

# Hunter's Clarion

## from the University Librarian

May 2006

by Bil Stahl

One of the primary reasons I became a librarian is that I like to read on a wide variety of subjects. Librarianship offered me the latitude to explore all manner of topics. I am almost exclusively a non-fiction reader. My reading can quickly move from religion to economics to whatever else piques my interest. In my 50+ years of reading this way, I have often discovered that things are not as they originally seemed to be. This has especially been the case when I have mustered the courage to read authors whose positions I did not care for or even violently disagreed with. In every case, I have come away with a modified understanding of the issue.

Lately I have been thinking a lot about the importance of context. In our digital world we are able to parse information quickly down to just what we need at the moment. However, it has been my experience that context often develops as we wade through information we did not think we needed. "Ah ha" experiences are not planned. These "Ah ha" experiences often come from discovering a new aspect of an issue's context.

A trivial example is my ongoing fight with squirrels at our birdfeeders. I waged my war for years under the assumption that squirrels gained their wisdom about how to foil humans over many years. Then, in one of my random readings, I learned that the average life span of a grey squirrel, my main nemesis, is one year! I have since changed my tactics to game playing with my rodent opponents, since they obviously can learn faster than I can!

*Continued on page 2*

## Hunter Library Fights Back Against Cancer with Information

by Kitty Taylor

Inspired by a colleague's battle against breast cancer, seven Hunter Library staff members, along with 30 additional teams consisting of WCU students, staff, and faculty, joined in Western Carolina University's 3rd annual Relay For Life. The event, founded in 1985 by Dr.

Gordy Klatt and officially started as a team relay in 1986, is the signature activity for the American Cancer

Society and seeks to raise both funding for research and

awareness of cancer, which is expected to strike almost 1.4 million people in the United States in 2006.

The goal of Hunter Library's team, prompted by its daily surroundings, was to provide resources of information on a local and national level, and to raise \$1,000. The event took place from the evening of Friday, April 7th through the early morning hours of Saturday, April 8th. This time was chosen as a reminder that cancer never sleeps and that fundraising and research efforts, in the hopes of finding a cure, should be as persistent.

With months of fundraising, Hunter Library's team found creativity as much of a necessity as deter-



*Hunter's Relay Team leads the way. Members include Kitty Taylor, Robin Hitch, Janet Sanders, Mary Hill, Deb Moore, and Serenity Richards. Not pictured is Terry Ensley.*

*Continued on page 2*

## In This Issue

- From the University Librarian ..... page 1
- Hunter Library Fights Cancer ..... page 1
- National Library Day ..... page 3
- Hunter Scholar: Andrew Denson ..... page 3
- Change Your World ..... page 3

- Civil War Roundtable ..... page 4
  - Evening in Atlanta ..... page 4
  - Hunter Profiles ..... pages 5-7
- Heath Martin, Brandon A. Robinson, Dan Wendel

*Continued from page 1*

### **From the University Librarian...**

On a more practical note, I wonder about the impact of MP3 downloads on people's understanding of a musician's work. In the past, we often purchased a CD for one or two songs, but became familiar with a greater range of the artist's work. Often we liked songs that we hadn't known existed before we purchased the CD. Now, however, as bits of a musician's oeuvre float around in a dismembered state, how do we come to really know his or her work?

Malcolm Gladwell, the author of *The Tipping Point* and *Blink*, is very proficient at finding "Ah ha" moments by discovering context. In a recent article, "Million-dollar Murray" (*The New Yorker*, Feb. 13 & 20, 2006) he found out that the average length of time a person is homeless in this country is three months! That understanding puts a whole new light on how we might go about remedying our homeless situation.

I sometimes wonder if libraries are getting

too efficient at providing just exactly the information asked for. Perhaps the less efficient libraries of old were actually effective at the "confusion principle" used by many retail stores to get customers to encounter products they were not actually looking for. Of course we do not want someone with an urgent need for a particular piece of information stumbling around lost in the huge forest of information. But we do need to share with students examples of the "Ah ha" moments we have encountered. This is an important part of the Library's information literacy efforts. Today's students are often very literal and fact oriented. We want them to understand that the Library is an important and exciting place for them to discover that not everything is as it seems.

*Continued from page 1*

### **Hunter Library Fights Back Against Cancer...**

mination. Endeavors to raise money ranged from a Thanksgiving raffle, also known as "turkey tickets," to a soup and bread luncheon, a Valentine's Day bake sale and basket raffle, and the sale of "book thongs" which were made by team members. By the end of the event, Hunter Library donated \$1,278.95 to the American Cancer Society. Thanks to the continuous financial support of coworkers, family, and friends, the team surpassed its fundraising goal.

With the intent to "fight back against cancer with information," the team set the décor of its site with resources found in the library, within the region, and online. Some Hunter Library resources include:

*From Cancer Patient to Cancer Survivor:  
Lost in Translation*

WCU General RC 262 .F76 2006

*Why I Wore Lipstick to My Mastectomy*

Leisure Reading RC 280 .B8 L83 2004

*Life's a Funny Proposition, Horatio*

CMC Children's PZ7 .P75284 Li 1992

Locally, information and support can be found at:

In Good Company Breast Cancer

Support Group

(828)213-1839 (Asheville)

Cancer Support Group

(828)369-7722 or (828)524-3839 (Franklin)

Online, the following sites provide data and assistance:

American Cancer Society

[www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org)

Cancer Treatment Centers of America

[www.cancercenter.com](http://www.cancercenter.com)

National Cancer Institute

[www.cancer.gov](http://www.cancer.gov)

In the words of team captain Deb Moore, "My reasons for participating in the WCU Relay For Life were twofold. I wanted to do something to help in the fight against cancer. My husband has lost several family members and my supervisor, Eloise Hitchcock, is currently undergoing treatment. I was also interested in supporting students at Western who are getting involved in something so important. Next year, I hope more staff teams will be created." Team member Robin Hitch described the event as, "An inspiration that shows what support can do and how far we have come in our research." Fellow team member Mary Hill walked throughout the night because, "It meant a lot to Eloise and that was the best part."

Hunter Library's team would like to thank Relay For Life committee members Tre Breedlove, Tabitha Taylor, and Leslie Weeks, American Cancer Society representative Lisa Duff, and honorary chair Coach Kent Briggs, for organizing this year's event. A special thanks is also due to Marcus Dunn, student assistant for the Curriculum Materials Center, for his participation in the "Miss Relay" contest held at the Spring football game. To all other Relay teams, thanks for braving the 3:00 a.m. storm and for helping Western Carolina University's Relay For Life raise a total of \$18,237.00. Finally, to Eloise, our coworker and friend, thank you for your inspiration and courage. Your fight is our reason to relay.

## Hunter Scholar: Andrew Denson

by Brandon A. Robinson

Hunter Library congratulates Andrew Denson, assistant professor of history at Western Carolina University, as our new Hunter Scholar. Dr. Denson will be working on a project, entitled, "Monuments to Absence: Cherokee Removal and Southern Memory." He received his Ph.D. from Indiana University in 2000, and has published articles in *Chronicles of Oklahoma*, *Western Historical Quarterly*, and *North Carolina Historical Review*. He is the author of a book, *Demanding the Cherokee Nation: Indian Autonomy and American Culture*, published in 2004 by the University of Nebraska Press.



## Integrating Curriculum and Information Literacy

by Alessia Zanin-Yost

Who says that students do not want to learn? Western Carolina University students in the Philosophy and Religion 203 course demonstrated the opposite and are "pledging for change" as Aaron Morgan stated. It all started last year when reference librarian Alessia Zanin-Yost at Hunter Library discussed with Steve Carlisle, Associate Dean of the Honors College the benefits of incorporating information literacy into the course content.

Information literacy is defined as the ability to find, retrieve, analyze and use information and the ACRL (Association of Colleges & Research Libraries) has developed five competency standards, which are widely applied by librarians to teach students about information.

Alessia and Steve joined forces and co-taught the PAR 203 course during the spring of 2006. Through the expertise of Hunter's faculty, the students were exposed to a variety of resources available to them, and allowed them to contemplate how information influences our thinking. A group of students, Jan Carrier, Jennie Dowdle, Aaron Morgan, Susan Pressley, Maleah Pusz, and Alessia Zanin-Yost talked about their experience with information literacy at the 2006 WCU Undergraduate Exposition.

"When students come to WCU", said Maleah Pusz, "they are expected to know how to research papers, but unfortunately this is not taught in high school. Information literacy provides a set of skills that are essentials to a freshman." Jan Carrier was concerned about starting school after a twenty-year absence. The changes in technology and again the lack of preparation at the high school level made her feel uneasy about doing research. However, through the course she gained confidence in her research skills and mastered the use of a variety of resources.

All of the presenters agreed that information literacy is an essential skill to have at the college level, but that unfortunately is not taught in such depth. Usually, students attend one fifty-minute library session during their freshman year. Aaron Morgan would like to see WCU become the "Little Harvard" in the mountains by increasing standards in the classrooms so that students are pushed to produce better work. This year WCU was second for the undergraduate papers presentations, and he asked the audience what we, librarians, instructors, students and administrators, need to do in order to be number one next year.



## Change Your World @ Your Library

by Brandon A. Robinson

On Wednesday, April 5, Hunter Library hosted the Annual National Library Week Reception; this year's theme was "Change Your World @ Your Library." Patrons entered their names in a drawing—for a \$20 gift card at City Lights—and enjoyed cake and punch in between classes, papers and exams. Dr. Glenn Bowen, Director of Service Learning at Western, and Dr. Jane Nichols, assistant professor of interior design, contributed a display on service learning and volunteerism, with graduate student Darius Foster on hand to field questions.



# A Clean, Well-Lighted

## Excursion *by Brian Railsback* *Dean of the Honors College*

*Ernest Hemingway traveled with the Friends to Atlanta in February and he left this note:*

When you traveled with the Friends of Hunter Library to Atlanta there was always the official Bill Kirwan. He was working for the other Bil (Stahl) but he also worked for himself and for the Friends and you understood that. Bill and the other Bil were both librarians and so were the Friends in spirit and so when you traveled with them they were official and organized and they followed through on plans.

Because of Bill and perhaps the other Bil you arrived at the High Museum on time unless you were with students. The Friends were on the time of Bill and Bil but the students were on their own time. There were 44 participants and only 8 were students but they were all Honors students.

You arrived at the High with the students and Bill had left the tickets so you could get in. When you walked from the hotel to the museum you felt the cold air cut through you but you saw the museum lit up in the sun through the clouds and so you did not mind the chill. The Andrew Wyeth exhibit was magnificent with the stark lines and planes and sepia light of the pictures and there was a chill in the paintings but you wanted to feel it.

At night you went with the students and so of course you went to Houlihan's where they had margaritas for \$2.50 each. You did not watch what you

were drinking but you watched the students and they were Honors students so you did not worry. The Friends were elsewhere but they were led by a librarian so you did not worry too much. The other Bil might have worried but you did not know.

The night ended with the Atlanta Symphony, where after the chill of Wyeth you were ready for the warmth of the violin virtuoso and the gold light of the hall itself. When the symphony played Dvorak's "New World" even the students were quiet and the music made you believe that you could touch the gold light on the stage. Of course you had arrived late with the students but the usher treated you well and while you stood against the wall behind the seats it did not matter because the symphony took you somewhere and when they settled down you could see the students were there too.

In the morning over your free breakfast Bill Kirwan made sure everything had worked as planned and you were glad that it did. Bill was very official and perfect and it made you a little afraid.

Later you learned that the event raised \$900 for the Library but that was administrative and it was hard to make that matter when you closed your eyes and let Mr. Wyeth invite you back to the New World.

# Civil War Roundtable

## Donation *by Brandon A. Robinson*

In early 2006, Hunter Library received a rich archival donation from the Western North Carolina Civil War Roundtable (WNCCWRT). Specific items include:

*The Southern Bivouac: A Monthly Literary and Historical Magazine* (6 volumes)

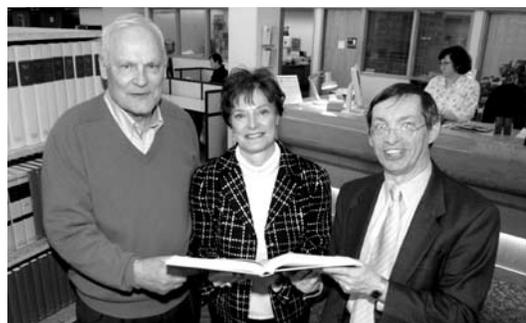
*The Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States* (70 volumes)

*The Confederate Veteran* (43 volumes)

*Papers of the Military Historical Social of Massachusetts* (15 volumes)

These primary sources were donated in honor of Dr. Max R. Williams, Professor of History Emeritus

at Western Carolina University, and editor of *The History of Jackson County*. They are not only invaluable to students interested in Civil War research, but also to history enthusiasts from the general public.



*Max Williams (Professor of History Emeritus), Carrie Houthouser (President of the Western North Carolina Civil War Round Table), and Bil Stahl (Associate Provost for Information Services) review the Round Table's most recent donation.*

# PROFILES



## Heath Martin

*by Brandon A. Robinson*

Near the end of the spring 2006 semester, Hunter Library welcomed Heath Martin as its Collection Development Librarian. As he assesses the growth and exciting changes at Western Carolina University, Heath stressed the importance of making sure “the library’s resources remain a central part of the WCU experience.”

Heath was born in St. Louis, Missouri, and grew up in Orion, Illinois, near the border with Iowa. Early in life he nurtured a passion for music, and played bass in a “very local” trash metal band. After two years at Black Hawk Community College, Heath matriculated at Illinois State University with the intention of study-

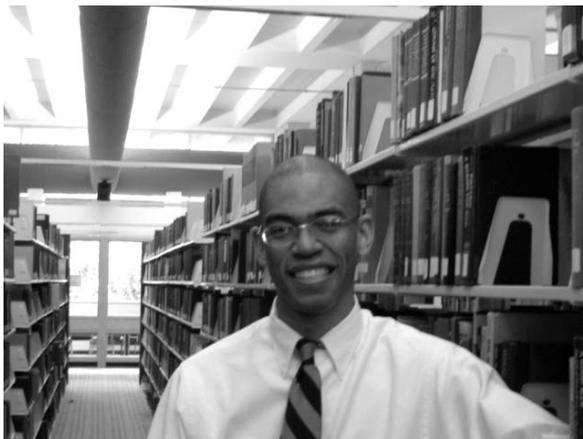
ing music. He found he had a great many interests, however, and after a stint in the natural sciences later settled on the study of literature, which has since wielded powerful influences over his life and thought. Heath graduated from Illinois State with a B.A. in English.

During his undergraduate studies, Heath was inspired by one of his professors to read deeply in early American literature, eventually developing abiding interests in the poet Phillis Wheatley and the sermons of the Great Awakening. He particularly enjoyed Wheatley, who he says helped him “expand my idea of what American literature is and what it could be.” After an interesting but short-lived career in journalism, Heath chose to return to Illinois State to pursue his M.A. in literature and work as a graduate teaching assistant in the writing program. During this time and extending into his later Ph.D. work, he began to study contemporary literature more deliberately. Ultimately he began to explore primary “cyberpunk” texts as a literary manifestation of the intersection of ethnography and literature.

After a move to New York, Heath continued teaching writing and literature at several area colleges while working on two degrees—one in the M.L.S. program at Queens College and the other in the Ph.D. program in English at the CUNY Graduate School—eventually deciding to leave the Ph.D. program after three years to devote himself to a career in librarianship. After first serving as a database consultant and reference librarian at SUNY Maritime College in the Bronx, Heath moved into the position of Acquisitions/Collection Development Librarian at the same institution. During his career as a librarian, Heath has developed research interests in alternative periodicals, the effects on pedagogy of library collections, and intellectual-property issues within the academy.

In early 2006, he accepted the Collection Development Librarian position at Western’s Hunter Library. Heath hopes to apply his previous experience in collection development to the challenges ahead at WCU. He notes, however, that he will be building on and learning from the accomplishments of Hunter librarians both past and present. “The librarians here have built collegial and productive relationships with faculty in the various departments, and these efforts have helped to create collections integral to the high-quality education being offered at Western. Amid the exciting growth the university is experiencing, working from those strong traditions and dedicated efforts is very encouraging.”

His wife, Amy, who received her Ph.D. in English from Illinois State University, has previously taught composition and directed the writing center at Pace University. Though Heath says he has fewer hobbies than in previous times, he is still an aficionado of diverse literatures and enjoys custom-building computers.



## Brandon A. Robinson

by Hunter Staff

In January 2006, Hunter Library welcomed Brandon A. Robinson as its Public Relations Assistant. Having previously served in this function on a temporary basis, Brandon says he is pleased to build new bridges between patrons and Hunter Library, the institution to which he attributes much of his intellectual flourishing during his undergraduate years at Western Carolina University.

Brandon was born in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, and was raised in nearby Mocksville, where his family has lived in the same neighborhood since the Civil War. At fifteen he became interested in politics when his state representative sponsored him as a page in the North Carolina General Assembly; first serving in this capacity in the House of Representatives, he then did the same in the Senate, where he witnessed deliberations of the finance and commerce committees. Brandon was highly involved in YMCA Youth & Government, a mock legislature held in thirty-eight states, and headed by a national assembly, the Conference on National Affairs (CONA), which meets yearly in Black Mountain, North Carolina. At the state level, Brandon served as Chair of the Judiciary Committee, Speaker of the House, Lieutenant Governor, and, in his senior year, Governor. In this capacity Brandon represented North Carolina, along with the other thirty-seven state governors, at the annual Youth Governors' Conference in Washington, D.C. During his week in Washington, Brandon breakfasted with members of the U.S. House of Representatives, dined in the Senate Caucus Room with several U.S. Senators, and met with State Department diplomats and then-Attorney General Janet Reno. The high point of the conference was an evening in the White House West Wing, during which he visited President Clinton's Cabinet Room, Roosevelt Room, Rose Garden and Oval Office. Two summers later, he was selected as a Presiding Officer at CONA in Black Mountain.

Brandon enrolled at Western in 2000, declaring a major in history and minor in philosophy. He almost immediately embarked on a reading plan of great works in Western Civilization, integrated with art history and classical music. By the time he graduated in Summer 2005, he had read 300 works—primarily in philosophy, theology, political theory, history, and world literature. Brandon says he would like to continue this reading throughout his life—if possible, reading a couple thousand books within his lifetime.

During his student days at Western, Brandon also was involved in several leadership activities. From 2001 to 2004 he was a resident assistant in Reynolds Hall. He successfully managed a friend's campaign for student body president, and served on the College of Arts and Sciences Dean's Student Advisory Council, and the Chancellor's Distinguished Teaching Award Committee. For several years he was both an assistant editor of *The Gadfly*, a philosophy student journal, and he expanded one of his essays, "A Swim With Heraclitus," into the December 2004 Commencement Address at Western. In his speech, Brandon told the graduates that the greatest challenge of the twenty-first century is that of "keeping a human face on a global society."

Brandon plans to eventually enter law school and practice in North Carolina. He enjoys reading, letter-writing, walking on Western's beautiful campus, and attending performances by the Western Civic Orchestra and Catamount Concert Group.

PROFILES





## Dan Wendel

by Brandon A. Robinson

Earlier this year, as 2006 aged slowly amid preponderances of snow, I enjoyed a good conversation with Dan Wendel, Curriculum Materials/Map Room Library Assistant, over green tea and surrounded by diverse maps. Dan began work in this position late last year, having previously served Hunter Library as Assistant Weekend Supervisor in Circulation.

Dan Wendel was born and raised in a rural community north of Detroit, Michigan. Several of his forbearers served in the military, and Dan continued this tradition when he enlisted in the United States Army. During his four-year tour of duty he went to Georgia, Louisiana, Alaska, Hawaii, Korea and Haiti as an infantryman. Aside from the obvious survival skills learned, Dan described his military service as impressionable for the cultures it opened to him—a purview that would prove invaluable when he took up anthropology at Western Carolina University.

Dan often emphasized how glad he was to have postponed his formal, academic education, for by doing so he achieved a finer clarity as to his mission: he sought, and still seeks the widest learning—“quality of learning, rather than time-based”—and to build upon the “inductive reasoning” cultivated from travel and military service. For Dan, the sum of these pursuits is the attainment of the good life. “I think there’s a unique trend evident in our generation. We want to spend our time more usefully—on aspects of our lives than just work. It’s a reaction to the baby boom generation.” Dan recently earned his B.A. degree in anthropology and religious studies from Western.

Dan knew long before graduation that he would like to work in a university setting. “I like the university, where the environment is suffused with information and people focused on information.” Describing himself as an “autodidact,” Dan has immersed himself in the world of art—drawing, guitar, violin, and the keyboard. He finds brevity increasingly powerful as he bends his mind towards verse: “Since coming to Western, I’ve graduated from prose to poetry, and I’ve found that I cannot only say things in fewer words, but hear things in fewer words.” Among his cultural inspirations is *Tao Te Ching*—the book that changed his life—the *Bhagavad-Gita* and the verse of Rumi, who compares the body to a robe, on loan to the spirit, though the ego tricks us into thinking that the robe is the real thing. Ultimately, the robe must be returned, and though Dan believes in keeping it up, he fully plans to remit in full.

Above all, Dan sees education as a “mythos, because there is no tool to measure it.” In our long, refreshing conversation, we did not have enough time to discuss James Joyce, but had the Irish novelist met Dan Wendel, he undoubtedly would have seen in his life a portrait of an artist as a young man.

PROFILES





*"It was in books I encountered the universe – assimilated, classified, labeled, pondered, still formidable." Jean-Paul Sartre*

## **HUNTER LIBRARY HOURS**

### **Fall Semester 2006**

<b>Mon. - Thurs.</b>	<b>7:30 a.m. - 1:00 a.m.</b>
<b>Friday</b>	<b>7:30 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.</b>
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>10:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.</b>
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Noon to 1:00 a.m.</b>

#### **Java City at Hunter Library**

<b>Mon. - Thurs.</b>	<b>9:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.</b>
<b>Friday</b>	<b>9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.</b>
<b>Closed Saturday &amp; Sunday</b>	



Hunter Library  
Western Carolina University  
Cullowhee, NC 28723

## **Hunter's Clarion**

<http://www.wcu.edu/library/about/CLARION/index.htm>

Editor . . . . . Eloise Hitchcock  
Technical Editor . . . . . Brandon A. Robinson