Capital campaign starts with a bang, thanks to Dr. Sarah W. Newman

Comics mean many things to many people—but for Dr. Sarah W. Newman’s husband Rick, they were a lifeline after his diagnosis with Lou Gehrig’s disease in 1979.

Richard Mark Newman, also an M.D. and a neuroscientist like his wife, relied on books alone during the eight years he lived with ALS.

“He couldn’t do anything but read,” Sarah said. “He was totally paralyzed, but he could move his eyes. I’d come home and he’d be reading mathematics or physics or astronomy texts—the kind of things people in those fields would be reading. But he did have a light side.”

As a childhood fan of Conan the Barbarian, Rick began reading Cerebus the Aardvark, a loose parody of Conan which evolved into a broad exploration of the artistic and literary reach of comic art. Each week, Sarah stopped at the comic store to pick up the latest issues of this and other favorite titles for Rick.

“Comics had been totally confined to my childhood,” she said, “and the idea that intelligent young adults were reading comics was really interesting.”

During his years of paralysis, Rick was “bored to tears” and always looking for ways to exercise his intellect. To him, comics brought entertainment and intellectual stimulus in equal measure. He had an appreciation for the artwork and collected a good deal of memorabilia from the Cerebus series before his death in 1987.

Memories of this time prompted Dr. Newman’s generous gift in support of the MSU Comic Art Collection. The Richard Mark Newman, M.D., Endowment for Comic Art will reach $280,000 once fully funded, and will ensure continued preservation and access to this important collection.

— continues on p.3
Insight is published to inform the MSU community about the collections, services and activities in the MSU Libraries. Story ideas and comments from readers are welcome.

For information about MSU Libraries, contact the Office of Development for Libraries & Information Technology at 517.884.6446, or visit: http://giving.lib.msu.edu.

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From the Director’s Desk

MSU students and faculty come to the Libraries to find and use our resources, study, and socialize. We support these activities by building collections, assisting users, and providing appropriate spaces for group work and individual study...and for relaxation. Even the most dedicated students need to take a break!

You might imagine that providing a coffee shop in the library is enough. Students can get a hot drink in January, or an iced drink in July, without enduring extreme cold or heat outside.

But we think the library has a much broader role in campus life.

We make the library itself a stimulating place to be, with artwork and exhibits. We have sculptures and paintings donated by individuals, and acquired with support from the Irene B. Arens Endowment. We have items on loan from the Broad Art Museum and the MSU Museum. Displays throughout the building include rare book exhibits made possible by gifts of museum-grade cases from Donald Koch and Barbara Sawyer-Koch.

We also host a diverse set of free public events. This semester, students could attend a poetry reading by Michigan author Marge Piercy; practice designing objects for 3D printing; see a demo by the MSU Fencing Club and examine historic fencing books from the Schmitter collection; discuss farm-to-table dining with local farmers and restaurant managers; watch and dissect the pseudoscience film Sharknado with faculty members from Geology and Geography.

Increasingly, the library takes part in student life through outreach efforts, profiled on page 14.

So the MSU Libraries do much more than provide routine library services. We strive to create a rich learning environment, and offer experiences far beyond what one might normally expect at a library. We encourage you to come to the MSU Libraries and expand your horizons.

Clifford H. Haka
Director of Libraries
Thanks to Dr. Sarah W. Newman

continued from p.1

“"I wanted to help the library by making a significant gift toward their goal of two million dollars in endowed funds for Comic Art," Sarah explained. The library’s overall target for the Empower Extraordinary campaign is $13.5 million, and the Comic Art endowment is one of the most important goals.

Comic art bibliographer and Assistant Head of Special Collections Randall Scott has plenty of ideas for the additional $15,000 per year the endowment will provide—starting with completing MSU’s collection of titles from the black-and-white comics era of the 70s and 80s.

"Cerebus was one of the flagships of the black-and-white explosion and there are some other titles I’d like to get," said Scott. "I’m close to completing the Cerebus run, but I’ve been trying to find issues for lower prices, which is difficult. I’ve never been able to afford collectors’ prices. The endowment money will change that. I also want to improve our American comic book collection as a whole."

MSU Libraries is already home to a comics collection of more than 250,000 items, with an emphasis on 20th century American comics as well as a growing collection of international titles. We welcome gifts in kind, as well as support for acquisitions. Filling gaps in this collection is essential to providing scholars with a complete picture of the landscape of comic art in the 20th century.

Funds are steadily growing to promote this crucial work. The Suzanne J. Levy Endowment for Michigan State University Libraries’ Comic Art Collection, which has reached over $30,000, is already making a difference, so it’s wonderful to see people like Sarah come forward with additional generous support.

“I’m excited to do this as a memorial for my husband,” said Sarah. “He’s the one who introduced me to comics.”

The Libraries are honored to carry on that work for other readers in Rick’s name.

Libraries welcome Chinese poetry collection

The Libraries have received several hundred hard-to-find volumes of Chinese poetry, which will greatly enhance our Asian literature collections.

They were a gift from Steven Van Zoeren, a scholar of Chinese literature and author of Poetry and Personality: Reading, Exegesis, and Hermeneutics in Traditional China (published by Stanford University Press in 1991.)

The timing of Professor Van Zoeren’s gift is a happy accident, coinciding with MSU’s thematic year “The China Experience: An MSU Exploration of Arts & Culture.”

From "The Autumn Wind" by Wu-Ti, sixth emperor of the Han dynasty; translated by Arthur Waley.

Autumn wind rises:
white clouds fly.
Grass and trees wither:
geese go south.
Orchids all in bloom:
chrysanthemums smell sweet.
I think of my lovely lady:
I never can forget...
The Search for “Summer Honey”

In this digital age, some wonder about the relevance of real, live librarians. But what if you have only a fragment of information, and no Google search results?

That was the case when 89-year-old Roland Romito, who suffers from near-term memory loss, surprised his son Jerry by reciting a 36-line poem—70 years after hearing it from a fellow sailor during World War II.

It began “The rose is a-flutter / The garden’s a-gog...” Jerry had never heard poetry from his father before, but Jerry’s mother Betty recognized it immediately. Roland had quoted the poem in a letter to her while they were engaged.

Jerry’s curiosity was piqued. He learned that the poem was probably called “Summer Honey,” and had appeared on the cover of The American Weekly in June 1940. The author was Phyllis McGinley and the accompanying illustration was by Henry Clive.

Tracking down McGinley’s books turned out to be harder than expected. Jerry sought help from the MSU Libraries through our chat reference service, and Christine Tobias, Head of User Experience, took up the baton.

After much effort, Christine determined that “Summer Honey” had never been published in collections of McGinley’s work. But the American Weekly cover had been reprinted in the newspaper San Antonio Light on June 16, 1940—and every word was legible in the high-resolution digital copy of the newspaper she found online.

And that wasn’t all. Christine discovered the collection of Phyllis McGinley papers at Syracuse University Libraries, and with help from their librarians, was able to locate the original typewritten draft of the poem in their archival collections. “I never imagined the effort Christine would make to help me with this search,” Jerry said gratefully. “It meant so much to my parents.”

Jerry ordered a reproduction of Henry Clive’s illustration, and surprised his parents with a framed copy of the painting and poem this past Christmas. “It turned out to be an emotional moment,” he said. “Dad tearfully recited the poem from memory, with Mom at his side.”

It was an emotional adventure for Christine, too. “I was so touched by Jerry’s story, that I became bound and determined to locate this poem for him. It started as a search for a needle in a haystack, but I ended up finding a treasure! This is why I love being a librarian...connecting to people by connecting them to information.”

“This is why I love being a librarian...connecting to people by connecting them to information.”

Above: Roland (on left) and Jerry Romito with a framed reproduction of The American Weekly cover featuring “Summer Honey”.

Left: Christine Tobias, Head of User Experience.
Special Collections recently acquired a rare copy of *Ockers*, an exuberantly illustrated edition of a poem by the Australian performance artist known as Pi O, or, using the Greek script, Π O.

The Australian slang term “ocker,” which became popular in the 1970s, refers to a loud, brash, loutish male. (Think of Mick Dundee’s drinking buddy “Donk” in the film *Crocodile Dundee*.)

The National Library of Australia noted the book’s “pop art style graphics and bold typography,” which re-create the poet’s “public performance pyrotechnics.”

Only 40 copies of this edition were produced. MSU’s copy is one of only three with this designer binding by artist Mike Hudson.
Swansons’ generous gift supports student workers
By Katie Diamond, MSU Libraries Development Office

On the banks of the Red Cedar in June 1963, Honors College students Kim and Judith Swanson met at their academic orientation. Five years later, they married. As philanthropists, Kim and Judith are influencing the Spartan community years after graduation.

“We have a tremendous affection for Michigan State,” Kim explains.

Their greatest impact is through a library endowment, the Kim L. and Judith A. Swanson Michigan State University Endowment for Library Student Employees. It supports competitive wages for library student workers with a preference given to Honors College students.

Their connection with the library began when Judith worked at the Main Library. She started in the former Science Library, processing periodicals. Later, she worked in the Bindery Reserve full-time. Kim worked as a Resident Assistant in Shaw Hall his junior and senior years.

When deciding which area they wanted to support, they asked themselves, “How can we best use the money we have at MSU in the most positive manner?”

“It sure looked like the library was the best place to do it,” Kim says.

Established in 2007, the endowment has already had a positive impact on library student employees. Christina Nguyen, an Honors student working in the Kline Digital & Multimedia Center, is paid with these endowment funds. Christina is studying Human Biology with minors in Bio-Ethics, Humanities, and Society and in Health Promotion.

Even though her library duties are not directly related to her Pre-Dental degree, working at the library has been a valuable experience. “I’m now proficient in Photoshop and I have experience with customer service,” said Christina. “I’m constantly assisting my peers and that makes me feel like I’m making a difference, whether big or small, in someone’s life.” Working at the library has allowed her to learn new skills, build her resumé, and stay connected to campus life.

Thanks to the Swansons’ generous support, more students can now experience the benefits of a library job!

Christina Nguyen is an Honors student working in the Kline Digital & Multimedia Center.

Libraries Support ARL Initiative to Recruit a Diverse Workforce

At the end of May, the MSU Libraries will host a three-day seminar for the 2014–16 cohort of the Association of Research Libraries’ Initiative to Recruit a Diverse Workforce (IRDW). Established in 2000, the IRDW program has attracted nearly 200 students from traditionally under-represented groups to careers in research libraries and archives.

MSU has been a strong supporter of the program, and we currently have three librarians on staff who participated in earlier years. But this is the first time we’ve hosted the seminar and site visit—a highlight of the two-year experience—and we’re very excited! Watch for a full report in the October 2015 issue of Insight.
Dear Friends,

Spring is a time for rebirth and renewal. This year our renovations ended just in time for new classes to visit and for the archives to plan new events, including a grand reopening of our research space in April. Renovations also added new storage just as we anticipate bringing in new collections, especially the papers of former MSU president Dr. Clifton Wharton and other faculty members.

This spring also represents the one-year anniversary of our Film and Video Preservation Fund. Thanks to generous gifts from supporters like you, we were able to hire interns to inventory our backlog of videos and cassettes. As part of the renovations, we created a state-of-the-art storage space and digitization area with equipment to help us convert the magnetic media collections. Now that we know what we have, we can begin the work of digitizing videos.

Finally, we are excited to be able to unveil our new website, which presents our holdings related to MSU’s Vietnam Project. This project was an important part of MSU history and we were able to collaborate with several partners, pulling together materials from five different collections and digitize them for online use. We are also thrilled that this site has a mapping interface and timeline that help non-subject specialists find information.

Spring is a time of renewal. For us, that means expanding our collections and making archival materials accessible in new and exciting ways!

Yours in MSU History,

Cynthia A. Ghering
Director, University Archives & Historical Collections
Ladies of the Club: the East Lansing Woman’s Club Yearbook Collection

By Jennie Russell, Assistant Records Archivist

The Archives have recently acquired the Lena Horn and Dorothy L. Barr Collection of yearbooks from the East Lansing Woman’s Club, covering the years 1907 to 1983—a full 75 years of Woman’s Club history.

Founded in 1903, the group was originally called the Michigan Agricultural College Woman’s Club. Membership was open to all women of the community, and the first president was Miss Maude Gilchrist, Dean of Women at M.A.C. The first meeting took place in the parlor of Morrill Hall.

The Club’s purpose, then and now, is to enhance the social and intellectual life of club members and the community. The group has supported many local charities, including the Women’s Home in Lansing and the East Lansing Public Library, and statewide charities such as Keep Michigan Beautiful.

In the early years, the Program Committee selected a particular topic as a focus for events and discussions during the next 12 months. Meetings might include an invited speaker or even a performance—and always, tea and conversation. The presentations were diverse, ranging from the naming of battle ships, how to write a will and trust, the development of East Lansing and MSU, foreign travel, and much more.

Happily, the East Lansing Woman’s Club is still an active part of our community—now in its 111th year!

New look for University Archives & Historical Collections

Two recent renovation projects have rejuvenated both our public research space and our secure storage areas. The renovations caused a brief disruption in service, but now everything is back and better than ever.

Last summer, our lower-level stacks were completely overhauled. While this area is not open to the public, it has a major impact on our ability to provide services. Old shelving was removed and replaced with high-density storage, giving us more room for current collections and space for future growth. A new air handler will provide ideal temperature and humidity control for our historical treasures.

This winter, our ground floor was remodeled to provide more room for researchers. The expanded reading room gives us extra space for classes and tours, while our new, larger work area will let us make new collections available faster. And, we now have equipment and a dedicated workspace for digitizing AV resources. Watch for new sound and video files on our website!

Researchers are already enjoying our freshly renovated space, and we couldn’t be more excited. Please stop by to visit—we’d love to show you around!
Thanks to the generosity of Gladys Olds Anderson, the University Archives & Historical Collections hold the personal papers of Ransom E. Olds, a pioneer in mass production in the automobile industry. Olds founded Lansing’s REO Motor Car Company in 1904.

The R.E. Olds Papers offer a fascinating glimpse into the life of a man who helped shape the city of Lansing. Early 20th century journeys to Egypt, China, and other exotic locales are documented in photo albums, daily journals, and ephemera, such as ship itineraries and theatre tickets. Other evidence of Olds’ great wealth exists in photographs of his extravagant homes in Lansing, Grosse Ile, Michigan, and Daytona Beach, Florida.

One scrapbook details the construction of Olds Tower, now Boji Tower, the tallest building in Lansing. The excitement in the newspapers is palpable. The Lansing Capital News proclaimed the tower “An Inspiration for Lansing.” There are also photos of the construction, from the groundbreaking by Olds to the final materials being hauled 300 feet in the air, accompanied to the top by a few brave souls.

In his personal life, Olds was a philanthropist and a devoted family man. His correspondence includes love letters to Metta Woodward, who became his wife in 1899. Though they merely discuss day-to-day affairs, the letters show a sweet and affectionate side of Olds. Valedictions such as “Ever your true and devoted Ransom” close the letters. The great love they shared can be seen in photos taken after nearly six decades of marriage.

The Ransom E. Olds Papers are a marvelous resource on Michigan history and social life, the auto industry, and early 20th century travel. Learn more at archives.msu.edu/findaid/027.html.

Letters and photos from the Ransom E. Olds Papers.
We’re thrilled to announce a new online resource which documents part of MSU’s history of global engagement. The MSU Vietnam Group Archive offers students and scholars access to unique primary resources for research and teaching about Vietnam, the Cold War, and American nation-building programs.

The site contains a map interface and a timeline to provide easy navigation through the collection. Background essays provide context about the history of the Cold War, South Vietnam, and MSU’s role in the post-World War II era.

From 1955 to 1962, MSU was active in the American-led effort to build a stable non-Communist state in South Vietnam. Thanks to personal ties with several MSU faculty members, the President of South Vietnam requested MSU technical assistance as part of an aid package offered by the United States. The “Michigan State University Group” focused its efforts on promoting rural economic growth; administrative, judicial, and financial organization; and training of police and security forces.

Despite the project’s limited success, the material it generated remains valuable for understanding South Vietnamese history. The MSU Vietnam Group Archive includes nearly 100,000 pages of reports, maps, and photographs, as well as film footage.

The MSU Vietnam Group Archive project was made possible by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) through its Preservation and Access program. Our partners in the project were the Department of History and MATRIX: The Center for Digital Humanities and Social Sciences.

Photos from the Vietnam Group Archive document collaboration between MSU consultants and the South Vietnamese government in the late 50s and early 60s.

[Link to the MSU Vietnam Group Archive: vietnamproject.archives.msu.edu]
Modern literature is an important focus for Special Collections, and the Michigan Writers Collection is a special point of pride, offering researchers access to more than twenty collections of personal papers from contemporary Michigan authors—including several with close ties to MSU.

One of the most well-known is Richard Ford, who won the 1996 Pulitzer Prize for his novel *Independence Day*, and who graduated from MSU in 1966. Special Collections also holds the papers of Lev Raphael, known for his mysteries and Holocaust fiction, who earned his PhD in English here; and Diane Wakoski, widely recognized for her “deep image” poetry, who was MSU’s Poet in Residence from 1976 to 2012.

An author’s papers may include drafts of manuscripts, subject files of research, correspondence, and more. The drafts allow researchers to analyze a writer’s creative process through edits and additions. Research notes and subject files offer insight into the source material for the creative process, as well as major influences in an author’s work.

Correspondence and diaries allow researchers a unique window into the personality of a writer. Word choices, brevity or lengthiness of writings, and even imagery on the stationary or diary can provide unique and interesting details about the author’s life. Letters exchanged with fans and fellow authors often contain wonderful anecdotes about the reception of a particular work and connections the author had within his or her community.

Visit Special Collections to explore our literary collections, and enjoy unique glimpses of creative minds at work. And if you know a Michigan author who may be interested in donating his or her papers, please let us know!

Nicole Smeltekop, Special Materials Catalog Librarian

Beyond the pages: Michigan authors in Special Collections

Nicole Smeltekop with material from the Richard Ford Papers. One intriguing item in the collection is Ford’s binder of class notes from his undergraduate English classes at MSU in the 1960s.
New twist on a traditional role

Libraries have a long history of helping users develop new skills. Urban public libraries in the U.S., for example, have been helping new immigrants learn English with classes and targeted resources since the late 1800s.

As the digital revolution accelerates, libraries are also helping students and scholars develop technical skills they need for research and for everyday life. Academic librarians now assist users with techniques like text mining and data visualization, which are necessary for using large datasets libraries offer.

The MSU Libraries’ MakerSpace, opening soon in the Main Library Copy Center, will take this trend even farther. The MakerSpace will offer services and resources that support prototyping of physical objects, with Terence O’Neill, Entrepreneurship Librarian, leading the effort.

“It’s easy to think of these skills as only being needed by engineers and computer science majors,” explains O’Neill. “But in fact, everyone uses computer science, and the skill sets for electronics and computer-aided design can be valuable in many other specialties—from a nursing student who has an idea for a new type of surgical instrument, to a student in apparel design experimenting with wearable electronics.”

The equipment needed to support the creation of such prototypes is surprisingly accessible. The library already offers 3D printing, and will soon add laser and vinyl cutting to enable production of 2D parts. We also offer a variety of “Arduino” sets for users to check out. Arduinos are circuit board kits used to test programming and robotic functions.

These services and resources are all offered through the Main Library’s Copy Center. “The library already had superb infrastructure to support these services,” notes O’Neill. “We’re able to offer something that’s in high demand by our users, for a very modest investment.”

Terence O’Neill, Entrepreneurship Librarian, uses one of the library’s circulating Arduino kits to build a prototype of a sensor.
The MSU Libraries and MSU Press are pleased to announced the launch of SiRO, Studies in Radicalism Online. The project is a collaboration between our Collections and Digital Information units, and the staff of the Journal for the Study of Radicalism, published by the MSU Press.

SiRO is an online portal which provides a single access point to primary resources from the history of radicalism, which are currently scattered among digital collections produced by many different institutions. The MSU Libraries are a major contributor of data to the portal, thanks to our Radicalism holdings in Special Collections.

“SiRO is designed to create a connection between the digital research environment, and the many archives holding papers and other print collections relevant to the study of radicalism,” explains Michael Rodriguez, Coordinator for Humanities Collections and Digital Humanities.

SiRO will also help to create connections between scholars and students, since the site functions as a virtual community for scholars and students. For example, the site allows researchers to collaborate on digital scholarly editions of important texts.

Initial funding for SiRO was provided by the Humanities and Arts Research Program at MSU. SiRO’s launch was celebrated with a symposium on Digital Scholarship and Radicalism Studies, sponsored jointly by the Libraries and the Press. The day-long program included keynote addresses by Ken Wachsberger, author of Insider Histories of the Vietnam Era Underground Press, published by the MSU Press; and Timothy Patrick McCarthy, director of the Sexuality, Gender, and Human Rights Program at Harvard University.

The symposium drew scholars, students, and librarians from many fields: labor history, religious studies, African American history, women’s and gender studies, African studies, Latin American and Caribbean studies, and many more. The discussions were lively and multi-faceted—suggesting that radicalism studies, and SiRO, can look forward to a long and productive future!
To say that MSU students are frazzled during exam week is an understatement, but the MSU Libraries are there to help.

“The library is a center of campus life and supporting students academically is our top priority,” explains Terri Miller, assistant director for public services. “When the students are stressed, we want to help.”

So back in fall 2013, the library started to invite members of the local chapter of Therapy Dogs International to come during exam week. Friendly dogs and their human buddies are greeted by flocks of students eager to spend a few minutes with a surrogate pet.

“The students absolutely love it,” says outreach librarian Holly Flynn. “There’s research showing that a person’s blood pressure actually goes down when petting an animal. Afterward you can see they’re more relaxed and ready to face the next challenge.”
Thanks from satisfied users

It's lovely to be thanked by a user via social media! And, we always try to follow up, to find out what library services and resources were helpful.

Jennifer A. Royston, doctoral candidate in the Department of English, posted to Twitter on January 20:

“Thank you @msulibraries for being so great to graduate students! Your librarians consistently make my scholarly life a little bit easier.”

“Thank you, Jennifer! We’re so glad our services are making a difference for you! 🐾

The therapy dog visits have been so popular that we’ve expanded them to the Gast Business Library as well as the Main Library, and added a night of coffee and donuts as well. “The Night of a Thousand Donuts” has been wildly popular!

“The main library and all the branches are completely packed, before and during finals week,” continues Miller. “We gave out one thousand donuts in 62 minutes—that’s how crowded it is here!”

When the MSU Federal Credit Union heard about our exam week activities, they wanted to help. So with a generous gift from MSUFCU, we’re adding a second night of food and prizes, including free water bottles and travel mugs supplied by MSUFCU. For extra fun, we’ll also have a photo booth one evening (“Look Mom, I’m at the library!”) and later, supplies for button-making (“I Survived Finals Week!”)

Many thanks to the Credit Union for helping us support hardworking MSU students! 🐾

“In the past, librarians in other departments have answered my questions, looked into sources for me, led workshops for my students, etc. The library is just a great resource that I’m thankful to have access to!”

Thank you, Jennifer! We’re so glad our services are making a difference for you! 🐾
Members of a Mexican delegation bring attention to the disappearance of the 43 student teachers from the Raúl Isidro Burgos Rural Teachers' College of Ayotzinapa, Mexico, in a MSU Libraries' Colloquia Series event. In the foreground is 43=Cuarenta y tres [43=Forty three], an artist's book from the MSU Libraries' Special Collections. Chicano/Latino Studies Librarian Diana Rivera coordinated the event, which was cosponsored by the Chicano/Latino Studies Program.

The Libraries have recently acquired a rare color copy of The Great Exhibition: "Wot Is To Be" by George Augustus Sala, a British journalist and humorist. Subtitled Probable Results of the Industry of All Nations in the Year '51: Showing What is to be Exhibited, Who is to Exhibit It: In Short, How It's All Going to be Done, this amusing volume whetted the public appetite for the opening of the Great Exhibition of 1851, the first world's fair of culture and industry.