With the potential of the COVID-19 pandemic stretching into the fall, the Pennsylvania Library Association board voted on May 15, 2020 to cancel the in-person annual conference at the Kalahari Resort in the Poconos and transition to a purely online conference. Out of respect for the ongoing challenges presented by the coronavirus, the board felt that it was in the best interest for the health of all conference participants to pivot the event to a virtual format. The Pennsylvania Library Association 2020 Virtual Conference and Expo will take place October 19–21, 2020, which is the same time frame that was originally planned.

Both the planning committee and board would like to emphasize that this will not be ‘just another Zoom meeting.’ The virtual conference platforms that the conference planners are reviewing include multiple options for attendee engagement such as chat windows, live Q&A with conference presenters, as well as chat capability for one-on-one and group interactions with exhibitors and other attendees. We are excited for these new opportunities to learn and engage and hope that this safe, virtual environment without the need for travel will encourage even more participation!

Educational Programming

Be assured that attendees of the PaLA online conference in 2020 will still receive top notch educational opportunities with both recorded and live-streamed presentations.

Keynote Presenters

We’ve engaged some amazing keynote speakers that will speak on a number of relevant topics:

• Andrea Jamison, Lecturer in Library Science, Valparaiso University (IN) will be the Opening Keynote Speaker and will speak on the importance of diversity in staff and collections.

• Ben Bizzle, Founder & CEO, Library Market will present “You Are the Brand: How Everyone Plays a Role in the Library Story.” From the website, in story times and at the reference desk, every library, in every action, is telling a story to its community. Learn how to make sure your library story is accurate and effective.

• Sofia Leung, CEO, Do Better, Be Better LLC, will speak on microaggressions within academic librarianship.

Continued on page 11
Contents

1 The Cat’s Out of the Bag: PaLA Annual Conference 2020 is Going Viral!
9 PALS Leading Thru Challenges
10 Changes to PaLRaP Editorial Team
13 Technical Services at Home: Experiences from the Technical Services Roundtable
15 Better Together: Partnering for Continuing Education Workshops

DEPARTMENTS

3 President’s Message
5 Executive Director’s Message
6 PA Forward™
7 It’s Academic
8 Welcome New Members
16 Calendar

The PaLA Bulletin is published online 4 times a year by the Pennsylvania Library Association, 220 Cumberland Parkway, Suite 10, Mechanicsburg, PA 17055, Phone: 717-766-7663, 800-622-3308 (PA); Fax: 717-766-5440.

Editor
Stephanie Campbell
sac4@pct.edu

Contributing Editor
Christi Bucker
christi@palibraries.org

Editorial Coordinator
Susan Wertz
admin@palibraries.org

Design/Layout
Graphtech
info@thinkgraphtech.com

President
Michele Legate
NE Library District/Scranton Public Library
Scranton, PA

1st Vice President
Tom Reinsfelder
Penn State Mont Alto
Mont Alto, PA

2nd Vice President – 2020 Conference
Sylvia Orner
Scranton Public Library
Scranton, PA

2nd Vice President – 2021 Conference
Nicole Henline
Monroeville Public Library
Monroeville, PA

3rd Vice President
Sheli Pratt-McHugh
University of Scranton/Weinberg Memorial Library
Scranton, PA

Past President
Denise Sticha
Centre Co Library & Historical Museum
Bellefonte, PA

Treasurer
Kate Boyle
Tredyffrin Public Library
Strafford, PA

ALA Councilor
Barbara McGary
James V. Brown Library
Williamsport, PA

Executive Director
Christi Bucker
christi@palibraries.org

Meetings & Finance Manager
Kim Snyder Wise
kim@palibraries.org

PA Forward Program Manager
Rob Lesher
rob@palibraries.org

Administrative Assistant | Membership Coordinator
Susan Wertz
admin@palibraries.org
Much of this past year can be summed up by the feeling that we’ve been ‘flying by the seat of our pants.’ We have had to make so many decisions so quickly and in rapid succession. Sometimes, all we could hope for was that the decision we made was not the worst one. One decision I am truly proud of is moving the association’s annual conference from in-person to virtual.

I never dreamed of having to consider whether to cancel the conference or to move it to a virtual platform. I have been excited for this conference ever since our last visit to Kalahari in 2016. When I was elected 2020 president and found out the conference would practically be in my backyard, my excitement went off the charts, and I knew I had to be a part of the planning committee. It didn’t hurt that the conference chair was a friend and co-worker, Sylvia Orner. The conference planning committee has been working non-stop since our first meeting in mid-2019. We secured diverse keynote speakers on timely topics, chose thoughtful and educational breakout sessions, and planned evening events that would knock the socks off of our attendees.

And then COVID-19 entered the picture. I was stunned at the prospect of cancelling the conference when we realized the pandemic wasn’t going anywhere any time soon. All of that work…for nothing? But in the end, the association board knew that our members, and the association, still needed a conference. Our members needed the chance to learn from each other, hear from industry experts, and network together. We would simply move it to a virtual setting. Our conference planning committee hasn’t hesitated one moment in pivoting from an in-person conference to a virtual one. We are dedicated to ensuring our conference is not ‘just another Zoom meeting.’ Our members and library community deserve more than that, and I can assure you - you will not want to miss it.

I am constantly amazed at the ease with which librarians and library staff can adapt to change so quickly. With the pandemic, we closed on a Monday and I saw libraries offering virtual story times later that week. Within a month, libraries were offering virtual book clubs, step-by-step cooking videos and science experiments, hosting trivia nights, answering county emergency phone lines, creating music videos about library databases, designing Harry Potter escape rooms, and so many more awesome things. We proved that even though our buildings were closed — our libraries were OPEN. I am in awe of all of you and I thank you from the bottom of my heart for your dedication to libraries and to your communities.

Being a leader in times like these isn’t easy and isn’t always fun. But it helps if you are surrounded by people who support you. I am incredibly lucky for the support I have received throughout all of this. I am grateful to the staff at association headquarters who have worked tirelessly from home to keep the association running — special thanks to Christi Buker, Kim Snyder Wise, Rob Lesher, and Susan Wertz. I owe you all cookies and chocolate. To the board — Tom Reinsfelder, Denise Sticha, Kate Shaw, Barbara McGary, Sylvia Orner, Sheli Pratt-McHugh, Joann Eichenlaub, Melissa Rowe, Kate Cummings, Joe Sherwood, Brady Clemens, Nicole Henline, Dana Farabaugh, and Kelli Knapp — no words can adequately express my thanks for your support over the last few months. And for not laughing at me when I cried at our April board meeting. I know there is no crying in baseball, but sometimes, a girl just has to let it out.

“IT’s supposed to be hard. If it wasn’t hard, everyone would do it. The hard is what makes it great.”

— A League of Their Own

Michele is president of PaLA and Northeast Library District Consultant. She is currently reading “Five Days: The Fiery Reckoning of an American City” by Wes Moore and Erica L. Green.
Meet the Demand for Digital with Flipster Magazines

Digital magazines are surging in popularity among library patrons for their ability to entertain readers during the pandemic while offering focused and illustrative content on virtually any subject or topic. Flipster enables libraries to deliver top magazine content in a format that can be accessed by patrons of all ages on any device from any location.

Readers are consuming more digital content than ever with no sign of slowing down.

Digital magazines are surging in popularity among library patrons for their ability to entertain readers during the pandemic while offering focused and illustrative content on virtually any subject or topic.

Flipster enables libraries to deliver top magazine content in a format that can be accessed by patrons of all ages on any device from any location.

Enjoy Free Flipster DIY Project Ideas

Click the link below to enjoy some sample magazine downloads from hot magazines such as Better Homes & Gardens, Real Simple and This Old House.

Learn More About Flipster and Enjoy Free DIY Project Ideas at:

more.ebsco.com/Flipster-PLA-Bulletin.html
In just 4 months (or is it 5 months?), so much has changed with the continuing coronavirus pandemic.

At a special meeting of the board on March 18, the decision was made that all units with in-person events through May 30 had to either cancel, convert to online, or reschedule to comply with health and safety guidelines. This meant that most of our regional, one-day chapter workshops were cancelled. During the April 17 board meeting, it was painfully clear that COVID-19 was also likely to impact the annual conference in October, and the Pennsylvania Library Association’s Academy of Leadership Studies (PALS) in-person workshops in early June. These are major programs and critical to our revenue. At the May 15 special meeting of the Board, the final decision was made that our conference would move online, and volunteer efforts would focus on making it the best experience possible. By the June 5 Board & Council meeting, online engagement was a part of every report for the various association activities, committees, divisions, and round tables.

Certainly, our volunteer board of directors, comprised of members elected by their peers, have invested significant time for additional meetings. Despite the intensity and emotion of these new challenges, they made really tough decisions in order to achieve the overarching good of the association and its members. With their support and encouragement, volunteers and staff have realigned in-person programs, launched all new content for “Leading thru Challenges by PALS” (PaLA’s Academy of Leadership Studies), revised three major grant activities and budgets, researched online conference platforms, purchased new technology for our program participants, and ultimately, found new ways to sustain our core mission – advancing libraries and librarianship.

One of the ways we deliver on our mission is by bringing people together for common goals and sharing of best practices. The Open and Director’s Forums we’ve been hosting since March 19 have been a particularly exciting new way to gather our folks together. These weekly, and often twice weekly, sessions have included members and non-members of public, academic, school libraries, and partners. Without a pre-set agenda and open to the needs of the day, our BlueJeans video conference platform was regularly hitting the full 100-seat capacity. Forums allowed participants to share best practices, ensured they had the newest information, interpreted the latest guidelines into practical applications, and acknowledged the hardships and silver linings we’ve found. It has been very reaffirming to see the strength of our unity in trying to be the best librarians and libraries!

As we look ahead in these rapidly-changing times, there are a few important areas where we particularly hope you will join us.

* Stay tuned for updates on the work of the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee
* Consider the “Mountains of Possibilities” 2020 Conference, October 19–21, with fun, networking, inspiration, and education built in!
* Participate in the September 21 virtual Pennsylvania Library Advocacy Day — where we show our elected officials the awesome work you are doing and why their support and funding is essential.

Truly, I appreciate each of you, and your willingness to join together through membership under the Association umbrella. While I don’t have a crystal ball to see in the future, I do know that our unified efforts will make it more positive! Thank you for being a member and being with us!

Christi Buker is the executive director of the Pennsylvania Library Association. You can reach her at christi@palibraries.org. She is re-reading “Strengths Based Leadership” by Tom Rath as part of the “Leading thru Challenges by PALS” leadership program.
As the world went topsy-turvy in March, we had to consider colossal changes in the way that we look at our work.

Within days, librarians began to develop ways to bring library service to the people in their communities who suddenly found themselves staying at home. Libraries have provided eBooks, eAudio and streaming video services for years. However, the importance of these collections expanded exponentially during the last few months.

Libraries even began to develop virtual story times, virtual programming, and virtual social networking in ways which they had not thought would be necessary just one month earlier.

Library buildings had to be closed to protect public safety, but libraries continued to serve their communities.

PAForward™ is just as important in a virtual world as it is in the analog world.

If you are working on your Star Library status, any virtual programs you did will count. Programs are programs, whether they occur within the physical walls of a building or exist in the eWorld.

The PAForward™ Program continues and training is available. Our trainers will work with your individual library, library system, or district to help you do virtual trainings.

The Star Library programs continue. Please submit your actions to the website. Our technical team is available to verify your steps. If your star was expiring the last few months, your expiration has been extended through September 30. If you do not feel you can complete your maintenance steps by then, contact me.

I hope you all saw the email from the Office of Commonwealth Libraries a few weeks ago. The state has begun a relationship with Niche Academy to provide online training. Because of this, the Pennsylvania Library Association was also able to contract with Niche Academy.

The training team is working on developing training modules for the PAForward™ program. These trainings can be used by libraries to teach their staff about PAForward™ or help anyone wanting to learn about PAForward™

The Star Library technical team is also working to move parts of the recognition program into the Niche Academy. This will allow the entire process to be under one platform, making it easier for libraries to navigate.

If you developed any virtual programming during the pandemic, please consider adding those programs to the PAForward™ Commons. Your colleagues would love to have more examples of programs which they can provide to their communities.

I just want to thank all of you for everything you did over the past months. There is no pandemic playbook. It has been so great to work with you at a time when so much is unknown, and you have executed library services in this time with grace and humor. I look forward to working with you as we all move onto the next steps! Have a great rest of the summer, you deserve it.

— Rob Lesher
I write this as I enter my 11th week of working from home, sitting at my dining room table, which, out of necessity, was turned into a makeshift office desk. My column in this issue of the Bulletin would be, on any other year, a recap of the College & Research Division (CRD) Workshop. But due to the coronavirus pandemic, plans have changed. This year our CRD Workshop was held virtually on Monday, June 22, 2020 with keynote speakers, presentations, book discussions, and breakout sessions throughout the day. While I was looking forward to seeing friends and colleagues at our in-person workshop, I am grateful to the planning committee and presenters for making the transition to a virtual workshop work so well. It may not be ideal, but our ability to learn from and support each other will always be there. Instead of a workshop overview, I am offering instead my personal thoughts on working from home.

In mid-March academic libraries across the country had to quickly pivot to remote teaching, and the situation was no different at my library in Middletown. In my experience so far, a portion of the transition has felt nearly seamless while a lot has changed. Seemingly overnight, I went from walking into a classroom prepared and confident for face-to-face instruction to remote teaching via Zoom to students I could not see, already concerned for how effective I would be. I love being an instruction librarian. I love working with the students and helping them further their research. Was this going to be possible for me to do in a remote teaching environment? Would I excel at this? How would I ensure that my remote teaching was accessible for the students? For the remaining weeks of the spring semester, I was determined to do my best. First, I reached out to colleagues for assistance and learned about best practices for remote teaching. I took their guidance, advice, and knowledge and implemented it as best as I could. Yes, the personal connection between me and the students was limited in our new virtual environment, but as we continued, my instruction was getting better, and I finished the semester feeling OK with it. I started each instruction session by asking the students simple questions like, “How are you?” “How are you feeling about this situation?” I was surprised by how many students would answer these questions and the class would spend five minutes just talking before I began the lesson. After doing this a few times, it dawned on me that I very rarely ask these questions when I am teaching in-person. I think it is something I will add to my instruction when I am back on campus. Though my course instruction has changed quite a bit, other aspects of my job have remained almost the same.

I am still meeting with students and faculty in my office... if I count my dining room as my office, that is. In my individual research appointments, I have found that students are more willing to share their camera which makes our interaction a bit more personal. Instead of sitting across from each other while I spin my desktop monitor towards their view, we sit miles away and I share my Zoom screen. We can hear, and sometimes see, each other’s pets and family members walk past, but other than that – not much has changed. I am lucky in that I do not need access to a specific physical space to continue my research. My research and writing process is interrupted, almost hourly, by my dogs but I know it could be worse. I am still able to add items to our library collection though now with more focus on electronic resources instead of physical items. I miss meeting with my colleagues and committees in person, but our work continues to be accomplished.

Eleven weeks ago, when working from home and social distancing interrupted my normal activities, I found it difficult to separate my work time from my personal time. I have been the most successful when I stick to a routine as much as possible. For me, this means exercising, getting out of my pajamas, and getting to work at the same time as I normally would. I have also learned to take breaks when necessary and not force things that just aren’t happening. While staying at home, I found that gardening, writing letters to friends, trying new recipes, and supporting my local community has improved my mood and mental health. Remember to be gentle with yourself during this time of change and know that we are all in this situation together.

Andrea Pritt is the STEM Librarian and Library Collections and Data Coordinator at Penn State Harrisburg Library. She is currently reading “One Person, No Vote: How Voter Suppression Is Destroying Our Democracy” by Carol Anderson.
Welcome New Members!

PERSONAL MEMBERS

Courtney Baran
Erie County Public Library

Leigh Barnes
Northampton Community College

Andrea Clarkson
Pine Richland School District

Robbie Fischer
Indian Valley Public Library

Chris Gmiter
Upper St. Clair Township Library

Hillary Hunter
William Jeanes Memorial Library and
Nicholas & Athena Karabots Center for Learning

Leah Kulikowski
Helen Kate Furness Free Library

Amy McDonald
Western Allegheny Community Library

Angela Okey
Erie

Elizabeth Pineo
Mechanicsburg

Angela Rines
Easton Area Public Library

Deborah Simonik
The University of Scranton Weinberg Memorial Library

David Trudeau
Glen Mills

Christina Walters
Community Library of Castle Shannon

Stephanie Williams
Reading Library District

Get the latest info on finding financial aid, grants, scholarships, work-study programs, and more by following us on Facebook at @pheaaid and Twitter at @PHEAAid.

Stay connected, stay informed...
As times change so do our enrichment opportunities. “Leading thru Challenges” is a six session, all-virtual leadership program brought to you by the Pennsylvania Academy of Leadership Studies (PALS). This program, held six consecutive Wednesdays starting July 15, was led by David Bendekovic. Each session included content centered on “Strengths Based Leadership” by Tom Rath and Barry Conchie, sharing the results of a 30-year research project. Based on their discoveries, the book identifies three keys to being a more effective leader: learning your strengths and supporting others’ strengths, recruiting people with the right strengths for your team, and understanding and meeting the four basic needs of those who look to you for leadership.

Additionally, the sessions offered keynote addresses from Pennsylvania library leaders with insights from their own experiences during challenging times, plus interactive question and answer sessions.

Public library directors, assistant directors, branch managers, academic head librarians, and other top leaders benefited from this timely and innovative professional development opportunity. From staff and community needs, rapidly changing environments, budgetary constraints, and burn-out, the content and discussions were meaningful and provided skills and connections to help participants Lead thru Challenges!

The coronavirus pandemic has highlighted the need for small and rural public libraries to acquire additional computer equipment to facilitate off-site working conditions and improve communication. PALS made arrangements to help. As a special feature, a limited number of laptops were provided to eligible library leaders participating in this program. Selection of eligible recipients was determined based on need, size of the library budget, and responses to registration questions. These laptops become the property of the home library at the conclusion of the program.

Angie Andre is head of children’s services at Tredyffrin Public Library. She is reading “How to be an Antiracist” by Ibram X. Kendi and listening to “The Sundown Motel” by Simone St. James.
Changes to PaLRaP Editorial Team

Welcoming Two New Co-Editors

BY TOM REINSFELDER & LARISSA GORDON

After publication of the Spring 2020 issue, PaLRaP will continue under the leadership of two new co-editors, and a new News Editor.

**Bryan McGeary** is moving into the role of co-editor after serving as the PaLRaP News Editor since 2015. Bryan is the Learning Design and Open Education Engagement Librarian at Penn State University. In addition to his Master of Library & Information Science degree from the University of Pittsburgh, Bryan also earned a Master of Science in Journalism from Ohio University, and a PhD in American Culture Studies from Bowling Green State University.

**Danielle Skaggs** will also serve as a PaLRaP co-editor. Danielle is the Online and Distance Services Librarian at West Chester University of Pennsylvania. She holds a Master of Information Science from the University of Texas at Austin and a Master of Science in Instructional Technology from Bloomsburg University. Bryan and Danielle have a strong record of experience with scholarly publishing, both as authors and peer reviewers.

**Annie Jansen** joins PaLRaP in 2020 as News Editor. Annie is a Reference and Instruction Librarian at Penn State Brandywine. She has a Master of Library Science from Kent State University and Master of Arts in English from DePaul University. Prior to her work as a librarian, Annie was a Senior Editor with PR Newswire. She will work to gather news items of interest from the Pennsylvania Library community and prepare them for publication in PaLRaP.

**Adam Balcziunas**, Electronic Resources & Systems Librarian at Kings College is our newest copyeditor. Bryan, Danielle, Annie, and Adam will join other volunteer members of the editorial team, including Stephanie Campbell (‘In the PaLRaP Spotlight’ column editor) and Amanda Clossen, Melissa Correll, and Stephanie Gillespie (Copy & Layout Editors).

With this issue, current co-editors Tom Reinsfelder and Larissa Gordon are ending their terms of service to PaLRaP and thank everyone who has contributed to the success of this publication. Tom Reinsfelder (Penn State Mont Alto) was a co-founder of PaLRaP and served as co-editor since 2012–2013. Larissa Gordon (Thomas Jefferson University) was involved with the startup of PaLRaP, assisting with early marketing and promotion, and as a News Editor. She has been co-editor since 2018. To date PaLRaP has published 15 issues, 71 peer-reviewed articles, 25 editor-reviewed articles, and 205 news items totaling 1,097 pages of content. In 2016 *Pennsylvania Libraries: Research & Practice* earned the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) Seal of Approval.
The Cat’s Out of the Bag:
PaLA Annual Conference 2020 is Going Virtual!

• Melanie Townsend Diggs, South Area Manager, Prince George’s County Memorial Library System, MD, will recount the story of how she kept her library open in the midst of the 2015 Baltimore Riots, as well as how and why libraries remained ‘open’ virtually during the pandemic.

Breakout Sessions

Similar to the traditional in-person event, the virtual conference will offer approximately 60 virtual breakout sessions. The following are just some of the online breakout sessions to be presented:

• Francella Ochillo, Executive Director, Next Century Cities, an attorney and broadband advocate will discuss the important topic of Internet connectivity to ensure that every American has an opportunity to participate in a digital society. This session will explore ways to use the power of storytelling and your ‘library story’ as a tools to strengthen your advocacy. Lawmakers and policymakers trust your community insights and benefit from your expertise.

• Speaking of broadband access, Julie Tritt Schell, State E-rate Coordinator, Pennsylvania Department of Education will provide an overview of the federal E-rate program which provides discounts to public libraries on broadband and Internet services as well as internal connection equipment and services, This workshop will cover the application steps for Funding Year 2021.

• Grace Kelly, Senior Consultant, RC Kelly Law Associates, will offer tips on how you can protect your library when hiring and firing employees. In addition, she will present a live, interactive double session, with real life scenarios and best practices for dealing with difficult or disruptive employees.

• Theresa Chmara, General Counsel, Freedom to Read Foundation and Deborah Caldwell-Stone, Director, ALA Office for Intellectual Freedom will present “Social Media, First Amendment Audits, and the Library as a Public Forum.” Do you know what the law says about a library’s ability to regulate comments on its social media sites? How about rights to film and record inside the library? Learn how to minimize your library’s exposure to litigation and have other questions concerning intellectual freedom and the law answered.

• A few misspoken words during a media interview can affect the credibility of an organization. Tom Meinert, of Meinert Mashek Communications will offer a media relations training course with an overview of case studies and tips on how you can improve your media relations skills.

Poster Sessions and Lightning Talks

Poster sessions and lightning talks are valuable informal presentations that allow an alternative forum for library professionals to share ideas and innovations with their peers. Just like in-person sessions, these virtual sessions will be interactive and brief. Poster & Lightning Talk proposals are currently under review and submitters will be contacted soon regarding acceptance and scheduling.

Virtual Exhibit Hall

This year’s virtual exhibit hall will feature library suppliers from all types of industries. While some are first-time exhibitors, many have been exhibiting for 20+ years!
PaLA's commitment to provide quality interaction between our exhibitor partners and conference attendees will remain in the virtual format. Exhibit booths will include video demonstrations, a resource library and live chat functionality for attendee engagement with library suppliers. In addition, there will also be lots of attendee engagement exercises including one-on-one video chats, gamification and more!

Local? Consider Touring the Poconos Safely

At time of publication, all counties in Northeastern Pennsylvania are either in the Green Phase of reopening based on Governor Tom Wolf’s guidance. Many businesses including restaurants and bars are open for at least outdoor dining and/or take out. Please consider patronizing one or many of these local businesses if you live in the area.

But even if you aren’t local to the Poconos area, you can still explore the beauty of the area through virtual tours offered throughout the conference schedule. Join other attendees on these virtual tours and converse about the experience in the session chat area. However, if you are local and you do decide to venture out, there is no shortage of things to do in the Poconos. For more information on tourism in the Poconos, check out the Pocono Mountains Website: https://www.poconomountains.com/. Additionally, please keep an eye out on the Pennsylvania Health Department website for changing business and other activity restrictions: www.health.pa.gov/topics/disease/coronavirus.aspx

Registration for the PaLA Virtual Conference and Expo will begin in mid-August.

For more information on the PaLA Virtual Conference and Expo: https://www.palibraries.org/page/2020VirtualConference

Allyson Wind is Electronic Resources Librarian at East Stroudsburg University. She recently finished reading “Lady Killer” comics 1 and 2, written by Joelle Jones and Jamie S. Rich, illustrated by Joelle Jones, and colored by Laura Allred.

Kim Snyder-Wise is currently reading “The Library Book” by Susan Orlean and “George and Lizzie: A Novel” by Nancy Pearl.
Technical Services at Home: Experiences from the Technical Services Roundtable

BY ANITRA GATES

When libraries across the Commonwealth closed in mid-March, the oftentimes behind-the-scenes work of technical services professionals looked drastically different. Members of the Technical Services Roundtable were asked to share what they were able to do from home during this time.

Traditional cataloging of physical materials depended largely on remote access to their library’s catalog and having library materials at home. “I was able to work in our ILS from home so we updated records and ran reports,” says Samantha Martin, Information Literacy and Collections, Washington & Jefferson College. One cataloger at a public library responded that they had access to the catalog from home and were able to have small amounts of materials delivered to their home for cataloging and processing. But for others, cataloging was not possible. Another cataloger at a public library did not have remote access to their ILS, limiting what they could do from home. Paige Andrew, Cartographic Resources Cataloging Library, Penn State University, could complete “pretty much everything except cataloging. And that is because we were not allowed to bring maps home to work on.”

For those with digital collections responsibilities, the work continued as normal. Thanks to database vendors offering free trials, many professionals spent time setting up access to these resources and promoting them on social media. This was also an opportune time for digital content creation and updates. “I created LibGuides for courses with direct links to relevant resources. I manned the virtual chat service. I also worked on evaluating products to offer more virtual services,” says Martin. Michele Anfuso, Information Services and Interlibrary Loan Librarian, Lehigh Carbon Community College, was able to complete many tasks online: “[I] renewed items in OCLC and Access PA, answered LibAnswers reference questions, [and] filled OCLC article requests when possible.”

How can administrators support the work of technical services remotely? Access and training are key factors. Slow internet connections, no remote access to the ILS, and lacking the necessary equipment to telework are stumbling blocks cited by the roundtable members. Assigning realistic projects with proper training is also essential.”

— Anitra Gates

“Continued on next page
Technical Services at Home: Experiences from the Technical Services Roundtable

continued from page 13

done from home, including appropriate access to necessary online tools,” says Andrew. Assigning realistic projects with proper training is also essential. “It’s been difficult finding projects for staff and then trying to make sure that they have the skills to complete them. I definitely think we need to do a better job of internal professional development for staff,” says Martin.

Flexibility is also key, especially for those professionals who find themselves now in a full-time caregiver role. “My workplace was very flexible in terms of planning for childcare and changing schedules, which I greatly appreciate,” says Katie Greenleaf-Martin, County Coordinator, Blair County Libraries. But others struggled with finding a balance between professional and personal lives. Says a collection development librarian at an academic library, “It is very difficult for anyone who has young children to work from home when there’s no child care or school.”

Technical services work can, and should, be done remotely with the right support in place. But how did our respondents feel about returning to the office? “I am ready to go back to working from my office as soon as possible!” says Andrew. Meanwhile, Anfuso reflects, “I enjoyed working from home. I firmly believe that this pandemic will permanently change the face of the workforce. I believe remote work makes for more alert, productive, and creative employees.”

Anitra Gates is Technical Services Manager at Erie County Public Library. She is currently reading “I’m your Huckleberry” by Val Kilmer.
The work we do in libraries often involves working together with community partners. When two organizations have a common goal, it makes sense to work in concert and provide more robust programs and initiatives. After all, why duplicate efforts and compete for resources that grow scarcer with each passing year?

This also applies in providing educational opportunities for our staff. As we’ve seen during the extended closing of libraries, a wide range of continuing education opportunities were available to libraries and their staff, many of which had a low cost to attend – or no cost at all! It was with this in mind that the Central Pennsylvania Library District and the Juniata-Conemaugh Chapter partnered to present a pair of virtual workshops this year. Since the Juniata-Conemaugh Chapter includes the counties that are part of the Central Pennsylvania Library District, it made sense to work together on a single workshop, rather than two separate workshops vying for the limited staff time and continuing education dollars libraries have available. Instead of competing, we collaborated, dividing up the tasks involved in creating the workshop, and also sharing the costs.

While we had our agenda for the spring workshop set, the pandemic forced us to reconsider how, and even if, we could move forward. After some discussion, we decided that it was better to go to a virtual format, even though this would necessitate re-thinking many aspects of what we had planned. In fact, making the workshop virtual provided a lot of unexpected benefits. A virtual workshop eliminated the cost of travelling to the workshop, which can often be a barrier to staff attendance. This was true for our speaker as well, and he found that he could present two virtual workshops for roughly the same cost as a single in-person workshop — an opportunity too good for us to pass up!

On May 12, David Spitko, a lawyer from the Philadelphia area who has worked extensively with libraries, presented our first session, “Understanding Paid Sick Leave and Family / Medical Leave for COVID-19.” A timely topic for libraries, Spitko walked us through the new leave time requirements, answered a variety of questions, and provided us with a helpful handout for understanding how to navigate these requirements. On June 9, our presenter returned with “Library Policy – Before, and During the Pandemic”. While this included information and updated handouts related to emergency leave time, it also covered other COVID-related policy concerns, such as requiring staff and patrons to wear masks – and the complexities that can arise with those who are unable to (or simply don’t want to) wear a mask. With so many questions, we ran out of time well before we ran out of material to cover!

Overall, we feel our partnership on these two workshops was successful, providing a timely set of continuing education opportunities. One key to this success was choosing a speaker and topics of broad interest. In addition, it was crucial that both partners were clear about the expectations of our partnership and goals for the workshop. Collaborating truly ensured a stronger workshop overall.

Brady Clemons is the District Consultant Librarian for the Central Pennsylvania Library District. He is currently reading “The Apparitionists: A Tale of Phantoms, Fraud, Photography, and the Man Who Captured Lincoln’s Ghost” by Peter Manseau.

Jennifer Powell is the Director of the Tyrone-Snyder Public Library and serves as the 2020 Chair of the Juniata Conemaugh Chapter. She is currently reading “White Fragility: Why It’s So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism” by Robin DiAngelo and listening to “Jo & Laurie” by Margaret Stohl and Melissa De La Cruz.
## Calendar

**JULY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date/Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Statewide Ballots Open</td>
<td>Deadline August 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pennsylvania Library Association Awards</td>
<td>Deadline July 26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 PA Forward Monthly Check-in</td>
<td>Virtual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 PaLA - PR &amp; Marketing Committee Meeting</td>
<td>Virtual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 PaLA - Office CLOSED for Independence Day</td>
<td>PaLA Headquarters/ Mechanicsburg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 PaLA - Rural &amp; Small Libraries Round Table Meeting</td>
<td>Virtual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 PaLA - Public Library Division Meeting</td>
<td>Virtual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 PaLA - Leading Thru Challenges by PALS (Six Sessions: 7/15, 7/22, 7/29, 8/5, 8/12 &amp; 8/19)</td>
<td>Virtual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 PA Forward Steering Committee Meeting</td>
<td>Virtual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 CANCELED: PaLA - Choosing Leadership by PALS (Rescheduled from April)</td>
<td>Williamsport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 PaLA - Intellectual Freedom Committee Meeting</td>
<td>Virtual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 PaLA - Rural &amp; Small Libraries Round Table Meeting</td>
<td>Virtual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28 PaLA - Juniata-Conemaugh Chapter Meeting</td>
<td>Virtual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 PaLA - Implicit Bias Workshop sponsored by CRD (Two Sessions: 7/30 &amp; 8/14)</td>
<td>Virtual</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**AUGUST**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date/Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4 PaLA - Rural &amp; Small Libraries Round Table Meeting</td>
<td>Virtual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 PaLA - Legislative Committee Meeting</td>
<td>Virtual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 PaLA - Coffee with Christi; Council</td>
<td>Virtual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 PaLA - Long Range Conference Planning Task Force Meeting</td>
<td>Virtual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 PaLA - Public Library Division Meeting</td>
<td>Virtual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 PaLA - Awards Committee Meeting</td>
<td>Virtual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 PaLA - Director Level Forum</td>
<td>Virtual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 PaLA - Equity, Diversity &amp; Inclusion Committee Meeting</td>
<td>Virtual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 PaLA - Intellectual Freedom Committee Meeting</td>
<td>Virtual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 PaLA - Rural &amp; Small Libraries Round Table Meeting</td>
<td>Virtual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 PaLA - 2021 Conference Planning Committee Meeting</td>
<td>Virtual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 PaLA - Juniata-Conemaugh Chapter Meeting</td>
<td>Virtual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 PaLA - Open Forum with Christi Buker</td>
<td>Virtual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 PaLA - PR &amp; Marketing Committee Meeting</td>
<td>Virtual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 PaLA - Northwest Chapter Workshop - Ripples of Resilience</td>
<td>Virtual</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SEPTEMBER**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date/Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7 PaLA - Office CLOSED for Labor Day</td>
<td>PaLA Headquarters/ Mechanicsburg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 PaLA - Public Library Division Meeting</td>
<td>Virtual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 PaLA - Long Range Conference Planning Task Force Meeting</td>
<td>Virtual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 PA Forward Training Team Meeting</td>
<td>Virtual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 PaLA - Intellectual Freedom Committee Meeting</td>
<td>Virtual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 PaLA - Rural &amp; Small Libraries Round Table Meeting</td>
<td>Virtual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 PaLA - Board Meeting</td>
<td>Virtual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 PaLA - Legislative Committee Meeting</td>
<td>Virtual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 PaLA - Equity, Diversity &amp; Inclusion Committee Meeting</td>
<td>Virtual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 PaLA - PA Library Advocacy Day</td>
<td>Virtual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 PaLA - Coffee with Christi; Chapters</td>
<td>Virtual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 PA Forward Steering Committee Meeting</td>
<td>Virtual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 PaLA - Juniata-Conemaugh Chapter Meeting</td>
<td>Virtual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 PaLA - Fire Up Your Fundraising</td>
<td>Virtual</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**On social media? Follow us!**

Follow the PA Library Association on [Facebook (/PALibraries)](https://www.facebook.com/PALibraries) and on [Twitter (@PALibraryAssoc)](https://twitter.com/PALibraryAssoc)

Follow PA Forward™ on [Facebook (/PAForward)](https://www.facebook.com/PAForward) and on [Twitter (@PAForward5)](https://twitter.com/PAForward5)