Information Commons to Debut
Spring 2006

By Dave Vose & Bern Mulligan

Binghamton University students will soon have a new space to access a powerful selection of print and online resources, a vast array of application software and tools, and expert assistance to help with their use.

The Bartle Library Information Commons (IC), scheduled to open Spring 2006, will be a welcoming, state-of-the-art, student-centered space with the information and technology resources and expert staff needed to support and enhance the scholarly needs of the BU community in the 21st Century. It represents an important collaboration between the Libraries and Computing Services, which will allow further collaborations between students, faculty, and staff.

Today’s students want more than information. They want a blend of information and technology that enables them to complete all aspects of a project, from initial research to finished product. They also want spaces where they can work together in small groups, to study and share ideas in a secure, comfortable, and motivating learning environment. The way students seek, discover, and process information is changing. By blending library resources and services with the enhanced technology the students require, the Information Commons is a response to this change.

Phase I of the Information Commons will occupy portions of Bartle Library’s reference area (currently undergoing renovation). The space will feature 150 computers, new furniture designed to encourage collaboration, and a new service point staffed by librarians and information technology consultants. Scanning, color printing, laptop loans, advanced resource discovery tools, presentation practice space, and multi-media production capability are just some of the services planned for the IC. Phase II of the commons will be implemented when additional funding is identified and feature an expanded footprint and additional resources and services.

We believe the IC will bring to life the Libraries’ new slogan, “Connect, Discover, Create” in a meaningful and dynamic way, as patrons make both physical and mental connections, discover new (and old!) resources and pathways to knowledge, and create new solutions and even new problems that lead to new connections, discoveries, and creations.
Following the success of last year’s sessions, the University Libraries held a two-day Scholarly Resources Fair for graduate students the week before classes began. On August 24, teaching assistants were invited to meet subject librarians and learn more about the plethora of resources available for themselves and the instructional opportunities available for their classes. The session was repeated for all other graduate students on August 25. For both dates, concurrent sessions were held at both Bartle and the Science Libraries. Approximately 200 students attended this semester’s fair.

All attendees were eligible to register for a chance to win an iPod mini. The winning entry was drawn on Thursday, August 25 by Dr. Ralph Blanchard, an alumnus of Binghamton University and a distinguished member of the Libraries’ Alumni Advisory Committee. The winner was Stephan Ebbeler, a second-year Mathematics master’s degree student from Germany.
Simplifying Library Logins

By Abigail Bordeaux

Logging in at the Libraries will get easier next semester. In order to simplify login procedures, the Libraries will start using PODS accounts for ILLiad, off-campus access, and metaLINK next semester. All Binghamton University faculty, staff, and students have a PODS account. For uninterrupted service, please be sure to obtain your PODS account information before the start of the Spring 2006 semester.

If you don’t know your PODS username and/or password, you can log in to BUSI and go to “E-Mail & User IDs” or contact the Computing Services Help Desk (777-6420). If you would like to test your PODS account information, you can visit http://library.lib.binghamton.edu/webdocs/podsinfo.html and look for our “Test Login” link.

For more information, please visit our website (http://library.binghamton.edu) or call Bartle Library at 777-2194 or the Science Library at 777-2166.

metaLINK

By Bern Mulligan

No, it’s not a heavy metal band. metaLINK is a new feature on our website that is both a federated search engine and a gateway to resources. As a federated search engine, it allows you to search several databases at once. For example, if you use “QuickSearch” (see illustration below), you get results from four different sources: infoLINK, the Libraries’ catalog; Expanded Academic ASAP; Research Library via ProQuest; and Web of Science. You can also select your own set of databases to search. From the navigation menu, choose “CrossSearch.” Here you can search across databases in different subject areas.

You can also use metaLINK as a gateway to all of the Libraries’ electronic resources. From the navigation menu, choose “Find Database” (see illustration below). You will see a number of pre-selected subject categories that you can choose from to find relevant databases to search. You may also choose the “Title” tab and type in the name of a database (e.g., JSTOR). If you click on the result, a new window springs up and allows you to search the database in its native interface.

Grokker

By Kate Bouman

Keep your eyes open for Grokker! In the spring semester the Libraries will be launching the visual interface Grokker. You will be able to see search results topically organized in visual maps from the following popular journal indexes: Expanded Academic, HighWire, and IEEE. Tired of sifting through long lists of results? Grokker will organize your results in categories and subcategories so you can retrieve the journal articles you need.

24x5 Hours at Bartle

By Caryl Ward

Bartle Library’s patrons will benefit from longer operating hours December 4-15, 2005. The innovative 24 x 5 schedule (Sunday-Thursday) is sure to please students, faculty and staff who have been asking for overnight hours throughout the semester. While it is expected that students will be in the library mainly to study during the new hours (midnight-8 a.m.), the self-check system will be up and running for anyone wishing to charge out materials. Circulation Service Desk hours will remain the same. The 24 x 5 service will be available at the beginning of the Spring 2006 semester. Look for a more detailed announcement soon!
New Databases Enhance Library Collections

By Ed Shephard

This fall, the University Libraries began providing access to several databases which significantly increase the University’s access to digital information in the Humanities, Social Sciences, and Sciences.

The **American Periodicals Series Online 1740-1900** is a unique and valuable collection for all aspects of American studies. It contains digitized images of the pages of over 1,100 American magazines and journals spanning nearly 200 years, from colonial times to the advent of American involvement in World War II. Titles range from America’s first scientific journal, *Medical Repository*, to popular magazines like *Vanity Fair* and *Ladies’ Home Journal*.

**Compendex (Engineering Village 2)**, the leading database for engineering, now includes coverage of the *Engineering Index* back to 1884. It references engineering journals and conference materials and complements the Libraries’ current holdings 1970+ in Compendex.

**Congressional Quarterly** provides us with three databases. **CQ Weekly** offers full coverage of the U.S. Congress: status of bills, votes and amendments, floor and committee activity, and back-room maneuvering, searchable by keyword, topic, page number, committee, bill number, byline, and date. **CQ Researcher** is a weekly publication providing original in-depth analysis of the most current major and controversial issues of the day. **CQ Historical Documents** provides online access to more than 2,500 primary sources covering current events around the world from 1972 to the present. An introduction for each document provides historical and intellectual context.

The Libraries now have expanded coverage of the **Science Citation Index** back to 1983. The **Science Citation Index Expanded** is a multidisciplinary index, with searchable author abstracts, covering the journal literature of the sciences. It indexes more than 5,700 major journals across 164 scientific disciplines.

In addition to these available resources, the Libraries will begin subscribing to the full **Project Muse** database in January 2006, providing full-text online access to over 300 high quality Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences journals from 60 scholarly publishers. Muse also has an e-mail alert function which will allow users to be notified when new issues of journals are added to the database.

One-Stop Shopping at Science

By Beth Brown

You may notice faces in new places in the Science Library this semester. The Science Library has reconfigured its services and combined the former Circulation and Reference Desks to create one newly-named Information Services Desk (ISD). The ISD is a one-stop location for all your library needs.

All members of the Science Library staff work at the ISD along with undergraduate and graduate student assistants. Looking for a librarian to help with your research? Librarians are available throughout the day and staff the ISD from noon to 3 p.m. Monday through Friday. Need to drop off materials for course reserves or request an item for purchase? Staff are at the ISD all hours that the Library is open.

At the Information Services Desk you can:
- Request items from the Library Annex
- Place and receive library searches, holds, and recalls
- Check out and return library books
- Pay library fines
- And much more!

Please stop by and let us know how you like the new ISD. Comment cards are available by the entrance to the Science Library.
Special Collections Hosts Homecoming Tour & Exhibit

By Yvonne Deligato

On Saturday, October 22, 2005, Yvonne Deligato, Sue Connors, and Robin Thurlow conducted a behind-the-scenes tour of Special Collections, University Archives, and Preservation as part of Binghamton University Homecoming activities. Attendees included alumni, former faculty members, spouses, and children.

In addition to the tour, an exhibit exploring the history and development of Binghamton University from its beginning as Triple Cities College to the present was displayed. The exhibit, which features items from the University Archives Collection, includes photographs, a sweatshirt from Triple Cities College, yearbooks, the student newspaper, programs and announcements from campus events, and various student publications.

The video, Binghamton University 50th Anniversary: From Vision to Excellence, a home movie of Scenes of Harpur College in 1955, a selection of rare books, and reproduction photographs of set designs and prompt books from the Reinhardt Archives were available for viewing as well.

Participating in Homecoming provided Special Collections a great opportunity to showcase its collections and also resulted in the donation of materials.

Libraries to Hold Scholarly Communications Symposium

By Ed Shephard

The Libraries have received an award from the 2006 Provost’s Inter/Multidisciplinary Symposia to help fund a spring workshop entitled Funding Our Digital Future: Budgeting for Libraries & Scholarly Communication. The purpose of this day-long symposium will be to explore the challenges of library resource allocation in the digital age. Libraries must create a flexible resource allocation process to respond to changing research and curricular needs of faculty and students, to address the increasing interdisciplinary nature of teaching and research, and to involve the university community in an ongoing dialogue with the University Libraries in this process. This symposium will be a forum where librarians and the university community will come together to explore how the changing nature of scholarship and scholarly communication impact the challenges facing libraries in collection resource management. In addition, we hope to enlist the participation of nationally recognized leaders in the area of library resource allocation and the changing nature of scholarly production and dissemination of information.

Instant Message a Librarian

By Erin Rushton

Instant Messaging is quickly becoming the preferred form of communication for university students. The Pew Internet and American Life Project recently reported that over 62% of 18 - 27 year olds use Instant Messaging. In response to its growing popularity, the Libraries recently implemented an Instant Messaging reference service. The service allows patrons to ask questions using their personal instant messaging accounts (AOL AIM, MSN Messenger, and Yahoo Messenger). Over 200 questions have been received and answered since the service was launched.

The service is offered Monday - Thursday 8:30 a.m. - 10 p.m., Friday 8:30 a.m. - 8 p.m., and weekends 4 p.m. - 8 p.m., when classes are in session. Patrons can IM a librarian at either BUmainlib or BUScilib. For more information, see http://library.lib.binghamton.edu/webdocs/IMpilot.html
The University Libraries hosted a multimedia reception Tuesday evening November 22nd in the staff lounge of Bartle Library. Guest speakers included Richard Andrus, Professor of Biological Sciences, Dylan Horvath, Steward of Binghamton University Natural Areas, and student photographers David Katz and Matthew Kull. The lecture incorporated a sound and slide show, an environmental art video, and the current photo exhibit, “Protecting the Earth.”

The exhibit features the Libraries’ collections, which emphasize the diverse literature of environmental protection, and 35 student photographs, which highlight some of the teaching, learning, and research aspects of the Binghamton University Nature Preserve. Founded in 1964, the Nature Preserve provides access to over 500 acres of undeveloped natural areas including wetlands, with many species of birds, mammals, amphibians and reptiles. The exhibit will remain up through January 2006.

Refreshments were graciously provided by the Binghamton University student-run Food Co-op and the Student Environmental Awareness Club.

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