Little Known Wonderful Library Facts

Most patrons are aware of the Library as a place where one can find resources for teaching and scholarly work. Some of these resources are tangible; many are available online. There is also general awareness of our instruction programs where students can learn to find the sources needed for assignments, as well as gain the lifelong skills of finding information and using it effectively and ethically. It may be that not everyone is aware of other facts about the Library:

1. We can lend things and get them back!
   All libraries in CUNY use an integrated library system that enables us to know when articles are not returned, no matter from where they were borrowed. Because of our ability to track delinquent borrowers, we are able to lend textbooks, laptops, calculators, cordless chargers and a growing number of other items that our students need. Most often the necessity to replace objects arises from their being worn out from over use, rather than from their disappearance. Occasionally, the fact that we fine financially disadvantaged students is questioned. Unfortunately, this is essential because we know that people will return our books and devices to avoid fines, enabling availability for the students who need them.

2. We are the most accessible service on campus.
   In addition to the 73 hours a week (7 days) when we are open, we are on hand for “late night chat” five nights a week. Students seek help with using our databases and ebooks, as well as citing them properly.

3. We have a broad range of knowledge.
   Almost all library faculty have subject master’s degrees. A second graduate degree (either another master’s or a doctorate) is required for an assistant professor status. All of our librarians have done serious work to become familiar with the literature of other disciplines and how people in those disciplines seek and use information.

4. Library faculty members are very connected professionally.
   Almost every QCC librarian serves on university wide professional committees. We share ideas and contribute to CUNY wide library policies.

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Dr. Paul Marchese Named Interim Vice President for Academic Affairs

As Interim Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dr. Paul Marchese is responsible for overseeing the Library, along with all of the academic departments, the Academic Computing Center, CETL, and the other learning centers. His positive influence on both the Library Department and the College as a whole is justifiably anticipated, since he has shown himself to be a deeply caring and committed educator, as well as a brilliant scholar and tireless worker.

Dr. Marchese came to academia via the world of science. His bachelor's and master's degrees from Columbia University are in the field of mechanical engineering. After several years' experience as an engineer in aeronautic design, including work on the space shuttle, he returned to Columbia to study physical oceanography, earning his Ph.D. degree. His interest in martial arts led to his teaching classes in Tae Kwon Do, and the discovery that he really enjoyed being an educator. His first position in higher education was four years at SUNY Maritime College, with a professorship in oceanography. He accepted a position at QCC in 2001 in the Physics Department. Growing up in Queens, he currently resides in Bayside with his wife and two teenaged daughters.

The Queensborough Community College web site describes his impressive scholarly accomplishments: “The author of numerous published articles in oceanography, science and technology education, physics, space science, and educational diversity, Dr. Marchese has also presented papers at national meetings such as the American Geophysical Union, American Meteorological Society, American Association of Colleges and Universities, and the Society for Advancement of Chicanos and Native Americans in Science. Dr. Marchese is a member of Sigma Xi Research society and received several awards including a Navy Faculty Fellowship three years in a row. He is a recipient of many grants, more recently a million dollar grant from the National Science Foundation grant to teach high school teachers about lasers and fiber optics, and to introduce this technology into the classroom. Dr. Marchese's current research interest includes studying hypoxia in Long Island Sound, climatology, and the composition of the solar wind. He does research in science education and has been involved in incorporating active methods into the introductory science course. He is involved in several initiatives to recruit underrepresented minorities to the sciences.”

The high esteem and respect that his peers feel for Dr. Marchese was evident in his selection for the 2014 QCC Award for Excellence in Faculty Scholarship. And his strong sense of the importance of community values and human rights was reflected in his participation in the Common Read program on Henrietta Lacks in 2013.

Although he will miss the active teaching that takes place in the classroom, he accepted this position with the hope of contributing to the strength of the College and creating some new worthwhile programs. He will also try to continue to work with some students. But most of all, he wants to be of as much help as possible to the faculty, whom he describes as being, “one of the best faculties in CUNY, one of the best faculties in the world.” And he loves reading books, real books with pages that can be turned. Who could ask for more?

~Sandra Marcus

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5. We are home to the Archives of the College.

At QCC the Archives is not a collection of outdated files and dusty artifacts. Under the direction of Prof. Constance Williams the Archives has become a space for learning and research. Faculty and other planners of events marking the history of the College come to the Archives to find original documents. A growing number of teachers are using the Archives for student assignments. Students respond very positively to examining documents, photos and artifacts to learn about the past at QCC.

~Prof. Jeanne Galvin, Chief Librarian
Honoring Poetry

Last month the world lost an important person, though many today do not see his significance. Galway Kinnell was, after all, only a poet, albeit a winner of both the Pulitzer Prize and National Book Award. In our fast moving, computer driven world, not many take time for poetry. How sad this is, and how deprived contemporary life has become.

Those that would like to put their everyday selves on hold for a time and look at reality through poetic imagery need go no further than the Library. On a cart next to the new book collection many new books of poetry sit, waiting for readers to venture into their pages. In Galway Kennel's obituary, eloquently written by Daniel Lewis in The New York Times, the poet was quoted as saying, "To me … poetry is somebody standing up, so to speak, and saying, with as little concealment as possible, what it is for him or her to be on earth at this moment." -- pretty important stuff!

~Sandra Marcus

Here are some minor offerings from our library:

Autumn Verses by William (Bill) Blick

Ode to Jack o-Lantern

Oh we slice you
Shaping with delight
Scooping out the gooey seeds
And fiber
Do not care about your exile
Perhaps you will despair
On the ledge
Of a stranger's house;
A suburban street.
Or endure in a pain, ornamentation
for a debauched
Halloween fright fest
Candy apples at your side
I can see you smiling
But hear a faint cracking from
Deep in your curbits soul

Ode to a Stuffed Turkey

Round, plump, sweating away in your juices,
Should we sing a dirge around the table
When you come out steaming with raisin and bread stuffing
Cranberries scattered on the orange table cloth?
What does the turkey have to be thankful for?
Does he resent being hunted?
Or does he rejoice because he has a purpose?
We should all be so lucky, our raison d'être recognized and fulfilled.
Or maybe when the fork and knife pierce crispy, golden skin,
The turkey has second thoughts about who he is.
That's the last thing this world needs: turkeys having identity crises.
Would there be psychotherapists for poultry?
What would the hourly rate be?
I stare at my aromatic, roasted turkey
And ask someone to pass the string beans.
Photography Contest Winners Announced

The second annual Kurt R. Schmeller Library photography contest was a resounding success with so many excellent entries that selecting the best ones became a daunting task. We want to express our sincere appreciation to Prof. Bob Rogers, Chairperson of the Art and Design Department, for effectively addressing this task, and judging the contest. We also want to thank Danny Li, College Laboratory Technician, for managing contest entries and means of access to the photographs. His separation of names from photographs insured totally fair evaluations. Our final thanks go to the wonderful photographers that submitted entries to the contest. They all showed talent and great promise. In our eyes they are all winners.

First Place winner is Tate Hyun for "A Beautiful Couple in the Sky,” Face the world and be myself.”

Third Place winner is Reda Bouzid for a “Beach in Morocco”
Second Place winner is Shirley Chen for “The Full Moon Night.”

An area in the Library has been designated for a Student Photography Gallery. Framed prints of all the winning contest entries will have a permanent place in this gallery. Watch for news of the grand opening of this special place.

~Sandra Marcus

Library Internships: Contributing to the Excellence of the Profession

Giving back to the profession of librarianship through mentoring library interns is one important way to ensure the future of academic libraries. As part of the City University of New York with nineteen campuses, including an ALA accredited library school, we, at Queensborough Community College, are privileged to be able to help in the development of good librarians.

Over the past eleven years, the Kurt R. Schmeller Library has worked in conjunction with Queens College Graduate School of Library and Information Studies to sponsor the internships of library school students during their final semesters. Our interns have always provided positive experiences.

The process begins with a library school student requesting an internship. I meet with the student and design an action plan structuring one hundred and fifty hours in our library. Specific activities and responsibilities are mapped out.

A memo of the action plan typically follows the outline below:

Actions: The intern will work at several tasks, under the overall supervision of Prof. Devin McKay. The intern will also work with other library faculty and staff. Since archives is her primary interest, she will spend time learning how a college archive center is set up and maintained and will assist the archivist.

For an authentic and rewarding experience the intern:
• Will provide reference service and participate in teaching information literacy classes;
• Will be trained in and actively participate in the use of the Aleph System to remove, relocate and add books;
• Will catalog some of the new acquisitions;
• Will navigate the Aleph system for ordering new library materials;
• Will work at the circulation and reserve desks, learning circulation and reserve functions;
• Will perform interlibrary loan transactions;
• Will learn how the college archives are managed.

The educational agenda consists of standardized procedures:
• The intern begins the internship after agreeing to the number of hours and schedule, and spends time at a variety of library locations.
• After seventy-five hours, at the midpoint, the intern receives a midterm evaluation. The experience thus far is reviewed, and how the remainder of the hours will be spent is determined.

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Meet Your Librarian -- Holly Skir

Sometimes service to the library can go beyond reference help, research direction or even teaching. Sometimes entertainment can provide additional gifts to the library community. Librarian, Holly Skir, has provided such gifts, her rich soprano voice and her valuable time, appearing as an artist for music programs sponsored by Friends of the Library.

Holly began working here part-time a number of years ago, as an adjunct reference librarian. As a result she was available to sing during our popular live concerts and illuminating music lectures presented by noted author and Columbia professor, Dr. Walter Frisch. Currently, she also serves as an adjunct lecturer at York College, another CUNY school.

Holly Skir grew up in Huntington, a town on Long Island; she studied music performance at Five Towns College. After graduating, she performed for the local opera company and sang in the Long Island Philharmonic choir. She also worked in retail positions for a while specializing in customer service, before earning her M.L.S. degree at the Palmer Library School, C.W. Post campus of Long Island University. She very much enjoys the satisfaction derived from being of help to people: assisting students with their research, identifying and locating reference sources and teaching classes. She is proficient in the navigation of the computer systems and databases shared by all of the CUNY schools. Another strong interest that Holly is developing is journalism, a pursuit shared with a cousin, the noted 20th century photo journalist, Ruth Gruber. When a College Now program in journalism required a library lesson here, Holly was happy to be able to teach it.

Among the myriad other activities that Holly enjoys are theater, opera, travel, art museums, reading, movies, television, baking, shopping and spending time with her family. She delights in all kinds of live performance including both musical theater and opera. Her favorite operas are the works of Mozart, especially the Magic Flute and The Marriage of Figaro. Her travels have included Italy, Amsterdam, Chicago, Los Angeles and Miami. Her favorite place in the world is Spoleto, Italy, where she spent a summer in a music internship program. She also loves the Art Institute of Chicago. Her taste in movies and television is broad and eclectic, but she has a special fondness for crime drama, a fondness extended to literature. A recent read that she would recommend is Gone Girl. A few years ago a crime drama called The Singing Detective was produced. With her strong voice and excellent library skills Holly Skir could be called “the singing librarian,” not a bad title for a book.

~Sandra Marcus
Librarians on the Threshold

In June 2012, Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education published in 2000 by the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL), was determined to be dated and needing revision. ACRL directors formed a task force charged with revising this document. They, instead, created a new document, a Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education, including a provision for feedback from the community. Revised drafts were released in February and April of 2014. A hearing was held at the ALA Annual Conference in June, and by July 15, feedback from the community contributed to a new draft of the Framework.

ACRL/NY collaborated with LILAC (Library Information Literacy Advisory Committee) (CUNY) and Barnard College Library on the program Librarians on the Threshold: An Overview and Panel Discussion of ACRL’s Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education. This event on October 31 at Barnard College drew a record number of attendees. The keynote speaker was Trudi Jacobson, co-chair of the ACRL Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education Task Force.

In her presentation, “ACRL’s Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education,” Trudi addressed student research behavior, the goals, major elements and implications of the new Framework, as well as threshold concepts. She began by asking her audience to describe student research skills in one sentence. Responses indicated an abysmal lack of such skills, and Trudi supported this belief with research studies. She included Alison Head’s “Project Information Literacy: What Can Be Learned about the Information-Seeking Behavior of Today’s College Students?” from the ACRL National Conference of 2013. She noted that research shows that assignments are often daunting and puzzling for college students, who may feel overwhelmed, confused and unsure where to begin. Tools such as Google and Wikipedia are generally used, along with a few databases. Some college students simply transfer the “routines and practices for research” from high school to college, which doesn’t get them very far. They miss seeing the “big picture,” and often lack information gathering skills, don’t understand the meanings of words used, or the “expectations of assignments.” These deficiencies prevent them from becoming “information literate.”

Trudi presented more detailed information about the new Framework and its goals and challenges, as well as threshold concepts and how they relate to information literacy. Threshold concepts are based upon economics and the works of Jan Meyer and Ray Land. Other recommended authors included L. Townsend, A. R. Hofer, S. Lu, K. Brunetti, and Silvia Lu. The central idea is “a passage through a portal or gateway.” Moving away from a checklist approach, it is “transformative” and “integrative.”

The threshold concept was addressed further in the presentation, Threshold Concepts in Practice, by Silvia Lu of LaGuardia Community College, CUNY. She discussed her use of threshold concepts in information literacy classes. Her ongoing work may be accessed at: http://www.ilthresholdconcepts.com. Other thought provoking ideas were provided by Ian Beilin of New York City College of Technology, CUNY in the presentation, Beyond the Threshold: Conformity, Resistance and the ACRL Information Literacy Framework for Higher Education.

A participant expressed the belief that the Framework helped her articulate concepts that she has been using in her information literacy classes. Among the implications for the new Framework is increased collaboration between librarians and course instructors; research skills instruction becoming more clear-cut, and information literacy sessions becoming “sustained or integrated learning experiences.” Such effects may be utilized at any level and should result in librarians becoming more involved with pedagogy. There would be more formative assessment to determine gaps in learning and the need for curriculum revision.

Participants got a peek into the revision process and the upcoming third draft of the Framework that should be completed by mid-November. Feedback from the second draft had been gathered from e-mails, surveys, blogs, and Tweets, coded by a task force member, and provided many good ideas. An online “Sandbox” is accessible for further discussion and feedback: http://try-2014-acrl-framework.wikispaces.com. More information on the ACRL Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education may be found at http://acrl.ala.org/ilstandards/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/Framework-for-IL-for-HE-Draft-2.pdf The ACRL Framework website is: http://acrl.ala.org/ilstandards/
The event concluded with an excellent panel discussion co-moderated by Robert Farrell of Lehman College (CUNY) and Julia Furay of Kingsborough Community College (CUNY). Nicole Brown of New York University presented “The Framework as Program Development Tool,” describing her experience of using the Framework drafts as a protocol for scholarly discussions with faculty as well as her creative strategies for making these interactions successful. With events such as wine and cheese receptions, she provided some interesting ideas to get the conversation going.

Among the greeters that opened the program were: Barbara Bonous-Smit (ACRL/NY Professional Development Committee, Chair); Curtis Kendrick (University Dean for Libraries and Information Resources, CUNY); Robert Farrell and Julia Furay (Co-Convenors, LILAC (CUNY); and Lisa Norberg, (Dean of the Barnard Library and Academic Information Services). Material from the program is available at: http://www.acrlny.org

~Barbara Bonous-Smit

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(left to right): Dianne Gordon Conyers, Julia Furay, Trudi Jacobson, Barbara Bonous-Smit, Silvia Lu, and Nicole Brown

Back row (left to right): Natalia Tomlin, Linda Miles, Megan Wacha, Robert Farrell and Ian Beilin
Open Education

Many faculty members have experienced guilt feelings in the knowledge that the student requirement for the purchase of a very expensive textbook does not meet the precise needs of a particular course. They have wondered about the use of OEMs or OERs (Open Educational Materials or Open Educational Resources). Educators here at Queensborough and elsewhere have begun to use such approaches. They are finding that the answers to textbook problems lie in “making your own.”

This started as a grassroots initiative by faculty members who wanted to organize their own materials, save students money and share their work with other faculty. It is now recognized and accepted across academia.

At one CUNY college the President gave the library $25,000 to assist faculty who wanted to create OERs. The money went for stipends or released time, and the result was some excellent work in several disciplines. Librarians helped faculty with various pieces of the project, including guidance through the process of getting copyright clearance if needed.

The library also hired technology assistants to help with the projects.

For two years SUNY has been offering its faculty grants to create OERs as part of its OpenSuny initiative. Interested teachers are supported by teams from various SUNY libraries. The results have included widely used online course materials that are openly available. More information about what has been accomplished is available at OpenSuny Textbooks: (http://opensuny.org/omp/index.php/SUNYOpenTextbooks/index).

This year, as in the past, CUNY colleges received funds earmarked by the Board of Trustees for libraries to purchase textbooks and other educational materials for undergraduate students. However, this year was different; it included the proviso that some of this funding could be used to assist faculty who are creating Open Educational Resources. Also, the CUNY Office of Library Services offered an online course in making the transition to Open Educational Resources. The course filled quickly, but will be offered again.

Here at the QCC Library we have met with some faculty members who are working on projects to create OERs. We appreciate the input we have received from them and are working with the Office of Academic Affairs to create a process for using part of the textbook funds to assist in these important projects. We look forward to hearing from more teaching faculty interested in this exciting initiative!

~ Jeanne Galvin, Chief Librarian and Sheila Beck

QCC Library Faculty Spreading the Word: More About Open Education Resources

A main proponent of Open Educational Resources (OER), the Hewlitt Foundation defines OERs as “teaching, learning, and research resources that reside in the public domain or have been released under an intellectual property license that permits their free use and re-purposing by others.” These resources are used in many ways, and can take many forms. They are usually electronic, of little or no cost, and widely accessible, extending information and educational benefits across location and financial status lines.

In order to raise awareness of OERs, Queensborough Community College librarians have formed an OER Committee. The goal is to facilitate resources through which faculty in other disciplines can utilize OERs in their own curricula. Library faculty have participated in e-mail campaigns in honor of Open Access and Open Education weeks, alerting the QCC community to the importance of this initiative with a diverse range of messages and information.

The OER committee will present at a poster session of the ACRL/NY Symposium, The Academic Librarian in the Open Access Future to be held at the Baruch College Vertical Campus on December 5. The poster will focus on the eclectic methodology utilized to spread the word.

From sociological benefits to practical local application, The Library faculty has drawn on its diverse experience. Specializations have been drawn upon to create programming addressing Open Access as well as Open Educational Resources. Last Spring, QCC Librarians held workshops on contracts for faculty seeking to be published. Cautionary alerts to predatory publishing practices, and infringements of author’s rights were provided.

~William(Bill) Blick
A Look at NAHRS

The Archives Committee of the Nursing and Allied Health Resources Section (NAHRS) of the Medical Libraries Association met here at QCC on October 27, 2014. NAHRS, the second largest section in the Medical Library Association with over 400 current members, was founded in 1962 and celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2012.

Queensborough awards several degrees in areas of health care. Our students may receive an A.A.S. degree in Nursing, an A.A. or A.S. degree from the Department of Health, Physical Education and Dance or an A.A.S. degree in Massage Therapy. The College also awards A.S. Degrees in Environmental Health, and Health Sciences, as well as A.A.S. Degrees for those pursuing careers in the area of Medical Office Assistant. In programs such as these, the assistance of medical librarians is invaluable both for faculty seeking information literacy library classes and for students seeking research guidance for papers and projects. A primary concern of the NAHRS is to increase awareness of their support among the nursing and allied health librarians, to foster continuing education and professionalism.

The Archives Committee’s duties include preserving and maintaining all presentations, as well as their documents and memorabilia. They gather, organize, inventory, preserve, store and provide access to the valued documents of NAHRS in print, audiovisual and electronic format.

Another focus of the committee is a list of nursing journals, developed to assist both nurses and librarians. As cited on the NAHRS webpage, (nahrs.mlanet.org/home), nursing and interdisciplinary journal titles are evaluated for library collection development, as well as potential publishing opportunities.

The meeting was convened by Wanda Anderson of Boston College. Also present were Mary Shah of Western Connecticut Hospitals and Constance Williams of QCC. Health Knowledge Consultant, Peg Allen, participated via a conference call. Agenda items included keeping items housed at Boston College, collecting more items for the Archives, and the possibility of digitalization of materials in the future. Also addressed was the current Oral History Project with the need to continue advertising, to develop a plan to reach a wider audience, and further interviewing of officers that have served over the years. Additional discussion points included the optimal number of members required for the committee; audiotapes, cd’s and various items ready to be sent to Boston College for storage and inclusion, and the most effective way to scan documents for the NAHRS History Scrapbook.

As this committee moves forward, new chairs and co-chairs will have to be considered. It was agreed that Wanda Anderson would remain an ex officio member regardless of changes in leadership.

Medical librarians at the October 27th meeting, pictured below, are all members of the Academy of Health Information Specialists (AHIP), part of the peer reviewed professional development program of the Medical Library Association. Individuals are admitted and certified based upon academic preparation, professional work experience and professional accomplishments.

~Constance B. Williams

(Constance Williams; Jeanne Galvin, Chief Librarian; Mary Shah; and Wanda Anderson)
For a first-year community college student, writing a research paper can be an intimidating task, especially if this is the first such assignment. The process involves identifying a topic, conducting research, analyzing sources and data, and incorporating everything into a paper. Research done by Lundstrom and Shrode, published in the Journal of Library Innovation in 2013, indicates that most first-year college students have not learned this process, and that they also find it difficult to develop research questions or topics.

In addition, a 2011 study by Connaway, Dickey, and Radford reports that "convenience and ease of use/access" are considered to be the most important factors when students seek information. Even when students believe library databases to be better, they prefer the web, seen as quicker and easier. Therefore, it seems highly probable that without library instruction, students are likely to use web search engines for all their information seeking.

This thesis was further supported by surveys conducted at the start of Queensborough Community College library instruction sessions. A majority of students described research processes limited to web search engines such as Google, Bing, or Yahoo. Participants were enrolled in English 101/102 classes taught by Professor Michael Dolan. Part of an embedded librarian program, three library sessions were held over the course of the semester with more surveys conducted at the end of each session.

During these sessions, students were given time to do preliminary research on their topics and subsequently narrow their research questions. After the first session, 35.1 percent of the students indicated that they had changed to a totally different topic; while 40.5 percent of the students described revising their original topic. These results indicate that most of the students had not been able to develop adequate topics prior to the lesson.

To ease students' anxieties in the early stages of the research process, the librarian can help them with selecting and narrowing topics, as well as navigating library databases. Helping students to obtain credible sources for their research instead of using Google is one of the most important learning objectives in library instruction. In a survey at the end of the first library session almost all students responded that they would use credible library sources for their research papers, with 98.46 percent of the students choosing library databases, and only 1.54 percent still indicating a preference for open web resources. These results demonstrate that library instruction can improve student behavior and leave them better prepared for the research papers they will have to write in the future.

~Christine Kim and Michael Dolan

Introducing OneSearch

CUNY Central Library has provided a new resource. Called CUNY OneSearch, it is appropriately named, enabling exploration of a broad range of databases, including the library catalog, with only "one search." Books, e-books, journal articles, DVDs, and CDs throughout the QCC Library Collection may all be found with a single search. The CUNY One Card Library Barcode number should be used to sign in for of the available resources. In addition to locating resources, articles may be added to e-shelves; searches saved; email alerts set up; library accounts viewed; and books renewed. OneSearch may be found at http://onesearch.cuny.edu/primo_library/libweb/action/search.do?vid=qb, or through one of the many links on the Library Website. A OneSearch video tutorial is provided at http://youtu.be/xxxxIOS9mpc.

~Nanette Johnson
Meet Your Library Staff - Elizabeth Devlin

Although she has been here a relatively short time, Elizabeth (Liz) Devlin has become an integral part of the library community. Her ready smile and pleasant demeanor serve to enhance a friendly atmosphere both for colleagues and patrons. A library is the ideal workplace for Liz, with books and reading filling a special place in her world.

Growing up right here in Bayside, Liz earned a bachelor’s degree in computer science from Queens’s College and Saint John’s University, but temporarily put aside her professional ambitions to devote herself to raising her three children. Her son is now an attorney, practicing immigration law, and one of her daughters is in the engineering program at Bayside High School. They are a sailing family, together enjoying a thirty foot racing sailboat, and each of the children with his or her own fourteen foot, Laser olympic class sailboat.

Liz ranks sailing, swimming and scuba diving among her favorite diversions, but books remain her first love. Participating in a book club with friends of over 25 years, she enjoys both fiction and nonfiction. Some of her favorite authors are Nora Ephron, Jeannette Walls, John Irving, Nelson DeMille and Jon Krakauer. She also delights in travel. After backpacking across Europe following college, exploring England, and visiting relatives in Ireland, she continued to seek adventure all over the globe from Mexico to Fiji and Australia. Her other pastimes include movies, especially romantic comedies, some reality television involving dancing and travel, and all kinds of puzzles. A source of creative satisfaction, as well as gifts for her friends, is her hobby of jewelry-crafting in her basement workshop.

Before coming to the QCC Library, Liz gained experience and expertise in a variety of fields, from nurse’s aide to web site developer to wine buyer. She is a connoisseur of fine wine and good restaurants, preferring the exotic specialties of Thai, Indian and Japanese food. Also cultivating her own abilities as a gourmet cook, she earned rave reviews for her jambalaya and Boeuf Bourguignon.

To join our library community after doing extremely well on the QCC test, Liz resigned from a web job introducing new products on a retail site. Her initial reserve desk and archival responsibilities have been expanded to include acquisitions, as well as both circulation and reserve desk coverage. Her duties involve ordering new books, and processing the books when they come in, as well as cataloging. She has also been known to provide her co-workers with special treats. Her husband owns a Pepperidge Farms distributorship.

When asked if she liked her current position, she responded with a grin of amazement at the question, “Working with books and young people in a variety of changing activities -- I love it!”

~Sandra Marcus

Elizabeth (Liz) Devlin

Books are still alive and well at the QCC Library. There are new best sellers, both fiction and nonfiction in their own “new books” section at the front of the main floor. Books for leisure reading are located behind the Reference Desks, and children’s books are beside the stairway to the third floor. Library books may be checked out with a CUNY card at the circulation desk. It is very easy.

Also near the stairway are books for sale. (amazing bargains) And free books may be taken from the cart beside the main doors.
Crime fiction is often thought of as frivolous, trivial, and escapist entertainment. However, scholars and critics are beginning to take a closer look at such material with works such as *Gone Girl* considered serious literature. There have been many masterful writers who used the genre of crime fiction to illuminate aspects of the human condition, notable names such as Raymond Chandler, Dashiel Hammet, Dorothy L. Sayers, Roald Dahl, and George V. Higgins.

The University at the picturesque and historically significant region of Poland known as Gdansk was the site of an international conference where I presented a paper on this topic on September 12. Among the many presentations were papers on "Breaking Bad," "Jane Eyre as Gothic Literature," "Autism and Crime Solving," and "Law Enforcement in Science Fiction." My presentation, "Trailer Park Noir: Drugs, Ultra-Violence, and Depraved Indifference in the Rural Landscape," examined recent trends in crime fiction which deal with seedy aspects of rural milieus, and home-grown drug manufacturing operations. This type of novel is often referred to as "Country Noir." Proponents of this genre include Daniel Woodrell (*Winter's Bone*), Donald Ray Pollack, (*The Devil All the Time*) and Frank Bill (*Crimes in Southern Indiana*). These uniquely American works are both disturbing and darkly strange. While traditional noir writing takes place in the city underbelly, works in this genre have a pastoral atmosphere and hint at roots of naturalism and authors such as Sherwood Anderson, Erskine Caldwell, and William Faulkner. Sometimes unsettling, sometimes sickening, and sometimes profoundly beautiful, such works provide a new and different perspective of what makes up "literature."

My presentation was well received, and I enjoyed listening to the diverse offerings of others. In restaurants that had been converted from ships, I had wonderful Zander fish, indigenous only to the Baltic Sea. I saw Solidarity monuments and elaborately ornamented churches that were quite old. As a writer of crime fiction myself, I found the ideas generated at the conference, as well as the foggy thousand year old cobblestone streets to be inspirational. My whole experience in Gdansk was positive, thought provoking, and personally enriching. It is my goal to publish my findings in a journal and to continue to pursue publishing my crime fiction in many venues. I was proud to be able to represent QCC across the Atlantic, and I believe that keeping abreast of cultural and critical changes will enhance my skills as a librarian, becoming more adept at advising readers and more effective with students researching contemporary literature.

~William (Bill) Blick
Library Exhibits

Near the entrance to the Library are three glass cases waiting for visitors to stop and peruse their colorful contents. Changing regularly, these exhibits are designed to aesthetically enhance the appearance of the Library. Additional goals of such displays include highlighting available books on various subjects, promoting awareness of college activities and departments, recognizing the heritage of different ethnic groups and honoring human achievement. Often, they also serve to showcase the creative work of QCC students.

The current display is “A Celebration of Hispanic Culture,” featuring Spanish literature, art, music, food, history and people who have made a difference. Plans for the upcoming display involve promoting three important cultural resources on our campus, the QCC Art Gallery, The Queensborough Performing Arts Center, and the Kupferberg Holocaust Resource Center and Archives. Both past events and brochures for future presentations will be featured. Hopefully the exhibit will generate interest and foster enthusiasm for taking advantage of these resources. Students, faculty and staff are all fortunate to have them at their fingertips.

~Sandra Marcus