Electronic Resources Management at the Bluford Library

The Systems Department is hard at work in implementing Innovative Interfaces’ Electronic Resources Management system (ERM). This system will help the library provide access to and organize all types of electronic resources, including databases, online journals, and e-books. The goals of the ERM project include creating a resource record for each electronic resource in the library’s collection, creating a database A to Z list generated by ERM, loading coverage for all electronic resources that have journal content, creating license records for each resource record, and associating order records with each resource record. The end result of the project will be a comprehensive source of information about the library’s electronic resources.

So far, resource records have been created for each resource. A resource record is similar to a bibliographic record, but it has different fields and is not in MARC format. Each resource record contains information about the particular electronic resource, such as the name, type, URL, subjects, and description. Many of these fields are displayed publicly in the catalog. The resource record also contains information strictly for library staff, such as subscription dates, administration usernames and passwords, and information about gathering usage statistics. Basic “placeholder” license records have also been created, which will be populated with more information about each resource’s unique license agreement. Collection Management compiled contact information for all of the library’s vendors, which has been input into contact records.

Currently, the Systems department is working with Reference in order to associate appropriate subjects with each resource. Systems is also working to ensure that journal holdings information in the Electronic Journals A to Z list is as accurate as possible, as this information will be loaded into ERM and display in the catalog. Stay tuned for a new and improved databases page, as well as more comprehensive coverage information in the online catalog.

Mac Lab at Bluford

As of this date, the Library is one of the few entities on campus with late-night computer access. To optimize this service, the Learning Resource Center (LRC) was redesigned to accommodate a Macintosh Multimedia Lab. The LRC is now home to 18 powerful Mac Pros with quad core processing and 4GB of memory. Additionally, the MACs are equipped with specialized software including Adobe Creative Suite, Microsoft Office for Mac, and editing software such as Final Cut. The Library hopes the Mac Multimedia Lab will be an added measure of support for academic programs that use these technologies in the curriculum and a great evening resource for students.

LibGuides: Going Paperless for Instruction Guides

Spring 2009 saw the dawn of a new era for instruction guides at NCA&TSU. LibGuides was acquired and has revamped how Reference approaches guides and handouts. In the past, Reference copied thousands of pages of Library Guides and handouts for English, University Studies, or upper division classes. No more. With the budget crunch affecting all state institutions, and the mandate to conserve paper, LibGuides permits Reference librarians to develop handouts and “publish” them to the web. Instructors are then linking to these guides through BlackBoard. The same elements are present in the LibGuides as were in the print guides: LC Call Numbers, Reference Books, Books, eBooks, Journals, eJournals, Associations, and/or Scholarly Web Sites. Check out the new LibGuides at http://libguides.library.ncat.edu/.
Dean’s Message

On behalf of the entire Library staff, I bring you greetings. Bluford Notes & Quotes provides an opportunity to share some of the highlights of this academic year. The Library continues its metamorphosis into a “library without walls” through external partnerships and increasing access to digital research materials. This year’s noteworthy accomplishments are indicative of these efforts. The Library is successfully building a “leaner and cleaner” collection by reducing duplication among formats, thus utilizing the budget more effectively. Bluford also collaborated with other UNC Libraries to develop a virtual union catalog that allows users to search and request books across all libraries in the UNC System. Also, the Library continues to strengthen collaboration with internal partners to promote information literacy.

As the Spring semester comes to a close, we celebrate several successes; the recent SACS on-site visit due to the dedicated work of the SACS Sub-Committee on Library and other Learning Resources, successful outreach programs and educational services, increased access to public site visit due to the dedicated work of the SACS Sub-Committee on Library and other Learning Resources, successful outreach programs and educational services, increased access to public computers, digitization of historical documents and an enhanced virtual presence.

We look forward to upholding the library’s presence as the intellectual heart of the campus by being a customer-centered organization dedicated to exploration, discovery and life-long learning.

Doris Mitchell, Interim Dean of Library Services

Google Documents: Collaboration

— by Natasha Johnson

The Bluford Reference Department has been exploring the world of Google over the past several months. We’ve all been hearing about the wonders of Google and how it has changed the work lives of libraries and corporations alike. Even entire universities have begun adopting Gmail and several of the Google “apps,” including Documents, Spreadsheets, Buzz, and Wave. So the Bluford Library Reference Department decided that it might be interesting to try out some of Google apps for ourselves. We didn’t have to look too far; opportunities to “Google” presented themselves.

As a part of recent efforts to reallocate and manage the publically accessible PCs, Reference and Access Services needed to collaborate to track usage and passwords. With the desk departmental hours and responsibilities varying from shift to shift, there needed to be a way for both departments to record patron usage information equally. Google Documents allows for real-time collaboration, with more than one contributor. Access Services and Reference desks can both have the document open and ready, logging users at the same time, without difficulty or lag.

Reference department’s interest in Google apps doesn’t stop there. We have a Google Calendar that combines almost all of our departmental calendars into one. We can glance at one calendar interface and see the meeting room, service desk, instruction and workshops calendars. They are all interwoven and color-coded to see the day, week, or weeks at a glance. From the calendar interface, we’re able to issue reminders to the staff and registrants involved, which has been well received.

The Reference Department and Professional Development Committee also has created a Google Form. The form acted as a topic survey for future professional development series. Google then fed all of the replies into a Spreadsheet where we could process the results.

Speak of Spreadsheets, we’ve even collaborated with Systems on a spreadsheet to organize the databases for the upcoming federated/multi-database features for the catalog and website. Yet, there are plans for more collaborative cross-departmental partnerships in the future, including forms for patrons and instructors, reporting database issues, and maybe even a website supplement to our shared drives. The possibilities are without bounds. As long as Google apps are free, Reference will continue to explore ways to enhance our departmental and inter-departmental workflow and...
Computer Changes in Bluford Library

Over the past several months, staff members and students noticed many non-University visitors “excessively” utilizing the computer services in the Library. This made the computers unavailable for students, University patrons, and new visitors. To address this issue, Access Services teamed up with the Reference Department and Systems to create a new policy for computer usage and access. This new policy reduced the number of public access computers, placed a time limit on the computers, and required visitors to sign in at the Reference and Circulation Desks.

Previously, there were 24 open access computers. The new policy reduced this to 6 password-controlled guest computers. Additionally, Systems placed timer software on the computers that will log a visitor off after 60 minutes. One renewal is allowed. Finally, visitors are required to sign in and show a picture ID at the Reference Desk to gain access to the computers. Thus far, the new computer policy has been appreciated by patrons who were unable to previously log on.

My First National Library Week at Bluford

As a first-time attendee, I greatly enjoyed the library’s celebration of National Library Week and National Library Worker’s Day. Ms. Newman and Ms. Pitts’s presentation on our new institutional repository was informative and engaging; this venture will make A&T history so much more accessible to students, faculty, alumni and the greater community. The awards ceremony was a great opportunity to learn about the accomplishments of my coworkers Cora Mathewson, Nina Exner, and Cass Plater, all of whom received awards this year. Finally, the jazz performance by Dr. Mondre Moffett and his students provided a lovely soundtrack to the afternoon.

Awards Winners Recognized During National Library Week

After a wonderful program presented by Euthena Newman and Gloria Pitts about the new Institutional Repository, the F.D. Bluford Library Awards & Recognitions Committee presented three Annual Awards.

Cora Mathewson was recognized for the Volunteerism Award. Over the past year, Ms. Mathewson has demonstrated the attributes for this Award by: working in whatever capacity she was asked; taking the initiative to assist other staff to better understand their tasks; and using her expertise in subject analysis to assist the Cataloging Department’s progress in their Thesis project. She also demonstrates a positive attitude and work ethic.

Nina Exner was recognized for the Customer Service Award. Students and faculty are very appreciative of the personal service that Ms. Exner provides. She has a following! Her attributes that matched the criteria of this Award included: consistently treating all patrons with respect and empathy; being thorough and following up to see if the patrons found the information they were seeking; being engaging and approachable; and being knowledgeable about appropriate print and electronic resources.

Interim-Dean Doris Mitchell presented Cass Plater with the Outstanding Employee Award. Ms. Plater was nominated for her continuous, ongoing commitments to customer service, volunteerism, and creativity. She has a customer-centered orientation and exhibits a manner that makes the customer feel at ease. Her instructions are clear and patrons enjoy her personalized service. Ms. Plater works tirelessly, often working into the evening to coordinate and facilitate her Lunch & Literature Book Club or serve on the University’s Lyceum, Faculty Senate, and SACS Committees. She has been instrumental in successful instructional collaborations between various academic departments and the library. Other adjectives used to describe her or her work include: helpful; welcoming; cheerful; positive; professional; and, of course, outstanding!

Submitted by John C. Teleha, Chair, Awards & Recognitions Committee

Nina Exner, Cass Plater, and Cora Mathewson (left to right)
As librarians at F.D. Bluford Library, North Carolina A&T State University, we are always searching for ways to help our community. Volunteering at Sedalia Elementary school was not on my radar until I had a casual conversation with my niece. I discovered her school needed volunteers for the annual Scholastic Book Fair. This short and sweet conversation led to another conversation with the School Librarian, Cindi Kilfoyle.

Cindi is an effervescent organized person who graciously accepted the help. I shared with her what wonderful librarians we have at the University and was certain they would be willing to volunteer too! Cass Plater, Francene Moore, Nina Exner, and Gloria Pitts did not disappoint! Cindi was more than happy to receive the additional help for the Book Fair.

Through emails, days and times were coordinated, to provide coverage for the November 16th-20th, 2009 event. When the time arrived we were given our marching orders and the students entered the library on a class by class basis. The students were so excited and scanned the room to find their favorite books. One young boy spotted his favorite book series “Diary of a Wimpy Kid” by Jeff Kinney and rushed to write down the information for each one of them. You could tell these students enjoyed reading.

As volunteers we participated in the Book Fair from beginning to end, helped students locate books, operated the cash register and packed up books to be returned to Scholastic. According to Cindi Kilfoyle this was one of the most successful Book Fairs held at the school.

We have since volunteered again at the school and participated in the “21st Annual African American Read In,” reading books to the students written by African American authors. We can’t wait to see what our next volunteer opportunity will be at Sedalia Elementary School. Through a casual conversation with my niece, we found a new friend and volunteer opportunity in Sedalia Elementary School.

Sedalia Elementary School educates Pre-K through 5th grade students and is part of the Guilford County School System. The enrollment for the 2008-09 school year was 460 students according to Education First NC Schools Report Cards website. (Source: http://www.ncreportcards.org/src/)

This year has seen the departure of two employees by retirement. Ms. Brenda Saddler and Ms. Jackie McGirt both retired late 2009. We are sad to see them go, but proud to have worked with them! The F. D. Bluford Library Publications Committee (Nina Exner, Chair, Judy Mayhand-Howard, and Donna Rosyster) thanks the library staff, all of our contributors, and the Aggie community for supporting the Bluford Notes & Quotes newsletter.