Political Collectibles

As we approach one of the most exciting presidential races in our history, the Library has a special exhibit of campaign and historic political memorabilia collected by Enoch Nappen of the Political Science department. Dr. Nappen recently published a book on the topic, *Political Collectibles*, which includes photographs of thousands of artifacts that he has found over the years at flea markets and collector events. The book takes a unique look at political items that go far beyond campaign buttons. Nappen’s collection represents the wide assortment of everyday items that have been used to promote candidates and election winners.

The exhibit in the entrance of the library is a colorful representation of badges, medals, photographs, buttons, posters, toys, kitchen items, hats, and office supplies with images of candidates and communicate slogans that were used during their campaigns. Items used by Eisenhower, Goldwater, Nixon, Carter, Reagan, and Kennedy are displayed.

The exhibit will remain in the Library until Thanksgiving, so please stop by to see this wonderful collection of political history. Copies of his book are also in our collection.
Fostering Information Literacy at MU — MaryBeth Meszaros

Having first encountered the information literacy movement as an instructor of freshman composition, I am very enthusiastic about the opportunity of promoting information literacy across the curriculum at Monmouth University.

For me, the best way to launch the information literacy initiative is through faculty outreach. I see faculty as our primary clients. It is they who shape curriculum. And it is faculty assignments that largely drive use of the library by undergraduates. However, even as we reach out to faculty, we need to be sensitive to subject-specific disciplinary agendas and to the fact that faculty are disciplinary creatures. An information-literacy initiative cannot succeed if it is solely library-driven. Definitions and standards of information literacy are not identical across the curriculum. We can best succeed if we are sensitive to those differences.

Another way to promote this initiative is to restore the all-but-lost connection between reading/writing and research. (Many colleges and universities are beginning to do so by moving the campus writing center into the library or by allowing a librarian to serve students within the campus writing center setting as a combined research mentor and writing tutor.) I’d like to see every instructional librarian trained and able to respond to student writing at any stage of the paper preparation process. After all, if students cannot read well, they cannot assess what they access; if they cannot write well, they cannot share the fruits of their research.

A New Interactive Learning Experience on Plagiarism — George Germek

Since its first entry in The Oxford English Dictionary in 1621, plagiarism has plagued all aspects of the written form. But today, its occurrences seem much greater. A simple Google search takes mere milliseconds to return hundreds of online news stories about plagiarism. Turn the clock back just a few years ago and we may believe that acts of plagiarism did not reach such geometric proportions. Once, the plagiarist label was tattooed only to the foreheads of a small group of demonized undergraduates. Now, modern plagiarists have somehow graduated college and mainstreamed themselves in big business, in medicine, in doctoral study, in authorship, and even in university-level posts.

In an effort to stem the high tides of plagiarism and preserve academic integrity, many college and universities are asking their libraries to get involved. To meet that challenge, the Monmouth University Library has developed a new tutorial for its students. This online interactive learning experience, titled “Understanding and Preventing Plagiarism: An Interactive Guide,” will help you identify plagiarism, recognize its causes, and learn ways to avoid it. Designed with easy-to-use mouse rollovers, this module takes only minutes to complete, but will leave you with many valuable tips that you can use throughout your academic career. Visit library.monmouth.edu and click on the “Understanding and Preventing Plagiarism: An Interactive Guide” link and give it a try.

Amazing Library Race Draws Students to the Library’s Open House

Walking around the Library with passports in hand, students participating in the Amazing Library Race visited six destinations in the Library. The stations addressed some of the hurdles we’ve discovered our students have in using the library – finding a book in the stacks, locating print periodicals, and getting assistance for computer problems. Other students participated in a 30 minute Research Basics workshop or took a study break and enjoyed free pizza and cookies at the September 24, 2008 Open House. Dean Sharma plans to have an annual Open House to bring in students to meet library staff and get comfortable with the Library as a destination for study, as well as a meeting place.
Library Survey cont’d.

Clearly, patrons want easy access to electronic resources, particularly journals. Their approach to using resources is also very independent in nature. On the other hand, the area where the Library received the highest ratings was in providing user support, including individual attention and willingness to help users. The area where the most significant improvement was made was in the Library as a comfortable and inviting location. This had the second to the lowest ratings of all questions in 2005 (aggregate perceived mean of 5.70), but is now one of the top categories with an perceived mean of 7.70.

What do we do best? The areas where the perceived levels of service provided by the library were the highest included:

- Giving users individual attention
- Employees who deal with users in a caring fashion
- Employees who understand the needs of their users
- Willingness to help users
- A comfortable and inviting location.

The LibQUAL survey allowed participants to give comments. This is a very significant tool in providing feedback that is specific to Monmouth University. Comments on the quality of service provided by Library staff were overwhelmingly positive, praising staff for excellent assistance in helping with research and interlibrary loans, as well as guiding patrons to improve their research results. In terms of improvements, additional hours and more instruction for graduate students were requested.

Comments on the Library facility were also extremely positive. The renovations have clearly made a difference in how patrons can use the library. Furthermore, features such as the café, group study rooms and commuter/faculty parking were hits with patrons. Parking still seems to be an issue and another problem is finding quiet areas for individual study. In terms of the Library’s collection of resources, some improvements were noted since the earlier survey. However, the majority of the comments were to increase funding and add more current resources, both print and electronic. Again, students were generally satisfied with the resources, while faculty would like more resources for their research.

Additional details on survey results are available on the library website: http://library.monmouth.edu/about/about.php

Library Circulation News — Allison Shields

Monmouth University Library is pleased to announce that we are now participating in the following VALE pilot program: VALE Undergraduate Reciprocal Borrowing Pilot Project. All MU undergraduates may complete a form located at the Circulation Desk to be eligible for borrowing privileges at any of the participating libraries.

These libraries include: Brookdale Community College, Centenary College, Gloucester Community College, Kean University, Montclair State University, NJIT, Raritan Valley Community College, Richard Stockton College of NJ, Rider University, Rowan University, Rutgers University, Seton Hall University, Somerset Christian College, TCNJ and William Patterson College.

Currently Monmouth University Library also participates in the same reciprocal borrowing program for all MU faculty, staff and graduate students.

For more complete details on all the reciprocal borrowing programs, visit http://www.valenj.org/newvale/recbor/.

Monmouth University Library welcomes all Bio-Technology High School students and faculty for the second year. All Biotechnology students and faculty are entitled full borrowing and printing privileges.

There are now two Information Desks staffed by student workers to assist patrons in locating materials and in answering general information questions. The Information Desks can be found on the Lower Level and on the 2nd Floor.

Beginning Monday, December 1, 2008 – Sunday, December 14, 2008, the library will once again extend its closing hours for Final Exams! Check the library website for more details!
Meet

MaryBeth Meszaros (she usually goes by “Beth”) is the newest addition to our staff. Beth defines herself as a career-changer. After earning her doctorate in English at University of Pennsylvania, she taught college-level English--first-year writing and various literature courses. Her specialization in literature is Modern Drama and Gothic literature. She is a published scholar in both fields. Beth retains her passion for literature and theater even as she transitions into academic librarianship. Beth enjoys librarianship because, as a teaching librarian, she gets to plan instruction and still has the opportunity to interact with students both in the classroom and in the Information Commons setting. Beth sees herself as “bi-lingual” or a “hybrid” in the sense that she keenly understands the perspective of both instructional faculty and academic librarians. This dual perspective is so pronounced that she sees faculty-librarian relationships as a fruitful area to explore as a scholar.

Russ Carstens recently joined the Circulation Department. Russ is a recent MU graduate who works weekends at the Circulation Desk. Delaine Sarraf will also be joining the Circulation Department as the Reserve Specialist.

Librarian and Staff Happenings


R.N Sharma’s name has been included in the 2009 edition of Who’s Who in America.

R.N. Sharma has been appointed chair of the International Relations Committee of the Association of College and Research Libraries / American Library Association for the year 2008–2009. He has also been appointed chair of the Nominations Committee of the Asian, African and the Middle Eastern Section of the Association of College and Research Libraries / American Library Association for 2008–2009.

Lisa Coats, Instructor, became the NJLA Reference Section’s President July 1st for 2008-2009.

Eleonora Dubicki, Assistant Librarian, attended ALA 2008 and received a $5000 Emerald Research Grant Award administered by the Business Reference and Services Section (BRASS), a section of the Reference and Users Services Association (RUSA). Her grant project will focus on the Research Behavior Patterns of Business Students.

Eleonora will serve as the 2008-2009 chair of the User Education Committee of the College and University Section of NJLA.

Beatrice Priestly, Adjunct Librarian, had an article titled “An argument on why the City should contribute to the Library budget in a means similar to corporate funding of R&D” published in Library Administration & Management Quarterly v22 n3 2008. An abbreviated version of an article in the form of an essay was published August 2008. “The Seasoned Librarian,” by Beatrice Priestly was published in The NJLA Reference Section Quarterly Newsletter v4 n3 August 2008.

Beatrice completed her coursework for a Masters in Business Administration at Monmouth University in August 2008. Congratulations!