

# ReferencePoint

*Central Michigan University Libraries' Newsletter*

Summer 2018





## Dean's Column A 40-year love of libraries

Hello!

In April, I began a new journey as dean of CMU Libraries after serving as associate dean since July 2013.

As I told the libraries' faculty and staff, I'm happy to say that CMU Libraries is stable. CMU Libraries is well-respected. CMU

Libraries has a positive future as we build on our successes and plan for the days to come.

I say that not only as the new dean, but as someone who has loved libraries for more than 40 years.

That love began during a visit to the Ames Public Library in Ames, Iowa. My grade school class was on a field trip. After one glance at the children's fiction room, the lure of reading hooked me for life. I vowed to read every book on the shelves starting with the letter A straight through to the letter Z. (I skipped a few.)

My love for reading and learning opened doors and launched my career. I studied education as an undergrad and worked at my college library. The day I completed my bachelor's degree, I promised myself that I would teach for five years. If I then discovered that teaching wasn't my calling, I would go to library school.

My teaching degree took me halfway around the world to Hong Kong. When I returned to the U.S. five years later, I taught for three more years while working on my library degree at Wayne State University. I have never looked back. After working for a few years in public and corporate libraries, I found my place in academic libraries.

Modern libraries may look different from the ones you remember as a child or as an undergrad, but what remains unchanged is that they are places where people can discover and contemplate ideas in solitude or community. And where the written word can work its transformative power.

At CMU Libraries, we boast about having more than 1 million volumes on 33 miles of shelving, yet this visible record of scholarly knowledge is a mere fraction of what we provide access to online.

We connect students and faculty with scholarly materials that propel them forward on their academic journeys and offer an oasis where people can slow down, become refreshed, and hear themselves think.

Central to that relationship are librarians, guardians of truth. We preserve the written record of humankind. We have the keys that unlock infinite universes of knowledge. We know that not everything is on the internet and that not everything on the internet is accurate.

Yes, my love for libraries began more than 40 years ago, and I have been a professional librarian for 20 years. Along the way, I've learned a lot about serving, leading, planning, budgeting, marketing, remodeling, managing change, and more.

But I still love hearing the stories people share about using the library. I love to see people learning, developing their strengths, and practicing new ways of living as they move among the bookshelves and study rooms.

We, the library employees, also have much more to explore and learn. We begin with our summer goals that include analyzing the libraries' recent user survey, conducting a strategic planning process, and hiring a new associate dean.

As we grow, I will remember what a famous cat once said, "The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you'll go." (Seuss, 1990).

Reading takes you places.

Libraries inspire lifelong learning.

I'm living proof.

On a final note, I am sad to report that John "Jack" Weatherford, emeritus director of CMU Libraries, passed away on June 2, 2018. He served as director from 1970 to 1988 and was instrumental in developing off-campus library services for distance students. We send our condolences to his wife, Gretchen.

Kathy Irwin





## Master plan guides library's future

In the rapidly changing world of learning, where technology and electronic resources are replacing print and physical materials, a new plan provides the framework to ensure Central Michigan University's Park Library will continue to enhance quality academic support for teaching, learning and research.

The CMU Park Library master plan designates usage themes for each of the library's four floors and focuses on providing flexibility for ever-evolving learning space needs among students and faculty. These designations will help guide what services and features fit into the library's overall academic support goals. The floor themes are:

- **First floor** Entry level, extended hours access, community outreach
- **Second floor** Resource and service-rich, collaborative spaces
- **Third floor** Student and academic support
- **Fourth floor** Teaching support and more

The plan, coordinated by CMU facilities management, was developed after a series of campus interview sessions and the collection of user comments.

"During the 2013 campus master plan, students identified Park Library as their favorite indoor place on campus; a place that we should not 'mess up' as the campus continues to evolve," said Linda Slater, facilities management director of plant engineering and planning.

"The master plan will allow us to move forward with confidence in evaluating and implementing changes to Park Library ensuring that it remains a preferred space for learning and studying." •



# Where **disability** meets **fashion**

Audiology instructor co-curates Clarke exhibit on assistive devices with style • *By Gary H. Piatek*



Stacey Lim wants to start a discussion about disability, beauty and ability.

Not just a private chat, but a public dialogue, an exhibition of views.

She's doing it through "(dis)ABLED BEAUTY: The Evolution of Beauty, Disability and Ability," an exhibit that opened Feb. 8 at Central Michigan University's Clarke Historical Library and runs through August.

Lim, a CMU audiology faculty member, was born with profound hearing loss — and has a fondness for fashion. Combining those two aspects of herself has been one of her life's passions. Another is to diminish the stigma that wearers of assistive devices feel by encouraging the manufacture of fashionable devices and to raise awareness of the issue.

"I think being able to express yourself physically helps break down the negative stereotypes of people with disabilities," she said.

### Fashion to friendship

An interest in fashion is what brought together Lim and Tameka Ellington, the co-curator of the exhibit.

Lim first met Ellington at Kent State University when the two doctoral students were waiting outside their statistics class. Ellington, a fashion designer, saw Lim knitting a scarf, and they began sharing their interest in fashion. They became fast friends and decided they wanted to do fashion research together.

They soon co-authored a study on how wearing hearing aids and cochlear implants affects teenagers' self-esteem. While presenting their findings at a health and fashion symposium, they attended a session on fashionable prosthetic limbs.

"We started looking at what was out there and began running into

a community of people making more fashionable prostheses, hearing aids and other devices — those that would match a person's personality," Lim said.

### Impulse to exhibit

Coincidentally, Kent State has the world's largest collection of hearing aids.

"I got to walk by it every day," said Lim. "It got me thinking that we can do better than that. We can show other things, like clothing that people have made, or other prostheses."

The pair began assembling a collection of assistive devices of historical, current and visionary design.

Lim began talking with Kent State and CMU about hosting an exhibition when she joined the faculty here in 2013.

Their first exhibition was at Kent State from September 2016-March 2017. Lim said it was well received.

### The CMU opening

Lim opened the CMU exhibit in collaboration with fashion merchandising and design students from CMU's College of Education and Human Services. The students added designs to the surfaces of prosthetic legs donated by Springer Prosthetic & Orthotic Services for a juried competition sponsored by CMU's Threads fashion show. The student designs are on display at the library.

The exhibit also includes stories of current and former students, faculty, staff and alumni who have disabilities or have been involved in disability work. The stories were the result of interviews conducted by CMU students along with history department faculty member Brittany Bayless Fremion, Adam Strom, of Due South Productions, and Lim. •





# Search for answers never ends

## CMU archivist fields questions from 125 years of CMU history

*By Betsy Miner-Swartz • Reprinted from Centralight Fall 2017*

Sometimes a 1980s yearbook is all Bryan Whitledge needs to dispel a myth, answer a question or track down a quirky detail about Central Michigan University.

But more often than not, CMU's archivist and manager of university digital records needs to do some sleuthing to pin down and preserve 125 years of the university's history.

"I try to find out what was going on here during certain periods of time," Whitledge said. "Sometimes it's a lot more difficult than you'd think, and luck is a lot of it."

Take CMU women's basketball, for example.

"That takes a lot of digging," he said. "You have to read through everything about the men's team starting in 1905 and just hope to find something about the Girls' Normal Team."

Whitledge fields hundreds of questions a year at Clarke Historical Library, and he can almost always find the answer — if he doesn't already know it. In just six years at CMU, his institutional knowledge is off the charts.

"He's an amazing detective. You can give him a fact or two, and he starts digging," said Marcie Otteman, executive director of alumni relations. "Even if he can't find what you're looking for, which is rare, he'll give you every dead end he ran into while looking for it."

As the university celebrates its 125th anniversary this academic year, Whitledge was asked about

the individuals who founded CMU, among dozens of other questions.

"The first meeting was in May of 1892," he said. "I've been asked everything from that to 'What trees were planted in honor of alumni at CMU?'"

He didn't just find mention of the trees. He took a hike with an intern one day so they could identify every single alumni tree on campus.

"I said, 'Let's go find a weeping cherry that's supposed to be south of the west doors of that building over there.'"

He's become an expert on CMU's history, which is impressive considering he knew close to nothing about CMU when he took the job in 2011 after earning his master's degree in library science at the University of Illinois.

Some of the history he can rattle off is pretty mundane: When did the Board of Trustees meet for the first time?

"It was in 1964. That's really boring, but it's important for why we are what we are," he said.

Other questions are far from dull — even if the answers might be a letdown.

"Like 'what was the Death House?' That question just came up," he said. "I found a 1980s yearbook and learned that it was simply a myth about a gruesome death that wasn't really gruesome at all."

Another mystery solved. •



## Centers of academic attention Library opens writing and math assistance areas

Park Library literally is centered on Central Michigan University student and faculty success.

And the proof is in two newly relocated service centers prominently positioned on the library's third floor.

As part of the 2017 CMU construction projects, the Writing Center and Mathematics Assistance Center both were moved from the back corner of the library's fourth floor to more convenient spaces near the atrium on the third floor. All services are available by appointment or on a drop-in basis.

It was all included in the CMU Park Library Master Plan that provides flexibility for ever-evolving learning space needs among students and faculty. The plan, coordinated by CMU facilities management, was developed with input from students, faculty and staff.

The new locations are more spacious, showered in natural light and create more engaging learning environments.

Ask Tristan Howard, a mathematics and physics major, who tutored in the Mathematics Assistance Center.

"The natural light, which we didn't really have in the previous location, really makes things feel more open, and more people want to come in," said Howard, of Dowagiac, Michigan.

"I've already worked with some students — they've been regulars at the center the past few years — who have commented on how much they like the light and openness of the new space."

Both centers are nearly 400 square feet larger than their previous locations. The locations are key to connecting with students, said Dan Lawson, Writing Center director and English, Language and Literature faculty member.

"We're hoping that being in a more visible location will increase the number of students we serve," he said, noting that center consultants hosted nearly 15,000 student sessions last year.

"By seeing the center and the students inside using it, others will see that this is a service available for writers in all disciplines."

### Writing Center

The College of Humanities and Social and Behavioral Sciences oversees this center as well as two other locations, in Anspach Hall and the Towers. Students from a variety of majors assist with writing at any level and for any discipline.

Emily Riley has served as a Writing Center consultant for four years. She said the more prominent location has great potential to spark students'

interests as they walk through the library.

"I hope people will notice us on their own rather than being required by their professors to come to the center," said Riley, an English and computer science major from Bay City, Michigan.

"This makes it easier for people to find us."

### Mathematics Assistance Center

Tutors from the mathematics department help students learn problem-solving skills that will bring clarity to any level of mathematics.

The new location in the library provides much-needed extra space for the tutoring services, said Reggie Becker, director of the center. Last year, the center had more than 11,000 users.

"During peak times, the old location could get quite crowded," Becker said. "The new location was needed to continue the growth of the MAC's impact on students' achievement in mathematics and statistics."

In addition to the library, the Mathematics Assistance Center has a location in the Towers. Both handle mathematics from algebra to business calculus, and the library center also handles statistics and the more advanced courses. •



> Development Column

## Use the library and be a standout

"The library is where you go to learn how to stand out when the world around you is so eager trying to fit in." Yes, I made that quote up, but I believe it to be true. The resources we have here at the CMU Libraries are so important. They allow the opportunity to discover, access and use information effectively for academic success, research, and lifelong learning. Hi, I'm Jacob Uithoven, and I'm pleased to introduce myself as the new associate director of development for special projects for the Central Michigan University Libraries.

I'm an alum of this great university, so I know how beneficial the CMU Libraries are. As a student, I was blessed to have the opportunity to use the services of the CMU Libraries. By making use of the study rooms, reference librarians and easy-to-use technology, I was able to sculpt myself in a way that allowed me to stand out postgraduation. Whether on campus or globally, the CMU Libraries do an outstanding job catering to the vast needs of its constituents.



Jacob Uithoven '15

I'm passionate about the students who attend this university and the community around us that make the libraries so special. In my short period of time as the libraries' development officer, I've met many individuals who feel the same way. Because of that, your generosity shows, allowing the libraries to be one of the premier spaces on campus.

In addition, the leadership at the CMU Libraries is second to none. When the Libraries' users need something a little extra to get them to the next step, our leadership is there to answer the call. They do an outstanding job at adapting to the rapidly changing environment around them. Whether it be the newest technology or the legendary stacks, this team will find a way to accommodate all. And with your help, anyone who uses these resources has the ability to stand out.

Please, if you haven't met me, I encourage you to reach out. I can't wait to meet more individuals who are as passionate about our Libraries as those who use it every single day. If you are a donor with either your time or resources, we all can't thank you enough. If you haven't yet gotten involved, but are interested in doing so, please reach out to me directly at **989-774-1615** or by email at **uitho1jn@cmich.edu**, and we can see how you might be able to help out the most.

As always, Fire Up Chips!

Jacob Uithoven '15







## Oppermans donate \$500,000 to library

When Sarah Rowley Opperman, '81, and her husband, Daniel S. Opperman, were deciding how best to invest a donation to Central Michigan University, they had one driving priority: It had to emphasize CMU's long-standing focus on success for every student.

One result was a \$500,000 contribution to Central's Charles V. Park Library, which serves students on and off campus and is continually evolving as a center for individual and small group learning. Another was a \$500,000 contribution to expand CMU's nationally recognized leadership experiences.

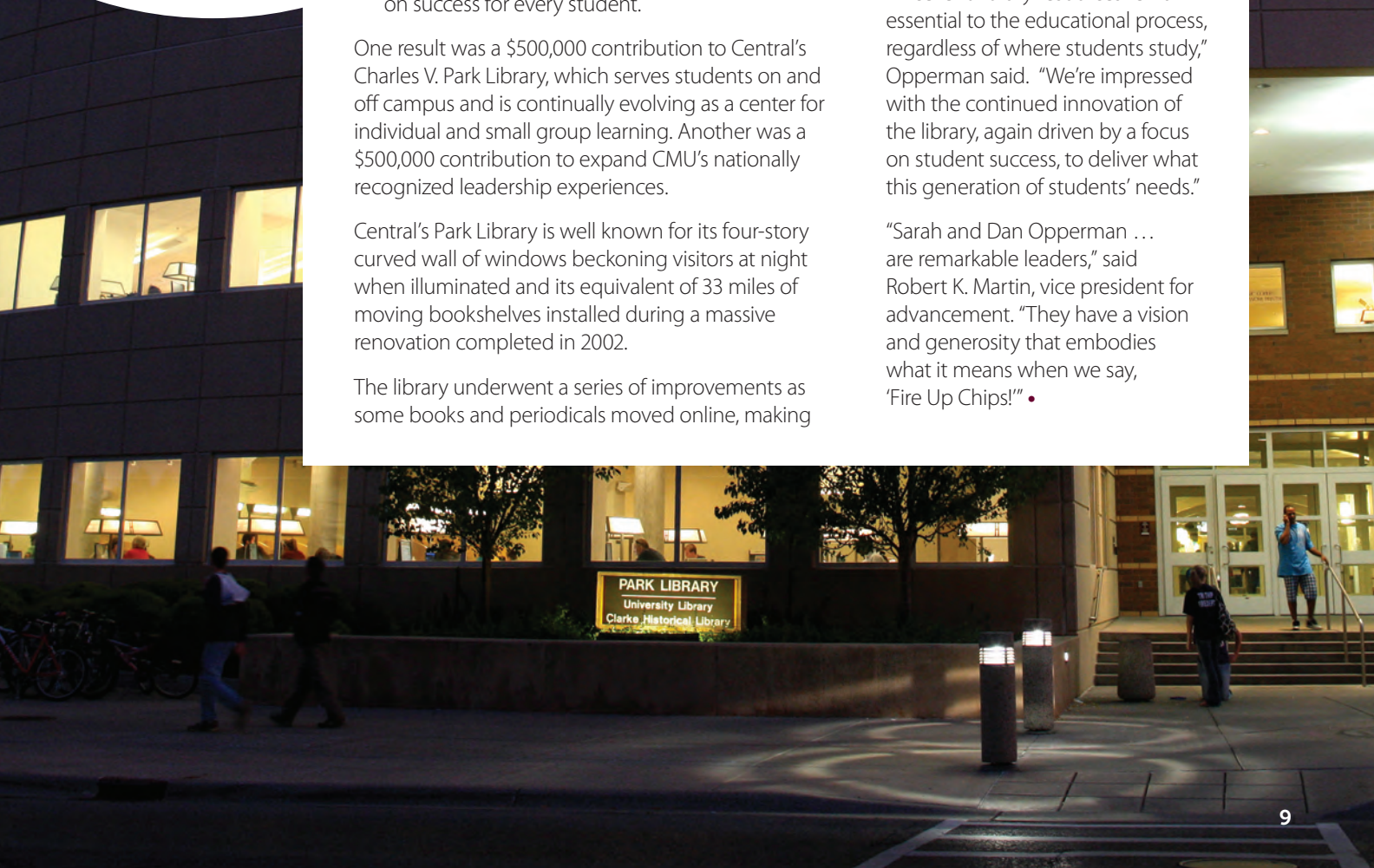
Central's Park Library is well known for its four-story curved wall of windows beckoning visitors at night when illuminated and its equivalent of 33 miles of moving bookshelves installed during a massive renovation completed in 2002.

The library underwent a series of improvements as some books and periodicals moved online, making

room for highly coveted student collaboration space. This past fall, at the request of students, the library study room went to a 24-hour schedule, four days a week.

"Excellent library resources remain essential to the educational process, regardless of where students study," Opperman said. "We're impressed with the continued innovation of the library, again driven by a focus on student success, to deliver what this generation of students' needs."

"Sarah and Dan Opperman ... are remarkable leaders," said Robert K. Martin, vice president for advancement. "They have a vision and generosity that embodies what it means when we say, 'Fire Up Chips!'" •





# Capturing the garden views

CMU grad brings artistic relief to winter in Park Library

*By Janet Danek, exhibits and projects coordinator*

A gentle stream, rocky edges around a peaceful pond, native plantings encircling a gazebo ... this is arguably one of the best views on campus. And it just keeps getting better as the Fabiano Botanical Garden matures. An arched window frames the scene from what was formerly the staff lounge on the third floor of Park Library.

In the library's effort to update and enhance the space so it could live up to this beautiful view, it was renamed the Garden View Room and was appointed with new, brighter furnishings and fresh paint.

The question then arose, how to maintain the garden ambience during our long Michigan winters? The answer was art. Capture those scenic views on canvas to be enjoyed in the Garden View Room throughout the year. The first person who came to mind to accomplish this task was Alan Maciag. He is an accomplished Michigan artist and Central Michigan University graduate whose work had recently been featured in the Baber Room art gallery, on the first floor of the library.

Alan's paintings of the natural world are filled with color and joy. One imagines he not only loves nature but is in his element when he is painting. We decided to share this joy he captures in his work with our guests in the Garden View Room. The library is fortunate in that through generous contributions to the Friends of the Library, a membership organization,

an endowment exists to fund art projects such as this. And so, Maciag was commissioned to create paintings of the gardens at the peak of their beauty.

To create the paintings, he spent many mornings at his easel in the gardens through the spring, summer and autumn of 2016, painting small "studies" of what he saw. Later, working in his studio, he used those studies to create paintings that embody his experience and offer his interpretation of the gardens in all their splendor.

The three paintings and the small "studies," which provide a record of the process, were introduced at the annual Friends of the Library event last year. The event began with words from the artist in the Baber Room. Guests were then escorted on a journey through the library with a variety of stops to learn about artworks along the way. The Garden View Room was the final destination, with refreshments and a grand unveiling of the artwork.

Especially during gray February days, the CMU community is fortunate to enjoy the colorful feast that now greets us in the Garden View Room. •





# Multicultural magic at library

Students, faculty were ready for 'Harry Potter' read-athon in a dozen languages

By Ari Harris



The best-selling "Harry Potter" series has been translated into more than 75 languages. On Feb. 22, anyone at Park Library's auditorium heard Harry's story in 12 of them.

Central Michigan University students and faculty members presented a reading marathon to share passages from "Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix" in languages including Spanish, Arabic and American Sign Language.

## Connecting over a shared passion

"Reading these books creates a common bond between people. You have this shared experience with someone from another country who loved these books, too," said Bryan Whitledge, archivist manager of the university's digital records.

Camilla De Bernardi, an international student from Italy who plans to double-major in international relations and psychology with a minor in cultural and global studies, was excited to share the book with her friends in her native language.

De Bernardi said her father read the books to her as a child, and she loved the inspirational message.

"The fact that Harry and his friends could do all they were doing with hardly any help from their parents made me believe I could, too," she said.

For Cassandra Olson, participating was an opportunity to share the fantasy fiction she loves with others while practicing her language skills.

Olson is a native English speaker majoring in German and has completed two years of German classes, including a study abroad stay in Berlin. She wanted to use the read-athon as a way to build her confidence speaking German before she heads back to Germany for a full year in the fall.

"This event is such a cool opportunity to connect Harry Potter fans from around the world in celebration of language and nerdiness," she said.

## Familiar in an unfamiliar way

The library is home to thousands of international children's books representing more than 50 languages and 70 countries, including a first edition of the London version of "Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix." Whitledge said the library borrowed or purchased copies of the books in languages such as Romanian and Korean in advance of the read-athon.

While the participants read aloud in different languages, audience members were able to follow along in English and be able to pick out some familiar words, Whitledge said.

Mackenzie Root, who is studying biomedical sciences, used American Sign Language during her segment of the read-athon. •

## CMU Libraries pilots 24/4 study room

CMU Libraries opened an extended-hours study room in fall semester to give students access to a safe, comfortable space that fits their schedules.

Judging from anonymous student survey responses, the move was a hit. Here is a sample:

"The extended hours study room is my favorite place to study! It is comfortable, convenient and has a lot of great resources."

"The dual-monitor computers are fantastic. I also like the convenience of the location and the variety of desk setups."

"It is a quiet, comfortable place for me to study late at night."

The decision to pilot 24/4 access was made in response to requests by the Student Government Association, library surveys, and the closures of the Ronan and Woldt computer labs.

The room includes Mac and PC computers, color printers, WiFi, and standard software, including the Adobe Creative Suite. Food and beverages are permitted. Restrooms, vending machines and additional study spaces are available in Java City, across the hall.

Use of the room is limited to enrolled CMU students, faculty and staff, and they must use their CentralCard to gain access. The schedule and policies are available on the libraries' Study24 webpage. •

## CMU library exhibit booklet **wins** award

A booklet made for one of Clarke Historical Library's traveling exhibits was honored with a Special Programs/Exhibits 2017 PR Xchange award at the American Library Association's annual conference.

The 16-page booklet was designed by Kari Chrenka, graphic designer for CMU Libraries and a CMU alum, for the "Native Treaties – Shared Rights" exhibit the Clarke produced in conjunction with the Ziiibiwing Center of Anishinabe Culture and Lifeways and CMU's Native American Programs office. This marks the sixth time Chrenka's work has received a PR Xchange award since 2014.

The American Library Association's PR Xchange awards are given yearly to honor the best public relations material produced by libraries around the U.S. Submissions come from public, academic, school, state and special libraries and are appraised by a panel of marketing professionals. •

