The Connecticut Four were invited to the NYC April premiere of The Public, a film by Emilio Estevez. A librarian at a public library in Cincinnati has sympathy for his homeless patrons and becomes involved in their efforts to be recognized as dignified humans. The CT Four were mentioned in the movie as an example of the librarian’s dedication to protecting the privacy of the patron.

At ALA midwinter, CLA President Kate Byroade responded to Estevez’ comment that he would like to meet the four. The after party was way cool!

Pictured here: Barbra Bailey, Glastonbury Welles Turner library director; Peter Chase, retired Plainville Library director and former CLA chair of the intellectual freedom committee; Emilio Estevez, writer, actor, movie director; George Christian, executive director of Library Connection; and Janet Nocek, Portland Library director.
Connecticut State Library Promotes Summer Reading at Space Expo! By Gail Hurley

Connecticut State Library, Division of Library Development Director Dawn La Valle and Library Development Consultant Gail Hurley sponsored an exhibit table at the New England Air Museum’s annual Space Expo Saturday, April 6, which saw an attendance of 861 people.

The Connecticut State Library is one of 14 state libraries in the United States to be awarded a grant to partner with NASA as part of its NASA @ My Library program. The goal of this program aims to bring STEM resources to the public through public libraries, and especially to underserved STEM populations. NASA is working closely with the Collaborative Summer Library Program this year because of the national theme “A Universe of Stories”, which is a natural fit! As part of the NASA @ My Library program the CT State Library received 3 NASA STEM Kits to circulate to public libraries for programming, and we are duplicating the kits in order to make more available to our CT libraries especially during the summer months.

For the Space Expo exhibit, we brought along items from the NASA STEM Kits including sunoculars, Celestron binoculars and infrared thermometers; a range of space themed books, and a variety of promotional bookmarks and stickers from NASA and A Universe of Stories. We had the pleasure of engaging with approximately 300 kids and families who were so excited to hear that the summer reading theme at their public libraries would be a space theme. We encourage CT libraries to take advantage of this popular theme this summer to promote public libraries with great resources and programming for kids through adults. A galaxy of kids and adults came up to the CT State Library table dressed in NASA costumes, space-themed clothing and aviator goggles, which is truly indicative of their keen interest in everything space related.

The 50th anniversary of the lunar landing is this July and NASA will be turning 60, which is a great opportunity for libraries to highlight the roles their communities played in these groundbreaking events. There are hundreds of resources available to libraries including free programming and great ideas through registering for STARnet’s Summer of Space. These resources and others are consolidated on our libguide: https://libguides.ctstatelibrary.org/DLD/NASA. For your summer reading software needs, the State Library has a 3-year subscription to READsquared summer reading program, which we offer as a FREE service to all CT public libraries. Stop by the State Library’s NASA table at the CLA conference to find out more! ♦
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Libraries are having a moment.

Eric Klinenberg’s Palaces for the People: How Social Infrastructure Can Help Fight Inequality, Polarization, and the Decline of Civic Life and Susan Orlean’s The Library Book have been out a little over six months, each of them addressing the role libraries play in their communities. Emilio Estevez’s new film, “The Public,” a passion project over 10 years in the making, addresses the reality that public libraries are de facto homeless shoulders, while the documentary “Ex Libris: The New York Public Library” looks at this country’s largest public library system. While these works don’t fully address every aspect of library service, they are opening the eyes of many opinion makers about the mix of old and new ways libraries serve the public. After years of stating the case for libraries, I’m finally beginning to hear politicians and the wider public say the same words back to me. They may not always have the full story, but they are beginning to understand that libraries are not going away and that they are doing innovative and unexpected things every day.

However, even with so much positive buzz out there, I heard recently from Christine Angeli, director of the Milford Public Library, who reached out to me to let me know about some negative publicity the library had received on WPLR on the morning show that airs statewide. The hosts had discussed an arrest that was made outside the library’s building, and they moved from there to what one host, Pam, called the Wild West behavior and constant drunks at the library.

Christine took the time to contact the hosts and to get on the air the next day and to be positive about what happens at the library every day all day. She held firm to our mission to serve the public broadly, to provide welcome and opportunity for all, and highlighted all the great things that went on at the same time as the original incident that had started the whole story.

She wrote, “In conversation with the co-host, Chaz, he mentioned that perhaps it was easy to focus on the negative news of libraries, because he doesn’t often hear good news. He asked me to send him news of things going on here in Milford, and he would promote as he could. I think we left off at a good place, where there will be conversation going forward.”

We need to constantly put out consistently positive stories in a positive manner. Lecturing and urging others to value libraries simply because we say so isn’t enough. Our stories matter. Share the library’s wonderful events, magical moments, as often and as widely as you can.

Earlier this month CLA’s publicity committee organized an eye-catching display for the concourse that connects the Legislative Office Building to the Capitol. I sat at the table for a few hours one morning, interacting with those who stopped by. Legislators shared that they love their libraries, one relying on audiobooks to combat the tedium of a long commute to Hartford, another toting her lunch in her beloved library book bag, while another appreciates how her library supports students after school. Policy makers understand our value, but one freshman representative said this with me, “If there’s anything I would tell people to do, it’s to take the time to make their support known by coming here [to the Capitol] or making a call or sending a letter—it really makes a difference.” I couldn’t have said it better myself.♦

Kate Byroade is director of Cragin Memorial Library in Colchester
Movin’ On Up!

from the Career Development Committee

Q “I am ready to move up in my career and start applying for library director positions, but I am a little concerned about all of the new responsibilities. Without having been a library director before, there are a lot of things I have never had to handle. In some smaller libraries or association libraries, I may be required to be the building manager and the HR manager. Do you have any advice for how to handle these new roles?”

from Laura Horn, executive director of the Farmington Libraries

A This is a great question and one, I think, that many new or prospective library directors ask themselves. All of the experience in the world as a department head, or even an assistant director, doesn’t necessarily prepare you for the full scope of issues you may have to deal with as a library director. Being said, you probably know more than you think you do. And the things you don’t know, you can learn.

Working with a mentor can really help you figure out where your strengths are, and where you may need to gain more knowledge or skills. If your library director is supportive of your career goals, ask him or her to meet with you to talk about their experience as a library director, and have some questions ready. If you can’t ask your library director, reach out to a colleague, or CLA’s Career Development Committee. We have a mentor program. Most of us librarians are, by nature, very helpful people, so don’t be afraid to reach out. If possible, try to speak with more than one library director. At the very least try to speak with someone from an association library and a municipal library. This will give you a better idea of how widely the expectations of a library director can vary.

Once you’ve had time to learn a little more about what the day-to-day life of a library director is like, make a list of any areas you’d like to learn more about. There are some really wonderful resources out there, and a lot of them are free. The various CLA committees host very informative workshops throughout the year, CLC hosts roundtables that will introduce you to new ideas and per-

Do you have a question about your career that you would like to see answered in the next issue of CLA Today? Send it to: editor@ctlibraryassociation with “Movin on Up” in the subject line.
Candidate Statements

Candidate for recording secretary

Danielle Valenzano, Milford Public Library

I am very excited to be running for recording secretary. I have worked as a children’s library assistant at the Milford Public Library for almost 10 years. This past December, I graduated from Valdosta State University with my MLIS. During my time in graduate school, I saw firsthand how supportive CLA is to students as I was very fortunate to receive two CLA scholarships, along with a FLAG scholarship, the Caroline Hewins scholarship from the Hartford Public Library, and a scholarship from my school. I am a hard worker and I am very passionate about my job and my community, as well as about libraries and the work we do in them. I am raising my two young daughters to know the importance of libraries just as my mother, who was also a librarian, taught me.

Since getting involved with CLA in 2015, I have served as the children’s section chair and procedures chair. I have enjoyed getting to know so many different librarians and library staff from CT and being informed of what is happening at their libraries throughout the state. I think CLA is such an important organization and I would be honored to serve as recording secretary. ♦

Candidate for vice president/president elect

Tom Piezzo, Brainerd Memorial Library

I am honored to be a candidate for CLA vice president/president elect and look forward to continuing the excellent work of my predecessors, while helping to guide the association through changing times. I have been a public librarian for 26 years, first in New York City, and for the past 15 years, in Connecticut. I am presently the director of the Brainerd Memorial Library in Haddam. Most of my career has been as a library branch manager or director, in libraries of all sizes: urban, suburban, and semi-rural. This experience informs my service priorities for patrons and colleagues. Within CLA, I was the 2016 annual conference co-chair, and since then membership committee chair. I am also the chair of the CLC Valley-Shore Public Library Directors Roundtable, the chair of the LION consortium governance workgroup, and a member of the LION finance committee.

My focus will be to ensure inclusion within and access to CLA, as well the sustainability of the association. We face no shortage of challenges in providing our vital services, both as CLA volunteers and library workers, and we are strong and relevant only to the degree we ensure all have a voice and a role. An encouraging development of the last year has been the constitution of a grants and development committee, which I believe will prove integral to our solvency.

I look forward to a productive year, if elected, and welcome everyone’s input and participation. ♦

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Candidate for region 4 rep
Geri Diorio, Stratford Library

After serving as CLA region 4 representative for the past two years, I am eager to serve for another two.

Libraries are so important in these turbulent times. Helping people get accurate information, teaching them how to use technology effectively, and being a safe public space for community connections are just some of what we offer.

CLA strengthens the Connecticut library community in so many ways: by offering networking opportunities and continuing education, and by working on our profession’s behalf with the state government. CLA helps libraries make Connecticut a better place to live, and I want to continue to do my part in those efforts. ♦

Candidate for region 1 rep
Travis Feder, NVCC

I am the systems librarian at Naugatuck Valley Community College in Waterbury. Prior to my current position, I worked in a variety of roles in public libraries all across the state. Starting out as a teen services assistant at the Booth and Dimock Memorial Library in Coventry, I worked my way to the position of digital services librarian and head of technical services for the West Haven Public Library system, earning my MLIS from Kent State University along the way.

Having seen first-hand the profound impact library services have on the patrons who visit every type of library, I know the importance of organizations like CLA. I look forward to working with, learning from, and representing all of the libraries in Region 1. ♦

Candidate for region 5 rep
Robbie Marshall, Brainerd Memorial Library

I received my MLS from Texas Woman’s University and hold an MA from CCSU in Community Psychology. As an avid reader and believer in continuing education, I enjoy taking online classes from edX presented by worldwide universities, which include certificates in: strategic planning in libraries, marketing, and science and art classes.

I love libraries and visit them when I travel. It’s interesting to compare them to our Connecticut facilities and discover different approaches. For 20 years I have worked in libraries and 10 years as WPCA program coordinator for Old Saybrook. I work in Brainerd Memorial Library in Haddam as financial accounts manager and webmaster. I enjoy manning the circ desk, getting to know our patrons, and supporting their interests. We have a great team at BML, where everyone is encouraged to contribute and collaborate in collection development, physical transitions, and programs. Besides our BIG book sale, the most fun we have is our agricultural day where we each bring our ideas and talents to the event.

I am a member of the Department of Public Health Code advisory committee, CT Association of Water Pollution Control Authorities [CAWPCA], and Friends of BML. As a director of CAWPCA, I serve on the workshop planning committee. I assist the Friends of BML with our “Book Nook” sales, Amazon Sellers’ Account, and co-chair the annual book sale.

One of the best things about librarianship is the ability to approach it in an unlimited number of ways; exploring and expanding ideas to provide relevant, engaging spaces, products, services, and other deliverables to the community.

I am excited to have the opportunity to become more involved in the CLA, as I enjoy and appreciate the

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workshops and resources provided by the association, and the sharing of library experiences with colleagues. As liaison to the CLA, I intend to: provide interested and diligent representation of the 35 libraries comprising Region 5, and present their concerns, successes, events, and plans at the monthly CLA meetings – absorbing and sharing the best of our profession.

Candidate for NELA rep

Christy Billings, Russell Library

I work in programming and community engagement at Russell Library in Middletown. I am running for the New England Library Association representative for CLA. I am interested in continuing to serve as the NELA rep on the CLA board in order to have a role in helping our libraries remain relevant and vital in these changing times.

I have been the NELA rep since 2017 and love letting people know more about this incredible organization. It is made up of passionate, dedicated members from all over New England. It is a great way to find out what is going on in our region and provide support to other libraries.

I am interested in continuing to serve on the CLA board as the New England Library representative because I care passionately about being able to bring information about all the great things that we do in Connecticut to libraries throughout New England, and to connect Connecticut library staff with great ideas and innovations from other places.

As a member of NELA and as the New England Library Association rep, I would also continue to serve on the legislative committee at CLA and be able to continue the advocacy work on behalf of Connecticut libraries. As the NELA rep, because of my previous experience in CLA, I have the flexibility to be able to shift gears as needed, according to the issues at hand. As hard as it is to see into the future, I believe I am best equipped to handle new changes, and challenges.

CLA members depend on their representatives for advocacy and accurate information so they can be the very best asset to their communities.
New Haven Free Public Library has been named a 2019 National Medal for Museum & Library Service finalist! There are 30 finalists nationally, including 15 libraries and 15 museums. In early May, we will learn if NHFPL has been selected as one of the 5 library winners. NHFPL was nominated for this honor by U.S. Sen. Christopher Murphy. Our application emphasized the civic-minded fighting spirit of our founders, which continues to this day, our training with EXCITE Transformation for Libraries (originally funded by IMLS in a grant to the CT State Library) and our new strategic framework, along with highlights of a few of our exemplary programs and partnerships including READy for the Grade, Long Wharf Theatre, and Ives Squared anchor role in the Elm City Innovation Collaborative.

Beardsley & Memorial Library in Winsted is one of 15 libraries in the U.S. selected to participate in OCLC’s “Small Libraries Create Smart Spaces” project led by OCLC in partnership with the Association for Rural and Small Libraries.

Participating staff from each library will be guided through the 15-month project designed by OCLC’s WebJunction, in which they will work with their community members to reimagine and reconfigure library space to encourage socially engaging and active learning at the library.

New Haven Free Public Library
People in the News

**Groton Public Library** is pleased to announce the promotion of **Michael Spellmon** to the position of manager of library public services. Spellmon joined Groton Public Library in 2007 and has served in the role of Sunday supervisor and most recently, serving in the position of librarian II. Michael is known to the Groton community, not only as a librarian, but as Groton’s resident local history and genealogy expert. He brings over 20 years’ experience in management and administration to his new supervisory role.

**Russell Library** has hired **Amy Slowik** as the manager of borrowing and discovery.

**Ericka Bajrami** is the new director of children’s services at the **Farmington Libraries**.

**Meg Schiebel** joins the staff at the **Meriden Public Library** as head of children and youth services. She comes to Meriden after many wonderful and successful years at the Booth and Dimock Memorial Library in Coventry.

Teen services librarian **Diane Stackpole** will retire from **Stratford Library** on May 31 after 21 years. “DStack” (as she is known to her fellow staff members) came to librarianship as a second career after working for Southern New England Telephone as an operator. At the start of her foray into librarianship she interned at the West Haven Public Library, running several teen and adult book discussion groups. She started working at Stratford Library in 1998 and has been an amazing advocate for the library ever since. She immediately connected with teen readers and reads widely, making her an in-demand booktalker at local schools and a sought-after readers’ advisor in the library.

The **Jeremy Richard Library** at the University of Connecticut - Stamford Campus is pleased to announce that **Jenny Gregory** is the new access services coordinator. Gregory will oversee the daily operations of the Jeremy Richard Library’s front desk services including circulation, interlibrary, and information services. Gregory comes to us from West Virginia Northern Community College where she served as library associate, working across a broad range of library functions including circulation, collection development, cataloging, interlibrary services, and reference and research assistance. Prior to that she worked as both youth services and public relations coordinator for the Belmont County District Library.

After growing up as a patron in the library, **Abigail Dugan** was hired as a library assistant at **Gunn Memorial Library** in July 2018 and her job responsibilities have broadened to include junior library program development and implementation, book repair, weeding and other special projects as needed. She received her library technology certificate in December 2018 and is currently taking online courses to earn a bachelor’s degree in library science. Her long-term goal is to earn her MLS.

**Obituary**

**Remembering Pat Coleman**

**August 28, 1937 – April 1, 2019**

Pat worked in the children’s room of the Brainerd Memorial Library from June 2010 to September 2017, eventually becoming children’s librarian. Her love of children, her friendly demeanor with co-workers, and her strong public service ethic is a legacy from which we and the Haddam community still benefit every day. Add to this, Pat’s decades in Haddam school libraries, and her outreach to The Saybrook at Haddam senior care facility, and we still only scratch the surface of her positive impact. We will miss you, Pat!

**To participate in services or offer condolences open link.**
CLA Today is the newsletter of the Connecticut Library Association. Published every other month, it is posted to the CLA website. Please send submissions for future issues to editor Jennifer Datum at editor@ctlibrarians.org.

www.ctlibraryassociation.org

Connecticut’s professional organization of librarians, library staff, friends, and trustees working together: to improve library service to Connecticut, to advance the interests of librarians, library staff, and librarianship, and to increase public awareness of libraries and library services.

Beth Crowley (l) and Kate Byroade (r) represent CLA at the capitol during National Library Week.

Shout out to Jess Noble of Avon Free Library for the awesome display!
REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN!

The 2019 Annual CLA Conference will be held

**April 29–30**

at the Mystic Marriott

**Monday Keynote:**
Romance Is Not a Guilty Pleasure
*Sherry Thomas, Regina Kyle, Jamie Pope, Jenn McKinlay*

**Tuesday Keynote:**
Dreaming of a Better World
*Vashti Harrison*

Featuring an exciting line-up of keynote speakers, plus two full days of workshops and speakers, and plenty of opportunities to connect with colleagues and exhibitors. Our afterhours events will include a performer’s showcase, All in the Game of Love with keynote speaker Regina Kyle, and cocktails.

Parking, breakfast, coffee/snack breaks, and a hot buffet lunch are included in the registration rate.

Last day to pre-register is April 22. Walk-in registration will be accepted.

Preliminary schedule is [available here](#).