From The Desk of The Chief…

From Books and Chairs to Activity

Recently, I was invited to have a conversation with an administrator about the Library. In preparation, I thought about what the Library needed in order to achieve our goals. Then I realized that the Library’s goals might not be in line with the expectations of QCC’s faculty, students and administration. I asked the administrator about what the college expected from the
Library, and through the discussion, we both realized how the focus for libraries has changed over the years.

Years ago, a Chief Librarian might be losing sleep over budget and the possibility that the Library might not be able to buy the books they wanted or continue their journal subscriptions. While a collection that meets the needs of faculty and students is certainly still a necessity for an academic library, chief librarians now need to lose sleep over whether the library is providing the services needed by students and faculty.

Our students are bombarded with so much information that it is difficult to remember to select only the information that answers their information question. The student needs help in distinguishing reliable information from that which comes from inferior sources. Then he or she needs to know how to use information ethically. In other words, librarians need to be sure that they are offering information literacy skills to our students. Faculty members need to realize that students do not know how to find and use information on their own. We also need the space to teach students these skills.

The expense of textbooks is definitely a barrier to student success. Librarians have become involved in helping faculty members to select or create open educational resources.

The internet and open access unfortunately have become a venue for unscrupulous publishers who make false claims about the journals and conferences they advertise. Librarians find themselves helping faculty members to distinguish preda-
In “the old days,” faculty members simply looked in the catalog to find out if their library subscribed to their favorite journals. Now libraries get almost all of their journals online, and we select databases, rather than individual titles. Guiding faculty members to find the journals that are important to their work and balancing the budget to pay for the needed databases are new challenges.

In other words, what the Library needs and does has become more interesting than counting chairs and books, and I am enjoying the opportunity to work in this environment!

Jeanne Galvin, Chief Librarian
On May 4, 2016, our colleague and friend, Dr. Barbara Bonous-Smit passed away. In preparing to write this, I looked over her CV which listed numerous contributions to the Library, to the College, and to the field of librarianship including her involvement in various professional organizations. Yes, Barbara accomplished much in the twelve years she was a member of QCC’s library faculty…and we were most fortunate to have had her in the Library. However, she was a great deal more than her achievements – including even the PhD in music of which she was very proud. Barbara was a stellar, generous spirited human
being. She was always there to help colleagues and go the extra mile for everyone. She always saw the best in people…. and she never said “no.”

As time has passed since her death, her absence becomes a palpable part of every day. Those of us who worked with her for many years are continually thinking “What would Barbara say about that?” or “If Barbara was scheduled to teach a section of the same class as I was, what library resources would she use?” Barbara’s opinion mattered a great deal. Her judgment, while it occasionally erred on the side of being too generous, was usually flawless. The absence of her solid perspective, her pleasant company, and her giggly laugh leaves a huge hole in the best of what the library has and will always have – professional collegiality, enthusiasm for the field of librarianship and our students, and an ongoing friendship that is not always found in a work environment.

There will always be someone missing who was most special and unique. We were blessed to have had her among us. May she rest in peace.

Devin McKay on behalf of
The Faculty and Staff of the Library
OERs Rapidly Growing on Campus

Open Educational Resources (OER) are rapidly becoming “go-to” resources for both Faculty and Students. The cost of textbooks is skyrocketing, and as an attempt to offset costs for students, more and more faculty are creating OERs. Academic Works, the CUNY Institutional Repository, is an excellent tool to create and share these open access textbooks. Not only does Academic Works act as a repository, it also facilitates the dissemination of these documents by making them discoverable by search engines.

On our own campus, we have several texts created by Math, Science, and History departments. They are:
Through monitoring the Academic Works interface, we can see that these valuable pedagogical aids have been downloaded across the United States and in places as distant as Romania and Turkey. Students can easily download these texts for no cost. The access is reliable and easy. Instead of paying publishers hefty sums of money for research that was not compensated for, in many instances, students can now enjoy the benefit of that information especially compiled for their study.

*My Math GPS*, is easily one of QCC’s most widely downloaded document. Professor Patrick Wallach created a unique text that was compiled a chapter at a time on Academic Works called Mathematics in
Contemporary Society Chapter. Professor Loeffler’s Ancient Civilizations text is another successful entry in our repository. Our faculty are leaders among the CUNY community when it comes to the innovation and ingenuity used to put these resources together.

We encourage faculty to participate in the development of OERs to foster Open Access goals. The Library is offering a series of faculty workshops to help in the creation and use of such resources.

The first of these workshops was held on October 26. Jointly sponsored by the Library and the Center for Teaching and Learning (CETL), the program included directions for signing up for an Academics Works account and submitting metadata.

More of such workshops are planned for the future. Watch the calendar for dates and times, and please do not hesitate to call for further information.

Bill Blick
Information Literacy, 2016

Information Literacy is poised to take some new ground in the next semester, fall 2016. We are starting the semester with a brand new librarian, Susan Wengler. She is a skilled Information Literacy instructor and we expect to give her plenty of classes to teach.

Regular IL Classes
We expect to offer a full menu of services to faculty and students this year including our offering of one and two hour classes. We have a group of seasoned librarians ready to tackle the demands of these classes. At times we reach 35+ classes per week with an average attendance of 25 students. For that single week it means we taught 875 students!

IL Honors Classes
Professor Neera Mohess will be once again leading our Information Literacy classes dedicated to Honors students. Joining her in this endeavor are Professors
Devin McKay and Leslie Ward.

Certification Classes
A new offering, also led by Professor Mohess, will be a special program dedicated to faculty and students who cannot schedule an Information Literacy class. These classes are scheduled on a mix of mornings, afternoons, evenings and Saturdays throughout the semester. A certificate will be offered attesting to the student’s completion of the course.

Embedded Librarian Program
Our very successful Embedded Librarian Program is also off to a good start this year. Many faculty have simply gotten used to one of our librarians coming alongside them and becoming an integral part of the class. Some librarians have a presence on the class’ Blackboard site. The librarian attends multiple classes and offers their time to students as needed. Both students and faculty have raved about this program and we intend to continue to offer and suggest it to faculty.

Summer, 2016
During the summer much Information Literacy work
continued while on a limited schedule. The word limited may not be a very good way to describe what we did. Librarians taught 45 classes from June through August and 2 librarians, Professor Christine Kim and Professor Leslie Ward, served as embedded librarians.

New Chairs
30 new chairs were purchased for the workstations in Library Room 302. This welcome addition and will improve for students. Much thanks to Buildings and Grounds for the cleaning of 302 and the fabulous job they did on making the floor sparkle. All of these improvements make it just a little bit easier for instruction to take place. It is rumored that a new air-conditioner may replace the current ineffective one. This is another step towards improving the environment within which Information Literacy is taught.

Rick Mako
Devin McKay Begins Phased Retirement

Devin McKay, our Deputy Chief Librarian began the next phase of her life in September, 2016. She is the second librarian, after Professor Sandra Marcus, to participate in TIAA-CREF’s Phased Retirement Plan which will enable her to retire gradually over a period of 3 years.

Devin grew up in Manhattan. After graduating from high school, she attended Bradford Junior College where she received an Associate of Arts degree in 1968. She then worked in publishing at Academic Press, for five years, until her first child was born.

Professor McKay completed Bachelor of Arts in Liberal Studies in 1985 from SUNY, Empire State College. She was prompted about a career as a librarian by her sister-in-law who suggested the career path she then followed. She completed her Master of Library Science from St. Johns University in 1990 and added a second Master’s in Literature in 2000, also from St. Johns.

Devin started at Queensborough in 1990 as a library
intern and then was hired as an Adjunct Librarian. In December 1993, she became a Substitute with her own full-time line in Cataloging. She also began teaching Information Literacy, which she claimed, “…initially terrified me.” In 2000, she was granted tenure, in 2001 she became an Assistant Professor and in 2006 and she was promoted to Associate Professor. In that same year she was asked serve as the Acting Chief Librarian, which she did for fourteen months. However, she discovered that she much preferred the academic aspects of her job and stepped into her current role as Deputy Chief and Faculty Outreach Librarian which she enjoys.

She never saw herself working in any kind of library other than an academic library. I asked her what she found so special about working in an academic library. She said, “It’s the endless challenges. You keep doing different things. I like the rhythm of the academic world. You start in September, there are break-times and then the semester closes only to resume again. I enjoy the students. The academic library was always for me.” She added that another thing she always enjoyed has been service on committees. “Some of them were very interesting and the issues so challenging!” She explained another draw toward librarianship. “I love books. I like their tactile quality
in addition to the content.” About her library colleagues, she stated, “They have been family. We have all shared the good times and the bad times and graduations, single-parenting, divorces, births and deaths, marriages, etc.” She credits her research in American monastic libraries as an exciting and successful project on the road to Full Professor to which she was promoted in 2012. She was fortunate to receive two PSC grants which funded her travel throughout the United States visiting six monasteries.

She expects her phased retirement to give her a chance to devote more time to her Episcopal church, The Cathedral of The Incarnation in Garden City, New York. She was recently asked to help create an archive for the Cathedral, and she was elected to serve a three year term on the Cathedral Council. She also has been asked to work on the committee for content on the Cathedral’s new website. She continues to serve the Cathedral as a Lector reading scripture in services and an Acolyte. Also in store for Devin is more time in her local gym.

After working at QCC for 26 years Professor McKay looks forward to the changes ahead.
Keeping her company, will be her husband of almost ten years and four cats: 10 year old Rory, 10 year old Oliver, 9 year old Molly and 3 year old Cecil.

The QCC Library appreciates all that Devin has contributed, and will not look forward to seeing her depart. However, we are grateful that we still have some valuable time to work together.

Rick Mako
So, I Was at The Desk When...

Someone started to play an acoustic guitar by where the guard usually stands to the left of the lobby doors. Yes, a guitar. He was not lightly strumming but pounding away. I didn’t need an instruction manual to tell me this was inappropriate. I jumped to my feet and hurried over to the minstrel as the chords began to rise even higher. A small crowd was beginning to gather. I told him he couldn’t play here as it was the library. He didn’t protest and immediately packed up his guitar and left.

(Rick Mako)

I found an odd shaped piece of wood painted brown. There was nothing very special about it but it was shaped like an R. It was the missing r from the REFE  ENCE sign that hangs above the Reference Desk. I discovered it among the Ready Reference books. I asked Lawrence Chan to help me as he was taller and now the REFER- ENCE sign is whole.

(Rick Mako)

(This is a new section of the Library Newsletter titled, So, I was at The Desk…. We hope you will share your unique experiences at the Reference Desk, Circulation Desk, Reserves Desk, et.al. in future issues.)
Meet Our New Librarian
Leslie Ward

Boston baked beans, Boston cream pie and heroes of the American Revolution represent some of the gifts for which this New England city has earned our gratitude. And now we have one more – Professor Leslie Ward, our new Emerging Technologies Librarian.

Young and energetic with a twinkle of humor in her eyes, she has enthusiastically embraced her role of keeping our library up-to-date with the continually growing means of acquiring and processing massively burgeoning information. She is enabling our community of teachers and students to locate and evaluate the most material in the least time, enriching the Information Literacy classes she teaches, the workshops she leads and her reference desk service.

Leslie grew up in Reading, Massachusetts, a suburb of
Boston. Her studies were informed by her passions. Her love of stories led to history, and her desire to know how things work led to science. She was especially taken with microbiology and the desire to understand disease. Her undergraduate degree was in secondary school history, achieved while she worked part-time as a tour guide of eighteenth century folk art at “Historic New England.” A winter part-time position at Barnes and Noble deepened her love of books. Also volunteering at a Massachusetts historic society, she soon determined that she needed a broader scope in her education.

An internship in Boston at the “Historic New England” Library led to a Library Science master’s degree at the prestigious Simmons College. For her second master’s, Leslie traveled to England, where she studied the History of Medicine at Oxford Brookes University. During this period she worked as a Reading Room Assistant at Oxford’s famous Bodleian Library. She describes viewing a performance of *King Lear* there as unforgettable. A recent scholarly accomplishment was the presentation of a paper on the history of medicine and architecture, describing how asylums for the criminally insane were designed and their effects.

Leslie enjoys travel, walking, food, museums, books, theater, art, and learning something new. In addition to London, which she loved, she has seen Paris, Florence,
Scotland and Eastern Canada. She relishes the variation in the cultures of different places. She enjoys going to ethnic street festivals, and walking in parks, historical cemeteries and architecturally interesting city streets. She appreciates all kinds of food from the gelato and rich dishes of Italy to the spicy cuisine of India, and will try anything. Interestingly, it is a rare day when she doesn’t consume large quantities of Pepperidge Farms’ Gold Fish. She will also go to every type of museum; art, history, science or nature. And her taste in books and theater is equally eclectic; novels from Stephen King to Thomas Hardy; short stories from Franz Kafka to Phillip K. Dick, and shows from Wicked to James Joyce’s The Dead.

The central career interest of Professor Ward is in teaching through technology, addressing different learning styles and making education more accessible through electronic means. Her goal is to integrate information literacy in new ways of learning. She believes that such integration is just as important in digital learning as it is in traditional learning. When asked what she wants to accomplish, she replies, “to get people excited about using technology to learn.”

Sandy Marcus
On January 15, 2016, a team of bold, innovative librarians from the City University of New York, or CUNY, set out to do what many librarians in the United States have not done. They traveled to Cuba for a week — an expedition of cultural, professional, and informational exchange. The mission was exhilarating as it was challenging. There were 10 librarians
representing a wide range of backgrounds and skills. Professor Kenneth Schlesinger, Chief Librarian of Lehman College, acted as the leader and organizer of the trip. Other leaders included the Chief Librarian for the Dominican Studies Institute at City College, Professor Sarah Aponte, and Professor Tess Tobin of New York City College of Technology. Without them, this trip would not have been as successful due to their skillful diplomacy and their attention to organizational details. Also, joining us was the senior archivist from CENTRO, Centro de Estudios Puertorriqueños at Hunter College, Pedro Juan Hernandez, and Acting Chief Librarian for Queens College, Manuel Sanudo. The other participants represented areas of librarianship such as cataloguing, electronic resources, information literacy instruction, and Interlibrary Loan. They were: Maureen Garvey (College of Staten Island), Sylvia Cho (The Graduate Center), Liz Jardine (Laguardia Community College), Judith Schwartz (Medgar Evers), and William Blick (Queensborough Community College).

The itinerary was full of learning opportunities. One such of opportunity was when The CUNY Librarians visited the Jose Martí National Library, where they met several different Cuban Librarians who had various roles. It was interesting to find out that the library discipline and principles practiced in the United States were similar, if not the same, in Cuba. Additionally, the CUNY group visited the National Archives, the National Medical Library, and the National Art Museum and Library. CUNY librarians
were able to network and exchange ideas and resources with Cuban Library professionals.

The librarian group were also able to savor and experience the culture, cuisine, music, and history of Cuban including visits to the city of Maztanzas, known as the “city of bridges” and Old Havana, where they witnessed the nightly custom of a firing of the revolutionary canon every night at 9 pm to commemorate Cuba’s emancipation.

Because of the transitional political, economic, and social climate in Cuba today, the period was ripe for CUNY librarians to visit and observe the development, creation, and dissemination of information resources. Cuba has several challenges and issues that make the exchange of information that we take so much for granted, somewhat repressed. It is evident that the exchange of values and ideas amongst information professionals was an exciting endeavor, and hopefully, the future holds more of these types of exchanges.

Bill Blick
Meet Our Librarians
John Schriner

The start of the new semester has brought with it a new look to the Library web site, reflecting a cleaner, simpler view. The importance of our web site cannot be overstated; introducing student and faculty users to our resources and programs, and how to access them, as well as to our excellent personnel and their expertise. This apparently simple presentation belies a complex and difficult process, often involving the frustration wrought by the complications of being a part of other sites in QCC and CUNY.

The patience and skill required for this job is present in ample measure in the person of our new Web Services Librarian, John Schriner, a valuable addition to our library family. A quiet, unassuming demeanor masks the strength and ability required for his daunting tasks. His background is adventurous and varied, which no doubt
helped to develop the character necessary to his position.

John was raised in the small town of Troy, New York, which he still visits regularly; he graduated from SUNY Purchase, majoring in Russian literature, and influenced by the work of Dostoyevsky, B.F. Skinner’s *Walden Two* and works of political theory. He spent the next three years in Twin Oaks, Virginia, living in a secular commune. During the following two years he earned his master’s degree in Library Science at North Carolina Central University in Asheville. He took advantage of the fact that much of this graduate work was doable online, and traveled while he studied. He spent time in India, Germany and Spain, picking up understanding of diverse cultures and technical skills along the way. His other travel adventures have included the west coast and New Zealand.

John’s first position as a librarian was one year at an English-speaking university in Kazakhstan, where he studied Russian. Returning to this country, he served as an “Electronic Resources” librarian for a year at the Technical Career Institute in Manhattan. He is currently working on his second master’s degree in “Digital Forensics” at John Jay. His special focus deals with cyber-
crime, malware and state-sponsored tampering. His published papers have emphasized means of librarian support for technologies used to support “whistle blowers.”

Activities that John enjoys reflect independent lifestyle choices, including biking back and forth to QCC daily, and maintaining a vegetarian, gluten-free diet. He reads graphic novels and science fiction, as well as books on historic Soviet linguistics. He plays the accordion and has been part of a band with album publications, and has focused on the work of Philip Glass and “small French songs.” Look for John in one of his signature flannel shirts.

John currently serves on the executive board of ACRL/NY as web advisor. When asked what he enjoys most about working at the Library of QCC, he expressed a love for the diversity. Using and communicating his experiences from India to New Zealand, and teaching from Kazakhstan to New York City can enrich the lives of both students and colleagues with all of the positive aspects of diversity.

Sandra Marcus
ASK A Librarian
We’re paid to help you
In-Person: Library 2nd or 3rd floor Reference Desk
  E-Mail: askref@qcc.cuny.edu
  Phone A Librarian: 718-631-6241
  Text A Librarian: 718-701-8021
  AIM: askref@qcc.cuny.edu

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Layout/Design: Professor Richard Mako

Happy Thanksgiving!