Dear Newspoke readers,

With this being our advocacy issue, I encourage you to read the 2018 AkLA Legislative Priorities. These priorities will set the tone for the coming year, and the Executive Council will work with the Advocacy Committee and our lobbyist to stay abreast of important items in the current legislative session.

I’m very excited to attend the 2018 AkLA Conference, Bridging the Gap, in Anchorage, March 8-11, and I hope you are also planning on attending. Conference is an important time to learn and be together as an association. Be sure to check out the speakers’ page on the conference website. If you haven’t registered yet, it will probably convince you to get it done right away.

It has been a privilege to serve as president this past year. I have learned so much about our organization, and I am inspired by the time and energy our members give to keep AkLA moving forward. Thank you for all that you do for AkLA and for your libraries.

See you in Anchorage!

Mollie Good
President, 2017-2018
Alaska Library Association
mgood@ci.valdez.ak.us
AkLA 2018 CONFERENCE SPEAKERS

I’m excited for this year’s conference speakers.

Brendan Kiely is our Authors to Alaska speaker. He is the New York Times bestselling author of All American Boys (with Jason Reynolds), The Last True Love Story, and The Gospel of Winter.

His work has been published in 10 languages, received a Coretta Scott King Author Honor Award, the Walter Dean Myers Award, the Amelia Elizabeth Walden Award, and was selected as one of the American Library Association’s Top Ten Best Fiction for Young Adults. His presentation will be on Saturday, March 10 at 1:00 p.m.

Jennifer O’Neal is university historian and archivist at the University of Oregon. She specializes in American West and Native American history, with a specific emphasis on decolonizing methodologies, social movements, and race relations.

Her research and teaching are dedicated to the intersections between the social and cultural contexts that marginalized or underrepresented communities are represented in history and the archive, with a specific focus on Native American history and American West history in the 19th and 20th centuries. Her presentation will be on Friday, March 9 at 9 a.m.

Dr. Jervette R. Ward is an Associate Professor of English at the University of Alaska Anchorage. She is the editor of Real Sister: Stereotypes, Respectability, and Black Women in Reality TV (Rutgers University Press, November 2015). Her research and teaching areas focus on American Literature with an emphasis in African American Women’s Literature.

She has taught and published on Zora Neale Hurston, the addition of the African American characters to the Dick and Jane series, and Black social justice movements. She earned a Ph.D. in English Literary and Cultural Studies from the University of Memphis. Her teaching, research, and other involvements can be found at www.jervette.com. Her presentation will be on Saturday, March 10 at 9 a.m.

Ryan Dowd has spent most of his career running a large homeless shelter outside of Chicago. In addition, he trains libraries, police departments, nonprofits, schools, and companies on how to engage compassionately with problematic homeless individuals.

His first book on the topic, The Librarian’s Guide to Homelessness, is being published by the American Library Association in January 2018. He will have an all-day preconference on Thursday, March 8 starting at 8:00 a.m. entitled "Practical Skills for Difficult Homeless Patrons." On Friday, March 9 at 2:45 p.m, he will have a shortened version.

And finally, Loida Garcia-Febo will give our Endnote presentation. She is the President-Elect for ALA, and President of Information New Wave.

She is an international library consultant, researcher, and expert on topics such as human rights, advocacy, and services to multicultural populations. She has served communities as academic, public, school, and special librarian in Puerto Rico and Queens.

Loida is President of Information New Wave, an international NGO seeking to enhance the education of ethnically diverse communities. She has taught in 20 countries and has advocated on behalf of libraries at the United Nations, US Congress,
NYC City Hall, NY State Senate, and on streets and sidewalks of New York. Her presentation will be on Sunday, March 11, at 9:00 a.m.

If this is your first conference, don’t miss the First-time Conference Attendee Orientation on Thursday, March 8 at 5:00 p.m. Following that will be the Opening Reception followed by Battledecks: the New Members Edition.

Teressa B. Williams
Manager and Librarian
Atwood Resource Center
Do you know of a small group of babies or young toddlers? Perhaps you have a baby storytime at your library or know of a child care center, preschool, or play group in your community that is in desperate need of new books to share with their kiddos. Well, if so, you’re in luck!

The Ready to Read Resource Center is proud to announce the launch of a new set of reading kits. Our Little Sprouts Book Club Tubs are perfect for baby and toddler “book clubs” either in a childcare setting, community play group, or for a baby storytime at your library. The book club tubs each contain 10 identical board books, meaning that each child and caregiver will have the same book to read along with the other children and their caregivers in the group.

The kits also come with 10 washable, baby-safe toys (such as shaker eggs, rubber bath toys, etc.) to play with, too! A helpful guide with early literacy tips and activities for the adult caregivers completes the kit.

The current titles we offer are:

- **I Can** by Helen Oxenbury
- **I Love Colors** by Margaret Miller
- **Maisy's Fire Engine** by Lucy Cousins
- **Mama, Mama** by Jean Marzollo
- **My First Baby Signs** by Linda Acredolo and Susan Goodwyn
- **Opposites** by Sandra Boynton
- **The Very Busy Spider** by Jean Marzollo
- **The Very Hungry Caterpillar** by Eric Carle

These kits for infants and toddlers are a fantastic opportunity for young children to have hands-on experience with print materials, to hear and learn new words, and to develop their conceptual thinking, which are all important skills for children to have as they grow and enter formal schooling. When we share books with children, we provide them with a reading role model, help foster empathy, build vocabulary, stimulate their imagination, and even increase their probability of staying in school through high school graduation.

You can borrow a Little Sprouts Book Club Tub today through the Anchorage Public Library! The kits are housed at the Z. J. Loussac Library in Anchorage, but you can request them to be sent to any one of our branches in the Anchorage area, or to any of the other southcentral and southeast Alaska libraries that are in the Alaska Library Catalog.

Is your library not part of the Catalog? No problem! Simply have a local librarian contact the Anchorage Public Library’s Interlibrary Loan department at 800-261-2838 or apl800@muni.org and we’ll have it sent your way, free of charge. No local library at all? Never fear! Contact me directly at 907-343-2970 or send me an email at ready@muni.org and I’ll make sure this tub makes it your way.

To see more information about all of our reading kits and the other resources offered by the
Ready to Read Resource Center, please check out our website at www.readytoreadak.org.

Let’s help Alaska’s youngest children get ready to read!

Samantha Blanquart
Early Literacy Outreach Coordinator
Anchorage Public Library/Alaska State Library

Alaska Native Issues Roundtable

The Alaska Native Issues Roundtable, with the Alaska Library Network, has been awarded a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services for a two-year project beginning this spring, 2018. The project will provide student-centered, community-centered, continuing education for Alaska public and tribal library staff working with indigenous populations and cultural materials.

A steering committee of Alaska librarians has been assembled from communities across the state (from Utqiagvik to Juneau). Part one of the two-year project will consist of a small conference held at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. The first round of student applications has been received, and a second round is upcoming. The final deadline has been extended through February 7. Once all of the student applications have been received, the steering committee will work with applicants to determine what subjects conference presentations will cover. We will adapt the conference sessions to student needs and interests, based on a comprehensive survey conducted after all student applications have been collected.

The second year, five to seven libraries will be selected through an application process for a week of customized on-site, hands-on training offered to the community library staff and other community agencies. Visiting specialists will be chosen based on the needs of each community, and a specialist will spend a week training, assisting, and assessing the community’s project.

After the visit, the specialists will present a topical webinar, based on their particular expertise and their on-site activities, to all libraries in Alaska and elsewhere. These will be streamed, archived, and made available on both the Alaska Library Network and the Alaska State Library websites.

Tyson Rinio
Elmer E. Rasmuson Library
Contact Larry Hildpschman, Kenai


The multiverse: does it exist? What would happen if you were attempting to move through it?

This potentially dry, complex topic is the basis for a compelling, engaging science fiction novel. A man, Jason Dessen, is abducted from his life and is forced to embark on a mind-bending journey to attempt to both locate and reclaim what he had taken for granted: his ordinary life. Also an excellent audio book.

*Tiki Levinson*  
*Delta School Librarian*


On March 11, 2011, a 120-foot tsunami struck northern Japan, killing more than 18,000 people, including 74 students at the Okawa Elementary School.

Author Richard Lloyd Parry writes with sensitivity and compassion about the parents of several of these children and how they dealt with their terrible loss. The book is a study of the universal experience of grief, through the prism of northern Japanese mores and culture.

*Pat Tully*  
*Director*,  
*Ketchikan Public Library*

*Newsflesh*. **Mira Grant (Seanan McGuire)**, New York: Orbit, 2010-2016.

Ms. Grant has created an interesting alternative reality in which the amazing medical advance of a cure for not only the common cold but also cancer resulted in a zombie apocalypse not only of humans, but all mammals over amplification weight - 40 pounds. Dogs, deer, and Australian kangaroo zombies add to the horror.

The first book in the series, *Feed*, follows Georgia and Shawn Mason, bloggers covering the 2039 presidential race of Senator Peter Ryman. They discover conspiracies, political intrigue, and a LOT of zombies. *Feed* is just the beginning:

My favorites are her short story collection *Rise*, with the origin
story *Countdown* and her Australian story *How Green This Land, How Blue This Sea* in which a zombie wombat is one of the more dangerous forms in the Outback. I haven't finished the saga (3 books, 1 short story) but skipped over and checked out *Feedback*, which follows another blogger team and different candidate. I hope Ms. Grant continues to spin more tales to share the world of *Newsflesh*.

*Kelly Johnson,*  
*T.A.G. Staff Liaison*  
*Ketchikan Public Library*

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**BOOK BUZZ HAS A SPECIAL TREAT THIS ISSUE—A DOUBLE REVIEW OF A PARTICULARLY SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNT OF ALASKAN INDIGENOUS CULTURE:**

*Naut'staarpet—Our Plants, A Kodiak Alutiiq Plantlore.*  

Received from Amy Steffian, Chief Curator, Alutiiq Museum, Kodiak [https://alutiiqmuseum.org/news](https://alutiiqmuseum.org/news)

I asked two community members to write reviews. I also wrote an article on the museum’s website.

*Naut'staarpet* has been a long time in the making and was certainly worth waiting for! Ms. Russell’s travels, throughout the Kodiak Region in 1990, to capture traditional knowledge of our Sugpiaq Elders and community members, are invaluable to the people of today.

Being a student of ethnobotany and of Sugpiaq descent, I have longed for a resource capturing the many uses of our traditional plants as food and medicine. Although there are books with this knowledge in neighboring regions, I have found applications in the book unique to the people of Kodiak Island.

To me, the most important and valuable part of Ms. Russell’s research was her ability to capture the traditional knowledge from the Elders. Many of them have passed on, but documented methods of harvesting and plant applications are preserved, and we may be assured that the wisdom of our Elders can and will be passed on to future generations.

*Melissa Berns*  
*Old Harbor Native Corporation*

Anyone living on Kodiak Island who desires a deeper understanding of plants that surround them will find *Naut'staarpet—A Kodiak Alutiiq Plantlore* the foundational resource for beginners and individuals who already have a rich background.

Priscilla Russell provides essential, significant details about plant groups and varieties and shares abundant traditional uses and practices, gathered from Indigenous wisdom keepers and current practitioners. Readers have immediate access to a personal teacher who also introduces a circle of past and present experts who revere this exquisite island.

This book is a precious treasure that weaves knowledge gathered over millennia from many disciplines – geography, history, botany, health, and spirituality – the hallmark of holistic Traditional Ecological Knowledge. The accumulated depth of knowledge from many contributors could serve as an elementary primer to live successfully without the tools and technology modern

*(Cont. on pg. 8)*
society depends upon.

The book powerfully demonstrates the productive relationship the Alutiiq people always had with their homeland and with other beings who share it. Insight and understanding are so elegantly shared that most will read it cover to cover for gems of wisdom, rather than use it as a simple reference source to address specific questions.

Information is organized in an engaging manner, supplemented with intimate pictures of those who graciously shared their personal experiences.

It celebrates the vibrant Kodiak Alutiiq Cultural Renaissance, not only because it documents traditional Indigenous heritage, but also because it contributes to language preservation, supplying both northern and southern dialects.

It is sure to instill a deeper understanding of human connections to the flora, fauna, and land of Kodiak and will be cherished by everyone who utilizes it.

Margaretkovich Mete
Associate Professor of Nursing
Kodiak College

[This material was heavily edited for brevity. Readers are strongly encouraged to go to the Alutiiq Museum’s weblink https://alutiiqmuseum.org/ and read all three complete articles.]

PLEASE NOTE:

You too can review a book you have enjoyed in Book Buzz.

Just email Larry (ILbombastico@yahoo.com) or Loretta (aflma@gci.net) with 4 or 5 (or 6 or 7) lines describing content and your appreciation (or lack of appreciation) any time before the Newspoke publication deadline.
GENERAL GUIDELINES TO PUBLISHING IN NEWSPOKE

Alaska Library Association Newsletter

Not accepted: paid advertising; material intended to “sell; make a profit” rather than to “inform.” Submissions viewed as advertisements, unless item is of particular interest to Alaska, Alaskan patrons, libraries, or is submitted by an AkLA member.

Accepted: Alaskana—books, book reviews, or articles relating to, or of interest to, Alaskan librarians and/or their patrons. Informative material related to libraries and librarianship, especially in regard to Alaska.

Most anything submitted by AkLA members—reasonably tasteful, of appropriate length, “decently” well-written; author is willing to submit to possible editorial changes. This may include length, perhaps spellings, downsizing of convoluted sentences... (Editor will make every effort to let the author know of, and pre-approve, any significant changes before the material is published in Newspoke.)

Other—determined on an individual basis by “the committee” (defined as a group of at least three AkLA members).

If the Newspoke editor, or the individual submitting, has questions or concerns about any submission, the matter will be sent on to the Newspace Committee.
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Publications

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E-list

CALENDAR

AkLA Conference, Bridging the Gap, Anchorage, AK  
Mar. 8-11, 2018
Public Library Assn. Conference, Philadelphia, PA  
Mar. 20-24, 2018
ALA Annual Conference, New Orleans, LA  
Jun. 21-26, 2018
PNLA Conference, Kalispell, MT  
Aug. 1-3, 2018
Alaska Historical Society Annual Conf., Nome, AK  
Sep. 2018
Medical Library Assn. Conference, Chicago, IL  
May 3-8, 2019
ALA Annual Conference, New York, NY  
Jun. 27-Jul. 2, 2019