



# ALLA COMmunicator: June 2026

## ALLA COMmunicator

Alabama Library Association | [www.allanet.org](http://www.allanet.org)

June 2026 | Volume 23, Issue 3


The Alabama Library Association (ALLA) is a non-profit corporation formed to encourage and promote the welfare of libraries and professional interests of librarians in the State of Alabama. The Mission of the Alabama Library Association is to provide leadership for the development, advocacy, and improvement of library and information services and to promote the profession of librarianship, in order to enhance learning and ensure access to information for all.



## In this Issue

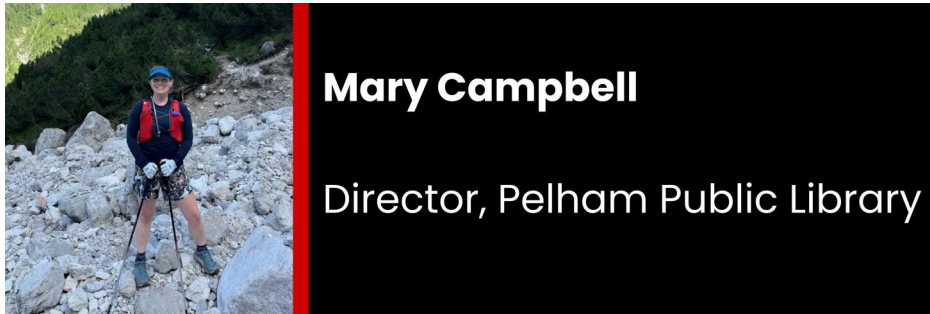
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## **From the President**

### **ALLA President**



My name is Mary Campbell, Director of Pelham Public Library. I began my library career as a page at Hoover Public Library and have spent the past 20 years at Pelham, including ten years as Children’s Librarian. I earned my MLIS from the University of Alabama and my bachelor’s degree from University of Montevallo. My husband, Michael, and I live in Homewood with our 15-year-old son, Jay, and our Italian Greyhound, Kona (who is the bestest boy). I enjoy hiking, backpacking, pottery, and trashy romance novels.

As I begin my term as president of the Alabama Library Association, I am deeply aware of both the challenges and the resilience of libraries across our state. In a time of political pressure, budget uncertainty, and growing scrutiny, library workers continue to serve their communities with professionalism, compassion, and dedication. You uphold our core values of service, intellectual freedom, literacy, and access to information, while also showing patrons how to use the copier. Whether in public, school, academic, or special libraries, you provide access, education, connection, and opportunity every day.

Despite these challenging times, I remain hopeful. The strength of libraries has always rested in the people who make them welcoming, trusted spaces for their communities. From helping

children discover a love of reading to guiding job seekers and supporting students, your work changes lives in meaningful ways.

Thank you for your advocacy, courage, and commitment to service. The Alabama Library Association exists because of you, and I am grateful for all you do to strengthen our communities and our state. As we move forward together, let us continue supporting one another and carrying out the enduring mission of libraries: to inform, educate, connect, and inspire.

It is an honor to serve alongside you.

With gratitude and hope,

Mary Campbell

Director, Pelham Public Library

President, Alabama Library Association



Get Involved:

- [Executive Council](#)
- [Divisions](#)
- [Committees](#)
- [Round Tables](#)

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**Facebook.com/  
AlabamaLibraryAssociation**



 **ALLA News**

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*ALLA Scholarly Communications Round Table (SCRT)*

*Tracy M. Cole, ALLA SCRT Moderator & April Urban, ALLA SCRT Moderator Elect*

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This is ALLA SCRT third year of learning and thinking about scholarly communications and academic libraries, and we are looking forward to offering some foundational learning opportunities in June and July with you.

Please join us and save the dates for the 2026 ALLA SCRT Scholarly Research in Library and Information Science Series. This series will offer a total of 5 sessions with the first to kick off on Thursday June 4th at 11 a.m. and an additional four sessions will be offered on Wednesday July 29th, 2026 between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. You can pick and choose all the you are interested in!

Come to one, or come to them all! You do not need to be a member of Alabama Library Association (ALLA) to participate.

Be sure to check out the flyer for first webinar "Bibliometrics Measures and their Impact: How to Use Alternative Metrics to Demonstrate Achievement" by Dr. Deborah M. Williams on June 4th from 11:00 - 12:00 pm on Zoom.

Learn more about the series and [please register for all the sessions here](#).

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## Library Happenings

### NAAL Library Support Staff Workshop



**Thursday, July 16th at the University of West Alabama in Livingston**

Registration is now open for the 2026 NAAL Library Support Staff Workshop and will close Wednesday July 13th.

[Network of Alabama Academic Libraries Library Support Staff Workshop Event Registration – Fill out form](#)

- The free workshop will run from approximately 8:30 am to 3:30 pm at the Bell Conference Center.
- Breakfast and lunch will be provided.

## Call for Proposals

The planning committee is currently accepting proposals for presentations that will meet the varied professional development needs of academic library support staff. Everyone has some knowledge and expertise that can benefit others. Please consider submitting a proposal.

Examples include managing student workers, AI in the library, making the most of technologies, developing library outreach programs, building professional networks, wellness in the workplace, and working successfully with supervisors.

Presentations will last 30 – 45 minutes, with Q &A included in the allocated time. Proposals should be 200-300 words in length. A brief bio of the presenter(s) should also be included.

Proposal Submission Deadline: **Thursday, July 2, 2026.**

[2026 NAAL Annual Library Support Staff Workshop Proposal Submission Form – Fill out form](#)

The planning committee will notify those selected on Thursday July 9, 2026.

[Visit this guide for more details](#) and for questions, please contact Mark Usry at 205-652-3453 or [musry@uwa.edu](mailto:musry@uwa.edu).

[Ellenburg Art Gallery, at Homewood Library, to Feature Artwork by Birmingham Artist Ray Kersh](#)



The Homewood Public Library's Ellenburg Art Gallery will feature the work of Birmingham artist Ray Kersh during a special exhibition on display June 1–30. The Ellenburg Art Gallery, located inside the Homewood Public Library, features rotating exhibits from local and regional artists throughout the year and is free and open to the public during regular library hours.

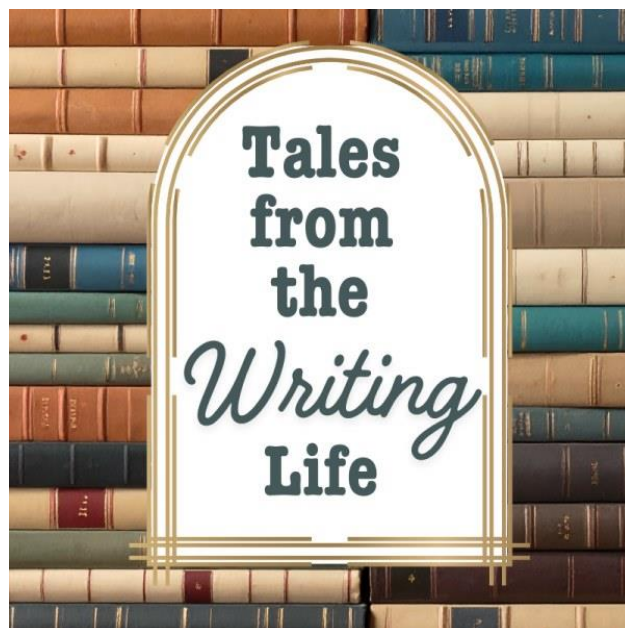
Ray Kersh is a mixed-media artist who specializes in vibrant watercolors and pen and ink drawings, but also creates folky, found-object art in the form of birdhouses, crosses and makeshift shrines. A lifelong resident of Birmingham, Ray grew up in Bluff Park and has lived his

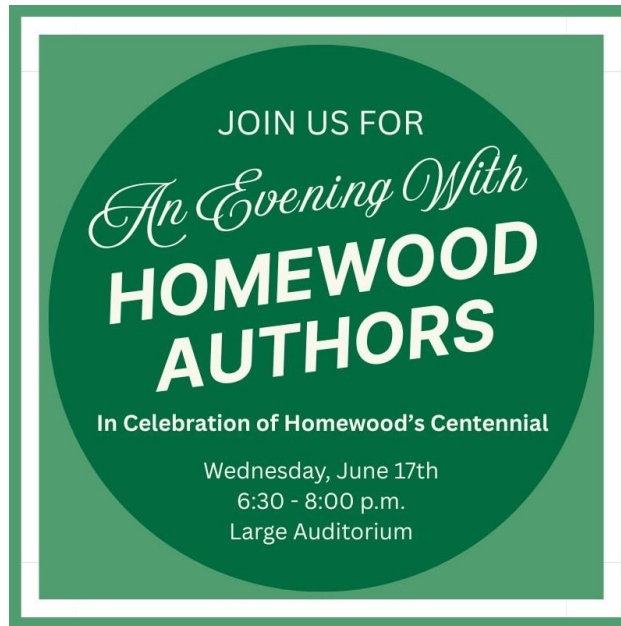
entire adult life in Homewood. He studied art at Auburn University and earned his Bachelor of Fine Arts from UAB.

He does not limit his watercolors to a specific subject matter, but prefers to paint whatever catches his creative eye: wildlife, culinary creations, bustling streets or recreations of striking photography. Each Christmas Ray sends a lucky list of friends his annual card, which he pens in ink before coloring each by hand with watercolors. This exhibition brings Ray's love for watercolor and storytelling to the library walls. When he's not painting, you can find him volunteering downstairs in The Friends Bookstore or walking in his neighborhood, often with his toddler grandson. Find more of his art on Instagram @raykershpaints.

### **Homewood Public Library "Tales from the Writing Life" Adult Summer Reading Series**

The Homewood Public Library invites adults of all ages to participate in its 2026 Adult Summer Reading program, "Tales From the Writing Life," running May 18 through August 9 for the Summer Reading Program and running until August 27 for the event series. The series celebrates books, storytelling, and creativity through author talks, literary discussions, memoir writing, and themed activities throughout the summer. We have special guest, John Archibald, interviewing Sam Harper on June 2. John Archibald is widely known for his thoughtful commentary, storytelling, and deep understanding of Southern culture and civic life. His appearances are celebrated for their honesty, humor, and ability to spark reflection and conversation. [View this press release](#) for a full list of author visits and programs.





*Submitted by Laura Tucker, Administration Librarian, Homewood Public Library*

### **Homewood Public Library Launches 2026 Summer Reading Program**

The Homewood Public Library invites readers of all ages to participate in its 2026 Summer Reading Program running May 18 through August 9. With programs and prizes for children, teens, and adults, this year's initiative encourages the community to explore new stories, build reading habits, and stay engaged all summer long. Participants can sign up online at [homewoodpubliclibrary.org/sr](https://homewoodpubliclibrary.org/sr) and see the [press release](#) for more information.





### Health Lab for Kids & Families: A Joint Venture of Albert L. Scott Library in Alabaster and UAB Libraries

The Albert L. Scott Library in Alabaster and University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) Libraries partnership hosted an engaging session of HEALTH Lab – Hands-on Exploration, Analysis, Learning, Technology Help on April 28. Designed for kids ages 6 to 11 and their families, participants dove into the world of genetics, exploring complex science and health concepts through interactive activities. The session was guided by UAB genetics graduate students and UAB medical reference librarian Meagan Bell working together making the specialized program a successful blend of high-tech learning and collaborative discovery.

***View the slideshow to see the Health Lab in action as well as recent reading, gardening, and arts activities. Click the box in the top left corner for captions.***



1 - UAB librarians and grad students working with students on hands-on genetics activity.



2 - UAB Health Lab team, holding books



3 - Summer Reading Theme: Unearth a Story



4 - Garden Club kids dig in



*5 - Garden club kids dig in*



6 - Small fries show of their artistic and scientific creations.



7 - Small fries work on their artistic and scientific creations.

## **Rhythm, Roots, Reading, and More @ Alabaster's Albert L. Scott Library**

Kids "March"ed to the beat of fun at the Alabaster Library and engaged in a variety of exciting activities.

- Homeschool Happenings: Music
- 4-H Science Club
- 4-H Creative & Expressive Arts Club
- Lego® Time
- Superhero STEM
- Teen Switch Tournaments
- Gardening Club
- Story Time Fun

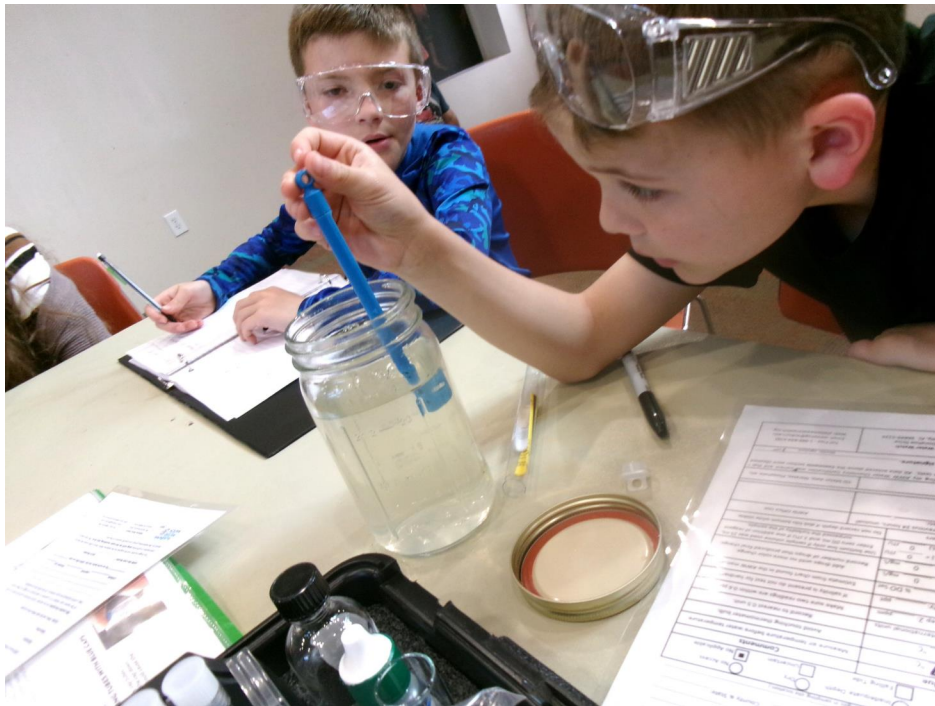
***Use the arrows to navigate the slideshow. Click the box in the top-left corner of the photo for captions.***



8 - The sound of music flowed through the Albert L. Scott Library in Alabaster on March 9 during Homeschool Happenings: Music. Students had fun learning about music and instruments from members of Scrollworks – a music school. They brought a variety of instruments that kids explored. The crowd also enjoyed a mini concert by young Scrollworks musicians and their instructors.



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10 - The waters of Buck Creek were examined during the March 10 session of the Shelby 4-H Science Club. They learned about the Alabama Water Watch program, practiced water chemistry testing, and discovered how they can become citizen scientists helping monitor and protect our local waterways.



*11 - Young thespians explored costume design, emotional expression, and movement during the Shelby 4-H Creative and Expressive Arts Club on March 10. They had a special volunteer during the session – Rebekah Smith. She shared her knowledge, creativity, and expertise with club members who had a great time learning new skills and exploring the art of performance.*



12 - Kids had fun seeing their imaginations becoming reality as they built with colorful bricks and figures during Lego® Time! on March 17.



13 - Children explored aerodynamics and had some high-flying fun during Science Saturday: Superhero STEM on March 21. They discovered how things fly by launching their own paper planes and parachutes.



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*15 - Tweens and teens revved up their engines and powered up their moves at the Teen Switch Tournament on March 23. They had an action-packed showdown featuring Mario Kart 8 Deluxe and Super Smash Bros. Ultimate. There were plenty of snacks to keep their energy up while they played in this epic Spring Break battle.*



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*17 - Out with the crunch, in with the munch! The Garden Club members sprouted into action on March 25. They pulled up a treasure trove of carrots before tucking some tiny tomato and corn seeds into new veggie beds.*



18 - Little hands, big fun! From story time magic to seasonal creative crafts and hands-on play, toddlers and preschoolers were busy exploring and learning during March story times.



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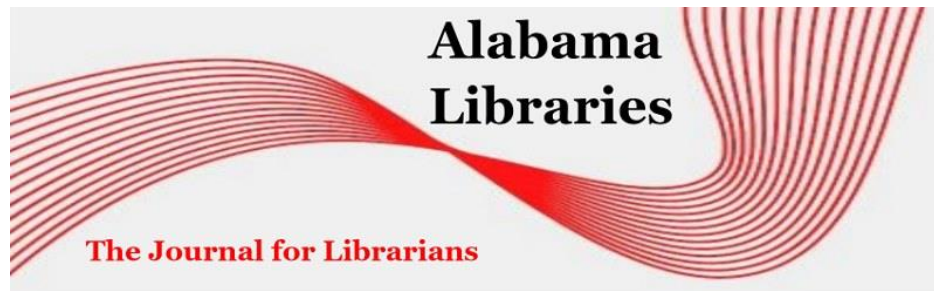
20 - Little hands, big fun! From story time magic to seasonal creative crafts and hands-on play, toddlers and preschoolers were busy exploring and learning during March story times.





*21 - A special treat -- story leader Ms. Karen welcomed the newest and tiniest member of her Friday story time friends.*



*Submitted by Frances Smith, Youth Services Librarian, Albert L. Scott Library*

## About *Alabama Libraries*



 **Interested in submitting to a future issue?** *Alabama Libraries* is seeking articles relevant to librarianship in Alabama. The Alabama Library Association's peer-reviewed journal publishes scholarly articles biannually in an open access format. The journal accepts four types of articles: Scholarly (peer-reviewed), practical, student research, and guest columns. To review the specific guidelines for each of type of article submission, review the [Call for Articles](#) information on the [Alabama Libraries](#) website.

 **Eligibility:** Submissions must relate to Alabama's library community or be authored by individuals with Alabama ties (residents, library workers, or LIS students/graduates).

 **Questions or Submissions?** Contact Dr. Laura Pitts, Editor –  [lepitts@jsu.edu](mailto:lepitts@jsu.edu)

## The GODORT Corner



The amount of statistical information compiled by, generated by, and published by the federal government is astounding. I would like to bring your attention to another statistical resource at this point before I forget – and also because it really is quite useful and may well help you answer a patron's reference question. I am referring to the National Vital Statistics Reports (SuDocs HE 20.6217: ), a product of the National Center for Health Statistics, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Vital statistics, as the word "vital" suggests, refer to statistics relating to life including births, deaths, marriages, divorces, and infant deaths. Originally titled Monthly Vital Statistics Report: Provisional Statistics from the National Center for Health Statistics (SuDocs HE 20.2209:) later known simply as Monthly Vital Statistics Reports, this resource was published in print from 1952 through 1998. Since 1998 it has appeared as National Vital Statistics Reports and appears to have been online-only since that date. This should not be confused with the annual publication,

Vital Statistics of the United States (SuDocs HE 20.6210: ), published from 1937 through 1993, although they are, shall we say, related.

National Vital Statistics Reports are [available online from August 1998 onward](#) . There are typically two to three issues per month with four to six special reports appearing each year as well. One can browse an individual issue. The focus of a given issue is indicated by the hot link to the title, for example, “Drugs Most Frequently Involved in Drug Overdose Deaths: United States, 2017-2023” appearing in March 2026 (Volume 76, Number 1). The link takes you to a 12-page report consisting of both statistics and narrative. The top three out of fifteen drugs listed include fentanyl, methamphetamine, and cocaine. Interestingly, heroin, which had been the number two cause of drug-related deaths in 2017 had declined to seventh place by 2023. Regarding methamphetamine, I am reminded of when I served on a grand jury for Tallapoosa County several years ago when a police officer accompanying the District Attorney showed us color photographs of the human devastation caused by meth addiction. I remain haunted by the gaunt faces, facial sores, and missing teeth of those addicts appearing in the police photographs. Needless to say, we brought forth indictments against the accused local methamphetamine dealers. In addition to browsing any of the 480 individual issues, it is possible to use drop-down selections for specific keywords and authors. The single search box also allows one to enter search terms as well. I once used this resource for a patron who was seeking statistics concerning births to unwed mothers for the years 2003-2013. The search engine is not as precise as one would like but I was able to find these statistics by entering “births” plus the year (“2003,” for example) for each of the desired years. In each case I quickly saw “Births: Final Data for [year]” as a hot link and once I clicked the hot link I was easily able to find the desired statistic. It turned out “unmarried” rather than “unwed” was the term employed by National Center for Health Statistics. The earlier publication, Monthly Vital Statistics Reports, is partially [available online from 1969 onward](#). It appears there are plans to provide online access back to at least 1964 but those earlier issues are listed as “not available,” so do not discard your older print issues just yet.

Find out more about the wonderful world of government documents by joining GODORT when you renew your ALLA membership!

*Submitted by Tim Dodge, GODORT Moderator*

## Promotions



- [Unearth a Story Summer Reading Program Resources](#)
- [Audiobook Appreciation Month](#) (June)
- [Graphic Novels in Libraries Month](#) (July)

## From the Editor

### A Note from the Editor




Sheila Brandt

Systems & Digital Services Librarian  
Carmichael Library  
University of Montevallo

Continued thanks for sharing your stories and happenings. Your contributions are the heart of this newsletter. If you haven't contributed in the past, please consider doing so.

### **What types of content can I submit?**

- upcoming events
- recent past events, accomplishments, and honors recaps
- success stories
- ALLA committee news and events
- "My library story" features

 **What types of files can I submit?** Save yourself time and effort by submitting flyers and press releases that you have already created for use elsewhere. Submissions can be as simple photograph and a paragraph or two or a more detailed feature. You can [browse past issues](#) for ideas. For more information, see the submission guidelines below.

## **ALLA COMMunicator Submissions**

### **Submission Guidelines**

Please feel free to submit your library related news to [communicator.alla@gmail.com](mailto:communicator.alla@gmail.com).

Submissions must include

- Your Name
- Job Title
- Library or organization name
- Contact email or phone
- article in PDF or Word (or via email text)
- .jpg images may be attached
- Description of image
- embeddable YouTube videos

### **Submission Timeline**

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Submission Deadline</b>	<b>Publication Date</b>
July/Aug/Sep	July (Early)	July (Mid/Late)
Oct/Nov/Dec	Oct (Early)	Oct (Mid/Late)
Jan/Feb/Mar	Jan (Early)	Jan (Mid/Late)
Apr/May/June	Apr (Early)	Apr (Mid/Late)

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