

Celebration of Service April 6, 2004

Introduction

I'm grateful for the chance to talk to you during this, the Celebration of Service Program, which marks the service milestones met by our staff. The program also represents for me, a personal milestone, because it roughly coincides with my anniversary as your Director of Libraries. I started work here on April 15, 2002, and my very first official function (barely two days later) was to address the staff assembled for the Celebration of Service.

It's been an eventful two years, and I won't pretend that it's been all sweetness and light. But overall, it has been most satisfying. I thought it would be useful to look back on some of the major accomplishments of this past year, to savor and to celebrate what we've done together. So I will now present my "Top Ten List" of the most notable events of the year. (See if it matches yours.)

MU Libraries Top Ten Events of the Past Year

- Ten Painting of the ceiling of Ellis 201, in preparation for a proposal to secure funds for a newly renovated reading room sometime in 2005 (we hope).
- Nine Retirement of the Card Catalog; a twenty-one drawer "salute" heralded the end of an era, as dignitaries helped us bid farewell to a venerable research colleague.
- Eight Copyright and Intellectual Property Conference; the second in a continuing series of forums on scholarly communications issues. (At our first forum in 2003, 80 participants; at this year's, 200!)

- Seven Kick-off of the MU Libraries' Capital Campaign, with a goal of \$8 million, and the Creation of the Library Society – our organization to recognize major benefactors to the Libraries.
- Six Resumption of the online Table of Contents Service to our cataloged records, enabling enhanced access for library users.
- Five Formation of the Journal Cost Management Group; and the move from print to electronic journal subscriptions as a major cost management strategy.
- Four Information Commons leadership gift from James B. Nutter, Sr., and the relocation of Ellis Reference Department to begin construction.
- Three Opening of the Bookmark Café; and we hope that next year we may see an expansion to one or two of our branch libraries.
- Two 190 new library computers through student Instructional Technology Fees; with promise of cycling through replacement of computers every three years.

And the Number One achievement of the past year:

Completion of the Staff Reclassification effort and the creation of a promotion ladder for all our classified staff.

Some of you may have a different “top ten list,” but I hope that most would include these as highlights of the past year. The important thing is that we can all celebrate these as collective efforts – as mutual achievements – that have both enriched our services to users and enhanced our image on campus. We have accomplished this together, and I thank you for your hard work. We can be justifiably proud of our efforts. Give yourselves a round of applause!