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Postcards from Bremen a.k.a. Oregon Trails

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Through this program we were able to restore the periodicals collection to its former state of completeness and even add to back runs of titles we purchased as a part of our regular collection development process.

The Kentucky Project:

When I arrived at my present position, I found a similar situation with regard to donated monographs. In addition, while attending an ALA program on gifts management, I learned of a program at the University of Iowa managed by **Kathy Vachel** who sold donated books on a consignment basis through a local used book dealer. Building on that idea, I decided that we could replicate a law library model of "trade-for-credit" in this environment also. It took quite a bit of selling, so to speak, to find a dealer and convince them of the viability and mutual value of such a program and to secure the approval of my superiors here at Western Kentucky.

Among the questions I needed to answer were the following:

Who would make the lists of titles, describe their condition and appraise their value?

Where would the stock be kept? Who would handle payment for shipping?

What percentage of the sale price would be profitable to both parties?

What kind of financial reporting would be required to keep the auditors feeling secure about such a program?


How and by whom would the credit be applied?

Also, it was decided that these were to be monographs that had never been accessioned or ever been a part of the collection or duplicated titles already in the collection. Titles withdrawn from the collection are not eligible for this program as they must be sent to surplus. Titles donated to the library are reviewed by the subject bibliographers after an initial verification against our holdings. Only those rejected by the bibliographers or duplicated in our collection can be eligible for the "Trade-for-Credit" program. We also check the title in the collection to be certain that the duplicate title cannot be used to replace a worn or missing copy. In short, only if we can determine that the title would have no applicable value to the collection, does it fit our "trade-for-credit" criteria.

Once these and many other issues were settled we decided to go into a partnership with **BUSCA**, a book vendor in Ithaca, New York, who was looking to get into the used book sales environment. After verbal negotiations, a memorandum of agreement was signed by both parties. In exchange for a percentage of the sales price in credit, we would create the list, appraise condition and assign the estimated value. To assign estimated value, we used the online price found for the same title found on databases like **Bibliofind**, usually taking a median price based on several titles in similar condition.

As we create the list, we move the books to an empty range and they are stored alphabetically by title. We then e-mail the list to

BUSCA which posts our offers on the Internet environment. As a title is sold by **BUSCA**, they alert us via e-mail to drop ship the title to the buyer. **BUSCA** has agreed to pay the shipping costs. Reports are supplied on a quarterly basis and we notify **BUSCA** when and to what title to apply the available credit. As we are offering titles once held in storage by our **Kentucky Museum**, **BUSCA** maintains a separate account for those titles which gives the museum additional buying power in a very depressed economy. Please remember that none of these titles have ever, at any time, been a part of either the library's or museum's collection, duplicate materials already in the collection or have been rejected for the collection by the subject bibliographers. We have, as of this date, submitted lists containing approximately 200 titles to **BUSCA**.

At this time, after a slow start, the program is running smoothly and we in the library are beginning to realize the benefits of this program to our collections and our institution. Planning, preparation and permission are key elements to making a program of "trade-for-credit" a success. We still are moving slowly but steadily toward our goal of enhancing the collection with materials otherwise useless to the library and at a pace we can manage without any measurable interruption to our normal schedule of ordering, receipt and payment. If anyone is interested in developing such a program, please feel free to contact me regarding the details of our experience at <Jack.Montgomery@wku.edu>. 



Postcards from Bremen — a.k.a. Oregon Trails

by **Tom Leonhardt** (Director, Information Resources Center and University Librarian, International University Bremen, Germany) <twl@iu-bremen.de>

Moin, moin! (That's low German or Plattdeutsch for Good Morning). It's Sunday, 8 July 2001 and I'm making time for myself. What better way than to sit at my desk with a cup of coffee (roasted right here in Bremen) and write a postcard to friends and colleagues and readers I have never met but who share my interest in libraries and all of the things that make them work.

After two months on the job, that is planning and working to establish library services by no later than 10 September 2001, I've given a lot of thought to what makes libraries work. The answers I have come up with aren't surprising but putting them together in the right order has become a bit of a challenge for many reasons, some understandable and some that are downright frustrating and beyond my control.

If you have never tried it, you might not know how helpful it can be to sit down and start writing. I write long hand and find the

direct, physical connection from brain to hand to pen to paper helps calm troubled waters and the respite itself is restful.

And writing is a way for me to try and organize my thoughts and test my ideas when it's time to revise my first draft. Writing is hard work, too, but when writing for myself, the release and relief that comes at the end is to the brain what a long walk or run is to the body.

I was advised, when I first accepted this job, to make time for myself. That has been difficult to do but the truth of that advice came late to my ears. I hear it now and am taking it to heart. When you read future postcards, you will know that I am taking time for myself.

There is a lot that I could say about what I have done so far to establish library services in very short order but I will be brief for the moment. If I have nothing else on 10 September 2001, no staff, no books, no journals, I will at least have an **OCLC** membership and **FirstSearch**. That is what I have now and on that foundation I will build other services.

I won't say a lot about German academic libraries, either, because I don't know much about them except that I think there are some differences and similarities. I look forward to learning more about them but that will take time.

To be honest, I am more interested in German bookstores and the German book trade than the libraries. I have already had delightful meetings with two local book jobbers, one who imports titles, mainly in English, is called **The Missing Link** (www.missing-link.de) and one who deals mainly in highly specialized and scholarly (is there a difference?) books and journals called **EBO-Fachliteratur** (www.eobuch.de). I am also, at long last, about to work closely with **Knut Dorn** and his colleagues at **Harrassowitz** (www.harrassowitz.de) in Wiesbaden just a four- or five-hour train ride away.

It's time to pour another cup of coffee and then go for a walk before it rains. Tschuess! 