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National Book Festival Returns to Convention Center
Festivalgoers will meet face-to-face for the first time since 2019.

The theme of this year’s National Book Festival, “books bring us together,” is fitting for a world seeking normalcy following a pandemic that closed borders and businesses around the globe — and, for two years running, turned the enormously popular in-person festival into an online event.

Next Saturday, booklovers will at last gather again for the first in-person festival since September 2019 — those seemingly long-ago days before “coronavirus” became a household word and masks a part of the daily wardrobe.

On Sept. 3, the Library will present a diverse lineup of over 120 authors, poets and writers to audiences at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center in Washington, D.C. The festival takes place from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m.; doors open at 8:30 a.m. The festival is free and open to everyone.

Those who can’t join in person can tune into sessions throughout the day: Events on the Main, Society and Culture and Young Adult stages will be livestreamed on loc.gov/bookfest. Videos of many presentations will also be made available on demand shortly after the festival.

The festival will celebrate its return to the convention center with new storytelling and audiobook

BOOKFEST, CONTINUED ON 7
NOTICES

DONATED TIME
The following employees have satisfied eligibility requirements to receive leave donations from other staff members. Contact Amy McAllister at amcallister@loc.gov.

Lynette Brown
Cherkea Howery

REMINDER: MANDATORY ANNUAL LIBRARY TRAINING
All Library staff are required to complete three important courses each year: IT Security Awareness, Records Management and Emergency Preparedness. Here are descriptions of the courses, links and deadlines. Note that individual service units may have their own deadlines for completion.

- **IT Security Awareness.** This course is for employees, contractors and volunteers with access to Library computers or other IT systems. It ensures Library IT users understand IT security procedures and can apply them in their everyday work. Deadline to complete: Sept. 9. Click this link to access the course on LOC Learn.

- **Records Management.** This course is for all Library staff, contractors, interns and volunteers who handle Library records. It ensures they understand their records responsibilities and how to file, maintain and dispose of records properly. Deadline to complete: Sept. 9. Click this link to access the course on LOC Learn.

- **Emergency Preparedness.** This course provides Library employees, volunteers and interns with detailed information about how to safely respond to emergencies in the workplace. Deadline to complete: Nov. 18. Click here to access the course on LOC Learn.

Questions about mandatory training? Submit them to AskHCD using the drop-down menus Training/Development and Required Training.

NATIONAL BOOK FESTIVAL SNEAK PEEK
**Aug. 30, noon**
**Online**
Join the Center for Learning, Literacy and Engagement (CLLE) and the Signature Programs Office for a sneak peek into this year’s National Book Festival. CLLE’s director, Shari Werb, literary director Clay Smith and Jarrod MacNeil of Signature Programs will explain how they approached returning to an in-person festival and how they programmed this year’s lineup. They’ll also offer some insider hacks to navigate the Sept. 3 festival and take your questions. Plus, two writers from the festival will speak with Library staff members about their new books.

Join the event here. Questions? Contact Clay Smith at csmith@loc.gov.
Weaving Together Primary Sources Across Institutions

Digitization allows educators to combine resources from multiple repositories.

BY LEE ANN POTTER

Through the Library’s Teaching with Primary Sources (TPS) program, organizations across the country receive grants to develop curricular materials for educators using the Library’s online collections. Increasingly, many of these projects also incorporate materials from beyond the Library thanks to the growing online accessibility of collections and exhibits housed in other cultural institutions.

The results have been transformative. Projects using this approach have expanded inclusivity, significantly benefited teachers, students and communities and enhanced partnerships.

This summer, I facilitated a panel bringing together four organizations that partner with TPS to explore the benefits and challenges of combining primary sources across institutions. Titled, “The Perfect Primary Source Combination,” the panel took place during the Smithsonian Institution’s National Education Summit.

Searching for, combining and creating teaching materials from a robust variety of sources can be both difficult and exhilarating. An inventor’s papers may be in the Library’s collections, while the inventor’s patent applications and models may be divided between the National Archives and the Smithsonian. Simultaneously, the National Park Service may maintain a related workshop, and a local historical society may offer tours of the inventor’s home.

The panel emphasized, however, that hard work involved in combining sources pays off. Primary sources can be excellent teaching tools, but when they are paired with others that reflect a variety of media, they can be magical. They can offer multiple perspectives on the same event, engage all of our senses and appeal to different learning styles. They prove that what a photograph shows, an oral history might tell. What one source whispers, another might shout. What one source proves, another source might contradict.

Bridget Morton, an assistant professor of education at Mars Hill University in western North Carolina, represented one of the organizational partners featured on the panel. Her university’s Appalachian diversity program invites educators to explore music to teach about cultures that have come together to represent Appalachia. She explained: “In our program, we use resources from the Bascom Lamar Lunsford Collection in our university archives, lesson plans from the Smithsonian Folkways collection and interviews from the Library’s American Folklife Center with Appalachian storytellers and singers.”

Another TPS panelist, Alison Noyes of the Emerging America Program at the Collaborative for Educational Services in Massachusetts, described contributing to development of a course for educators titled “Reform to Equal Rights: K-12 Disability History.”

She explained that the curriculum features primary sources from the National Museum of American History’s online exhibition on disability history and relies heavily on the diverse collections of the Library. In particular, many lessons highlight items from the Library’s free to use and reuse set on disability awareness.

Panelist Tuyen Tran from the California History–Social Studies Project and Jessica Ellison from the Minnesota Historical Society shared specific examples from their TPS projects related to culturally relevant pedagogy. They emphasized the powerful ability that primary sources have to reveal multiple perspectives and enable content to become relevant to every student.

Also featured at the Smithsonian summit was Jason Reynolds, the national ambassador for young people’s literature, who provided the closing keynote address in conversation with the Smithsonian’s undersecretary for education, Monique Chism.

View a recording of “The Perfect Primary Source Combination” here.
COVID-19 Guidance Updated

Earlier this month, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) modified its COVID-19 guidance to align more closely with current practices and to help individuals and communities better manage COVID-19.

In response, the Library has adjusted its policy on screening tests based on vaccination status and on mask wearing after exposure to COVID-19.

The stated goal of the new guidelines is to reduce severe disease and limit the strain on the health care system. The first and most important guideline emphasizes the importance of staying up to date with vaccination, improving ventilation, testing those who are symptomatic and those who have been exposed and isolating infected people.

The guidelines emphasize that individuals must recognize their personal risk related to COVID-19 and the risk to those around them who may be more vulnerable to COVID-19 and to take precautions based on those risks.

With respect to the Library community, the following policies remain in effect:

• Complete the daily health screening prior to coming to work.
• Do not come to work if you are sick or answer yes to any screening question.
• Continue to report COVID-19 exposure, symptoms and positive tests to the Health Services Division (HSD) at HSD-COVID-check-in@loc.gov.
• Follow HSD’s advice regarding testing and quarantine if you have COVID-19 exposure or symptoms.
• Continue to report all international travel to HSD and follow the guidance its staff members provide on quarantine and testing.

Employees who have symptoms or positive tests for COVID-19 should consult with HSD for guidance on testing requirements and timing of a return to on-site work.

At high or medium community transmission levels, you should continue to wear a mask indoors in public if you are at high risk of getting sick. In addition, if you have household or social contact with a high-risk person, consider COVID-19 testing to minimize the risk of exposing the person and wear a mask when you are indoors with the person.

Questions? Contact HSD at HSD-COVID-check-in@loc.gov.

NATIONAL BOOK FESTIVAL POSTER

Artist, writer and educator Gail Anderson designed the poster for this year’s National Book Festival with an eye toward its theme: “books bring us together.” While books can be a wonderful solitary experience, she said in a blog interview, “they can also build community.”
Nathan Cross is an archivist for the Veterans History Project.

Tell us about your background.

I grew up in Fort Worth, Texas, the son of two educators. I owe my parents a huge debt of gratitude for instilling a love of learning in me from a young age.

I did my undergraduate studies at Texas Christian University in Fort Worth, after which I spent seven years as an officer in the Marine Corps. The military was a great experience and gave me the opportunity to live in Hawaii and Okinawa for three years each.

I also deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan. While deployments had their share of difficult days for everyone, I feel incredibly privileged to have had the opportunity to work alongside the types of people I met in the military.

After the military, I went to graduate school at the University of Texas at Arlington, where I earned a master’s degree in history. When I enrolled, I had only a vague plan that I would be some sort of historian. While there, however, I fell in love with the idea of working in archives, and I feel so lucky to be doing so today – I’m an archivist for the Library’s Veterans History Project (VHP).

When did you arrive at the Library, and what does your job entail?

After graduate school, I worked for the National Archives and the U.S. Navy Archives as a reference archivist before coming to the Library in 2020. Being a military history aficionado, working for VHP is obviously a dream job for me.

My role is to create access points for researchers using our collections. This entails processing new collections, creating finding aids and research guides and providing reference services.

What are some of your standout projects?

I have really enjoyed the opportunity to work on research guides for VHP. Last year, I completed a guide for the collections we hold from Navajo Code Talkers, Native American veterans who served in the Pacific during World War II. They came to be known as “Code Talkers” after they developed a military code based on the Navajo language.

The Code Talkers are legendary figures, and the collections are a unique strength of VHP’s holdings. Getting to work with them was a true privilege, especially as a Marine.

Working with two colleagues, I also produced research guides on World War I correspondence collections and photograph collections from Iraq and Afghanistan veterans.

Processing newly acquired correspondence collections has also been a favorite project of mine. By chance, all of the correspondence collections I’ve processed so far have been from World War II veterans. Getting this glimpse into their personal lives has been fascinating and has somewhat altered my perceptions of the “Greatest Generation” – I’ve found they weren’t that much different from my generation!

One task I took on during the pandemic that wouldn’t necessarily be a part of my duties during “normal” times was transcribing oral history interviews from our collections. Transcribing can at times be tedious and frustrating, as oral language tends to be very different from written language. But transcribing also forced me to slow down and really pay attention to what the interviewees were saying. During those “unprecedented times,” having to slow down and truly connect with another veteran’s story could be incredibly therapeutic.

Through all these projects, I’ve been re-exposed to the incredible diversity that characterizes the veteran population. American military veterans are a diverse population by just about any demographic category one could use. The fact that they consistently come together to get things done gives me hope in our polarized times.

Veterans also relate highly diverse experiences, and I’ve come to appreciate the important role that VHP plays in providing human profiles of American veterans. Media and pop culture portrayals tend to coalesce around two archetypal perceptions of veterans as either heroes or victims. But VHP collections can help researchers to dig deeper and see the human stories beyond the stereotypes.

What do you enjoy doing outside work?

Traveling, hiking, reading and spending time with my wife and our beagle, Lola.

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

I have a minor obsession (my wife would say more than minor) with watching English soccer. I’ve made two trips to the U.K. just to attend soccer games.
Brenadette Branch

Brenadette Branch, beloved mother and grandmother and treasured friend, passed away on Aug. 10 after a battle with cancer. She had recently celebrated her 53rd birthday.

A Washington, D.C., native, Branch lived a life dedicated to public service. She spent over 35 years working as a federal employee, always pushing herself to learn and grow in unexpected directions. After joining the Library in 1998, Branch served in administrative roles for several years before changing careers and jumping into a new challenge as an information technology specialist in 2002.

Branch went on to support a variety of technology efforts across the Library, working as a software developer for the Copyright Office’s Licensing Division system and other IT applications. Most recently, she served as a valued member of the IT Quality and Performance Management Directorate in the Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO), where she supported the adoption of IT service management practices and became OCIO’s service catalog management and maintenance expert.

Amid an already distinguished career, Branch completed a bachelor’s degree in 2013 at the University of Maryland University College. It came as no surprise to her friends and family, who often looked to Branch’s dauntless spirit and no-nonsense attitude for encouragement and strength.

Branch loved traveling, watching cooking shows and Korean dramas and spending quality time with her family. She was especially proud of her two sons and was known to be an enthusiastic cheerleader for all their accomplishments. She was delighted when her first grandchild came into her life and was awaiting the birth of her second grandson this year.

Cherished for her calm and friendly manner, Branch made many lifelong friends at the Library. One colleague remembers fondly that Branch was such a gentle soul that in 20 years of carpooling through D.C.’s notorious traffic, they never once saw her lose her temper.

In perhaps the truest reflection of her kindness and courage, friends shared that Branch was uncomplaining and deeply devoted to her family even when she became ill. “Brenadette’s was a life that shined brightly so the paths of others could be illuminated,” one friend said. “Hers was a life that exemplified brilliance in every capacity.”

Branch is survived by her two sons, one grandchild and one on the way, her mother, brother and sister. A memorial service will be held for her at 10 a.m. on Aug. 27 at St. Judah Spiritual Baptist Church in Washington, D.C.

**Library Night at Nationals Park**

**Aug. 30, 7 p.m.**

Librarian of Congress Carla Hayden will throw the first pitch at Library of Congress Night at Nationals Park, home to the Washington Nationals. The Library has reserved discounted seats for staff. Purchase discounted tickets to the Aug. 30 game through this link. Questions? Contact signatureprograms@loc.gov.

**Apply for a Continuing Education Grant**

The Library of Congress Professional Association’s (LCPA) Continuing Education Fund is accepting applications for 2022–23 grants to support staff educational and professional development opportunities.

Staff members who have been employed at the Library for at least six months and who are LCPA members are eligible to apply. Associate members, including contract employees, are not eligible. The application deadline is Sept. 2.

For more information and instructions, visit the LCPA intranet site. Questions? Contact Anne Peele at apeele@crs.loc.gov.
events. Festival stages have been renamed and refocused from past years, including the addition of a dedicated Life/Style stage. Offerings for young people will take place on three stages: Please Read Me A Story, KidLit and Young Adult.

And a new PopLit stage features beloved writers talking about contemporary topics as well as popular classics, such as a discussion of the memoir “Tuesdays with Morrie” with author Mitch Albom.

One thing hasn’t changed: The festival still will offer a deep lineup of literary stars. Among the highlights:

Singer–songwriter Janelle Monáe discusses bringing the Afrofuturistic world of her album to the written page for “The Memory Librarian: And Other Stories of Dirty Computer.”

Deaf activist Nyle DiMarco shares his story in “Deaf Utopia: A Memoir — and a Love Letter to a Way of Life.”

Actor Nick Offerman from TV’s “Parks and Recreation” explores his journey writing “Where the Deer and the Antelope Play: The Pastoral Observations of One Ignorant American Who Loves to Walk Outside” with a National Park Service ranger.

Comedian and internet personality Leslie Jordan is sure to entertain with a discussion of his book “How Y’all Doing?: Misadventures and Mischief from a Life Well Lived.”

Young audiences will be enthralled by a conversation featuring D whole Clayton, Tiffany D. Jackson, Nic Stone, Ashley Woodfolk and Nicola Yoon, authors of the young adult novel “Blackout.” Author Donna Barba Higuera joins the Young Adult stage to discuss her award-winning dystopian novel, “The Last Cuentista.”


The festival also will feature a virtual ceremony bestowing the Library of Congress Prize for American Fiction on Jesmyn Ward, author of novels such as “Salvage the Bones” and “Sing, Unburied, Sing.” At 45, Ward is the youngest person to receive the Library’s fiction award for her lifetime of work.

In collaboration with the Library’s National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled (NLS), the festival will feature a panel of popular audiobook narrators sharing insights into their work. The festival also showcases, for the first time, performances by the literary non-profit Literature to Life, a literacy program that presents professionally staged verbatim adaptations of American literary classics.

Meanwhile, the expo floor of the convention center will feature Roadmap to Reading, an area where all 50 states and three territories will highlight books and host children’s activities; a Washington Post space with story readings, a photo booth and yoga; a General Motors exhibit with children’s activities; and multiple sponsor booths, including those of El Tiempo Latino and Scholastic.

All authors will participate in book signings, and the Junior League of Washington will return to the festival this year to manage the expo floor signing logistics, as they have in the past. Festivalgoers will be able to purchase books by the featured authors from Politics & Prose, the official bookseller of the 2022 National Book Festival.

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 the Institute of Museum and Library Services, the Washington Post, AARP, General Motors, the James Madison Council, the John W. Kluge Center, the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities. Additional support is provided from the For The People Fund, with seed funding provided by the Ford Foundation; Friends of the Library of Congress; Hay–Adams; Joseph and Lynn Deutsch; the Junior League of Washington; the Library of Congress Federal Credit Union; the Library of Congress Publishing Office; NLS; Rancho Mirage Writers Festival; Scholaristic; Sharjah Book Authority; Timothy and Diane Naughton; the Washington Nationals; NPR; El Tiempo Latino; and Book TV on C–SPAN2.

For more details, visit loc.gov/bookfest.