Building Library Collections in the 21st Century -- Making Hay While the Sun Shines, or Being Laid up When the Snow Falls

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Building Library Collections in the 21st Century — Making Hay While the Sun Shines, or Being Laid up When the Snow Falls

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it was, too. He happens to be an RN but not a real nurse, as he puts it, but a “psych” nurse. Other nurses always seem very impressed about it, however.

Everyone always thinks they will get all the books read they put aside, but really when you are recovering from anything, you simply haven’t the wherewithal to do much of that. I read some of the things I wanted to but started and stopped more than I read. I don’t think librarians are any better than any other recovering people in this regard. I did enjoy round-the-clock access to TCM — something I’ve long desired and have often envied my retired friends for having. Whole days of Bette Davis, Ginger Rogers and Fred Astaire, Hitchcock, Film Noir — I had enough of an attention span for that essentially passive activity.

My last column was about writing a procedures manual and I feel like a broken record — boy, that makes me sound old — but manuals are really useful when key employees are gone. I think having had the experience of a medical leave for surgery or an illness makes you more cognizant of the realities of employees in these situations. As a supervisor I feel the experience is such an asset. Even though university regulations and law limit what any supervisor can do, just having experienced it makes you realize things will go on without you or any other particular person for a while.

something to Think About —
Gifting is a Gift

Column Editor: Mary E. (Tinker) Massey (Serials Librarian, Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, Jack R. Hunt Library) <masse36e@erau.edu>

In these tough economic times, we have cut after cut in our budgets. Results: there are fewer books, media and serials that can be bought and we get further behind in being able to fulfill the needs of the patrons using our libraries. We tend to the basic needs, looking for issues and volumes to fill our missing periodical ranks. We hope for the classic books to be donated from a concerned patron or alumnus. We can’t really order items from our unknown donors, but sometimes we can lay the groundwork for specific donations. We have a number of people come by the library or call on the phone and they like to start with a declaration of how much they have to donate and how great the condition of the material. You want to jump up and say yes we’ll accept anything, but the truth is, we have to be careful of what and how we accept donations. There should be an agreement that states the material will be given freely, but if we can’t use it, we would be able to dispose of it as we wish (trade the material with other institutions, substitute new issues for old, utilize to trade for issues being purchased through another agency, or just recycle). This gives us the ability to utilize donated materials more efficiently.

I had one faculty member who donated a complete run of a technical journal title that allowed us to switch out our older used issues for the new ones. The older ones were still good enough to ship to a back issue agency where allowed to us to see the results and when they would be bound. He visited us the next year to see the results and was very proud. We can help people make the decisions to gift us with good material and sometimes very special materials. Frequently it is an accident that donors show up at the right time or gift us with the appropriate materials that will continue to enhance our collection for years to come. Sometimes we can’t even use the materials being

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