INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Net Neutrality 2
President's Message 3
Conference Save the Date 3
Movin’ On Up Advice Column 4
NELA conference review 6
People in the News 7
News from Around the State 8
Fall Program Roundup 9
Awards Season 10

Most Memorable Reads of 2017
Contributed by CLA Board Members

From Glenn Grube
Requiem for the American Dream: The 10 Principles of Concentration of Wealth & Power by Noam Chomsky

Noam breaks down the ways the wealthy and powerful control the 99% and what we can do about it, providing great primary source evidence at the end of each chapter. What we see now in our broken political system is nothing new or shocking to those who have been paying attention. Read this book and join that group. Having a Howard Zinn passage as the closing words of this book seemed hugely appropriate.

From Scott Brill
We Were Eight Years in Power by Ta-Nehisi Coates

This collection of powerful essays provides a timeless and vital analysis of both the deep divisions and the voices for justice that have emerged during the past decade (with striking parallels to the post-Reconstruction era).

From Geri Diorio
Bored and Brilliant by Manoush Zomorodi

Literally changed my life. I took control of my online time and gained some peace of mind. Being bored can be really productive! Zomorodi is the host of Note to Self on WNYC radio where she talks about how to preserve your humanity in the digital age.

From Richard Conroy
Paul McCartney: The Life by Philip Norman

Norman followed up his critically acclaimed biography of John Lennon with this exhaustive (though not exhausting if you’re a true Beatles fan) examination of the life of the other half of one of the greatest creative duos of all time. As a biographer he doesn’t take sides. He is neither fawning nor dismissive of McCartney but, instead, presents a well-balanced portrait that humanizes its subject.

From Chris Hemingway
The Mastery of You by Renu Persaud

This is one book that has stuck with me throughout the year. It is a thoughtful, insightful narrative which seeks to explain the inner workings of what makes up our personality. Dr. Persaud lays a blueprint on how to realize our own unique abilities and find a greater, deeper meaning in our lives. Adding a touch of her own experiences, Dr. Persaud seeks to answer the questions that many of us face each day.

CONTINUED ON P. 5
By Andrew Boyles Petersen

By the time this comes to press, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) will have voted on the future of the free and open internet we rely upon. Current FCC chairman Ajit Pai’s proposal, Restoring Internet Freedom, seeks to eliminate the 2015 FCC protections for net neutrality. The existing regulations on net neutrality were passed in 2015 to establish clear rules prohibiting internet service providers (ISPs) from throttling, prioritizing, or blocking online content. As the fight for net neutrality continues around the country, it’s important for us as librarians to understand what net neutrality is, as well as the potential implications for our profession.

On a basic level, net neutrality is the expectation your ISP will treat all websites and content you access equally, allowing you to access any websites you desire. This principle has guided the formation, growth, and use of the internet, aligning with libraries’ service goals by providing patrons with equal access to information. Overturning net neutrality could directly go against this core tenant of our profession, resulting in access to different websites being prioritized or impeded based off of the beliefs or profit-model of the ISP. As with many profit-based programs, consumers will likely be burdened with the consequences of these changes, with marginalized communities bearing the worst of this affront. Pairing with the push to end net neutrality, a November 16 FCC vote seeks to scale back the Lifeline program—a program designed to provide discounted phone and internet services to low-income households. Throttling back the Lifeline program alongside rescinding net neutrality will target many of our most vulnerable populations, both repressing possible avenues for their free speech and constraining marginalized communities to public telecommunications offerings, including our library services. This will likely lead to an increased demand for library services, particularly internet access. Responding to this demand, however, might be more and more difficult.

Without net neutrality in place, the payment plan for ISP customers, including libraries, could increase dramatically. As ISPs are presently prevented from blocking or slowing online content, customers are currently charged based on their service provider and desired download/upload speeds. Under the new plan, ISPs could slow or block web content, charging content companies and end-users to reach specific websites or receive priority access to content. Along with higher monthly bills from their ISPs, consumers and libraries could also see increased costs from content companies once these companies begin paying ISPs for preferential treatment. Trickle-down from these increased costs would likely result in increased product and subscription charges for the average consumer. With state governments making cuts to library budgets and ISPs raising monthly rates, addressing an increased demand for library internet services may be challenging, or for some libraries, impossible.

On a national level, the American Library Association (ALA) has consistently supported maintaining net neutrality, resisting both the current and 2015 moves to repeal. Following the December 14 decision there will likely be legal challenges to the order in the federal court of appeals, as well as possible legislative action.
Message from the President

This issue of CLA Today comes out as many are in the midst of holiday preparations, but I am writing this shortly after Thanksgiving, the unofficial start of the holiday season and my official favorite holiday. Aside from all the food, wine and football, I love Thanksgiving because of its simple message: be thankful for what you have. I spent much of the past weekend reflecting on all the things in my personal life for which I am grateful, and now I am doing the same for my professional life.

I am thankful to be part of such an engaged, caring, and giving profession, surrounded by colleagues who devote so much of their time and energy to enriching the lives of all those in our community by providing information, services and experiences that help people learn, create, and understand. The collaborative way in which libraries, librarians and library staff work is often overlooked by those of us who have been in this world for years, but I am grateful that we see each other as complimentary resources, not competition, and that we are just as willing to help another librarian find answers as we are willing to help a patron.

I am thankful for the overwhelming support that Avon Free Public Library, the Connecticut Library Association, and libraries of all kinds around the state enjoy. It is far too easy to focus on the stagnating budget, the grumpy patron, or the neighbor who says nobody needs libraries anymore because of Google, but a 2016 Pew Research Center poll found that 91% of Americans felt closing their local library would negatively impact their community. Most of us are lucky enough to have Friends groups that offer financial and other support. Our users are usually more than willing to speak out on behalf of libraries when we ask them to, and many of you willingly donate your time and talents to make CLA such a successful organization.

While there is much to be thankful for, a great deal of work is still needed to allow libraries and librarians to continue to be the positive social force they are. Libraries across the Caribbean were devastated by hurricanes Irma and Maria. The American Library Association (ALA) has started an adopt-a-library program, which pairs stateside libraries with damaged institutions in Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands for fundraising, consulting and other support. Learn more at http://bit.ly/2yUSVH9.

Closer to home, the celebration about the state finally having a budget was short-lived. The Connecticut State Library's initial budget looked promising, but now that holdbacks, rescissions and deficit mitigation plans are in the mix, the numbers on the original budget are no longer accurate, and we could be facing a loss of federal funds as well. Watch for advocacy updates on budget issues on the state’s library listservs and at http://ctlibraryassociation.org/Advocacy.

This holiday season, I hope you all take a moment to be thankful for your fellow librarians and library workers at your library, around the state and around the globe. We can and do make a difference and I am proud to be part of this valuable vocation.

Glenn Grube is the director of the Avon Free Public Library.
Movin’ On Up!

I recently moved to Connecticut, and applied for an entry level position at a public library. When I got to the interview, there were 4 people there to interview me, which I wasn’t expecting. Is this a common practice in CT? What are some strategies and best practices for dealing with panel interviews vs. 1-on-1 interviews?

From Kate Byorade, Director, Cragin Memorial Library, Colchester

The interview panel is a longstanding practice in many Connecticut public libraries for hiring either full-time or critical part-time positions. These panels can be external panels, internal panels, or mixed panels. While there is often a town human resources professional sitting on or assisting any of these, an external panel is made up of library colleagues from other towns, while an internal panel will be comprised of people who work in the library, and a mixed panel is just that, mixed.

I’m going to focus on external panels, which are first interviews, aimed at assessing whether the candidates are qualified for the position. External panels are typically brought in to provide a neutral playing field, especially when

From Richard Conroy, Director, Essex Free Library

I don’t know if this is a common practice in Connecticut, per se. In the case of Essex, though, our staff is small so it’s very important that new hires not only have the proper qualifications, but will fit in well with our culture. For that reason I usually include at least our head of adult services and head of children’s services in all interviews that I conduct so that I can get their perspectives on the candidate’s personality. I’ve also heard of interviews for lower level positions with panels that included a member of the library’s board and/or Friends group. In a municipal setting someone from the town’s HR department may be on a panel. Long story short – there are a lot more potential pitfalls that directors have to be careful of when hiring than was the case when I was

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.
CONTINUED FROM P. 1

From Kate Byroade
The Indigo Girl by Natasha Boyd

Boyd fictionalizes the life Eliza Lucas, left in charge of her family’s three South Carolina plantations in 1739 at age 17, and her quest to establish indigo as a crop and export product. Even though I was familiar with Lucas’s accomplishments, the novel’s account of her travails, including an unsupportive mother, obnoxious suitors, a saboteur, and personal heartbreak, had me anxious throughout. I listened to the excellent audiobook narrated by Saskia Maarleveld, whose precise diction and depth of feeling transported me to the 18th century.

From Jennifer Rummel
Moxie by Jennifer Mathieu

Vivian’s had enough of the boys getting away with lewd comments and sexist behaviors. She starts a zine for girls to band together and make a change. Moxie Girls Fight Back! I couldn’t put this feminist read down, I loved it. With everything going on in the world around #MeToo movement, this is the perfect book to hand to readers.

From Sam Lee
Genuine Fraud by E. Lockhart

I’ve been a fan of Lockhart since high school when I stumbled upon one of her books. I was lucky to pick up the ARC of her latest book, Genuine Fraud. Imogen is rich, connected and has every opportunity available to her. Jule is rough around the edges and thrives off Imogen’s attention. These two friends rely on each other’s support until one outgrows the other. Suicide? Murder?

From Christy Billings
I Liked My Life by Abby Fabiaschi

A debut novel told by a dead woman. The first line is the dead woman, named Madeline, telling us that she has definitely found a new wife for her husband. Before you stop reading, and think, “Ugh, what a tacky, gimmicky debut novel,” hear me out! Madeline tragically dies but does not completely leave her teenage daughter, Eve, and her husband, Brady. Madeline has been a wonderful wife and mother and has left her family shocked and bewildered. She finds herself in a kind of limbo, and tries to fix her family’s heartache from beyond the grave.

From Danielle Valenzano
Jabari Jumps by Gaia Cornwall

I absolutely adore this picture book full of beautiful illustrations and diverse characters! It’s about a little boy’s struggle to finally take the plunge from the high dive. The book has some great moments of anticipation — ending with his little toes peeping over the edge of the diving board as his dad and little sister wait below in the pool… will this finally be the time Jabari jumps? I highly recommend this book for any preschooler or young elementary school child or storytime!

From Alessandra Petrino
Life by Cynthia Rylant and Brendan Wenzel

With simple, yet breathtaking illustrations of animals across the world in their various environments and journeys, Rylant’s picture book is not just a story for children but a reminder for adults that though we are not all the same and life is not always easy, it is always worth it.

From Susan Ray
The Radium Girls: The Dark Story of America’s Shining Women by Kate Moore

The newly discovered element of radium is touted as the wonder drug of medicine. Hundreds of young girls go to work in the radium-dial factories, ingesting the radium as they lick their paint brushes to a fine point to paint delicate clock faces. This coveted and high paying job is wonderful until they begin to fall ill with a mysterious illness. As the factories deny their claims that their jobs have poisoned them, these brave girls fight against one of the biggest scandals in America and begins the battle for worker’s rights across the country ultimately saving thousands of lives.

CLA Today December 2017/January 2018
Report on the NELA Conference

By Christy Billings

I had the opportunity to attend the NELA Conference: Recharge 2017, in Burlington, VT. I am appreciative of having a PEG grant to assist with the registration costs of the conference.

It was a full slate of programs and events. Dr. Allison Butler, Director of UMass Media Literacy Certificate Program, started off the first day with an excellent interactive program on Critical Media Literacy. She spoke about understanding sources that put out news, and the tools of persuasion to make a fake news story appear true. She explained how words can be used to push a story in one direction or another such as “Only 500 people turned out…” or “Over 500 people turned out.” She taught us that even if we agree with the news story we should still critique it the same way. I left with a good foundational understanding of critical media literacy and plan to apply it in my everyday life.

I attended a program on Project Management and am not going to name the speaker. The program was disappointing. The speaker did apologize for being fatigued from jet lag, but she did not seem to be adequately prepared. She said she was still creating a PowerPoint which she would send out later. She did offer that identifying tasks and skill sets in your people and assigning accordingly will assist in a smoother project outcome, as well as, “Address the project, not the person.”

Our excellent Keynote Speaker, Richard Moniz spoke on “Mindful Librarians.” His mindful strategies were insightful in all avenues of life, including difficult interactions at work with staff and with patrons. He has done research on bullying in libraries and has written a book on his findings called The Dysfunctional Library: Challenges and Solutions to Workplace Relationships. He had another workshop later in the day, on personal strategies giving even more resources and tips on living a mindful life. At the close of that workshop, participants were able to walk on a labyrinth mat that is easily taken to any venue.

The Mental Health 101 program was a panel that covered a lot of familiar ground, but did address triggers such as unmet expectations, and partnering with local mental health providers.

Jessamyn West, the community technology librarian at the Randolph Technical Career Center in Vermont, talked on Privacy in 2017. She spoke in a very practical manner about personal and institutional privacy. One of the best take-aways of conference was her research tip of adding “EILI5,” which stands for “Explain it Like I’m 5” when doing an Internet search. She spoke about devices that are always “listening” like Siri, Google, or Alexa, and what that means in everyday life. Another good tip was Facebook Purity, and Privacy Badger. Her advice was to give informed consent as much as possible, and to ‘trust but verify.’ She was excellent.

As a programmer of a Veteran’s Writing group in my home library, I was excited to attend, Good Naked: An Expressive Writing Workshop, by author, Joni B. Cole. Fortunately, the “Good Naked” referred to exposing our writing, not ourselves. We had a 7 minute writing exercise and then read our work out loud for feedback. I was hesitant to share my writing, but participants in our veteran’s writing group share their pieces every week. How could I do any less? I was pleasantly rewarded, when people smiled and laughed in the right places, and gave me positive encouragement.

Franken-desk, a workshop I was really looking forward to hearing was canceled due to illness. I hope another conference or CLC hosts the presenter, Julie Petzold on this topic.
People in the News

Guilford Free Library director Sandy Ruoff retired on Nov. 30. She was just two months shy of 41 years of GFL service and just a few days ahead of serving Guilford as a newly elected selectman. “I’m leaving on a Thursday, and the first meeting of the new board is the next Monday, so I’ll have one day off. I’m used to being busy,” says Sandy, who is also a past Connecticut Library Association president and served CLA for many years as its legislative co-chair.

Former assistant director Rob McCool has been named director of Guilford Free Library. McCool began his career at GFL as a reference librarian 11 years ago and has led many technology initiatives at the library including 3D printing services and the launch of StudioSpace.

The Scranton Memorial Library in Madison welcomes Lydia Holland as its new children’s librarian. Lydia most recently worked as a children’s librarian at the Southington Public Library. She loves STEM programming, especially if she gets to make a mess!

Ellen G. Janpol, business librarian at The Westport Library, is the 2017 recipient of the "Distinguished Service" award presented by the Special Libraries Association New England chapter. The award is given annually "to an individual who has, consistently over the years, given her/his time and efforts to ensure the continuing success of the chapter." The award was presented to Ellen at SLA New England’s annual business meeting and dinner in Boston on December 5. The SLA New England Chapter represents special librarians in Connecticut (except for Fairfield County), Massachusetts, Vermont, New Hampshire and Maine. Ellen is co-chair of CLA’s Customer Service Committee, and chairs CLC’s Special Librarians Roundtable and Business Librarians Roundtable.

Brett Garabedian is the new librarian/social media specialist at the Connecticut Clearinghouse. Brett is a longtime resident of New Haven County who previously worked at the Wallingford Public Library. Connecticut Clearinghouse is a library and resource center for information on substance use and mental health disorders, prevention, health promotion and wellness, treatment and recovery, and other related topics.

At the Stratford Library, Christopher Bacchiocchi and Sarah Mellinger have been promoted to new positions. Bacchiocchi started as a page at the Milford Library in 2005 and began working in the same position for the teen services department of the Stratford Library in 2010. He graduated to become the library’s full-time digital literacy associate and, most recently, was promoted to technology specialist. Mellinger was previously a children’s department librarian at the Fairfield Public Library. At the Stratford Library, she spent 10 years as a children’s librarian and is now a full-time reference librarian.

Jennifer Billingsley is the interim assistant director at Russell Library in Middletown.

In North Branford, Lauren Davis is taking over as the new first new library director in 40 years. She will handle both the Atwater and Smith libraries. Read a detailed article here.

Library director Meryl Farber retired after 18 years of service to the Case Memorial Library in Orange.

Helene R. Murtha is the new town librarian in Fairfield. A Fairfield University graduate, she previously held the position of head of children’s services for the Fairfield Public Library where she managed the children’s department at both the Main and Woods Branch libraries for the past year. Read a detailed article here.

Kenya Flash, librarian at Yale University Library, was named in the American Library Association 2018 Class of Emerging Leaders.

CONTINUED ON P. 8
News from around the State

Congratulations to Groton Public Library and Hartford Public Library, two of only 28 libraries in the country that received grants to design and implement coding programs for young people. The grants are part of ALA’s ongoing Libraries Ready to Code initiative sponsored by Google to promote computer science (CS) and computational thinking among youth. It is the first time ALA has dedicated funding for CS programs in libraries.

The Simsbury Public Library was recently presented the 2017 Annual Recycling Award by the Town of Simsbury’s Recycling Committee recognizing “its sponsorship of the innovative Repair Café premier event held on July 29, 2017 promoting reduce and reuse recycling goals in Simsbury.”

Otis Library in Norwich will host the traveling exhibit “Let Me Be Myself: The Life Story of Anne Frank” from January 3—31 in the Millie and Martin Shapiro Community Room. Making its United States premiere, the new exhibition discusses the life and struggles of Frank from her birth in 1929 to her death in the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp in 1945. It then jumps forward to the present, telling stories of young people today.

The children’s department at Avon Free Public Library will be hosting an interactive play exhibit, called The Amazing Castle. The Avon Friends of the Library have donated the funds to bring the exhibit to Avon. This exhibit is a 1,500 square foot interactive play castle. It was created by the Minnesota Children’s Museum. This will be the first time that the castle will be installed on the floor of an actual children’s department. The castle arrives January 22 and will leave June 1.

To celebrate their 25th anniversary, The Friends of the Case Memorial Library in Orange, reached out to the community to collaborate on a “Yarn Storming” of the outside and the second floor gallery of the library. This is a crochet and knitted installation depicting the four seasons. Strolling around the 100-foot circular space, one can see many flowers, insects, fish, birds, reptiles, snow, a rainbow, and a graceful tree covered in fall leaves. Also included are characters from favorite children’s books (Charlotte’s Web and The Day the Crayons Quit) and movies (Frozen). This spectacular exhibit was created through the Herculean efforts of Lucia Bloom, Lorraine Adinolfi, and Laurel Brown of the Friends.

Free Speech vs. Hate Speech with Associate Professor of Media Studies at St Michael’s College, Traci Griffith was very eye opening. I learned that political speech is protected under the Constitution, which sadly includes speech that otherwise would be considered hate speech.

On the final day I attended a Mindfulness to Meditation: Contemplative Practice in Public Spaces. We saw a “shruti box,” which is something like an accordion, to assist in chanting, and meditated for 20 minutes. Very peaceful!

The vendors were informative, and the food was outstanding. We heard authors, Garth Stein, Chris Bohjalian, and Ann Hood, who gave great talks about books, reading, writing, and how their lives have been impacted by libraries.

CLA and NELA now have an option for joint membership for a very nominal fee. Belonging to both organizations is such a bonus! This was my very first time attending a New England Library Conference, and I look forward to attending many more.
Fall Program Roundup

The Technical Services Section held their fall program: Should it stay or should it go? : right-sizing (weeding) your collection on October 18 at the Farmington Library. A panel of librarians from different library sectors: Kristina Edwards, acquisitions librarian from Central Connecticut State University; Kyle Lynes, reference librarian from the University of Hartford; Kate Soboleva, adult services librarian from Bethel Library; and Linda Williams, children’s services consultant from the Division of Library Development at the Connecticut State Library all provided valuable information on how to right-size library collections.

The panel fielded questions about projects they each participated in such as major library renovations requiring removal of 78,000 items from the University of Hartford, removal of 90,000 items in order to merge state library collections due to a location merger, migration of collections such as reference and the curriculum lab at Central Connecticut State University, and what happens when you are newly hired in the midst of a building project that has taken 13 years to complete.

Each case discussed had its own intriguing dilemmas. Real life scenarios from each librarian made for a thought-provoking discussion and activity in which participants had to assess collections of books based on certain criteria. Many topics covered throughout the workshop emphasized the need for
- online policies and the importance of having them in place, inventories,
- outlining goals,
- utilizing usage reports,
- creating space,
- censorship,
- rare books,
- re-classification due to new subject headings,
- updating subject matter
- sending withdrawn material to places such as Better World Books, American Friends of Kenya (AFK), The Dodd Center and Discover Books.

Due to the onset of digital media, librarians are faced with a changing dynamic of how to instruct patrons how to access information they need, even if it is no longer physically on a shelf. Right-sizing library collections should be done consistently and will ensure collections are current; reduce work flow issues when renovations and moves occur, and will ultimately provide the best collections for users. By Laurie Haggan

The Support Staff Section, CLASS, held our 19th annual professional development conference, “Welcoming Innovation with CLASS,” for library support staff on Oct. 27. The conference was at the University of Hartford’s Gray Conference Center for the eighth year. The all-day conference offered a diverse range of educational, networking, and fun opportunities for library support staff. This year, we had close to 100 attendees.

Our morning Keynote Speaker, Maxine Bleiweis, gave a motivating presentation about innovation. She provided tips to enhance your work/life that could be put into practice immediately. She encouraged everyone to be innovative in every interaction - and have fun while doing it! Bleiweis also facilitated one of the roundtable discussions.

Our afternoon Keynote Speaker, Jean Baur, charmed us with the story of her dog Bella. Baur is the author of Joy Unleashed: The Story of Bella, the Unlikely Therapy Dog. Baur and Bella discovered that they both love being a therapy dog team. Bella has touched so many lives, including her work with special needs children and hospital, cancer center, and rehab patients. Bella shared the podium with Baur, adding commentary when needed.

Roundtable discussions allowed attendees to engage in meaningful dialogue. Subjects included technology, cus-
Continued from p. 9

Customer service, ILL and office administration. All the breakout sessions were well received and ranged from serious to fun. Serious topics included career growth, innovation, highlighting your local collection, mindfulness in the workplace, and fake news. Lighter topics included laughter yoga and library origami.

The conference steering committee was led for the third time by Alberto Cifuentes, Jr. Cifuentes worked tirelessly to be sure the conference was organized and compelling. This is his last year as part of the committee, as he is busy expanding his horizons in a post graduate education setting. We wish him well in his new endeavors. Committee members included Katherine Bengtson, Emmanuel Doreste, Lorrie Goings, Jennifer Hadley, David Oppelt and Janet Valencis. Thanks to committee members, roundtable facilitators, and session and keynote speakers for their efforts.

Lastly, the committee would like to especially thank Randi Ashton-Pritting, the 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. She has helped make the planning and coordination of this conference so much easier and flexible for all involved.

To see our full list of presenters as well as some helpful links and guides, please go to our conference page, https://tinyurl.com/CLASSCLA17. To get more involved with CLASS or if you would like to share any feedback about this year’s conference, feel free to e-mail us at ct.class.conference@gmail.com.

By Janet Valencis

CLA Awards Season is Underway!

Nominations Sought for CLA AWARDS 2018

Do you have a person in your library who should be nominated? This is your opportunity! Awards include: Outstanding Librarian, Special Achievement, Excellence in Public Library Service, Support Staff, Supporter of Support Staff, News Media, Adeline Mix, Intellectual Freedom, and the Edith B. Nettleton Award for volunteer service.

Any questions, please contact Chris Hemingway, Region 5 Rep. chemingway@hagamanlibrary.org

Click here for a description of the awards and nomination form

Deadline: January 31, 2018

Publicity Awards Now Accepting Entries

THE CLA PUBLICITY AWARDS, sponsored by the Publicity Committee, recognize accomplishments in design, marketing, and publicity by Connecticut libraries. Materials designed to promote a library concept or event are accepted. A panel of professional designers/artists and a representative from the library field will choose the winning entries. Winning entries will be displayed at the CLA Conference and winners will be honored at a special awards ceremony at the Conference.

Download the entry guidelines and submission form.

there may be one or more internal candidates. External panels tend to be shorter interviews of 20 to 45 minutes with 10-20 general questions, usually focused on the basic requirements and duties of the position and the suitability of the candidate for library work. Surprisingly, the interviewers may not have seen your application materials, so it’s important that you name the places you’ve gone to school or worked, specializations, skills, and experience. The interviewers score the answers, provide general feedback about the candidates they see, and then their work is done. I’ve often served on a panel and not known for months afterward who was ultimately hired for the position! While we still provide candidates with an opportunity to ask a question, we can rarely answer the questions that candidates typically ask about working at the library. So when you arrive, pay attention to where the panelists are from. You can ask an external panel what they know about the hiring process moving forward, but they likely can’t answer more specific questions.♦

just starting out. As a result, many of us involve others in the process out of an abundance of caution.

As far as how to approach a panel interview goes, I think the same basic rules apply that do with a one-on-one situation. Always take a moment to gather your thoughts before you start to answer a question. When you do speak be sure to make eye contact, not only with the person who asked the question, but the others who are present, as well. If you are unsure that you understand the question don’t be shy about asking that it be repeated or clarified. If you are unsure that you answered the question “correctly” then don’t be shy about concluding by asking something like “have I answered your question?”

Most importantly, try to get the names and contact information for everyone on the panel so that you can send them a (preferably hand written) thank-you note. That can sometimes be a challenge but, if necessary, you will almost always be able to get in touch with the person who set up the interview to ask for those names. I’ve personally done this in the past when I went through an interview with a panel of 10 people. What I did was contact the person who set it up and said “I’d rather seem forgetful than rude, so can you please send me the names of the people who were on the panel that interviewed me so that I can send them thank-you notes?” I then sent individual notes to each of them, care of the library – and I got the job. That may seem like a small gesture, but it could give you the edge if the panel is deciding between hiring you and one or two others.♦
Throughout, the ALA has committed to “work with other supporters of strong net neutrality protections to ensure policymakers know how important a free and open internet is to libraries and the communities we serve” (Satterwhite, 2017). Similarly in our state, the Connecticut Library Association Intellectual Freedom Committee (CLA IFC) is here to support you in this struggle, as well as in challenges to materials, library services, and patron privacy. Coinciding with the ALA’s Office for Intellectual Freedom, the CLA IFC seeks “to recommend such steps as may be necessary to safeguard the rights of library users, libraries, and librarians...” For that reason, we will be providing regular updates on these issues via this column in CLA Today.

In our digital age, we must together as a profession continually focus on protecting patrons’ rights online, seeking to support our patron’s right to free speech online and the confidentiality of their digital identities, just as we long have with their physical selves. Although the FCC vote on net neutrality has now passed, there is still time to speak up on this issue. Read through the ALA’s advocacy information on net neutrality, and follow the ALA Washington Office’s District Dispatch blog as this continues to unfold. If this debate transitions to Congress, call your senators and express your support for net neutrality. As we move toward a new year, we can together support our libraries and communities by speaking out against affronts to intellectual freedom and by working together to protect the rights of our patrons.

By: Andrew Boyles Petersen
Instruction and Outreach Librarian, The Loomis Chaffee School
Member, CLA Intellectual Freedom Committee

The CLA IFC will be overviewing a current privacy issue or tool for each CLA Today this year, discussing such topics as two-factor authentication, secure browsers, password managers, and anti-tracking extensions and applications. To build on this, we will discuss possibilities for implementing these tools in your libraries as well as techniques to aid patrons in safeguarding their online identities.

BECAUSE THE INTERNET SHOULDN’T HAVE A SLOW LANE.

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