Library Automation Project Update

by David Robinson

The Library's Automation Committee began an in-depth analysis of the Library in 1984. The committee interviewed staff members in each department and observed the normal day-to-day operations of that department over an extended period of time. The result was a better understanding of the operations of each department and a determination of which problems in each department could be addressed by computerization and which by changes in procedures. The committee then made recommendations for those changes and for potential improvements that could be realized through the assistance of computerization. This project was completed in 1987.

The automation committee compiled its analyses of existing problems and its recommendations. It then wrote a synopsis, in the form of a proposal to the President, advocating computerization of the Library and requesting funding for such a project. Copies of this proposal were sent to the president, all the vice-presidents, the deans, academic departments, the University Library Committee, the Faculty Senate, and the Associated Student Body. Copies were also made available to any other interested parties.

Shortly after a successful publicity campaign for automation, President Ingram directed the Library to proceed with obtaining bids for the system. The Library officially solicited proposals on December 10, 1987. The results of the needs analysis played an important role in the development of the Request for Proposal (RFP), which had been developed concurrently with the analysis, and the specifications addressed those needs the committee had identified.

After receiving eight responses from library system vendors, the Automation Committee carefully read and compared the proposals with the specifications in the request to determine how well each vendor's proposal met the stated requirements. Since the State of Tennessee requires that any large computer procurement made by a state agency follow a multi-step bidding process, vendors were required to submit unpriced technical proposals in response to the Library's RFP. The Library then evaluated each proposal and worked with the vendor to get its proposal into full compliance. Since the state also requires competitive bidding on all procurements, it isn't enough to simply get one vendor into compliance. There must be at least two.

Clearly, the Automation Committee had a major task to complete. There were eight vendors who submitted proposals based on literally hundreds of specifications in the RFP, hundreds of specifications because an automated library system is very complex. A fully integrated automated library system affects the operation of every aspect of the Library, from acquisitions through circulation. The task of evaluating the vendors' proposals took several weeks.

The Automation Committee worked with each vendor to try to bring its proposal into compliance. Some proposals were just too incompatible with the Library's stated specifications. These vendors either voluntarily dropped out, or their proposals were rejected. Other vendors came very close to meeting our specifications, and the Committee redoubled its efforts to bring them into compliance. In some cases this meant altering some specifications or deleting some altogether. In other cases it

Check Us Out...

Collection Enhancement

I have waited a long time to be able to announce to you that the Library is being computerized. This activity has been a dream of the staff since the mid-seventies, when the Library began recording data in a computer-readable format on new materials being added to the collections. After several years of cataloging new materials through the Online Computer Library Center, an off-campus computer service agency, the University administration provided funding for the major project of converting the manual records of all pre-1975 records to this same computer format. This record conversion project had to be completed before the staff could proceed with the implementation of a local computer system for Library functions.

In this issue of *Library Update*, you will find a summary of the staff's effort to obtain a computer system to enhance the Library's program of services to the campus community. This improvement in operations is a result of a campus-wide effort to bring about new levels of capabilities for instruction, research, and public service through the use of the Library's collections and services. Such a major change in operations requires a student body that is willing to learn, a faculty that is willing to participate in extensive and difficult changes in work assignments, procedures, policies, and methods, as well as an administration that is willing to fund this major electronic enhancement project. I am convinced that we have all of these characteristics and that the project will be implemented successfully. I further expect that this new system will make significant contributions to the University's goals and objectives for decades to come.

PALS is a sophisticated, complex, state-of-the-art computer system which will obviously require a great amount of time and effort to implement. Because of its complexity and the comprehensive changes it will require in current methods of operations, it will take from one to two years to implement in its entirety. Through this newsletter and other communications with you, we will do our best to keep you informed of our progress. While your support during the long process of acquiring the computer system is most appreciated, we will continue to need your valuable help during the implementation phase of the Library Automation Project. Please feel free to call me or my staff at any time with any questions or suggestions that you may have about the project.

Cordially,

J. Don Craig
University Librarian

In October 1988, additional funds of $550,000 were made available to Todd Library by President Ingram. The purpose of this addition to the library budget was to improve the book and periodical collections. Fifty thousand dollars of this amount was earmarked for new journal subscriptions. Four hundred ninety-nine new subscriptions were entered during 1988-89. The remainder of this money was to be spent on non-periodical items, such as books and microforms. An additional $100,000 was made available in January specifically for the acquisition of resources which will enhance the collection in business areas so that accreditation standards can be met.

In fall, 1988, Don Craig, university librarian, requested department chairpersons to advise him of any special needs their departments might have for both periodical and non-periodical materials. A December 1988 deadline for journal needs was requested so that subscriptions could be started in January. Special needs of non-periodical materials were also received in December with a deadline of February 1, 1989 for receiving order cards.
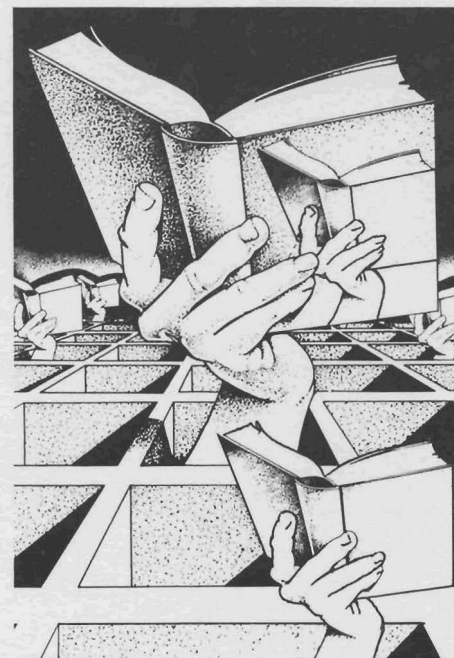
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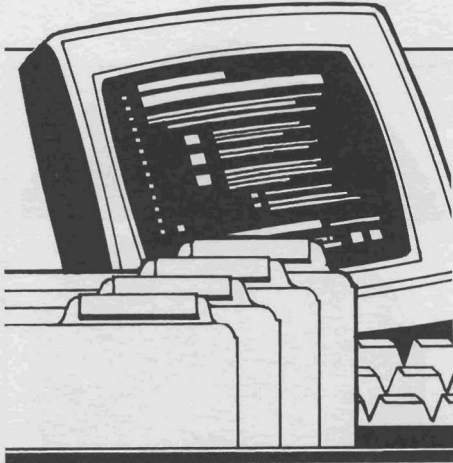
required a commitment from the vendor to provide custom programming to fulfill the specifications. In the end, there were four vendors whose proposals were deemed acceptable based on their compliance with the specifications of the RFP. These four vendors were invited to submit price bids.

The price bids were opened on April 24, 1988. Since advances in computer technology occur on an almost-daily basis, a system that can be proposed as state-of-the-art today may be left in the dust by advances made next week. Consequently, some vendors' bids incorporated new technology that had appeared since their technical proposals were submitted—technology that hadn't been specifically approved. According to the multi-step process, once a technical proposal has been accepted and the Invitation to Bid has been issued, no further changes in the equipment configuration are allowed. Everything is "carved in stone" (so to speak) at that point. These discrepancies in the bids prohibited making an award under current interpretation of the rules of the multi-step procurement process. Consequently, the decision was made to reject all bids and repeat the process.

Request for Technical Proposals number two was issued July 22, 1988. Essentially, it was the same document as previously issued with the addition of more detailed instructions on how responses must be handled. As this was a new RFP, the invitation was open to any system vendor that wanted to submit a proposal. Consequently, in addition to the four vendors who had bid previously, one new vendor participated in this second round. The evaluation of technical proposals went much faster this time since the vendors knew what the University wanted and they knew how to respond to the specifications. The committee knew what each vendor could offer and what to look for in their responses.

During the evaluation process a number of changes were made in the original specifications. For example, the vendors were asked to plan on installing both the computer equipment and the wiring necessary for connecting the total system. Also, the evaluation criteria were changed to add the costs of site preparation (e.g. raised computer flooring and additional air conditioning) and the operational costs of the system over a five-year period. These changes in specifications consumed a considerable amount of time since they had not been developed as a part of the original specifications. It was also deemed necessary to have the bids on the site preparation costs received on the same date as the library computer system bids, since one of the library system vendors was also bidding on the site preparation specifications.

The price bids were opened January 10, 1989. Bids from all the competing vendors were evaluated by the committee to determine that they did match the specifications and conditions as approved in the technical proposals. The low bids for the computer system and for site preparation were submitted by Unisys Corporation. Unisys is marketing the PALS Library Automation System, which was developed by Mankato State University in Minnesota. Announcement of intent to award the contract to Unisys was issued to all competing vendors who were given an opportunity to view the technical proposals and bids at that time.

One of the competing vendors protested the intent to award, claiming that there were discrepancies in Unisys' proposal and that their system was superior. This protest was evaluated by the University, by the State Board of Regents, and by the Tennessee Board of Fiscal Review. The decision of all these reviewing agencies was unanimous that the protest had no merit, that Unisys' proposal was in compliance with the specifications, and that it truly was the lowest bid. Consequently, the contract for the library system was issued to Unisys on May 31, 1989.

Since then, preparations for automation have proceeded at an accelerated pace. The site preparation is complete and the Unisys computer system is being installed. Once all the equipment is installed and the system is running properly, the Online Catalog will be

Automation...

made operational sometime in the Fall semester of 1989. The Circulations system should come on-line in the spring of 1990, with Acquisitions and Serials Control following shortly thereafter. Plans are to provide five dial access lines to the public catalog. The telephone number for these lines will be published and will provide free access to the public catalog for anyone who has a PC or terminal and modem. We also plan to provide access to the catalog by connecting the Library system to the University's administrative DEC VAX network. This will provide access to the Library's catalog for users of the University's administrative computer system. Also, the plan is to incorporate the holdings of the Center for Popular Music and, eventually, the holdings of the Learning Lab in the LRC into the catalog.

It has been a long and arduous process, and it's not over yet. There is still a lot of work to be done. There are going to be extensive changes behind the scenes in the Library's day-to-day operations. Procedures in almost every area of the Library will be different. For instance, overdue notices won't be handwritten anymore. They will be automatically produced by the computer system and sent out much more quickly than in the past. Job assignments will be changed, and policies will be reevaluated in light of the new capabilities provided by the computer.

One of the truly great things about PALS is how easy it is to search the catalog. Any book in the Library can be located quickly and easily from the convenience of a terminal. Instead of the old centrally-located card catalog, we will now have catalog terminals scattered throughout the Todd Library building, each of which will provide access to the information contained in the old card catalog and more.

Other libraries that have installed the PALS system have told us that the catalog is so easy to use that their patrons usually can learn how to search the system on their own. Nevertheless, the Todd Library staff will be ready to

Library Exhibits
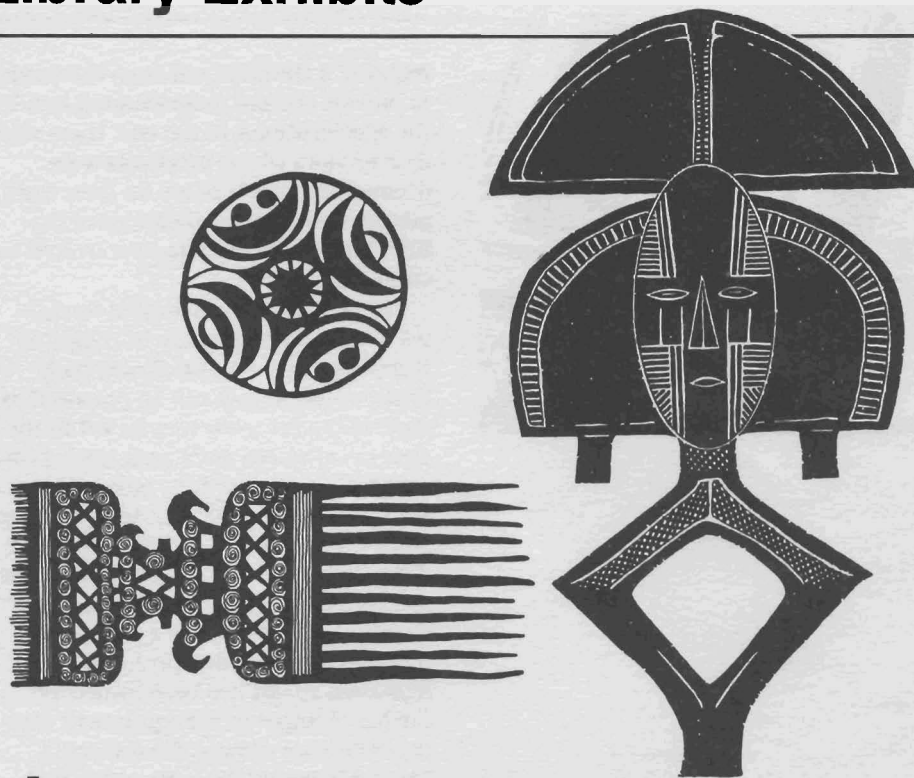
In recent years the Library has improved its exhibit capability by purchasing several types of exhibit cases. These have been used to display a number of different items, including the copy of the Gutenberg Bible (the Library's 500,000th volume), political memorabilia, small book collections, and artistic jewelry. These displays, which have been located near the front entrance, have been enjoyed by many who have been in the Library.

The staff would like to invite others who have items that would make interesting displays to exhibit them in one of these lockable cases on the main floor. If you would be interested in providing items to display, please contact exhibit coordinator John David Marshall. He can be reached at extension 2612 or 2817. (JDC) ■

assist anyone who asks how to use the new catalog. The library instruction courses will be expanded to incorporate instruction in the new catalog, and the Library plans to offer orientation courses for interested faculty, staff, and students.

Automating the Library is a project we have worked on for many years. The Library staff are extremely pleased to be working with the Unisys Corporation, which has done an excellent and professional job throughout this process. And

we are really looking forward to the enhancements in service that our PALS Library system will provide.

The Library staff would like to express their appreciation to all those people who have supported efforts to significantly enhance the Library's program through the application of electronic technology. We especially want to thank Tom Burks, director of Computer Services, and purchasing agent Joe Hugh for their valuable assistance in the procurement of the new computer system. (DR) ■

New Library Faculty

Since the last issue of *Todd Library Update*, Kathy Field, Eloise Hitchcock, and Anita M. Johnson have joined the Library staff. We are pleased to welcome these librarians to the staff and to introduce them to the campus community.

Kathy Field came to Todd Library in April 1988 as a member of the User Services Department with primary responsibility for circulation services. Ms. Field is a native of Tennessee and received the Bachelor of Arts degree from David Lipscomb University, where she majored in English. Her Master of Library Science degree is from the University of Tennessee-Knoxville (class of August, 1984).

Before joining the Todd Library staff, Ms. Field was reference librarian at the Business Library, University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa for three years. She has also worked at the Vanderbilt Medical Center Library, Commerce Union Bank of Nashville, and First Federal Savings and Loan Association, Lewisburg. Ms. Field enjoys cooking, reading (Edgar Allen Poe is a favorite author), and collecting cookbooks.

Eloise Hitchcock has been a member of the Collection Management Department, where her primary area of responsibility is acquisitions, since June 1988. A native of Gloucester, Mass., she received the Bachelor of Science degree from Tennessee Technological University, where she majored in history and minored in French. She received the Master of Library Science degree from the University of Tennessee-Knoxville in 1987.

Mrs. Hitchcock has worked as a library assistant in acquisitions at Tennessee Tech. Prior to coming to MTSU, she was reference/instruction librarian at Berea College in Kentucky. She enjoys sewing and hiking, is interested in folklore and Appalachian Studies, and collects teapots and David Winter miniature cottages. She and her husband, John, are the parents of a son, John Phillip, born in early June.

Anita M. Johnson joined the staff of the User Services Department in November 1988. Her primary assignment is as a reference-information services librarian. A native of Alabama, she received the Bachelor of Science degree from David Lipscomb University, where her major was psychology. Her Master of Library Science degree is from the University of Tennessee-Knoxville (class of December 1987).

Ms. Johnson has worked as a library assistant at the Brown-Daniel Library of Tennessee State University. She lives in Nashville and enjoys jazzercise, softball, reading, and working with children. (JDM) ∎
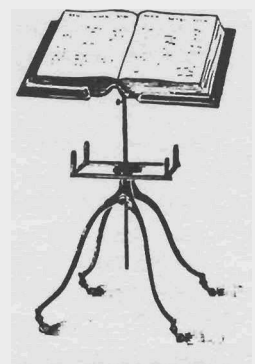
Collection...

The Collection Management Department started ordering these specially requested items, including back files of journals and issues of the *Chicago Tribune* from 1849-1945, as quickly as they were processed. Most of the material ordered has now been received. Among microfilm collections acquired are the supplement to the papers of Andrew Johnson; the papers of Charles Sumner; *Black Workers in the Era of the Great Migration, 1916-1929; The East St. Louis Race Riot of 1917; Civil Rights during the Johnson Administration*; and the papers of Claude A. Barnett.

In addition to faculty and departmental requests, the Collection Management Department compared our holdings against titles listed in the six-volume third edition of *Books for College Libraries* (Association of College and Research Libraries, 1988). Titles not in our collection have been ordered. The addition of these titles and the titles represented by departmental requests will indeed enhance our colleciton and provide faculty and students with an improved level of library resources. We are very grateful to President Ingram for making funds available for this project. (MS) ■

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from Todd Library Faculty and Staff

Faculty Representatives

Ms. Darla Adams (*Accounting*)

Dr. Clay Chandler (*Biology*)

Dr. Norman Ferris (*History*)

Dr. Marian Hamilton (*Elementary and Special Education*)

Dr. Donald Parente (*Journalism*)

Ms. Brenda Parker (*Computer Science*)

Dr. Robert Price (*Business Education, Marketing Education, and Office Management*)

Student Representative

Kristin Bullen

Ex-Officio Members

Dr. Robert Corlew, Vice-President for Academic Affairs

Mr. Don Craig, University Librarian

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