

# NEWS *from* FONDREN

A LIBRARY NEWSLETTER TO THE RICE UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY

## FONDREN LIBRARY HAS A NEW LOOK

Professors and students returning to Fondren Library this fall may have felt a slight sense of surprise. So many renovations have taken place since the end of the spring semester that the library looks like a different place.

The most noticeable changes have been on the first floor and on the second-floor balconies. Perhaps the most visible change is the lighted passageway between the east and west entrances. One student called this the “tunnel of light” and remarked that he often walked through it when he needed to wake up after hours of studying.

Sixty-two study carrels have been added on the first floor, including some with OwlNet PCs. This area is very popular with students, who often bring their laptops and take advantage of the wireless network. Macintosh computers have also been made available to both



*Students make good use of the new study areas. In the foreground: Sukhdeep Kaur, Ricardo Barrera, and Alexis García enjoy the comfortable blue chairs.*

Rice users and the public for library research and Internet searching. Listening stations have been added near the circulation desk to provide a convenient location for students to listen to the sound recordings now located there. The new reference desk has been placed amidst all this activity, giving reference staff a greater sense of being part of the action and allowing easy access for people who need help.

More study areas are available on the balconies. Eighteen carrels provide for individual study, while six new study rooms give groups the opportunity to work together. These rooms, which have white boards, are in high demand. Lounge chairs scattered throughout the floor offer comfortable places for reading or even a nap break.

The Woodson Research Center has been given a prominent place in the renovation. While its location has not changed, new glass walls give it much-improved visibility and accessibility. The spacious reading room provides pleasant study space, a scanning station, and a new reference desk. Anyone entering the center will notice an enhanced display area, which now houses some of the Rice memorabilia from the archives. The new basement annex, located directly under the Woodson's first-floor quarters, offers improved work space for storing and processing new collections.

The sixth floor of the library has been converted to a restricted-access study area for Rice students. With its

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*Nadhi Thekkek and Lissett Bickford traverse the new east-west passage through the library's first floor.*



*Books stand ready for processing by Barbara Hairston and Sara Trejo in the new Technical Services work area.*

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360-degree views of the Rice campus and Houston, this location is sure to become a favorite spot for both individual and group study.

Nonpublic staff work areas have benefited from the renovation as well. A better arrangement of space and upgraded furniture and equipment have increased the efficiency of Technical Services, where all library materials are ordered, cataloged, and made ready for use.

Jane Segal

*Social Sciences/Humanities Librarian*  
segal@rice.edu



*Bioengineering graduate students Lissett Bickford, Nadhi Thekkek, Emily Day, and Sue Anne Chew (in the foreground) take advantage of the new study areas on the second-floor balcony.*

## HELP US CELEBRATE AT THE LIBRARY!

On Friday, December 1, Fondren Library will celebrate the completed renovation of the building. Afternoon tours and a reception are planned for members of the Rice community, as well as visitors from Houston and beyond. In addition, a special event for students will take place in the quadrangle at the west entrance to Fondren Library. Details of all events will be forthcoming.



*The Woodson Research Center displays an inviting new entrance.*

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## BROWN FINE ARTS LIBRARY INCREASES HOURS



*Viengvilay Oudonesom checks equipment at one of the new first-floor listening stations.*

As part of the Fondren Library renovation, the circulation and reserve services of the Brown Fine Arts Library were recently merged with those of the main circulation desk. This change allows expanded access to the collection, which is now available during all the hours the building is open. Additional approaches to this area are offered via elevator D and stair E (on the north side of the building); these entries were locked when Brown Library hours differed from those of the main collection.

The merging of service points means that all fine arts circulation and reserve activities have moved from the third floor to the main circulation desk on the first floor, now located adjacent to the new west entrance. Brown circulation and reserve assistant Viengvilay Oudonesom has relocated to the Circulation Department, where she will continue to supervise fine arts reserves.

The sound and video recording collections have also been moved to the circulation desk. Circulation staff will retrieve materials and check

them out just as Brown Library staff did in the past.

Most of the listening equipment has been relocated to carrels on the first floor between the reference and circulation desks, in front of elevator D. Some equipment remains in the Brown Library, so that audiovisual materials may be used there as well.

Current fine arts periodicals and the “new books” reading area will remain in the Brown Library. Rare fine arts materials have been moved to the Library Service Center. They are available for use in the Woodson Research Center upon request.

Art and Architecture Librarian Jet Prendeville and Music Librarian Mary Du Mont remain in their current offices in the Brown Library. They will continue to serve the reference and research needs of faculty, students, and visitors and to provide expertise in the management of the collection.

Sandi Edwards  
*Head of Reference*  
edwards@rice.edu

## *RICE INSTITUTE PAMPHLETS NOW AVAILABLE IN DSPACE*

The *Rice Institute Pamphlets*, digitized last year and currently available online at <http://www.rice.edu/fondren/hyperion/>, are now in DSpace, Rice's institutional repository. The *Rice Institute Pamphlets* were an interdisciplinary scholarly journal published at Rice between 1915 and 1981. The digitization project includes Volume 1 (1915) to Volume 33 (1946) and the Index Volume for volumes 1-47.

Members of the migration team were Debra Bailey Kolah, Project Coordinator; Sid Byrd, Systems Developer; and Denis Galvin, SIRSI Database Administrator. Google and other search engines search the full text of the material in DSpace, making the content very accessible. The *Rice Institute Pamphlets* collection can now be found at <http://dspace.rice.edu/handle/1911/8324>. For more information on DSpace, please contact Geneva Henry, Executive Director of the Digital Library Initiative, at 713-348-2480 or [ghenry@rice.edu](mailto:ghenry@rice.edu). Rice's DSpace is available online at <http://dspace.rice.edu>.

Debra Bailey Kolah  
*Science Librarian*  
[dbailey@rice.edu](mailto:dbailey@rice.edu)



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# A MILESTONE REACHED: FORTY-FIVE YEARS IN FONDREN LIBRARY

As a member of the Fondren Library staff for forty-five years, Elizabeth Allspach Baber has seen and been part of many changes, not only in the library, but also elsewhere on campus.

Elizabeth first arrived at Rice fifty years ago as a freshman, during the era when Rice still offered free tuition. In 1956 there was no housing for women on campus, and out-of-town students lived in university-owned apartments on nearby Banks Street. When Jones College opened in 1957, Elizabeth was in the first group of women to move onto campus, which at that time contained only about a dozen buildings. Her class of 1960 had the distinction of being the last class to graduate from Rice Institute; shortly thereafter the name was changed to Rice University. Following receipt of a B.A. in psychology, Elizabeth attended the University of California at Berkeley, where she obtained a Master of Library Science degree.

After being a runner-up for an internship at the Library of Congress, Elizabeth accepted a position as original cataloger at Fondren Library in August 1961. The library, like the campus, was much smaller then, as the 1969 addition to the library had yet to be built. Much of the space at the front of the library was taken up by the card catalog, which continued to be the main source of bibliographic information in Fondren for the next twenty-five years. Cards for the catalog came either from the Library of Congress, which sold sets of cards for the books it cataloged, or from cards typed by Fondren catalogers and mimeographed in-house. Headings for titles, subjects, series, secondary authors, etc., were manually typed on the card sets, which were then filed into the card catalog.

Although the use of computers was first introduced into Fondren Library when circulation was automated in the mid-1960s, it was not until ten years later that the

library was financially able to join a cataloging consortium (OCLC). This allowed the library to receive card-sets ready for filing, as well as cataloging produced by other member institutions. More importantly, digital records were saved for each title cataloged in the OCLC database. Along with other libraries, Fondren began to think about the space- and labor-saving advantages of moving to some sort of computerized catalog. In 1980 a Catalog Review and Planning Committee, of which Elizabeth was



*Elizabeth Allspach Baber*

chair, recommended the implementation of an online catalog, skipping the interim computer-output-microform catalog adopted by many libraries as successors to their card catalogs.

For an online catalog to be useful, however, all of a library's manually produced catalog records must be converted to machine-readable form. Because of the cost of a vendor conversion of the card catalog, the University Librarian decided that conversion of Fondren Library's catalog would be done in-house, with a special team working nights and weekends.

Elizabeth was heavily involved in this project, including planning, procedure writing, training of the supervisor and staff, and resolution of problems. The in-house retrospective conversion project took eight years to complete (from 1980-1987). Its initial stages are described in an article in *Retrospective conversion: From cards to computer*, edited by Anne G. Adler and Elizabeth A. Baber (Ann Arbor, Mich.: Pierian Press, 1984).

After serving in various positions, including Head of Copy (i.e., Library of Congress) Cataloging, Head of Monographs Cataloging, and Principal Cataloger, Elizabeth became Head of Database Management in 1988. This department was created to ensure the quality of data in the online catalog by providing standardized versions of author's names, titles, subjects, and series. Later the department also became responsible for commercial binding, in-house repair, and the labeling of all materials added to the collection.

Elizabeth was named co-chair (in 1998) and, later, chair (in 2002) of the Collection Management Project Team, the charge of which was to shift the very overcrowded stacks to allow room for growth, to barcode and link all items in the collection to the correct online bibliographic record, and, as a last step, to inventory the library's 2.4 million volumes. The multi-year project, carried out by special teams hired for this purpose, turned out to be an essential first step towards the implementation of the Library Service Center, Fondren Library's offsite facility for the shelving of its less-used volumes. Beginning in 2004 and continuing to the present, Elizabeth has supervised the library end of a project which

has moved over 600,000 volumes from Fondren Library's stacks and its stadium storage area to the Library Service Center.

For her work on the Collection Management Project and other accomplishments, Elizabeth received the first Shapiro Library Staff Innovation Award in 2002. This award is named after Beth Shapiro, who was University Librarian from 1991 until her death in 1995.

Elizabeth has served as editor of the library's newsletter, *News From Fondren*, since 1995. She has been active in the library's Career Advancement Program (a peer review process) over the years, helping to write and revise the governing documents, serving on review committees, and acting as the liaison for the process since 2000.

As an alumna, Elizabeth has also helped with fundraising at Rice, serving on the Rice University Telefund and Reunion Giving committees and as Class Chair. She was especially pleased that a new class high—over \$100,000—was reached the year she chaired the 35th Reunion Giving Campaign for her Class of 1960.

Elizabeth's great passion is travel. Early in her career she took a leave of absence from Rice to work in Wiesbaden, Germany, where she was employed by Otto Harrassowitz, a German book-dealer's firm. Before returning home, she was able to travel extensively in Europe, visiting ten countries. Since that time she has visited Canada, Mexico, Peru, Chile, New Zealand, Italy, Greece, Turkey, Egypt, and Russia, as well as Alaska, Hawaii, and other parts of the United States.

Elizabeth says that, besides the intellectual stimulation offered by working with books in different languages and on many subjects, the thing she has enjoyed most about working in the library has been the diversity of backgrounds and interests of her colleagues. She has also been proud to play a small part in the growth and development of Rice University.

Karen Oster  
(with Elizabeth Baber)  
*Senior SIRS Database Administrator*  
blurose@rice.edu

## MULTILINGUAL AIDS FEATURED DURING INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION WEEK

For a second year Fondren Library is actively participating in International Education Week, an event sponsored by the Office of International Students and Scholars (OISS) and scheduled for November 13-17. An international education display table in the foyer will feature instructional handouts in many different languages, as well as samples of books and videos from different countries available for circulation from the library.

The library will also be showcasing the multilingual capabilities of many of its databases during this week. Not only may search results be limited by the language of the materials, but some databases also offer the ability to change the interface to allow searching in various languages.

WorldCat, a combined catalog for over fifteen thousand libraries worldwide, offers both capabilities. Its interface can be changed to Spanish, French, Arabic, Japanese, and other languages. You can also limit your search to find only materials in a particular language: Arabic, Chinese, French, Hindi, Russian, and many others are available. In addition to these aids, databases frequently offer tutorial pages in numerous languages.

For more information on accessing Fondren Library's databases through the use of languages other than English, contact Sandi Edwards, Head of Reference, at 713-348-2504 or via e-mail at edwards@rice.edu.

Debra Bailey Kolah  
*Science Librarian*  
dbailey@rice.edu

The screenshot displays the WorldCat search interface in Spanish. At the top, there's a 'FirstSearch' logo and the text 'WorldCat Búsqueda avanzada'. Below this, a search bar is visible with the placeholder text 'Escriba términos de búsqueda en uno o más casilleros y haga clic en Buscar.' To the right of the search bar are links for 'Inicio', 'Bases de datos', 'Buscar', 'Vista para el personal', 'Mi cuenta', 'Opciones', 'Comentarios', 'Salir', and 'Esconder sugerencias'. Below the search bar, there are tabs for 'Búsqueda básica', 'Búsqueda avanzada', 'Búsqueda experta', and 'Búsquedas anteriores'. The main search area includes a dropdown for 'Base de datos en uso: WorldCat', a search input field, and buttons for 'Buscar' and 'Borrar'. Below the search input, there are options for 'Buscar en base de datos:', 'Idioma', 'Número de bibliotecas', and 'Limitar el Tipo a:'. The 'Limitar el Tipo a:' section includes checkboxes for various material types like 'Libros/Textos', 'Material visual', 'Archivos de computadora', 'Recursos en Internet', 'Publicaciones seriadas', 'Grabaciones sonoras', 'Material de archivo', 'Recursos continuamente actualizados', 'Artículos', and 'Partituras musicales'. There are also options for 'Limites de subtipo' and 'Limitar la disponibilidad a:'. At the bottom, there's a 'Clasificar por:' section with a dropdown for 'Total de bibliotecas' and buttons for 'Buscar' and 'Borrar'. The footer of the page lists various languages: English, Español, Français, العربية, 日本語, 한국어, 中文(繁體), 中文(简体), and links for 'Opciones', 'Comentarios', and 'Salir'.

*A Spanish-Language OCLC Search Screen*

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## A LIBRARY STAFF MEMBER PREVIEWES HER FORTHCOMING NOVEL



Alexis Latner

*Fondren Library has always been fortunate to number among its staff people of diverse backgrounds and abilities. While the wide array of materials collected has required a knowledge of foreign languages, the university setting has also attracted staff with many other talents and interests. Musicians, authors, artists, cartoonists, and even a ballet dancer have been counted among those who also needed a “day job.” Other wide-ranging interests have included acting, art collection, antiques, photography, fabric art, weaving, needlework, singing, music composition, foreign travel, and cooking.*

Circulation staff member Alexis Latner knew in the third grade that she wanted to be a writer. In college she often chose to write when she should have been studying. Nevertheless, Alexis earned a B.A. from Rice University, with a double major in linguistics and German literature, and an M.A. in systematic theology from the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, California. Her master’s thesis was titled “Revelation in a World of Science: A Comparison of Revelation in Paul Tillich’s Systematic Theology and in Science

Fiction.” This, she says, served as a preface to her science fiction writing career. Her science fiction always has a spiritual dimension—at the very least, the traditional “sense of wonder.”

Alexis’s first organized attempt to become published was in 1986. Her short story, “Wanderers,” was published in the June 1990 issue of *Analog Science Fiction and Fact Magazine*. Since then many of her novelettes and short stories have appeared in science fiction and horror magazines and anthologies. Her novelette, “A Pillar of Stars by Night,” was *Analog’s* cover story for January 1996, and the novelette, “Witherspin,” is the cover story in the July/August 2006 issue of the same magazine. In 2005 Alexis was recognized as the seventh most-published female fiction writer in the seventy-five-year history of *Analog*. She has also written numerous nonfiction articles in the fields of education, technology, and aviation, which have appeared in international, national, and regional print and online magazines.

Since 2001 Alexis has been teaching creative writing classes in the Rice University School of Continuing Studies. She has been employed at Rice University in various capacities for twenty years. Her first job after college was working for the Electrical Shop in Rice’s Physical Plant. She says that she “changed a lot of fluorescent tubes in the library (and elsewhere) in those days.” Since 1987 Alexis has worked mainly in Fondren Library’s Circulation Department.

On March 6, 2006, at 5:55 p.m., while preparing to close down the Circulation Desk, Alexis received an e-mail from her agent. Her novel, *Hurricane Moon*, had just been sold to Pyr, with publication set for July 2007. Her co-workers were alarmed when Alexis screamed but were reassured when she told them it was a scream of joy.

*Hurricane Moon* is set in the late twenty-first century, when Earth has become almost unlivable, due to

political and ecological problems. The Aeon Foundation launches a starship to find a new home, one where the mistakes of the past will not be repeated. The crew and passengers go into cold suspended animation for the journey, which takes more than a thousand years.

When they awaken, Catharin Gault, the starship’s physician, discovers that being in stasis for so long has damaged their gene structure. If she is unable to find a way to repair the human genome, the colony will be wiped out. She has an unlikely assistant in her quest, Joseph Devreze, a theoretical molecular biologist, brilliant and irresponsible. He joined the crew not out of altruism, but because he’d gotten into some serious trouble on Earth and needed to get as far away as he could.

The world to which the group has come is very different from the one they left, and the ground rules they knew no longer apply. Many unexpected trials and tribulations test Catharin and Joe along the way, and, as they race to save their world, they must struggle with profound moral and spiritual questions.

In writing the book, Alexis turned to scientists, engineers, and NASA astronaut candidates for advice. Although the work is hard science fiction, she believes its character-centered story will appeal to a wide audience.

When people ask where she gets her ideas, she tells them she has a random idea generator in her brain with no “off” switch. Alexis currently has three novels in progress, including a dark western fantasy for which she is inventing a new romance language. That Rice education is coming in handy!

Shirley Wetzel  
Database Management Librarian  
wetzel@rice.edu



## PRESIDENT LEEBRON ADDRESSES FONDREN STAFF

President David Leebron met with Fondren Library staff on August 25 to update them on the current university planning process, which started with the Call to Conversation and continued with the Vision for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Century (V2C), and to discuss ways in which this process will involve Fondren Library.

Leebron focused on two goals in the V2C's ten-point plan: making the Rice campus more vibrant and increasing international programs. Initial programs are already in place to increase the presence of international students on the Rice campus. The number of undergraduates from outside the U.S. is now at 7%, and, for the first time, scholarships will be made available to attract graduate students from other countries, particularly in the humanities and social sciences.

Two planned buildings, a wellness center and a multi-purpose pavilion, will encourage on-campus activity. The pavilion, which will

be linked by a walkway to the west side of the library, will function as a beacon to students and provide them with a central gathering place, attracting traffic to and from Fondren.

While there is no way for Fondren Library to duplicate the libraries of the Ivy League, some of which have been in existence since the seventeenth century, Leebron would like to see Fondren collect more historic books and documents. By striving for an equal measure of print and online resources, Fondren can contribute to the V2C mission of balancing on-campus services with the ease of remote access.

The coming changes at Rice University are sure to bring change and challenge to Fondren Library as well.

Jane Segal  
*Social Sciences/Humanities Librarian*  
segal@rice.edu



*President David Leebron with Vice Provost and University Librarian Charles Henry*

## DID *you* KNOW?

*History Detectives*, the popular PBS program dedicated to exploring historical mysteries and local folklore, visited Rice and Fondren Library in February 2006. Producer Eric Slade, host Gwen Wright, and their crew filmed several scenes for a segment on the controversy surrounding Howard Hughes' invention of the drill bit that allowed oilmen to reach previously unattainable oil reserves—and which laid the foundations for Hughes' fortune. The segment aired in June 2006. Unfortunately, only one Rice scene survived the cutting room! (See [http://www.pbs.org/opb/historydetectives/investigations/402\\_hughes.html](http://www.pbs.org/opb/historydetectives/investigations/402_hughes.html))



The Electronic Resources Center has changed its name to the Digital Media Center (DMC). The new name better describes the center's mission to support the use and creation of digital media in teaching, research, and creative expression.



Science Librarian Debra Bailey Kolah has been asked to continue as librarian consultant to the Publications Oversight Committee of the American Physical Society.



## NEWS from FONDREN

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### Editor

Elizabeth Baber

### Newsletter Committee

Esther Crawford

Kerry Keck

Karen Oster

Alice Rhoades

Jane Segal

Shirley Wetzell

### Graphic Designer

Web & Print Communications

### Photographer

Jeff Fitlow

### Proofing

Joe Hatfield

### For information, contact

Elizabeth Baber

Rice University

Fondren Library—MS 44

P.O. Box 1892

Houston, Texas 77251-1892

713-348-3749

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## RICE UNIVERSITY FONDREN LIBRARY REGULAR HOURS

August 27, 2006–December 20, 2006

and

January 8, 2007–May 7, 2007

**Open 24 hours, Sunday noon–Friday 10:00 PM  
Saturday 9:00 AM–10:00 PM**

*Library hours are modified during the following periods:*

Labor Day Weekend

Friday, Sept. 1–Monday, Sept. 4

Martin Luther King Weekend

Friday, Jan. 12–Monday, Jan. 15

Fall Midterm Recess

Friday, Oct. 13–Sunday, Oct. 15

Spring Midterm Recess

Friday, Mar. 2–Saturday, Mar. 10

Thanksgiving Recess

Wednesday, Nov. 22–Friday, Nov. 24

Spring Recess

Thursday, Apr. 5–Saturday, Apr. 7

Final Exams and Holidays

Friday, Dec. 8–Sunday, Jan. 7

Last Week of Classes—Commencement

Friday, Apr. 27–Sunday, May 13

### SUMMER HOURS

May 14, 2007–August 27, 2007

Monday–Thursday 7:00 AM–9:00 PM

Friday 7:00 AM–6:00 PM

Saturday 10:00 AM–6:00 PM

Sunday 1:00 PM–5:00 PM

(Closed Saturday–Monday, May 26–28, for Memorial Day  
and Wednesday, July 4, for Fourth of July)

*Please call 713-348-4800 for information. Library hours are subject to change.*



# RICE

Rice University  
Fondren Library—MS 44  
P.O. Box 1892  
Houston, Texas 77251-1892