

University Librarian's Letter, January-March 2010

During the last quarter the following activities, events, projects and initiatives occurred and I thought I should write them down and share this information with you. What you will read below may already be known to you or it may be totally new. Regardless, the intent is to make a record of "happenings" and to share it – so here it goes ....

*Fenwick Library Water Leaks*

Lene Palmer prepared a detailed chronology of minor and major floods in the Fenwick Library building in 2009 ... there were six such incidents. (Thank you, Lene). With this information in hand, in early January I met with the Vice President for Facilities to discuss the situation and ascertain what measures had been taken to prevent similar events in the future. Facilities has initiated a number of preventive measures, along with more regular maintenance of the HVAC systems on the roof (sixth floor) of both wings B&C. Hopefully, there will be no more incidents, such as the one that occurred on October 16, 2009, in the future. Regarding losses and expenditures sustained during the October 16 flood, the Libraries received monetary compensation through Mason's Office of Risk Management recently.

*Snow Closings & Stats*

From February 5 through February 11, Mason and the Libraries were closed due to two consecutive snowstorms and record setting snow accumulations. During this time, only Fenwick Library opened for six hours on February 9. However, the digital component of the Libraries was open for service, and indeed we had considerable business during this period. Some numbers:

Virtual Reference IM/E-Mail Service	Available for 45.5 hours 88 research consultations completed, with each consultation requiring 15+ minutes
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Hits on library servers:	
library.gmu.edu (Libraries' website)	658,768
furbo (dbwizard & e-reserves)	257,667
proxy server	3,908,821
TOTAL	4.82M

In one service area alone (proxy server activity) we saw a 45% increase during this snow period compared to the same period in 2009!

In addition, aspects of our Interlibrary Loan/Document Delivery operations partially functioned during the days that we were closed.

Congratulations, along with our thanks, to the librarians and staff who worked from home in this period. I will not mention any names, as there are too many to list, but I will note units that made all of these services possible for Mason's students and faculty: Access Services, Fenwick Reference department and Johnson Center Library, and Digital Programs and Systems.

#### *Washington in the 70s – WETA TV 26*

The Special Collections and Archives department contributed photographic images to this PBS production, which premiered on February 22. Mason received acknowledgement in the Credits section of the film. (We had also contributed content to the production of *Washington in the 60s*, receiving similar credit, in 2009.)

#### *Renaming the University Libraries' Newsletter?*

A quick staff survey was conducted to solicit views regarding proposed title changes to the Libraries' external-audience newsletter, currently *Full Text*. Thank you to all who responded to the survey. It is now almost certain that the Spring 2010 issue of *Full Text* (currently in press) will be the last. The newsletter will be issued under a different title and newer design starting next fiscal year.

#### *Merle Reed Fellowship in Southern Labor History, Georgia State University*

Jordan Patty was awarded this annual fellowship for 2009 to support his research to create "secondary sources ... on public transit, ownership, and labor." As part of the fellowship, he delivered a lecture at Georgia State's Library, Atlanta, GA, titled "Public Transit, Ownership, and Labor in the United States" on March 3. Congratulations to Jordan.

#### *Library Publications*

We have initiated discussions with University Relations (Creative Services) toward a phased plan to develop a series of print, digital, and print on-demand publications for the University Libraries. Such publications should serve public relations, marketing, and fund-raising requirements; therefore, their content will be focused on external audiences. We are anticipating concept development, assembling content and writing, and (selective) production starting this summer.

### *Council of Library and Information Resources (CLIR)*

As a recent recipient of a CLIR grant, we were invited to participate in the CLIR-sponsored "Hidden Collections Program Symposium," Washington, DC, March 29-30. We were represented at the symposium by Jordan Patty, Manon Th  roux, Melissa McAfee, and Friedgard Cowan. Jordan Patty also served as a Lead Discussant in the Technology Breakout Meetings, on the topic of "Adapting Generic Tools for Processing Projects."

### *Iraqi Faculty Training Program*

Mason has received a Fulbright grant (through the U.S. State Department) to train five Iraqi university professors in the field of Public Health. Under the auspices of the College of Health Sciences & Human Services, the Libraries will participate in this faculty development program. The Iraqi faculty will be here during August and September, with four-five days devoted to library matters. Three to four librarians are expected to lead workshops and discussions with the Iraqi faculty in August. Craig Gibson will be coordinating our efforts, including development of curriculum.

### *ACRL Summer (2010) Immersion Program*

Andrea Baruzzi has been accepted, through a competitive application process, to this premier and week-long academic library instruction training program. It will be held during the last week of July at Champlain College, Burlington, VT. Congratulations to Andrea.

### *Fenwick Library Plaza*

We decided to acquire furniture (tables, benches and umbrellas) for the Fenwick Library Plaza. This will be a good complement to the (successful) *Jazzman's Caf  * in Fenwick's lobby area. We hope to receive and install the furniture well before the end of the academic year.

### *Mason's Climate Action Plan*

Aaron Hartman, as a member of the Core Planning Committee, contributed to the University's first Climate Action Plan. Aaron was cited by Mason's Sustainability Coordinator, Lenna Storm, for his "phenomenal work." Congratulations to Aaron.

### *A Student Assistant Accolade*

Congratulations to Alexandra Tyson, Office of Collection Development & Preservation, for winning the grand prize in a writing contest in the Global Affairs program. Alex's story was based on events in her own life since she has lived in various parts of the world with her parents who are U.S. State Department employees.

### *Songdo Global University, Incheon, S. Korea*

Planning continues toward this initiative at several levels (academic program, library services, IT infrastructure, finances) among the "alliance universities." Recently, the University of Missouri-Columbia has joined Stony Brook, Delaware, NC State and Mason in active discussions. A second face-to-face meeting of the library group was held on March 31. Progress is being made ...

### *LibraryZone eBook Summit*

Sponsored by the publisher, Springer, this Washington, DC summit on March 18, featured a panel on "Challenges and Successes of Implementing eBooks @ My Library." Cynthia Holt was one of the five panelists ... Cynthia's co-panelists were from NASA Goddard Space Flight Center, the Institute of Defense Analysis, and DuPont Co. Congratulations to Cynthia.

### *Patriot Jobs*

ASD is partnering with Mason's Career Services Office to utilize the Patriot Jobs recruitment tool. This will enable student assistant applicants to compete for a wider array of job openings on all campuses including, of course, for Libraries-ITU positions. Pam Thomson is ASD's liaison for this initiative.

### *Librarian Reappointment & Promotion in-rank 2010 Cycle*

Many thanks to the members of the Professional Review Committee (PRC) of the Librarians' Council who performed peer-reviews, as well as to the supervisors (department heads and/or Associate University Librarians) who performed administrative assessments. In the end, this year there were 11 candidacies for reappointment and 3 candidacies for promotion in-rank. Final recommendations were submitted to Vice President Hughes and Provost Stearns on March 25.

John G. Zenelis – April 9, 2010