BISSETT CENTER GETS MORE COLLABORATIVE

What happens when you put librarians, AV specialists, information technology experts, and design and environmental analysis students together on a project? A transformed library study hub with major improvements in hi-tech functionality, work space efficiency, and, well, comfort and pizzazz.

As students return to campus for the official start of spring semester, at Mann Library they’ll find some big changes in the library’s Bissett Collaborative Center.

Improvements include:

Four collaborative work clusters combining computing equipment, a display screen, comfortable seating and built-in privacy screens that have the effect of creating an intimate group study room feel within the Center’s airy open space. (The computers integrated into these workstations come loaded with MS Office & Adobe Creative Suite, VGA and HDMI cables for hooking up laptops, as well as a USB hub that doubles as an iphone/ipod charger.

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MANNDIBLE CONTRACT RENEWED

Five years ago, a new café opened in the newly renovated Mann Library, featuring locally grown food and products, and one of the first campus eateries to use 100% compostable material. Named Manndible Café, it offered healthy salads, sandwiches, and a burrito bar with vegan and vegetarian options.

Ithaca business partners and co-owners, Pam Gueldner and Kathleen Pasetty, submitted the proposal for an eco-friendly café back in 2007, and, among the many that came in, their proposal stood out because they stressed the importance of sustainability, diversity in menu options, and unique choices on campus.

Since opening, Manndible’s fan base has been broad and enthusiastic, and there are many in the Ag Quad community who will be thrilled to learn that the Café’s contract has been renewed for another five years. “It’s a great feeling. After working on this renewal since January, it’s a relief to have the process completed” said Pasetty.

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NEW WEBCASTS

Mann Library is pleased to announce the publication of several new book talk webcasts as part of the library’s webcast collection (mannlib.cornell.edu/podcasts). Available in both full video as well as simple audio format, the new additions include Plant Physics and Why Calories Count.
ON THE GROUND IN GHANA:
MANN SUPPORTS PHD STUDENTS IN WEST AFRICA

It’s not every day that a librarian can boast “Hey, I just made a direct, positive impact on food security in Africa.” But every year for the past five years, Mann librarians are actually making precisely that kind of difference.

The West African Center for Crop Improvement, or WACCI, is a joint project of the University of Ghana (where it’s hosted) and Cornell University with funding from the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA). Started in January 2008 with a class of ten graduate students from five different West African countries, WACCI is a ten year project to produce crop breeders who, when finished with their studies, return to their home countries to become major players in establishing a plentiful supply of cutting edge food crops—disease resistant Maize in Nigeria, for example, or drought tolerant sweet potatoes in Burkina Faso.

And behind every one of these amazing graduate students is the staff of Mann Library, offering the same sort of support that Cornell faculty, staff and students have every day here in Ithaca. Every January, WACCI students are offered a one week writing and research workshop at the University of Ghana co-taught by a Mann Librarian and a staff member from CALS International Programs. The IP staffer teaches scholarly writing, while the librarian from Mann teaches essential research skills like conducting a literature search and managing information. How do you find the full text of that article on salinity and rice via databases like TEEAL or AGORA? And how do you use a program like Zotero to manage all those citations and then format the dissertation you’ll eventually write? We’re right there in the classroom for five days helping them navigate that difficult information landscape.

And not just for those five days—Mann’s support is in fact year round, and involves quite a few different staff members here in the library. In addition to the week’s training at the University of Ghana, we provide year round reference support by email, as well as interlibrary loan services for free electronic delivery of scholarly articles that students can’t get their hands on otherwise. We also help them create search alerts in Web of Science so they can get regular emails on the latest research on their topics.

So, yes, we’re proud of our direct involvement with supporting the academic mission of WACCI, and look forward to helping future cohorts of students there. And, of course, we’ll be quite happy down the line to shout “That new breed of super pearl millet they’re living on in Niger? Yeah, we helped with that.”

A GOOD DAY IN COURT FOR ACCESS TO KNOWLEDGE

Library efforts to foster research and learning by protecting access to digital books had a good day in court earlier this month.

On Oct 10, a federal district court dismissed a lawsuit brought by the Authors Guild charging five universities (Cornell included) with copyright infringement associated with their membership in the HathiTrust. The HathiTrust is a partnership of research libraries developing a large collection of digitized books drawn from scanning initiatives taking place—sometimes in association with the Google Books Library Project—at each member institution. Work of the HathiTrust is helping to ensure that books digitized by libraries continue to be preserved for long-term access by the world’s research community even if initiatives such as the Google Books Project were to discontinue.

Thus far, HathiTrust collection contains 10.5 volumes, with over 408,000 volumes coming from the Cornell University Library system. This number includes over 200,000 books in the agriculture and life sciences from the Mann Library collection, digitized over the past 20 years through various grant-funded projects as well as in partnership with Google Books. Researchers from Cornell and other member institutions of the HathiTrust can access these books in full text form for books in the public domain, or in snippet-only form for books still under copyright or for which copyright status is not yet clear—the operating principle here being that providing access to book snippets greatly increases researchers ability to find resources (via keyword searches) while still honoring all copyright.

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Word of the contract renewal came just in time for a big birthday bash that happened on October 25th, when Mannibble Café and Mann Library celebrated their 5th and 60th anniversaries together with a huge crowd in the library's lobby. Talented pastry chef Paul Kellems created two inspirational cakes—a replica of two stacked leather bound manuscripts and a delicious vanilla iced vegan cake. Students, staff, and faculty lined up in the hundreds to sample the cake, eat ice cream, and enjoy some fun party favor giveaways from Mann Library.

Asked how things have changed over the past five years, Pasetty answers: “We have learned a lot! We’ve seen the impact of price changes, the impact of posing a credit/debit card minimum, and the results of being responsive to customers’ complaints and questions. We’ve watched a relationship build between customers and our staff that is fun and seems to feed people on both sides of the counter.” As a small business, Mannibble Café enjoys the advantage of being flexible with menu options and responsive. Stressing the importance of friendly but efficient customer service, Pasetty said “having fun while moving the lines can be challenging but I’m super proud of our staff for how they do it.” They are also thankful for how supportive and helpful Mann Library staff have been over the years, giving them feedback frequently in a thoughtful way.

So Mannibble enthusiasts, rest easy! For the coming five years, you’ll continue to enjoy freshly brewed Gimmel coffee and other beverage favorites (both hot and cold), a large selections of baked goods baked in Mannibble’s own kitchens and places like Blue Wave Pastry, and a great variety of healthy meals, including Mannible’s ever popular customiz-

able burritos, homemade soups and a much anticipated new item on the menu: the Friday Curry Bar.

Owners Gueldner and Pasetty hope to keep the business stable and healthy for many years to come. “We love it here and look forward to 5 more years of being a haven of local foods.”

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The Author’s Guild suit had contended that the act of making a digital copy alone constitutes copyright infringement and had asked that all copyrighted works be removed from the HathiTrust database. The Oct. 10 decision by U.S.District Court Judge Baer dismisses this charge, ruling instead that scanning books to preserve them and to construct an index (which enables them to be easily found via keyword searches in a database like that of HathiTrust) is the kind of fair and creative use that copyright should favor.

So university scholars and citizen researchers can take heart. With Judge Baer’s ruling, full text availability for public domain works AND powerful keyword searching capacity for all digitized books will continue to be a key feature of Cornell’s collection of scanned works—and finding your way to the resources you need should only keep getting easier.

(For further information, please see Cornell Chronicle article.)

EVENTS

February 21st, 4 pm
Book Talk by Jon Corson-Rikert, Dean Kraftt, and Brian Lowe
Vivo - a Semantic Approach to Scholarly Networking and Discovery
Room 160 Mann Library, 1st floor

March 7th, 4:30 pm
Lecture by Annie Schatz
Fixing Problems Around the World: Home Economics at the Cornell School for Missionaries
Room 160 Mann Library, 1st floor

March 27th, 4 pm
Book Talk by Nina Glasgow, David Brown, and Doug Gurak
Room 160 Mann Library, 1st floor

April 25th, 4 pm
Book Talk by Paula Horrigan
Service-Learning in Design and Planning: Educating at the Boundaries
Room 160 Mann Library, 1st floor

Download Podcasts for all events at: http://www.mannlib.cornell.edu/podcasts

EXHIBITS

January 22nd - February 28th
Mann Gallery
Planet Cornell: photographs by Claire Smith and Kent Loeffler

February 2013
Mann Lobby & Top Shelf Gallery
Black Is... by BSU for Black History Month

Online Exhibits including:
Harvest of Freedom: The History of Kitchen Gardens in America
Keepers of the Hill: The Trees of Cornell
Through a careful evaluation of student needs and preferences, improvements that would best fit making recommendations about already being used by students and ways in which the Bissett space was helping to carefully document the provided some key consulting services, Meron ’12 and Sara Lesage ’12 pro- ronmental Analysis students Gilad at the library. Design and Envi- and services that students can find for inclusion in the suite of study tools found on the technological frontier picking the best ideas and products AV specialists charged with hand- information technology staff and any of the other moveable table and chair furnishings in the space.

Moveable large digital screens that allow students to form collaborative work groups using laptops and any of the other moveable table and chair furnishings in the space.

Lots (and we do mean lots) of moveable whiteboards to further support flexible work group arrangements.

Additional comfortable seating, including colorful ottomans and bean bags (yes, bean bags!), which have long been on the wish lists students have given us for study spaces in the library and are already attracting rave reviews for comfort and versatility of use (good for reading, good for resting, and great for informal group discussion).

The transformation of the Bissett Center emerged from the work of the Mann Library Technologies (aka MaLT) group, composed of librarians, information technology staff and AV specialists charged with hand-picking the best ideas and products found on the technological frontier for inclusion in the suite of study tools and services that students can find at the library. Design and Environmental Analysis students Gilad Meron ’12 and Sara Lesage ’12 provided some key consulting services, helping to carefully document the ways in which the Bissett space was already being used by students and making recommendations about improvements that would best fit student needs and preferences. Through a careful evaluation of available technologies, direct observation and innovative user studies—which included interactive exercises that invited students to sketch out or compile photo diaries of their ideal study spaces—MaLT and the DEA students were able to distill a ranked list of the most promising improvements for the collaborative study area. We believe that the resulting refurbishment of the Bissett Center, put into place during the quiet weeks of the winter break, will make a significant impact on students’ ability to engage in fruitful group work in the Library.

This upgrade to the Bissett Collaborative Center—one of the most heavily used study spaces in the Library—is a timely one. The Center’s name commemorates the life of Kenneth L. Bissett ‘89, a student of communication at the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, whose life was cut tragically short in the bombing of Pan Am flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland in 1988. This year marks the 25th anniversary of that tragedy. Part of Ken’s legacy as a young scholar and aspiring communication professional lives on in the Bissett space, which fosters precisely the kind of sharing of cross-disciplinary perspectives that characterized his own studies and interests at Cornell.

For more information on the Bissett Center and its facilities—including instructions and policies on reserving the collaborative workstations—please visit the Bissett Collaborative Center page of the Mann website.

For additional details, please also see the Cornell University Library’s “ShelfLife” blog.

**GRASS IS BACK!**

Like elves, students from the Dept. of Design and Environmental Analysis worked some powerful magic in the Mann Library lobby late one Sunday night at the start of finals week of the Fall 2012 semester. When Mann opened its doors on Monday morning, visitors looking for a good place for rest, and refreshment and inspiration could find just the spot: A patch of fresh green grass that brings the feel of the great outdoors to a large corner of the Mann Library lobby.

It’s been an instant hit, both here and at three other spaces at Cornell—Olin Library, Duffield Hall, and the Physical Sciences Building—that are well trafficked by students in need of a rejuvenating break. Working with Gannet Health Center and other university sponsors, Gilad Meron ’12 and Ryan Allen-Parrot ’13 have led the group of DEA students behind this initiative. Aiming to repeat and extend the stress-busting effect of last year’s first-ever “bring the outdoors indoors” initiative in the Mann Lobby, this year’s grass project is part of the students’ “Cognitive Restoration” effort in the design field. Saratoga Sod Farm of Stillwater, NY has been the generous donor of turf at this year’s campus grassy nook locations, which will be in place for this week and early next. Do stop by to feel the green!

For additional details, please also see the Cornell University Library’s “ShelfLife” blog.