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From the Dean’s Desk

I am proud to be a part of a dynamic, growing, and accomplished team of librarians and staff. We have made real strides in educational and community outreach, and we have substantially increased our collaborative activities—both with other campus units and with other libraries. I was especially happy that we were able to increase significantly our special and digital collections, to provide more features and services on our Web site, and to renovate and equip the Pryor Center for Arkansas Oral and Visual History. We continue to enhance the cultural opportunities on campus with our series of events celebrating diversity. The Library Leadership Council was established and is composed of special donors interested in helping to support our progress.

I was gratified that the Traveler, the student newspaper, once again voted Mullins Library as the “Best Place to Study” on campus. Our goal has been to make the Libraries one of our students’ favorite places to gather—to do their homework and research, write papers, access e-mail, find a book to read or a movie to watch, use their laptop, listen to music, and practice their speeches and presentations together.

I am also proud of my faculty and staff. Without their expertise, talents, and hard work, these good things could not have happened. They were instrumental in helping me shape the Libraries’ goals and strategies for the future. They continued to hone their skills in library research and instruction—constantly adapting to changing technological advances, and working with students and faculty to identify and use the numerous resources and services that we offer.

Carolyn H. Allen, Dean of Libraries
Fifty years ago in September, nine black students faced an angry, jeering mob as they integrated Little Rock Central High School, an episode that evolved to include a power struggle between the highest office of the state with the highest office of the nation and the federalization of the Arkansas National Guard.

To commemorate the 50th anniversary of the 1957 integration crisis, the Libraries obtained a grant from the Arkansas Humanities Council and the Department of Arkansas Heritage to partially fund a digitization project entitled "Land of (Unequal) Opportunity: Documenting the Civil Rights Struggle in Arkansas."

Staff in Special Collections are identifying and digitizing one thousand original documents, illustrations, political cartoons, photographs, and audio recordings on the history of civil rights in Arkansas. While emphasizing the 1957 Little Rock Central High School integration crisis, the civil rights project also includes materials from earlier and later eras and a wide variety of polemicized groups, so that the events of 1957 are placed in their historical context.

Most of the documents and images included in the project are from the holdings in Special Collections, such as the Daisy Bates Papers, Governor Orval Faubus Papers, Federal Bureau of Investigation Records, oral history interview transcripts, the WPA Interview Project, the George Fisher Papers, the 1871 Civil Rights Act, photographs from the Geleve Grice and Larry Obsitnik collections, and writings by Arkansas attorney Sciopio A. Jones.

Digitized images will be stored electronically, providing access to the materials online. Plans for the materials generated by the project include reproducing a set of posters containing lesson plans, a detailed bibliography, and a time line on Arkansas civil rights history.
What’s New in Online Research

Campus-wide online access to the premier journal covering academe, the Chronicle of Higher Education, quickly became a hit this year. Faculty are delighted to have this resource at their fingertips, with its in-depth reporting on issues and events covering every facet of college and university life.

Black Women Writers, a recent acquisition and a work in progress, bolstered the African-American Studies and literature programs. When complete, it will offer more than 100,000 pages of poetry, prose, and essays by authors from more than 20 countries. The database currently contains 6,000 pages of authors such as Harriet Jacobs and Nikki Giovanni.

In partnership with other members of the Greater Western Library Alliance (GWLA) and the Center for Research Libraries (CRL), the Libraries are contributing to the new TRAIL project. TRAIL—the Technical Report Archive and Image Library—is a collaborative project to digitize, archive, and provide unrestricted access to federal technical reports issued prior to 1975. Numerous reports are already accessible, and the project is ongoing.

“Find It!”

A useful new linking service, Find it!, allows students and faculty to locate full-text articles quickly from within dozens of library databases—without the extra step of checking holdings in the online catalog. The Find it! service uses records for more than 25,000 electronic journals, e-books, and online conference proceedings held by the Libraries to offer online full-text when a user locates a citation in a research database. If the item is not owned by the Libraries, Find it! will allow users to send the citation information directly to the interlibrary loan service.

Faculty immediately reported saving time with the Find it! links, and the hope is that such quick access to the available full text articles will expand the number, depth, and quality of research resources used by students.

“I love the flying pigs! Huge time saver, even for veteran researchers. Whoever implemented this should receive a medal!”

(Faculty member, Walton College of Business)

“What you have available for a doctoral student in Mena, Arkansas, is simply amazing!”

(UA Graduate Student)
Gift Collections

Forty-three manuscript collections were donated this year. Among them were the papers of long-time UA history professor Thomas C. Kennedy and the papers of James J. Johnston, a Searcy County historian and genealogist.

The Vernie Bartlett Papers include materials from Bartlett’s school activities in Newton County, his years in the Armed Services as a decorated World War II veteran, and most significantly his correspondence, handwritten sermons, and photographs stemming from forty years as a rural Presbyterian minister in Arkansas. This collection documents the life of one Arkansan who rose out of poverty and illiteracy to guide, encourage, and help thousands of people in the changing landscape of rural Arkansas in the last century.

Charles Sharum, born in Fort Smith, was captured by the German Army after his plane was shot down during a mission over Berlin in May, 1944. He was held as a Prisoner of War in various German camps until his liberation by Russian troops in May, 1945. He kept a journal during his captivity and managed to hide it from prison officials. The journal contains poems, notes, and drawings of Sharum and his fellow prisoners. Sharum died in Springdale in 1992. His widow Marcella Sharum, when donating the journal, was pleased to know that her husband’s legacy would be preserved in the University Libraries’ Special Collections.

In addition to the manuscript collections, a total of 1,900 books were donated to the Arkansas and Rare Book collections. Among the many other gift books is a collection of 275 books dealing with the silversmith industry and the emigration of Huguenots to the United States that was donated by Richard W. Davies, executive director of the Arkansas Department of Parks & Tourism.

International Collections

World Wide Political Science Abstracts, an online index to scholarly literature on all aspects of international politics and government, was a welcome addition for political science students and faculty.

Samuel Kupper of Spring, Texas, enhanced the international collections with a gift of over 770 volumes and materials related to Chinese history, politics, and current affairs. This collection will significantly support the University’s Asian Studies program.

Digital collections made possible through membership in the Center of Research Libraries (CRL) complemented Mr. Kupper’s gift collection of books on China by providing online access to Chinese political pamphlets published in the 1940s and 1950s. Other international materials accessible through CRL this year were slavery and manumission records from Timbuktu, Brazilian government documents, pamphlets and periodicals from the 1848 French Revolution, Mediterranean maps, and extensive collections of south Asian and African materials.
Use of Collections & Services

Web Site Kudos

The Libraries continue to receive compliments about the Web site from students and faculty both on and off campus. In addition, the South Arkansas Community College Library asked to use the Libraries’ electronic resources module as a model for their own database pages.

A Little Online Help

In recent years, students have significantly increased their use of online resources. The most recent addition to online services has been a series of Flash video tutorials. Students with busy lives off campus, including study-abroad students, seem especially appreciative of these new tools to help them learn how to use resources available through the library Web site.

Manuscript Collections: a Mine for Researchers

While conducting research for his dissertation as a doctoral candidate at the University of Arkansas, Robert Patrick Bender came across a collection of letters whose quantity and quality he believed warranted publication as a full-length edited manuscript. After successfully defending his dissertation, Bender returned to Special Collections to work more extensively with the William Remmel Papers, a selection of which he published as Like Grass Before the Scythe: The Life and Death of Sgt. William Remmel, 121st New York Infantry.

Edited by Bender and published by the University of Alabama Press, the book contains the text of original letters describing the wartime experiences of Remmel, a young Union soldier serving in the Army of the Potomac’s 6th Corps during the crucial middle years of the American Civil War. The letters are dated from August 1862 to October of 1864. Wounded and captured by Confederate forces at the battle of Cedar Creek, October 19, 1864, Remmel was sent to Andersonville Prison where he presumably died.

Over 2,000 researchers used materials in Special Collections this year. Manuscript sources were cited in thirteen books, fifty-six journals and periodicals, and sixteen film, television, and radio broadcasts.
Otto Ernest Rayburn (1891-1960) was an Ozarks writer, school teacher, and promoter for thirty years. He published magazines and books celebrating the region. The bulk of the Rayburn Papers collection (MS R19) housed in the Special Collections archives is The Ozark Folk Encyclopedia, 229 folders containing Rayburn’s working files of clippings, notes, letters, photographs, etc., all arranged in alphabetical order.

Ethel Simpson, retired archivist with the Special Collections Department, worked on the Rayburn collection for many years. Beginning in October, 2005, Simpson selected a subject under each letter in turn through the alphabet and read Rayburn’s Encyclopedia entry for it for Ozarks at Large, an original program broadcast by KUAF radio, the University of Arkansas affiliate of National Public Radio. With the permission of KUAF, web development staff created audio files of Simpson’s readings and posted them on the Libraries’ Web site.

“I thought he was kind of nutty then, but then when he ran for attorney general and governor and president and all those—I felt like he really had the people’s best interest at heart, and always have felt that way.”

(Liz Clinton-Little)

Otto Rayburn’s Encyclopedia Podcasts

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Kris Katrosh joined the David and Barbara Pryor Center for Arkansas Oral and Visual History in January as its director. Katrosh has been expanding the focus of the Center’s program to include high-definition digital audio and video formats. Equipment upgrades from funds provided by a gift from Tyson Foods, Inc., include camera, lighting, audio and editing equipment, software, and expansion of the server system.

The Pryor Center plans to partner with public broadcasting as well as community cable access channels to reach an audience far beyond the academic community. Outreach projects, such as providing equipment and training to school and community groups to enable them to conduct their own oral histories, are also in the works.

Katrosh previously worked as general manager and director of long-form programming for the Dempsey Film Group in Little Rock, serving the Group’s clients in the capacity of producer, director, and editor of commissioned visual products.

The Center’s inaugural advisory board met for the first time in April. The Board meeting was followed by a public reception hosted by Senator David Pryor, his wife Barbara, and the Libraries.
Another step in the University’s and Libraries’ goal of supporting Arkansas’s teachers and students was reached this year through a successful outreach program—the production of an educational poster series.

The first series, five posters on “Amazing African American Leaders of Arkansas,” was released in February during Black History Month. The second series, five posters on “Amazing Women Leaders of Arkansas,” was released in March during Women’s History Month.

The posters were made available free of charge to teachers and administrators throughout the state. Requests for the posters were overwhelming, and more than 1,300 poster sets were distributed to schools.

Each poster contains a photograph and biographical sketch of the subject; the back side of each poster contains a detailed lesson plan for teachers, as well as a timeline and other educational features created by the Special Collections Department’s curriculum developer, Anita Mysore.

The subjects of the African American history posters are: Charlotte Stephens, who became Arkansas’s first black teacher in Little Rock in 1868; Joseph C. Corbin, the founder of what is today the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff; Scott Bond, a St. Francis County businessman and planter who was known as “Arkansas’s black Rockefeller”; Daisy Bates, the NAACP leader who oversaw the integration of Central High School in Little Rock in 1957; and Silas Hunt, the young World War II veteran who integrated the University of Arkansas Law School in 1948.

The subjects of the women’s history posters are: Senator Hattie Caraway, the first woman elected to the U.S. Senate; Louise Thaden, the record-setting early aviator; Florence Price, the premier African American female composer and music teacher; Charlie May Simon, a writer of note and the namesake for the Charlie May Simon Children’s Book Award; and Hazel Walker, a phenomenal basketball player who was the women’s free-throw champion of the world on multiple occasions.
Collaboration with the Honors College resulted in technological upgrades in all group study rooms in Mullins Library. This included the installation of new projectors, interactive audio-visual computer podiums, and flat screen televisions to interface with laptop computers, allowing students and other campus groups to practice multi-media presentations. Made possible by collaboration with the Graduate School, the successful Graduate Assistant Internship Program, now in its fifth year, brings graduate students from a wide range of subject areas—education, agriculture, biology, chemistry, geosciences, physics, anthropology, business, and engineering—to work on library-related projects and to serve at the Reference Desk. In return, graduate interns gain valuable experience in conducting research, providing peer-to-peer consultations, and learning “up close” how research libraries function.

Four Honors College interns assisted staff in Special Collections, working on various manuscript projects, including the John Paul Hammerschmidt Papers, the Fay Jones Papers, and others.
The Libraries received over $1.3 million in gift funds and endowments this fiscal year, and gifts-in-kind were valued at more than $90,500. The total amount of gifts included funds from the Tyson Family Foundation earmarked for the Pryor Center, as well as funds from the Thomas Goldsby family to purchase equipment for processing and digitizing manuscripts.

The Libraries undertook two initiatives this year in the area of fundraising. The first involved a library appeal coordinated by the Annual Fund, the third in a series. With a tagline of “Turning Pages, Opening Minds,” the appeal garnered $53,235 from 732 households, 26 percent of which were first-time donors to the Libraries.

The second initiative was the establishment of the Library Leadership Council, a group of donors dedicated to the advancement and support of the Libraries. The Council opened with fifteen charter members. Members of the Council pledged at least $1,000 a year to the Libraries. Membership guaranteed invitations to special events hosted by the Libraries and planned “members only” programs throughout the year.

The Paperback Book Exchange, a program designed to promote pleasure reading through the recycling of paperback books, has been a big hit. Available books can be browsed by anyone in the West Entry vestibule of Mullins Library. All books in the program are registered with BookCrossing.com, a Web site dedicated to the free circulation of books throughout the world. Bookplates and bookmarks were designed to notify readers of participation in the program, including the “Expand Your Horizons” bookplate depicted at the right.

The Libraries adopted the Paperback Book Exchange as a customer-friendly method of distributing donated paperback books that are duplicate copies or that cannot be accepted into the collections for other reasons. The UA administration granted the Libraries permission to distribute surplus books in this manner.
A major improvement this year was the remodeling/renovation of the Chemistry and Biochemistry Library. More computers, seating, and public services are now available to faculty and students in the Chemistry and Biochemistry building. Because the building is on the National Register of Historic Places, renovations involved the restoration of the look and feel of the original WPA-era building, including wood trim and terrazzo flooring, which add to the beauty of the facility.

Members of Pi Mu Epsilon (undergraduate math club) assembled a model of a four-dimensional polyhedron, the runcinated dodecaplex, in Mullins Library in October. Chaim Goodman-Strauss and Luca Capogna, professors of mathematical sciences, organized the volunteers, who included art and architecture students, passers-by, and math enthusiasts.

The Club used Zometools loaned by the Zome Company to construct the model. The runcinated dodecaplex is a three-dimensional shadow of a four-dimensional polyhedron. After completion, the model was suspended with fishing line in the east spiral staircase of Mullins Library.
The Libraries and the School of Architecture co-sponsored a conference in March on historic preservation entitled “The Architecture and Landscapes of Arkansas: A Heritage of Distinction.” Richard Longstreth, director of the graduate program in historic preservation at George Washington University, was the keynote speaker at the conference. Other speakers were Charles Witsell, award-winning Little Rock architect, Harriet Jansma, former editor of Magnolia, the journal of the Southern Garden History Society, and Ethel Goodstein-Murphree, UA professor of architecture. Several representatives from the Libraries also presented at the conference, including Tom W. Dillard, head of Special Collections, Tim Nutt, manuscripts and rare books librarian, and Ellen Compton, architectural collections archivist.

The conference culminated in a banquet and tribute to Cyrus Sutherland, professor emeritus of architecture at the U of A. Sutherland joined the School of Architecture faculty in 1968 and was instrumental in saving and preserving more than forty historically significant buildings in Arkansas, including the Fayetteville landmarks the Headquarters House, the Walker Stone House, the Old Post Office, and Old Main.

Partnering with the UA Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Planning Committee, the Libraries hosted three University lectures in the Walton Reading Room in January. Speakers included: Joyce Elliot, who served as the representative from District 33 in Little Rock in the Arkansas House of Representatives; Joe Seabrooks, UA assistant vice chancellor for Student Affairs, and Sybil Jordan Hampton, former director of the Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation.

Together with the Center for Arkansas and Regional Studies (CARS), the Libraries hosted a lecture in February by Susan Marren, UA associate professor of English, entitled “Taking Care: The Photography of Ralph Armstrong.” The lecture was complemented by an exhibit in Mullins Library of Armstrong’s photographs entitled “Something for the Record.” Armstrong’s works were primarily portraits of black citizens taken in the Little Rock area from 1951 to 1988, but also included photographs of scores of houses, churches, and schools—many of them just before their demolition.

In September, the Libraries organized a joint program with the Fayetteville Public Library in honor of Hispanic Heritage Month called Lectura Para Niños, or reading to children. Students were recruited from the University to read children’s books in Spanish to pre-school aged children at the FPL’s story hour two days a week.
The late Ruth Borchard of London amassed a remarkable private art collection of more than one hundred self-portraits, featuring a virtual who’s who of British artists of the mid-twentieth century. Borchard collected works that captured the artist’s introspection beyond the canvas, providing an insightful view into the artistic genre of self-identity. Borchard never paid more than twenty-one guineas for any single picture, making the collection all that more astounding.

Dean Allen, Associate Dean Juana Young, and UA Vice Provost for Academic Affairs Nancy Ellen Talburt were instrumental in securing an exhibit of the Borchard collection for the Walton Arts Center, which became the first stop for the exhibit on its inaugural United States tour. Titled “Face to Face,” the exhibit was displayed at the Walton Arts Center from August 21 to November 25.

The opening of the exhibit included a reception for Katherine Hallgarten of London, whose mother, Ruth Borchard, collected the works, and for Katherine’s daughter, Ruth Hallgarten, on October 5 at the Walton Arts Center.

Also participating at the reception was Mary Ann Greenwood of Greenwood & Associates who partially funded the exhibit.
Art Exhibits

The ongoing rotating art exhibits in Mullins Library, many of them featuring Arkansas artists, continue to offer the campus community an opportunity for aesthetic and cultural enrichment. The summer opened with “Beauty and the Brush,” a showcase of artworks created in the fifth annual Garvan Woodland Gardens plein air painting event. The Gardens are located outside of Hot Springs and are owned and managed by the University of Arkansas. The 2006 invitational event drew eighteen professional artists from six states.

An exhibit later in the summer featured portrait artist Monta Black Philpot of Mena. In “A Ouachita Portrait,” Philpot illustrates the story of her home community by featuring subjects who represent the spirit and character of the region.

Tim LaTourette, shop supervisor and instructor at the School of Architecture, provided a bit of whimsy with his “Eight Etchings, Four Cabinets.” The cabinets were three-dimensional, actual working pieces placed on pedestals for viewers to admire their smooth mechanisms by opening the cabinet doors.

In celebration of American Indian Heritage Month, an exhibit in November honored the legacy of the Art Department of Bacone College in Muskogee, Oklahoma. “Raising the Standard for Indian Art” provided an overview of the evolution of the Bacone style. Featured were three directors of Bacone’s Art Department—Acee Blue Eagle, W. Richard “Dick” West Sr., and Ruthe Blalock Jones—as well as pieces from some of its world-renowned students and faculty: Archie Blackowl, Lee Joshua, Mars Biggoose, Sharron Ahtone Harjo, and Kevin W. Smith, currently a faculty member at Bacone and curator of the exhibit.

Trained as a photographer in Chicago, the late Little Rock photographer Ralph Armstrong worked as a mail carrier in downtown Little Rock for thirty-seven years while also maintaining his photography studio. An exhibit in January and February featuring a selection of his photographs accompanied a lecture and a reception honoring his work.

Photographs of Arkansas vernacular architecture from a collection by Rice University professor Geoff Winningham were the featured exhibit in March and April. The images were taken from a survey commissioned by First Federal Savings and Loan of Little Rock in 1980 and 1981. The large format prints were displayed in conjunction with Arkansas Heritage Month.

Paintings by Megan Chapman in an exhibit entitled “The Path that Light Takes” delighted viewers with a variety of colors and shapes. Chapman, a Fayetteville native, received her B.F.A. in painting from the University of Oregon.
A library version of the “Fab Four” proved to be a big hit when it was depicted on a poster during National Library Week in April. Based on the national theme, “Come Together @ Your Libraries,” the poster featured Dean Allen, Phil Jones, head of Reference, Ellen Compton, architectural manuscripts processor, and Anne Marie Candido, assistant to the dean, in a vintage Beatles pose.

Library faculty and staff celebrated National Library Workers Day with an Ice Cream Social hosted by Dean Allen and Juana Young, associate dean. The American Library Association Allied Professional Association (ALA-APA) created National Library Workers Day in 2003. It is meant to “recognize the hard work, dedication, and expertise of library support staff and librarians.”

This year’s event included the first annual Library Employee Awards: Rookie of the Year Award for Kimberly Rolf, Extra Mile Award for Gwyneth Jelinek, Keystone Award for Angela Hand, Outstanding Service Award for Sarah Makowski, and Team Project Award to the Staff Concerns Committee, who were Angela Hand, David Lacy, Erin Wilson, Gregg Doty, and April White.

A library retreat was held at the Rockefeller Conference Center in Petit Jean, Arkansas, in late May. In attendance were heads of departments, faculty, members of the Library Program Steering Committee, and selected staff.

The goals of the retreat were to give library personnel the chance to review progress, identify current trends in libraries, identify the current teaching and research needs of students and faculty, and to look for ways to “re-create” the Libraries as necessary within the next three to five years. A revised mission statement was crafted, as well as new strategic goals and objectives.

The work of the coming fiscal year is to determine how the goals and objectives can best be carried out and to assign personnel to the various tasks needed to make the goals a reality. Responses of those who attended the retreat were very positive; everyone seemed to appreciate the opportunity to put forth their ideas and to get to know their colleagues better, and to have a little fun. A special attempt was also made to involve those who did not attend the retreat.

On the evening of the first day, faculty and staff enjoyed an evening of relaxation and karaoke.