MLA: Future of Libraries Interest Group (December 2018)

Meeting Date & Location
12/3/2018 @ Mt. Airy Library, Carroll County Public Library

Economy

National Economy

The economy is humming. So why do experts foresee a recession in 2020?

"Low- to middle-income Americans could feel the pain even more acutely. Credit-card delinquencies made up 2.54% of outstanding debt the first quarter, up from a low of 1.96% in 2015, according to UBS. Higher borrowing costs would increase the burden."

"Some analysts believe the mandate will increase costs and bring back $4 gasoline."

It may be a year or two away, but some economists already see recession on the horizon

After the Retail Apocalypse, Prepare for the Property Tax Meltdown

"If the stores prevail in West Bend, for example, it would reduce property values by millions of dollars, force the city to refund hundreds of thousands of dollars in back taxes, and set back payments on the public infrastructure that the town built to lure these retailers in the first place. That could result in higher taxes for residents, fewer police officers, firefighters, and teachers, and potentially, a mess of public debt."

Why 'micropolitan' cities may be the key to rural resurgence

"Defined as geographic areas with one city of more than 10,000, but fewer than 50,000 people, it's a smaller-scale version of the city/region scenario. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, which introduced the concept in 2003, the nation has 550 micropolitan areas, and combined, they are home to roughly one in 10 Americans.

Ross DeVol, a fellow at the Walton Family Foundation in Bentonville, Arkansas, who has studied the impact of micropolitan areas, believes that their economic success can revive rural economies and be a catalyst for the surrounding region. Much has been made of the increasing fortunes of midsize U.S. cities, or plans to invest in tech businesses outside of established

innovation enters in coastal cities. But significant investment in these smaller cities can, as DeVol told Curbed, be a more direct engine for rural growth."

An Unlikely Group Of Billionaires And Politicians Has Created The Most Unbelievable Tax Break Ever

"For all the focus on drastic tax-rate cuts, the fate of the state and local tax deduction and the exploding federal deficits, it's the least-known part of last year's tax-cut law that could be the most consequential. Officially called the Investing in Opportunity Act, it promises to pump a massive amount of cash into America's most impoverished communities by offering wealthy investors and corporations a chance to erase their tax obligations."

"Real estate investors rehab the school into a tech incubator. Venture firms back the startups that emerge, while other funds launch automotive vendors and suppliers to serve the $1.1 billion Volvo plant recently opened 30 miles away. To help fight gentrification, impact investors can offer cheap renovation loans and subsidized mortgages so locals can benefit from rising property values instead of getting priced out. Finally, local government can take the new payroll-tax and property-tax revenues and reinvest them in the community to improve basic services and infrastructure."

Education & Employment

China Expands Research Funding, Luring U.S. Scientists And Students

"In the past decade or so, China has been expanding its commitment to scientific research, and it shows. Chinese researchers now produce more scientific publications than U.S. scientists do, and the global ratings of Chinese universities are rising."
"There's another aspect of getting a pharmaceutical science degree at Tianjin that Siegel expects students from throughout the world to find particularly attractive: The Chinese government plans to offer scholarships to cover the cost for students who enroll."

Graduate School Can Have Terrible Effects on People's Mental Health

"To make matters worse, the payoff for all that stress may be wanting: A 2014 report found that nearly 40 percent of the doctoral students surveyed hadn't secured a job at the time of graduation. What's more, roughly 13 percent of Ph.D. recipients graduate with more than $70,000 in education-related debt, though in the humanities the percentage is about twice that. And for those who do secure an academic post, census data suggest that close to a third

of part-time university faculty—many of whom are graduate students—live near or below the poverty line.”

Why San Jose Kids Do Homework in Parking Lots

“More than 10.7 million low-income households in the United States lack access to quality internet service. In cities like San Jose, Calif., local governments are using streetlight poles to facilitate equitable access to high-speed internet to dramatically improve educational outcomes for low-income students and expand economic opportunity for their families. Unfortunately, a recent mandate by the Federal Communications Commission might halt the progress made by these cities.”

Michael Bloomberg: Why I'm Giving $1.8 Billion for College Financial Aid

“This will make admissions at Hopkins forever need-blind; finances will never again factor into decisions. The school will be able to offer more generous levels of financial aid, replacing loans for many students with scholarship grants. It will ease the burden of debt for many graduates. And it will make the campus more socioeconomically diverse.”

GM to lay off 15 percent of salaried workers, halt production at five plants in U.S. and Canada

“The company also said it will cut 15 percent of its salaried workforce, laying off 25 percent of its executives to “streamline decision-making.” GM also said it will close two plants outside North America by the end of 2019, but those locations have yet to be announced.”

Universities Look to Strengthen the Places They Call Home

“Many colleges and universities are taking a leading role in revitalizing local communities, recognizing that development not only can enhance the often fraught town-and-gown relationship but also make their institutions more attractive to students and faculty.”

Healthcare

[Woman rejected for transplant told to raise money via 'fundraising effort'](#)

"The situation highlights a systemic issue within the US healthcare system: the exorbitant costs for treatment force people to look elsewhere for the means to pay for treatment, such as crowdfunding sites. While Martin's case has a bright point — the outrage pushed donations above her campaign's goal in just a day — hoping for viral exposure is not a method, and Martin's case is likely an exception, rather than a rule."

[More people turning to fundraising to help pay for medical costs](#)
Another example

[Chronically Ill, Traumatically Billed: $123,019 For 2 Multiple Sclerosis Treatments](#)

"Such medicines have become increasingly expensive, priced in many cases at well over $80,000 a year. Hospitals delivering the drugs often make money by charging a premium on top of their cost or adding hefty fees for the infusion clinic."

[Amazon plans to sell software that reads medical records](#)

"Amazon plans to begin selling software that'll mine medical records for information that can be used to improve patient treatment and reduce costs, the e-commerce giant said Tuesday."

Entrepreneurship

[Bird CEO asks scootrepreneurs to do his job for him](#)

""Bird Platform enables independent operators to manage their own fleet of shared e-scooter vehicles," explains the Bird Platform page. Simply "[upload] your logo, select a sleeve color, cover the cost of city permits, and we'll do the rest.""

Politics

Kialo – Social Media for Politics Conversations

"Kialo cuts through the noise typically associated with social and online media, making it easy to engage in focused discussion."

'ICE IS EVERYWHERE': USING LIBRARY SCIENCE TO MAP THE SEPARATION CRISIS

"This is not the first time XPMethod has responded to a humanitarian crisis with a map. Last year after Hurricane Maria hit Puerto Rico, aid groups struggled to transport food and supplies across the island, a problem made worse by the inadequate and out-of-date maps that were available. The XPMethod team and 60 other volunteers from 25 institutions held an emergency mapathon to crowdsource maps and get them to people in the field. After that experience, Gil put together a toolkitso that other people could set up what Gil refers to as "nimble tent"—a popup team of digital researchers collaborating on a specific project in response to crisis."

Future Elections

The Suburbs Are Changing. But Not in All the Ways Liberals Hope.

The party people chose to vote for in their representative doesn't necessarily reflect the way they vote on propositions, etc.

https://www.22x20.org/

"22 million teens will turn 18 by the 2020 U.S. election. Let's engage now."

Big Latino Turnout In Midterms Raises Stakes For 2020

"Election after election, pundits predict that Latinos will be a powerful voting bloc. And Latino voters consistently underperform those expectations by failing to turn out at the polls in big numbers. But this year's midterm results in Nevada, Arizona and other states suggest that Latino turnout is up dramatically — a development that could reshape the electoral landscape for 2020 and beyond."

New Representation

Science, Technology, Math, Engineering And Now Congress

"Anything from cybersecurity, biosecurity, information technology and privacy issues are all things the government now has the responsibility to be worried about," she says. "Those are all things that scientific and technical backgrounds can be used for."

Local Government & Development

Open Data Baltimore

Inventories everything from vacant homes to art installations to contracts with Baltimore City to grocery store locations.

Smart City Development

"A "smart city" is one that has developed technological infrastructure that enables it to collect, aggregate, and analyze real-time data to improve the lives of its residents. The report suggests that any smart city effort should include explicit policy recommendations regarding smart infrastructure and data, a functioning administrative component, and some form of community engagement."

International Politics

Beijing to Judge Every Resident Based on Behavior by End of 2020

"The capital city will pool data from several departments to reward and punish some 22 million citizens based on their actions and reputations by the end of 2020, according to a plan posted on the Beijing municipal government's website on Monday. Those with better so-called social credit will get "green channel" benefits while those who violate laws will find life more difficult."

Libraries & Politics

[Libraries Aren't Neutral: Programming and Resources for the Political Climate](#)
Handouts from the PLA presentation in 2018. Includes ideas for programming and more at the library that is neutral, but not totally devoid of politics.

[Are Libraries Neutral?](#)
[President's Program tackles heavy subject from multiple angles](#)
Multiple viewpoints from librarians about whether libraries should be neutral or not.

[Why quiet-loving librarians can't shut up about politics](#)
Opinion piece implying it's not good for librarians even to care about the economic prosperity of the community or actively against bigotry.

[From Awareness to Funding: A study of library support in America](#)

"Among the findings from the report:

- Library funding support is only marginally related to library visitation
- Perceptions of librarians are an important predictor of library funding support
- Voters who see the library as a 'transformational' force as opposed to an 'informational' source are more likely to increase taxes in its support"

What is the library's role?

1. Talking about it is an important step. Knowing what is happening to people, where they are coming from will help us serve the people coming in to our branches.
2. How do we educate ALL library staff in these topics so they know how best to help their community without coming off as one-sided?
3. St. Mary's had an expungement day, that could be politicized by people who don't like the idea of expunging people's records
4. Funding can be affected if we are trying to do things the current government doesn't like. We have some decisions to make. Do we want to take this risk? This involves a lot of communication.
5. Make sure we keep literacy in the forefront of our priorities. If we continue to do this, we'll maintain a lot of support.

6. Focusing on early childhood literacy can maintain our support and better position the community in the future.

Things we're already doing…

1. Fake news conversations
2. Job and career development help
3. Mental health workshops
4. Homelessness in the library training for staff (for the state soon)
5. Human/living libraries
6. Community forums
7. The Great decision series
8. Bridges out of Poverty - highly recommended