Friends of NIU Libraries Enhance Library Purchasing Through Suggestions from Patrons

The Friends of NIU Libraries announce a new method of purchasing materials for “one-time expenditures that would enhance the collections, operations, or services of the Northern Illinois University Libraries.” We would like suggestions from you!

Instead of purchasing expensive items for the Libraries based solely on faculty librarian suggestions, Friends of NIU Libraries has created an Awards Program, whereby members of the NIU community can submit applications to have specific materials purchased for the library.

All members of the Friends, and other NIU faculty and staff members (including faculty and staff of the University Libraries) are eligible to submit proposals. Individuals may submit up to a maximum of three different proposals. Proposals for the support of routine, ongoing library expenses (such as annual subscription fees for serials or databases) will not be considered.

The proposal should contain an abstract (250 words or less), description of the proposed expenditure, rationale for purchase and a cost proposal. For further details, please see the proposal requirements at: http://www.ulib.niu.edu/FRIENDS/Proposal%20guidelines.pdf

Proposals should be sent to Lynne Thomas, Head, Rare Books and Special Collections, FO 402A, lmthomas@niu.edu, who can also answer questions about the proposal process (753-0255).

Proposals will be accepted annually from the first Monday in September through the first Monday in October, and again from the first Monday in January through the first Monday in February (January 3-February 7, and September 5-October 3, 2011). This year only, the spring deadline has been extended to March 7. The Executive Committee will review the proposals received after the submission window closes, and reserves the right, dependent upon the number and quality of the proposals received, to make one, several, or no awards in response to this announcement.
Hello again from the Regional History Center.

In the last issue I mentioned that in addition to over 300 collections pertaining to the history of the northern Illinois area, we also work to document the history of NIU. This set of collections, called the University Archives, consists of materials pertaining to the history, organization, and administration of the wider university community. Included in this collection are Illinois Board of Higher Education and Board of Trustees proceedings, the president’s and provost’s office records, college and departmental records, faculty papers, records of student government and organizations, oral history tapes, and extensive photographs of campus life. These materials document organizational and policy development, faculty and staff concerns, student affairs, and town-gown relations. Archival copies of university publications, yearbooks, theses and dissertations, and student newspapers are also available in the Center.

We often see researchers delving into the history of their individual university department or organization. This can be an interesting process as they discover old photos, an original charter, or outdated by-laws. I find it very exciting when our usually quiet reading room erupts into laughter or a clamoring of “no way!” as a group of researchers look through their organization’s past. Half the time they are giggling at the clothing and hairstyles, but they usually leave with a number of relevant photocopies.

The majority of the collections are open for public use, so do not feel limited if you would like to browse through an NIU department or organization’s records.

**Featured Collection:**

Another aspect of our University Archives is a new collection: February 14, 2008 Memorial Collection. I speak of this collection with mixed feelings. In the sense that I wish such a thing never would have happened, I am certainly not excited to have this collection as part of the archives. On the other hand, I could not be prouder of the archival staff for collecting, organizing, and preserving materials from such a tragic day. Recognizing that the events of February 14, 2008 are a part of the campus history—the very thing we work to document—the Regional History Center staff began gathering articles, photos, and emails the very next day. In fact, most collections come to us in boxes and haphazardly organized folders; the materials for the 2/14 Collection required us to personally seek them out. We contacted university departments, scoured the internet daily for news, and became advocates for providing the archives with relevant material. The processing of the items was emotionally and often physically trying, and after nearly three years we are so very ready to consider it done and move on to new collections.

This particular collection will take a unique role within the archives. Unlike the majority of other collections, it will not be available to the general researcher. The physical materials are accessible for scholarly, educational, and journalistic purposes only. However, the Center’s staff created a website to allow individuals to view the memorial items, find comfort in the condolences sent to the University, and to somehow learn from this tragedy. The website provides access to the memorial items without causing damage from regular physical handling and allows visitors interested in looking at the memorial items to do so at any time, from any location world-wide. This includes the Martin Luther King Commons panels and Virginia Tech panels; these signature boards are viewable with high zooming capabilities. Included in the resources portion of the website are bibliographies on relevant
topics such as campus violence and mental illness. Also included are lesson plans for different age groups to help teachers use the website as a classroom tool.

Finally, the website provides the opportunity for people to tell their own stories, which aids in the healing process, as well as adds to the first person accounts in the archives. We welcome you to take a look at the site and read the contributions of others. If you are feeling like you have something to say, please take a moment to add your memories. Whether you were present on campus or not; are a student, alumnus, or simply heard about it on the news; whether you were across campus or the globe--your story is significant. The thoughts, memories, emotions, and actions of everyday individuals like yourself are what make up archives.

www.feb14.niu.edu

--Katharine White, Curator of Manuscripts, Regional History Center
Southeast Asia Digital Library Project Grows with New Grant Award

In October, 2009 Northern Illinois University Libraries began work on a new grant project producing new materials and infrastructure for the Southeast Asia Digital Library (http://sea.lib.niu.edu). Awarded $760,000 over four years by the United States Department of Education’s Technological Innovation and Cooperation for Foreign Information Access (TICFIA) program, the “Building Capacity for the Digitization, Dissemination, and Preservation of Southeast Asian Resources” project collaborates actively with the Committee on Research Materials on Southeast Asia (a librarians’ group organized within the Association for Asian Studies) as well as partner institutions including the National University of Malaysia; Chiang Mai University (Thailand); the State Islamic University of Indonesia; the Lontar Foundation (Indonesia); the Vietnamese Nom Preservation on Foundation (USA); Yale University; the University of Hawai’i and individual scholars in the United States and Asia.

The project will continue the work of the Southeast Asia Digital Library by preserving and presenting a wide range of Southeast Asian materials supporting learning about the region, especially language instruction in Indonesian, Javanese, Malay, Thai, Lao, Khmer, and Vietnamese. Project collaborators will preserve contributed materials in a secure digital repository designed and maintained in keeping with prevailing international digital library and preservation standards and disseminate them free of charge via the World Wide Web. Project activities will produce a set of newly-digitized materials including: video, sound, image, and text materials shedding light on Indonesian language, literature, and culture from the collections of the Lontar Foundation (Jakarta, Indonesia); Muslim manuscripts from a number of Southeast Asian nations from the collections of the Center for the Study of Islam and Society (CENSIS) at the State Islamic University (UIN), Indonesia; Malaysian materials from the Institute of the Malay World and Civilization at the National University of Malaysia; temple murals (with spoken word/video commentary) from Laos preserved with the assistance of scholars from Northern Illinois University’s Southeast Asian Studies Center and the Faculty of Fine Arts of Laos; Thai mural and cloth paintings, as well as exterior photographs of the temples that house them (accompanied by spoken word/video commentary) preserved in partnership with Chiang Mai University (Thailand); manuscript materials from the Vietnamese National Library written in Nom script, an ideographic writing system used in Vietnam in a period extending from the tenth century into the twentieth, developed in partnership with the Vietnamese Nom Preservation Foundation; text, image, and video materials from the collections of Vietnamese writers, filmmakers, and artists in the Doi Moi period following that nation’s war with the United States, gathered in collaboration with an international team of scholars; and Cambodian scholars’ private research collections, gathered by a Cambodian collaborator.

The project will also add new facets to the larger Southeast Asia Digital Library initiative by producing technical infrastructure allowing increasing numbers of Southeast Asian institutions and individuals able to contribute digitized analog or born-digital electronic materials to its repository and web site during and beyond the period of TICFIA support. To this end, project collaborators have hosted digitization workshops at Paramadina University (Indonesia) and the National University of Malaysia. The project will also develop a secure, online upload/ingest and metadata entry utility enabling individual scholars and organizations to submit digital materials to project staff members.
This spring Northern Illinois University Libraries' Digital Initiatives Unit will expand the scope of its award-winning Abraham Lincoln Historical Digitization Project (http://lincoln.lib.niu.edu) by bringing a team of collaborators together to produce digital cultural tourism materials exploring less well-known aspects of the Lincoln Home National Historic Site in Springfield, Illinois. The team will produce ten multifaceted digital objects, available via the web. Each will include a video presentation discussing a specific aspect of the historic site; short recordings of readings from period sources discussing the site and its context; digital images shedding light on the site and its context; as well as supplementary videos in which leading historians discuss major themes in the study of antebellum America as illuminated by the site.

The project will focus on those portions of the Lincoln Home National Historic Site other than the Lincoln family’s pre-presidential residence itself. While site visitors can receive a guided tour of the Lincoln Home, National Park Service personnel cannot provide a similar level of service for the rest of the site. Featured locations include a number of historic structures and lots on which the homes of Lincoln’s neighbors once stood. Each has a story to tell. For example, one was the home of Jameson Jenkins, a black man who helped escaped slaves on the Underground Railroad. In another home Harriet Dean led a girls’ school while her husband was away at the California Gold Rush. The project’s video tours discuss how each specific structure or lot illuminates a major theme in the period’s history. For example, the discussion of the Jameson home provides an opportunity to discuss antebellum African-Americans’ experience, slave and free, as seen through the Underground Railroad. The project’s exploration of the Dean school illustrates many nineteenth-century Americans’ devotion to the idea of men’s and women’s “separate spheres” in public and private life. This approach expands upon the Lincoln Digitization Project’s general emphasis on using Lincoln’s pre-presidential experiences to shed light on his political and social context in antebellum America.

Collaborators in this work include Dr. Jeffrey Smith of Lindenwood University (St. Charles, Missouri), an academic historian with considerable experience in the development of cultural tourism materials as well, who wrote the project’s tour scripts and helped to select supporting primary texts and images. Tim Townsend, Lincoln Home National Historic Site historian, facilitated the project’s approval by National Park Service officials, reviewed scripts for accuracy, and provided research for review by scholars at Southeast Asian Studies Centers, and potential submission to the project repository and web site. These materials may include research collections (such as anthropologists’ field work photographs) and pre-prints (or copyright-cleared versions) of scholarly articles. This aspect of the proposed project will provide scholars at Southeast Asian universities that may lack digital institutional repositories with opportunities to take advantage of this technology’s ability to preserve and disseminate a wide variety of materials. Project staff members will use the digitization and loading of data from projects in Thailand, Laos, and Vietnam to test this utility’s effectiveness and usability.

-Drew E. VandeCreek, Director of Digital Initiatives
on specific structures. Ashley Michels, a student in the Northern Illinois University Honors Program studying Broadcast Journalism, appears in the video tours as an on-camera presenter of Dr. Smith’s scripts. In addition, Ms. Michels contributed to the project’s technical development, processing and editing video materials. Michael Taylor of the university’s Digital Convergence Lab assembled the collected digital video, image, and sound materials as integrated digital objects on a project web site available to users of a number of different types of hand-held devices.

This project stands as an example of the Digital Convergence Lab’s promise for the future of the university, promoting interdisciplinary and inter-institutional collaboration, as well as new opportunities for students, in the development of materials showing a high level of technological sophistication. According to National Park Service officials, nearly 350,000 individuals visit the Lincoln Home National Historic Site every year, including a large number of high school students. Beginning in the spring of 2011, those using smart phones and other hand-held devices will enjoy the opportunity to see what Northern Illinois University can do.

--Drew E. VandeCreek, Director of Digital Initiatives
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Northern Illinois University Libraries Launches Institutional Repository Project

This year Northern Illinois University Libraries will launch an institutional repository, providing the university community with an opportunity to explore such a resource. Institutional repositories collect, preserve, and disseminate the intellectual output of a university in digital form. Collected materials can include journal articles in preprint or postprint form, depending on their copyright status. They can also include other digital objects, such as image, sound and video materials produced by students, faculty, and staff used in teaching, as well as large data sets produced by researchers. This new resource will employ DSpace, the world’s leading open-source institutional repository software, presently in use at over 700 academic institutions around the world.

The NIU institutional repository will clearly identify and present its different sets of materials so as to avoid confusion. Perhaps the most significant set of materials included in the repository will be a collection of publications from peer-reviewed journals voluntarily submitted, as individual copyright agreements allow, by NIU faculty members. Non-peer reviewed materials will not be presented in this section of the repository. Other sections of the repository might present exceptional student work, which often goes unnoticed outside the classroom; materials from the university archives; and open-source journals published by NIU faculty and staff members to the web-using public.

Developed with international standards in the field of library science, institutional repositories have been built with an eye to interoperability. Search portals can retrieve results from a large number of repositories at once, allowing further, easier dissemination of university-produced research. The presentation of intellectual capital in one online location can enhance a university’s reputation before prospective faculty members and students; legislators; and members of the general public. Finally, institutional repositories bring universities into compliance with the policies of federal granting agencies increasingly requiring funded researchers to make their findings available free of charge on the web.

Institutional repositories can also benefit research universities by preserving access to a variety of digital resources, in addition to academic work, for future use. Many materials, including digital images, sound, and video files used in research, teaching, and learning presently reside on individual computers or servers, or CD-ROMS and DVDs, around campus. This situation places them at risk of loss due to the simple failure of computers storing a single version of an object; the deterioration of storage media (the average CD or DVD can be expected to preserve digital materials for eight to ten years without data loss); or the obsolescence of file formats (making materials no longer readable by prevailing technologies). Properly-designed institutional repositories work hand-in-hand with nationwide digital preservation networks, which store multiple private copies of objects on servers at collaborating institutions around the country, and are refreshed daily, using tools that validate and confirm file formats, authenticity, and integrity, as well as migrating contents into new file formats as needed.

During the spring semester Northern Illinois University Libraries will be soliciting feedback on this project from faculty, staff and students. Please contact Drew VandeCreek (drew@niu.edu) or Lynne Thomas (lmthomas@niu.edu) with comments and/or questions, or to schedule a time to discuss the matter at greater length.
Member Benefits:
- Receive a 10% discount on merchandise at the following stores:
  - Ed Ripp Fine Art Books, Chicago
- Receive a 15% discount on merchandise at the following online stores:
  - Arcadia, (www.arcadiabooks.net)
- Coming soon: Friends tote bags! (watch your mail, the Friends website, or our Facebook page for details.)

A Note from NIU library’s Circulation department:
NIU Annuitants/retirees can contact Cliff Golden or Madelyn Nelson at the Circulation desk to have your accounts updated to provide full library privileges for life. You must have I.D. and your One-card. For more information contact Cliff Golden at 815-753-0343 or Madelyn Nelson at 815-753-9846.
A Letter from the Faculty Liaison

We have an exciting group of spring events planned. I hope that you will join us!

Our February event focuses on the theater. On Tuesday, February 15th, Chris Jones, the theater critic for the Chicago Tribune, will be talking about “How Chicago Became America’s Hottest Theater City,” at 7:30 pm in the Rare Books and Special Collections Department, on the 4th floor of Founders’ Library. This event is free and open to the public.

In March, we return to fiction, once again co-sponsoring a book discussion with the DeKalb Public Library. On March 2, from 7-9 pm, Alex Bledsoe will be on hand to discuss his fantasy-noir novel, The Sword Edged Blonde, in which a gumshoe investigator needs to figure out the murder of the king’s heir in a swords-and-sorcery whodunit. This event takes place at the Ellwood House Visitor’s Center. Enjoy treats from Sweet Dreams Desserts as we participate in Destination Wonder, the DeKalb Public Library’s SF book club. Copies of The Sword Edged Blonde will be available for checkout throughout February at DeKalb Public Library. This event is free and open to the public.

In April, we look closely at the world around us, guided by a Pulitzer-Prize winner. Blair Kamin, architecture critic for the Chicago Tribune, will be giving a talk based on his latest book. Terror and Wonder: Architecture in a Tumultuous Age, April 7th at 7:30 pm in the Rare Books and Special Collections Department, on the 4th floor of Founders’ Library. This event is free and open to the public.

Now is your chance to discover the value of some of your favorite books! On Sunday, May 1st, from 11 am-2 pm, in the Rare Books and Special Collections Department, on the 4th floor of Founders’ Library, we will once again be sponsoring a book appraisal fair. Appraisals will be provided by Thomas Joyce of Thomas J. Joyce & Co. and the Chicago Rare Book Center, who appeared on HGTV’s Appraisal Fair program, and William Butts, of Main Street Fine Books, in Galena, IL. Mr. Butts, who has appeared on PBS’s “History Detectives,” has extensive experience with appraising ephemera and autographs. Individual appraisals cost $10 per title. Members of the Friends receive their first three appraisals free, and subsequent appraisals at the discounted rate of $5 each. We will gladly accept new Friends memberships on-site for this event.

To finish out the spring, our Annual Ice Cream Social is scheduled for Monday, June 13, 3:30 pm, in the Rare Books and Special Collections Department, Founders Memorial Library 402. There will be a brief business meeting between delicious bites of Ollie’s Frozen Custard, but really, the focus is on the Ollie’s, as it should be. This event is free and open to the public.

I look forward to seeing you this spring!

--Lynne M. Thomas, Faculty Liaison, Friends of NIU Libraries
Announcements:
If you have books you’d like to donate to The Friends book sale at NIU Library, please contact Ken Kamm (815) 753-0573.

Don’t forget to visit the Founders Cafe on the lower level of Founders Library!

Save These Dates:
February 15, 2011, 7:30 pm.
“How Chicago Became America’s Hottest Theater City”
Chris Jones, Theatre Critic for the Chicago Tribune.
Rare Books and Special Collections Department, Founders Memorial Library 402.
This event is free and open to the public.

Wednesday, March 2, 2011 7:00-9:00 pm
“An Evening with Author Alex Bledsoe”.
This event is free and open to the public.

April 7, 2011, 7:30 pm
“Terror and Wonder: Architecture in a Tumultuous Age”
Blair Kamin, Pulitzer-Prize winning Architecture Critic for the Chicago Tribune.
Rare Books and Special Collections Department, Founders Memorial Library 402.
This event is free and open to the public.

May 1, 2011. 11 am-2 pm.
Book Appraisal Fair.
Rare Books and Special Collections Department
Once again, appraisals will be provided by Thomas Joyce of Thomas J. Joyce & Co. and the Chicago Rare Book Center, who appeared on HGTV’s Appraisal Fair program, and William Butts, of Main Street Fine Books, in Galena, IL. Mr. Butts, who has appeared on PBS’s “History Detectives,” has extensive experience with appraising ephemera and autographs. Individual appraisals cost $10 per title. Members of the Friends receive their first three appraisals for free, and subsequent appraisals at the discounted rate of $5 each. We will gladly accept new Friends memberships on-site.

Monday, June 13, 3:30 pm
Friends Annual Meeting and Ice Cream Social
(Join us for Ollie’s frozen custard, good company, and the world’s shortest business meeting, so that we can focus on eating the Ollie’s.)
Rare Books and Special Collections Department, Founders Memorial Library 402
This event is free and open to the public.
Yes! I/We wish to join the Friends of NIU Libraries at the following level:

- $1,000 or more Life Member
- $500 Benefactor/Corporate
- $100 Donor
- $50 Family
- $35 Individual
- $10 Student (Must show ID)

Enclosed is a gift of $______________
(installment plans are available for large gifts)

Please charge to my

- Visa
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Make checks payable to Friends of NIU Libraries.

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- Friends of NIU Library
- Founders Memorial Library
- NIU also offers Payroll Deduction for Faculty and Staff
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- Library Book Fund

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Mail to: Friends of NIU Libraries, Northern Illinois University, Dekalb, IL 60115-2868

Thank you for your support!

Friends of NIU Libraries
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Mail to: Friends of NIU Libraries, Northern Illinois University, Dekalb, IL 60115-2868

Thank you for your support!

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