

INSIDE

Knowing Your Audience

A new report sheds light on the Library's registered users and its donors.

PAGE 3



Q&A: John Cole

The historian and former Center of the Book director talks about his career and upcoming retirement.

PAGE 4



Clearing the Backlog

How one section cleared up an accumulation of new material that piled up during building closures.

PAGE 6

On Tap

Lectures, concerts, podcasts and other events coming up at the Library of Congress.

LOC.GOV

NATIONAL BOOK FESTIVAL



Mark Seiger, Tony Rinaldo and Adedeyo Kosokoto

Clockwise from top left: National Book Festival presenters Michael J. Fox, Trisha Yearwood, Annette Gordon-Reed, Joy Williams, Jason Reynolds and Nikki Giovanni.

Library Reveals Authors, Schedule for Book Festival

Fans can create their own experience over 10 days with over 100 authors.

The 2021 Library of Congress National Book Festival will feature more than 100 authors, poets and writers in a range of formats – all celebrating the festival theme, “Open a Book, Open the World.”

The 2021 virtual festival programs will roll out over 10 days in an extended schedule from Sept. 17 to 26. The schedule of programs, announced by the Library this week, is now available on loc.gov/bookfest.

The 2021 festival will invite audiences to create their own festival experiences by offering a variety of ways to access programs and allowing attendees to tailor

their interests to their preferred mode of participation. Festival content will be available online through videos on demand, author conversations in real time and live question-and-answer sessions. Live events also will be recorded for viewing on demand.

The kickoff day will include a virtual live conversation with LeVar Burton, the actor and literacy advocate who is host of the television special “Open a Book, Open the World: The Library of Congress National Book Festival” on PBS. Burton will join Librarian of Congress Carla Hayden to discuss

NBF, 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 lidav@loc.gov.

Lynette Brown
Tiffany Corley Harkins
Stephanie Jefferson

Linda Malone
Kenneth Mitchell

USER DATA COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

Sept. 1, 2:30 p.m.
[Online](#)

At the next User Data Community of Practice meeting, we will hear from Library Services about analyzing Zoom events, from the Center for Learning, Literacy and Engagement's (CLLE) Visitor Engagement Office on new data and from CLLE's Learning and Outreach office on how it maps its networks and partners. All interested staff are welcome to attend.

Questions? Contact Emily Roberts at eroberts@loc.gov.

OIG WOULD LIKE TO KNOW

Report suspected illegal activities, waste, fraud, abuse and mismanagement in Library of Congress administration and operations to the Office of the Inspector General (OIG). A link to all Library regulations is available on the staff intranet at <http://staff.loc.gov/sites/rules-and-regulations/>.

To make a report, contact OIG via the online form at www.loc.gov/about/office-of-the-inspector-general/contact-us/ or report anonymously by mail to 101 Independence Ave., S.E., LM 630, Washington, D.C., 20540-1060.

HCD SERVICES PORTAL

During this period of remote work, the [Human Capital Directorate \(HCD\) services portal](#) is there to help. Ask questions of HCD professionals; submit documents related to benefits, retirement and payroll matters; and track requests.

Library employees are required to attest to their COVID-19 vaccination status by Sept. 10. A vaccine certification form is available on the HCD portal at the above link.

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GAZETTE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

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.

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GAZETTE DEADLINES

The deadline for editorial copy for the Sept. 10 Gazette is Wednesday, Sept. 1.

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.

New Report Offers Insight on Library Audience

Third installment in this study completes the picture of the institution's registered users and donors.

BY LORA SODINI AND MICHELLE SPEZZACATENA

A new report commissioned by the Library of Congress sheds light on the demographics and interests of registered Library users and donors and explores strategies to help the institution more effectively reach audiences digitally and build a new giving program.

In 2019, the Library's Center for Learning, Literacy and Engagement (CLLE) contracted with strategic research consultancy Morris Hargreaves McIntyre (MHM) to assess current and potential Library audiences.

In October, MHM produced a visitation report based on data collected from on-site visitors to the Library in 2020 prior to the pandemic. In January of this year, MHM analyzed the Library's potential audience in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area.

This week, MHM presented the third and final deliverable to all Library staff, completing the audience picture by taking a deeper look at current and lapsed registered Library users and donors.

The current audience survey was digitally administered this June to the Library's GovDelivery registrants and donor list, receiving 2,983 responses overall. The following data is from the current registered audience lists and donor survey presented on Aug. 26.

The results were split into four main sections to help the Library understand its audiences through a more holistic approach.

First, the survey explored who the Library's current registered users are, how they engage with



Engaging your community

A report researching the Library of Congress current audiences

August 2021 report

morris
hargreaves
mcintyre

Results, reports and presentation decks related to the survey can be [found online here](#).

the institution and what they may want to do in the future. Nine in 10 respondents have engaged with the Library in the last three years. Seventy percent of in-person audiences and 58 percent of digital event audiences have interacted with the Library for over 10 years. The Library's registered audience is highly educated – 71 percent of users have at least a master's degree. Registered users also tend to be over 55 years old and identify as white or Caucasian.

Second, the survey explored the visitor experience, including what people want when they visit in person and their engagement with, and response to, researcher services. About half of visitors heard about the Library from friends or family. Though they overwhelmingly visit to see the Library's buildings, about half also visit to participate in staff-led exhibit/programs, to conduct research or attend events. Nine in 10 visitors found the librarians to be welcoming and approachable. Eighty-five percent found all the resources and information they needed while on-site, and 99 percent found the Ask a Librarian online research assistance services very or fairly helpful.

Third, MHM provided strategies on the best way to make the most of the Library's digital presence.

Lectures and symposia, the National Book Festival and webinars, workshops and courses were the most attended digital events in the last year; they also garnered the most interest for future years. Behind the scenes looks at Library activities and virtual guided

tours drew much interest for potential digital events. The vast majority of users requested the ability to catch up on previous events after the fact.

Finally, MHM addressed donor relationships, which will help the Library understand the overall interest in donating to the institution and inform a new individual giving program. Seventy-one percent of patrons who have not previously donated said they are interested in doing so – equating to a pool of 268,000 potential donors. The top motivations for giving include supporting the Library's mission to engage, inspire and inform, preserving our nation's treasures and making the Library more accessible to all. Joining a new membership program was the identified as the top way donors are interested in supporting the Library.

The Library's audience survey team included members from CLLE, the Development Office, the Office of Communications, Library Services and OCIO. The team worked together to gather survey objectives, review draft surveys, conduct user testing on the survey instrument and assess the final report. The team will use this information to drive future engagement in all four key areas. ■



Sheelah Craighead

John Cole stands before a portrait of Ainsworth Rand Spofford, the sixth Librarian of Congress.

John Y. Cole

John Y. Cole is the historian of the Library of Congress and the former director of the Library's Center for the Book. He plans to retire in September.

Where did you grow up and go to school?

I was born and raised in Washington state, graduating from the University of Washington with degrees in history and librarianship. My grandfather was an itinerant linotype operator and newspaper editor who read to me frequently, managing to instill both printer's ink and a love of reading in his grandson.

What first drew you to library work and ultimately to the Library?

At the University of Washington I was "lured" into library school by a wonderful teacher who introduced me to book and library history. My next lucky break came in 1964, when my two-year ROTC obligation took me to the U.S. Army Intelligence School at Fort Holabird near Baltimore, where fortunately my graduate library school degree was noticed.

As a result, and without my knowledge, 2nd Lt. Cole was not

assigned to Vietnam with most of the rest of his class, but instead "stayed home" to head the Intelligence School Library. I learned about the Library of Congress (loved it from the start!) when I began visiting the Library's Surplus Duplicate Collection to gather materials for my U.S. Army Intelligence School Library.

How did your career at the Library evolve?

I left the Army in 1966, knocked on the door of the Library's Personnel Office and was shepherded into the 1966-67 professional intern program, then called special recruits. I served as the Library's adviser for the program for the next several years; an early career satisfaction was being able to facilitate the opening up of this valuable "outsider" experience to qualified Library employees.

I soon found a job in the Collections Development Office in the Reference Department, which was a good "Library-wide" fit with my recent part-time enrollment in the American Studies Ph.D. program at George Washington University. My dissertation topic focused on Ainsworth Rand Spofford, Librarian of Congress 1864-1897.

My interest in Library history

was one of the reasons that, in 1976, Librarian of Congress Daniel J. Boorstin asked me to chair his one-year task force on goals, organization and planning. This key experience led in 1977 to my appointment as the first (and at the time the only) staff member of the newly created Center for the Book.

What inspires you to study and write about the Library's history?

During my initial training year at the Library, I read "The Story Up to Now: The Library of Congress 1800-1946," by David C. Mearns, a distinguished Library veteran who joined the staff in 1918 and retired in 1967 – one year after I had arrived.

I was astonished to learn about the national library vision and accomplishments of Spofford, who then was a relatively unknown Librarian of Congress. Mearns encouraged me to take Spofford on as a dissertation topic. I did so and then followed up on a lead from an earlier issue of the Library's Information Bulletin about Spofford descendants in the D.C. area. To my amazement and delight, these family members in Great Falls, Virginia, and also New York City had kept important Spofford manuscripts and documents as well as a color portrait – all eventually donated to the Library. I still am inspired by Spofford and his remarkable achievements.

What are a couple of standout memories from your career?

Overall, I'm grateful to have been able to contribute to the Library in several different ways, especially in helping increasing understanding of our unusual and somewhat complicated role in American government and culture.

Specifically, I was privileged through my 39 years of service as the founding director of the Center for the Book to work closely with Librarians of Congress Daniel J. Boorstin and James H. Billington – both strong personalities who also loved the Library.

I especially treasure the friend-

ships I developed, in tandem with Dr. Billington, with first ladies Barbara Bush, the honorary chair of Center for the Book national reading promotion campaigns from 1989 to 1992, and in 2001 with Laura Bush, the “founder” and co-chair, with Dr. Billington, of the National Book Festival.

What’s a little-known fun fact you’ve uncovered about the Library?

In January 1898, “on behalf of the American home,” the National Women’s Christian Temperance Union urged “our National Library” to stop liquor sales in its restaurant on the third floor of the newly opened Jefferson Building. And the campaign

apparently was successful.

What do you see as the most significant changes at the Library during your time here?

The continued expansion and improvement of the institution, thanks largely to better internal communication with the staff and with also with Congress, libraries, scholars and researchers, and the general public.

Concurrently, a growing awareness of the Library’s unique characteristics on the part of both its staff and its talented top leadership. Each of the Librarians of Congress “during my time” has brought different interests and talents to the institution, continuing the “balance” needed to continue a

high standard of service to our wide range of constituents – local, national and international.

What will you do during retirement?

My wife, Nancy Gwinn, retired last year after a long career at the Smithsonian Libraries. Now that I’m finally (in her view) joining her ranks, we will have more time, especially for family and international travel. The D.C. area, however, will remain our home, with our condo in Arizona as a western outpost. And of course I’ll be working on an interesting Library history project or two wherever I am! ■

NEWS

Agency Historians Offer Meaningful Context to Our Past

BY LEE ANN POTTER

A highlight of my first day as a Library of Congress employee in January 2013 was listening to the briefing that John Y. Cole gave to my orientation group.

I had received two books for Christmas – “Jefferson’s Legacy: A Brief History of the Library of Congress” (1993), by John Y. Cole; and “The Library of Congress: The Art and Architecture of the Thomas Jefferson Building” (1997), edited by John Y. Cole and Henry Hope Reed. I found both volumes inspiring, and I hoped to meet this author, editor and historian one day. Getting to do so on day one was quite exciting!

Cole’s remarks conveyed his knowledge of, curiosity about and affection for the Library and its rich past. He shared numerous facts and anecdotes, weaving together personalities and events with the skill of a great storyteller.

A librarian and historian, Cole has been a student of the Library’s history for more than 50 years. His 1971 dissertation focused on

the sixth Librarian of Congress, Ainsworth Rand Spofford, and he has published extensively on the Library’s history over the course of his career. He was appointed the first official historian of the Library of Congress in 2016.

Cole has regularly presented on the history of the Library at new employee orientations since 2011. As a result, more than 1,000 new employees have started their Library experience with meaningful historical context.

Providing “meaningful historical context” is exactly what federal historians do. Both houses of Congress, the Department of State, the National Park Service, the Department of Defense, NASA, the intelligence community, the National Archives and the Library of Congress are among the many federal agencies that employ historians.

Their duties include conducting research, curating exhibitions, conducting oral histories and creating website content. Nearly all write scholarly books and articles. Many prepare historical studies for agency officials that provide

background information, describe the evolution of policies and derive lessons learned.

The Society for History in the Federal Government website, www.shfg.org, includes a wealth of information about the work of agency historians. The HISTORY@FEDGOV section serves as a portal to federal history, historical resources and historical programs. It includes an article entitled “History of the Library of Congress.” Guess who wrote it?

Lee Ann Potter is director of Professional Learning and Outreach Initiatives. She served as president of the Society for History in the Federal Government from 2008 until 2009. ■

HAVING TECHNICAL ISSUES?

The Office of the Chief Information Officer’s service desk is staffed around the clock with technicians ready to help. Contact ocioserVICES@loc.gov or (202) 707-7727.

Better Together: Clearing a Pandemic Backlog

Boxes of overseas acquisitions piled up while buildings were closed.

BY HONG TA-MOORE

Before March 2020, the Middle East and South Asia Section (MESA) received an average of 20 boxes a month from the Library's Cairo, Islamabad, Jakarta and New Delhi offices, processing the new acquisitions with relative ease. Then the pandemic struck.

Between March 2020 and June 2021, nearly 1,000 boxes of materials were placed in quarantine. When limited on-site operations and international shipping resumed, MESA began to receive massive shipments – at one point, more than 500 boxes arrived in a matter of days. The unprecedented accumulation overwhelmed staff.

But thanks to some internal strategizing and a collaboration with the Acquisitions Fiscal and Overseas Support (AFOS) Division, the backlog has been cleared. Moreover, staff in the Asian and Middle Eastern Division (ASME), of which MESA is a part, have gained a better understanding of one another's responsibilities and fine-tuned their workflow – a team-building experience that will pay dividends going forward.

"The timely cooperation also ensures that materials will be discoverable and available to users during the ongoing pandemic," Jessalyn Zoom, ASME's chief, said. "It's a win-win situation."

When quarantine was lifted from the stockpile of international materials in June, they were moved to the Capitol Hill campus. The still-limited number of staff members permitted on-site scrambled to arrange boxes by country of origin, unpack books, account for inventory and perform serials check-in and end-stage



Boxes of acquisitions arriving from overseas offices await processing in the Madison Building.

processing before sending the acquisitions to custodial divisions or an assigned storage facility.

As MESA's section head, I worked with Zoom, my division chief and MESA processing staff to brainstorm how to resolve the complexities of both limited space and staff. We first built an "assembly line" to mass process materials. I opened boxes and staged material, labeling book trucks according to country of origin and custodial destination. Three technicians then worked through the entire contents of the trucks before moving them to the next stage of processing. This methodical plan allowed for continual progress – albeit at a slower-than-ideal pace.

The tide shifted when ASME approached AFOS, our colleagues in the Acquisitions and Bibliographic Access Directorate. AFOS' division chief, Vivek Nadkarni, quickly agreed to help.

A group of four AFOS technicians led by Adrian Korz finished opening all remaining shipments of bound serials and organized them on AFOS' shelves according to overseas office of origin. That freed

all of MESA's staff (librarians and technicians alike) to focus on performing end-stage processing of monographs. The result: MESA staff processed 350 boxes of monographs in less than a week.

During the pandemic, ASME staff have offered support to one another at a time when fewer staff are on-site. All of us have engaged in tasks that fall outside our normal duties and faced and overcome challenges together.

As a result of our experiences, ASME has developed a specialized workflow document addressing end-stage processing of materials from overseas offices and ASME acquisitions receipts. This document will provide an invaluable reference to staff and will be used for future training.

ASME's management team commends the division's processing staff who helped to clear the backlog and our colleagues in AFOS.

"Their support was instrumental," Zoom said. "It allowed us to process massive shipments in record time." ■

‘Open a Book, Open the World’

Genres and featured authors for the National Book Festival in September:

Current events: Eric Eyre, Sarah Frier, Daniel Kahneman, Patrick Radden Keefe, David Nasaw, Sonia Shah, Cass R. Sunstein, Anna Wiener, Isabel Wilkerson and Lawrence Wright

Fiction: Elliot Ackerman, Kristen Arnett, Brit Bennett, P. Djèlí Clark, Tana French, Roxane Gay, Yaa Gyasi, Elizabeth Hand, Kristin Hannah, Kazuo Ishiguro, Honorée Fanonne Jeffers, Robert Jones Jr., Chang-rae Lee, Raven Leilani, Yiyun Li, Margot Livesey, Alice McDermott, Alex Michaelides, Sue Miller, Silvia Moreno-Garcia, Viet Thanh Nguyen, Christopher Paolini, Sarah Pearse, Deesha Philyaw, George Saunders, Maggie

Shipstead, Adm. James Stavridis, Douglas Stuart, Martha Wells and Joy Williams

History and biography: Noé Álvarez, Catherine Belton, Kai Bird, Joseph J. Ellis, Michael J. Fox, Annette Gordon-Reed, Maria Hinojosa, Heather McGhee, James Oakes, David O. Stewart, Julia Sweig, Karen Tumulty, Simon Winchester and Joshua Yaffa

Lifestyle: Jennifer Ackerman, Diane von Furstenberg, Adam Grant, Hawa Hassan, Mishal Husain, Katherine May, Adrienne Raphel, Marcus Samuelsson, Rodney Scott, Will Shortz, David Allen Sibley and Trisha Yearwood

Poetry and prose: Patricia Engel, Danielle Evans, Kelli Jo Ford, Rivka Galchen, Nikki Giovanni, Francine J. Harris, Toni Jensen, Claudia Ran-

kine, Patrick Rosal, Phillip B. Williams, Kevin Young and Charles Yu

Science: Olivia Campbell, Bill Gates, Peter Godfrey-Smith, Avi Loeb, Janice P. Nimura, Matt Parker, Mary Roach and Suzanne Simard

Children: Derrick Barnes, Sophie Blackall, Kacen Callender, Stacy Davidowitz, Rep. Sharice Davids, Kate DiCamillo, Nikki Grimes, Dan Gutman, Brayden Harrington, Ann Clare LeZotte, Meg Medina, Lupita Nyong'o, Jerry Pinkney, Guy Raz, Ali Stroker and Mindy Thomas

Teens: Traci Chee, Jay Coles, Sharon G. Flake, Tahereh Mafi, Kekla Magoon, Trung Le Nguyen, Jason Reynolds, Yusef Salaam, Angie Thomas, Katie Zhao and Ibi Zoboi ■

NBF, CONTINUED FROM 1

the power of reading, story and connection on Sept. 17 at 7 p.m.

Two ticketed in-person events are scheduled to take place at the Library and be livestreamed on the festival website.

The featured in-person events are:

- A discussion about obsessive crossword fascinations between Adrienne Raphel, author of “Thinking Inside the Box: Adventures with Crosswords and the Puzzling People Who Can’t Live Without Them,” and New York Times puzzle master Will Shortz. That event is scheduled for Sept. 21 at 7 p.m.
- Bestselling poet and writer Nikki Giovanni, named by Oprah Winfrey as a “Living Legend,” will read from and discuss her new book, “Make Me Rain: Poems & Prose,” in conversation with Hayden. The conversation will take place Sept. 25 at 7 p.m.

Throughout the 10 days of the festival, prerecorded videos as well as live conversations will roll out in a schedule in which each program has a dedicated timeslot.

The more than 100 authors writing in myriad genres offer something of interest for readers of all ages. Authors include, among many others, actor Michael J. Fox; Pulitzer Prize-winning historians Joseph J. Ellis and Annette Gordon-Reed; country music and culinary television star Trisha Yearwood; Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates; Joy Williams, recipient of the 2021 Library of Congress Prize for American Fiction; and young adult author Jason Reynolds, the current national ambassador for young people’s literature at the Library of Congress.

The festival website will feature five interactive presentations showcasing Library experts in conservation, copyright, art and literature, comics and genealogy, from Sept. 20 to 24 at 3 p.m.

Television viewers also will see an inspiring introduction to the festival and its lineup in a one-hour special premiering Sept. 12 on PBS. “Open a Book, Open the World: The Library of Congress National Book Festival” will be hosted by Burton.

This year’s festival will include a new podcast series with NPR,

live events with The Washington Post and virtual events from PBS Books on Facebook in collaboration with public television stations and libraries across the country.

The National Book Festival is made possible by the generous support of private- and public-sector sponsors who share the Library’s commitment to reading and literacy, led by National Book Festival Co-Chair David M. Rubenstein.

Sponsors include festival vice chair the James Madison Council and Charter sponsors The Washington Post, the Institute of Museum and Library Services, the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities. Additional generous support is provided by the Library of Congress Federal Credit Union, Tim and Diane Naughton and Capital Group; Presenting Partner NPR; and Media Partner The New Republic.

For the latest National Book Festival news, subscribe to the festival blog here for [updates](#). ■