



LIBRARY NEWS

For the faculty of the
University of Florida

A publication of the
George A. Smathers Libraries

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New Online Reference Now Available

Do you conduct research using your computer at home or in your office? If so, have you ever wished that you had a librarian near at hand to help you with a question or a problem while searching databases remotely? Perhaps you called one of the reference desks and experienced the frustration of trying to describe to the librarian what you were seeing on your computer. Maybe emailing the library wasn't helpful because you needed an immediate answer. Try chatting with a UF librarian via George A. Smathers Libraries' new service, *RefeXpress*.

What is *RefeXpress*?

RefeXpress is an interactive reference service that allows you to consult online with a UF librarian on the Web without leaving your computer. *RefeXpress* offers a chat, or conversational feature that allows you and the librarian to discuss your question, as well as your time frame for getting an answer. As the librarian starts to work on answering your question, *RefeXpress* has powerful features that allow him or her to assist you while online. The librarian can push a web page that displays on your computer, by sending you a file of information, or even by collaboratively searching the Web and certain databases with you. He or she can demonstrate how to perform a search by typing keywords in the blanks in a database, as you watch at

your computer in your office. When finished, you have the option of receiving a transcript of your chat in two formats, HTML or email (if you supply an email address when logging on).

How to Use *RefeXpress*

You do not need to install any programs to use *RefeXpress*. Click on the *RefeXpress* logo on any of the Libraries' web pages, and you will be rapidly connected with one of the twenty-two *RefeXpress* staff members on duty. The first thing that you will see after clicking on the logo will be a welcome page with a "Go!" button to connect to the service. (You might wish to bookmark this page on your computer for easy access.) Click on "Go!" and then fill out your name, email address and your question on the next page. Leave "web collaboration" checked if you would like the librarian to demonstrate a database search, or to follow you as you search. Then click on the submit button to logon.

A small popup window will announce that you are connected, followed by a greeting from a librarian who has read your question. The next screen that you see, the *RefeXpress* screen, integrates a small web browser and a chat window. Type your comments in the chat window in the bottom half of the computer screen. The Libraries' home page will display in the top half of the screen, the web-

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Frequently Asked Questions

Q What types of reference are available from UF Libraries?

A In addition to in-person and phone reference, the Libraries offer email reference services and the new online interactive *RefEXpress*.

Q Email reference and *RefEXpress* are both internet services. What's the difference?

A Email questions can be submitted at any time. Librarians respond to these on a daily basis using a regular email system. *RefEXpress*, in contrast, offers a way for a researcher to consult with a librarian, in real time, without leaving the computer.

Q What progress has been made towards purchase of a new library management system?

A The choice has been narrowed to two systems, Endeavor and Ex Libris, which best addressed the criteria we developed. After demonstrations by these vendors there will be site visits to other libraries already using each system. It is planned that the final decision will be made by June 2001.

RefEXpress (Continued from page 1)

browsing window. Watch the top half of the page for information that the librarian will send, or use it to demonstrate the searching problem that you are experiencing. Please avoid using your web browser's back or forward buttons, as they will cause you to travel away from the *RefEXpress* session. Use the back button to return to the *RefEXpress* session if you accidentally navigate away.

What Kinds of Questions Are Appropriate for *RefEXpress*?

When you use *RefEXpress*, the librarian on duty will make every effort to answer your question or lead you to the informational resources that you need. Some questions may be answered immediately during a brief *RefEXpress* session, while others may take some time. If your question falls into the latter category, the librarian will make arrangements to email you the answer, refer you to a subject specialist, call you back with an answer, or make an appointment to meet with you.

Interactive Reference Using Chat

The Smathers Libraries are proud to be in the vanguard of this trend in the library world to offer reference assistance to remote library users via synchronous communication. Our goal is to extend services that have traditionally been available only at the reference desks of the nine libraries on campus into the offices, the dorm rooms and the homes of the UF community. *RefEXpress* is available Monday-Thursday 9 a.m.-9 p.m. and Friday 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

Jana Smith Ronan, Interactive Reference Coordinator, jronan@ufl.edu

Special Collections Support Organization Holds Annual Dinner

The Howe Society, a support organization of the Department of Special and Area Studies Collections, held its annual celebratory dinner on February 17 in the Smathers Library Research Room.

John Ingram, Director for Collections, gave the welcome and on behalf of Director Dale Canelas, spoke about new initiatives during the previous year. Carl Van Ness, interim chair of the Department, and university archivist, opened the program with a summary of major changes in the Department.

Marcia Pearce, Director of Development, reported major gifts to the Libraries in the last year. She announced the gift of rare William Faulkner books from Jacksonville physician Dr. Hugh Carithers; multiple scientific journals by Dr. Alan Katritzky; and the Honorable Farris Bryant's increased commitment to the Farris and Julia Bryant Florida History Preservation Endowment. Pearce noted the bequest of Donald E. Van Dyke establishing an endowment for the Libraries' greatest needs and a second bequest to establish the Jesse Shaw and Mortimer B. Bates Jr. Endowment to enhance electronic resources at the Library. Pearce introduced Dr. Marilyn Fregly, who recently increased the Melvin J. and Marilyn S. Fregly Endowment for Biomedical and Humanities Collections and donated her late husband's papers concerning the development of UF's medical school. She is serving as a specialist on-site in archiving and processing those papers. Fregly spoke about the signifi-

Preserving Knowledge of the Real Florida

As Florida's primary land grant institution, the University of Florida has a long and rich involvement with its agriculture and rural life. It is thus very important that we preserve the books and periodicals that have documented these aspects of Florida. When we had an opportunity several years ago to join with similar schools in other states in proposing a funded program to microfilm aging and deteriorating copies of these works, librarians John Ingram, Erich Kesse and Vernon Kisling jumped at the chance.

Today we are in the final stages of our part of the resulting project, in cooperation with the United States Agricultural Information Network (USAIN) to identify, describe and preserve through microfilming a large number of books and serials concerned with Florida agriculture and rural life prior to 1945. The project, funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), is coordinated at Cornell and has grown to include other states.

The first phase of the project involved creating a comprehensive list of materials to be preserved. Bibliographer Vernon Kisling of the Marston Science Library spent over a year compiling a list of significant works both at the University of Florida and in other locations throughout the state. His Florida Agriculture and Rural History Bibliography (covering 1820-1945 and consisting of some 2,500 citations) is not available in printed form. It has become merged into the Digital Library Center's Linking Florida's Natural Heritage site at <http://susdl.fcla.edu/lfnh/> and all the citations from the bibliography are now integrated into this website's bibliographic database along with many others.

Annual Dinner *(Continued from previous page)*

cance of her gift, and invited special guest Dr. Robert Cade, her husband's colleague, to add a few words of his own.

Bertram Wyatt-Brown, Society president, introduced board members and the speaker, author David Hackett Fischer, Warren Professor of History at Brandeis University. Dr. Fischer, author of *Paul Revere's Ride* and *Albion's Seed* gave an illustrated lecture on "Liberty and Freedom: An American Iconography."

Cathleen Mook, Chair of the Libraries' Preservation Department, coordinated the project after completion of the prioritized list on which it was based. Nelda Schwartz and her preservation team had to physically locate the books and periodicals from our library stacks and elsewhere for cataloging and microfilming. The library at UF's Citrus Research & Education Center in Lake Alfred loaned us boxes of old journal volumes for filming, and the National Agricultural Library also gave us many volumes in the later stages of the grant. Preservation staff developed an ACCESS database for tracking and managing the various titles and volumes through the steps in the process. Staff also searched each title in the library catalog and in the OCLC database (known to library patrons as WORLDCAT in FIRSTSEARCH) for records describing these old books and journals.

Many of the existing bibliographic records required considerable revision, and there were many authors whose names required detective work. It was common when the books were published to give only the initials and surnames of the authors on title pages. Many of these were key figures in the agriculture or the development of Florida, and many had been agricultural scientists here at the University of Florida and at our research centers throughout the state.

Microfilming of books and journals began in December 1999 and continues today. An impressive 850 monographic and serial titles have been preserved on approximately 300 reels of film, comprising over 1,700 different physical volumes. Filming will be completed this spring. New catalog records in OCLC were added to document the resultant microfilm editions. Anyone interested in acquiring copies of this film may contact mfmsales@mail.uflib.ufl.edu.

In addition to making microfilm copies available for distribution and use in libraries, archival copies are safely stored off-site for future generations as is standard practice in our microfilming programs. This will guarantee that the real Florida as it was written about and photographed in those earlier times will always be available for study regardless of how it has changed or will continue to change in the future.

Jimmie Lundgren, Resource Services and
Cathleen Mook, Chair, Preservation Department



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Children's Books Microfilmed and Digitized

The Baldwin Library of Historical Children's Literature of the Department of Special and Area Studies Collections was awarded a two-year grant by the National Endowment for the Humanities to catalog, microfilm and digitize 8,600 children's and young adult books published between 1850 and 1869. The grant began October 1, 2000, when Ruth Sheng and Jane Anne Carey were hired



to catalog the volumes. All books will be microfilmed and then the text and black and white images will be digitized from the microfilm. This time period covers the years of great expansion in children's publishing and the introduction of color and its increasing presence in children's books. All color images in each book will be scanned and merged with the digitized version of the microfilm, to allow digitized access to the complete book.

As of March 1, approximately 1,000 books have been fully catalogued and added to LUIS, the University of Florida Libraries' online catalog. Access points to these records include genre terms, such as fairy tales and catechisms; printer, publisher and illustrator; binding and provenance terms, as well as the standard author, title and subject. Approximately 40% of the books cataloged so far have no record in OCLC, the national database, indicating that the Baldwin Library holds the only available copy. The microfilming began in late February and after two days of filming, 11 reels containing 65 volumes have been produced.

The fulfillment of the terms of the grant is definitely a team effort, including personnel from Library Administration, the Department of Special and Area Studies Collections, the Preservation Department, the Resource Services Department, the Digital Library Center and the Florida Center for Library Automation (FCLA).

This two-year grant is Phase I of what is hoped to be a three-phased project, with Phase II covering the years 1870-1889, and Phase III, 1890-1910. For more information on the grant or on the Baldwin Library of Historical Children's Literature, contact Rita Smith, Curator at 392-0369; email: ritsmit@mail.uflib.ufl.edu.



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