From the President

What an enjoyable season we are drawing to a close. The programs have been terrific and refreshingly varied. The ice cream social will be the final activity of this season. Please mark your calendar and plan on stopping in for a short visit. I want to thank each member for contributing to the development of our Friends organization through their volunteering of time and materials. Without this ongoing support, our valuable organization would not be able to make the needed contributions to our great libraries here at Northern Illinois University.

The program committee is making the arrangements for this coming season. These enjoyable and informative programs will be announced as these plans are confirmed. I am very pleased to be able to introduce a Friend of the NIU Libraries, Mr. Larry Stein, who has come to help us in the valuable efforts of coordinating the programs and making the announcements as they develop. Watch for this information as it is released and make plans to stay involved by attending and showing your support for the committee and the presenters. This coming season promises to be as wonderful as this season now coming to completion. It has been my pleasure to serve the Friends organization as President this past season. I look forward to continuing my involvement as Vice President by assisting our program committee and by helping Larry prepare for this next season.

Again I encourage each member of the Friends of the NIU Libraries to keep involved with your organization. Please continue to bring book donations to the library for offering in our ongoing book sale cart. This continues to be a great money source. Thank you very much for the support you have given me during my service as President. Join me now to show Larry Stein this continuing support as we move forward and look to the upcoming years.

--Ralph Crafton, President
Library Website

Libraries have come to rely on digital technologies to provide access to their resources. The most significant digital technology libraries have utilized in the last ten years is the Internet. Ten years ago the graphical user interface for the Internet did not exist. If you were out exploring the digital world you were using gophers, WAIS, and Archie to get around. How times have changed.

The University Libraries launched its first website in 1995. The complexities of the first website included finding digital resources to link to, writing the HTML code, and envisioning the structure of a library website. Today, maintaining consistency and currency of the 200 files that make up the website, meeting rising user expectations, and incorporating universal design principles into the website offer a level of complexity that we only imagined in our dreams in 1995.

The popularity of the website has kept pace with the growth of the site. A look at the statistics from February 1999 and February 2003 for the website is illuminating. In February 1999 the website was accessed 710,512 times. In February 2003 that number had grown to 2,190,061. However, hit counts can be deceiving because the count includes all the files and graphics downloaded by a visitor. A true reflection of a website’s traffic is the page view count which counts only the files that are accessed. In February 1999 the website’s page view count was 129,000. In February 2003 the view count had grown to 519,536 pages. In other terms, in the four years between 1999 and 2003, the libraries’ website saw its monthly page view count expand by a factor of 4.

What other fun facts do we know about the growth in the usage of the website? We know that Mondays and Tuesdays were and are the busiest days of the week. However busy has a new meaning in 2003 compared to 1999. In February 1999 busiest meant the site had a monthly total of 245,844 hits on Mondays and Tuesdays. The monthly total for those two days in 2003 was 852,607 hits. The busiest time for the website has changed from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. in 1999 to 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. in 2003. The current website has been viewed from Canada, United Kingdom, Australia, Netherlands, Germany, Japan, Spain, France, Poland, Belgium, Denmark, Singapore, Italy, Brazil, Sweden, New Zealand, Austria, Mexico and Malaysia.

It will be interesting to see if the numbers continue to grow over the next four years as they have in the last four years.

--T. J. Lusher
Assistant Dean, University Libraries

Friends Financial Snapshot

In the current climate of economic bad news on nearly every front the Friends of NIU Libraries, thanks to you, offers a bright counterpoint. Our faithful friends have continued their memberships, their donations of books for the sale, and their occasional memorial gifts.

In just the last three years our permanent endowment fund has more than doubled. In April of 2000 it stood at $71,000 and this April is has surpassed $182,000, an increase of one hundred fifty percent. Compare that with any economic or market index you choose. We reached a second heartening milestone this past year with the establishment of the first separately endowed fund to support staff development. The Library has fifteen smaller endowment funds and to date all had been in support of the collections: this is the first dedicated to staff development and support.

Each year the Friends Endowment yield has been used to purchase items for the library and a list of those purchases is available on our web site. The yield has risen almost proportionately to the total fund so we now have nearly twice as much to spend each year as we did three years ago.

Please turn the page...
The Friends also created and maintain the memorial trees that you will see on either side of the main lobby as you enter the building. These are an excellent way to recognize the retirement of a faculty member, the memory of a loved one who has died, or just to say “Thank You!” to the library for its support of your own research and pleasure.

How do we keep this good thing going? Simple. Pay your membership dues each year since almost all of that money goes into the permanent endowment fund. Remember the memorial trees when the time comes for you to create a memorial for a friend, colleague, or loved one. And please, please remember to donate any and all used books you may have for our ongoing lobby book sale. **Now that we have the book sale up the year around we need more books than ever before.**

Remember that your dues are tax deductible. The fair market value you can honestly place on your book donations is also tax deductible. All contributions leading to memorial leaves, acorns, or trees are fully tax deductible. If you have a colleague retiring this year why not gather your friends and put a permanent leaf on the tree with name and years of service? And then, of course, urge her to donate generously as she packs to move her office library.

Thank you again! Your efforts have ensured an endowment that will help the library in perpetuity. This is a truly extraordinary accomplishment in which we should all take pride.

--Glen A. Gildemeister, Treasurer
Friends of NIU Libraries

**Intellectual Freedom Committee**
Byron Anderson, Northern Illinois University Libraries
Confidentiality and Customer Service

A patron parent wants to know whether her child’s best friend is registered to participate in an upcoming Youth Services program. Can this information be provided? It would be preferable to request that the inquiring patron obtain this information by asking the friend’s parent. Note that if the friend’s name does not appear on the registration list, saying so would not violate the Library Records Confidentiality Act.

This question and others found below were part of the Intellectual Freedom Committee’s 2002 ILA Annual Conference program, “Intellectual Freedom: Hot Legal Issues.” The presenter, attorney Heidi Katz, distributed a packet of useful information and gave permission to reproduce a summary of this for the *ILA Reporter*. The packet contained two pages of hypothetical questions and answers summarized below. While the information is considered accurate, it is not legal advice.

- A caller asks library staff member to locate a patron whom the caller believes may be at the library. Can this request be obliged? What if a parent calls asking staff to locate his or her child? It is advisable to decline the request in light of potential “stalker” problems. In the case of the “parent” caller, how can the staff member be certain that the individual asking about the child’s whereabouts is, in fact, the parent?

- May a staff member permit a requesting parent to see what books his or her child checked out last week? The answer may depend upon the library’s policy. Libraries are not required to perform these services for parents of minor patrons. Many libraries remind members of the public that monitoring children’s reading choice is the responsibility of each child’s parent or guardian.

*Please turn the page.*
• May a staff member provide a person with requested information relating to his or her spouse’s use or borrowing of library services or materials? To do so would violate the Library Records Confidentiality Act, and could create serious repercussions, particularly household units depending on the facts. (Imagine the consternation of an inquiring spouse who learned that his or her mate recently checked out a volume entitled “Do-It-Yourself Divorce.”)

• Suppose a staff member calls to advise a patron that a book, or other collection item, reserved by the patron is available for pickup. If another member of the patron’s household or workplace answers the call, may the staff member leave a message with that individual for the patron, advising that the requested item is in? Yes, if the message is confined to leaving word that “the requested item” is in, without specifying the title or nature of that item.

**Law Enforcement-related Inquiries and Concerns**

Make sure library staff know that inquiries or documents received from representatives of law enforcement agencies concerning patrons’ use of the library should be referred promptly to the Library Director or other responsible administrator.

• May the library supply a patron’s phone number to police upon request? If the number is a listed number, there should be no problem, unless it is a violation of the library policy even to confirm that someone is a patron.

• If a law enforcement official asks for copies of library computer sign up logs for a particular date or dates, may the library provide that information? If the library maintains and retains computer sign up logs, these documents would appear to be protected from disclosure, absent a subpoena, by the Library Records Confidentiality Act.

• Would the answer to the above question differ, if law enforcement officials provided the library with a copy of an electronic message sent that day from a library computer, in which the sender threatened imminent violent harm to a third party? The library has a right to enforce acceptable use rules for its computer system (75 ILCS 5/4-7 authorizes local library boards to make and adopt rules for the government of the library, and to exclude from use of the library any person who willfully violates prescribed rules). Presumably, the acceptable use rules inform the public that if a patron uses the library computer system to commit an unlawful act, the library may contact law enforcement authorities.

**Novelist Richard Powers**

On Thursday, February 27th, the Friends of NIU Libraries welcomed Richard Powers. Words to describe his outstanding accomplishments and achievements are difficult, but somehow Joseph Lo Cascio found those words and introduced this great novelist:

"Those of us fortunate enough to have known Richard Powers at DeKalb High School before he graduated some 28 years ago knew full well to anticipate his greatness. As it turns out, we were all guilty of monumental underestimation. Richard Powers has become America’s preeminent serious novelist. No writer today can challenge his depth, his breadth, his courage, his productivity, and, most importantly, his integrity.

Writing in The New York Review of Books, A.O. Scott says, “I can think of no American novelist of his generation who makes a stronger case that the writing of novels is a heroic enterprise, and perhaps even a matter of life and death.” The Boston Review calls him simply “America’s greatest living novelist.”

---Byron Anderson
Head of Reference

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Lonn E. Brander, D.D.S.
Evening & Saturday Appointments
Friends’ Members receive a $5.00 discount on initial dental exams
203 North Second Street, DeKalb 756-2295
Translated into scores of languages and second to none in his international acceptance, Richard Powers refuses the celebrity status that so many want him to accept. He will not engage in book signings, and is reluctant to do any publicity to sell books. But he will drive from Champaign to DeKalb to talk to high school students for eight consecutive hours, and then spend an afternoon welcoming one of them to the campus of the University of Illinois. He is an amazing human being.

Richard Powers has been the recipient of a 1999 Lannan Literary Award and a MacArthur Genius Fellowship. He has been elected a fellow to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and holds the endowed Swanlund chair in the Department of English at the University of Illinois. Esquire Magazine has named him one of the five “Writers of the Decade.”

In the remarkably short period of only 18 years, he has staggered the literary world with eight completely unique, daring, and passionately human novels whose subjects are as varied as his own limitless interests. Among them: history, art, virtual reality, genetics, the corporate entity, race, music, artificial intelligence, medicine, memory, and the very nature of time itself.

Reviewers often emphasize the cerebral quality of his works, their intellectual challenges, and the demands he places upon his readers. Many critics see him as our most dazzling interpreter of modern technology. But in my opinion, the most insightful reviews are those which see that Rick’s greatest concern is not with technology, but with the human condition itself and the fragile nature of our personal interactions in an increasingly complex and expanding world. Each of his novels is a testament, then, not to ideas, but to people. And each has been received with a wealth of recognition and awards:

His first novel, Three Farmers on Their Way to a Dance, 1985, was a Finalist in the National Book Critics Circle Award

The Goldbug Variations, his third novel, published in 1991 was named Time Magazine’s Book of the Year

Gain, in 1998, won the James Fennimore Cooper Award for Best Historical Fiction. Indeed, if I were to list all his awards tonight, there wouldn’t be time to hear him speak.

His latest novel, The Time of Our Singing, published last month, is one of the most courageous and compelling works I have ever encountered. It is a bold and magnificent novel about race, love, music, and, as always with Richard Powers, the integrity and triumph of the human spirit.

I can only hope that each of you in your lifetime can experience the sense of deep pride I do at this moment, as I introduce to you Richard Powers.”

--Joseph Lo Casio
Medieval Manuscripts

Many of us take books for granted. We have hundreds of them on our bookshelves. We have access to thousands of them in libraries. We can buy them in many places: in bookstores, in supermarkets, online. Books are ubiquitous. Yet many of us do not often stop to think about just how old the book as an object is. The books we handle on a day-to-day basis are fundamentally the same in design as the very first codices ever created. Codex (pl. codices) is the technical term for a book, differentiating it from a scroll. In the ancient world, writing was most commonly preserved on papyrus scrolls. After the codex was invented ca. 100 CE, it soon eclipsed the scroll, which largely fell out of use. The codex is still with us today.

Of course, modern books differ in some important ways from their earliest ancestors, which were manuscripts, that is, written by hand. The heyday of the manuscript was the Middle Ages, roughly from the 7th to the 14th centuries CE. Medieval manuscripts were not written on paper, but on parchment, and they lacked many of the refinements of modern book design, such as page numbers, tables of contents, indices. Yet while most modern books are black and white and contain text with little ornament of any type, medieval manuscripts were colorful and decorated. Even the most humble manuscript had enlarged initials in red or blue or green. The most lavish manuscripts had, in addition, colorful ornamental borders, full page illustrations, and they were illuminated, that is, decorated with gold or silver leaf which caught the light and made the pages glow. While the ornament in medieval manuscripts served many functions, on the most fundamental level it made the pages of the manuscript memorable, enabling readers to find their way in a book in the absence of page numbers, a table of contents or index.

More manuscripts have survived from the Middle Ages than any other object, and the study of manuscripts is an important part of any course on the history or culture of that period. My field is the history of medieval art, and I spend at least some time on manuscripts in just about every course I teach, both the general introductory surveys of art history and the more specialized courses on specific periods or aspects of medieval art. For the most part I rely on photographic reproductions to show students the manuscripts we study, but looking at a slide on a screen or a reproduction in a book, while necessary and informative, is only an imperfect substitute for looking at the real thing. This has been brought home to me more than once since I started teaching at Northern Illinois University two years ago. Last spring I taught a course specifically on medieval manuscripts and organized a special trip for my class to the Newberry Library, which houses the finest collection of medieval manuscripts in Chicago. There my students had the opportunity to see and touch and turn the pages of a variety of manuscripts, from different centuries and parts of Europe, and with varying degrees of decoration. They felt the textures of the different types of parchment, noticed the ruling lines and prickings and erasures, saw the raised surface of the paint and gilding. The excitement was palpable. The same thing happened a few weeks ago when Dr. Christopher de Hamel of the Parker Library, Corpus Christi College, Cambridge University and a world renowned specialist on medieval manuscripts, came to Northern Illinois University. In addition to his public talk, he came to one of my classes and spoke to the students about how medieval manuscripts were made. He brought with him a single leaf from a 13th-century manuscript of a work by Thomas Aquinas. It was a pretty humble fragment, worn at the edges, no fancy illumination, from the type of book that a medieval university student might have owned. He handed it around the class, and as I passed it from student to student I could see the realization dawning on their faces that this was a concrete link between their lives and the lives of human individuals—the scribes who wrote out manuscripts and the students who used them—living centuries ago. Suddenly the Middle Ages were real.

One of the first inquiries I made when I arrived at NIU was whether Founders Memorial Library owned any medieval manuscripts that I could show to my students. I was very disappointed to learn that there were none in the collection. I have tried to compensate in the ways described above, but the number of students for whom I have been able to arrange these experiences is relatively small, only about 35 out of the approximately 800 students whom I have taught.
here so far. If the library owned a small teaching collection of medieval manuscripts it would enable me to provide such experiences for a much larger number of students, enriching their education and instilling in them a greater love and understanding both of the Middle Ages and of books in general.

--Dr. Ann Van Dijk
Assistant Professor, Department of Art

Once a year, the Friends Endowment helps provide funds for books and materials the Library may not otherwise be able to afford. We are currently looking toward purchasing medieval manuscripts to help support the teaching in the Department of Art. Any additional donations toward this effort would be greatly appreciated. If you would like to contribute, the address is: Friends of NIU Libraries, Northern Illinois University Libraries, Room 402, DeKalb, IL 60115 and please indicate "For Medieval Manuscripts." Thank you!

BARB CITY MANOR GARDEN WALK

Barb City Manor's thirteenth annual Garden Walk and Plant Sale will be held Saturday, July 12, 2003 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., rain or shine!

Barb City Manor has provided senior housing to the DeKalb community for twenty-four years and is located in the former DeKalb Public Hospital building. The building is owned by the City of DeKalb. Barb City Manor's operational budget is financially self-sufficient and receives no financial assistance from local, state or federal sources.

Thirteen years ago, board members and supporters came up with the idea of a garden walk/plant sale fundraiser. The funds have been used to benefit various projects including landscaping and the redecorating fund. With donations from community supporters and a successful 12th Annual Garden Walk, Barb City Manor was able to purchase furnishings and artwork for the hallways, lounges and sunrooms on each of the three resident floors. Proceeds from the Thirteenth Annual Barb City Manor Garden Walk will be used to replace two trees and to benefit the endowment fund.

If you will be dividing perennials in your flower garden this spring and wonder what to do with your extra plants, donations would be appreciated for the Plant Sale. Simply pot them up and bring them to Barb City Manor where they will be cared for until the day of the sale.

During the Garden Walk, Rare Books and Special Collections on the fourth floor of Founders Memorial Library at NIU will be the site of a special exhibition entitled: “300 Years of Gardening Books.” It will feature books from the 1700s on landscaping, books on trees with slivers of wood inserted inside the pages, how-to books on growing vegetables from the 1800s, Observations on Modern Gardening (from 1771!), pictures of wildflowers, items from the Regional History Center on Victory Gardens from World War II (Americans were encouraged to grow vegetable gardens) including newspaper clippings about them from DeKalb, posters from World War I about gardening, and many more.
Normally, the Rare Books and Special Collections department is closed on Saturdays, but being open during the Garden Walk will give community members a ‘rare’ opportunity to see inside. Free parking will be available on Saturdays in the parking structure behind the library and in neighboring lots.

Gardens confirmed for this year will be from DeKalb, Sycamore, and Kirkland. If you know of any friend who has a spectacular garden in any of the surrounding areas you think could be featured in a future Garden Walk, please contact Barb City Manor at: 756-8444 to recommend a garden.

Tickets will be available mid-May for $8.00 in advance or $10 day of walk. For information call Barb City Manor at 815-756-8444. Please join us for a beautiful day of viewing gardens in DeKalb and surrounding areas!

--Ginger Turk and Kay Shelton
Barb City Garden Walk Committee