GAZETTE
LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

Volume 33, No. 42
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A weekly publication for staff

INSIDE

Conserving Energy

A just-completed project of the Library and the Architect of the Capitol reduces the energy and water consumed in Library facilities.

PAGE 3

Updated COVID Guidance

The Health Services Division offers advice on safely gathering during COVID and flu season.

PAGE 4

Q&A: Tyna Hepburn

Staff members who have checked out books from the collections have likely encountered Hepburn at some point over the years.

PAGE 5

Records Management

The Records Management Division reminds employees about proper handling of Library records.

PAGE 6

Shawn Miller

A modern-day view of the Thomas Jefferson Building.

Thomas Jefferson Building Turns 125 Next Week

The building remains one of the world's most beautiful spaces.

BY WENDI A. MALONEY

Nov. 1, 1897, dawned warmish and wet in Washington, D.C. – heavy rains were predicted through the evening. But the gray skies failed to dampen the spirits of readers anticipating a long-awaited event: the opening of the new and reportedly fabulous Library of Congress reading room. In fact, the gloomy outdoors only added to the appeal of the literary feast indoors, wrote the city's Evening Star.

When a watchman began allowing entrance at 9 a.m., an achievement a quarter century in the making came to pass: The U.S. had a national library set to rival any other, both in splendor and in function. That milestone was reached 125 years ago this November.

The road toward the building's construction had more than a few twists and turns, to put it mildly. But, in the end, it led to a stunning monument to America's turn-of-the-20th-century ambitions and creative ingenuity.

As those first readers filed into the building that rainy Nov. 1, they likely began to grasp why popular magazines had been writing about the wonders of the new structure for months. They would have seen the Library's granite exterior and imposing size; the flame of learning atop a brilliant dome gilded in 23-carat gold; and some of the artwork and sculpture that left observers breathless.

"In construction, in accommodations, in suitability to intended

JEFFERSON, 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
Joselynn Fountain
Cherkea Howery
Wilbur King
Mary Lamb

MANDATORY EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS TRAINING

All Library employees, volunteers and interns must take the Library's revised online training course on emergency preparedness by Nov. 18. It is strongly recommended for contractors as well. The course will help employees learn to take the appropriate actions and follow the proper procedures in response to threats, incidents and emergencies that occur in or near the workplace.

Use Microsoft Edge or Google Chrome to take the course in LOC Learn. Do not use Mozilla Firefox. When prompted, click I Agree, then click Continue to log in. Click Start to begin the course.

Closed captioning is provided. A screen-reader accessible version of the course is available for staff who use assistive technology.

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

YOU CAN STILL GET YOUR FLU SHOT

The Health Services Division (HSD) has flu shots available. Library employees, contractors, on-site volunteers and staff of the U.S. Capitol Police and the Architect of the Capitol can walk into LM G-40 between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. to get a vaccine or make an appointment to attend one of the Madison Building flu shot clinics on Nov. 8 and 9 and Dec. 6 and 7. Sign up for a clinic here.

Questions? Contact HSD at hso@loc.gov.

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 Nov. 11 Gazette is Wednesday, Nov. 2.

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.

Energy Savings Project Has Positive Environmental Impact

The Library and the Architect of the Capitol teamed up to score big results.

BY STEPHEN MALLOTT AND ABDUL MAJID

The Architect of the Capitol (AOC) and the Library are pleased to announce completion of an energy savings performance contract at the Library. The project set out to achieve energy and water savings in Library buildings to meet congressional and agency conservation goals. By any measure, the effort is a success – the Library has achieved a significant reduction in the energy and water consumed in its facilities across Capitol Hill and in Fort Meade, Maryland, and Culpeper, Virginia.

Construction began in April 2020 and concluded this fall. The improvements to heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC), lighting and faucets will lead to an annual energy savings equivalent to that consumed by 614 average Americans each year.

"Annual water savings are equal to the amount of water contained in 21 Olympic swimming pools, and the environmental impact of the improvements is comparable to removing 4,318 cars from the road each year," Lemoyne Blackshear, chief of the Facility Services Division, said.

Some of the project's achievements include converting fluorescent lighting to LED (light-emitting diode) and installing lighting occupancy sensors in locations across Library facilities. Installation of these lighting upgrades required extensive coordination with Library staff members assisted by service unit space liaisons.

"This program has placed great value in sustainability efforts, and I echo my co-workers' sentiments that I truly appreciate the decision AOC made to invest in energy savings at the Library," said Brittany Flock, a space management specialist and the space liaison for the Library Collections and Services Group.

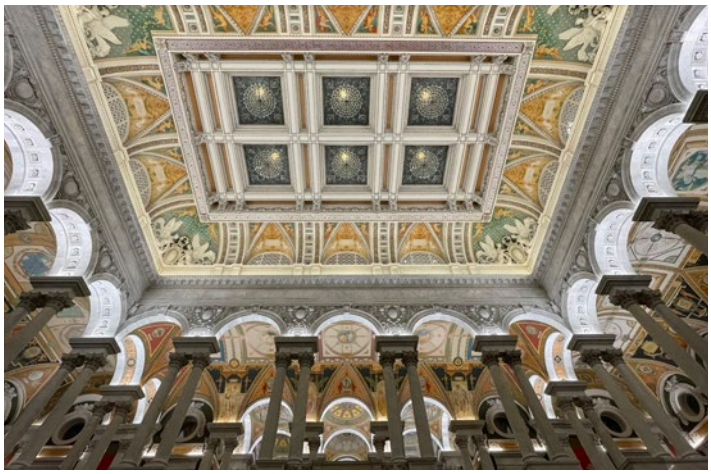
The teams also upgraded outdated HVAC control systems in Capitol Hill and Fort Meade buildings, replaced a portion of the pneumatic thermostats in the Madison Building and updated faucets and sprayers to conserve water. In addition, the project implemented exterior irrigation and fountain improvements, replaced transformers and installed a new gas-fired hot water boiler at the Little Scholars child care facility.

Throughout Library buildings, staff members can see evidence of the project, including new thermostats, light switches and occupancy sensors. Some of the most striking improvements involve lighting upgrades, notably in the Jefferson Great Hall and on the Culpeper campus.

"The updated lighting in the Great Hall is spectacular," Jennifer Romm, manager of public program services, said. "The entire space feels warmer and somehow cleaner."

She added: "The emphasis on certain features draws the eye to highlight the most important elements in this majestic space. Plus, the entire system is user friendly and easy to adjust for special events. What a sensational investment in this national treasure."

These reviews demonstrate that in addition to energy savings and technology upgrades, the project increased the Library's ability to meet its mission as a universal and enduring source of knowledge and creativity. ■



Architect of the Capitol

A view of the ceiling of the Jefferson Building's Great Hall before the lighting upgrade (left) and afterward.

Updated COVID Guidance, New Staff Events Policy

BY DR. SANDRA CHARLES

As the holidays and colder weather draw near along with cold, flu and COVID-19 season, we unfortunately face ideal conditions for people getting very sick. Already, Germany and other Western European countries are reporting a new wave of COVID that is bringing severe disease and an increase in hospitalizations.

At the same time, new COVID subvariants are making their presence known. In the U.S. Northeast, the omicron subvariant BQ.1.1 has jumped from 1.1% to 11% of new cases. New York has a quarter of all the cases in the country, and hospitalizations are increasing. The area is also seeing the highest concentration of virus in wastewater since last winter.

With these developments in mind, the Health Services Division (HSD) urges all staff members to bring their vaccinations up to date. Now is the time to get your booster and your flu shot.

Vaccines can help protect you from getting very sick from the flu and COVID. Boosters reinvigorate waning immunity. This is particularly important if you are over age 50 and have a weak immune system or other high-risk factors. Effective medications are available if you need additional protection along with your vaccines.

Many questions have come up recently about meetings at the Library and social gatherings for the holidays and retirements. The Library Events Office may approve room reservations for staff meetings when a service unit determines an in-person meeting is necessary to accomplish its mission.

In the case of social gatherings, planners and attendees should consider their own personal risk and act accordingly. While we want to allow such events with contingencies, we urge careful risk assessment based on community COVID transmission levels, which can be found on the data tracker page of the website of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

As is the case for coming on-site generally, do not come to a meeting or gathering if you are feeling unwell, have a fever or have been exposed in the past week to someone with COVID-19 or an illness with similar symptoms. No one diagnosed with COVID-19 in the past 10 days should attend. Service units are encouraged to allow staff members to participate virtually in gatherings or schedule hybrid meetings to enable distancing recommendations.

Besides community transmission levels, other factors to consider when deciding whether to attend an in-person social gathering include the size of the room versus the size of the crowd with an eye toward maximum ventilation; the type of activities that will occur (e.g., eating, drinking, singing); the duration of exposure; your vaccination status and age; and any underlying conditions.

HSD recommends that you mask in meetings or gatherings if you will be in close contact or have had a recent non-COVID illness or exposure to an ill individual, test before the event and five days after and do not serve food or drinks if avoiding close contact is impossible.

Flu vaccines are available in LM G-40, and all badged Library personnel can get a COVID bivalent booster and, if needed, an initial COVID vaccine series, in the Rayburn Health Unit of the Office of the Attending Physician, located in room G-2050 of the Rayburn House Office Building. Make an appointment here from your Library computer. ■

FAREWELL, LESLIE JORDAN

Shawn Miller

Jordan, 67, held court at this year's National Book Festival, talking about his memoir, "How Y'all Doing?" and trading zingers with Megan Mullally, his former "Will & Grace" co-star. Sadly, it was one of his last public appearances. The actor turned Instagram star died on Monday of an apparent medical emergency while driving. Read more.

QUESTION & ANSWER

Tyna Hepburn

Tyna Hepburn is an inventory management technician in the Inventory Management and Document Fulfillment Section of the Collections Management Division.

Tell us about your background.

I grew up in Chester, Pennsylvania, a small city outside of Philadelphia. I went to Chester High School and then majored in business and education at Delaware County Community College in the Nursing Program.

Afterward, I worked in retail positions in Pennsylvania. However, since I scored high on the Office of Personnel Management test in high school, and with advice from my counselors and my mother, I left Pennsylvania to get a federal job. I was familiar with the Washington, D.C., area because my father has family here. My first federal position was with the Government Publishing Office (GPO), where I did clerical work for about two years.

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

I was at GPO when I saw a position opening for deck attendant at the Library, and I applied. I was excited, because who wouldn't want to work at the Library of Congress? I remember at the time, we had to not only fill out paper applications, but also take a typing test, which I did in the Madison Building.

I started in 1985 on the night shift. Then, I did a detail in the Collection Improvement Section, where my job was to resolve cataloging problems with items, inspect new items and inventory the collections. Next, I accepted a permanent position with that section.

After a time, the section merged with the Loan Division and eventually became the Inventory Management and Document Fulfillment Section (IMDF). I have been an IMDF technician ever since.

I am responsible for a variety of circulation activities, but my primary duty is to serve as the first line of contact for Library account holders, including members of Congress, congressional staff members, other libraries, special borrowers and Library employees.

My other duties involve problem resolution, quality control and direct public service, including staffing circulation stations. Staffers who have checked out books from the collections have likely seen me behind the desk at some point over the years.

What are some of your standout projects?

There have been many over the years, but a recent one that I'm proud of occurred during the early part of the pandemic. With my co-workers, I input negative shelf list cards into a database under the supervision of Zakia West and Matt Martin.

Negative shelf list cards are cards used in place of items that were moved or that are missing. The cards contain information about items that were supposed to be on the shelf; that way, if someone went to retrieve an item, it would be clear what happened to it.

We translated the data from the cards into an Excel database and ended up doing over 120,000 cards. We had extensive training from Matt. We were thankful to have work to do over the pandemic when the Library was closed.

What is a memorable event from your time at the Library?

I always enjoy visiting the different divisions for their holiday parties. At the Library, it can be a fun surprise to run into celebrities. For example, I got to meet Isaac Hayes and Randy Jackson of the Jackson 5. I also have many fond memories of late Librarian of Congress James Billington.

What do you enjoy doing outside work?

I enjoy taking vacations with my three granddaughters; walking my little dog, Ziggy (aka Flex); and, most of all, helping my elderly neighbors. My latest venture is to prepare my yard for a Little Free Library. There are a lot of kids in my neighborhood, and since I work at the biggest Library in the world, I feel compelled to share my love for libraries with the children.

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

They may not know that for the last 10 years, I have been working as a security officer in Chinatown and that I'm the youngest of 13 siblings. They also may not know that I love music, and I watch comedy on a daily basis to keep me uplifted. ■

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.

To make a report, contact OIG via the online form here or report by mail to 101 Independence Ave., S.E., LM 630, Washington, D.C., 20540-1060.

Records Management at the Library

The Records Management Division (RM) in the Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) is responsible for the Library's Records Management Program. This article is published annually to remind staff that managing records is everyone's responsibility. For more information, visit the RM website, contact RM at records@loc.gov or reach out to your office's records coordinator or liaison.

Why is records management important?

It's the law. The Library is subject to the Federal Records Act and follows guidance from the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). Library of Congress Regulation 5-810 and Library of Congress Directive (LCD) 5-810.1 address records management. All staff members are required to create and manage the records necessary to document their official activities.

All employees, as well as contractors and volunteers who create or handle Library records, must take the records management online course within 30 days of their start date and on an annual basis.

Who will help me with records management?

Every office in the Library has a records coordinator or records liaison who is designated by a supervisor and trained by RM. The list of liaisons and a summary of their responsibilities is available on the RM website. Each office has a file plan established with RM and maintained by the liaison referencing all records in the office to the Library of Congress Records Schedule (LRS) and listing their formats and locations.

RM initiates an annual records review and cleanup each February. During the cleanup, all staff members are responsible for the cleanup of personal papers, nonrecord materials and transitory records, which can be destroyed without RM permission. Liaisons focus on transferring inactive paper records to RM and updating file plans.

The cleanup process can also be followed when preparing for office changes or separating from the Library. A cleanup quick guide is available on the RM website.

What about my Library email account?

Most email messages and staff calendars are records. Under the email management policy, LCD 5-810.2, email accounts are designated as permanent (Capstone) or temporary.

Fewer than 50 Library staff members have Capstone accounts, and they are typically senior-level employees. The contents of Capstone accounts are transferred to NARA for permanent preservation 25 years after the account holder departs the Library. All other email accounts are temporary. Their contents are destroyed on a rolling basis when seven years old. An email management quick guide is available on the RM website.

Staff members should not use personal email accounts for Library business. If Library email records are created or received by the personal email account of an employee, these email records must be forwarded to the employee's Library email account no later than 20 days after the original creation or transmission of the record.

Has records management changed with telework?

Library staff members are responsible for managing records generated in the course of their work, regardless of location. An RM quick guide for teleworking is available on the RM website. It provides policy reminders that are important for teleworkers.

When I separate from the Library, what should I do with records?

Federal records cannot be removed from government custody, nor can they be destroyed, except in accordance with the LRS. An exit procedures quick guide is available on the RM website so that departing staff members can plan ahead and speak with their supervisors and liaisons.

Departing employees may take only nonrecord materials (e.g., copies of records and reference materials) that have been approved by their supervisors and the Library's records officer on Form 1785, Request for Removal of Non-Record Materials. Staff may remove personal papers at any time without the Library's permission. ■

LEAVE BANK UPDATE

For calendar year 2022, the Library's Leave Bank board has determined that members need to donate only two hours of leave instead of the number of hours they would accrue in one pay period.

Typically, employees can become members of the Leave Bank by contributing an amount of annual leave equal to the amount they would accrue during one pay period (i.e., four, six or eight hours). Members are then eligible to receive leave contributions, if needed, to cover medical emergencies throughout the coming year.

This year, for current Leave Bank members, two hours of annual leave will be deducted from their accounts during pay periods 23 and 24 (between Nov. 6 and Dec. 3). Leave Bank members may receive a maximum of 160 hours in 2022.

New employees can apply for membership within 30 days of their hire date. Current employees who wish to become members can enroll during the enrollment period for 2023, which is Dec. 1 through Dec. 30.

For more information, visit the webpage of the Leave Bank program. Questions? Send an email to AskHCD@loc.gov.

JEFFERSON, CONTINUED FROM 1

uses, and in artistic luxury of decoration," the Washington Post reported, "there is no building that will compare with it in this country and very few in any other country."

The accolades went on, no doubt deeply gratifying to one man in particular: Ainsworth Rand Spofford, the valiant Librarian of Congress from 1865 to 1897, whose vision and persistence brought the Library into being.

From the moment the former Cincinnati bookseller and journalist joined the Library's staff of six in 1861, he saw its potential to grow into an institution on a level with national libraries of Europe – even though, at the time, it sat within the U.S. Capitol and served as a reference library for Congress.

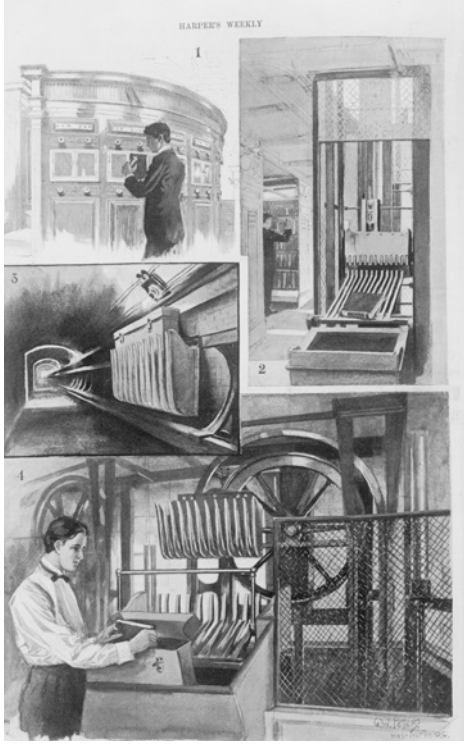
After President Abraham Lincoln appointed Spofford Librarian of Congress on Dec. 31, 1864, he quickly gained congressional approval for several expansions. When, following a tireless campaign by Spofford, Congress revised the Copyright Act in 1870, the Library's future as a national institution took a leap forward.

The new law centralized copyright registration and deposit activities at the Library, dramatically increasing the number of copyrighted U.S. works set to flow in – books, maps, prints, music. Spofford needed more space.

In his 1872 annual report to Congress, he advocated for a new building. He envisioned a domed circular reading room like that of the British Museum with books in alcoves "rising tier above tier" around its circumference.

The Library would continue to support Congress, of course, but it would also serve the public and have ample room for collections and exhibits.

"In every country where civilization has attained a high rank, there should be at least one great library, universal in its range," Spofford wrote, referencing France's Bibliothèque nationale and the British Museum.



Shawn Miller/Prints and Photographs Division

The Library's pneumatic tube and conveyor system for books (clockwise from left); the southwest clerestory arch under construction; and early souvenirs.

The capital's political climate favored Spofford's expansive vision. "It was a time when America was feeling its oats," Library historian John Y. Cole says. "The Civil War was over. Washington, D.C., was growing. Spofford took full advantage of the situation to promote his national library idea."

Congress funded a design competition for a new building in 1873, and the Washington, D.C., firm of John L. Smithmeyer and Paul J. Pelz won the $1,500 first prize with an Italian Renaissance design that included a circular reading room.

Hopes were high that construction would soon follow. Alas, it was not to be.

Just a year later, Congress reopened the design competition when some members wanted an even grander structure. That move set off more than a decade of squabbling by committees and commissions – revisiting whether to construct a new building, arguing about its location, debating its style.

Ironically, after all that, Smithmeyer and Pelz won again with a more ornate version of their Italian Renaissance design. In 1886, Congress authorized construction of a new building across from the Capitol, yet the controversies continued.

Smithmeyer, appointed project architect, became embroiled in a dispute about cement for the foundation, leading to delays and congressional hearings, followed by his dismissal. The humiliation devastated him – he was later found with pistol in hand inside the Library, apparently planning to take his own life. (He didn't.)

The troubled project got back on track when Congress appointed Brigadier General Thomas Lincoln Casey, chief of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and Bernard Richardson Green, a Harvard-educated civil engineer. The pair's reputation preceded them: They had successfully collaborated to construct the Washington Monument and, more recently, the lavishly decorated State, War and Navy Building.

JEFFERSON, CONTINUED ON 8

JEFFERSON, CONTINUED FROM 7

"Their momentum and nationalism carried the day," Cole says.

Soon, Casey submitted a plan for an even bigger structure, and Congress approved around $6.5 million to construct it. Pelz designed the larger building, retaining the general features of his and Smithmeyer's Italian Renaissance design, and he created sketches for the interior. But then he, too, lost his job after yet more infighting. Neither he nor Smithmeyer were ever fully compensated.

When it became clear Casey and Green would complete the building for less than what Congress appropriated, more money became available for interior embellishment.

"Casey and Green seized the opportunity and turned an already remarkable building into a cultural monument," Cole says.

Casey's son, Edward Pearce Casey, a trained architect, succeeded Pelz in 1892 and oversaw a program of majestic interior decoration that used tiles, mosaics, rosettes and columns to set off scores of sculptures and paintings. For guidance, Casey drew on the example of the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago.

In fact, most of the more than 40 American painters and sculptors commissioned to contribute to the Library's interior were involved in some way with the exposition, and many repeated idealistic themes from it. One of them, Edwin H. Blashfield, painted "The Evolution of Civilization" in the collar of the circular reading room Spofford had so desired. The mural is among the building's most famous artworks.

It depicts 12 historical cultures and eras that contributed to Western civilization, starting with Egypt and ending with America. In the dome above, a painted figure lifts a veil of ignorance, signaling the nation's intellectual progress.

Form did not, however, crowd out function. The new Library was one of the first public buildings in Washington, D.C., equipped with electricity. And Green himself designed and patented its steel bookstacks, nine tiers high and serviced by the first efficient library pneumatic tube and conveyor system in America.

The tubes carried books back and forth between the reading room and each level of the stacks, while one tube each whisked books to and from the Librarian's office and the Capitol.

"The book-carrying apparatus is a marvel of ingenuity," one observer reported.

Even such a wonder, however, could not produce the first book requested on Nov. 1, 1897, about three minutes after the reading room opened. "Roger Williams' Year Book" was not on the shelf, having just been published. Fortunately, the second book asked for, "Martha Lamb's History of New York City," was available.

In the 125 years since that rainy day, elements of the grand building have evolved. Copper replaced the dome's gold gilding in the 1930s. In 1980, the no-longer-new structure, by then one of three Library of Congress buildings, was renamed for Thomas Jefferson.

Then, over a dozen years in the 1980s and 1990s, a major repair and renovation program restored the splendor of artwork and architecture obscured by decades of wear and tear, enabling people today to understand the awe of early witnesses.

"All good Americans should hope to visit the new Congressional Library before they die," one advised in 1898. "It is one of the world's wonders, well worth a trip across a continent to view."

Based on the millions who visit the Library each year now, many Americans still share that view. ■

CALENDAR

02 WEDNESDAY

Book Talk: "The Chemistry of Fear: Harvey Wiley's Fight for Pure Food." For the Made at the Library series, Josh Levy and Lara Szypszak of the Manuscript Division will interview author Jonathan Rees. Noon, online. Contact: lszy@loc.gov.

Film: "Folklife, Foodways and Women's Empowerment in Afghanistan," the first of three films in the American Folklife Center's series "Homegrown Foodways in Central New Jersey." Noon, online. Contact: taus@loc.gov.

Displays: View curated displays on Brazilian independence, Dwight D. Eisenhower and Ulysses S. Grant. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Great Hall. Contact: 7-8000.

03 THURSDAY

Webinar: "Orientation to Legal Research," focusing on federal legislative history. 11 a.m., online. Contact: kgoles@loc.gov.

Jefferson Anniversary: "Finding Pictures: The 125th Anniversary of the Thomas Jefferson Building." Kristi Finefield of the Prints and Photographs Division will present images from the Jefferson Building's design and construction. 3 p.m., online. Contact: kfin@loc.gov.

Jefferson Anniversary: For one night only in honor of the 125th anniversary of the Jefferson Building, visitors are invited to view some of the Library's rarest spaces, including the Librarian's ceremonial office and the office of the poet laureate. 5 to 8 p.m., Great Hall. Tickets required. Contact: 7-8000.

Concert: Cellist Jamal Aliyev will perform with pianist Fazil Say. 8 p.m., Coolidge Auditorium. Tickets required. Preconcert conversation, 6:30 p.m., Whittall Pavilion. Contact: 7-8000.