

SOUTHERN NEVADA: THE BOOMTOWN YEARS, 1900-1925

Southern Nevada: the Boomtown Years 1900–1925 is the story of Southern Nevada’s mining boom and bust, the coming of the railroad, and the unlikely survival of the last Nevada boomtown — Las Vegas.

Drawing on a broad range of collections from the University Libraries Special Collections department, the Nevada State Museum, and the Clark County Heritage Museum, this digital project, funded by a \$95,000 state Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) grant, presents a wealth of rarely seen letters, newspapers, maps, photographs, family photo albums, mining company records, and local clubs’ meeting minutes — available for the first time in a fully accessible online format.

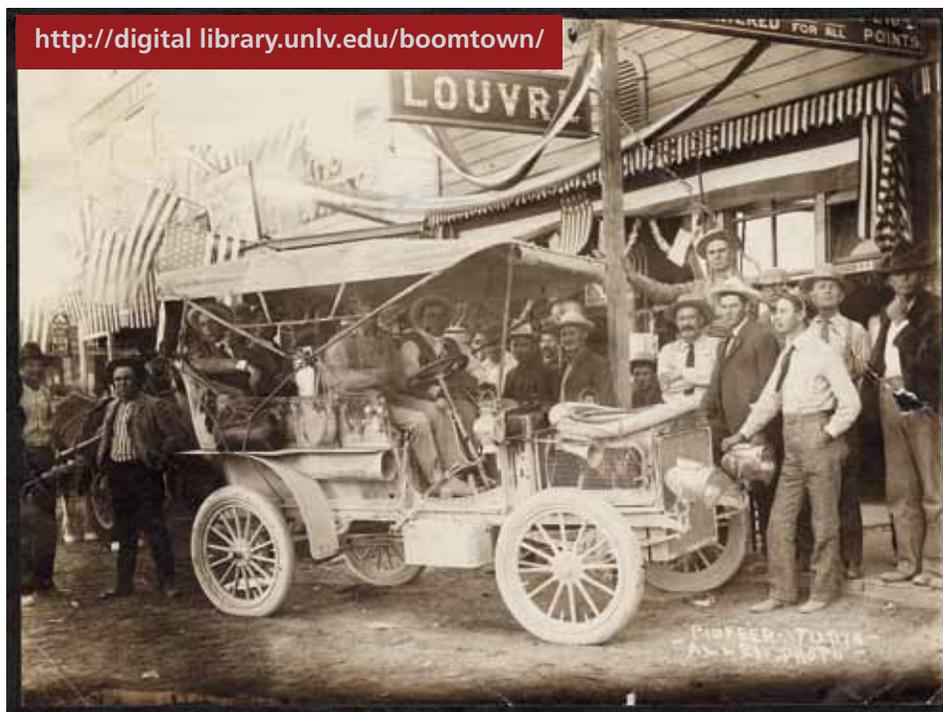


The Boomtown Years provides online access to the largest collection ever brought together of primary historical material for students, historians, and anyone interested in the history of Nevada,” says Patricia Iannuzzi, dean, University Libraries. “Our mission to preserve and make accessible the dynamic history of our region resulted in a valuable collaboration on this digital project. We are sincerely grateful to our partners, the Nevada

State Museum and Historical Society and the Clark County Heritage Museum, for contributing materials from their collections to this project.”

According to David Millman, director, Nevada State Museum and Historical Society: “The idea of

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In 1907, at the peak of Goldfield’s mining boom, townsfolk pause for a snapshot in front of the Louvre Bar.

August 1904. J. Ross Clark, brother of Sen. William A. Clark and vice president of the Union Pacific Railroad, advises Texas investors, “There is nothing definite that I could advise about at the present time relative to how much of a town this [Las Vegas] will amount to.”

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Patricia Iannuzzi
Dean, University Libraries

One of the Libraries' primary roles in our community is the documentation of Las Vegas' History. Nowhere is this more evident than Boomtown.

CONNECTIONS

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*For information, call (702) 895-2286
or visit us on the web at
<http://www.library.unlv.edu>.*

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FROM THE DEAN

As Clark County, Nev., celebrates its centennial, this issue of *Connections* focuses on the documenting of our history and, just as important, on organizing and accessing that history to aid in the discovery of knowledge. It is serendipitous that the University Libraries is launching its newest digitized collection, *Southern Nevada: the Boomtown Years 1900–1925*, this spring. This project represents the largest online collection ever assembled of primary historical material on Southern Nevada. I have discovered a great deal about the rich history of this region since I joined the Libraries four years ago, and much of my knowledge comes from our own collections. One of the Libraries' primary roles in our community is the documentation of Las Vegas' history. Nowhere is this more evident than in Boomtown. I believe it is a treasure trove for researchers as well as new and longtime residents of Las Vegas.

Our collections are rich and deep and are used in a variety of ways. Graduate students from University of Turin, Italy, are using the Sands Hotel collection to create a virtual 1950s Las Vegas in an exciting, online interactive format. Researchers of Las Vegas architecture and history can search an online database through the Libraries' website with comprehensive information on architects, building projects, and more. In this issue, you will read about a biographer who used the Libraries' political papers collection as source material for his recently published book, about library staff collaborating with UNLV faculty to incorporate information literacy into the curriculum; and about library staff teaching groups how to collect their own oral histories.

And finally, we spotlight a former librarian who helped build the University Libraries. After dedicating 40 years of her life to the Libraries, Billie Polson knows well the effort and resources necessary to process and organize the vast wealth of materials and information that the Libraries offer to UNLV students and faculty, our community, and to researchers the world over via the web.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pati Ianni".

Patricia Iannuzzi
Dean, University Libraries

RE-LIVING LAS VEGAS

Collaboration Between UNLV and the Polytechnic University of Turin Brings Virtual Life to Old Las Vegas

The Sands Hotel in Las Vegas — once the epitome of '50s and '60s luxury and, perhaps, most famous as the gathering spot of Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin, and the members of the Rat Pack — lives again. Using the extensive Sands Hotel Collection in UNLV Libraries' Special Collections, three visiting graduate students from the Polytechnic University of Turin, Italy, have recreated the Sands, down to details like carpet design and placement of slot machines, in a fully interactive, 3-D, virtual-reality format.

The creators of Re-Living Las Vegas, Aniello De Santi, Marco Antognozzi, and Marco Locatelli, chose the iconic Sands Hotel for their media and engineering project because it was “the place to be.”

“The Sands Hotel Collection is one of the largest and most popular collections of casino materials in Special Collections,” says UNLV manuscripts librarian, Su Kim Chung, who provided access to the collections and worked with the students during their three-month visit.

“With Su Kim’s help, we were able to go back in time

and make old Las Vegas come back to life,” says De Santi.

“We digitized more than 500 images from the collection.” Professors Dan Cook and Joe Aldridge, UNLV Entertainment Engineering and Design



The Sands Hotel and Casino sign and partial view of the hotel facade [c. 1950s].

Department, are overseeing the ongoing project. Future students from Turin and UNLV will populate the virtual exhibit with casino customers and showgirls and create additional virtual exhibits focusing on other iconic Strip properties such as the Stardust.

For more information on the Sands Hotel Collection and the Rat Pack, contact Su Kim Chung at sukim.chung@unlv.edu or visit <http://www.library.unlv.edu/speccol/>.

MEDIA LAB HAS A NEW SPACE AND A NEW NAME!

Are you a faculty member experimenting with assignments that go beyond the traditional research paper? Are you a student interested in creating media?

Lied Library’s Media Lab — a video and audio editing room — has a new, expanded location and upgraded equipment. Formerly known as the Multimedia Design Studio, the Media Lab serves as an example of the Libraries’ direct involvement in the student learning process.

“It offers the opportunity for furthering faculty partnerships with library liaisons to create new approaches to assignments and classroom projects,” says Patricia Iannuzzi, dean, University Libraries.

Recently, a group of graduate creative writing students produced a half-hour movie based on Don Quixote using library camcorders and Media Lab editing equipment. Many users appreciate the ability to transfer analog media (audio cassettes, VHS tapes, LPs) into digital formats. Others transfer clips from documentaries or self-produced videos into PowerPoint presentations.

The new room is twice the size of the original location and features cubicles for sound protection and small-group work. The Libraries will be adding new equipment, including scanners, 30-inch monitors, and a large-format printer. Library technicians provide personalized service approximately 40 hours a week, including many evening hours.

“The Media Lab has been a great help to me in my teaching and research. I have copied DVD to DVD, VHS to DVD, and audio cassette to CD, and I look forward to learning and doing more at the lab,” says Margot Mink Colbert, assistant chair, UNLV Dance Department.

For more information or to make an appointment, please visit <http://www.library.unlv.edu/media/medialab.html>.

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BOOMTOWN

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sharing a site location with UNLV and other institutions as well as having our material digitized is a great aspect of this proposal. Our institution does not have the financial resources to do something like this on our own, and collaborating with UNLV presented a terrific opportunity for us.”

The collection will benefit students in grades kindergarten through 12 and beyond. This project is designed

to serve “as a dynamic platform for finally building a very extensive collection of sources documenting the development of Southern Nevada. This would not only promote the teaching of Southern Nevada history but would also make many more records available than ever before to a greater number of scholars, which will in turn encourage more research and writing in a subject that has attracted relatively little scholarly attention,” says Eugene Moehring,

noted historian and professor, University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

The project, <http://digital.library.unlv.edu/boomtown/>, includes Union Pacific Railroad files containing encrypted telegrams sent as the 1905 Las Vegas townsite auction progressed and during the tense days of the railroad strike of 1922. The history of Southern Nevada unfolds in vivid detail: the Tonopah Goldfield gold strike and the transient life of ranchers, speculators, mining camps, and boom



This photograph from the Tonopah Goldfield album shows carts and wagons decorated for the Tonopah Railroad Carnival. The three-day festival was in honor of the completion of the short line from Tonopah Junction to Tonopah in 1904.

towns. The automobile was replacing the horse, and children rode burros in the streets. Letters from railroad agents and individuals tell stories never heard, newspapers “boom” the camps and the mines, and photographs capture a disappearing frontier — a West of wandering people looking to make a fortune or simply a living.

“As the co-director of two Teaching American History grants for the Clark County School District, I know that history teachers in local schools — and schools throughout the state — are eager to have primary materials that they can use and share with their students, and this project is a wonderful opportunity to meet

their needs at a variety of educational levels,” says Michael Green, professor of history, College of Southern Nevada.

For more information, contact Peter Michel, director, Special Collections, at peter.michel@unlv.edu.

Boomtown continued on page 7

November 1904. A railroad official advises J. Ross Clark: “From what I have seen at Las Vegas, I believe it would be absolutely useless to attempt to make Las Vegas a prohibition town or even to limit the sale of liquor.” Clark responds that because there is “open gambling in the state of Nevada . . . there would be a great many saloons started and a great many of the saloons would also run gambling games, which would virtually make the town a gambling hell.”



Above: Gamblers at a Faro Bank in Goldfield. Left: A schoolteacher and her students stand outside the schoolhouse in Springdale. Right: A railroad surveyor in Clark County in 1907.

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LAS VEGAS ARCHITECTS AND BUILDINGS DATABASE ENHANCED WITH GOOGLE™ MAPS FEATURE

Looking for information about local architects and buildings? The Architecture Studies Library's (ASL) Las Vegas Architects and Buildings Database offers information in five categories — Awards, Firms, People, Projects, and Project Types — for easy searching.

The database, at <http://www.library.unlv.edu/arch/archdb2/>, contains facts about buildings

The Architecture Studies Library's (ASL) Las Vegas Architects and Buildings Database offers information in five categories — Awards, Firms, People, Projects, and Project Types — for easy searching.

constructed in Las Vegas, including information such as architects, location, and more, with links to the print publications and archival material in the ASL that relate to Las Vegas architecture, interior design, and landscape architecture. Whenever possible, it links to websites or online images. Most recently, the database was upgraded with a Google™ maps feature.

The three largest sources listed in the database are the Las Vegas Review Journal, the American Institute of Architecture Nevada Chapter Design Awards Archive, and the Nevada American Society of Landscape Architects Design Awards.



A view of the Stratosphere tower in Las Vegas.

Who made it happen?

■ Architecture librarian **Jeanne Brown** started collecting information on Las Vegas architects soon after she arrived at UNLV in 1991. She developed the list of sources, and library staff and graduate assistants from the School of Architecture added to it over the years. The list became a database, thanks to the expertise of the Libraries' Web and Digitization Services and to the hard work of ASL staffers.

Who uses the database?

■ A graduate student from California University found City Center project information in the database. This prompted him to spend several weeks in Las Vegas researching materials and resources in the ASL for his thesis.

■ The producers of the television series *Unsolved Mysteries* purchased an image of a building from the database for use on the show.

■ Architecture students using the database accessed resource material for UNLV floor plans and historical building information for the Judy Bayley Theatre and Artemus W. Ham Concert Hall.

■ The Las Vegas Review Journal, Clark County Government, and other agencies have used the database for images of buildings for their websites and news articles.

NEW COURSE BUILDS INFORMATION LITERACY SKILLS

Libraries Partner with College of Education to Develop EDU 280

Looking for opportunities for collaboration in student learning, Curriculum Materials Library head Jennifer Fabbi partnered with College of Education faculty last fall to identify areas in their curriculum where information literacy (IL) skills could be incorporated.

Valuing Cultural Diversity, EDU 280, a required course for undergraduate teaching majors that already incorporates a research-based writing project, was

identified as a logical entrée for establishing basic IL competencies. Working with EDU 280 coordinators, instructional designer Abigail Gonzales, education librarian Paula

McMillen, and Fabbi designed integrated assignments that foster investigative and critical-thinking skills in a multicultural context. Still in its first year, this effort promises

a model for building and measuring such competencies within students' program areas.

UNLV Libraries' mission to "foster information literacy, working with the UNLV community to think critically, create new knowledge, and be life-long learners"

DIVERSE COLLECTIONS TRANSFORMED: TAKING TEACHERS TO THE BOOMTOWN YEARS

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What makes the Boomtown project unique?

The \$95,000 LSTA grant included funding for an education consultant, Christy Keeler, Ph.D. Keeler is a visiting assistant professor in the UNLV Education department who has several years' experience working on education and technology projects.

What are the educational goals of the project?

Making these digitized resources easily accessible and academically relevant to a K-16 audience. The project team is developing a section on the site for teachers. It will include information about using primary sources in the classroom as well as various standards-based activities using artifacts from the Boomtown collection. This additional section should enhance the overall usefulness of the site for both K-12 teachers and university-level history and social studies professors and students.

Who created this digital library?

This project was led by Peter Michel, Special Collections director, and Cory Lampert, digitization projects librarian, who supervised four grant-funded staff members and coordinated a project team of nine library staff members.

Who Makes it Happen: Paula McMillen, education librarian

"Although it was hard to leave the beautiful Pacific Northwest, I came to Las Vegas in April 2008, because of the UNLV Libraries' mission and its people. Dean Iannuzzi and her staff have worked to position the Libraries at the heart of the university's educational mission, and that is totally aligned with my professional values and views of academic librarianship. Jennifer Fabbi, as head of the Curriculum Materials

Library, laid a solid foundation of good working relationships with College of Education faculty and I have been fortunate to be able to build upon that. Another compelling reason to come to UNLV was to continue a nine-year research partnership with a colleague from Oregon State University, Dr. Dale Pehrsson, who had joined the Counselor Education program in the College of Education a few months earlier."

UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

Lied Library
(main library)

library.unlv.edu
895-2286

Architecture Studies Library

library.unlv.edu/arch
895-1959

Curriculum Materials Library

library.unlv.edu/cml
895-3593

Music Library

library.unlv.edu/music
895-2541

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BIOGRAPHER SOURCES POLITICAL PAPERS –

The files of politicians can be both an opportunity and a challenge for an archivist, according to Peter Michel, director, University Libraries Special Collections Department. An opportunity in the enormous amount of information they may contain — a challenge in the enormous amount of space they may occupy.

“An archivist hopes for a biographer who will use the papers to tell the story of the politician’s life or career or who will use the papers as a framework for the story of the times and places in which the politician lives,” says Michel.

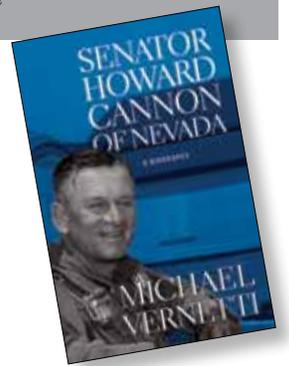
Journalist Michael Verneti was one such biographer. Verneti used the Libraries’ extensive collection on U.S. Sen. Howard W. Cannon as

The University Libraries political papers holdings include those of:

- *Former country commissioner Thalia Dondero*
- *State Senators: Lori Lipman Brown, John Vergiels, Jean Ford*
- *State Assembly members: Flora Dungan, Jane Ham, Eileen Brookman, Rosemary Clark, Thomas Hickey, Zelvin Lowman*

a source for his book *Senator Howard Cannon of Nevada*, published in 2008 by University of Nevada Press.

Special Collections holds the papers of many national and local politicians, including Cannon’s successor U.S. Sen. Chic Hecht and Las Vegas Mayor Oran K. Gragson (1959–1975). The Libraries is in the early stages of acquiring the legal files of Las Vegas Mayor Oscar Goodman (1999–).



SECOND ANNUAL RETIREES’ LUNCHEON

More than 200 years of UNLV Libraries expertise was represented Oct. 15, 2008, when Libraries retirees were honored with a reunion and luncheon. Each year, the University Libraries celebrates the loyalty

and accomplishments of retired staff. Dean Patricia Iannuzzi welcomed guests, thanked them for their years of service, and announced a bequest intention from retired librarian Billie Polson, who had worked in

the library for 40 years. Longtime friends and co-workers enjoyed each other’s company and posed for a group photo. Plans for the 2009 Retirees’ luncheon are already under way.



Front row, left to right: Kathy Rankin, Ida Bowser, Catherine Boyer, Billie Polson, Alice Brown. Standing, left to right: Elmer Curley, Joan Rozzi, Esther Brown, Kathy Rothermel, Pam Sitton*, Pat McCarty*, Marilyn Vent*, Dean Patricia Iannuzzi*, Victoria Diaz, Sharon Drouin, and Laralee Nelson**

**Indicates current library staff*

BILLIE POLSON

Looking back on 40 Years with the University Libraries

Four years as a children's librarian in a Los Angeles public library convinced Billie Polson she wanted a different job. An opening for a catalog librarian at the fledgling Nevada Southern University brought her back to her hometown to be a part of the early years of an academic library. Forty years later, Polson retired from the library system she helped build.

Polson enjoys recalling the pioneer spirit of her early years of working at Nevada Southern — like the time she found a rattlesnake under her desk. She started in a converted storage room in Archie Grant Hall, with the book collection in Maude Frazier Hall. Through the years, Polson took on increasing responsibility, even spending two years as interim library director. She retired as director of Technical Services, overseeing more than a dozen staff. Since Technical Services is behind the scenes, most patrons don't realize these staff ensure all materials, print and digital, are purchased and cataloged (described) so they can be found.



Billie Mae Polson (1962)

In 1999, after having helped move the library — and its growing collections — five times, Polson decided the move to the new Lied Library was best left to others. Even in retirement, she keeps up with the Libraries through friends — old and new — who work here.

When planning her estate, Polson considered where she had spent most of her time as an adult ... the Libraries. She valued what an academic research library adds to a campus and a community as well as the work of the Technical Services staff. As a result, Polson's estate provides a bequest intention with an estimated value of \$2 million to benefit the University Libraries, with a portion designated for Technical Services.

Dean Patricia Iannuzzi was delighted and gratified to learn about Polson's plans. As she said when the bequest intention was announced last November at the Movable Feast: "For 40 years, Billie Mae helped build the UNLV Libraries. Through her generous legacy, she will continue to strengthen the Libraries for future generations."

NEW COLLECTION ON TEACHING

Dr. Leora Baron spent a lifetime helping colleagues and friends become better teachers. During her six years as the director of the UNLV Teaching and Learning Center (TLC), Dr. Baron established programs that helped thousands of members of the UNLV community. In 2007 alone, more than 2,700 people participated in workshops and programs at the TLC. She believed everyone had the capacity to be a great teacher and readily shared her collection of professional teaching materials to help others enhance their teaching.

She was a longtime supporter of the Libraries as well as a Dean's Associate. When she passed away July 29, 2008, her son Gil Baron wanted her library of teaching, pedagogy, and other education-related books to be available for others.

Dean of Libraries Patricia Iannuzzi says, "We are honored to accept Leora's collection so her influence on teaching at UNLV will continue." In all, 321 volumes were added to the Libraries collections.

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THE DEAN'S ASSOCIATES MOVABLE FEAST

Gift Commitment Announcements Highlight Annual Libraries Event

More than 100 guests spent an event-filled November evening exploring Lied Library, meeting students, and getting up close to photographs and manuscripts in Special Collections. The good food and friends were just the beginning; after dessert, Dean Patricia Iannuzzi announced three major gift commitments to the Libraries.

Libraries Advisory Board member Lance Calvert and his wife, Elena, are endowing the University Libraries Lance and Elena Calvert Award for Undergraduate Research. This \$200,000 endowment will provide financial awards to current and future generations of UNLV undergraduates whose research projects demonstrate original and sophisticated integration of library resources. It is believed to be the first library research award in the U.S. to be endowed.

Billie Polson, who helped bring about many changes at UNLV Libraries in her 40-year career as a librarian, has made a commitment to create the Billie Mae Polson Libraries Endowment Fund through a bequest intention. The Polson Fund will enhance library operations, especially technical operations.

Libraries Advisory Board member Flora Mason and her husband, Stuart, provided the funding to create the remarkably successful Peer Research Coaches pilot program. Now, the



Assistant President and Chief of Staff Christian Hardigree, Jack Harvey, Mary Jane Harvey, Patricia Iannuzzi, Dean, University Libraries



John Shepherd, Nancy Shepherd, Laura Mulkey, David Mulkey.

Masons have pledged \$1 million to endow the program.

The Flora and Stuart Mason Peer Research Coaches Program creates the opportunity for first-generation or other

statistically at-risk college students to excel in their chosen degree programs, achieve academic success and personal growth, and experience working in a library.



Above, the Mason family with the Peer Coaches: left to right: Derek Berger, Shawne'e Corey, Ron Adlaon, Jim Mason, Gwen Mason, Brittany Edwards, Bill Mason, Gina Cassaro, Sara Mason, Stuart Mason, Alyssa Ventura, and Flora Mason. Below, Charlie Silvestri, Marydean Martin and Brittany Edwards.



Left, Art and Naomi Sloan, Florence Bolatin, Irene Miller.

PRIVATE GROUPS LEARN TO COLLECT THEIR OWN ORAL HISTORIES

Another Side of the Oral History Research Center at UNLV

Before the Oral History Research Center (OHRC) collected its first interview or even purchased equipment, UNLV Special Collections received a phone call from Pat van Betten in Blue Diamond. Her group wanted to gather the history of its unique village and needed help getting started.

Claytee White, director of the OHRC, had not even hung the pictures in her new office when she visited the group in Blue Diamond, a community about 15 miles west of Las Vegas, and laid out an action plan. White conducted training workshops on the art of conducting oral interviews — from scheduling the appointment to editing the interviews. White explained how to select interviewees representing various decades of Blue Diamond history, taught the necessary paperwork and how to design questions, and shared tips that would allow all members to contribute to the project. The group, now called the Blue Diamond History Committee, has conducted and transcribed approximately 50 interviews since 2003.

“Collecting the oral history of clubs, specialized entities, and families is important because history must become more than one voice. To understand the history of the 1940s or 1960s or any other decade or era, historians need a myriad of sources; oral histories of various groups are a valuable source of firsthand recollections,” says White.

White has also consulted with the city of Henderson’s public libraries, Nevada State College, and the Junior League of Las Vegas. For more information on collecting your group’s history or to learn more about the OHRC, visit http://www.library.unlv.edu/oral_histories/index.html.

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WHAT'S NEW AT THE LIBRARIES

NEW AT LIED LIBRARY: LEISURE READS BEST SELLERS

Lied Library now offers fiction and nonfiction best sellers. This collection, called Leisure Reads, is found on the first floor of Lied Library behind the Book N Bean coffee shop. These books are available for one three-week checkout period. New academic books are also in the same new browsing area.

UNLV LIBRARIES JOINS GREATER WESTERN LIBRARY ALLIANCE

The University of Nevada, Las Vegas, Libraries was accepted into the Greater Western Library Alliance (GWLA), a prestigious group of academic research libraries whose membership includes 32 institutions located in 17 states from Illinois to Hawaii.

“UNLV brings many strengths to GWLA, including excellent general and special collections, an excellent digitization operation, the Oral History Research Center, and the world-renowned Center for Gaming Research. The GWLA deans and directors felt that UNLV would be a strong partner in the alliance’s projects, including scholarly communication, resource sharing, digital libraries, and other cooperative activities,” stated the GWLA board of directors in its approval of the UNLV Libraries’ membership.

LIBRARIANS AND TEACHING FACULTY CONNECT

UNLV Librarians, through Teaching and Learning Center (TLC) workshops, connect with teaching faculty to share ideas for designing effective research assignments that introduce students to academic discourse without the traditional “term paper.” Another workshop offers strategies for deterring plagiarism in student writing. Librarians also facilitate workshops for graduate students. Located on the third floor of Lied Library, the TLC, <http://www.tlc.unlv.edu/>, keeps the teaching community abreast of pedagogical developments in research and practice.