Porter Henderson Library

Library Newsletter

Word from the Director
Dr. Maurice Fortin

This first issue of the *Library Newsletter* will be a little different from previous years. You will also note it is two months late. My staff has been overwhelmed with projects during the summer (as I will detail below), helping with the preparation for the SACS reaffirmation process, bringing up new services, finishing the busiest year of usage ever, and the list can go on and on. So in other words, my usual "Word for the Director" column will be the sole piece for this first issue.

As part of the Library's ongoing institutional effectiveness efforts, several staff members will use this academic year to investigate using social media as an alternative to the traditional newsletter format for informing the ASU community about developments, services, and resources in the Library. This year there will probably still be a winter (January) issue in the traditional format for the Newsletter. A late spring issue may be issued, but that will depend on the outcome of the investigation for using social media. For the time being in this first issue, you, the reader, are stuck with my thoughts.

2012 Summer Remodeling Projects

Over the course of the recent summer months, a contractor converted two large group study rooms on Second Floor and one large group study room in the Basement into six new group study rooms. These new rooms seat either four or eight individuals and each has new tables, new chairs, carpeted floors, a white board, and a wall-mounted flat screen panel with connectors for use with laptop computers. All six of these rooms are available for reservations and checkout through the Library's Circulation Desk.

A second project completed this summer was the creation of a desktop PC workstation area on Second Floor near the central elevator. This area now has seven cubicles with desktop PCs, carpeted floor, and a dedicated, high-capacity printer. For those wanting to work on papers and in-depth research, this new location provides a quieter alternative than the noisier and high-energy atmosphere of the Learning Commons on the First Floor.

The third project completed during the summer was a reconfiguration and a furniture upgrade for the Quiet Study Room located on the Second Floor. This study space is located along the east side of the floor. The 45-year-old wooden study desks were replaced with 12 new study cubicles with desk surfaces, book shelf, study lights, electrical outlets, fabric covered walls, and new chairs. The cubicles are designed for the use of laptop PCs. The existing comfortable chairs and sofas located in the room were repositioned along the walls of the room. This room is designed as another quiet alternative to the Learning Commons.

In addition to these three larger projects, additional Wi Fi capacity was added to all three floors of the Library. New furniture and carpeting were added to the reading alcove on the west side of the Second Floor. One other group study room on the Second Floor was turned into a temporary office.

It only took students about two weeks to discover the new group study rooms, PC workstations, and upgraded seating in the Quiet Study Room. The six group study rooms are in almost constant use from early afternoon until about 10 pm or later each weekday and especially on Sunday afternoons and evenings.

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Library Usage is UP

In FY 12 the Porter Henderson Library had nearly 341,000 visits including, readers, assignment researchers, campus visitors, coffee addicts, overnight studiers, paper writers, and other types of users. This is measured through electronic door counters in the north or west entrance doors. That total of nearly 341,000 is almost 150,000 more than in any previous year for which records are available. I do not believe that record will stand for long. In September 2012, the Library had nearly 49,000 users and nearly 56,000 users in October come through to use the Learning Commons, study on Second Floor, or use either Government Documents or the Media Collection in the Basement. Both September and October set all-time records for a single month. I do not think it will be long before the single month record falls again.

New Services and Resources

Much of the increase in usage can be traced to such physical changes within the Library as the Learning Commons, as well as new furniture, carpeting, and group study rooms. Much of the increase can also be traced to the services and resources available from the Library. The Library's home page, with new services highlighted, appears below. Examples of some of these new services and resources are covered in the remainder of this issue.

LibGuides

LibGuides are organized lists of print and online materials, created and maintained by librarians and other knowledgeable staff members to highlight resources students will find useful in their course work. They are divided into six areas: reference, books, databases, news, websites, and videos. Linked to in two places from the Library's homepage, LibGuides are available online 24/7 and can be conveniently connected to courses on Blackboard. The box to the right, from http://angelo.libguides.com/, shows those LibGuides already available as of November 1. You can also find additional information, such as profiles of the authors of each LibGuide or to track when new ones are available, on the main LibGuides page.

U-Search is a "discovery tool," which allows individuals to search simultaneously across multiple databases produced by different vendors. This allows researchers the flexibility of quickly discovering items in databases they may not have thought about searching or that they may have postponed searching until the future. Angelo State University is following a trend among academic libraries in launching such a tool, as many of our peer and stretch-peer institutions have implemented such tools in the past few years. After researching alternatives, the Library joined with the Abilene Library Consortium in taking advantage of an opportunity to subscribe to the EBSCO Discovery Service (EDS) product. This service is now the primary way to simultaneously search both RamCat (the online catalog) and numerous databases. The U-Search interface is located in the center of the Library's webpage interface (see box to the right). If the U-Search box is not showing on the home page (for instance, it might be showing "RamCat"), you can click on the smaller "U-Search" link found at the bottom of the box (see below) to make it the active box.

A video-recorded, instructional workshop on U-Search is available on the CITR website at http://www.angelo.edu/dept/citr/faculty_workshops.php.

Pilot Program for USTD Freshman Seminars

Two librarians, Mark Allan and Sarah Schmidt, are working with faculty members, CITR, and the Freshman College in the development of the freshman seminar pilot classes. Mark and Sarah have been introducing the topic of information literacy and how that is a component of critical thinking and the other student learning objectives that are the core of the seminars. In addition to exercises and assessment measures, they have developed course specific LibGuides for each of the pilot courses. (See titles below.)

Library » LibGuides » Freshman Seminar: Natural Born Killers: The Serial Killer As The Hero In Pop Culture   Admin S

Freshman Seminar: Natural Born Killers: The Serial Killer As The Hero In Pop Culture

Library » LibGuides » Freshman Seminar: Nothin' Wrong with a Good Party

Freshman Seminar: Nothin' Wrong with a Good Party

Library » LibGuides » Freshman Seminar: Sports and American Culture

Freshman Seminar: Sports and American Culture

Guide to Library Services

In the early years of the *Library Newsletter*, the first issue of the year was a multi-page guide to Library services and resources. It would describe each department and its particular services, staffing, operations, and resources. Several years ago, the Library created a webpage for this information rather than devoting an issue of the *Newsletter* to this purpose. In theory the webpage should have been easier to update and to keep the information current. Over the spring and summer, a taskforce of librarians and support staff revamped this webpage offering and made a three-tiered approach to provide more relevant information by type of user, resources, and a how-to section. These options are available on the Library's homepage in the "Services For" box.

There are sections that answer questions on borrowing materials (e.g., borrowing periods), using equipment and facilities (the Learning Commons or group study rooms, or the scanners, printers, and copiers), how to do research (U-Search, online resources, the West Texas Collection, research help, and LibGuides), or borrowing materials from other libraries (interlibrary loan and getting a getting a TexShare card). The Services guides also include links to information on Library hours, maps of the Library, the staff directory, a comment box, and services provided by other campus offices (Information Technology, the Writing and Tutoring Centers, and Blackboard). Some categories of users will have more information (such as the one for Faculty), some will have less (Affiliate Patron Groups).

West Texas Collection Activities

The staff of the West Texas Collection also spent a very busy year hosting or co-hosting a variety of events. Below is a partial list of these events.

- Display on Early Day San Angelo
- Display on World War I
- Veterans Vigil
- Veterans Day PowerPoint and display
- SAMFA Hispanic Heritage
- Homecoming display for Golden Exes
- Held two book signings: Virginia Noelke's Early San Angelo and Jane Wilson's Texon

Currently there is a display available for viewing concerning the history of the "Sanatorium" in Carlsbad. They will also be helping with Veterans Vigil again this year and are planning a display for the spring concerning the Vietnam War.

The new "West Texas Photo Gallery" is now available with over 2,000 photographs. This digital collection was made possible by a Train to Share Grant from the Texas State Library and Archives Commission (TSLAC). The Gallery can be accessed from the West Texas Collection home page using a link on the graphic above. The link opens a search box (below).

Recent Promotions and Appointments in the Library

- Mark Allan has been promoted to Assistant Director for Research and Instruction Services.
- Angela Skaggs has been promoted to Assistant Director for Access Services.
- Shannon Sturm has been promoted to University Archivist and Assistant Head of Special Collections and Programs.
- Autumn Barnes has been appointed Library Assistant-Media and started July 16th
- Dayna Dugger has been appointed Library Assistant-Acquisitions and started October 1st

Conclusion

Obviously my staff has been very busy in FY 12 and it appears there will be little to no let up for FY 13. From September 9th to December 13th the Library is open continuously from 1 pm on Sundays to 9 pm on Fridays and from 9 am to 6 pm on Saturdays. That is accomplished with one of the smallest staff ratios to full-time students and faculty in the State of Texas. The physical changes in the Library and the partial list of new services and resources listed above are the Library's attempt to meet and exceed the expectations of the ASU community's desire for high quality library resources and services. I feel every Library staff member is committed to helping the University achieve its goals in improving recruitment and retention of students and in helping our academic programs achieve recognition at the regional and national levels.

I do want to hear from anyone on how the Library can provide the resources and services that meet the needs of the ASU community. In the spring, I hope the Library will be able to run another user satisfaction survey with students. In the meantime, please feel free to call, send emails, or stop by for a cup of coffee, and we can discuss improvements needed in the Library.