



From the Editor: Librarians, Privacy, and the Freedom to Read

This spring issue contains some wonderful articles and columns, plus a dozen reviews of some fascinating books. Many thanks to [editorial board members](#) who have volunteered to become column editors. First up, we have Denelle Eads' Wired to the World column "[Matching New Technology to Real User Needs](#)," along with Joanie Chavis describing the journey that led her to library leadership in her column, [In Step with Library Leaders](#). There is one article I would like to recommend especially, in conjunction with encouragement for librarians to consider how they may implement the values it presents.

In "[Library Privacy Heroes](#)," Allison Sills traces a brief history of how libraries have protected patron privacy through the 20th and into the 21st century. Starting with the touchstones 1st and 4th Amendments of the US Constitution and the American Library Association's emphasis on this [core value](#), Sills calls out role models like Flora Ludington, Judith Krug, and the Connecticut Four for their bravery. She closes by mentioning some resources that could help librarians, including ALA's [Privacy Guidelines for Vendors](#), [Library Privacy Checklist for Public Computers and Networks](#), and [Library Privacy Toolkit](#).

In addition to these resources, let me also point out [Read Free NC](#), which connects librarians to a variety of ethical statements, North Carolina

State Laws, and Toolkits. Read Free NC also tracks privacy-related bills in the NC General Assembly and offers confidential peer support for librarians who are navigating book challenges.

And now the challenge for each of us: what is your library doing to minimize its tracking of patron reading? Consider not only what circulation records are kept and who has access to them, but also what electronic resources usage is captured and associated with individuals. If you currently retain patron circulation history, can you stop collecting it? When you set up new electronic resources, are your proxy settings designed not to pass along the individual's name, email address, or other identifying characteristics? It's up to us to do our part in helping protect our patrons' right to privacy to help preserve their right to choose what they read.

Letters to the editor should be addressed to the editor and mailed to:
Joyner Library, 1000 E Fifth Street,
Greenville, NC 27858,
or by email to editor@nclaonline.org.

We reserve the right to edit all submissions. If you are interested in writing for *North Carolina Libraries* or would like consideration for news and product information, please send brief information to the editor at the above address.