

UTAH LIBRARY ASSOCIATION | APRIL 2024





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ABOUT

The Utah Library Association advocates for libraries and cultivates leadership development to promote library excellence for the Utah library community.

We hope you find the Utah Library Association to be an organization that makes a difference for you, for Utah librarians, for Utah Libraries, and for the citizens of Utah.

Utah Library Association P.O. Box 970751, Orem, Utah 84097-0751 Phone: (801) 494-3860 Email the Executive Director, Mindy Hale: mhale@ula.org A 501(c)3 non-profit organization. <u>www.ula.org.</u>

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President's Message

Flying Through Adversity: Lessons Learned from Parrots and Broken Bones

ow many of you have ever watched a parrot for an extended amount of time? I've had the privilege of seeing Blue and Gold Macaws across a lake in the Amazon Rainforest and Sulfur Crested Cockatoos up close and personal at a park in Sydney. I've spent countless hours at home watching my budgies and days taking care of my brother's Green Cheeked Conure when he's out of town. One of the things that continually delights me is the ability of a parrot to manipulate items without hands. Whether that is with their beak or their feet depends on the situation, but watching a bird eat an almond like an apple out of their clawed feet never fails to delight me.

Recently I received my own crash course in manipulating items without my hands when I broke my right hand and sprained my left arm. While I haven't eaten any almonds with my feet, I've definitely had to adapt (to wing it, one might say) and find alternate ways of doing things. I learned about voice commands on my phone so I could send text messages hands free, I got good at opening doors with my elbows, and I learned to ask for lots of help (putting on socks by myself was impossible for a couple weeks).

Hopefully, most of you haven't had to face this exact situation, but I suspect this type of adaptability rings true to most librarians. We're used to making due with outdated or suboptimal equipment. We find ways to make the services we have work for the needs of our community. And we're no strangers to adversity. If I'm being honest, that's part of what I like about being a librarian. I like solving problems and adapting to new situations even when they're difficult.



The nice thing about winging it is that sometimes it turns out even better than what you originally planned. The conference this year is a great example of that. Originally we were going to be at the Mountain America Expo Center, but unfortunately before a conference of our size was able to sign the contract, a larger conference came along and booked the whole space. For a few weeks I was in a panic. I had a joint conference with MPLA coming up and I didn't have a space to hold it. Luckily a spot opened up at the Salt Palace at a great rate and now I'm able to host all of our out of town MPLA visitors in downtown Salt Lake City. I'd always been told the Salt Palace was out of our price range. So I actually feel really lucky that the Expo Center fell through and I had to adapt, I never would have ended up there otherwise. There are definitely times when problems are just problems (there has been very little upside to the situation with my hands), but there are also real opportunities when you have to change course. For me this year has been about trying to make the most of those changes in course, hopefully there's a useful takeaway in that for all of you too.

President's Message

Flying Through Adversity: Lessons Learned from Parrots and Broken Bones

PS The way I broke my hands was actually pretty funny. I was in the back office at my library and I kept hearing a kid dribble a basketball into the vestibule. Each time I went out to ask him to hold the ball while in the library he had gone back outside. Finally, on the third time I went outside to talk to him. Usually when I'm enforcing the rule with a kid I try to incorporate a positive experience to help build back up the relationship. So when I went outside, I dribbled the ball with him for a little while. As we were dribbling I started feeling pretty good about myself. I found I was still able to bounce the ball between my legs and behind my back. So I decided to showboat a little bit and bounce the ball behind the kids back and pick it up on the other side.

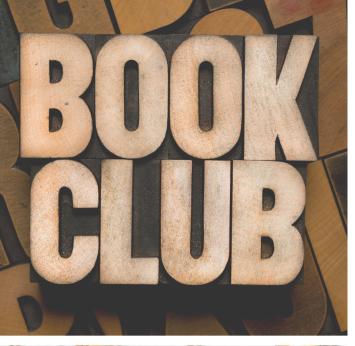
Unfortunately my legs weren't able to keep up with my hands and I leaned too far forward going for the ball. I landed on both hands hard and my momentum carried me forward into a roll. The kid was super sweet. He asked me if I was okay about a hundred times and tried to help me up. As we went back into the library he asked me if I was okay one more time, I assured him I was (I wasn't) and called after him, "make sure you hold the ball while you're in the library, I don't want anyone getting hurt." Ironic. A week later, when I was back to work and sporting a cast on one hand and a brace on the other, he came over and asked me "Am I kicked out for breaking a librarian's hands?" I think he was mostly joking, but also a little bit worried about it. I reassured him that he did nothing wrong and asked him if he wanted to sign my cast. He did.

Patrick Hoecherl

Patrick Hoecherl ULA President Salt Lake City Public Library













THE FIRST RULE OF BOOK CLUB

In the 1989 film *Dead* Poets Society, the inimitable Robin Williams delivers a captivating performance as John Keating, an unconventional English teacher with magnetic charisma and an infectious passion for literature. Keating's high octane teaching style brilliantly lights fires in the minds of his students, opening new avenues of possibility and an unexplored intellectual landscape.

I'm mortified to admit that the above scenario is how I imagined things would play out at the branch Book Club when I was first tasked with the responsibility: I, the unassuming librarian, probably wearing a tweed jacket, would stand upon the tables, effortlessly spewing profundities as if my vocabulary was limited to earth shattering insights, to a captive, enraptured audience. In my defense I'm confident that this fantasy or some version thereof resides somewhere in every educator and librarian with a human centered approach to their craft.

Rather than my grandiose plot, in actuality the inverse was true: I was the eager listener and audience, the pupil, the one learning and changing, taking in the decades of insight from the wisdom and life experience of the individuals that attend our Book Club. And I learned from the basic machinery of a Book Club itself; how it functions and how that schema benefits the group. Here is a brief list of a few important things I've learned along the way:

- The most valuable benefits are the product of listening, not speaking. The diverse perspectives you will likely hear and the critical thinking involved in examining those perspectives will cultivate a much deeper understanding of the book you are discussing. Reading fictional depictions of life circumstances is great, but listening to others relate their own firsthand is something else entirely, and a great tool for developing deeper empathy and emotional intelligence. Active listening in this type of environment is also a great opportunity for selfreflection and in turn deeper self-awareness.
- Any book can be either good or bad depending on who you ask, but every book can lead to a great discussion. In most Book Club meetings you'll have a mix of readers who greatly enjoyed the book being discussed and those who may not have cared for it, but inevitably it can be a fruitful discussion for everyone. This is because there are certain elements at play in the life of the discussion that you can't find in the text itself; the space to capitalize on the subjectivity involved in the reading experience by listening to other thoughts and opinions, the space to hear multiple interpretations, additional perspectives on the context(s) at play in the book, and the value of discussion itself.
 - Book Club inevitably evolves into a space that fills many roles for people. A Book Club can be an educational, social, or therapeutic experience, or possibly all of the above. Book Clubs can help with the epidemic of loneliness. Book Clubs can be an opportunity to connect with populations of people that we may not associate with regularly. In other words, a Book Club is about a lot more than books.

- Book Clubs expand your horizons by nudging you to read books that you may not have otherwise read. I hear variations on this quite often, which come in the form of comments like I would never have chosen this book myself but I'm so glad that I read it!
- You can't always find books that nobody in your group has read but this is okay because **a book will give you new insights every time you read it.**
- No matter where the discussion goes, every Book Club discussion is essentially about us as human beings.
- A Book Club is a microcosm of the world. The diversity of perspectives, the cultural exchange of ideas, the process of conflict and resolution at play in any discussion with personal questions involved, a sense of community and connection, the opportunity to explore social issues, and the celebration of diversity.
- **Disagreement leads to insight**. When an idea is refined by the scrutiny of other ideas what you end up with are better, deeper ideas. This is similar to the philosophical concept of dialectic and how it is the long historical interplay of ideas that has led to our most enduring insights. Ideas don't exist in a vacuum.
- Book Clubs transcend differences.
- You will become better and wiser at Book Club, and it will be more because of the people you listen to than the books you read.

I have certainly benefited from my branch Book Club more from my attendees than they have from me, and I am grateful to have the opportunity to be a part of a lifelong learning process with such a wise and thoughtful group of people.

> **Christopher Bray** Adult Services Librarian Salt Lake County Library

"I would never have chosen this book myself but I'm so glad that I read it!"

Librarian Spotlight Michael J. Whitchurch



This issue I had the opportunity to interview Michael J. Whitchurch, ULA's incoming President-Elect. Michael works as the OER and Medial Literacy Librarian at Brigham Young University's Harold B. Lee Library. He has a Bachelor Degree in Psychology from Brigham Young University and received his Master's of Library and Information Science degree from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Where are you from? Where did you grow up and where have you lived?

For the first two years of life I was a "military brat"; born in Oklahoma and lived in Germany. I then spent my life until I was 14 in Bountiful, UT, back when it was a smaller town with deep roots and deeper interpersonal connections.

At fourteen my parents moved our family of ten to Lima, Peru for my father's job. The assignment was to be for three years, but after two we moved to Quito, Ecuador where I graduated from Academia Cotopaxi, American International School (graduating class of 33 people). I then spent one year at BYU before serving a mission for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints in northern Argentina. Following that wonderful time I spent four more years at BYU and graduated with a degree in Psychology, having discovered I was going to continue education with a Masters degree in library and information science.

Since then I have only lived in Utah, though in different cities.

You've lived in a lot of places. Do you have a favorite?

That's tough, if I had to choose I'd say, Ecuador, it was a very formative time in my life. I was in my last two years of high school. During that time I was also able to summit one of the highest active volcanoes in the world, Cotopaxi (19,350 ft).

How did you become a librarian?

This is an interesting question, and one that I enjoy answering, because I decided to become a librarian at a time when I still hated to read. (Yes, you read that right.)

My interest in libraries began when I worked in libraries at BYU as an undergraduate student. My first position was as a shelver in the Lee Library and then after just over a year I moved to work in the BYU Law Library where I managed all the ILL requests. It was at this time that my boss made me aware of the library degree and I discovered that librarianship is not about reading. Rather, it is about information, and as librarians we are experts in finding, understanding and using information. When my ILL

We as librarians are all about truthseeking and helping others in that quest.

responsibilities were folded into a full-time position I moved into computer support for the Law School. In this position I found I had an innate understanding of computers and digital information. It was during a time that the Internet was nascent in academic contexts and I immediately connected with both the information and technical aspects.

After graduation with my bachelor's degree I received a temporary full-time position at the BYU Law Library while waiting for my wife to graduate. I then began work for three years at the LDS Motion Picture Studio where I managed the audio visual vault, completing tasks in cataloging, shelving, circulating and organizing the collection. It was during this time that I applied for, was admitted to and completed a master's degree in library and information science at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. I was part of the second LEEP cohort, which was a fully remote program at a time when such programs were scarce, to say the least.

Upon graduation with my master's degree in 1999 I began work at the University of Utah's J. Willard Marriott Library as an Instruction LIbrarian. Eight months later I was asked to be the campus <u>WebCT</u> (a course management tool) administrator. I was in that position for five years until I applied for and became the Information Commons Section Head at BYU. Since that time I have had five job descriptions and had five offices. If you're interested in the gruesome details, feel free to ask.

What are some highlights from your library experience?

- Teaching: There is no greater role for me than taking opportunities to meet with anyone to learn together about whatever is interesting (and for me that's about anything). This could happen while teaching first-year writing students, meeting with potential library school students, or associating with anyone who has a curious mind.
- Participating in the evolution of the intersection of libraries and technology and helping others to see the important role librarians play in that evolution. Libraries are about information (mostly online), not just books.
- Associating with so many amazing colleagues throughout the world.

What do you enjoy most about your job?

The people and seeing learning happen in their eyes, as they hopefully see it in mine. We as librarians are all about truth-seeking and helping others in that quest. The light we see when truth is discovered (or the next step on the path to truth) is amazing to experience.







What project are you most proud of?

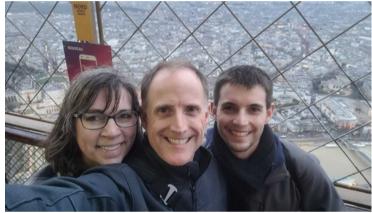
There isn't one I am most proud of. However, one that has had a significant impact on the BYU library was the combining of two major service points (general reference and access services) to create a single helpdesk at the main entrance of the library. The fulfillment of this dream was a long time coming and couldn't have happened without amazing colleagues.

What do you love about libraries?

The opportunity to help others in finding the information they seek and to help them understand and evaluate that information. This could be a novel, educational materials, a movie, a trivial fact, or any other need. We are not judges of that information or the reason for the information, but conduits through whom the information is found. It's about seeing the light in the eyes of information seekers.

What impact do you want to have on the world with your work?

If I can show just a few people how to seek, find, evaluate and use information to find truth then I will have succeeded professionally. And if I can bring a little happiness to someone everyday then I will have succeeded personally.



How has your ULA membership and participation been valuable to you?

The positions I have held have benefitted me personally and professionally. ULA has helped me see the diversity in service opportunities throughout the state and beyond and has helped me better appreciate the work done at other types and sizes of libraries. In addition, the friendships I have formed (both personal and professional) have helped me grow to become the person I am today.

66—

The fulfillment of this dream was a long time coming and couldn't have happened without amazing colleagues.



What are some of your favorite things?

- Photography
- · Making stained glass windows
- Turning wood on my lathe
- Racquetball
- Hiking
- Spending time with my wife (and children when possible)
- Reading fantasy books

You said that when you first became interested in being a librarian that you didn't like to read. I see that you like reading fantasy books now, what was the book that hooked you?

That's testing my memory. I couldn't tell you. I know some that were early ones but I'm not able to say the one that started it.

Making stained glass windows is an interesting hobby. How did you get started doing that?

It's something my wife and I have wanted to do for years. In 2019 we decided to take a class at Holdman Studios. During the pandemic it was a sanity saver, it gave us a good outlet and was really good for our emotional and mental health.

What do you do with what you make? Is it on display anywhere?

Most of what we make gets given away as gifts. For the larger items that we create I make light boxes and display them on our walls.

Wood turning is another unique hobby. Tell me more about that.

I started out with making pens and pencils and other small items like handles for cheese slicers and pizza cutters. Right now, I'm turning wood to build a bird feeder.

Thank you Michael for sharing with me. It was great to get to know you more. I am looking forward to working with you and I hope I get to see some of your fantastic creations in the future.

> **Erin Warnick** President-Elect American Fork Public Library

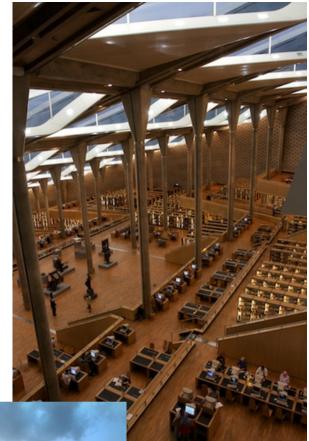
AXIOMS ON LIBRARY ARCHITECTURE

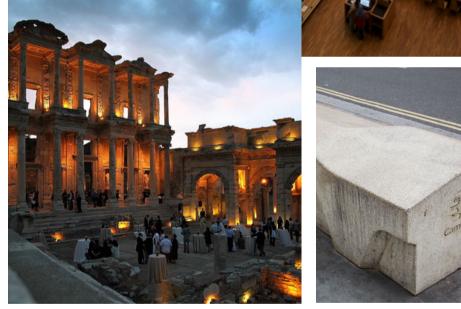
Since ancient times, libraries have served as grand bastions of human knowledge and history. Such marvelous institutions as <u>The</u> <u>Great Library of Alexandria</u> and the illustrious <u>Library of Celsus</u> are remembered to history as not only citadels of immense wisdom, but as vivid edifices to the cultures they stood for.

The principles that characterize efficacious library architecture have, expectedly, transformed since the reign of these buildings incidentally, both libraries, like many of their ancient siblings, failed to stand the test of time—due in part to the ubiquitous digitization of information. As such, contemporary libraries and their architecture should evolve from the textual repositories they once

were to community-oriented havens. This precludes physical libraries from becoming obsolete. Of course, the inherent archival framework should remain as is, but from it, can be constructed an establishment that will elevate the heart and mind of its community.

The design of the structure, then, must accomplish four axioms: It should be inviting. All indications of <u>hostile architecture</u>—antihomeless spikes, obstructive boulders, <u>Camden benches</u>, and the like—must be erased. To appeal to a range of ages, the façade must be welcoming and curious rather than superlative and imposing.





It should ensure retention of visitors by implementation of an interior that is agreeable to the senses and expeditious in its navigation of materials. Simplicity of shelving schematics is essential here, so as to prevent patrons' frustration.

In this same vein, the building should be a paragon of accessibility. When designing in this regard, it is essential to empathize with and comprehend the multivariate perspectives of many different kinds of individuals. By simulating how others perceive and interact with a space, the architect can construct a more holistic matrix of the needs of individuals. Simultaneously, an imperative canon of accessibility that is oft forgotten is its universality. That is to say, accessibility is for everyone, not just the disabled.

The final precept to be considered is service delivery. Indeed, fundamental to all modern libraries is the catalog of services each one offers. This can range from study rooms to makers labs, to kitchens, and even extensions of the classroom. One's creativity is the only conceptual restraint in this case. However, intrinsic to the success of any service is the presence of all required infrastructure to facilitate its operation.



Because each library serves its own unique demographic, the services provided will be distinct to that particular facility. While this does make it difficult to design *collectively*, it consequently manifests an opportunity for the character and cultural significance of *individual* libraries to develop. As mentioned previously, all great libraries have stood as a testament to the circumstances of their time and place. Accordingly, one must consider astutely the precise utilities to incorporate within their own library. What is the goal? What facets of the community need improvement or addressing? These are the questions whose answers determine history.

If, for instance, a given population is experiencing a substantial digital divide, then the region's library must allocate adequate room for enough public computers, *and* it must be done in such a way in which librarians can effectively instruct patrons in their use—think line of sight.

As another example, if a library is located adjacent to a school, a compelling space for young adults will prevent them from disrupting service delivery without ostracizing them as a subset. Furthermore, it can provide them with the means to focus their attention on subjects they prefer, which they may otherwise be unable to do.

These four axioms can be thought of simply as **invitation**, **retention**, **accessibility**, and **service** *delivery*. The *foundation* of present-day, community-focused library architecture is dependent on these notions. The *pillars*, then, are at the discretion of the designer with the capabilities of their imagination as their only constraint.

A final note. Both library science and architecture are ever progressing disciplines. Developments in either can alter their roles in society. Therefore, it is important to not only consider the *now*, but the *when*. Architects and librarians must be prophets of their time, with the foresight to envision future prospects and their associated changes. I will leave the reader with one final inquiry to realize:

What is the future of library design?

Innovative Contemporary Libraries

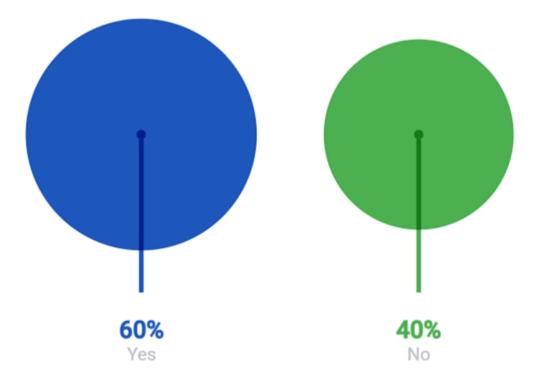
- Libbie Mill Library Henrico County, Virginia
- Helsinki Central Library Helsinki, Finland
- Surrey City Centre Library Surrey, British Columbia
- Library of Birmingham Birmingham, United Kingdom
- The New Library Almere, Netherlands

Utah Public Libraries Overdue Fine Policy Distribution by Heidi Fendrick

60% of public libraries in Utah maintain a policy of charging fines or fees for overdue materials, while 40% have opted for a fine-free approach. Embracing the latter, these libraries recognize the value of removing financial barriers to access, ensuring that all members of the community can freely engage with the wealth of resources and knowledge available. By eliminating fines, libraries foster inclusivity, encouraging patrons to utilize their services without the fear of financial repercussions, ultimately enriching the cultural and education fabric of the communities they serve. As we eagerly anticipate the full FY23 dataset, it will be interesting to see if this distribution has changed, offering insights into evolving library policies and their impact on community engagement and access. Stay tuned for further updates!

Source: Utah Annual Statistical Report FY22

Fine Policy Distribution



ula.org/donate

SUPPORT UTAH LIBRARIES

Utah Library Association

ULA Supports Strong Libraries for All Utahns by:

- Advocating for the freedom to read, learn, discover, and create for all Utahns
- Promoting appropriately funded and staffed library services across the State
- Contributing to standards and principles for libraries
- Providing continuing education and staff development programs for library workers

Your tax deductible donation will help to ensure that ULA has the resources we need to effectively advocate on behalf of our shared values as Utahns, and on behalf of libraries, librarians, and those that we serve.



Jelcome -

New ULA Members!

The ULA community, Executive Board, and staff are pleased to welcome our newest ULA members. We are looking forward to seeing what new ideas and contributions you bring to ULA and hope you thrive here.

Jenna Ahern **Tiffany Bainter** Noah Baskett **Trenton Bateman** Nannette Bauer Weslie Baum **Cassandra Belliston** Sara Bingham **Alicia Burgess Ashley Byers Camille Campbell** William Challis Hannah Chapman Shauna Coy **Christy Crenshaw** Neil Davilo Sonia DeGriselles Xiaolian Deng

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Katherine Quigley Elizabeth Rane Courtney Reiley Alisa Rose Kannon Servoss Paulee Shakespear

Dainan Skeem Deborah Smith Ezra Smith Cynthia Smith Danelle Strong Amber Swartz Camille Thomas Nick Totten Caitlyn Towne-Anderson Meagan Waldrip Shannon Williams

Renew Your Membership

Remember you can renew and pay for your ULA Membership renewal online by logging in to <u>ula.wildapricot.org</u>.

Click on "Join Us", then select your Membership Category. Your receipt will be sent to the email you list in your membership.

What's On at Your Library?

Utah Libraries is happy to publish announcements of library-related exhibits, lectures, open houses, tours, and other events.

Send announcements to Mindy Hale at mhale@ula.org. We publish issues in September, November, February, and April (Annual Conference Issue).

Strategic Planning

April Strategic Plan Update

As I sat down to write my final strategic plan update, I reflected back on all the wonderful things that ULA has accomplished this year. So much has happened and there is so much more to look forward to. It wouldn't be possible without your dedication and hard-work. Here are a few highlights:

On February 22nd, Let Utah Read held a Read-In at the Utah State Capitol. ULA participated as an organizer as well as having a table at the event. There were an estimated 200 people in attendance with opportunities to have a number of conversations with legislators and legislative staff. You can see more pictures of the event <u>here</u>.



Theodora Soter, Patrick Hoecherl, Hiroko Hashitani

The Library Administration and Management Roundtable held a virtual meet-up in January. They are planning to have an in-person meet-up at the annual conference in May. Watch for details for that. Additionally, they have been busy setting up a mentoring program that should launch just before the ULA Conference.

The Library Instruction Roundtable had a workshop on AI and had a great turnout. The Continuing Education Committee held a panel on Imposter Syndrome and is hosting another panel on ULA Involvement in April.

The Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee and Diversity Services Roundtable have been working together to plan a joint activity in the Spring or Summer.

Finally, The Publications Committee has added new content to the newsletter, including an infographic from Heidi Fendrick, the Utah State Library State Data Coordinator, and a "From the Editor" section which seeks to highlight a particular program, event, or news that is particularly relevant at the time of the issue. If you have something that you would like to submit, please do. We love new content!

Erin Warnick President-Elect American Fork Public Library

Strategic Directions





REGISTER NOW

VIRTUAL RUN

As part of the events leading up to this year's conference, join us virtually by yourself, with a friend or colleague, or a group to walk or run a 5K. All participants will receive a conference t-shirt!





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ULA/MPLA Joint Conference 2024 ula.org/2024-annual-conference/

ULA/MPLA 2024 Annual Conference MAY 8–10





ALA President EMILY DRABINSKI

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Author SY MONTGOMERY





Keynote SARA JONES





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LAST WORDS

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