

Connecticut Library Association Board Meeting
November 20, 2025
10:00 am Business Meeting via Zoom
Minutes

- I. **Call to Order:** President Erin Dummeyer called the meeting to order at 10:01 AM.
- II. **Approval of Minutes from October:** Motion made by 1. Sam Lee 2. Lisa Miceli. No abstentions.

- III. **Old Business**
 - a. President's Report – See attached.
 - b. Treasurer's Report- See attached.

- IV. **New Business**
 - a. Member Management Software Replacement Discussion- See attached.
 - b. YA co-chair nomination for Jackie Bush made by Erin Dummeyer.

Representative Reports:

CT State Library: Deborah Schander:

As you saw in the news, the special session for the Legislature recently wrapped up. They did focus a little bit on some of the federal funding issues that we have been seeing, but really it was focused on the most urgent of the impacts that some have been seeing the state library because our funding is really potentially impacted in the next fiscal year. We are being held to the next regular session which starts in February. We have been in ongoing conversations with OPM about that and the ongoing need that we anticipate or may need to address once we get to the special, the regular session. We are continuing that as well as just preparing for the regular process that we will be going through for every session. that's coming up. This is a short session, starting in February this year. Also, those of you who are directors may have seen, hopefully, saw an e-mail from my new secretary, Maria. I am coming up on my fifth year anniversary as State Librarian and I'm hoping to use this as an opportunity to do a big tour of libraries across the state and I'm hoping to be able to visit and see a lot of libraries and other institutions across the state in action. If you've got story time or 250th program or anything that you think it might be interesting for me to see invaluable, we're hoping to start arranging those for 2026. Obviously, you can, it doesn't have to wait till 2026. We're just using that as an opportunity for this year. Looking forward to seeing a lot of libraries in action in the near future.

NELA: Sarah McCusker: The NELA conference was a couple of weeks ago in Rhode Island. It went really well. I am very pleased to announce that our intrepid Connecticut team took second place in the NELA games. Bet you didn't all know that Scott Jarzombek could act, but he did. The one of the big things from there is that our own Scott Brill is now the president-elect. We've got good representation on the NELA board at the moment. There is going to be an in-person meeting for the NELA, the board tomorrow in Massachusetts, which I unfortunately cannot go to, but I am going to zoom in. It's the beginning of the NELA year. The leadership is all switching over. We are in the middle of that right now.

ALA: Kate Byroade: I thought I would share and I'll drop, I'll drop some information in the chat. The American Library Association is working to find libraries in every state, including Connecticut to host a Ted Democracy Live next year. I'm going to drop the information about that into the chat. But this is an opportunity to host satellite events that will live stream Ted

Democracy tied into the America 250 and bring conversations to every state. That is the big thing. They are working toward a library advocacy day coming up and I will be dropping some information about that as well into the chat and talking more about it with my legislative hat later.

Calling Libraries: Bring TED Democracy LIVE to Your Area.

We are looking for 50-plus libraries across the country to host satellite events that will livestream TED Democracy Philadelphia: Founding Futures and bring these crucial conversations to every state and territory in the U.S. Bring TED Democracy LIVE to Your Area

ALA EDI Assembly: Kristina Lareau: Absent

ACLB: Denise Stankovics: Last night ACLB had its annual Board Basics webinar. We tried to schedule those shortly after elections for boards that elect their members that anybody new coming on board can catch it early. We have two webinars coming up. On January 21st, we're repeating the Freedom of Information one that we did a couple of years ago, and on March 13th we're doing one on collection development and defense. Sarah McCusker will be doing that one. We thought that it was particularly important at a time with many challenges to books and libraries. We're not sure just how much board members know about the collection development process, what's behind it. And again, there's going to be a lot, I guess we're going to be hearing everywhere about the whole defense issue. That'll just be a good way of making sure boards are aware of the whole process, not just coming in when something is challenged, but all those books got selected. Stay tuned for further details.

ACLPD: Robert Kinney: Absent.

America 250: Margaret Khan: Not a huge report again today for the 250th, but if you haven't and it's on your To Do List or you're just thinking about it, I would encourage you to still become an affiliate organization for the America 250 Connecticut Commission. As an affiliate organization, there are not a whole lot of requirements for it. Just to have your organization aligned with the 250th submission, which I would say that all libraries already do. You can plan your own programs. You don't have to do anything in particular, but you do have access to the 250th logo, to some of their promotional materials, to their event calendar, and it's a good way to get your programs out to a broader audience. I'll put that link into the chat. Also, I worked with the folks from the CT Humanities to get a conference proposal for our conference and we have a proposal for talking about tough topics. Hopefully, that will come to fruition in April.

<https://ct250.org/get-involved/affiliate-program/>

BCALA: Vivian Bordeaux: The Black Caucus of the American Library Association, the chapters are very interested in advocating for the development and improvement of library services and resources to the state's African American population. I'm just excited to mention that we had our first civic engagement event last month and this was a discussion and a Q&A time for those that were in attendance to be able to ask questions of. This was held at the Stetson Library, one of the branches of New Haven Public Library. Our Connecticut State Senator, Gary Winfield was there along with the president of the Connecticut chapter of the Black Caucus, Robert Kinney, and they were there to facilitate the program, the civic engagement. It was really a nice event. We hope that this will not be the first and the last, but we hope that this will be something ongoing. It was timely because it was just before the election in New Haven for the Mayor. We're excited about that.

Bibliomation: Alessandra Casiello: I'm happy to say we just did our audit and passed with flying colors yesterday. We do have some of our team members who have put in some conference proposals. Hopefully, we'll be able to participate at the CLA conference.

Commission on Ed Tech: Colleen Bailie: The Commission will be meeting on December 1st I should have a report for next month.

Communications Task Force: John Casiello: I've had a couple of people ask me again about Discord or whatever. My big concern is the amount of effort that we'd have to put into maintaining it and whether members will actually buy into it at the level we would want them to. I guess I would pose it as well to the board and any chair of a section or committee because a lot of it would also be on you to engage your members through that. It would be a lift on your part as well. As Brenda said, it would be great if the whatever software we had just had it incorporated in, our members are just going to one place. But I'm still working on it. I'm very concerned about the amount of effort we'd have to put into it. I've seen the Jedi Discord slow down in its use and again, I just don't want to create something that becomes too difficult for us to maintain and doesn't get the traction that we would want but also would serve a purpose. That's where I'm like in a pause mode. Just not sure exactly how to move forward with it. But I'm open to any conversation or suggestions.

Erin- I wonder if you could create like a pilot period where you're essentially trying it out, knowing that you'll sunset it after six months or whatever if you feel like it's not being used.

John- I mean, it exists. The framework is all there. We've shared it with this board previously and even then, not every board member joined, but the way we had built it was that each section or committee had its own channel in it. And that was the hope was that members would go to those places to communicate with those chairs. It would create that dialogue. But I guess, I guess part of it is also figuring out what we want it to be and is it OK if it just sometimes gets a lot of use and sometimes gets none. But I know some people had wanted it to be something that's just an ongoing constant thing. And I just don't know if we can maintain that. But yes, it's built, we can certainly send out the invitations and see how it gets used. That's something we could do in the near future.

Erin- I was just throwing that out as an idea if I mean, if you don't recommend it, I'm comfortable with that too.

John- Well, here are some of the conversations that happened around it. I was a proponent for having it be somewhat members only, because as an organization where we need membership to give it away for free would not be helpful to us and it creates an incentive for people to join. But then the step to do that check makes it cumbersome for whoever is responsible for that, whether it's me or my committee. Like we would then have to keep doing this cross reference when someone tries to join. OK, are you a member? Yes, you're allowed. And we have Google forms and things that we can create that can help. But it's just that constant maintenance of that once people are in, I think any of the concerns about behavior within there I think are manageable. We can deal with that if and when it comes, but it was more some of those pieces and then making sure that people are engaging. Like I said, I think it can be great. It's just that it would be something that everyone would have to buy into, not just membership, but the board itself. But it is, I recognize it's something that until we get it started, we don't even know. I'm willing to like to get it going. I just want to make sure everyone here knows that they would have to be involved in that as well and that they would have to monitor it and be part of the conversation.

Erin- Mary contributed some things in the chat (Members only moderation).

John- I think that was that was a big question that the task force and we went through different iterations of like it's just completely free for all. I personally, as chair of outreach thought this is this would be a CLA tool it should be for CLA members specifically. We can create areas that are not just members only. Discord allows for some flexibility in that. Again, it's just a matter of

maintaining that because we would want people to at least come to it if they're not a member, to know that, OK, this is something I would want to become a member for. But. And then we talked through the different levels of moderation. Like there's no intention of censoring or anything like that, but there should be a code of conduct. We had written up some stuff for that- like a lot of it's in place. It was just figuring out the logistics of the launch and the maintenance and making sure that it then gets used and it's not just sitting there empty. I also know like we can do more with not e-mail necessarily, but just we haven't had a newsletter in years. We haven't I know social media isn't at the level that it should be and we're talking through ways that we can improve all of that. I think it's all part of that bigger conversation about how we engage with our members and how they engage with us.

CAS-L: Gina Wiese: Absent.

CLC: Ellen Paul: Ellen is very, very busy she asked me to step in and give an update. We have had a very busy fall. We're wrapping up the extension bid for equipment contracts as well as finalizing the new non-print bid. Those will officially be done in January but as we get those bids back and signs, there might be some news out in emails. Looking in for December after several back-to-back large events in November, including our vendor Expo. Thank you to everyone who joined us. We are going to be taking December as a time to pause a little bit and reflect as a team on this year's works, debrief on our recent events, and continue shaping the vision and priorities that will guide us into the new year. We already have a number of really exciting events lined up in 2026 that we can't wait to share with everyone. Then just as like a general thing, please be thinking of us. When you're buying anything for your library, be sure to use your CLC discount and that you'll be receiving your discount contract program in the mail with your thank you letter for membership renewal. One CLC adjacent thing is Take Your Child to the Library Day is coming up will be February 7th and it'll be celebrating its 15th year anniversary, and we would love to have every library in Connecticut participate. I'm going to drop in the link for the registration for that.

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeuu4aLHssRpIc4gKtfst9HNMMRfJcLA3qH_69Sxhcc02G3Aw/viewform

FOCL: Debbie Misiaszek: Absent.

LION: Joe Farara: Absent.

Library Connection: Laura Horn: Absent

Region 1: Heather Aronson: No report.

Region 2: Lisa Miceli: See attached.

Region 3: Drusilla Carter: No report.

Region 4: Kiera Parrott: See attached.

Region 5: Emily Rush: Absent. See attached.

Region 6: Madhu Gupta: See attached.

SCSU: Cindy Schofield: Absent.

Sustainability Taskforce: Everything else has pretty much been updated. We have no changes right now for the bylaws and we are working on the software and training changes. And the strategic plan should be on the December agenda to do an overview of what we've done over the last year and where we need to focus. that should be on the agenda next month.

Association Committee Reports:

ADA: Marilyn Lewicki: Absent.

Archivist: Gerald Seagrave: No report.

Awards: Region Reps: John Casiello: We're just finishing up the forms now but look for the announcement in January of nominations going out.

Career Development: Diana Preece and Mirja Johanson: I have two things today. Thank you to John for posting the updated compensation benchmarks. It's the managerial roles first and we are looking to post the last four roles like the LTA positions and things coming soon. Keep an eye out for that and we are looking to put together some like FAQ kind of documentation and stuff to explain some of the background and suggestions for how to best use it in your own institution. that's moving along. The second thing is we have the scholarship period coming up soon. There are some applications that we award scholarships at the conference and with the times that we're in; we are considering adding some kind of rule or disclaimer on the use of AI or not in an essay. Because there's also an essay for PEG, we thought it would be good to kind of ask the rest of the board if people have ideas, opinions, if it should be, a statement that they signed that they didn't use or just disclose what kind they used and how we would score that. It's new territory and we just wanted to check in.

Alessandra- I think it should be a disclaimer that they have to check, so a box stating they did not use AI to create their application.

Diana- I would support a check box. I personally I feel like it would be OK to clarify no AI other than predictive text and a like a grammar check kind of program. If we can get that specific because I think sometimes, I'm typing stuff and it's filling in suggestions and I don't even know what's happening. Are we actually going to check? Well, we are because that's what I'm wondering. Like you can have the check box and everyone's going to check "No, I didn't use it." But if there's no like teeth behind it, I don't know. Well, it's in the same ballpark as plagiarizing, right? We're just taking their word that they're not plagiarizing. I don't know if we have a way to check that either. I don't know any AI checking tools that are super accurate right there. There are some out there, but they're only maybe 70/80% accurate. Mirja had a comment on that. It came up last year because there was an applicant that disclosed that they used AI. That's why we brought this up. For now, are we leaning towards checkbox? It's on their integrity that they're honest. I would agree that it's similar to plagiarism, especially if not disclosed. When we draft the sentence, do you want to see that before it's posted? Should I share that?

Erin- I mean, you could share it as an FYI, but I feel like it's really your committee and your decision.

Diana- OK, we will, we'll work on that.

Conference 2026: Starting off with conference, we have a lot going on right now. We opened our vendor sponsor and Ad registration at the end of October. Currently we have 6 vendors signed up an ad sold already. We are in a good spot and a good pace for that. We also opened our proposals earlier in the fall and the deadline was supposed to be this Monday. I did get some emails from people who said they were still working on things. We opted to extend the proposal deadline to the 24th, this upcoming Monday. If you have not put in a proposal and you were hoping to, please make sure that you get that in there. We also want to remind you that each chair of a section or committee should also be putting a proposal in for your spring meet-up. We are asking every section and committee this year to do one of our shortened sessions as an info session or for each of the section and committees. Those do have to be put in as proposals as well. Please make sure that you put that in by the end of day on Monday if you have not already done so. This is a good way to generate membership and also for people to explore the types of committees and sections that they can get involved in. again, they will be the shortened sessions, but everybody who is a chair should be putting that in for their section or committee through the

proposal form we can put you in a slot. If you have questions about proposals, please feel free to reach out to Kristina or Vicki or myself. If you just need some feedback on, we are all happy to help with that on the committee. Another thing that I wanted to let people know about, we have confirmed both of our keynotes, and we will start doing little e-mail blasts starting in December to get people excited for registration sign up which will happen at the end of January. We'll be announcing both of our keynotes as well as registration rates and our after-hours events that have been. Nick Tanzi will be doing the keynote on Monday and then we actually will have SeaTea Improv doing a performance for us on Tuesday morning. Both of them will also be doing sessions during the day that they are keynoting on. Nick Tanzi will be doing AI and then SeaTea Improv will be doing an improv workshop, you'll get a chance to also attend those if you'd like.

Development: Alessandra Casiello: We just completed our Fall Meadow Farms online fundraiser. Thank you to those who purchased. We had about \$900 worth of purchases, which means we'll get around \$400 for that profit, and we'll see that in the December financials. Upcoming, we have our Giving Day fundraiser, which the giving day this year is December 2nd. It will run for a week, and we will start doing some blasts about that next week. It is a match fundraiser; our match company is RH Lord. Robert H. Lord is going to match up to \$1000 of anything that is donated from December 2nd to December 10th. Please, if you are thinking of doing a donation, do it then we can get the match. We are launching a new T-shirt campaign for Giving Day. I'm going to pop that into the chat in a second. Sorry, I thought I had the link ready, but I didn't. The link will be a little bit different, but you can at least see the design here. That is our Giving Day campaign. Hopefully, everybody gets the joke with it. There are nine different products as always that you can choose from to purchase as well as different colors that you can select from. And that is going to be in our shop. Feel free to purchase that. The next thing will be our performer showcase which I'll start preparing for in December. We have a lot going on right now and that's everything.

<https://www.bonfire.com/cla-ct-cardigan-cavalry-1>

Intellectual Freedom: Sam Lee & Lindsay Delligan: I just want to report that I went to the Common Ground Intellectual Freedom Summit in Arkansas back in October. I had mentioned that we were going to meet a lot of intellectual freedom advocates from all across the country. We met Leila Green Little of the Llano, Texas case and I had submitted a proposal for her to come to conference this year. Hopefully, everyone will get to meet her. She's lovely, she's wonderful, and she is fighting the good fight for intellectual freedom. As always, we're around to provide support to anybody who needs help dealing with book challenges, censorship, board trainings, et cetera. We're happy to help, but quiet, cautiously quiet on the intellectual freedom front, or everyone's super capable of handling intellectual freedom because of all the training Lindsay and I have done. We're just going to give ourselves a pat on the back.

Alessandra- We were made aware of something at our board meeting yesterday, just connect with Weston Library if they have not already reached out to you. They have had 6 conversations of questions on books since July. Ian, the director, has said that it is very specific to the language that has been used in the Texas or Florida? You're not going to go to the Texas case, the Texas case. Yes, I just wanted to put that on your radar, and it was Ian at Weston-he's the director.

Legislative: Kate Byroade & Rebecca Harlow: There's a couple new initiatives that the legislative committee is working on in addition to what we reported last month. We are talking in that committee about different communication tools that we can use. We have a work group that's formed to figure out how we can utilize different communication channels to reach a wider audience in the library community, including CLA members. If anybody is interested in

participating in that work group, please feel free to reach out to me or Kate and we will connect you with the team that's working on that. We are also working to be responsive to the IMLS discussion. There's whispers that that will be possibly happening soon, we're working on just some advocacy messaging around that to remind our federal delegation that this is really important to Connecticut. Passport agencies: That's something that we are discussing in the legislative committee. If you are a library that is impacted by this Passport Agency 501(c)3 issue and you'd like some support or you'd like to be a participant in the discussion around that, please reach out to us about that and we will connect to you with that work group.

Kate- I'll just pick up. We are working on conference proposals- thank you for the extension. We're hoping that we can get somebody from the staff at the Legislative Office Building to go over the legislative process. The trouble is this our conference always falls in the thick of session. They would need permission to not be there that day. That's the trickiest thing about it. Maureen Sullivan has already submitted taking back the narrative of which is meant to be an advocacy training, sort of practical guide and then worth hoping to do an e-book update on what's happening nationally because we were successful in getting our legislation passed, but we have a has a trigger clause. But New Jersey is taking up similar legislation and if it passes, we would exceed the trigger. A lot is happening nationally. A lot of states are looking at legislation right now. We could be 6 months from now a we could be looking at a very different landscape in terms of work on this issue. I just wanted to share that ALA has long had a public policy and advocacy National Library Legislative Day and that is scheduled for February 25th to 26th in Washington, DC. This is different. Usually ALA picks the people, calls them up and says, "you have an all expenses paid trip to Washington" and now ALA is like "Oh no, you have to pay for yourself." They are soliciting people to submit for that process. I'm going to drop some information about that in the chat, but I would really urge anyone who is interested in participating to reach out to Rebecca and me about that because you should know what it involves. We should talk about how we would bring that together because normally ALA has picked who shows up and this time they're still going to pick, but people have to apply. We want to talk about that process. Yes, ALA is broke. They are in debt. That is why they are not paying for it. I'm going to drop some information about the chat, but if anybody's possibly interested in that, please reach out to Rebecca and me.

Fifty years after the first National Library Legislative Day, ALA's Public Policy and Advocacy (PPA) team invites advocates to show up for America's libraries on Capitol Hill for a two-day educational advocacy event.

The event will take place February 25-26, 2026, at the Marriott Courtyard Washington DC Downtown/Convention Center.

The event combines advocacy education, networking, and in-person meetings with your legislators and congressional staff on Capitol Hill.

Interest Form & Selection Process

Action Required: You must complete the Interest Form by December 12, 2025, to be considered.

www.ala.org/advocacy/nlld

Capacity & Balance: Capacity is limited to 235 people. We require your home and work zip codes on the form to ensure equitable state representation.

Selection: Completing the Interest Form does not guarantee a spot. If selected, you will receive a registration link from ALA in December.

ALA & Legislative : Next Steps: Please complete the Interest Form by the deadline or notify us of any change in plans. We will also notify you if your application is declined due to an overabundance of applications from your state. For questions or updates, email nlld@alawash.org.

Outreach: John Casiello: We've talked about a lot of stuff already. I would just say if you are emailing me about CLA stuff, you're welcome to use my Ridgefield Library one. But if you use the outreach at ctlibraryassociation.org, there's a better chance of it not getting lost in all the

other stuff I'm doing. Or send it to both and then you can guarantee them getting it one place or the other. I apologize to the people that asked me to do stuff, and it got buried but I think I'm all caught up. But if anyone needs anything, website or otherwise, just let me know.

PEG: Mary Etter: Absent.

Procedures: Lisa Miceli: Just a reminder to all the section chairs, not the committees, but sections should be reviewing their bylaws and revising them if necessary and then getting them to me. just another reminder about that. Committees do not have bylaws.

Section Reports:

Children's: Vacant

CLASS: Vacant

College & University: Rob Walsh: Absent.

JEDI: Mary Richardson: I don't really have anything to report. I am trying to get another co-chair. Fingers crossed by January I will have a co-chair, and I will try and be more consistent with our meetings and get us in a direction.

Public Libraries: Jennifer Sullivan: Absent.

Reference & Adult Services: Christie Mitchell & Kelly-Ann Gardella: I just wanted to report that Kelly-Ann and I sent a contact with serve e-mail out to the group asking for adult services librarians to consider a program proposal for the conference. We just got several responses back and thank you for the extended deadline. We hope to get a few more proposals in.

Resource Sharing: Matt Earls:

Technical Services: Ann Victor & Christine Rinaldi: No Report

Technology: Kate Sheehan & Jessica Wolford: We have a survey coming out. We've had a couple different meetings with folks talking about what they're experiencing with tech stuff in their libraries. It's all libraries, all work, all workplaces are the same, right? All libraries are the same. We all have lots of people coming in and going "it's broken, can you help me fix it right now?" and that makes time management a challenge. That's one of the big things we keep hearing about. But we're trying to tease out some of the other major issues that are going on at public service desks and look for the survey. Please take it and make your people take it. I am not opposed to voluntelling.

YA: Danielle Murray: Welcome to Jackie, she just made it official today. We also had our YA annual workshop on Tuesday. It was around Burnell, compassion fatigue, self-care, and was really positive. I had a really enjoyable time facilitating it. I saw Mary there and Jackie and we're looking forward to the conference and have our proposals in.

Adjournment: 10:42 AM. Motion made by 1. Kate Byroade 2. Danielle Murray

Present: Erin Dummeyer, Brenda McKinley, Margaret Khan, Shannon Angelone, Deborah Schander, Alessandra Casiello, Ann Victor, Christie Mitchell, Christine Rinaldi, Danielle Murray, Denise Stankovics, Diana Preece, Drusilla Carter, Heather Aronson, Jackie Bush, Jerry Seagrave, Jessica Wolford, John Casiello, Kate Byroade, Kiera Parrott, Lisa Miceli, Mary Richardson, Mirja Johanson, Rebecca Harlow, Robert Scheier, Sam Lee, Sarah McCusker, Vivian Bordeaux.

Old Business

a. **President's report- Erin Dummeyer**

At the end of October, there was a screening of the documentary "The Librarians" in Stamford, and Alice Knapp asked me to participate in a panel discussion afterward. A lot of you were there, thank you very much. It was a nice evening to be in community with librarians, and it's a very moving film and very inspiring. All the librarians featured in it were really great to see and learn from and gave nice messages of hope afterwards. Alice and I wrote an op-ed that was published in the Stanford Advocate. I'll drop a link to it in the chat. Hopefully, it's not behind the paywall, but you might want to try and open it in an incognito window or something like that that you're able to read it. I also had the first library appeals meeting with Deborah and Association of Connecticut library board president, to talk about what the process is going to look like if a challenge in one of our libraries does escalate that far that it has to be consulted on with those folks. We have not completed our work yet, but we're meeting again in December to talk through what that would look like. that is in progress.

<https://www.stanfordadvocate.com/opinion/article/stanford-redding-books-librarians-21166212.php>

b. **Treasurer's Report- Margaret Khan**

- c. Not much activity has been going on over the last month, but we have earned over about \$17,000 for a membership, which puts us a good step ahead of where we expected to be at this time of the year. We're looking good to reach our goal. We do have steady membership numbers. The young adult section is putting on a workshop, and they brought on a little bit of money from that as well. And the financial plan has been updated and is now live on the website.

New Business

a. **Member Management Software Replacement Discussion-Alessandra Casiello**

We will be asking to take a vote to replace our member management software, which is StarChapter, at next month's meeting. If people can attend, that would be wonderful. A brief overview: we started investigating this several years ago and at that time we felt that we just didn't have the funds in order to change to a different software. But StarChapter doesn't have the functionality that we wish it had to make it easier for us as volunteers who are working with the software, especially as new people come on to the board and the training isn't really being done on a schedule as we're replacing people. We do our yearly training but as people move on and off the board, I, Lisa, Margaret, and John have had to find other times to do training. We do want something that would be a little bit easier for people to manage. We investigated it a couple years ago. At that time, it just didn't seem like the funds were there. At this point, we think that we're in a bit of a better place to look at some of the other member management softwares. We did some demos with Wild Apricot and Member Clicks. Those are both Personify softwares. Those are also ones that are used by other association libraries that are close to us. Maine uses Wild Apricot and NELA uses Member Clicks. Bob, our administrator for the library association, is familiar with both of them. Wild Apricot is pretty simple to use. It doesn't have as much functionality as we were hoping for, but it would be a good move to that and would have a similar cost to what we're currently paying for StarChapter.

Member Clicks would be about double our cost, but it does have more functionality as well as a better members-only interface that would allow us to actually put members only content on our software. It would be about double the price but I did want to bring this up now get questions from you all on what more you would want to know about the softwares before we do that vote in December, I can put something together for all of you. We do have the sustainability committee who was exploring softwares and training. Some of them have graciously accepted to look at things with us again. We're going to get them involved as we put something together for the board to vote on for December. I'm just asking what information you all would need as board members to make an educated vote on this.

Erin- Dummeyer- I'm just going to speak for myself I would want to watch a demo.

Drusilla Carter- I would agree that I'd like to see a demo of the options or would it be at least possible to get some kind of online video that shows like what their features are? Would it be possible to get links to that that we could at least look at ?

Brenda McKinley- I have a question which is based on just not knowing about it. Please tell me if it makes no sense, but is it when you were talking about members only content, would that also solve some of the communication? Did some of these have a feature where there's member communication portal?

Alessandra-Yes, the functionality of the members only content for Wild Apricot is what we would see with star chapter. There is no discussion board or anything like that. While we could upload things that people could access in wild Apricot, the what you're asking for the communication isn't there. Member Clicks- they do have different types of messaging boards. They also have, if later on we felt we wanted to, they have an add-on which is a full community board where it basically functions as what our discord would have been, but it's there for members. The other nice thing with Member Clicks that they have is a job board and that is part of the software itself. It's not an add on. There are some things that it has that we currently don't have with Star Chapter, but there are also add-ons. If later on we decided, we wanted to get something that was more of a community-based communication center. They have that as well.

John Casiello: I perked up when the salesperson was talking about that. But it is an added cost, unfortunately that seemed extravagant to me. We'd definitely have to budget for it. But it was great to think that there's a solution that would already be built into something our members are accessing rather than trying to create another piece of software or another thing that people have to log into. But the cost might be prohibitive. I'll also say StarChapter has started to raise rates- that's why we initially started looking into this and Alessandra can go into more detail. But not only were the annual fees going up, but they were starting to add transactional fees on every single transaction that took place. We were getting charged extra. That's why we started to look into this because we saw that this was going to become something even worse for us if we didn't address it.

Erin- What does NELA use?

Alessandra- They use Member Clicks and the reason that they like that is because it really is a full functioning member management software. They use the listservs that are part of it. The one thing that Member Clicks has that's really nice is that it does solve

some issues with Institutional Memberships or with payments for institutions because you are able to connect people to each other or to an organization. If we wanted to put everybody who paid through Mark Twain together, we could mark them all as Mark Twain and then update that. NELA really pushed for that when they switched over several years ago.

Erin- Danielle asked in the chat if it would be possible for a demo to just be recorded and shared people can watch it on their own time.

Alessandra- We did ask that and they won't do that. I think it's proprietary things that they don't want just out there.

John- it's one of the things that turned us off. I can't remember which one- Wild Apricot- it was a couple of years ago. They refused to even do a demo. They were like, no, just come on board and we were like, we can't do that. But we were able to get them to at least give us a conversation. Some of these companies are pretty strange.

Alessandra- Bob and I did do a 30-minute demo of Wild Apricot he has offered, and maybe this is something we could do for the board, to show us the back end of Main Library Association because he is also the library administrator for them. They use Wild Apricot while it wouldn't be a demo from the company itself, Bob could take us through that side of it to show us a little bit more in depth than what they're willing to show member clicks. We spent quite a bit of time going through the demo, but again, it wasn't something they were willing to record and send to us.

Erin- OK, well, I would say if a demo isn't possible, a brief pro and con list and just what the quote is versus what we currently pay.

Alessandra- OK, Yep, we'll put together some documents for the board, and we will also come with a recommendation from the Sustainability Software Task Force of what they think would be the best move.

Sarah- Can I ask a quick question about the software? If you addressed this and I just didn't hear it, I apologize. But would it make the reciprocal membership easier if we were on the same software?

Alessandra- It doesn't really affect that at all. The process would still be the same. We can't tie in the two databases. We just export a list of people each month that signed up for NELA/CLA and we send it over to them so that they can put it into them. The same thing happens with the CASL.

John- I believe that process itself might be easier in these others than in StarChapter. It's hard to get some reports from there.

Kate- I'll just hop in here as a NELA secretary. There have been ongoing problems with Maine and Massachusetts- Bob is dealing with it, but Maine and Massachusetts are definitely both having problems. There's some technical issue that they've been trying to resolve for a few months now.

CLA Region 2 Report
Lisa Miceli
November 2025

It's a quieter time in libraries as the calendar year draws to a close.

Berlin-Peck Library

- In time for the holidays, the Library has created a bibliography of Books About Complicated Families and Communication. You'll find the list on their homepage.

Cromwell Public Library

- Will offer a baby and toddler photo shoot on November 22. The Library will provide backdrops and props.

Region 4

- From Alice Knapp at the Ferguson: Several of the libraries that offer Passport Services received a letter asking them to fill out a form verifying that they are government agencies. If they are not, the letter says, they shouldn't be a passport acceptance facility. This letter is being sent throughout the country. CLA should be aware of this and may even consider advocating. The Ferguson has reached out to its federal representatives as well as the Attorney General's office.
- From Lynn Zaffino at Easton: Here in Easton, we have an Eagle Scout candidate who is creating a word garden on the Library Lawn. We have chosen a circular area on the right side of the lawn, which will fill with gravel. Then she is having stones engraved with words on them that people can manipulate to make phrases and sentences. We are also thinking about putting a bench in the area. We are very excited about this!
- From Sheri Szymanski at the Stratford Library: The Stratford Library will be under construction over the winter, with the third and final phase of a project which will replace an HVAC Air Handling Unit, ductwork, drop ceilings, and light fixtures. The Library Lobby, Children's Department, makerspace, and Program Room will remain open while work is being done. Adult Reference and a small computer lab will be set up in the Lobby, and the Teen Department will operate out of the Program Room. We expect work to begin in late January and run through April. During construction, the Adult Fiction and Nonfiction collections will be inaccessible, other than a small circulating collection of new and high-demand titles housed in the Lobby. We will not be able to accommodate public seating for adults during this project. We are very excited for improved lighting and air quality as this project is completed and will soon be able to provide an update on additional improvements being planned in conjunction with this project.

CLA Region 5 News: November 2025

Brainerd Memorial Library, Haddam

- Brainerd Memorial Library enjoyed a successful open house on November 8, celebrating its completed renovation. We hosted a two-part event complete with two programs by Riverside Reptiles, a ribbon cutting, refreshments, live Celtic music, and silent auctions. It was a great time.

E.C. Scranton Memorial Library, Madison

- We've hired Susan Frankenbach as our new Development Director - she comes to us with an extensive background of working in development at Yale for 19 years.

Wallingford Public Library, Wallingford

- Janet Flewelling left WPL to become Deputy Director in Cheshire. We split her role in two and promoted Katie Dygon to be our new Head of Collaboratory Services and Kayleigh Sprague to be our new Head of Technology.

West Haven Library, West Haven

- Shane Maher was promoted to Reference Associate from library assistant.
- West Haven is very excited to be receiving \$10,000 from the Carnegie Foundation in their celebration of the country's 250th anniversary.

Respectfully submitted,
Emily Rush
Region 5 Representative
E.C. Scranton Memorial Library

CLA Board Meeting
November 20, 2025 Meeting
Region 6 Libraries

The Bill Memorial Library is proud to celebrate 25 years of children's programming under the leadership of Mary-Jane Carle, their children's librarian.

East Lyme just held its 2nd annual LibraryCon event and it was a huge success.

The Public Library of New London CT DOL hosted a job fair at the library on Nov 13. The event was v successful. Patrons joined us to learn about opportunities in NL and the surrounding areas.

Otis Library: Jessa Franco, our Assistant Director, has accepted the Director position at Ledyard Public Library.

Stonington Free Library-

- Has been awarded a \$12,000 grant from CEN to expand WiFi in the library park
- Has installed a water bottle filler station. A heavily requested improvement from the community.
- Has installed a built-in speaker and microphone system for library programs. Another heavily requested improvement from the community.

Mystic and Noank Library hosted the Mystic Cocktail Classic with Veritable Distillery. There was a book Fair with six authors who wrote books about cocktails; Bank Square books came and sold their books. A mocktail station which was a big hit. They also did a silent auction with spirited arrangements.