blogs and engage with one another on platforms such as Twitter and Facebook. Organizations see it as a necessary medium to connect with audiences.

Years before that was so, however, the Library chose to embrace this new media and quickly became an example for other federal agencies. Today, social media is helping the Library reach new and more diverse groups than ever before.

Through social media, the Library

seeks to drive traffic back to its resources. At first, some worried that it would distract attention from existing resources, such as the Library's website, but that hasn't turned out to be the case.

"It's proven to be a success in introducing new users to Library collections," said John Sayers, chief of digital strategy and content in the Communications Office. "During the pandemic, especially, when the Library's physical doors have been closed to the public, social media has helped to draw visitors to Library collections and programs."

SOCIAL MEDIA, CONTINUED ON 6

DONATED TIME

The following employees have satisfied eligibility requirements to receive leave donations from other staff members. Contact Lisa Davis at ldav@loc.gov.

Lynette Brown

Stephanie Jefferson

COVID-19 UPDATE

The Health Services Division (HSD) continues to monitor Library staff members with symptoms, clinical diagnoses or positive test results associated with COVID-19. On May 13, HSD announced that it had received three new reports of symptoms of COVID-19 or confirmed cases since its previous COVID-19 announcement on May 6. Most employees reporting symptoms are not diagnosed with COVID-19, but, out of caution, the Library is monitoring all reports of symptoms.

More information on the Library's pandemic response: <https://go.usa.gov/xdtV5> (intranet) or <https://go.usa.gov/xdtVQ> (public-facing staff webpage)

FACILITY OPERATIONS UPDATE

The Architect of the Capitol has been working to improve energy efficiency on campus. Returning employees may notice new lighting sensors and controls and new thermostats on the walls. Teams are installing the devices and retrofitting the existing ceiling light fixtures with LED lamps. Most of this work is occurring during the day in the Madison Building. Jefferson Building work is scheduled to begin in August. Programming and commissioning of these new systems continues throughout the buildings.

Questions? Send an email to facilityoperations@loc.gov.

IT SECURITY REMINDER: UPDATE YOUR MOBILE DEVICES

Apple and Android have recently released important security updates. It is important to ensure that your mobile devices are kept updated to prevent cyberattacks and other malicious activity.

Library policy requires staff to update all Library-issued iPhones and iPads in a timely way. If you have a Library-issued mobile device, check that it is up to date with the current software version: 14.5.1.

To check your software version, visit the Settings menu on your Library iPhone or iPad and tap About. If your device is not running software version 14.5.1, update it as soon as possible.

Questions? Contact the Office of the Chief Information Officer service desk at (202) 707-7727 or ocioservicedesk@loc.gov.

UPDATED EMERGENCY GUIDANCE

The Security and Emergency Preparedness Directorate has made available [phase 2.2 of its protective action guidance for responding to building emergencies](#). The updated guidance includes detailed information about social distancing during emergencies, evacuation assembly areas and best ways to contact emergency services.

Staff are encouraged to download the Joint Emergency Mass Notification System (JEMNS) mobile app on their personal devices and register to receive text alerts. For instructions and more information, go to <https://go.usa.gov/xs5mR>. Learn more about the Library's emergency guidance: <https://go.usa.gov/xs5mQ>.

Questions? Call (202) 707-8708 or send an email message to ep@loc.gov.

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.

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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Design and production: Ashley Jones, 7-9193, gaze@loc.gov
ISSN 1049-8184

Printed by the Printing Management Section

GAZETTE DEADLINES

The deadline for editorial copy for the June 4 Gazette is Wednesday, May 26.

Email editorial copy and letters to the editor to mhartsell@loc.gov and wmal@loc.gov.

To promote events through the Library's online calendar (www.loc.gov/loc/events) and the Gazette Calendar, email event and contact information to 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 and wmal@loc.gov.

Yiddish Playscripts Migrated to New Platform

Yiddish theater was an extremely popular turn-of-the-20th-century entertainment.

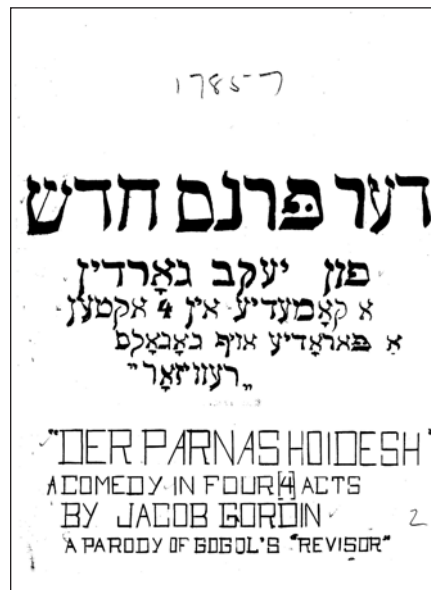
BY SHARON HOROWITZ

May is Jewish American Heritage Month, and the African and Middle Eastern Division (AMED) is delighted to celebrate by announcing the migration of digitized Yiddish playscripts to the Library's Project One web platform. The 77 playscripts were originally made available in 1996 through American Memory, one of the Library's first-generation websites. The modern presentation allows for enhancements including the ability to zoom in on items – especially important because many playscripts are handwritten or typed on carbon papers and difficult to read.

The newly released playscripts were selected from more than 1,290 in the Lawrence Marwick Collection of Copyrighted Yiddish Plays, housed in AMED's Hebraic Section. Most of the plays were written between 1909 and 1950. Intended for the Yiddish American stage, the plays document the hopes, fears and aspirations of several generations of immigrants to America. Marwick was head of the Hebraic Section from 1949 to 1979, and it was at his initiative that the collection was transferred from the Copyright Office to the Hebraic Section.

"The improved ease of access to these unique and historically significant plays on [loc.gov](https://www.loc.gov) will greatly increase their discoverability," Lanisa Kitchiner, AMED's chief, said.

Besides improved readability, the most obvious advantages of the migration are a cleaner, more aesthetic presentation and easier navigation among collection items. Many back-end enhancements will also benefit users of the collection. In addition, bringing it onto the modern platform makes it easier



A 1910 Yiddish-language parody by Jacob Gordon of Gogol's "Revisor."

to maintain and ensures that it will be included in any future [loc.gov](https://www.loc.gov) enhancements.

Improved interaction with images in the collection, such as deep zooming and clipping, is enabled by use of JPEG2000 image files (instead of bitonal TIFFs). The image files themselves have also now been migrated to a modern storage environment, and they are inventoried in the Library's content transfer service, making long-term maintenance more manageable.

In addition to these improvements, each of the plays is now described by a catalog record in the online integrated library system (ILS), which means that updates and edits to the descriptions can be made in a system that many staff have access to and expertise in, reducing the cost of metadata maintenance.

Christa Maher of the Digital Services Directorate accomplished the migration with colleagues in the directorate and the Office of the Chief Information Officer. The team included Sam Manivong, Marcus Cooper, Mark Nappier, Barak Stussman, Laura Moiseev and Dave Reser.

The modern Yiddish theater emerged in 1876 when poet and songwriter Abraham Goldfaden (1840-1908) produced his first musical in a Romanian tavern. By 1882, a Yiddish theatrical troupe had arrived in New York. Within a few years, American Yiddish theater had become a popular entertainment, and 24 Yiddish theater companies performed across America by 1927.

Yiddish theater was a musical medium, and orchestral overtures and songs and dances accompanied the most serious melodramas. Most had runs of only three or four performances. An American journalist, Hutchins Hapgood, noted in 1902 that many immigrants who earned as little as \$10 a week were willing to spend half their income on theater admissions. If you want to find out what drove the popularity of this form of entertainment (and if you read Yiddish), [check out the playscripts here](#).

An [annotated bibliography](#) of the entire Yiddish playscript collection, created in 2004 by Zachary M. Baker of Stanford University, is available on the Hebraic Section's website. ■

SELECT YOUR ZOOM BACKGROUND

The Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) earlier this year launched the Zoom for Government application. OCIO also released background images, including the Jefferson Building, the Copyright Office and the Packard Campus theater, for staff to use. To change your Zoom background, click "settings" in your Zoom profile and select a photo from the "backgrounds and filters" menu.

More information: <https://go.usa.gov/xs4tb>

Questions? Contact the OCIO service desk at (202) 707-7727 or ocioservicedesk@loc.gov.

Sexual Harassment Survey Update

The Office of the Inspector General (OIG) sent a survey on sexual harassment to Library employees via email on April 7, and it closed on April 21. Designed with the assistance of survey methodologists at the Government Accountability Office, the survey collected more than 1,100 completed responses, representing about one-third of Library employees. Next steps include analyzing the data, along with other data the OIG is collecting, and sharing results with Library management.

Two of the OIG's goals for the survey were maximizing participation and protecting anonymity. To maximize participation, the OIG sent the survey to every Library employee and advertised it in the Gazette and in Librarywide emails.

Protecting anonymity was particularly important given the sensitivity of the survey's topic and the OIG's intention to share results with the Library. The Office of Congressional Workplace Rights, which

conducted the Congressional Climate Survey in October 2020 that collected data in part on sexual harassment, has not shared its survey results with the Library.

If you have questions or concerns about the survey, you can contact the OIG either directly or anonymously. For example, if you feel that your experience was not adequately represented through the survey and want to share additional details, the OIG encourages you to do so via its [online hotline form](#); you can do so anonymously if you choose. To communicate directly with an OIG representative about the survey, send an email to oigsurvey@loc.gov.

To officially report sexual harassment, contact the Library's Office of Equal Employment Opportunity and Diversity Programs at (202) 707-6024 or EEODP@loc.gov or contact the Office of Congressional Workplace Rights at (202) 724-9250. ■

PHASE 3, CONTINUED FROM 1

institutional, procedural and service-related changes that will be in place. The virtual webinars cover two main subject areas: staff re-engagement in a post-COVID world and health and safety.

All interested staff are welcome to participate in the courses, and some supervisors may require staff to take the courses before returning to on-site work. Unless otherwise directed by a supervisor, however, the courses are optional.

Initial live webinars will be offered this month, and the webinars will be recorded and made available to staff who are unable to attend live. Additional webinars will be offered in the summer.

The webinars are:

On-Site Staff Re-Engagement May 26, 2:30 to 3:30 p.m.

An overview [presented on Zoom](#) by the Center for Learning, Literacy and Engagement about changes made in and outside the Library since the start of the pandemic, what staff can expect when interacting with the public during the pandemic and successful practices for engaging with visitors who are not adhering to posted safety protocols.

Infection Prevention and Personal Protection May 25, 10 to 11 a.m.

An overview [presented on Zoom](#) by the Health Services Division offering updates about the pandemic; information on infection transmission and recommended practices to prevent infection, including the Library's virus-mitigation strategies; and details about proper application, use and removal of personal protective equipment.

Questions about the webinars? Contact Yamil Forbes, events specialist, at yfor@loc.gov. ■

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HCD SERVICES PORTAL

During this period of remote work, the Human Capital Directorate (HCD) services portal (<https://bit.ly/31fqIKw>) is there to help. Ask questions of HCD professionals; submit documents related to benefits, retirement and payroll matters; and track requests.

QUESTION & ANSWER



National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled

Karen Keninger

Karen Keninger is director of the National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled (NLS). She will retire at the end of this month.

Tell us a little about your background.

I was born into a thriving Iowa farm family. When I was 16 months old, my parents realized I couldn't see very well. I attended the Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School, which happened to be located in my hometown of Vinton, from kindergarten through 12th grade. During that time, my vision deteriorated to light perception. I received a B.A. from Drake University in journalism and later an M.A. in English from Iowa State University with additional classes in library science at the University of Iowa.

What drew you to Library work?

I worked as a freelance writer for several years while raising my children and went to work full time in 1995 at the Iowa Department for the Blind as a rehabilitation consultant. The department housed

several programs, including the Iowa Library for the Blind, a library I have used since I was 7. Five years later, when the regional librarian resigned, I was asked to step into the role temporarily. I loved it. It turned into a permanent appointment shortly thereafter.

I managed the library for eight years, during which time I served on NLS committees working on the development of the digital talking book system we have today. In 2008, I was appointed director of the Iowa Department for the Blind, a position I held until my appointment as director of NLS in 2012.

What inspired you to take the position of NLS director?

When I was growing up, my home was filled with books – print books I could not read. But the library in Des Moines sent me braille books – books I could read. Those books opened worlds of magic, worlds of possibilities. With a braille book on my lap, I could go anywhere, be anything. And the library in Des Moines was the magic place where those books came from. They came in the mail wrapped in brown paper and tied up with string – definitely my very favorite things!

When the director's position at NLS became vacant, I thought being able to work in and direct the library that had given me thousands of hours of reading pleasure would be an amazing opportunity to give back and impact the service that meant so much to me. So, I applied.

To work at the national level was an exciting prospect. I had been a patron; I had been a regional librarian in the NLS network; I had served as chair of a circulation system user group and chair of the NLS network's Midlands Regional Conference. I thought it might be

an easy step up. I soon learned that I had three more steep learning curves to climb – NLS itself, the Library of Congress and federal government. It took some time to settle in, but I did.

What achievements as director are you most proud of?

I am most proud to have worked with such brilliant and dedicated leaders at NLS. Together, our team has produced iOS and Android apps to play NLS books from BARD, the Braille and Audio Reading Download website; tripled the annual additions to the NLS catalog; forged a path to the next generation of service, which includes voice-controlled devices and digital delivery, and made changes to ease access for people with reading disabilities.

What are some standout moments from your time as director?

My favorite project has been the introduction of refreshable braille devices, called braille eReaders, into the NLS program. Previously out of reach for many braille readers because of their cost, the eReaders will soon be available to any NLS patron who wants one. Using the devices, blind readers can easily download and read digital braille content instead of using the bulky, multivolume hard-copy braille circulated through the mail. It's the size of a print paperback and can hold as many braille books as one cares to manage. Books can be delivered to it directly from BARD, and it fits neatly in my purse!

What will you do in retirement?

I look forward to spending time with my children and grandchildren and having time to travel and write. And, of course, time to read. This is an exciting new phase, and I'm looking forward to diving into it. ■

**Your Employee Personal Page (EPP) is at
www.nfc.usda.gov/epps/**

SOCIAL MEDIA, CONTINUED FROM 1

Launched on the Library's birthday – April 24 – in 2007, the Library of Congress blog was one of the very first from a federal agency. Blogs emerged from the “web 2.0” concept, which emphasizes user-generated content and feedback, and they remain one of the most popular social media tools. The Preservation Directorate's new blog, [Guardians of Memory](#), which debuted last month, is the Library's 20th active blog.

The Library jumped into the world of podcasting early on, too, releasing episodes during the 2007 National Book Festival. Podcasting allows digital audio files to be downloaded to a personal device, such as a smartphone, for listening. [America Works](#) from the American Folklife Center is the Library's latest podcast series.

The photo-sharing website Flickr was also among the Library's first forays into social media. In 2008, the Library launched a Flickr account as a pilot project,

uploading 3,100 digitized photographs from the collections, most of which were already available on the Library's website.

The response was overwhelming. By October of that year, content from the Library's Flickr page had amassed 10.4 million views. Views of the same photographs on the Library's website also increased compared to the prior year.

“It was a huge, instant success, really,” Sayers said. “What made it a big success was that there was very strong commitment from the curatorial staff in the Prints and Photographs Division (P&P).”

Shepherded by Michelle Springer of the Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO), the Flickr pilot was so well received that Springer and her colleagues, along with specialists from P&P, were invited to present to federal agencies that hoped to replicate the Library's experience.

Initially, the licensing-statement options on Flickr didn't allow users to describe the copyright status of

photos from the Library's collections. The Library does not generally own the copyright to materials on its website and cannot grant permission for use of photographs in its collections. The Library's desire to specify the copyright status of uploaded photos led to a collaboration with Flickr and other cultural heritage organizations also interested in Flickr's user-generated approach to content.

The collaboration inspired George Oates at Flickr to create [The Commons](#) with the Library in 2008, inviting the public to “help us catalog the world's public photo archives.” Institutions that have concluded a photograph is free of copyright restrictions can join The Commons and share their images under a “no known copyright restrictions” description. And community users can tag photos with descriptive details.

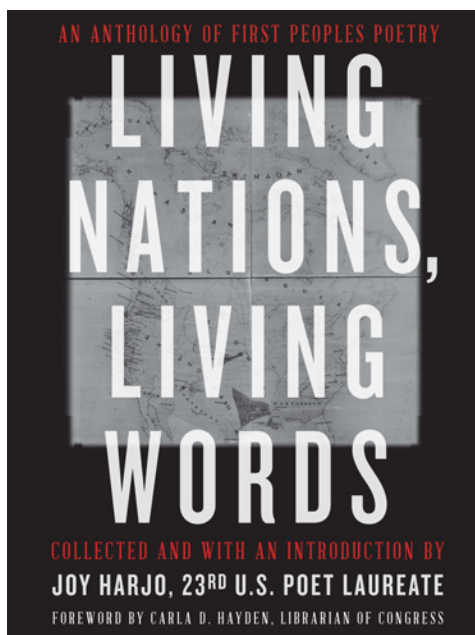
Soon, staff began to purposefully choose collections to highlight that had little description or categorization, encouraging Commons users to help identify the subjects of photographs – marking one of the Library's first endeavors into crowdsourcing.

More than 15,000 changes to Library catalog records have now been made based on input from The Commons community. As of March 10, the Library surpassed 400 million views of its content on Flickr.

While Flickr proved almost tailor-made for Library content, the requirements of other social media platforms, such as Twitter and Facebook, call for more adaptability. Twitter, for example, limits the character count for a single post, which can pose a challenge when sharing an item from the collections that has lengthy caption and credit information.

The Library of Congress introduced a Facebook page and a Twitter channel in 2009. Today, there are 13 public Twitter channels and four Facebook pages housed in divisions across the Library. The Library also shares videos to YouTube; and photos to Insta-

NATIVE AMERICAN POETRY ANTHOLOGY PUBLISHED



Publishing Officer/Shawn Miller

“Living Nations, Living Words: An Anthology of First Peoples Poetry” features poets whose work U.S. Poet Laureate Joy Harjo is highlighting in her [signature laureate project at the Library](#). W.W. Norton published the anthology in association with the Library.

gram, Unsplash and Pinterest. In addition, it relies on the platform History Hub to engage with patrons through its popular By the People crowdsourcing project.

From a legal and policy perspective, the presence of the federal government on social media platforms in the early 2000s was a novel idea – no policies existed for agencies interested in them. The Library was integral to helping negotiate governmentwide policies with platforms such as YouTube, according to Hope O’Keeffe of the Office of the General Counsel.

“We were such an early adopter that other agencies used our agreements with social media platforms as models,” said O’Keeffe.

Over time, the Library has refined its workflows and policies to regulate and sustain its social media engagement. “We made a big splash at first,” Springer said. “The challenge was to establish policies and procedures that ensured that required resources were understood by management at the outset, and that staff communicating in these forums were trained in applicable Library policies.”

About 235 staff members across the Library are now designated as responsible content authors (RCAs), meaning that they are authorized to share content on behalf of the Library after completing training.

The concept, according to Springer, is to operate a decentralized model that allows staff to speak directly on their topics of expertise while ensuring consistent application of Library policy. “Every channel has its permutations, but the underlying principles are the same,” Springer said.

Reporting social media metrics has also evolved as a workflow. When social media began, metrics were elusive – your follower count was supposedly all that mattered. Social media companies had yet to communicate with platform users about how the public interacted with content. When companies

started to report details, it became clear that followers didn’t necessarily reflect engagement. “That was kind of our first slap in the face, that not everyone who was following us saw everything we posted,” Sayers said.

In 2012, OCIO introduced monthly and annual social media analytics reports. They include platform-specific information about successful engagement techniques, sources of unexpected activity, new Library social media offerings and other notable happenings, capturing both quantitative and qualitative data. In addition, RCAs began to append codes – called campaign codes – to content, allowing the Library to track where traffic to the website originates from and how much traffic Library social media activity generates.

Like other organizations, the Library has leaned hard on social media during the pandemic. It adapted as many events as possible to the virtual landscape, and it

used social media not only to promote them but also to host many. In April alone, the Library premiered events on its social media platforms featuring Oscar-winning actor Lupita Nyong’o; Colson Whitehead, winner of the Library’s Prize for American Fiction; and Kluge Prize honoree Danielle Allen, among others.

Event videos that premiere on the Library’s social media platforms are accessible indefinitely, and people from around the world are able to tune in whenever they choose.

“When we started using social media, we saw it as mostly a tool to promote our collections and services,” said Sayers. “However, it’s expanded into a much more robust way for people to experience and interact with our collections where they are, as opposed to coming to where we are. It’s completely upended the way we think about events at the Library.” ■

LAW LIBRARY DISPLAYS NEW ACQUISITIONS



Nathan Dorn, rare books curator for the Law Library of Congress, recorded a [video displaying five new acquisitions](#) – including a compilation of mid-17th-century Russian laws, a record of a land sale tied to a major figure in early colonial Nantucket and a manuscript copy of Article 9 of the Treaty of Ghent concluding the War of 1812.