Family Diaries a Special Collections Find

In all bureaucracies, there is a constant danger that two different departments may, at some time or other, work at cross purposes to each other. One does not need to look any farther than the federal government for many examples of the left hand laboring mightily while blissfully unaware of the right hand’s efforts, but occasionally even universities experience such unproductive activity. Fortunately for Special Collections, this trait of opposing efforts did not prove true in a case where the MSU Alumni Office and The Libraries worked in perfect harmony. About three months ago, Rose Hanson, program manager for the Alumni Office, received an email from a Florida retiree named John Nevin Thompson III. Thompson had in his possession an 1891 diary from his grandfather which described a journey through Yellowstone National Park.

Mr. Thompson, who had attended MSU in his youth, had heard of our active collection of Yellowstone diaries and wanted to know if there was any interest in adding his own contribution. Ms. Hanson immediately recognized the importance of the contact and forwarded the information to us at Special Collections. Once we had the opportunity to correspond with Dr. Thompson, we discovered that his family papers extended beyond his grandfather’s Yellowstone adventure. Henry E. Thompson, the great-grandfather of the donor, had served in the 20th Wisconsin Volunteer infantry during the Civil War, and two of his diaries were available. These diaries, which describe among other things a detailed battle narrative of Prairie Grove, Arkansas, December 7, 1862, were also offered with the family papers. To make a long story short, all three diaries, with supplemental materials, were donated to Special Collections on January 25, 2007 and are now part of our collections. The Yellowstone diary is particularly interesting for local researchers because the writer was engaged in herding a remuda of horses through the park, making his tour somewhat unique among our other contemporary Yellowstone narratives.

Once again, the various departments of Montana State University have demonstrated their ability to work together in our common goal of facilitating student success. The left hand certainly knew what the right was doing in this case!

The Friends of MSU Board Welcomes New Members

A former Friends of MSU Libraries Board member returns! Following an extensive career in radio ranging from California to Montana, Anne Shaw Barnaby has recently relocated back to Bozeman after helping her family’s needs in Santa Cruz, California. She enjoys assisting with the products that lead to healthy living and staying fit and has a strong interest in reading, horses, movies, and everything Montana and is thrilled to be back in Big Sky country.

Christi Kruger has been a successful Certified Public Accountant (CPA) since January 1992. Christi was awarded a Bachelor of Science in Business degree from Montana State University in August 1988. She spent six years in Newcastle, Wyoming and eight years in Wolf Point, Montana in local CPA firms before accepting her current position with Penor & Associates CPAs P.C. in December 2002.

Judy Staigmiller has a long history with both Montana and Montana State University. She attended Montana State University and graduated in 1971 with a bachelor’s degree in Modern Languages. Judy worked full-time for the MSU Libraries from August 1973 through January 2004 before retiring, and now works only part-time on special projects. She enjoys quilting, reading, walking, and travel. Her main volunteer activity is for the Bozeman Symphony Orchestra and the Friends of MSU Libraries.

View from the Dean’s Office continued...

Crystal ball gazing or prolonged squinting at the horizon may be apt metaphors for looking to the future, but they are not reliable methods for making decisions that will inevitably affect the success (or lack thereof) of students and faculty. Therefore, we are looking to the resources of MSU’s College of Business to assist us in gaining a better sense of the likely future expectations of our students and faculty. Toward this end, we are working with marketing professor, Dr. Omar Sherry, and a team of students from the college’s Marketing Club to conduct marketing research about attitudes, behavior, and technologies relating to the consumption of information. It is our hope that such intelligence will help us inform our decision making as we chart our course in the future.

Contributed by: Kim Allen Scott, Special Collections Librarian

NPR All Things Considered, early April 07, segment on Willa Cather qtd her wishing she had her brother’s Y’stone diary.
View from the Dean’s Office

It is hard to believe that the academic year is almost over. Much of this year has been spent on various elements of planning.

I have asked Tamara Miller, our associate dean, to work with our organization’s team leaders to re-conceptualize and rearticulate the library’s strategic plan so that it will harmonize in both its focus and its style with the university’s five-year vision document. I believe that this will keep foremost in our minds that the library is an integral part of a larger effort. It should also give added meaning to our mission statement, which is: To facilitate student and faculty success through the provision of information resources and information services.

For most of this academic year, I have engaged the entire library in a process of introspection as to what our organization should look like in the near to mid-term future in view of several working assumptions. Those assumptions are that information technology will be more important, more pervasive, and more complex in the library’s future and that there will not be significantly more base-budget dollars to help address needs in this regard. Ultimately, whatever changes that may be made in our organization will need to reflect the library’s performance goals. This process has stimulated much thoughtful discussion. It has also created some angst because the result is likely to be targeted reallocations of existing resources to help us morph into an information technology-driven organization. Actually, I should say “to continue” to morph, since we have been incrementally reallocating resource in this direction for years. Our library will need to reconsider its articulation of position descriptions and the skill sets we expect our people to have. This will mean making investments in continually “re-skilling” current staff and decisively recruiting forward-looking skill sets in new staff.

Personnel turnover in any organization is at once a challenge and an opportunity. The loss of valued colleagues and accrued expertise must be balanced by the opportunity presented to “rethink” a position and to recruit new skill sets and fresh approaches. While this consideration of the future has been progressing, I have been holding open as many position vacancies as possible so as to have resources available to redirect our course when decisions have been made.

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Dessert Dialogues a Delectable Event

The 3rd annual Dessert Dialogues event proved to be a success. With 24 table hosts and an increased guest list, the dialogues have become a thriving event for the Friends of MSU Libraries. Guests enjoyed an assortment of desserts while engaging in captivating conversations of their choosing on a wide range of topics from music to microbes.

For more details about this and other Friends events and information visit our website at: www.lib.montana.edu/about/friends

Join Us For The MSU Authors’ Reception

The Friends of MSU Libraries and President Gamble will recognize MSU’s recent authors on Thursday, April 12, 2007 in the Burton K. Wheeler Reading Room at Renne Library from 4 to 5:30 p.m. Community members are welcome to join us as we celebrate the MSU faculty who have worked to bring their writing to a level worthy of publication. Refreshments will be served, and authors will be available to discuss their works and autograph copies of their books. The MSU Bookstore will have a selected inventory on hand for purchase.
The Ripple Effect – “The Power to Bring About Results”

Kitch Walker, president and co-founder of Ripple Marketing, along with his partners and colleagues, contributed significant time and creative talent to come up with a fresh, new look for the Friends of the Libraries publications, including this newsletter redesign.

Our relationship with Kitch goes back to the early 1990s when he was a triple option undergraduate major at Montana State University. While earning degrees in marketing, business management and fish and wildlife management, Kitch was part of a College of Business library examination team which conducted focus groups for students, faculty and users, regarding traffic patterns, usability and needs assessments for the future of MSU Libraries. Ultimately, the results from this study were used to develop a case for renovating Renne Library, which culminated in the beautiful facility we now operate within today.

When I posed the question to Kitch about, “Why Libraries?” he responded by saying, “For me, the library is the intellectual and social heart of the campus community—an environment that encourages inspiration, education and a sense of belonging for the entire body of students, educators, and the Bozeman community.”

With a strong sense of commitment, combined with a healthy balance of community involvement, Kitch has over 10 years of experience as a fully integrated marketing consultant. He has served national and regional clients like the Securities Industry Association (New York, NY), Foundation for Investor Education (New York, NY), Montana Bankers Association, First Security Bank-Bozeman, Great Harvest Franchising, Inc., Bozeman Deaconess Hospital, as well as Montana Small Business Development Centers. Kitch is also the past president of Prospera Business Network (formerly Gallatin Development Corporation), and current board member for the MSU Leadership Institute. In addition, his former board affiliations include MSU College of Business National Board of Directors, Gallatin Valley Food Bank, GALAVAN, MSU Libraries, as well as national marketing advisor, Foundation for Investor Education (New York, NY).

Whether in large or small communities, neighborhood partnerships provide the pathway to future success. MSU Libraries is so fortunate to be the beneficiary of the wonderful generosity and award winning talent of the team at Ripple Marketing, who continually demonstrate throughout our community “The Power to Bring about Results.”

I hope you will join us in applauding Kitch Walker, along with Denise and Kurt Palmquist and the staff at Ripple Marketing, for their generous commitment to Excellence in Education.

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**MSU Librarians Receive Recognition**

MSU Libraries Reference Librarian Mary Anne Hansen was recently nominated for an Excellence in Outreach award for her work helping librarians initiate, design, deliver and maintain unique networking experiences for one another.

Special Collections Librarian Kim Allen Scott has published “Yellowstone Denied” the story of Gustavus Cheyney Doane, a soldier, inventor, author and explorer who felt he should be famous for “discovering” Yellowstone National Park and wealthy from one of his inventions.

Reference Librarian Greg Notess’ work “Teaching Web Search Skills: Techniques and Strategies of Top Trainers” presents expert training strategies for teaching web skills and has earned him recognition in the Web Search Instructors world.

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Don’t Miss the

**MSU Libraries Book Sale**

**Thursday, April 26th - 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.**

**Friday, April 27th - 8 a.m. to 12 noon**

Strand Student Union Ballrooms B & C

(Due to SUB renovations please use the West Entrance)

Great selections and even better prices!

For more information, please call: 406-994-3119