A Message from the Dean of Libraries

In 1997, Sebastian Junger published *The Perfect Storm*, a fictionalized account of the crew of the fishing boat *Andrea Gail* lost at sea during the October 1991 storm south of Nova Scotia. This perfect storm was created by a combination of meteorological events occurring only once a century.

Basically, no one saw it coming until it was there.

The impact was significant, with 13 fatalities and damage in excess of 200 million dollars. The lesson learned was that the models used at the time for predicting weather and warning of impending storms was inadequate, and needed to be improved and updated.

The state of Illinois and Northern Illinois University are in a perfect storm as well. At Northern Illinois University it is a combination of declining enrollment, an erosion of public fiscal support for higher education, and the immediate reality of the new governor asking for a 31% reduction to higher education, coupled with a budget impasse in Springfield that has left the state with no current budget. Did anyone see this coming? I do not know, but the clues had been building over a period of time. The impact on the NIU Libraries of this perfect storm is significant. There has been no increase to the base funding to the libraries for almost 10 years. We have had no new revenue, yet costs of materials and services (books, periodicals, software, online and digital materials, fees, furnishings, etc.) have continued to rise during the same period. We have to spend more to maintain what we have with less funding. This is an unsustainable model. Added to this, in the 7 years I have been Dean, there has been a required give back of funds, further cutting our budget, every year save two. This has severely reduced our ability to function as a library tasked with supporting the mission of research and teaching for the NIU community.

With the governor eviscerating higher education funding, and the impasse between lawmakers in Springfield, NIU -- along with all publicly supported institutions of higher education in Illinois -- has been forced to develop a budget in the dark. Our budget includes a permanent reduction of 11% to the NIU Libraries: that represents a cut of over one million dollars. The NIU Libraries does not generate revenue through student enrollment or through any fees, so we have no other means to offset this cut.

This is the most significant cut the NIU Libraries have faced, and will be felt in all areas of library operations.

Here’s what it means in real terms, right now:

- **If a server fails, we cannot easily replace it.** There is no money for new equipment, new software, or any improvements or repairs to our facilities. This puts our collections, staff, and patrons at risk.

- **We can only buy a handful of books this year, and will be cutting serials as well.** There is very little money to purchase books (monographs) in fiscal year 2016. Almost 85% of the amount budgeted for library materials goes to serials and online research databases. This typically leaves 15% for monograph purchases. We are reviewing our subscriptions and online content and inevitably will cut from this area. Those cuts will not be enough to meet our required reduction. We are having to mostly suspend monograph (book) purchases for fiscal year 2016. This will disproportionately affect the humanities and the social sciences in particular.
That is the immediate impact of this perfect storm. The long term impact will be more significant. We will never be at a funding level sufficient to reinstate the serials and online content we will need to cancel this year, and we will not be able to retrospectively purchase the monographs. Higher education is going through a period of change, some of it driven by external fiscal pressures. Libraries that support higher education, including the NIU libraries, are also going to go through a period of change and adjustment.

The lessons from this are that the NIU Libraries need to develop new revenue streams. While libraries have traditionally been fully supported and funded by their parent institutions, that is apparently no longer a trusted model. Libraries like ours will need to look at possibly charging for goods and services currently delivered for free, while vigorously pursuing philanthropic donations.

NIU is undergoing a program prioritization process this year. The results will have a direct impact on the focus of subject collections in the libraries. We will not be the same library in a few years that we have been, but benefits and new opportunities can come from that. What can you, the reader, do in this time of a perfect storm? First and foremost, be supportive of public investment in higher education. If we do not invest in the education of future generations, what future is there? Become involved, contact your elected officials and encourage fiscal support for higher education. Second, please consider supporting NIU’s teaching and research mission by making your gift to the University Libraries through the NIU Foundation website. [https://securelb.imodules.com/s/1579/Foundation/index.aspx?sid=1579&gid=3&pgid=401&cid=1052#](https://securelb.imodules.com/s/1579/Foundation/index.aspx?sid=1579&gid=3&pgid=401&cid=1052#). Click on “Select a college or university wide program” and scroll down to choose “Library General Support.”

Thank you.
Patrick J. Dawson, Dean

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Thank you to our Life Members (donating $1000.00 or more)

- Adra Baker-Gallagher
- Paul & Jean Burtness
- Glen & Dawn Ericksen
- Deborah Erickson
- James Erman & Lydia Vitello
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The Digitization Lab

NIU Libraries’ Digital Initiatives unit has recently completed the migration of many of their award-winning and popular digital projects onto a new web platform. This platform brings a host of new improvements, including enhancements to website design, graphics, and navigation; built-in digital preservation capabilities; improved organization and management of digital objects; the ability to share collections easily through the OAI protocol; and faceted searching (a more powerful way to sift and winnow search results by the application of filters, like what is used on e-commerce sites.) The rich audiovisual content from sites such as Lincoln/Net (http://lincoln.lib.niu.edu), Mark Twain’s Mississippi (http://twain.lib.niu.edu) and Illinois in the Gilded Age (http://gildedage.lib.niu.edu), was also migrated and ingested into our digital collections repository for long term preservation, and includes interview clips with prominent historians and live recordings of historical music. The website for the Libraries’ Regional History Center and University Archives was given a major overhaul (http://rhc.lib.niu.edu), and features collections containing materials such as Civil War era correspondence, family diaries, church records, and postcards of noteworthy sites throughout northern Illinois. The entire run of NIU’s yearbook, “The Norther,” have been digitized, and many of them are now available for browsing on this website. If you are an alumni, we invite you to visit the site and try to find yourself!

The unit has also recently launched a new website, Nickels and Dimes (http://dimenovels.lib.niu.edu), which is an online collection of dime novels from the Albert Johannsen and Edward T. LeBlanc collections in Rare Books and Special Collections. A format of inexpensive popular literature produced in the United States from 1860 through 1915, the dime novel sold for as little as a nickel or as much as a dime, which made them especially popular among children and the working class. While it was originally a format that was synonymous with the Western, frontier heroes and cowboys eventually gave way to detectives, like Nick Carter, and boy inventors and entrepreneurs, like Frank Reade and Jack Wright. Because of the format’s popularity, however, especially among children, dime novels were a frequent target of moral crusaders and have largely been neglected by both academia and libraries. But since they offer such a unique glimpse into American culture and society at the turn of the century, there has recently been a resurgence of interest in the dime novels among literary scholars and cultural historians, as well as a concerted effort to preserve the yellowing, brittle pages for posterity. In progress since 2013, the digital collection currently consists of 1,479 distinct titles with over 75,000 pages. Among the series digitized is a nearly-complete run of the seminal Beadle’s dime novels, as well as comprehensive runs of Nick Carter weekly -- featuring one of fiction’s first detectives and, for several decades, one of the most well-known fictional characters in American literature. Each page is full-text searchable, with high-quality covers images and PDFs freely available for download.

For a full list of current sites that we manage, please visit: http://www.ulib.niu.edu/aboutus/DigitalCollections.cfm. And if you are a social media user, please follow us on Facebook (http://www.facebook.com/niudigalllibrary), Twitter (http://www.twitter.com/NIUDigLib), and Tumblr (http://www.tumblr.com/niudiglab for updates!

Drew VandeCreek
Director, Digital Initiatives
Jimmy Carter As Author: An Appreciation

Even before it was announced that former President Jimmy Carter was diagnosed with cancer, I had made plans to buy his latest book, *A Full Life: Reflections at Ninety* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2015). After purchasing this book, I noticed two pages into the volume a standard list of previous books simply entitled “Also by Jimmy Carter” that totals 28 separate titles. As I read this list, I was not surprised to learn that I have read most of his books. It should be noted, however, that I have not read his children’s book, *The Little Baby Snoogle-Fleejer* (Illustrated by his daughter Amy Carter) or his collection of verse, *Always a Reckoning and Other Poems*. Carter may yet write more books, but his current total places him second in the category of “most books authored by a former President” behind Theodore Roosevelt who wrote 38. Carter’s books matter to me beyond the fact that he was a President of the United States.

As a native Georgian, I have had a long personal and professional interest in Jimmy Carter. Much of my scholarly writing has focused on Carter as a communicator. This research should eventually be published in a book on Jimmy Carter’s presidential speechmaking. My personal fascination with Carter starts with his humble birth. Carter was the first American president to be born in a hospital—in very rural Plains, Georgia. Carter’s *An Hour Before Daylight: Memories of a Rural Boyhood* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2001), cheerfully describes in colorful detail his memories of growing up in southern Georgia during the Great Depression. Jimmy’s father, James Earl Carter, Sr. and his mother, “Miss Lillian” Carter are lovingly depicted in candid prose. In this book, we also learn a telling detail about the future president. “Mr. Earl,” as was father was known around Plains, gave Jimmy the nickname “Hot,” short for “Hotshot,” reflecting perhaps the mindset and the attitudes displayed at the time by his oldest son. My own father, born in 1926, was two years younger than Carter, told me very similar stories about his adventures rowing up in rural Rutledge, Georgia during the Depression era.

The book that has impressed me the most so far is Carter’s *Turning Point: A Candidate, at State, and a Nation Come of Age* (New York: Crown Publishers, 1992). This volume describes Carter’s very difficult first campaign in 1962 for public office against the local “courthouse gang.” Carter was running for the state senate and his opponent had the endorsement of the powerful county board supervisor. On Election Day, many voting irregularities were observed by Carter loyalists that included votes cast by many occupants of the local county cemetery. Carter lost the election, but demanded an investigation of the voter fraud as well as a recount. Carter’s book carefully describes the lawsuits filed in this case that ultimately resulted in his claiming the state senate seat. The former president was often faulted for often not being very adept at political machinations. This book demonstrates that Carter could be a very shrewd political strategist.

For those that do not care for politics, the other impressive feature of my copy of *Turning Point* is that it is signed by the author. When Carter was promoting the book in 1993, I waited in a long line with other customers at a suburban Chicago bookstore to have the former president autograph my copy of his book. He was very gracious and also signed my copy of *Keeping Faith: Memoirs of a President* (New York: Bantam Books, 1982).

Ferald Bryan,
President Friends of NIU Libraries

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Member Benefits:

Receive a 10% discount on merchandise at the following stores:
- Ed Ripp Fine Art Books, Chicago

Friends tote bags! {email (aschroeder@niu.edu) or call (815-753-8091) Angie Schroeder for details.}
A Note From the Faculty Liaison

Dear Friends,

I am still having some difficulty believing that it is fall already, despite just having kicked off the semester with our annual Wine and Cheese event on August 27th.

Our other program this fall is one that we hope will appeal to the mystery-lovers in our crowd. Timothy J. Johnson, E. W. McDiarmid Curator of the Sherlock Holmes Collections at the University of Minnesota, will be joining us on **October 27, 2015** for a talk on “Gophers, Huskies, and Sherlock Holmes,” focusing on Holmes in the Midwest.

This spring we also have a stellar lineup.

We are cosponsoring, with the Medieval Studies Program, a visit from Dr. Robert Berkhofer of Western Michigan University on **Thursday, March 24, 2016**. While we don’t know his official topic yet, we expect it will be excellent.

The Friends of the NIU Libraries are once again participating in The Big Read in concert with the DeKalb Public Library. There will be an event with National Medal of Arts winner Julia Alvarez, the author of *How the García Girls Lost Their Accents* on **March 22, 2016**. Once we have more details, we will let you know.

And, of course, you can count on our Annual Ice Cream Social and annual meeting at the end of the Spring Semester.

You may note that our programming this year is a bit more pulled back. This is because NIU is going through Program Prioritization, looking at every single program on campus. Since I’m the University Libraries’ representative for this process, my time for programming and events for the Friends is limited this year. Rest assured, though, this year’s programs are top notch.

In this issue of Founders’ Type, you will also find a brief survey. As part of the Program Prioritization process, we would like to ask for your feedback about the Friends. Please take the survey, and return it to us by September 30. If you wish to write a letter of support for the Friends, that would also be welcome. Both can be sent to: Friends of NIU Libraries, Founders Memorial Library 403, Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, IL 60115.

Thanks once again for your support of the University Libraries.

Lynne M. Thomas
Faculty Liaison, Friends of NIU Libraries

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**2015-2016 Friends of NIU Libraries**

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- Lynne M. Thomas (Faculty & Program liaison)

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Chicon 7 Supports Science Fiction Collection

The big story at NIU for science fiction and fantasy enthusiasts is that they will have many more pages to turn thanks to a generous contribution from Chicon 7 that will help grow the science fiction and fantasy collections at NIU.

The Peggy Rae Sapienza Endowment will provide financial support to the Northern Illinois University Library, Special Collections, enabling the procurement, preservation, and promotion of materials germane to the study of Science Fiction, Fantasy and Horror and their fandoms.

Presentation of the initial endowment of $25,000 was made at the Nebula Award Weekend in Chicago and represents the last of Chicon 7’s surplus. Steven H Silver, who was one of three Chicon 7 vice chairs, will serve as the fund’s trustee.

The endowment honors fan and convention organizer Peggy Rae Sapienza who was an important figure in convention fandom. She chaired Bucconeer, the 1998 Baltimore Worldcon, and was the North American Agent for Nippon, the Japanese Worldcon in 2007. Sapienza also chaired the Nebula Awards Weekends in 2011 and 2012 and co-chaired the 2014 World Fantasy Convention.

Sapienza received a Big Heart Award in 1983 and was fan guest of honor at Chicon 7, the 2012 Worldcon in Chicago, IL.

The endowment is meant to ensure that Sapienza’s love of science fiction and fantasy will continue to inspire passion and imagination in others.

“We are absolutely thrilled that Chicon in 2012 — and the greater science fiction fantasy community — have come together to support our collections through the Sapienza endowment,” says Lynne M. Thomas, Curator of Rare Books and Special Collections at NIU. She adds, “This generous gift — and further gifts of support like it — ensures the stability and growth of our science fiction collections for generations of scholars, fans, and readers to come.”

Additional contributions to the Peggy Rae Sapienza Fund can be made at the NIU Foundation giving page.

-- NIU Foundation Marketing & Communications
Survey

Your responses to this survey will help us to evaluate the Friends of the NIU Libraries during the Program Prioritization process. Thank you!

How many Friends of the NIU Libraries programs have you attended in the past 2 years?
None 1 2-3 4-5 6 or more

What kinds of programs would you like to see more of? Less of?

What makes the NIU Libraries a significant resource for NIU and DeKalb?

Why do you choose to support the Friends of the NIU Libraries?

Thank you! Your responses will help the University Libraries to demonstrate their excellence, and their commitment to the University’s mission.

Please send your comments via email to: libraryfriend@niu.edu
or
mail to: Friends of NIU Libraries
   Founders Memorial Library
   Northern Illinois University
   DeKalb, IL  60115

Save These Dates for Friends Events!:

**Tuesday, October 27, 2015**, 7:30 pm. *Gophers, Huskies, and Sherlock Holmes* with Timothy J. Johnson, Curator of the Sherlock Holmes Collections at the University of Minnesota Libraries. Staff Lounge, Founders Memorial Library, Lower Level. This event is free and open to the public.

**Thursday, March 24, 2016**. Medieval discussion with Dr. Robert Berkhofer from Western Michigan University. Co-sponsored with the Medieval Studies Program. This event is free and open to the public. More info coming soon.
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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Credit Card Number__________________________
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Make checks payable to Friends of NIU Libraries

If a gift is in memory or in honor of someone, please include the purpose.

Would you like any of the following brochures?
- Friends of NIU Library
- Ensuring the Future Trees
- Library Book Fund
- Library Dedication for Faculty and Staff
- NIU also offers Payroll Deduction

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

Thank you for your support!

Friends of NIU Libraries
Founders Memorial Library
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DeKalb, IL 60115