

# FOCUS

THE FRIENDS OF THE GOUCHER COLLEGE LIBRARY NEWSLETTER

## Late-Night Library

*Extended hours generate a variety of feedback*

by Jennifer Spieler Curry

Last semester, the Julia Rogers Library initiated an extended-hours schedule, staying open for students until 4 a.m. on weekdays and 24 hours a day during finals. This change, years in the making, became even more desired after the Center for Teaching, Learning, and Technology moved into the library a few years ago. According to Access Services Librarian Susan Ezell, students have always been asking for longer library service hours. Nowhere was this request more apparent than the 2005 LibQual+ survey, where “increasing hours” ranked as one of the top comments.

A library and CTLT task force, chaired by Ezell and CTLT director Fran White, was formed to see what it would take to expand hours before the move to the Athenaeum. The committee focused on coordinating services and equipment to streamline access. The student work force of each department was combined, creating a staff of more than 60 students. Librarians provide research service until 10 p.m. on weekdays and on weekends. Late-night hours are staffed by a Public Safety officer.

Resources for the added hours were made possible by consolidating computers and staffing from the 24/7 computer lab in Thormann Center. There are now 72 computers installed throughout the library. Ten were used to create the Digital Arts Classroom located in the old bindery on the second floor, which provides a unique opportunity for faculty and students



Students take advantage of the library's new late schedule

interested in multimedia projects such as creating movie videos or podcasts. While many students miss the convenient location of Thormann, building attendance is much higher than that recorded in previous semesters for both places combined.

A student survey of library and information technology services was conducted in December 2006. The new late hours were so favorably received by students that they will be increased to around the clock in the coming semester. Faculty members have also appreciated this change. Professor Lesley Brown and others in the Chemistry Department utilized the space for study nights, and found that “the students liked the fact that they did not have to rush even after the official event ended,” and “the time frame was good for all faculty involved—it worked out such that a faculty member was present during each hour of the study night.”

Students who work the late shifts in the library find that it

gives them extra time in their schedule. Senior Adam Nicolai, who had a midnight to 4 a.m. shift every Thursday, commented that “in the beginning of the semester, it was a good chance to finish my homework,” while junior Kellie Mecleary said “working those hours also made me feel very much like a college student; there’s something kind of neat about being at the library during ridiculous hours.” Both Nicolai and Mecleary have seriously considered signing up for additional late shifts this coming semester, in order to open up more time for themselves during the day.

Among the many positive comments concerning the library hours in the student survey, one student commented that “it gives me a place to study when my roommate is sleeping. I also like the atmosphere of the different rooms.” Another student stated that there are “lots of out-of-the-way places to hide and work at late hours.”

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## FOL

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## Not Your Parents' Reference Desk

*The changing nature of library reference questions*

by James Huff, instruction librarian

In a well-known cartoon, Dilbert is talking by telephone to a reference librarian. When he asks her for the average running speed of the Tasmanian Boola-Boola dog, she immediately responds "8.3 miles per hour." Dilbert stares at the phone and says, "I can't believe she knew that," as the voice on the other end continues, "and you have something stuck in your teeth."

Librarians have traditionally been seen as wizards of facts, able to conjure esoteric bits of information at a moment's notice, but this view is rapidly changing. Online sources make it easy for students to find their own factoids. The individual who needs to know the organization of Brazil's government, the political background of the United States secretary of state, or the speed of the Boola-Boola dog can easily find out without consulting a librarian.

This situation has led some naive observers to suggest that librarians are becoming obsolete. These individuals obviously have no experience with an environment such as the Julia Rogers Library, where bright students attempt to meet the requirements of demanding professors in an increasingly complex universe of information. While the number of traditional reference questions is down, the help that students need has become more complex. Some of the more challenging topics that have come my way recently include comparing George W. Bush's attempt to transfer the security of Iraq to Iraqi forces to Richard Nixon's program of "Vietnamization," and the history of the concept of

Congressional oversight of the executive branch, especially as related to expanding unilateral executive power under the current administration.

In the old days, students used the library's catalog and paper indexes to find books and articles housed within the library building. They might also occasionally visit other Baltimore-area libraries. This meant that the information available to the student was like the resources of a small but lush tropical island: rich, complex, but very circumscribed. The librarian was like a naturalist standing beside the student, helping her understand the flora and fauna of this limited ecosystem.

The student using our library today still has access to the library's collections but may also use (as of this writing) some 199 databases, each with its own particular set of collections and techniques for use. These resources collectively contain millions of articles and thousands of books, plus photographs, artwork, government reports, and much more, which are interrelated in complex ways. This is in addition to all the resources of the public part of the Internet.

Today, the student is no longer limited to that one island of knowledge. All of the islands, continents, and oceans of the world are open. To help make sense of all this, the librarian must be not only a naturalist, but a geographer, navigator, anthropologist, zoologist, meteorologist, and guide. This involves the student and the librarian in a partnership far more complex and nuanced than that of questioner and expert.

## Creative Corner

*Nancy Patz generously donates to Special Collections*

by Jennifer Spieler Curry



Nancy Patz at a recent book signing at The Children's Bookstore

One of the latest exciting donations to the Julia Rogers Library comes from award-winning children's author and illustrator Nancy Patz '52, who has made a commitment to the college to donate her artwork, correspondence, and other publication materials to Goucher's Special Collections. The materials will come to the library when appropriate space in the Athenaeum is complete. Patz has also chosen to endow the library with the Nancy Patz Corner, which will fund annual programming meant to utilize and highlight the collection's materials.

According to an article in the Fall 2006 *Goucher Quarterly*, Special Collections Librarian and College Archivist Gail McCormick says that the most interesting aspect to Patz's gift "is its interdisciplinary nature, showing all aspects of the creative process from the artist's perspective." Project Archivist Tara Leigh Tappert, PhD, who has worked as an art consultant

for such organizations as the Rising Phoenix Retreat Center, the Glen Burnie Museum Gardens and Collections, and Hueschen Arts Collection, has been hired to help incorporate these new materials.

Although Patz attended Goucher for only two years (before moving to Stanford when her husband was accepted there for graduate work), she has always felt close to the college because of her family connection to it. Her mother was Fanny Jonas Patz, class of 1927.

Patz published her first children's book, *Pumpernickel Tickle and Mean Green Cheese*, in 1978, and she has received many honors, including the Sydney Taylor Award from the Association of Jewish Libraries. When speaking to the *Quarterly* about donating her materials to Goucher, Patz said, "I like knowing that they'll be enjoyed by future generations."

### Announcement: Please Mark Your Calendars

#### Friends of the Library Spring Event and Annual Meeting

Wednesday, April 18, 2007

Meeting and Reception

The Soper Room in the Julia Rogers Library, 6 p.m.

Guest Lecturer: Author Laura Lippman, 7 p.m.

Haebler Memorial Chapel, Goucher College

## From the College Librarian

by Nancy Magnuson

You'll note a theme to this column, in which the library moves beyond the Goucher boundaries—locally, nationally, and internationally!

Leslie Burger's November presentation to the Friends was a wonderful evening. As president of the American Library Association, Burger attracted an audience that included many members of the local library community. Librarians and library supporters from Baltimore and surrounding counties were in attendance, representing public, academic, and school libraries. Her talk was an insightful and inspirational look at the changing role of libraries and the values we represent. Audience members

contributed over 150 books for the Baltimore Reads Book Bank, benefitting disadvantaged families in Baltimore.

A larger library audience will be exposed to Goucher when the national meeting of the Association of College and Research Libraries occurs in Baltimore. President Sandy Ungar will deliver an invited paper "Education Without Boundaries: The Goucher Experiment." In addition, Instruction Librarian Jim Huff will offer a contributed paper "Information Visualization as a Tool for Teaching Research Skills," and a poster session "Beyond Students and Faculty: Providing Research Instruction for Academic Staff." Pamela

Higgins of the Eisenhower Library at Johns Hopkins and I will present a poster session "Jane Austen to Norman Mailer, Hon: Baltimore's John Cotton Dana Award Winning Libraries Share Their Strategies."

In July we will move even farther away, to England, for "Private Collections and Their Role in Libraries," a conference to be held at Chawton House Library, an independent research library and study center that focuses on women's writing in English from 1600 to 1830. We're very excited about this partnership with Chawton and the University of Southampton. We will send you more information about the conference as the details are confirmed.

Back at home, we'll continue to evaluate the response to the expanded hours. An increasing number of college libraries, including Gettysburg, Whitman and Elon, are providing around-the-clock service, and students are coming to expect it (as you'll have gleaned from my previous column and the article in this issue!). We'll also be busy with a variety of projects related to the move to the Athenaeum. Thanks to the Friends, students are enjoying a new soft-seating area near the current periodicals. And once again, with your generous support, we'll be selecting the student winners of the Julia Rogers Research Prizes.

## Global Videos To Go

*Library plans to expand foreign film acquisitions*

By Barbara Snead, collection management librarian

Videos are very popular in the Julia Rogers Library. How hot are they? All of the items that have been checked out over 40 times are videos. This is probably not surprising, given the prominence of the movie industry in our culture and the ubiquity of YouTube and other Internet video sites. What is somewhat surprising, though, is the variety of films in high demand, used by students for both entertainment and class assignments. The most frequently borrowed titles include dance documentaries like *Trailblazers of Modern Dance*, political films like *Eyes On The Prize*, and literary classics like William Shakespeare's *Romeo & Juliet*.

Meeting the growing demand for videos is challenging on a tight budget already stretched to buy books, journals, and electronic resources. Adding to the equation is the need to replace worn-out films in obsolescing formats.

As a way to bolster Goucher's commitment to global education, the library applied for an Innovation Grant "to expand the offerings of award-winning videos from countries outside the United States." Our proposal addressed the vision of the college's Strategic Plan that "*every academic inquiry and intellectual endeavor must have a global context.*" We focused initially on feature films, an underrepresented category in the collection. For example, of 58 foreign-film Oscar winners, the library lacked 31. The proliferation of study-abroad programs has spurred interest in videos in a wider variety of "target" languages—both for recreational and instructional viewing.

The Innovation Grant Committee approved our proposal and awarded the library \$1,000. We initially bought 25 Oscar-winning films. Armed with well-informed suggestions from several enthusiastic faculty members,

**"Global Videos" continues on p. 4**

## New Membership

Yes, I wish to join the Friends of the Goucher College Library. My contribution is enclosed.

Please make your check payable to Friends of the Goucher College Library. Mail this form and your check to Friends of the Goucher College Library, Julia Rogers Library, Goucher College, 1021 Dulaney Valley Road, Baltimore, MD 21204.

- Benefactor (\$500 or more)
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# Emergency Preparedness at the Library

*Task force focuses on crisis situations*

by Randy Smith, research services librarian



**Committee member Cindy Ogden holds 50 space blankets for emergency use.**

An emergency-planning task force has been created to bolster the library's ability to deal with both emergency evacuations of the building and circumstances requiring building occupants to stay inside for an extended period of time. The five-member group is co-chaired by Pamela Flowers and myself.

Now that the library is to be open around the clock, the possibility of an after-dark power outage

with people in the building has become a far more likely scenario. Among the supplies being purchased to help in this event are extra flashlights (some not requiring batteries) and megaphones.

Since the library is located near a major highway, another crisis to consider is an accident on the Beltway, which could cause a toxic spill and resulting "vapor cloud." Such incidents could make venturing outside the library hazardous for hours, or even days. Several members of the task force have attended workshops on the topic, and the task force has begun to purchase supplies toward the goal of providing support for 50 people for 72 hours, including water, energy bars, space blankets, flashlights and paper products.

The committee has recognized that effective communication is crucial in dealing with potential or imminent emergency situations. A manual, explaining procedures for various emergency situations, is in the works. The committee will be conducting both information sessions and staff training workshops, as well as forging coordination agreements with Goucher's Office of Public Safety.

Committee members Donna Lummis, Tom Minnema, and Cindy Ogden have tackled many logistical issues and will continue to peer into the future to determine what will be needed and ensure that nothing essential has been missed—daunting but extremely gratifying work.

**"Global Videos" continued from p. 3**

we will have no trouble spending the remaining one-third of the allotment.

Looking to the future, the library hopes to build upon this project's success to acquire additional highly recommended films. While the library will never match the stock of a video rental store (nor does it aspire to), it does aim to provide a broad selection of the world's best films. For now, we face the need of replacing thousands of aging videocassettes, as well as making decisions on adopting new formats, such as high-definition DVD and downloadable movies. The Innovation Grant is a welcome catalyst for future projects.

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