



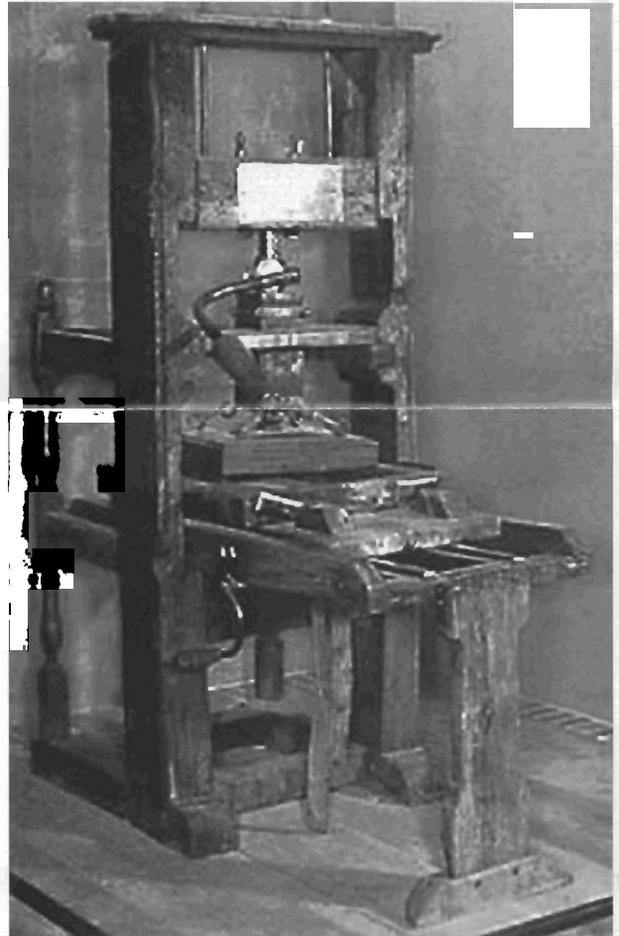
# MTSU to Build Replica of Ben Franklin's Printing Press

**W**alker Library and the Book Arts Program of MTSU's Art Department have been awarded a Special Projects grant from the MTSU Foundation to construct a replica of a fully operational eighteenth-century printing press. Alan Boehm and William Black of Walker Library and Janet Higgins of the Art Department are directing the project.

Don Craig, dean of the library, has high hopes for this endeavor. "This will be a significant event in the history of the University. The wooden press significantly shaped over 400 years of Western history, but there are too few who know about its history and use. This project provides us with a unique opportunity to bring a bit of publishing history to our students and to the community as well."

Craftsmen in Facilities Services are building the press entirely in-house. Photographic Services is chronicling the construction, and a broadcast-quality video is being created by Audio/Visual Services.

With detailed construction plans drawn from Benjamin Franklin's printing press housed at the Smithsonian Institution, a number of metal components have been forged and the press frame has been shaped from massive chestnut timbers that were recovered from an early nineteenth-century house in Virginia. Preparations to fabricate the main mechanical component—the threaded press screw or "spindle"—are about to get underway in the Department of Engineering Technology and Industrial



Studies on a state-of-the-art computerized metal-cutting lathe recently procured by the department.

When construction of the press is completed, MTSU will be one of a small handful of higher education and public institutions with a working wooden press and perhaps the only institution in the country with a historic press that can be conveniently disassembled, transported, and reassembled for printing demonstrations.

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## Library Upgrades Computers for Student Use

In the past semester the library has replaced all of its public computers with newer, faster systems with many new features. This move upgrades the library's computers from 400MHz to 2.26GHz and quadruples the amount of memory available on each system. The CD-ROM drives in the old systems have been replaced with DVD-ROM drives, the Zip100 drives are now Zip250 drives, and many of the new systems now have optical mice. The library's public printers were also upgraded. Higher capacity, high-speed printers

have been placed throughout the building for student use.

The Technology Access Fee students pay each term made these upgrades possible. For this reason the University requires the library to track usage of the systems. The Information Technology Division has recommended that the library use the pGina login interface you now see on all public computers. To log in you simply key in your PipelineMT username and password and away you go.

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## PRESS continued from cover

According to William Black, administrative services librarian, "The printing press will bring excitement to MTSU, highlight the skills of University staff, and serve as a magnet for educational opportunities and grant seeking at MTSU and in the community."

The printing press will also be an important educational resource for the University, offering a rare opportunity for students in the Book Arts Program and attracting to campus nationally known visiting lecturers on the history of the book as well as prominent book artists. The press can be integrated into advanced undergraduate and graduate bibliography and early modern literature courses to show how literary texts were presented to their original readers and transmitted to subsequent audiences.

A partnership has been formed with the Rutherford County school system to integrate the press into reading and writing education. Discussions are now underway to use the press in public printing demonstrations in middle Tennessee.

Janet Higgins says, "Today any youngster with a personal computer, a printer, and a few readily available software packages can command a power of communication that rivals the printing press. Yet most people today have rarely seen an origi-



Keith Jenkins, master cabinetmaker

nal press in operation and, as our experiences with our small press indicate, they are enormously fascinated when they do."

Construction will take place in stages as plans are studied and advice gathered. In addition to building the press, the University plans to produce a broadcast-quality documentary film of its planning and construction.

"Although such presses were used throughout Europe and, in time, the Americas, surprisingly little is known about the technical history of these presses," says Alan Boehm, special collections librarian. "We are fortunate to have the work of Elizabeth Harris and Clinton Sisson to help us in this project. Harris and Sisson worked with the Smithsonian staff to examine every inch of Benjamin Franklin's original press (acquired by the Smithsonian in 1901) and patiently reconstructed the dimensions and techniques used in its assembly by eighteenth-century craftsmen. Their work will

guide our construction."

The full printing press should be completed sometime next summer. A private donation matching the original grant has recently been secured and additional funding is being sought. Those interested in finding out more about this project or assisting with it are encouraged to contact Bill Black at 898-2772 or [wblack@mtsu.edu](mailto:wblack@mtsu.edu).

## UPGRADE continued from cover

The laptops that can be checked out from the Reserves Desk (for use within the library) have also been replaced with newer systems. The new laptops are not only faster but are wireless as well. With these you can search the databases available in the library, check Voyager to see if the book you need is on the shelf, and do research over the Internet without having to plug into a power or network jack. The laptops can access the in-house wireless network from almost any casual seating area or study room in the library.

### University Library Update

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Editor: William Black

Contributors to this issue:

William Black, J. Donald Craig, Melvin Davis, Mayo Taylor, Michael Wheaton

## Library Launches Student Recognition Program

One-third of the persons providing service in the Walker Library are MTSU students. The library could not operate without the dedication of these student assistants. In order to recognize those who go above and beyond what is expected, a Student Recognition Program has been put into place. Students who excel at their work can be nominated for an award. Nominations are reviewed by the Library Administrative Council and award winners are recognized with a short ceremony in the dean's office, a Web page highlighting their achievement, and a framed Student of the Month photo at the circulation desk.

## Greeter Program Inaugurated

Surveys of library use are conducted on a regular basis to help ensure successful service to students and faculty. In an effort to gather additional information and to improve access to library collections and services, the library began a greeter program at the beginning of the fall semester. Volunteers from the library faculty and staff served one-hour slots at the front doors handing out information about the library and greeting those entering the building.

# Twelve Ways Libraries Are Good for the Country

MOST AMERICANS KNOW what they can expect from a library. And librarians know what it takes to provide comprehensive access to every recorded detail of human existence. It takes support. Libraries are ready when they are needed, ready to enrich our minds and defend our right to know, just as other institutions protect our safety and property. Without sound minds, however, the American dream of safe streets and secure homes will never be fulfilled.

**1. Libraries inform citizens.** Democracy vests supreme power in the people. Libraries make democracy work by providing access to information so that citizens can make the decisions necessary to govern themselves. The public library is the only institution in American society whose purpose is to guard against the tyrannies of ignorance and conformity, and its existence indicates the extent to which a democratic society values knowledge, truth, justice, books, and culture.

**2. Libraries break down boundaries.** Libraries provide free family literacy programs for low-literate, illiterate, and non-English-speaking people. In addition, hundreds of librarians across America lead outreach programs that teach citizenship and develop multilingual and multicultural materials for their patrons. Libraries serve the homebound elderly, prisoners, and other institutionalized individuals, the homeless, and the blind and hearing-impaired.

**3. Libraries level the playing field.** Economists have cited a growing income inequity in America, with the gap between the richest and poorest citizens becoming wider year by year. By making all its resources equally available to all members of its community, regardless of income, class, or other factors, the library levels the playing field. Once users have access to the library's materials, they have the opportunity to level the playing field outside the library by learning to read, gaining employment, or starting a business.

**4. Libraries value the individual.** Library doors swing open for independent thinking without prejudice. Libraries offer alternatives to the manipulations of commercialism, from the excellence of public-television productions to the freethinking of renegade publishers and the vision of poets and artists outside the mainstream business of art and literature.

**5. Libraries nourish creativity.** In the library we are all children. By stimulating curiosity-parent to the twin forces of creativity and imagination-even the most focused and specialized library serves the purpose of lifting the mind beyond its horizons. Libraries store ideas that may no longer work but can serve as the raw material that, cross-fertilized in the innovative mind, may produce answers to questions not yet asked.

**6. Libraries open kids' minds.** Bringing children into a library can transport them from the commonplace to the extraordinary. From story hours for preschoolers to career planning for high schoolers, children's librarians make a difference because they care about the unique developmental needs of every individual who comes to them for help. Children get a handle on personal responsibility by holding a library card of their own, a card that gives them access to new worlds in books, videos, audiotapes, computers, games, toys, and more.

Libraries safeguard our freedom and keep democracy healthy. To library advocates everywhere-Friends, trustees, board members, patrons, and volunteers-American Libraries offers this gift of 12 ideals toward which we strive. It will take all of us, in a spirit of pride and freedom, to maintain libraries as a living reality in a free nation into the 21st century.

**7. Libraries return high dividends.** What do Gallo wines, the I Can't Believe It's Yogurt chain, and billboard-sign giant Metromedia have in common? Libraries made millionaires out of each of these companies' grateful owners by providing crucial start-up information when they were no more than wannabe business titans. Libraries are there to help people with more personal goals, too. The seed money expended for these and other success stories? Less than \$20 per capita per year in tax dollars.

**8. Libraries build communities.** No narrow definition of community will work in a library. Each community has its libraries and its special collections. Libraries validate and unify; they save lives, literally and by preserving the record of those lives. Community-building means libraries link people with information. Librarians have become experts at helping others navigate the Internet. Before there was talk of cyberspace, there were libraries, paving the way for the information superhighway.

**9. Libraries make families friendlier.** The American family's best friend, the library, offers services guaranteed to hone coping skills. Homework centers, literacy training, parenting materials, after-school activities, summer reading programs, outreach-like the families they serve, libraries everywhere are adapting to meet new challenges.

**10. Libraries offend everyone.** Children's librarian Dorothy Broderick contends that every library in the country ought to have a sign on the door reading: "This library has something offensive to everyone. If you are not offended by something we own, please complain." This willingness and duty to offend connotes a tolerance and a willingness to look at all sides of an issue that would be good for the nation in any context; it is particularly valuable when combined with the egalitarianism and openness that characterize libraries.

**11. Libraries offer sanctuary.** Like synagogues, churches, mosques, and other sacred spaces, libraries can create a physical reaction, a feeling of peace, respect, humility, and honor that throws the mind wide open and suffuses the body with a near-spiritual pleasure. But why? Perhaps it is because in the library we are answerable to no one; alone with our private thoughts, fantasies, and hopes, we are free to nourish what is most precious to us with the silent companionship of others we do not know.

**12. Libraries preserve the past.** Libraries preserve the record; a nation, a culture, a community that does not understand its own past is mired in its own mistakes. Libraries enable us to communicate through distance and time with the living and the dead. It is a miracle kept available by the meticulous sorting, storing, indexing, and preservation that still characterizes library work-work that will carry, in the electronic environment, challenges and a price tag yet unknown.

## In Print and Program

**John Hitchcock and Eloise Hitchcock**, co-editors, "Tennessee Bibliography 2002," published in the *Tennessee Librarian*, Vol. 53, no. 4.

**Sue Alexander, William Black, Kathy Field, Virginia Vesper**, "Perceptions of the Library: A Key to Planning Effective Services," *Southeastern Librarian*, Spring 2004.

**Alan Boehm**, review of *The House of Blackwood: Author-Publisher Relations in the Victorian Era*, by David Finkelstein (Penn State Univ. Press, 2002), to be published in *Libraries and Culture*, University of Texas-Austin

**Rachel Kirk** made a presentation with Dr. Carol Tenopir from the University of Tennessee at the American Society of Information Science and Technology Annual Meeting in Long Beach. "Undergraduate Science Students and Electronic Scholarly Journals" is phase one of a two-phase project funded by the National Science Digital Library Project of the National Science Foundation to study undergraduate students' perceptions of science journal literature and the use of digital library resources.

### Library Hours

Monday–Thursday	7:30 a.m.–midnight.
Friday	7:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m.
Saturday	8:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.
Sunday	1:00 p.m.–midnight.

## New Staff

Since the spring 2003 issue of *Update*, Amy York and Tammie Dye have joined the Walker Library staff. We are pleased to welcome them and to introduce them to the MTSU community.



**Amy York** (assistant professor, User Services). Amy joined User Services in October 2003. She will work primarily at the reference desk and teach bibliographic instruction classes. A native of Tennessee, Ms. York received the bachelor of arts degree from MTSU, where she majored in English. She received her graduate degree from the University of Tennessee. Before coming to MTSU, Amy was a reference librarian at the Williamson County Public Library. ~~She was once a student worker at the Todd Library.~~

**Tammie Dye** (Library Administration). Tammie is the new account clerk in the administrative office. She handles receivables, payroll, and mail. She was hired in August 2003. A native of Tennessee, Ms. Dye previously worked for Friendship Christian School in Lebanon.



[www.mtsu.edu/~library](http://www.mtsu.edu/~library)

**MIDDLE  
TENNESSEE**  
STATE UNIVERSITY

James E. Walker Library  
Box 13  
Middle Tennessee State University  
Murfreesboro, Tennessee 37132

2-40100