Most Memorable Reads of 2015
Recommended by members of the CLA Board of Directors

From Christy Billings
*Kitchens of the Great Midwest* by J. Ryan Stradal.
While we all say you shouldn’t judge a book by its cover, we all secretly do. It’s the reason I picked up this book which turned out to be one of my top ten all time favorites of 2015. In the first chapter we meet newborn baby Eva, who is the apple of her socially awkward father’s eye. From birth, this father, who is also a superb chef, wants his little girl to experience amazing food and goes to great lengths to make that happen. Each subsequent chapter is told by a different voice, and the reader is looking to see how Eva’s story is woven into each new narrative. Each person has their very realistic own set of problems, quarrels, loves, hates, and foibles. It is an intriguing read.

From Marge Ruschau
*Go Set a Watchman* by Harper Lee
You have to know going in that Atticus is not the perfect man/father/lawyer that he was in "To Kill a Mockingbird." Otherwise there is no way you’ll get through this book. That said, Harper Lee wrote a good book about Jean Louise (Scout), now 26, learning her hometown of Maycomb, Ala., isn’t and maybe never was, the place she remembers.

From Karen Jensen
*Fates & Furies* by Lauren Groff
This novel about a marriage suggests that often it is the secrets that are kept that make a partnership strong. A complicated, insightful and dark story of a marriage first from the husband’s point of view, and then from the wife’s. Outwardly the marriage is per-
I Love My (CT) Librarian(s)!

Each year, ten librarians from around the country receive the prestigious I Love My Librarian Award. The award is a collaborative program of Carnegie Corporation of New York, The New York Public Library, The New York Times and the American Library Association. The award encourages library users to recognize the accomplishments of exceptional public, school, college, community college, or university librarians.

This year, 2 of the 10 winners were Connecticut Librarians! We are not surprised. Congratulations to Diane Brown and Elizabeth G. Rumery!

They each received a $5,000 prize at an award ceremony and reception held in New York City, hosted by Carnegie Corporation of New York.

Diane Brown
Branch manager of the New Haven Free Public Library’s Stetson Branch

Known as the “urban librarian” to her patrons, Brown develops valuable programs and services to meet the needs of the underserved residents in a community with high rates of poverty, crime and low literacy levels.

Under Brown’s leadership, the library has transformed into a true community center. She is always bringing residents together by hosting cultural and educational events such as an international “pop up” festival, art exhibits, lectures and health fairs.

Brown has been praised for facilitating an afterschool tutoring program for K-8 students and providing opportunities for children and their families to spend time together by establishing history and game nights.

(excerpted from an ALA press release)

Elizabeth G. Rumery
Library director for the Avery Point Campus Library at the University of Connecticut in Groton

Rumery has transformed the library into a welcoming and dynamic place for students by modernizing the facility to meet the needs of 21st century learners. She worked with contractors and school administrators on renovating the library. Improvements included new media rooms and collaborative study spaces for students and faculty.

She has also expanded services to create a safe haven for students. Rumery established a place in the library where anyone can come talk to her about concerns related to GLBTQ, depression or other personal issues. She finds the appropriate help and resources they may need. She also serves as an advisor for the student gay/straight ALLIANCE club.

(excerpted from an ALA press release)
Message from the President

One of my favorite library quotes is from the Rev. Timothy Healy, a Jesuit priest who also led the New York Public Library from 1989 until his death in 1992. Healy said “The most important asset of any library goes home at night – the library staff.”

Rev. Healy knew our libraries are only as strong as the people who work in them. We can have the most beautiful facilities, the latest high-tech gadgets, and the largest collections but in the end libraries are just buildings of stuff, bricks and mortar, paper and ink, metal and glass without strong staff to provide access to our resources. And it takes the whole team to make this happen successfully day after day.

In October I was asked to give welcoming remarks at the Connecticut Library Association Support Staff Conference. Admittedly this is the first time I had attended the CLASS conference but after spending the day with over 100 amazing library employees I came away even more impressed by the talent of those working in our organizations. It was also heartening to know that library administrators saw the value in sending their support staff to this important professional development opportunity.

Earlier this year, CLA was notified that the ALA-accredited LTA Certificate program at Three Rivers Community College was in danger of being eliminated due to low enrollment. As one of only 20 ALA-accredited LTA programs in the country this was a concerning development. The CLA Board approved my writing a letter of support to the college administration and the CLC Board approved the same for Director, Jennifer Keohane. We also met with the program coordinator, Marie Shaw, and gave her our feedback on how the program could be reimagined to reach a larger audience. Suggestions included moving the courses completely online and offering shorter, special topic classes for those who want to enhance their current skills. The response we received from the college administration was favorable, and Marie and the LTA Advisory Board immediately went to work to completely revise the program. I am happy to report that enrollment is currently open for the spring semester, and complete information can be found at http://www.ctlibrarians.org/?3rivers.

As a library director, one of the best parts of my job is seeing staff learn and grow and develop their skills not just because it improves the quality of our services but because I know it also improves the quality of their careers. There is no job in the library that can’t benefit from continuous learning. And there is no person who works in a library who can’t be a leader, no matter the position they currently hold, in promoting the value of libraries to our residents and lawmakers.

I wish you all a peaceful holiday season and a happy new year!

Beth Crowley
CLA President

Connecticut Brings Home the Snail Trophy—At Last!

A small group of Connecticut librarians, led by “Queen of the Improv” and CLA President Beth Crowley, swept the 2015 New England Library Association (NELA) games.

The game this year involved creating a timeline/live presentation representing a year in history. Our 1985 entry involved an entire cast of characters who brought to life such memorable events, products and entertainment icons as: “New Coke”, Sally Field’s “You like me” Oscar acceptance speech, Norm from Cheers, the introduction of the compact disc, a Back to the Future vs Goonies debate and more, cumulating with a rousing and moving version of “We Are the World”.

State Librarian Ken Wiggin received the trophy from Beth. He will proudly display it in his office at the State Library.
So you are a graduate of the United States Naval Academy! Tell us what led you there, and a little about your experience in the Navy.

My father was a career Air Force officer and two-tour Vietnam veteran so after growing up “in the military” I knew that I too wanted to serve my country and travel the world. Many family members also served in combat in WWII, so there was a strong family tradition of military service. It was an honor to be accepted to the U.S. Naval Academy Class of 1988 and be a part of the eighth academic class with women (the first women graduated in 1980). After graduation and commissioning, I served as the assistant chief engineer for two years and then the weapons officer for my final year as a division officer on the combat store ship USS San Diego (AFS-6). We were deployed in the Persian Gulf for the duration of Operation Desert Storm in 1991. The first Persian Gulf War was mercifully brief compared with the years-long conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan after 9/11. For my next tour, I returned to Annapolis as a faculty in the Leadership and Law Department, and I taught courses in organization behavior, leadership by example, and total quality management to the midshipmen.

Did you always know you wanted to be a librarian? Was your desire related to your time in the Navy?

That’s a great question because my mom was a librarian, but growing up I did not think I would ever be a librarian! My family loved to read though, and we were frequently at the base library or local public library, and I was a real book-worm. My mother received her MLS from the University of Hawaii in 1976, and I often hung out at the university library during school vacations while she was in class. While making the difficult decision to leave the Navy during the enormous post-Cold War Department of Defense drawdown in the early 1990’s, I read the book What Color Is Your Parachute by Dick Bolles. It guided me towards library and information science since I love to research and had enjoyed working with computers since 1983. With a BS undergraduate degree and my technical and teaching background in the Navy, I thought I would become an academic librarian or work in a corporate information center. During the MLS program at the University of Maryland, I also took a seminar in legal literature since I had been the ship’s legal officer as a collateral duty so that ended up being a serendipitous exposure to legal research. I was also fortunate to have been active in the UofMD Special Libraries Association and exposed to so many different types of libraries during graduate school – very helpful in starting a new career.

What do you do as a law librarian?

The Judicial Branch public courthouse law librarians work with all levels of patrons from judges to courthouse personnel including clerks and government attorneys to the general public, which include private attorneys and self-represented litigants. Most of us are solo librarians who provide legal research assistance and teach patrons how to use legal databases such as WestlawNext...
effect, the difference between the two views is shocking, yet the couple cannot live without one another.

From Janice Wilson
*Between The World and Me* by Ta-Nehisi Coates
Winner, National Book Award for Non-Fiction, this book is a timely reflection upon the societal pressures and suspicions placed upon African-American males as seen through the eyes of one who has endured them. The author writes a series of letters to his son explaining his own upbringing in a tough Baltimore neighborhood, fears stemming from within and outside of the neighborhood, and life lessons and cautions. A raw and honest perspective well worth reading.

From Betty Anne Reiter
*Just Mercy* by Bryan Stevenson is eastern CT’s fourteenth “One Book” and, I think, the most important one we’ve chosen. It’s an account of an idealistic lawyer’s coming of age, a look into the lives of those he has defended, and an inspiring argument for compassion in the pursuit of true justice. We all need to read this book about justice, human rights and just mercy from the winner of a MacArthur Genius Grant.

From Allison Wilkos
*The Mechanical* by Ian Tregillis
*The Mechanical* is an alternate history set in the early 1900s in which the Dutch and French are the primary world powers. Jax, “the mechanical,” is a Dutch robot slave powered by clockwork and alchemy who accidentally attains free will. Jax struggles with the concepts of right and wrong as he gets pulled into a French espionage plot. The main characters’ paths become increasingly intertwined, with plenty of action and suspense leading up to the conclusion.

From Steve Cauffman
*Different Every Time: The Authorised Biography of Robert Wyatt* by Marcus O’Dair
Wyatt was the drummer for Soft Machine, the British psychedelic band that formed in the late 60’s. After a fall from a window paralyzed him from the waist down, he became a singer and composer. Constructed primarily from interviews with the subject, his family, and friends, this well-researched biography is as warm and engaging as Wyatt himself. Includes wonderful black and white photographs throughout and a discography at the end.

Check us out on social media

facebook.com/ctlibraryassociation
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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
How long were you in Kenya? Was your library supportive of your trip?
I left to go on my trip to Africa on Oct 17 and I was back in Boston on November 3. My employer and library were incredibly supportive. My director, Bernadette Baldino, even told me about a trip to Africa that another librarian had taken, and told me that it would be an experience that would change my life. The encouragement that she gave me was a part of the reason I decided to go. She also donated many of the things that I took with me for the children in Africa.

What is one thing that surprised you when you were there?
I was surprised by how quiet everyone was. During my story time demonstrations and the workshops, everyone, including the children, sat perfectly still and perfectly quiet. I’m use to questions, comments, and conversation. When I asked why no one said anything, they said it was because they were interested and wanted to listen. It’s a cultural difference that I found fascinating. In America when people are interested they whisper to each other and ask a million questions, but in Kenya, it seems to be the exact opposite, they sit quietly and absorb everything that you throw at them.

What is one thing you found challenging?
The wildlife was challenging but by wildlife I mean the lizards and bats and mosquitoes. They were everywhere. One night while eating dinner in a house we were living in for the week, a bat flew right into the house. It was terrifying. I didn’t get the rabies shots before the trip.

Tell us about the organization that organized the trip.
The American Friends of Kenya (AFK) is a non-profit, 100% volunteer organization. AFK has partnered with individuals in Kenya creating networks of libraries who have needs that we may be able to fill. Each area with a network has been assigned a network leader who evaluates the needs of participating libraries. One library may be in need of children’s books, another library may need engineering books, and a third may need a computer and sports equipment, and so on. The network leader then contacts AFK, and as we collect and pack books to ship, we try to fulfill those needs as best as we can.

What were some of the places you visited while you were there?
When we took this trip to Kenya, a lot of the trip was meeting in person with those network leaders and visiting the various public, community, and school libraries that we’ve assisted through donations. While visiting some of the libraries and schools we did workshops on book binding, storytelling, book preservation and general library organization.

Give us an example the work you did.
During the trip, fellow traveler, Audra Zimmerman and I, spent a few days at a library reorganizing a children’s collection. We worked with a few boys who were in their gap year, the year between secondary school...
Fall Workshop Roundup

Maxine Bleiweis Speaks at Customer Service Workshop
By Ellen G. Cartledge
On Thursday, Oct. 8, the CLA Customer Service Committee sponsored a talk by Maxine Bleiweis, recently retired executive director of the Westport Library and recipient of the 2015 Charles Robinson Award from the Public Library Association, on “How to Make ‘Yes’ The Answer & Other Secrets of Customer Service.” In this well-attended session (over 65 participants), Maxine presented a powerful PowerPoint presentation that focused on key aspects of customer service. Stressing that the only person you can change is yourself, she noted that you must be open; treat people with dignity and respect; and to “focus on the customer.” It’s not about us: it’s about library users. The customer is always right and we need to reduce the number of rules that stand in the way of excellent customer service. We must consider the customer may not be comfortable coming into our space – we must have empathy and compassion for them. We need to learn to say “yes” to everything and make it work. Librarians must learn to explain this concept to their colleagues and to reinforce the idea of meeting customers where they are and helping them as much as they can. By being positive in every situation and bringing a fresh perspective with each encounter, we will be seeing customer service through the users’ eyes. We need to say “hello”, smile to everyone who walks in the door, and hope it catches on. The participants’ overwhelming response was that Maxine provided concrete suggestions, not just “concepts.”

CLA Technical Services Section’s Fall Workshop on Linked Data
By Laurie Haggan, Chair, CLA Technical Services Section
The CLA, Technical Service’s Section’s fall conference: Link up! : Get the Basics on Linked Data was held Nov. 12 at the Farmington Library. Librarians from Connecticut and New York participated in a lively discussion with expert speakers, Amber Billey, metadata librarian, from Columbia University, and Robert Favini, member liaison, membership and research, for OCLC. Amber gave a brief history of MARC and about how it was a great way to capture data. Explaining why MARC is dead, she transitioned to BIBFRAME, a framework where relationships can be created and MARC data can be used more effectively. Utilizing special URLs and languages such as RDF/XML, RDFS, JSON and Turtle, librarians will play a key role in the way search engines can link data! Although BIBFRAME is only in its initial testing phases, librarians have begun to develop and participate in test pilots addressing cataloging processes required to bring the transition from MARC to BIBFRAME to fruition. Rob Favini followed up with an overview as to how OCLC is bracing for and participating in the linked data movement. With the release of WorldCat Works Linked Data in May of 2014, there had been close to a two million increase in unique visitors to WorldCat in just a six-month time period. OCLC is actively pursuing ways to bring authority control to the web and on finding new efficiencies for linked data. OCLC is working with the Library of Congress and others to work on BIBFRAME. Amazing examples of what linking data is capable of were provided. Workshop attendees brought up so many interesting questions and comments that the speakers felt compelled to possibly conduct a study addressing concerns and ideas that were brought up!

Librarians’ Tour of Hartford
By Jennifer Datum
We began our day at the Wadsworth Atheneum, where we were given a private tour of the recently installed...
Continued from p. 7

exhibit Guise and Dolls: Warhol and Mapplethorpe. We continued with a tour of some of the other galleries in the newly renovated museum. We only saw a fraction of what was there—a good reason to return! Next, we walked down the street to the Hartford Public Library. We learned about the Hartford History Center and received a tour of the bustling main branch. Many of us ate lunch at The Kitchen at HPL. We ended our day at the CT State Library, where we toured the Museum of Connecticut History, the Law and Legislation section, and the History & Genealogy Unit. Thanks to the Reference and Adult Services Section for coordinating a wonderful and informative day.

Reflections on Celebrating with CLASS: 2015 CLA Support Staff Professional Development Conference

By Alberto Cifuentes, Jr., CLASS Vice-chair and Conference Steering Committee Member

One word: Success! The CLA Support Staff section (CLASS) presented our 17th annual professional development conference for library support staff on Oct. 29th.

Our morning’s keynote speaker, State Librarian Ken Wiggin, gave an empowering and compelling speech about the importance of advocating for libraries and, ultimately, ourselves as library professionals. In the afternoon, mystery author and artist Janice Law read a few poetic excerpts from several of her recent novels and offered us an evocative look into her creative history and artistic process.

All six breakout sessions, ranging from various topics such as BIBFRAME and ILL to genealogy and laughter yoga, were very well-attended. One of the workshops I attended and moderated, “Astounding Ancestry: Exploring Your Roots Using Ancestry.com,” facilitated by Berlin-Peck Memorial Library’s Reference Librarian Andrew J. Fal, had a little over 50 participants! In addition, the conference itself had a total of 113 participants, 20 participants higher than last year’s conference.

Moreover, our new roundtable discussions where library staff freely and openly discussed a variety of relevant topics, such as reference, children’s/teen’s services, and technology, were incredibly productive and engrossing.

This was my first time planning and coordinating the CLASS Conference. It was a very enjoyable and enriching experience, and I could not have done it without the diligence and dedication of our Conference Steering Committee, which includes Kate Bengtson, Lorrie Goings, Jennifer Hadley, and Sandy Smith Rosado. Our committee would like to thank all of our speakers, including our opening remarks speaker, CLA President Beth Crowley; keynote speakers Ken Wiggin and Janice Law; and our six amazing workshop presenters: Steven Bernstein, Steve Cauffman, Andrew J. Fal, Jennifer Keohane, Laura Le, and David Vrooman.

Lastly, the committee would like to especially thank one of CLASS’s greatest allies, Randi Ashton-Pritting, Director of University Libraries at the University of Hartford, for all her support and guidance this year and previous years in making this conference possible.

If you would like to check out the program from this year’s conference or some workshop materials, including helpful links and guides, please go to our conference page, http://tinyurl.com/CLASSConf2015, and download them (listed in the document list below the CLASS logo on the left side of the page). If you would like to get more involved with CLASS or would like to share any feedback about this year’s conference, feel free to e-mail us at ct.class.conference@gmail.com.

We look forward to making the next CLASS conference even bigger and better! Hope you can join us next year. ♦
2016 CLA Publicity Awards Contest

The CLA Publicity Committee sponsors an Annual Awards Contest. Materials designed by a library to promote a library concept or event may be submitted. A panel of professional designers/artists and a representative from the library field will choose the winning entries. Winners will be honored at a CLA Conference Program and winning entries will be displayed at the CLA Conference.

Entry Guidelines
- Library may submit one entry per category created during calendar year 2015.
- If your library has won an award in a particular category and have not made significant changes, please do not resubmit in that category.
- Send 1 original of each entry with a copy of this entry form attached to each original. If submitting Electronic Media, you may email the project’s URL and screen shot (if applicable) to jmenders@otis.lioninc.org and mail or fax completed entry form.
- Entries will be judged for content, usability, originality & design.
- Judges’ decisions are final. The judges reserve the right not to give an award in a category or give additional awards if merited.
- Entries will not be returned.

Submit entries by January 31, 2016 to:
Julie Menders, jmenders@otis.lioninc.org, fax (860) 889-2533
Otis Library
261 Main Street, Norwich, CT 06360

PRINT MEDIA
- Bookmark  □ Newsletter  □ Program Flyer (8 1/2” x 14” or smaller)
- Poster (11” x 17” or larger) □ Library Logo
- Other (e.g. Annual Report) ______________________

ELECTRONIC MEDIA (include entry URL in the form below)
- Website / Blog  □ Video (DVD, YouTube, Public Service Announcement, etc)  □ e-newsletter
- Other (e.g. Library Guides) ______________________

THEMATIC PROJECT
- 3 or more coordinating items which can be print media, electronic media or a combination of both

DESIGN  □ In-House Design  □ Professional Design

Library Director: ________________________________
Library: ________________________________
Address: ________________________________
Phone: ________________________________ Email: ________________________________
Designer(s): ________________________________
URL (for Electronic Media): ________________________________

Please describe the purpose and marketing plan in 250 words or less. (use back of form or attach a sheet)

Join CLA — For the advancement of librarians and the libraries we serve.
www.ctlibraryassociation.org
People in the News

West Haven Public Library has a new director, Colleen Bailie.

Cindy Muhlbach, director of the Brainerd Library since July 2007, accepted a job closer to home in Rhode Island. Her last day at Brainerd was Oct 3. Sue Staehly is the interim director.

Michael Robin has been promoted to full time library assistant - marketing/technology/social media at the Easton Public Library. He will replace VivianLea Solek, who is leaving to take a position as archivist at Knights of Columbus Museum in New Haven. Michael had previously served as part time children’s programmer in Easton and part time children’s library assistant at the Wilton Library. In addition to his new job duties, he will continue to present two children’s programs per week.

Congratulations to these BCALA-CT librarians

- Astoria Ridley, law librarian, on being appointed to a two year term on the State Library’s Advisory Council for Library Planning and Development (ACLPD).
- Josephine Fulcher Anderson, branch supervisor of the Ferguson Library–South End Branch, appointed by Senate Majority Leader Bob Duff to the CT African American Affairs Commission to a two year term.
- Retirement of Celestia Simmons, storyteller and senior branch manager of Ropkins and Barbour Branches of the Hartford Public Library.

Willimantic Library Director Drusilla Carter has been named to the ALA Legislative Assembly as the representative for the joint ALA/SAA/AAM committee on archives, libraries, and museums.

At the Babcock Library in Ashford, long time LA II Theresa "Terry" Decker is retiring after 27 years of service.

Many of you in Libraryland probably know Peter Chase (or at least know of him due to his work protecting patrons’ privacy), and after 35 years at the Plainville Public Library he has retired. The library’s auditorium has been named after him. Douglas C. Lord, formerly of the New Britain Public Library and the Connecticut State Library, is the new director.

Starting in November, Scott R. Brill is the new Circulation Supervisor for the Huntington Branch Library in Shelton. For the past five years, Scott worked as a library assistant in the children’s department of the Miford Public Library. Before that, he had worked part-time as a circulation assistant at the Huntington Branch Library, so he is now happy to return as a full-time staff member at the branch.

Eleanor Boruch has retired after almost 22 years of working at the Prospect Public Library. Connecticut’s longest serving mayor (38 years), Bob Chatfield presented Eleanor with a gold key to the town in appreciation of her many years of service to the town.

Karen McNulty, a former president of CLA, who retired in 2010 after 23 years at Avon Free Public Library, says there’s been no second cup of coffee in the mornings. Karen, a 16 year volunteer of her hometown library in Hartland, continues to select, order and process all materials from her home; staffs the circ desk twice a week with elected Trustee volunteers; manages Librarika in the absence of ReQuest; and does most of the library’s programming. She maintains that keeping her skills sharp is not just a hobby but a change from caring for an elderly mom and an elderly springer spaniel. You can reach her at kpal822@yahoo.com.

Acton Public Library recently lost reference/young adult librarian -- Sam Perduta has started work as the head of children’s services at a branch of the Philadelphia Free Library. We miss him already! We are in the process of filling this part-time position.

At the Cheshire Public Library, Gail Roberts, head of technical services, will be retiring in December after 36 years of service. Nicole Dolat, children’s librarian, has moved on to the Prosser Public Library; Lauren Gledhill is our new children’s librarian.

On June 1, Andrea Dombrowski retired as Library Associate – Public Services from Northwestern Connecticut Community College. She served in the NCCC Library for over 34 years. Jeremy Withnell was hired to fill the position on June 28. Jeremy is a recent library science graduate of Catholic University of American in Washington, DC. Over the summer, he and his wife relocated to Winsted from Virginia.♦
Libraries through the Looking Glass
reflecting on the past while stepping into the future

April 21 & 22, 2016
Connecticut Convention Center, Hartford

Imagination is the only weapon in the war against reality

Featuring:
Keynote Speakers Ben Bizzle, Library Technology and Marketing Specialist, and James LaRue, CEO of LaRue Associates and Consulting, &
Lunchtime Speakers Roz Chast, Cartoonist, and Brian Mayer, Gaming & Library Technology Specialist & 2015 Library Journal Mover & Shaker

Curioser and curioser
If you wish to go anywhere you must run twice as fast as that

Conference Co-Chairs:
Katy Dillman, Blackstone Library, Branford
kdillman@blackstonelibrary.org, 203.488.1441, ext. 313

Tom Piezzo, Scranton Library, Madison
piezzot@scrantonlibrary.org, 203.245.7365, ext. 26

125th Connecticut Library Association Annual Conference
CLA Today December 2015
and LexisAdvance, consult subject-specific legal treatises, and use the case law reporters and statutory sets located in the judicial law libraries. We also provide in-depth email reference and telephone reference services, and we are always happy to help out public librarians with their patrons who have legal questions. I am on the Web Committee and our Connecticut Judicial Branch Law Libraries web site www.jud.ct.gov/lawlib has excellent pointers to Connecticut and Federal online legal links as well as 100+ “Connecticut Law About…” web pages with resources for conducting legal research remotely. (Had to put in a plug for our web site -- I am also on the Marketing Committee!)

How long have you worked for the state? How has the field changed since you started?
In 1998 I was hired to work for the Connecticut Judicial Branch as a permanent part time law librarian in Norwich. When I did online research to prepare for the job interview, judicial only had one page on the ct.gov website explaining the three court systems – the Connecticut Supreme Court, the Connecticut Appellate Court and the Superior Courts. Within 3 years, the judicial branch was winning awards and recognition for its comprehensive web site and the CJB law libraries web pages were a significant part of the expansion of Judicial’s web presence. When I started library school in 1995, we had to create web pages with the original HTML coding, and indexing was still done by person and not machine. The explosion of the World Wide Web and browsing and software applications during the late 1990’s was such a time of rapid change for librarians. It was both a very exciting and very challenging time, but I think that sense of continuous change in accessing information and the role of librarians as information gatekeepers, community stewards and technology teachers will be the constant challenge of our profession going forward.

What books are on your nightstand right now?
Right now on my perpetual stack of bedside books are three in particular I would like to share. I am hoping to win the battle of home clutter control by reading the terrific The Life-Changing Magic of Tidying Up: The Japanese Art of Decluttering and Organizing by Marie Kondo. As the mother of a high school sophomore, I recently began re-reading Katie Malachuk’s You’re Accepted: An Enlightened Way to Lose the Stress, Discover Yourself & Get Into the College That’s Right for You, which was a helpful book for my college junior. In the spirit of trying to maintain healthy balance in all things, I keep Dr. Weil’s 8 Weeks to Optimum Health as a ready reference. My favorite daily reading though is my email subscription to Garrison Keillor’s The Writer’s Almanac, a broadcast program and daily podcasts available with the support of NPR. It has motivated me to tackle poetry and fiction works by talented authors such as Margaret Atwood, Langston Hughes and the Connecticut poet Wallace Stevens in the near future.\n
Continued from P. 4

Columbus Letter Comes Home

George Miles, William Robertson Coe Curator, Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Yale University, led a program about Pequot Library’s 522-year-old “Columbus Letter” showing the letter and speaking about its importance, on Dec. 5, at Pequot Library in Southport. The letter is part of Pequot Library’s Special Collections and had been on loan to Yale for 60 years.

The public views the rare books in the Special Collections’ exhibition, Exploring America: Christopher Columbus at Pequot Library in Southport, on Dec. 5. The museum-quality exhibition runs through January 15, 2016 during normal library hours.

As part of the "Pages from Pequot" Special Collections exhibition, Exploring America: Christopher Columbus, Pequot Library’s own Columbus letter comes home for a visit after being loaned to Yale University for over 60 years.
and college. It was great getting to know them, and learning a few Swahili words. I felt like I was really connecting to the people of that country.

**What did you learn from the trip?**

When I decided to become a librarian, I wanted to create lifelong learners and help build and advance communities, and create safe environments for children. What I learned while on this trip with AFK was that those ambitions that I have don’t have to stop in Connecticut, or even America for that matter.

While on this trip however, I also learned that to accomplish greatness, you’re going to need some help. Because we’re a small organization we depend solely on the donations of others; we couldn’t accomplish half of what we do without help. People and institutions have sent us books, sports equipment, crutches, wheel chairs, shelving units, bookends, braille equipment, and so much more.

**Where can I find out more about AFK, and how I can help?**


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**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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