



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA  
**LIBRARIES**

THE MAGAZINE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA LIBRARIES

# continuum

**INSIDE:**

**AN HOURLY  
WINDOW INTO  
THE UNIVERSITY  
OF MINNESOTA  
LIBRARIES**

**A DAY IN THE LIFE  
OF THE LIBRARIES**

**ISSUE 5**

WINTER 2007

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*continuum* supports the mission of the University Libraries and our community of students, faculty, staff, alumni, and friends by providing information that:

- › highlights news, events, developments, and trends within the Libraries
- › examines issues facing libraries globally
- › provides a forum for dialogue
- › connects the many constituencies of the Libraries

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## TIME AND AGAIN

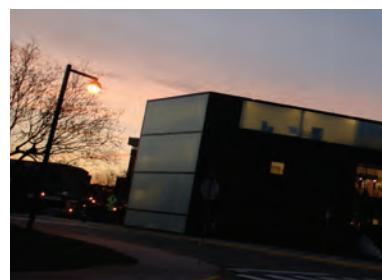
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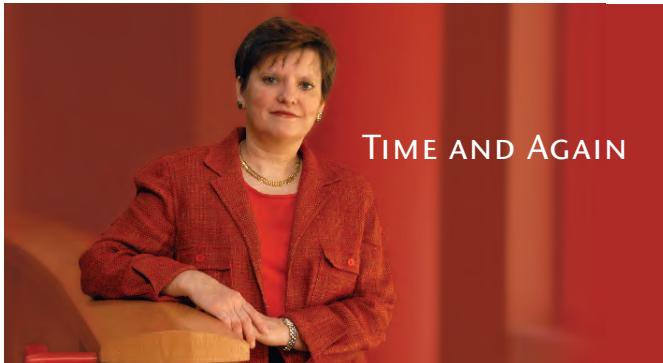


ABOVE & COVER: a sunrise over the Architecture and Landscape Architecture Library in Rapson Hall on the East Bank campus, Minneapolis.

For more information about the University of Minnesota Libraries visit [www.lib.umn.edu](http://www.lib.umn.edu)

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## TIME AND AGAIN

This issue of *continuum* explores the impact of our Libraries through a round-the-clock look at library experiences. We've structured these stories by time, an hourly window into the life of the University of Minnesota Libraries. The concept of time permeates libraries. Following the example of this issue's short vignettes, let me offer a few elaborations on the theme.

### **Timeless Collections**

Our collection resources capture the cultural and scholarly record for today's and tomorrow's users. In fact, we selected *continuum* as the title of this magazine since it captures the enduring role our library organization plays, providing continuity of knowledge resources over time.

### **Timely Access**

Libraries also play a vital role in connecting an individual with an information need to useful knowledge resources. Card catalogs have given way to electronic systems and, of course, the likes of Google, Amazon, and other online services. But the role of the library in facilitating access has never been stronger. The library has become the go-to place for access to reliable, authoritative, scholarly resources—everything from a librarian's expertise in ferreting out a hidden fact to digital publications that enable a search of every word on every page.

### **The Times, Time...**

Of course, these news sources are in our collections, as are hundreds of other newspapers from the *Washington Post* to *Pravda* to *El Eco de Madrid*. A growing number of news media are also available online, allowing real-time access to news from cities around the U.S. and around the globe. The Libraries also created and now manage the University's blog service, *UThink*, thus far enabling over 8,000 authors to post commentary of their own.

### **Working Against Time**

Libraries staff can recognize that look of panic in the eyes of a student or faculty member with a tight deadline. And a significant number of the thousands of reference questions that come to our online reference services include a pressing request for help. Need a statistic, a citation for a grant, or just the right documentation for a compelling argument? Our expert staff know how to navigate the labyrinth of print and digital resources to find the answer. We often hear expressions of appreciation from our users for assistance provided in the nick of time.

### **Saving Time**

Many of our scholars and researchers can recount the details of laborious methods for finding and documenting information. Typed bibliographies, 3"x5" cards, and piles of journal photocopies are the stuff of 20<sup>th</sup> century scholarship, and faculty offices across campus hold the output from decades of research. The Libraries have been at the forefront of implementing technologies that save time and enable new forms of scholarship. Nearly 15,000 individuals on campus use RefWorks, our personal citation management software. Starting this month, graduate students will be able to view a discipline-specific presentation of library resources and services via the University online portal. With advances in technology, we're now a major player in helping people use, store, manipulate, and share information more effectively.

### **Passing Time**

While the University Libraries play a fundamental role in supporting research and learning, they also are important places and sources for more leisurely pursuits. Our Walter Library coffee shop, the Wise Owl Café, provides a relaxing place for conversation and collaboration, and Wilson Library users will soon have a place of their own for rendezvous and refreshment. The coffee venues also provide a context for leisure reading collections. A notable recent gift will allow acquisition of timely and topical reading within the Wilson Library cafe.

### **The Ravages of Time**

One of our greatest challenges lies in preserving materials over time. If you have ever opened a book and watched the brittle pages crumble apart, you know firsthand the impact of time on the high-acid paper that was commonly used between the mid-19th and mid-20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Some estimates suggest over two million print volumes in our collections are in jeopardy of deterioration to the point of being unusable, a ticking time-bomb we must address.

### **The Times They Are A-Changin'**

Minnesota native Bob Dylan's classic rallied his generation at a time of significant upheaval. There are times, too, when the Libraries play a role in rallying our community around issues, most recently issues related to publishing and copyright. There's no question that technology has fueled significant change in policy and practice related to information access, and libraries have often been at the forefront of the dialogue. The Libraries' program of copyright education has grown in response to the complexities of the digital age, helping students and faculty make informed choices about the use of copyrighted works in a class, on a website, or in future publications.

This issue of *continuum* invites you to experience the Libraries' full range of resources, services, and identities. Have a wonderful time.

WENDY PRADT LOUGE  
UNIVERSITY LIBRARIAN and MCKNIGHT PRESIDENTIAL PROFESSOR

# A DAY IN THE LIFE OF THE LIBRARIES

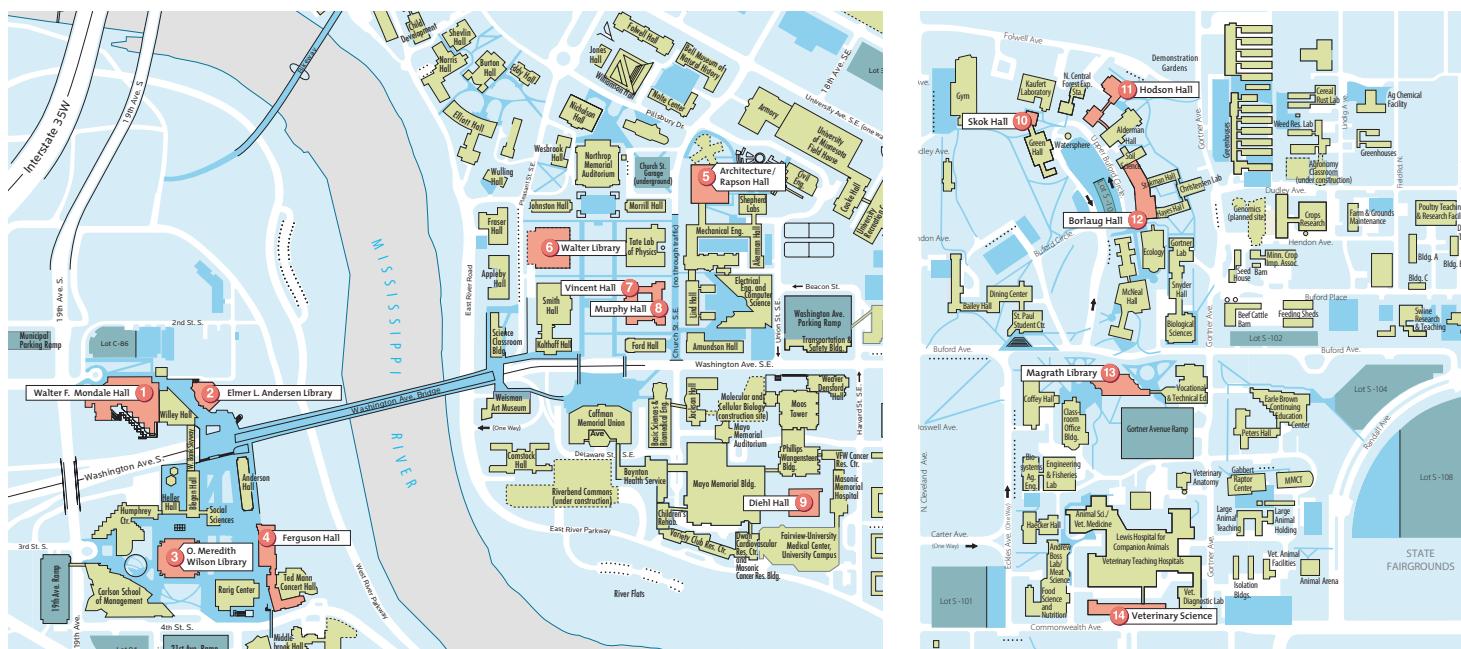


An architecture professor in Jerusalem. A geologist with a caffeine habit. A Minneapolis bartender, exhausted at the end of her late-night shift. A young, uniformed security guard with aspirations to become an engineer. An avocational embroiderer.

What do these seemingly disparate characters have in common? On a typical day, they all interact and engage with the University Libraries.

Libraries play many roles and fulfill diverse needs within a day. Long esteemed as a place of intellectual stimulation and scholarly study on campus, the academic library is also a meeting place, an online resource, a starting place for answers to questions ranging from the mundane to the extraordinary, a storehouse of rare and unique material, and a repository for the output of the institution's own faculty.

In this issue, *continuum* chronicles a typical day in the life of the Libraries. At each hour of the day, the Libraries fulfill real needs for real people. In the pages that follow, you'll meet those people—and see how the Libraries play multifaceted, often surprising, and decidedly central roles for users on campus and across the globe.



6  
am

## Kautz Family YMCA Archives, Andersen Library

Outside the window of the Kautz Family YMCA Archives, the landscape is dark, cold, and eerily silent. One researcher, however, has been hard at work for hours combing through the thousands of historical documents in the collection. Inbal Ben Asher Gitler doesn't mind the hours or the temperature in Minneapolis, since it's warm, sunny, and mid-afternoon where she works in her office in downtown Jerusalem.

When she was a student of architecture, Gitler focused her studies on the Jerusalem YMCA, due to its bold and highly symbolic design. The building is unique in that it was built to serve Christianity, Judaism and Islam, the three monotheistic religions of Jerusalem. "It was through my interest in that building that my Internet searches brought me to the U of M's website," she says. The Kautz Family YMCA Archives (part of the University of Minnesota Libraries) collect and hold the historical records of the YMCA of the USA, the Minneapolis and Greater New York YMCAs, and Y's Men International.

Traveling 6,000 miles to do research is impossible for most students, yet after working with the archive online, Gitler, who is now a professor at Sapir College in Israel, decided to make the trip to the University last year for more

in-depth study. Her research has been so well received that she has spoken at several conferences in the United States, Europe and her home country of Israel. Designed by architect Arthur Loomis Harmon, the Jerusalem Y is as famous in Jerusalem as is his better-known Empire State Building in New York. Interestingly enough, both buildings were designed and built during the same timeframe —the early 1930s. —B.L.

7  
am

## Wise Owl Café, Walter Library

It's a dark and stormy morning, and the sleepy souls who enter the brightly lit Wise Owl Café in the basement of Walter Library are rain-soaked and squeaky-shoed. But the terrible weather seems to have kept no one away. Says Kim, the petite blond barista who opens the café each morning at 7 (and whose wire-rimmed glasses lend her a look appropriate to the café's name), there's often a patron waiting at the door when she arrives to open shop. By 7:05, she's got customers. "Good morning, how can I help you?" she greets one of them. The customer's face is partially obscured by the hood of his maroon sweatshirt, and the espresso machine's whir drowns out his response, but Kim's a pro. "Whipped cream with that?" she asks. Moments later, he's slurping a caramel apple latte. By 9 a.m., patrons are spilling out of the café, beyond the café's welcome sign (featuring a very alert-looking owl), and into the library circulation desk area nearby. The café's wooden tables are crowded with people in headscarves, tweed jackets, sweatpants, and horn-rimmed glasses. At 9:30, people start ordering turkey sandwiches.

The Wise Owl Café opened in the basement of Walter Library in 2005, and the response has been ..... .



LEFT: The Jerusalem YMCA. Image courtesy of the Kautz Family YMCA Archives, University of Minnesota Libraries

enthusiastic. Caffeine is, of course, an academy-sanctioned habit, and for many students and faculty on the East Bank, the café is the nearest place on campus to indulge it—or, for that matter, to grab a sesame bagel. The Wise Owl is a respite, a hideout, a meeting place, and a quick fix. And all day, every day, a steady stream of students trickles from the café, like the rich stream from a well-tuned espresso machine, to parts all over campus. —J.N.

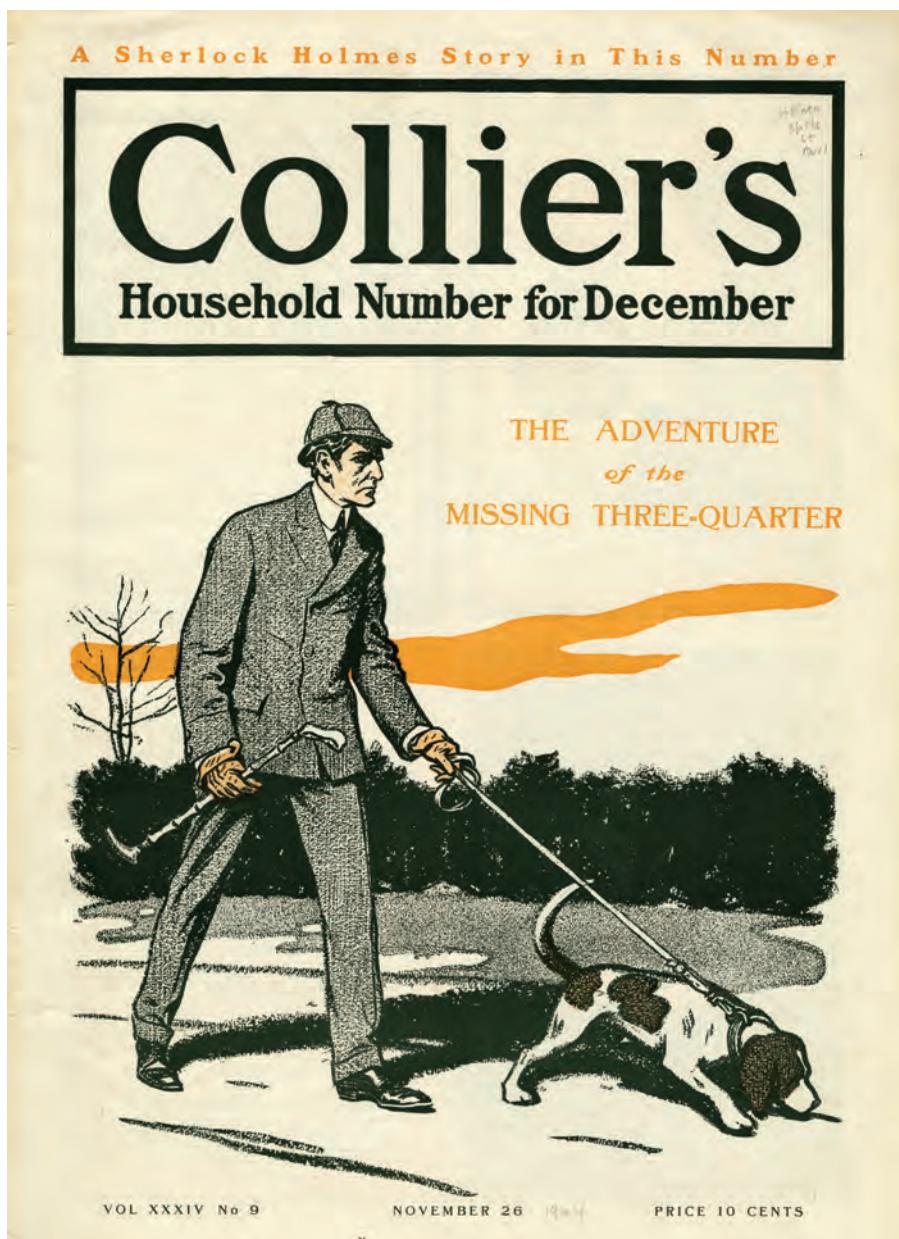
## Digital Collections Unit, Andersen Library

The yawn, the stretch, the sideways glance at the wall clock – all sure signs of the need for a coffee break. Yet dark roasts, iced frappacinos, and vending machine decafs are noticeably absent from the office of Jason Roy, head of the Digital Collections Unit in Elmer L. Andersen Library. Surrounded by hundreds of dangerously delicate illustrations, tattered tabloids, and maps of bygone eras, Roy is shepherding a diverse group of preservation projects that range in content from the commonplace to the sublime.

"Take this artwork by Frederic Dorr Steele," explains Roy, pointing toward his high-tech scanner and indicating a 100-year-old illustration of Sherlock Holmes. "This might not be the most scholarly of works, but it has amazing appeal throughout the world." The University Libraries hold the world's largest collection of Sherlock Holmes memorabilia, but only a small portion of the collection has been digitized.

Indeed, the legacy of the literary detective in the deerstalker hat may owe as much to Steele's drawings as it does to the famous writings of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. "Meanwhile," Roy continues, "we're working on scanning 20 years' worth of mimeographed U of M Board of Regents minutes. They may not have the same cache as the draw-

**RIGHT:** A 1904 cover of *Collier's* magazine. Image courtesy of the Sherlock Holmes Collection, University of Minnesota Libraries



ings, but the historical importance to the school is extremely high."

Roy went on to say that other works being digitized include some items never before available to the public, including large-scale maps of Minnesota from the 1800s, rare World War I photos, and newspapers produced inside a Japanese internment camp dur-

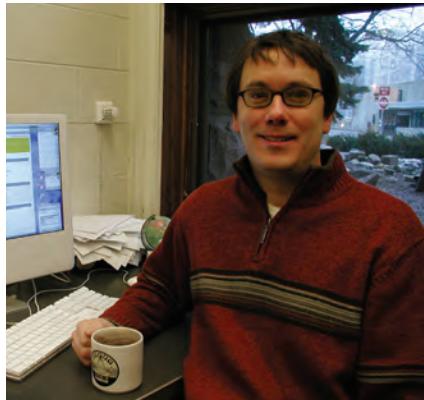
ing World War II. "By digitizing and sharing these works online," he says, "we not only are preserving them for future generations, but what was available to perhaps a dozen researchers will soon be available to everyone on Earth. That's pretty amazing."

—B.L.

**9**  
am

## Pillsbury Hall

By 9 a.m., geology and geophysics assistant professor David Fox is well into a morning routine that centers around three cups of coffee from a Zippy the Pinhead mug he's used since his first week of grad school. He sits at his computer scanning the new issues of some of the journals he pays most attention to, a variety of biology- and chemistry-oriented geoscience publications (and of course, *Science* and *Nature*) whose contents are delivered to his inbox. He figures he clicks on only a couple articles per issue to save full text versions, but he reads all of the titles and many of the abstracts. It's an armchair way of staying current in his own field and those of his colleagues, and he encourages his graduate and undergraduate advisees to follow his example. "In grad school, I used to go look through the recent issues stacks for science journals every couple months, but you can do that online so easily



now. By reading broadly, you will find unexpected connections between parts of the discipline and see what is bubbling up in different areas." Fox still visits Walter, Wilson, and oth-

er libraries to pick up books and some older papers, but he credits the Libraries' continuing acquisition of online back issues of scholarly journals with making it "even easier to stay out of the library." And as he polishes off cup number two, he jumps, remembering that he needs to use another one of the Libraries' online services: Web-based renewal of a bunch of books that are due today.

—A.M.

## Veterinary Medical Library

**10**  
am

By student standards, it could still be considered early. The students, all in their first year at the College of Veterinary Medicine (Vet Med), are finishing their morning routines – drinking coffee, perusing *The Minnesota Daily*, pondering Sudoku puzzles, and confirming the day's course schedule. Then Andre Nault, head of the Veterinary Medical Library, takes the floor. This is the last of three class sessions he'll have with the Year One students. Nault explains that the strong honor code in Vet Med and the expectations of attending classes and other sessions such as his promise a full house. Outside these sessions, he knows he won't see them much if at all this first year, but he is not discouraged. As their studies continue, particularly when they get to their clinics in Year Four, they will become intimately familiar with his library and its rich resources. Nault believes the foundation for scholarly research—one that will ultimately take hold—will be an indispensable tool as these Year One students become tomorrow's animal health professionals. As *The Dailys* and course schedules are put away, he opens by reminding the students of their earlier sessions on searching the University Libraries' cata-

log. Today's session will be on indexes and peer-reviewed journals. As Nault cautions, "Not all journals are created equal," and if you want to know if Brad and Angelina are still together, use Google. But if you need to research feline leukemia, PubMed, a federal government health literature index with over 14 million citations, is what you need. And so the lesson begins. —E.G.



12  
noon

Elmer L. Andersen  
Library

A little before noon the audience begins to arrive at Elmer L. Andersen Library for First Fridays, a series of presentations of materials from the University Libraries' special collections and archives. The topic for this week is The Art of Design, and the people assembled for this week's presentation are oddly assorted—there are some snazzy looking folks from the newly formed College of Design, graduate students (who reveal themselves by their wan countenances and bulging book bags), and a large number of retirees. One couple reviews the brochure of upcoming presentations, enthusiastically anticipating next month's topic: Animals in the Archives.

Today, however, The Art of Design turns out to refer to fashion in the archives. Several men slump in their chairs as the director of the Goldstein Museum of Design describes the revolution in post-WWII American fashions, accompanied by PowerPoint images of 40s, 50s and 60s fashions. One taste-conscious gentleman leans forward and murmurs, "I like that one" at the sight of a sari-inspired Bill Blass number appropriate for hosting a 1970s fondue party. The second presenter shows slides of exquisitely illustrated, almost illuminated fashion plates and magazines from the 18<sup>th</sup>,

11  
am

## Entomology, Fisheries and Wildlife Library

The Entomology, Fisheries, and Wildlife Library on the St. Paul campus feels like a cozy neighborhood branch of the public library. New books beckon from display stands, armchairs and coffee tables take the place of some carrels, and color posters of snakes and bugs brighten up

the place. But beneath this friendly exterior lies a serious research library with an exceptional rare books collection, with some volumes dating to the early 17<sup>th</sup> century. A steady stream of late-morning users keeps undergraduate employee Jenna Maland hopping. Between helping patrons look up publications ("this one is in the state documents section, that one in reference books, these other three over at Magrath Library") and troubleshooting photocopy cards gone bad, she strides around the sunny room re-shelving books and periodicals. A woman who's made a quick foray into the stacks steps up to the circulation desk and laughs, "I've had this book out so much I don't even need to look it up in the catalog." This collection fills a niche between pure and applied science, along the human interface with the environment. It houses books and journals on pollution, conservation, and the use of land and animals, as well as research on ecosystems for their own sakes. —A.M.



ABOVE: A plate from Karl Jablonsky's *Natursystem aller bekannten*, 1783.

LEFT: A plate from Alexander Scott's *Australian Lepidoptera and their transformations*, 1864. Both volumes are part of the collection of the Entomology, Fisheries, and Wildlife Library.

19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century. In those days, she remarks, fashion illustrators had a distorted, idealized notion of female bodies and beauty. The more things change, the more they stay the same. As the lights go up and the audience starts stirring, the woman turns to her disenchanted companion and says, "We'll definitely come for the animal one." —L.V.

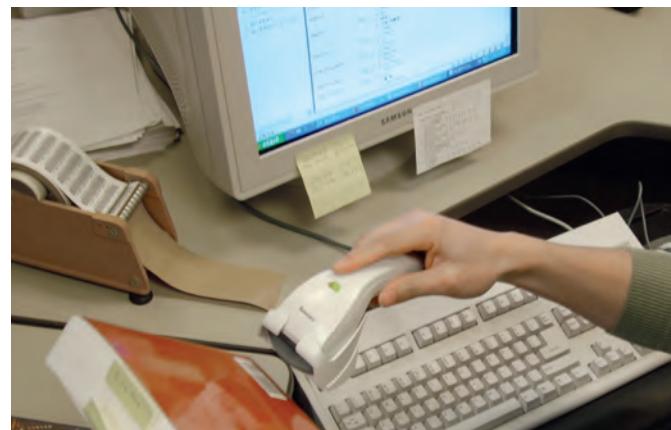


1  
pm

### *Technical Services offices, Wilson Library*

Tony Fang likes to think of himself as a detective. He's a resident librarian on a post-graduate school appointment at the University of Minnesota, and he's currently working in the offices of Wilson Library. And his inspiration for investigation? That's a result of Fang's present appointment as cataloger of new acquisitions to the library. This afternoon, Fang approaches a large, hardcover monograph (that's "book" in cataloging community parlance) entitled *Adaptive Cruise Control*. The investigation begins with the Library of Congress (LC) database, and when Fang discovers that there is no existing record of this book, it's up to him to create one. Here's where Fang's work gets creative. He holds the heavy volume, opens to the title page. He determines the physical dimensions of the book after noting the party responsible for the intellectual work: in this case, the editor. Now it's time for subject analysis, which requires a bit more detective work. Fang returns to the LC database and, drawing on his reconnaissance of the new book, determines the appropriate LC headings to ascribe

to it. "This is important because it puts library materials of all formats in order, and it facilitates patrons' access to and use of library collections," he explains, reflecting on the need for accuracy in selecting LC headings. All that's left now is to assign a call number. While this endeavor may not require Fang's more specialized sleuthing skills, such as using online translation materials to decode the synopses of books in a variety of languages, acquisitions of more mysterious provenance often find their way to his desk. Within the hour, *Adaptive Cruise Control* is in the system, and this new addition the library's collection is well on its way to the shelf. —T.C.



**Architecture  
and Landscape  
Architecture  
Library, Rapson Hall**

A Zen-like serenity pervades the Architecture and Landscape Architecture Library at mid-afternoon. Dried grasses sit languidly in tall vases; irregular pieces of grey slate on the floor soften the room's harsh corners; sea-green sunlight filters through the tinted channel-glass windows. Built as an addition to the decades-old Rapson Hall, home to the university's College of Design, the library—completed in 2002—features 24-foot ceilings and polished concrete floors that softly reflect the diffuse light coming from the towering windows. Three students are engaged in scholarly pursuits—reading, contemplating, taking notes. That's not unusual for a library, but these three seem to have internalized the tranquility of this decidedly unusual space. They sit in round, modern, stainless steel chairs designed by noted furniture artist Harry Bertoia. The chairs are part of a collection (including pieces by designers Charles Eames, Frank Gehry, and Mies Van Der Rohe) scattered throughout the library. "Architecture students need to experience sitting in architect-designed chairs," explains head librarian Joon Mornes, standing near a wall decorated with abstract contemporary art. "Most often people are ignorant about what is designed by architects. By placing the chairs as an example, and highlighting them, the students can experience and examine how it feels and learn the connection between the architect and the user." One of the stu-



dents rises and walks slowly toward a nearby shelf for a book. Her body's impression remains imprinted in the chair's upholstered cushion. When she returns and sits, flipping through the book's pages, it's difficult to tell where the chair ends and she begins, as if in this quiet space, collection, environment, and user are one.

—C.J.



## Owen H. Wangensteen Historical Library of Biology and Medicine, Diehl Hall

A dissected arm from the 19th century gestures away from the medical artifacts in the lobby area and toward the library's reading room and stacks, which house a collection of 60,000 rare journals, manuscripts, and materials from the 1400s to 1920. Among the velvet book cradles and wooden tables, Ph.D. candidate Jessica Jones is poring over yellowing sheets of close-written French script. Jones has come back to Wangensteen by way of London, where she went to trace the economic relationships between apothecaries and distillers. Only when she got to London did she find the subject thoroughly picked over and heavily researched by English scholars. Defeated, Jones returned to Minnesota and asked the director of the Wangensteen collection if there was anything around the place that needed doing. Was there ever. In the 1980s, the library acquired a sizable collection of papers from France. Naturally it was all in French, but there was no one to translate it until Jones came along. Jones found herself translating the records, illustrations, case studies, and theoretical musings of seven generations of the Pamard family, French ophthalmologists, starting from the late 1700s. The Pamards specialized in ophthalmology, but they were public health officials, town surgeons, civic leaders, public scholars, and correspondents to the Paris Academy of Medicine. "It's a goldmine," Jones confesses. The collected papers form an intellectual history, a social history (shifts in the hierarchy of physician versus surgeon as a result of Enlightenment thinking), and a glimpse into the day-to-day realities of community care (modern-sounding issues like tumor surgery and vaccination debates) over the course of nearly 100 years. —L.V.

**BELow:** Handwritten ophthalmological notes from the Pamard Collection (ca. 1773). Image courtesy of Wangensteen Historical Library of Biology and Medicine

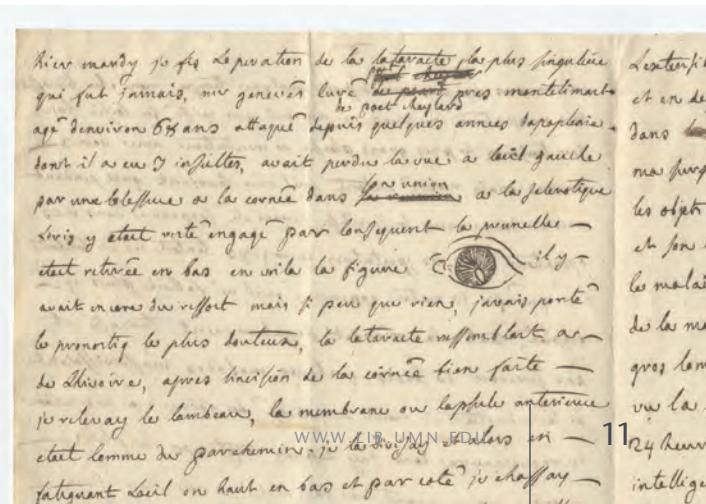


### Administrative Offices, Wilson Library

3  
pm

Robert McCollister, a retired associate dean of the University of Minnesota medical school, surprised Kathy McGill several months ago with a phone call. McCollister explained that he had a lifelong interest in reading outside of medicine and viewed Wilson Library as a treasure, having enjoyed many opportunities to use its collection of contemporary fiction and nonfiction. In return, he continued, he and his wife would like to make a donation to the library. McGill, the development director for the University Libraries, is the point person for library donors, and this afternoon, McCollister and McGill sit down to discuss potential forms his contribution might take.

They carefully weigh a few possibilities, from creating a fund to replace books that are in disrepair to setting up an endowment to support the acquisition of contemporary literature—for example, books included on the *New York Times'* 100 Notable Books of the Year. McCollister is particularly interested in this latter opportunity: endowing a collection of popular, literary books supports the University as a learning community and encourages reading for pleasure, the activity he so enjoyed as a library patron. Furthermore, it ensures that books of this genre will be added to the collection regardless of fluctuations in the Libraries' budget. As much of the Libraries' acquisition budget is spent on volumes that fall within the academic disciplines (and donors often earmark money for specific fields—archaeology, for example, or fine art), a fund dedicated to books of general interest is a unique contribution. And it comes at a particularly fitting time: a coffee shop will open in Wilson this year, and central to the space will be a large bookcase filled with contemporary fiction and non-fiction. When students, mid-sip, pull a volume from the shelf, they'll be sampling directly from the Robert and Virginia McCollister Contemporary Reading Collection. —J.N.



5  
pm

## **SMART Commons, Magrath Library**

Like the evening in winter, the second and third floors of Magrath Library are mostly dark by this hour, though the stacks glow warmly around those still searching the shelves this late in the afternoon. On the ground floor, however, there is no want of light and intellectual activity, as the familiar clicking of keyboards emanates from the public workstations, reference librarians direct researchers in hushed tones, and students study comfortably in the newly renovated SMART Learning commons, located just outside the entrance to the library. The Commons, which are also housed in Klaeber Court on the East Bank and

in Wilson Library on the West Bank, offer individual and group support from peer learning consultants who cover academic areas from mathematics to writing, from languages to library research skills. The Commons in Magrath Library also provides an extended study area with comfy chairs, sofas, and group study rooms. Shortly after 5:30 p.m., Gulseren Isik is snugly ensconced in a warmly lit corner of the Commons, behind a small sliding table upon which sit her laptop and a thick stack of paper. She gives the impression of a seasoned library user, her belongings spread out deliberately around her. Gulseren is a pre-doctoral sociology student, and although the collection for her discipline is kept on the West Bank cam-

pus, she lives in student housing near Magrath Library. So she has eagerly welcomed the new SMART Learning commons, which provides a supportive setting in which to write her pre-doctoral thesis. But Gulseren praises the new space for another reason in particular. She remembers sharing the Commons one late evening with a fellow graduate student whose small child was sleeping soundly across her lap. Reflecting on the young parent and child situated so peacefully in this welcoming environment, she says, "It would have made a great picture." As a mother and student herself, Gulseren considers fondly the opportunities the new Commons has provided her, and she quietly settles back into her work. —T.C.



6  
pm

## **East Asian Library, Wilson Library**

Two scholars are bent over a stack of pages covered with drawings and Chinese characters. They're whispering in Chinese and English, arguing about the meaning of a character until, laughing, one rises to fetch a Chinese dictionary. The scholars are Qin Fang, a University of Minnesota Ph.D. student in history who studies the way 18<sup>th</sup> century Chinese women's poetry has been interpreted, and Barbara Davis, an alumna of the East Asian Studies department who is writing a book about Cheng Man-ch'ing, a poet and also the man responsible for popularizing Tai Chi in the U.S. in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Fang and Davis

point out that humanities scholars typically work alone, camped out in study carrels with a laptop and a stack of books. But these two have dispensed with scholarly solitude: though they're working on different projects, they meet regularly to discuss their work and assist each other. Their research centers on different eras and different people, but they have also found that it overlaps in surprising ways—Davis's subject, for example, includes Man-ch'i'ng's published poetry, and understanding his work helps Fang understand the poetry of earlier eras. Working together, each enlarges her understanding of her own project.

Today, they're collaborating on a paper for the 2007 SHARP conference on the history of books. Together, Fang and Davis are examining an "album" of poems and paintings that Cheng Man-ch'i'ng created at age 23. The scholars hope to explore the layers of meaning embedded in

the album. They're especially interested in the importance of context in Chinese poetry; Man-ch'i'ng, like many Chinese poets, presents other poets' endorsements of his work within the album itself. This network of friends and colleagues helps Fang and Davis understand how Chinese poets situate themselves in the larger Chinese society.

—J.N.

7  
pm

### ***Music Library, Ferguson Hall***

Not surprisingly, a gentle quiet surrounds graduate student JoLynn Holcomb as she focuses on her computer monitor in the Music Library. Flute music seeps in from a distant practice room, and winter boots squeak under the added weight of a black-bagged cello being carried out the door. Right now, Holcomb is weighing the pros and cons of printing out an article she needs for her musicology degree. "It's 87 pages, and it's 10 cents a page to print," Holcomb explains. "I just moved here and, if I had a laptop, I could just access this from the Internet. I suppose I'll have to print it out eventually. I'm just a poor college student, after all," she smiles and quickly covers the emotion with a shy hand.

Holcomb is in the library researching experimental performance artist and avant-garde musician Laurie Anderson. "I didn't really know who she was," recalls the self-described small-town girl, "but once I heard some of her works, I was just wowed." Using the University's access to JSTOR, an online scholarly journal archive, Holcomb is quickly able to find a nearly 13-year-old article about the artist. "Coming from a much smaller undergraduate program in Michigan, I really had no idea how many tools would be available to me here."

Of those tools, the Music Library's online classical audio streaming services allow student access to literally thousands of full recordings of music by famous, and not so famous, composers throughout history. "5,200 tracks for J.S. Bach," Holcomb notices as she clicks through the program with dizzying speed. "And just one track of 'Three Blind Mice.' I guess they don't have everything."

—B.L.



**8**  
pm

## Willey Hall Auditorium

*I don't mind your saying I will die soon.*

The audience is rapt. At the lectern, dressed in his trademark cravat and brocade vest, is legendary poet Robert Bly. For many of the more than 600 fans assembled tonight, it's a chance to be in the presence of an idol. Bly is the author of more than 30 books of poetry and several of prose—one of which, his novel-length essay *Iron John*, sparked the “expressive men’s movement” of the 1990s. He is undeniably one of the world’s greatest living writers, and he has come to the University to read from his work.

*Even in the sound of the word soon, I hear  
The word you which begins every sentence of joy.*

The reading tonight, sponsored by the Friends of the Libraries, is part of a celebration. The University Libraries recently acquired Bly’s personal archive of original manuscripts, diaries, notebooks, letters, and audio-visual material to the University Libraries. This inestimable collection will be housed in Elmer L. Andersen Library and available for research and study by the campus community and the general public. Bly’s legacy will be preserved and cared for in his home state.

A reverent hush envelops the room as Bly finishes his final poem of the night.

*“You’re a thief!” the judge said. “Let’s see  
Your hands!” I showed my callused hands in court.  
My sentence was a thousand years of joy.*

—C.J.

**9**  
pm

## Wilson Library group study rooms

*Ach du lieber!* Unlucky German travelers Felix, Helmut, and Alfred have been robbed blind on the sunny beaches of Barcelona. While they relax on the golden sands with a bottle of red wine purchased from a nearby shop, a Gypsy approaches them with a peddler pack of junky wares. While the Teutonic tourists gape at the goods, the *zigeunerzicklein*, or Gypsy kid, deftly relieves them of their wallets. It’s the old, old story. After realizing the extent of their misfortune, they return to the shop to summon a policeman. But neither

the clerk nor the policeman is of any help; indeed, they blame the victims as easy marks. The scene ends with

another skit for Beginning German has been immortalized.

By this hour, most of Wilson Library is wrapped in a tense hush broken only by low-voiced greetings, the susurration of turning pages, and the tapping of computer keys, but in the group study



the helpless tourists outraged at the apathy of these unworthy representatives of the fair city of Barcelona. The players lapse into English, and

rooms, dramas like the one above are played out as students hold discussions, work on projects, and compose language class skits. Wilson design-



nates several areas of the library for absolutely silent study, but the group study rooms are lively. In one corner, students discuss a presentation for a history class while others quiz each other for upcoming final exams. Gamely, the small group of Beginning German students again rehearses the misadventures of Felix, Helmut and Alfred, once again playing out their cautionary tale of innocence lost. —L.V.



## Throughout Wilson Library

10  
pm

The walk through Wilson Library is purposeful with a couple stops to remind students with some cookies and an apple that no food is allowed in the library. Guleed Farah is on duty as a security monitor, and he knows the building well, an advantage for a first-year student planning to be an electrical engineering major. He admits it is an unusual student job, being the eyes and ears for the University of Minnesota Police Department. Farah and the night's field supervisor Stefanie Benham, who has stopped by on her shift visits with West Bank monitors, speak in the same low-key way about their responsibilities: they help keep the campus safe. They're not police officers but well-trained student employees who enforce policy in campus

buildings, act as observers to gather accurate information after security incidents, and provide escorts for people walking on campus. In the Libraries, monitors help enforce policies on food and beverages, disruptive behavior, and appropriate use of computers. Benham, a senior double major in linguistics and Asian Languages and Literatures, talks about her responsibility as a field supervisor in maintaining standards for monitors' job duties and being a connection between the monitors around campus and the program staff. She also laughs at the surprising response people get when they ask her for directions on campus. "On this job you get to know campus well," she says, "so I can give them the building address, cross streets, nearest parking, and transportation options to pretty much anywhere." —E.G.

## Walter Library circulation

11  
pm

The circulation and reserve desk in Walter Library basement is fairly quiet in the hour before midnight, and the Wise Owl Café is long closed. Even the custodians are done for the day. Working this late in the evening has made everyone still in the library a little frazzled, or punchy, or both. Two undergraduates working together on a chemistry problem cycle between giggles and serious discussion of whether it's okay to assume that the specific gravity of water is 1. In the last 15 minutes of the library's day, a steady stream of patrons emerges from the stacks carrying this evening's selections. Books won't be due for a few months, but those periodicals have to be back by this time tomorrow. One man comes through the main entrance to stand wordlessly before the circulation desk. The student behind the counter smiles and says, "More stuff, huh?" as he pulls off the shelf several books recently transferred from other libraries: a regular. The student's friend shows up at a few minutes to midnight to chat, and the two crack up over the colorful blurbs on the dust jacket of a book from the Popular Reading Collection shelf across the way at the Wise Owl. Not a bad idea to get some variety into the scientists' and engineers' diets, though this collection of bestsellers may be a little Ann Coulter-heavy (one book) for some tastes. Finally, at 12:00 on the dot, the lights snap off. —A.M.

## *Swati Agiwal's apartment*

Swati Agiwal has an office on the St. Paul campus that she shares with two other Ph.D. students in applied economics, but it's a bit of a sterile space. Most of the real action, it seems, occurs at home. Agiwal is a self-described night owl, and she often burns the midnight oil in her sublet apartment. Among other tools, she makes use of RefWorks, an online bibliography application available to all University students, faculty, and staff. Like other bibliography applications, RefWorks allows the user to create and build databases of citations by importing references from the library catalog and other databases, saving a great deal of time otherwise spent with one hand on the keyboard and the other holding a book open. RefWorks can also arrange references in the approved style of the user's particular discipline. Unlike some other software applications, RefWorks is web-based, so users are not chained to a particular computer or even a particular building or room—hence its usefulness to users who are mobile or just like or need to work at odd hours.

"Once I forgot my password to my RefWorks account and it was about 10:00 p.m." Agiwal says. "I wrote the account manager an email but wasn't expecting a reply 'til next morning. I really thought I was going to waste my most productive time. And then I got a reply at about 10:30 with my account info! I was overjoyed. I mean, I totally didn't expect that anyone would be available to help me at that hour." —L.V.

**1**  
am

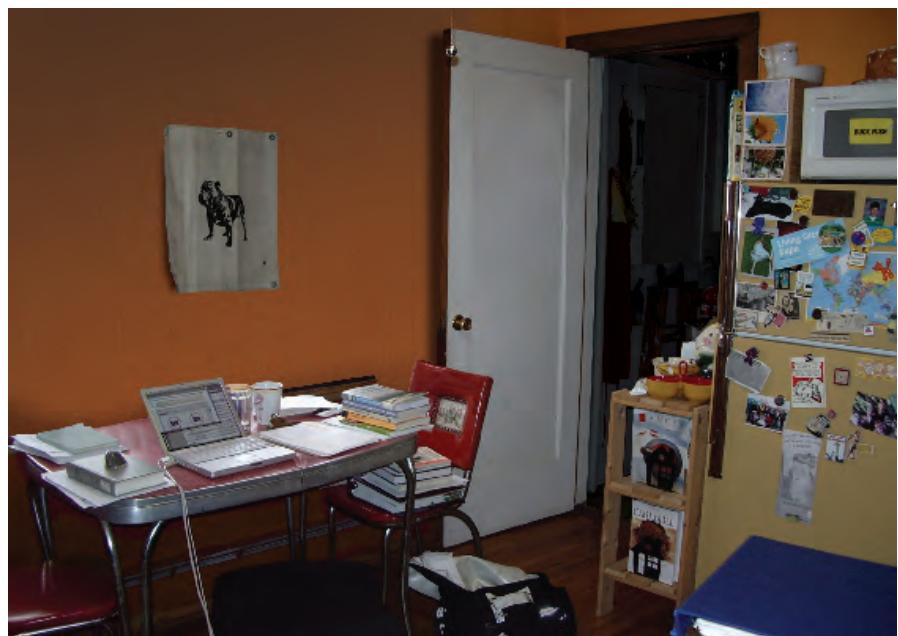
## *Kim Belk's kitchen*

It's the end of the witching hour, and Kim Belk has just gotten home from work. A master of public affairs student at the Hubert H. Humphrey Institute with a minor in international economic community development, Belk is also a bartender at three different restaurants, so late-night research is a given.

Her home office is the kitchen, decorated in cozy reds and yellows that somehow manage to convey warmth rather than McDonald's, and her desk is a 50s relic from a dinette set. A row of fairy lights over the window illuminates Belk's labors as she pores over journal articles from the University Libraries' indexes and databases. Her recent capstone project focused

on out-of-school programs. Wanting to show that they are more than just a nice idea, Belk did research on the development of the adolescent brain to demonstrate the essential nature of positive influences. Drawing from electronic journals, Academic Search Premier, PAIS International and other databases available around the clock through the Libraries, Belk gets the information she needs to pursue research interests that range from block-by-block public policy analysis on the North side of Minneapolis, to economic development in Latin America.

"I've always been a night person and I've always worked late," Belk says. "So it doesn't really faze me. I'm awake when I get home from work. I can either sit and watch TV or I can get some work done." —L.V.



**2**  
am

## *A living room in Uptown Minneapolis*

It's Saturday night. Freshman Tim Cronin is sitting in a friend's living room, and the subject turns to embroidery. Cronin has been fascinated with the art of embroidery ever since seeing a friend's hand-embroidered hood-

ed sweatshirt; the garment was covered with loop stitches in the shape of a giant bird, and Cronin was dazzled by its intricacy. He began to wonder if he might be able to attempt something of the sort himself. Tonight, as the friends chat about Cronin's nascent interest, one suggests he make use of the University Libraries to get started—any University student, faculty, or staff member may use the "Ask a Librarian" online reference service of the University Libraries. Cronin fires off an email asking for good resources on learning to embroider, and the next day, he receives a detailed response, including a complete list of books and magazines that will help him learn not only the craft, but



also the history of embroidery and trends in contemporary textile design.

This was three years ago. Today, Cronin receives embroidery commissions. He began developing his embroidery skills by creating monograms on shirts and then moved on to simple drawings, beginning with a series of animal outlines with the animal's name inside the outline in French (Cronin is a French major). He recently embroidered a friend's shirt with a complex design inspired by the imagery on Bjork's album *Vespertine*. Now, as Cronin finishes his senior thesis on French writer Jean Genet, he still makes use of the University's reference librarians. Recently, he contacted a librarian at Magrath Library to help him research the biology of flowers so he could better understand Genet's use of floral imagery. When he arrived at Magrath, the librarian was waiting for him with a full

## **Wilson Library, Facilities Management offices**

It's quiet. Human activity is minimal. As University custodial staff clean and straighten Wilson Library from the day's scholarly work, systems throughout Wilson and all the Libraries' buildings help ensure other types of maintenance will not be needed. Sensors and systems are monitoring heat, internal and external temperatures, humidity, and other elements to safeguard the Libraries' over 6.5 million volumes. Curt Stone, facilities management shift supervisor for the West Bank (which includes both Elmer L. Andersen and Wilson Libraries) knows these systems well—from the ventilation system that keeps users and books comfortable in Wilson to the intricate sensors working around the clock in the Andersen caverns. This week in November has been unusual — temperatures from 30 to 50 degrees and dewpoints all over the map. But Stone checks the monitoring system records for the caverns, called the Minnesota Library Access Center, and it's a steady 55 degrees with about 50 percent humidity. Comfortable for human beings and nearly perfect conditions for the caverns' contents—books, manuscripts, artifacts, documents—from the University's archives and special collections and from libraries around Minnesota who send infrequently-used collections for efficient and safe storage. High humidity or other moisture can promote mold, and large temperature swings could easily damage fragile paper and other materials. Stone looks intently at the monitoring system reports and says, "Water is the arch-enemy of books."

—E.G.

## **MINITEX loading dock**

An ungodly metallic groan pierces the silence as a 13-foot-high mouth opens in the side of the sandstone Mississippi River bluff. A white commercial courier van passes through the bluff's massive entrance into the loading dock for Elmer L. Andersen Library (and the MINITEX Library Information Network), which sits inside and beneath the rocky riverbank on the University's West Bank campus. The van backs through a set of double doors onto the loading dock. It's the 4 a.m. courier, here to pick up her shipment—books, CDs, DVDs, and other materials bound for libraries in the .....



Twin Cities. Because of MINITEX, dozens of commercial shipping vans like this one, which carry items needed to fill interlibrary loan requests, traverse the interstates and back roads of the region (not just the Twin Cities, but all of Minnesota, North and South Dakota, and parts of Wisconsin) at all hours five days a week. With a staff of 78 regular employees and well over 100 part-time student employees, MINITEX is a hub—a system for sharing materials between libraries of all types: academic, public, state government, research, and school. Each year, MINITEX fulfills more than a quarter-million requests for materials from library users throughout the region and transports over 800,000 items. The program serves more than 2,200 individual libraries, so a patron in, say, Rochester could easily receive a cookbook or a videocassette from the collection of the public library in War-

road. This kind of regional materials-sharing happens at other institutions throughout the U.S. (and the world), but very few programs in this country approach MINITEX's scope and volume. This morning's courier exits her van, yawns, snaps on the fluorescent lights in the 60-foot-by-60-foot loading dock, and walks across the room to one of several pre-staged pallets sitting on the sealed concrete floor. The pallet is loaded with blue plastic bins, full of library materials, each bin marked with the appropriate destination address. Soon, the van re-emerges, fully loaded, into the pitch-black night. —C.J.

## 5 am *Connie Hendrick's living room*

In a quest to be transparent as well as responsive to online catalog users' needs, Connie Hendrick readies her tools: laptop, catalog system documentation, slippers, and recliner. It's 5 a.m. on a crisp fall Sunday as Hendrick prepares to take down the entire Libraries catalog from the comfort of her living room. Hendrick is installing a monthly Service Pack issued by the catalog's vendor to fix identified problems and provide enhancements for catalog users. Why Sunday morning? Hendrick and her colleague Erik Biever explain later, at a much more civilized hour, that at any given time someone is using the Libraries online catalog, so early Sunday morning is a good window when activity is at its lowest. Through secure and reliable wireless networks, Biever, Hendrick, and their colleagues can do this criti-

cal maintenance from home or other off-campus locations. While the system may be quiet, it is not sleeping. Overnight, every night, the catalog and its complementary systems produce courtesy notices about book due dates, update the status for new students as they register for classes and need Libraries access, add records for new materials to the collection, and run programs to locate books requested through interlibrary loan. Biever and Hendrick smile about the difficulty of explaining what they and their colleagues do—managing information technology systems—and the ease with which the catalog is used when their work is done well. Biever says, "If we're doing our job right, it looks like we're not doing anything."

—E.G.





## DEAR FRIENDS,

This issue of *continuum* lets you know what goes on during a typical day at the University Libraries. Now it might be interesting to take a look at what Friends' activities make up my day as board president of the Friends of the Libraries. (This "day" is actually a composite of several days over the past months.)

**7:00 A.M.** Breakfast meeting at local coffee shop with Friends coordinator Lanaya Stangret and development director Kathy McGill to prepare the agenda for an upcoming board meeting and to confirm details and arrangements for an upcoming event. Arrangements are solidified for expected attendance, publicity, speakers, and introductions at the event. The potential speaker is not feeling well but thinks he can still deliver the presentation—but even so, back up plans are discussed. Who could we call at the last minute to do an informal talk on the fly? Lanaya offers to contact the backup speakers.

**8:00 A.M.** Business development committee chair John Mauriel solicits ideas from committee members about how to promote and share Libraries services with the local business community.

**12:00 NOON** The nominating committee meets over lunch. Several board members will complete their terms soon. Chairperson Kent Bales facilitates a discussion with committee members about key skills and competencies that would complement the existing board membership and contribute needed expertise to the board. Committee members propose potential candidates and a lively discussion ensues. At the end of the lunch, the chair has a list of candidates to propose at the board meeting.

**2:00 P.M.** Awards committee chair Stephanie Van D'Elden begins an engaging discussion about who should receive the Friends' annual staff development grants (two \$750 grants are awarded each year) and outstanding student employee scholarships (two \$250 awards are made

each year). Several committee members express how honored they feel to participate in the awards process, affirming the importance of the competent and dedicated people employed by the University Libraries.

**3:00 P.M.** Event committee co-chairs Ann Phillips and Marguerite Ragnow meet with the committee to brainstorm future events for fall 2007 and 2008.

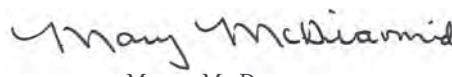
**4:00 P.M.** Rich Cornell and Gayle Graham Yates, co-chairs of the membership committee, meet to plan their board presentation about ways to encourage and increase membership in the Friends. They design an entertaining and engaging brainstorming exercise for the board, which they hope will yield creative ways to build our membership.

**6:00 P.M.** Lanaya Stangret is busy making sure the room for the evening's event is set up properly, promotional materials are available, refreshments have arrived and the speaker is confirmed and healthy enough to speak.

**7:00 P.M.** The evening's speaker begins and the audience is engaged for the next hour in an enlightening presentation.

An important critical thread among all these events, programs and meetings—one we could not possibly survive without—is the excellent work done by our coordinator, Lanaya Stangret, who does a masterful job making sure events go off without a hitch, coordinating meetings, and communicating regularly with the board president, committee members, and other library staff and university departments. She is an invaluable resource whom we are so fortunate to have as a member of our team, and she makes great events—like the one above—happen without a hitch.

As a member of the Friends, you can experience these great events and help support a great cause in the process. So please, join us as a Friend if you haven't already, learn firsthand about our activities, and help us promote, advocate and support our University of Minnesota Libraries.

  
MARY McDIARMID  
PRESIDENT, FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARIES



## BURNING THE MIDNIGHT OIL

A round-the-clock schedule is nothing new for the University Libraries. In this image, taken in 1934, two students take a nighttime study break amid dramatic shadows in Walter Library.

Lighting was a topic of much discussion in 1934, after two University engineering students conducted an illumination study of the libraries. A string of dust storms that year led to an extraordinary buildup of dust on light fixtures, affecting illumination in the library. The students' report concludes by saying that "conditions could be remedied by a strict maintenance program that includes re-lamping with proper sized bulbs, cleaning reflectors and walls. However, it appears that the maintenance program for this building is good. We may never again experience weather conditions such as existed this spring, when it was practically impossible to keep the reflectors from becoming dusty."

In 1937, Dr. William Holman, superintendent of buildings and grounds and consulting engineer, announced the award of a contract to install lumaline bulbs in Walter instead of the old incandescent lights that were installed when the library building was first occupied in 1924.

Images and historical research were provided courtesy of University Archives. Sources include F. Walter's unpublished history of the library, *Ninety Years of the University of Minnesota Library 1851-1941*, historic files from the library, *University of Minnesota Library. Records*, and *The Minnesota Daily*.



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