VCU Friends of the Library June 2012

An extreme makeover: Just in time to brighten spirits at the end of the academic year, Tompkins-McCaw Library for the Health Sciences opened a renewed and refreshed Multimedia Collaboration Room. This basement-level space, which had not been significantly upgraded since the 1970s, was updated and revived with a vibrant, modern color scheme and furnishings and technology designed for collaborative study, multimedia computing and making presentation materials. See before and after photos on VCU Libraries Flickr page.

Newsy notes:

- **Dr. Edward Peeples** (B.S. ’57/E), longtime member of the Friends of the Library, was honored with a digital "bookmark" denoting his years of service to the libraries and the Friends board. See the Peeples Collection with the bookmark.
- **Dr. Jack Spiro**, one of VCU Libraries' patrons' favorite lecturers, was featured in a profile story that showcases his scholarship and many contributions to VCU. Read "Scholar a Celebrated Voice of Inspiration to Community."
- VCU Libraries hosted an inaugural event featuring poet Henry Hart. Read "First Master Class Rated Big Success."
- **Friday Flashbacks**, a new weekly feature to the VCU Alumni Facebook page, is featuring photographic images from VCU Libraries Special Collections and Archives.

End of the fiscal year: VCU wraps up the financial year June 30. Please help us achieve our fundraising goals and make your 2012 annual fund gift now! Thank you so much for your continued support.

Richmond history recounted: Richmonder Selden Richardson, author of "Built by Blacks:
African American Architecture and Neighborhoods in Richmond," will discuss his new book "The Tri-State Gang in Richmond: Murder and Robbery in the Great Depression" 3 p.m. Wednesday, June 20 in the Multipurpose Room (Room 250) on the second floor of James Branch Cabell Library. A reception and book signing, in Special Collections and Archives on the fourth floor, will be held after the talk. Leading the infamous Tri-State Gang were Robert Mais and Walter Legenza, the "Dillingers of the East." In 1935, their ring of organized crime came to an end in Richmond. More.

A landmark year: As we approach the summer and celebrate the close of another successful academic year, we look back on outstanding VCU Libraries programming. It was a season of four 10th anniversaries and record numbers of attendees for some programs:

- September 2011 marked the 10th anniversary of 9/11, and at Cabell Library, a multi-part 9/11 Commemoration featured a display of prints of the World Trade Center's construction, courtesy of VCU Friends of the Library member John Jay Schwartz (B.S. '69/B) and his wife Gail P. Schwartz; a sound installation using recordings from inside the World Trade Center by internationally prominent artist and VCU professor Stephen Vitiello; and an interactive "Wall of Memories." The Wall allowed library visitors to post memories of 9/11 and to respond to memories posted by others.
- VCU Libraries and the Department of English celebrated the 10th anniversary of the Cabell First Novelist Award in November with two days of engaging lectures, discussions and readings, featuring NPR book critic Alan Cheuse and the 2011 recipient, David Gordon, for his genre-bending literary mystery novel, "The Serialist." Each event drew about 300 members of the VCU and greater Richmond communities.
- For the 10th anniversary Black History Month Lecture in February, Tom Burrell, founder of the nation's largest marketing firm owned by African-Americans, gave a provocative talk based on his recent book, "Brainwashed: Challenging the Myth of Black Inferiority." The house was packed with more than 400 attendees, and the VCU Barnes & Noble sold out of copies of the book. A video of the talk is available on the VCU Libraries YouTube channel.
- The Community Health Education Center celebrated its 10th year of serving the greater Richmond community with an open house in April, in addition to a redesign of its website. Photos.

Dr. Spiro does double duty: VCU Libraries audiences were treated to two talks by Dr. Jack Spiro: the 27th Annual Brown-Lyons Lecture, titled "Jerusalem: A Tale of Three Cities," in March and a January lecture titled "One Singular Sensation: The American Jew and the Musical Theater." Each event attracted nearly 500 members of the VCU and greater Richmond communities.

Photos from these events can be viewed here and here.

Library and literary partnerships: VCU Libraries partnered on two other significant literary events. With the James River Writers, VCU Libraries brought award-winning novelist Tayari Jones to read from her new novel "Silver Sparrow," and the Department of English helped to bring Pulitzer Prize-winning poet Yusef Komunyakaa to VCU for a reading with 400 attendees. Photos.
Galleries and exhibitions:

- Tompkins-McCaw Library hosted an exhibit of watercolor paintings by Dr. Victor A. Yanchick, dean of the School of Pharmacy. He allowed all of his paintings to be auctioned off to raise money for student scholarships. This exhibition received considerable media exposure.

- Also at Tompkins-McCaw Library, an exhibit titled "Intersections: Art and Science" and featuring illustrations and multimedia works by students, faculty and alumni in the Scientific and Medical Preparatory emphasis area of the Department of Communication Arts runs through Sept. 28.

- The American Library Association traveling exhibit "A Fine Romance" in Cabell Library offered visitors insight into the relationship between Jewish culture and many of the standards of the "American Songbook." Supporting the exhibit was a cluster of events including Dr. Spiro's "One Singular Sensation" lecture, a lecture on George Gershwin by VCU music professor Dr. Patrick Smith, a performance by klezmer ensemble Klezm'Or'Ami'm and a performance of love songs by two students from the Department of Music. A team of librarians developed an online song playlist, a video of musical excerpts and a podcast of the exhibit and more.

Spring cleaning continues: Many generous donations of books and other materials came to us through the Spring Book Drive. Did you know that we also accept donations by appointment year round? For details, please see our book donation FAQ. Donations go toward the annual Friends of the Library Book Sale, the proceeds of which support the collections and programming of VCU Libraries.

Update your information: Do you have a new email address or home address? Please update your information by contacting Antonia FD Vassar (B.A. '05/A), assistant director of development, at (804) 827-1165.

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