

STATE OF THE LIBRARIES – 2007

Thanks, Dick, for that very nice introduction. It's wonderful to be back in front of all of you again talking about the state of the Penn Libraries. I'm appreciative of the invitation from Dick and the Executive Committee of the Librarians Assembly and for their sponsorship of this annual event.

Some of you have questioned why there was no 2006 State of the Libraries address. There were a number of unconnected reasons why the timing didn't work for me but suffice it to say that I'm very glad that September 2006 is behind me and that we've been able to gather together today to assess the ship of state, and to speculate a bit on our collective future.

You'll notice that a couple of things have changed since my 2005 address. And, no, I'm not talking about my mustache or lack thereof. In 2005 it was the state of the *library*; today it's the state of the *libraries*. We've made the change from the singular to the plural not to abandon the idea of "one library" system, but to recognize the multiplicities of locations and collections that make up the information universe at Penn.

In truth, this change was partly driven by our Board of Overseers who, to a person, preferred "libraries" to "library," feeling that it better framed their and my obligations and the associated fundraising challenges that we face in the upcoming capital campaign.

The other change is in venue. In 2005 we met in the old Dietrich Reading Room on the eve of the construction of the Weigle Information Commons. We have been so successful in fundraising for new and renovated spaces that we've essentially programmed ourselves out of floor space large enough for full staff meetings. I guess that's not a bad problem to have, considering the alternatives. Space is a theme that I'll come back to because, in our case, it really is the final frontier.

What I plan to do is to talk for a short while and then open the floor to questions. I trust that works for you.

Let's start with a look back over our shoulders at FY 2007. (Please remember that I think in academic/financial years, not calendar years, so we're talking here of the period roughly starting in July of 2006 and ending in June of 2007.)

Unfortunately, any review of this past year has to touch on the significant number of staff transitions that we've all lived through. The first was the very sudden and unexpected passing of John Merkel on August 27th, 2006. John spent his life from his teenage years to mature adulthood working for the Penn Libraries. Countless generations of students and faculty were served by John and, as we all know, his commitment to his job was extraordinary. He was kind to his students and a thoughtful and wonderful colleague to us all. I have to say that even after a year it still doesn't seem right to walk by Current Periodicals early in the morning and not see John already at work.

In November, Sandra Kerbel went on Medical Leave. Sandra, as most of you know, had been valiantly fighting cancer for a number of years, having been diagnosed shortly after arriving here from Virginia. But by November she realized that she couldn't continue working. Actually, how she continued to work so hard and so effectively for so long in the face of a cruel and unrelenting disease was amazing to witness. Her determination to continue to work at the highest level possible, and her grace in handling her fate, should provide lessons in dignity and courage for us all. Thankfully for the organization, Marjorie Hassen and Bob Krall were willing to share Sandra's large number of responsibilities on an acting basis thereby averting a significant management problem.

At the outset, there was every hope that Sandra would rebound and be able to return to her duties but, instead, her condition worsened and she died on April 4, 2007. Marjorie and Bob have continued to hold the public services directorate between them since then – giving me some time to think about organizational restructuring, which I will also come back to.

Finally, the year closed with the death, on June 2, 2007, of our dear friend, guide and benefactor, President Emeritus Martin Meyerson. Martin was a source of inspiration and support to me, particularly in the early days of my interim directorship, and he continued to play an important role in the life of the Libraries right up to the final stages of his illness. His widow Margy has always played a similar role and has recently agreed to be the honorary chair of a new initiative called the Orrery Society which will focus on fundraising for collections.

There were other transitions – by choice thank goodness, but disruptive nevertheless. I'm thinking particularly of the loss of John Keane to a life without commuting from Baltimore and without the yoke of the Hyperion budgeting system. John's departure came at a particularly bad time: when the 2007 budget needed to be put to bed and the 2008 budget activated. Again, people in place – in this case Bob Puri and Jean Curcio – rose to the occasion and we survived that particular hurdle. My thanks to both Bob and Jean and the entire staff of Financial and Administrative Services, including Tom Wilson, Frank Stamato, David Mowl, and Aleta Arthurs, for carrying on so effectively in John's absence.

Let me turn now to some of the highlights of the year.

Faculty Express

One of our signal successes this past year has to be our faculty delivery service, FacultyExpress. We have slowly but surely rolled out this very well received and already highly regarded service, taking a school by school approach. Currently, the service is available to the entire standing faculty in the School of Nursing, SEAS, School of Arts & Sciences, Dental, SP2, Design, Annenberg, and Education. Faculty Express is operational in the ten basic science departments in the School of Medicine and, after the ILLiad software is completely operational, the service will be rolled out to the clinical departments, and to the School of Veterinary Medicine. The Lippincott Library has long provided a similar service for Wharton faculty and we've decided to leave that relationship be for the time being. This was an important Provostial level initiative and he is very, very happy that we've been able to pull this off. I am very appreciative of all of the

efforts of Bob Krall, Sheila Ketchum and the FacultyExpress staff, including Susan Gavin-Leone and Maryanna Kraft, for creating and sustaining this new service.

Biomedical Library Renovation Study

Although we haven't yet reached the formal feasibility stage, real work has been done to plan the renovation of the Biomedical Library. We have spent a lot of time and energy working with the School of Medicine and their architects in exploring ways in which our mutual interests can be met by significantly redesigning library spaces in the Johnson Pavilion. I am currently involved in a fast-track project to create an architectural vision for the whole Morgan-Johnson-Stemmler complex of buildings that the Dean of the School of Medicine can share with his Board of Overseers in October. Although the current plan reduces the size of the Biomedical Library's overall footprint, it does put the Library on a major east-west interior corridor that will carry crowds of people between Medical School offices and classrooms in both Morgan and in Stemmler.

Many of you are aware of the fact that this past year we did agree to cede 2,500 square feet of library space to the School of Medicine for the expansion of their zebra fish operation. To accomplish this, over 40,000 volumes from the Biomedical Library's collection were displaced with most being transferred to High Density Storage.

As a further sign of our commitment to creating a state of the art bio, nursing, and medical library facility, and to provide some improvement for the creature comforts of current students, I authorized the expenditure of around \$75,000 to purchase additional soft seating and new furnishings for the group study spaces; to replace broken carrel lights, as well as hundreds of stained and mismatched fluorescent light diffusers; and to improve overall signage. And, when the painters were fixing the signage in the building, they actually painted the walls throughout – which was an unanticipated by-product of this project! Thanks to David Mowl, Anne Seymour and the staff in Biomedical for making all of this come together. I think it really has improved the look and the feel of the place.

Veterinary School Library

If you wonder why the senior management of the School of Medicine has shown such renewed interest in the future of the Biomedical Library, you just have to look toward 38th Street and the new Hill Pavilion that supports the School of Veterinary Medicine. Of course, I'm talking about the new Steven W. Atwood Library & Information Commons which opened in early January of this year. Between the Weigle Information Commons and the Veterinary Library, the School of Medicine folks are suffering library-envy. And they're hearing it loudly and clearly from their students who feel disadvantaged in the current Biomedical Library space.

I think this is the first new library built on campus since the Biomedical Library construction in the late 60's and early 70's. Congratulations to Barbara Cavanaugh for shepherding this project to completion and, more importantly, for her effective stewardship of the long-term relationship between the Vet Library and the school it serves. That kind of relationship is critical for library projects of this magnitude.

Engineering Library Feasibility Study

Another place you see the results of similar stewardship, in this case by former physical sciences libraries director Mary Steiner and by Danianne Mizzy, is in the Engineering Library. A formal feasibility study was undertaken and completed by the architectural firm of Purdy O'Gwynn. This study was jointly funded by the Library and by SEAS. The result is a \$4M plan to totally refurbish the Engineering Library and transform the adjacent 2nd floor corridor of the Towne Building. Architecturally interesting and innovative, the redesign has the full blessing of Dean Eduardo Glandt, who has promised to work with us on raising funds for the project. With a nanotechnology building to fund, for which he's already found a \$20M naming gift, it is unlikely that Dean Glandt will turn over his donor list to us, but just having him as an advocate for the project ensures ultimate success.

Special Collections Renovation

If there is one area in which we have fallen short of my expectations, it has been in trying to raise the \$11M necessary to do major renovations on the 6th floor of the Van Pelt-Dietrich Library Center. As you all know, we have an ambitious design and we have a good story to tell about the project, but so far we have only been able to raise an additional \$1M toward our goal.

That's the bad news. The good news is the Major Gift officers in Development really like this project and have been shopping the naming gift of \$7M to a number of prospects. So far it's been nibbles-not-bites, but that could change tomorrow. We also have identified a prospect for the conservation lab portion of the project and hope to close the deal with him by the end of June. We are also establishing a "founder's" gift drive at the \$250K level with each donor receiving recognition on a plaque prominently displayed on the 6th floor.

The situation is complicated by the competing pressures of the reunion Class of '78, who wants to see some action from their gift, and from a member of our Board of Overseers who thinks we haven't been grand enough in our thinking and, so, has put together a consortium of donors to fund another look at the floor by the architectural firm, Gensler and Associates. How these two things play out will give Adam and me many sleepless nights over the next few months!

I should also note that we were able to close the deal on a \$1.5M endowment gift to establish a preservation officer position. Penn has long been one of the few major research libraries without a fulltime preservation program officer. This gift from 1981 Wharton graduate, Chuck MacDonald, allows us to really move ahead in this critical arena.

Continued Development of Digital Library Services

FY07 was another strong year on the digital side for the Penn Libraries. We upgraded the VCat search interface with new features. Users can now browse by genre and language, customize their search options, and place holds on videos in circulation.

Work on expanding the use and utility of PennTags, has continued as has the interest in it from observers of the digital library "scene."

SCETI, in conjunction with Bill Keller, completed *Philadelphia Neighborhoods*, a unique Philadelphia resource that provides access to digitized archives of the City Planning Commission from 1946-1990. They have also moved a number of other digital projects along this year as they have worked very diligently to reduce the project backlog that David McKnight inherited when he arrived in May of 2006. With the purchase of two new large scanners, throughput of digitized material has been increased dramatically – they scanned over 40,000 images during FY07 – giving SCETI staff the tools necessary to increase the number of projects they can handle while significantly reducing the time each project takes to complete. Among the first things David did upon his arrival was to undertake a thorough review of SCETI. As a result, we have totally redesigned and are working on overhauling the SCETI technical infrastructure to ensure stability and sustainability.

As part of our ongoing responsibility for campus-wide management of the Blackboard course management system, we have added new features including document sharing and editing facilities and a blogging capability, as well as the ability to generate podcasts from course sites. Use of the system continues to grow. Library staff has also been attending meetings of those academic institutions actively developing SAKAI, the open-source courseware system that could well compete with Blackboard in the future. Thanks to iTadd staff and John Kiser, we've installed a test instance of the SAKAI software which will give interested faculty a chance to compare the two systems.

John Ockerbloom from iTadd assumed a leadership role in the D-Space Architecture Review Team, a national federation of universities and corporations, such as Google, developing the technical infrastructure for future digital repositories. Joe Zucca, proprietor of the Libraries' Data Farm, established a collaborative project with researchers at the Los Alamos National Laboratory, working under the auspices of the Mellon Foundation, to develop metrics for electronic journal use that can be applied to collection development and new tools for scholarly communication.

We also improved awareness of and access to Penn scholarship by increasing the collection size and number of contributors to the Library's digital repository, *ScholarlyCommons@Penn*. 2007 adopters include the School of Social Policy and Practice, School of Design, the Wharton Research Scholars and, within SAS, the Population Studies Center and the Center for Organizational Dynamics. We are currently working with Art Caplan, a prominent Penn scholar of medical ethics, who is interested in posting his many publications in *ScholarlyCommons@Penn* as a way of getting his work more available to the general population. We think that things are moving along well enough in this area to want to hire a fulltime director for scholarly communications initiatives.

Although there were other digital developments, the only other one of real note is that we launched a redesigned library front page. Actually, we launched two. The first one was very sleek and modeled after Google's minimalist approach with a search bar as the centerpiece to the page. Unfortunately, this design did not comport with the University's current web guidelines and we were given the choice of getting in line or losing our link on the University's homepage. Since a lot of our traffic comes from that link, we decided that discretion was the better part of valor. We still think our original design was forward-thinking and more in line with today's web

user's expectations but some quixotic quests need to be abandoned. And, so, earlier this month we launched yet another version of the main page. I think the message here is that we need an overall design approach to all of our web pages that will allow for continuous improvement/modification and the creation and use of web tools that empower staff to manage more aspects of their own particular web presence. Among many others, Leslie Vallhonrat has been an absolute brick throughout all of this, often working under tough time constraints and with a multitude of voices telling her how things should look. Much of the look, feel and currency of our web presence is the result of her efforts.

Collections

On the collections side, the most notable event of this past year was the arrival in early December of Martha Brogan as the new Director of Collection Development and Management. Martha hit the ground running and hasn't stopped. Her incredibly productive work with her colleagues in the Collection Development Council, in Area Studies and in the Bibliographers group has really taken her directorate to the next level in a short period of time. It's been interesting and instructive to watch!

The Campaign

Speaking of collections, as I mentioned earlier, we have come up with the concept of a new high-level support group, the *Orrery Society*. Working in concert with Development and with Martha and her Collection Development staff, the Orrery Society will have one purpose: to support the enhancement and preservation of scholarly collections at the Libraries. Primarily, this will involve raising money for new acquisitions, and encouraging the creation of new acquisition endowments.

This new society will be dedicated to the memory of Martin Meyerson. His wife, Margy Meyerson, has agreed to be the Honorary Chair. Richard S. Johnson W'64, and Deborah Wharton Lippincott C'76, have agreed to serve as Founding Co-Chairs.

For those of you relatively new to the staff, the David Rittenhouse Orrery, which currently sits near the Walnut Street windows in Reference, maps the movement of the planets. It was probably the most important scientific apparatus in academic use in eighteenth-century America. It proclaimed, in the Age of Reason, the interest of the nation's first university in the exploration of all human knowledge. It's one reason why it has been used as an iconic symbol for the Penn Libraries in the past and why it seems so appropriate a name for a collection-building initiative.

Raising money for collections is only one part of our very aggressive fundraising plan for the upcoming capital campaign, the official kickoff of which is October 20. Just to remind you, we are planning/hoping to raise \$45M over a seven-year period. We have identified endowment building, facilities renewal, innovation and agility funding as the major areas of need going forward. The success of this effort will go a long way toward defining our future.

These are just some of the highlights of another extraordinary year in the Penn Libraries. In a large and complex organization like ours, it is often easy to focus on the big projects and lose

sight of all of the wonderful work being done every day by each and every one of you and your colleagues across the Libraries: collections being developed and managed; high quality circulation and reference services being offered; services that we refer to as technical – cataloging, e-resource licensing, acquisitions, shelf prep- that are by their very nature public services; lending and borrowing efforts that are almost Herculean; exhibitions and receptions of the highest quality and impact. We are, all of us in every library and in every position, here to provide top-level services to our various publics and all of us have an impact on the quality of those services. My thanks to all of you who have toiled so hard over the year to enhance our well-deserved reputation for providing high quality services.

Let me close this brief retrospective by mentioning two more successes from FY07 that were really quite extraordinary and extremely important as we think about the challenges that face us as an organization.

The first was the completion of the third class of minority student interns. This diversity initiative is something that I feel very strongly about as it is improving our overall staff diversity. We need a staff that is reflective of the community we serve. As Penn becomes more diverse, so should we!

The other success that I want to close this segment with is the recent contract negotiations that resulted in a new and visionary document that will serve all of us well as we move forward.

I must thank both Valerie Pena and Howard Deck for their leadership throughout the negotiations, their willingness to think creatively, and their shared commitment to creating a document that really anticipates future organizational needs. Howard and Val and their teams:

Representing AFSCME Local 590:

Yvonne Harris
Mike Wisniewski
Faith Anderson
Mark Lewis
Linda Laws
Lloyd Frank
John Hogan

Representing the University and Library Management:

Amanda Lawhorn
Jeanne Shuttleworth
Nancy Rose
Dennis Deegan

really did an amazing job working together in a collaborative and respectful atmosphere and with a real sense of how intertwined our futures are. We all owe them a considerable debt. Thank you.

So that's where we are as of September 24, 2007. I don't know about you, but I think we've spent enough time looking in the rearview mirror. Perhaps the most important question we need to ask ourselves is, Where are we heading? Now this should be of particular interest to you because, as some wag once said, "We should all be concerned about the future because we will have to spend the rest of our lives there".

What is our shared future here in the Penn Libraries? What will the Penn Libraries look like in 20 years – a period of time that many of you probably hope to spend working here?

Well, I'm going to leave you thinking about those cosmic questions for a minute and concentrate on the immediate future, which brings some organizational changes.

First, for those who haven't had a chance to meet him, I'd like to introduce Bryan Wilkinson, our new Director of Financial and Administrative Services. Bryan joins us most recently from Student Health Services where he held a position with a similar set of responsibilities. Before that, Bryan held a number of positions in the healthcare field. We are very, very happy to have Bryan on board.

Next I'd like to formally announce that Co-Acting or Acting-Co will now be removed from both Marjorie Hassen and Bob Krall's titles. As I mentioned earlier, we have been moving toward an organizational reworking of the public services directorate.

As of October 1st Marjorie will become the Director for Public Services. In her new role the following functional areas will report directly to her:

- Research and Instructional Services
- Courseware and Electronic Reserves
- Weigle Information Commons
- Circulation/Stacks and Current Periodicals
- *ScholarlyCommons@Penn*
- Music Library
- Van Pelt-Dietrich Library Center and the Goldstein Undergraduate Study Center

Also beginning October 1st, Bob Krall will become the Director for Departmental Libraries, Resource Sharing and Delivery Services. Bob's title is long and fairly descriptive of his areas of responsibility:

- Museum Library
- Fine Arts Library
- Physical Sciences Libraries
- Health Science Libraries
- High Density Storage
- Resource Sharing (ILL, EZ-Borrow/BorrowDirect/Rapid)
- FacultyExpress

Perhaps less expected by the whispering classes but equally deserved, Joe Zucca has been promoted to Director for Planning and Communication. Joe will continue to play his critical role in assessment, a role that continues to set the standard for library assessment activities

nationwide, as well as publications and other forms of communication. What is newly added to his set of responsibilities are:

- Web Design and Production which is moving from iTadd to this new directorate
- Grant Program Office (a new initiative for the Libraries)
- Planning and Organizational Analysis

This last area of responsibility is of particular importance in that it is an attempt to respond to a growing sense of the need for more robust strategic planning across the board. I've asked Joe to take the lead in coordinating our efforts in this crucial area with every expectation that future decision making will be better informed by placing more concentrated emphasis on this activity.

There are a number of staffing changes underneath those that I've outlined above that will happen over the next couple of months. Stay tuned.

Now, back to the future.

As you can probably imagine, I do spend a lot of time thinking and worrying about positioning the Libraries at Penn to take maximum advantage of the opportunities inherent in the future while assiduously avoiding the pitfalls that await the unwary.

And although I think that we are in a relatively healthy situation, I do think that it would be a mistake for us not to deal openly with the fact that things have changed so dramatically that we cannot count on our work futures in the same way that our predecessors could. In the past, there was a rhythm to life in libraries. Change, when it happened, took place over relatively long periods of time. Card catalogs ruled. Eraser guns were our weapons of choice. Time was plentiful; information in short supply. Sure, there was change, but we had more control over its pace. Large, ponderous organizations like ours had time to adjust. We adapted emerging technologies to our needs. Our users needed us to collect, organize and provide access to the world of information. There was constancy to our world – we slept, we ate, we bought and processed thousands of print volumes, we created miles and miles of catalog cards, we thought AACR2 was a good idea, our patrons thought we were indispensable, the sun came up in the east and set in the west.

Do you feel that same constancy today? I certainly don't. Let's face it: There has been a sea change in the information ecosystem that we live in and, perhaps more importantly, in the information seeking behavior of those humanoids who are in that ecosystem. How we, as an organization – as a profession – react, how adaptive we are, how proactive we are, will go a long way toward defining our future.

I, for one, am not interested in sitting back and having others define that future for us, nor do I want to sit back passively and assume that our lords and masters will continue to view our services in a positive way and provide the necessary funding to keep us going. Actually, I would rather assume that we are in the unenviable position of having to justify our presence every single day. And I would rather you assume the same, because I really think that to do otherwise leads us in the wrong direction.

It certainly is a confusing world we live and work in:

While there are sure signs that print culture is on the decline particularly among younger students more books than ever are being published and we continue to bring in our fair share. How will great print collections like ours grow over time and where will they fit into the information landscape?

For the first time, we are spending more money on digital resources than we are for print, yet it seems as if every time we cancel the print version of a journal we get pushback from some users. What is the right balance between print and digital? How will that balance change in coming years?

A recent survey of the Medical School faculty indicated that almost to a person they reported that they did not use the library. They used digital resources licensed by the library but not the *library*. Yet they and the Medical and Nursing School students surveyed talked about how important and supportive the staff were to their work. So, on one hand they love us, but on the other hand we're invisible. Sounds like a country song!

Wasn't it just a couple of years ago that Google was just one of a number of new internet search engines? Now they and Starbucks rule the known world. And although we know that they are a wonderful resource, we also know that they only provide access to the tip of the information world. Think of how much they have impacted the information landscape. How do the great research libraries fit into a "Googlized" world? How do we teach our users that there is life after Google, at least when doing research? With their unlimited resources and unrestricted vision how will Google continue to alter our world?

So, the fundamental questions for us are: How do we deal with these external pressures or fundamental environmental changes, and how do we look for opportunity in the midst of the chaos that swirls around us? We know that change has always been part of our work environment and I've often argued that, as a staff, we are much more adaptive than we give ourselves credit for.

But, to date, I would also argue that most of our changes have been accretive, done slowly over time. And that they haven't been all that fundamental or revolutionary. We've tinkered at the edges but we haven't done a thorough rethinking of all that we have held near and dear as a profession.

Let me give you a concrete example: most of you have either read or heard someone say – maybe even me – that in an environment where libraries are leasing the same digital information and buying an increasingly homogeneous set of monographs, what really differentiates a library are its special collections. Yet we continue to allocate the same percentage of human resources into processing current versus rare material as we did ten years ago. If rare books and manuscripts are the coin of the realm for today's research libraries, why haven't we turned that organizational resource allocation model on its head?

That is not to say that we haven't changed our perceptions over the course of time. What we expect and accept has changed. When we provided card catalog access to our collections we accepted that, when we were closed, users had no access. Now that we have an online catalog we expect no downtime and are quite put out when there is some. Why do we accept the premise that there can be no downtime for enterprise-level systems like Voyager and Blackboard while still accepting the reality of cataloging backlogs, limited or no shelf reading, just to name a couple of unpleasant realities? Where's the same passion, the same concern? Is it because downtime hampers our own work or is it out of concern for our patrons and their fundamentally changed expectations for library service? I would argue, for example, that if a patron can get immediate access to the online version of new issue of the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, what possible service do we provide by holding the print copy of that same issue from the public for days on end after receipt, waiting to check it in on Voyager? Again, I don't think we've always called into question our work assumptions.

And why is that important? Well, partly because of the relevance and value-added factors – think about the Voyager OPAC in relation to Amazon's database. Which would you rather use? Which *do* you use? Do you start your own search for information with a Voyager search or with a Google search? If, more often than not, it is the latter then let's deal with that reality and create real world, real time solutions that speak to the needs of our users. Otherwise we will be marginalized in ways that we are only beginning to imagine.

Okay, so our environment has changed in fundamental ways and continues to change with extraordinary rapidity. So what else should we be concerned about?

Well, money is always a good place to begin. We never seem to have enough money to do the things we want and need to do. Perhaps a quick budget lesson is in order here: Our regular budget was around \$52M last year. It comes from an allocated tax on the 12 Schools at Penn. Although all of the numbers for FY07 aren't in yet, we know that in a normal fiscal year 20% of our budget goes to pay allocated costs (i.e., space charges back to the University, cleaning, central HR and financial offices, Development, etc.). Another 27-28% goes for the purchase and licensing of information. So say 48% for those two categories. Compensation, salary and benefits come in at 40%. That adds up to 88% of our budget spoken for before we get started. What does the other 12% have to cover? Things like memberships – OCLC, RLG Programs, CRL, etc; preservation; supplies and services; rent on our high density storage facility; staff development/travel; money to replace our 700+ desktop computers on a three-year replacement cycle; any facilities renewal that we need to do that we can't easily raise money for – you know, infrastructural things like HVAC systems, bathrooms, etc.

In general, the increases we get from the University do cover increases to existing salary lines but have not kept pace with inflation on the information side for many years. The delta between the cost of information and the money we have available to spend on it continues to widen. Information is everywhere and we can't afford in FY08 to pay for what we purchased and licensed in FY07. The result: another round of cuts.

Staff in the Penn Libraries has countless ideas for new digital projects for Mike Winkler and the iTadd staff and/or David McKnight and his SCETI folks to develop and support. Where will the

staff and equipment come from that allow us to bring those ideas to fruition? Since the Deans are the ones ultimately paying our tab, I can tell you that asking them for new dollars to add staff positions gets the same reaction that you have when your local tax bill goes up.

I mention all of these things not to depress you – although it depresses me in the telling – but to point out that the \$50M General Purpose Budget that we get from the University needs to be stretched as creatively as possible; that we rely very heavily on the income we get from our endowments – which Bryan reports recently hit the \$75M mark (that’s total value not annual income) – to supplement many of the things that we want and need to do; that we need to pay homage to Adam and his staff every day for their efforts to raise more money for us; and that we need to be wise stewards of our limited resources.

Google can throw zillions of dollars around on new projects that expand their grip on the information landscape. We are trying to reinvent ourselves with one financial hand tied behind our backs.

Let’s recap: the information environment has changed dramatically and we have little money to react. Boy, this is uplifting so far.

So, what do we have going for us?

The three S’s: stuff, space and staff.

Stuff

I think this is pretty self-evident. We have extraordinary collections in every one of our libraries - print, digital, visual and so on. These collections are the result of the accumulated wisdom and hard work of generations of librarians building, shaping and pruning what we save for the ages. Our challenge going forward is in leveraging those collections. We must do a better job of exposing these collections – particularly those on the 6th floor – to users through more timely cataloging and selective digitization. Beth Camden has been spearheading a wonderful effort to identify and quantify our “hidden collections,” those collections un- or under-processed. I have to say it’s a sobering list but it will be an invaluable aid in setting priorities and fundraising for specific projects. A prime example of what this list illuminates is the Lea Library. Mr. Lea will have been dead for 100 years in 2009 and we still haven’t fully cataloged the books and manuscripts that comprised his library. In fairness, the Lea family gave the collection to Penn in 1925 so it’s only been 82 years in our hands. Obviously, like fine wine we do no cataloging before its time. Seriously, when you think about it, that’s not particularly good stewardship and I feel guilty that in my many years here I haven’t done much, myself, to make things happen with Lea. However, I do plan to lead an effort to finally get that work done. I think the model will have to be the Marshall Plan which was so effective in rebuilding Germany after World War 2.

Many of you in this room today have been leaders in building digital libraries so I don’t have to tell you that a crucial way to get scholars to your material is by providing digital access. I think we should all be very proud of our collective efforts to create a robust digital presence. Penn really has been out there in many ways and although we haven’t got the press that others might enjoy, we are known far and wide as real innovators.

Mike Winkler and his iTadd colleagues are busy building a technical infrastructure that will support ramped up activity in this area. We've just been through a consultancy which has provided me with some ideas about how to improve our ability to prioritize digital projects and to significantly increase the number of projects we can complete.

But again, you can't have a vibrant, robust digital presence without a lot of stuff and stuff we've got!

Space

Earlier I referred to space as our final frontier. That's probably not the best description since it suggests new space opportunities waiting for our exploration and colonization. I think you realize that on a city campus like ours, opportunities for new library space are limited at best. Parenthetically, I had high hopes that the purchase of the postal lands held some promise for new library spaces but was sorely disappointed by the initial planning process that essentially programmed out any space for us. I asked about it and was told that Faculty – faculty mind you – on the planning committee said not to add library space because the digital environment was rendering libraries obsolete. Must have been Medical School faculty!

But in our current configuration we have the three things real estate people consider critical: location, location, location. Think about it: This building sits directly across from College Hall. Engineering sits on a major highway between SEAS buildings, as will the Biomedical Library become the crossroads of the Medical and Nursing complex. The challenge for us is the way in which we adapt the spaces we have to meet current user needs. We need to challenge long-held assumptions and we need to be willing to make tough and controversial decisions about our spaces. Here's one: this building housed c. 2,427,744 volumes in FY06. That same year 342,199 items circulated. Assuming an individual item only circulated once – which we know is crazy – only 14% of the collection circulated. Can we afford to keep all of the other 86% that didn't in this prime location? Would our users be happy? It would depend on what we did with the spaces we created. Do you think the users of the Weigle Information Commons care one whit that I have to give this talk twice because they're sitting in the old Dietrich Reading Room space?

We must rethink our use of all of our spaces in the context of evolving user needs and shifting organizational priorities. We are not the University of Chicago. We cannot keep all of our collections close to our users. This is our reality and we must deal with it.

There is another reality: As we do renovate and revitalize our spaces, users flock to us. They come to us for numerous reasons, but mainly because we have it all within our four walls: comfortable study spaces; high tech group study rooms; a café; rich print collections that complement our digital resources; and, finally, staff resources that are always there to provide help, comfort and support as they do their work.

Staff:

So you're the third S – and, arguably, the most important one!

We are, after all, a human organization. For many of our users you *are* the library. Many of you serve as the Libraries' public face. Others stoke the engines that keep this ship of state afloat. There are no throwaway positions in the Penn Libraries. Each and every one of you plays a critical role no matter the tasks you perform. If you don't see value in your own work, we all have a problem!

We enjoy a well-deserved reputation for providing effective services. We are recognized far and wide as a welcoming, service-oriented research library organization. To maintain that reputation every person in every position needs to work as effectively as possible.

We need a smart, well-trained, adaptive and agile staff if we are going to effectively meet future challenges. The skills we will need in five years will no doubt be much different than those we need today, which differ so fundamentally from those that we needed 20 years ago. In support of those new skills we will have to keep up with technological innovation to provide staff with the equipment necessary to support peak performance. We also need to do a better job helping current staff retool their skills to increase people's comfort levels working in the new information environment.

A few years ago, Will Harris, a professor in the Political Science department, published an article in the *Almanac* entitled "Teaching in the Constitutional University." In it he talks about the origins of universities:

"In medieval political thought, the Latin term universitas did not originally refer to an academic institution, or to an inquiry into the "universe", or to the study of everything, although the word now partakes of all of these meanings. The initial reference was to a comprehensive association, a political community in the full sense, with an understanding of what each member owed the whole body, turning toward the center."

He then goes on to talk about modern universities and the kinds of students they should be graduating. He refers to them as "Founders":

"Such graduates would be citizens of the constitutional sort, with a spacious character of mind-not only well suited for taking care of themselves and the institutions of the broader world; but also fitted for rethinking the first principles of those organizations, remaking them if our security and happiness require it; and even capable of remaking themselves, redesigning their intellects in life's mid-course, if changes in the institutions and world require it"

My point is simple. To ensure the future of the Penn Libraries we will all need to be "Founders" together. Our rapidly changing work world requires it. Our job security and job satisfaction demand it. As I said earlier in the context of the recent negotiations, our fates are intertwined. To think and act differently would be a strategic mistake which I truly hope our history, our shared commitment to the organization, to the Penn community and to each other, will prevent us from making.

So, that's all from Lake Woebegone. You're a terrific staff and I am very proud to have the opportunity to work with you in shaping our collective future.