The Printed Saint Augustine: Early Editions in Special Collections, a major exhibit on display in Falvey Memorial Library during the spring semester, featured early editions of Saint Augustine’s works, augmented by fascinating commentary. The invention of the printing press made the works of Saint Augustine more widely available to early modern readers, and he became a bestselling author, as evidenced by the numerous editions of his works published during the 16th and 17th centuries.

Curated by Bente Polites, Special Collections librarian, the exhibit was located on Falvey’s second floor. What began as a small display created to celebrate both Augustinian Heritage Month and the “Confessions Alive!” marathon reading in November, 2010 evolved into a full-fledged exhibit.

Polites notes that she has made “an effort to acquire 15th and 16th century editions of Saint Augustine’s Confessions.” Special Collections owns approximately one thousand volumes by Saint Augustine and also collects works by other Augustinians for its Augustiniana Collection.

On display was the first English translation of City of God, published in 1610 in London. Was this edition commissioned to convince investors that English expansion in colonial Virginia was an opportunity to promote Christianity in the New World, as an Augustine scholar suggests? The exhibit’s text notes that the “1610 edition has a rather cryptic preface which states that the translator, J.H., has just left for Virginia. It is a puzzle why J.H. (John Healey) and the publisher, George Eld, had an interest in procuring a translation of De Civitate Dei at this time.” Mark Vessey, Ph.D., an Augustine scholar, found it conceivable that Healey and others were engaged on behalf of the London...
Reflecting and Supporting the University’s Strategic Initiatives

By Joe Lucia

During 2010, Villanova University developed an institutional strategic plan, intended to chart the course forward for roughly the next decade. A high-level document, it articulates the University’s abiding values, principles and commitments in light of our institutional history and defining characteristics, such as the Augustinian mission.

It identifies opportunities and priorities for Villanova University within the national higher educational eco-system. That plan can be viewed online:

http://www.villanovauniversity-digital.com/villanovastrategic-plan/2010 - pg1

Over the past months, Falvey staff members worked to develop a library plan that is informed by and supports the University’s overall strategic priorities.

The library plan also reflects a clear recognition of the challenges and opportunities specific to the overall academic library environment in 2011.

Falvey Memorial Library’s key imperatives are summarized on the next page.

To our readers:

News From Falvey features events, exhibits, services, news, trends, innovations, resources and other activities at Falvey Memorial Library. We hope you enjoy the publication, and we welcome your comments and suggestions.

Read more Falvey news at blog.library.villanova.edu/news

Judith Olsen, Editor
Inspiring the Mind:
The Library Transformed at Villanova University

To enhance academic distinction and advance national stature, Villanova University’s 21st century library will be:

An Intellectual and Cultural Commons –
- a physical setting for engaged learning, social interaction and the exchange of ideas
- a barrier-free digital environment for information discovery, inquiry and the creation of knowledge
- a trusted repository for access to and promulgation and preservation of University intellectual assets

A Learning and Innovation Hub –
- partnering with students and faculty in the digital age learning and research enterprise
- connecting students with advanced tools, methods and models of critical inquiry in their subjects of study
- exploring and facilitating new approaches to scholarly communication in the digital environment
- increasing institutional capacity for intellectual productivity

A Trusted Steward –
- making informed, data-driven investments in digital and physical resources to support recognized learning and research needs
- assessing organizational performance in a consistent and rigorous manner and adjusting programs and services accordingly
- adopting smart, flexible, cost-effective methods for management of the library enterprise
- cultivating new sources of support for the library mission at Villanova

A Transformational Force –
- expressing the distinctively Augustinian character of Villanova through collections, programs and organizational culture
- reinventing and reinvigorating facilities and spaces to inspire learning and engagement with ideas
- developing model services and model collections for the digital age
- embracing the ideal of openness in access to information, in the development of library technology, and in collaborative partnerships in the regional, national and international library communities
- communicating the rich story of the library’s ongoing evolution and transformation to all of our constituents
The exhibits hall at the recent Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) 2011 conference in Philadelphia served as the launch pad for VuDL, Falvey's newly released open source digital library system.

Developed by David Lacy and the Technology Development team, this digital library management software allows organizations to store, manipulate, display and make discoverable their digital collections.

VuDL's public interface is powered by VuFind, an open source discovery layer developed and managed by Villanova University. VuFind is currently in use in academic and research libraries in 12 countries, including the National Library of Australia and the London School of Economics.

The ACRL booth was staffed by members of the Digital Library team who provided information about the software and how to obtain it as well as some unusual and attractive “swag” items adorned with images from the Digital Library.

Team members staffing the booth were Michael Foight, the Special and Digital Library coordinator, Laura Bang, David Lacy, Demian Katz, David Uspal, David Burke, Phylis Wright, graduate assistants Preetha Rao, Alexandra Edwards and Jeffrey Eisenberg, and Digital Library interns Marie Johansen and Jean Turner.

The simple-to-use Digital Library Administration application is powered by open source technologies, and provides a METS metadata editor, service image generation tools, XML database repository and a built-in OAI server.

Falvey's live installation can be viewed at http://digital.library.villanova.edu, and a demonstration of the administration can be found at the software's website, http://vudl.org.

By David Lacy; photograph by Luisa Cywinski

Falvey Plays Active Role at National Conference

A number of Falvey librarians and staff members participated in the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) national conference in Philadelphia March 30 to April 2. ACRL was attended by nearly 3,000 librarians.

Outreach Librarian Darren Poley gave a virtual conference presentation, “Digital Library Interdependence: Building External Partnerships with Cultural Heritage Organizations.” He highlighted how the Villanova Digital Library (VuDL) collaborates with its partners for the sake of scholarship. Poley discussed the VuDL’s use of open source digital repository software, developed at Falvey for the Digital Library.

Dennis Lambert, coordinator of Collection Management, chaired a roundtable discussion, “Liaison Teams, Academic Integration and Resource Council: A Collection Development Policy for a Medium-Sized Academic Library.” This session looked at Falvey’s Academic Integration model from the perspective of collection development and invited comments and discussion from librarians who are reassessing their collection development organizational structure.

Research Librarian Kristyna Carroll hosted a roundtable discussion about evolving reference services. At her
Falvey Memorial Library recently received a generous bequest from the estate of James L. Mason ’64 A&S. Mason’s gift was used to purchase The Christian Recorder newspaper, an online 19th century African American newspaper published in Philadelphia.

The Christian Recorder was published by the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church with the stated purpose of “the Dissemination of Religion, Morality, Literature and Science” (Accessible Archives).

A four-page weekly, in its early years it covered major incidents of the Civil War as well as news about the African American regiments. Church burnings and “other Southern outrages” were reported factually as were more mundane events such as sermons, marriages, obituaries and advertisements.

History professor Judith Giesberg, Ph.D., teaches the History Practicum graduate seminar in which her students actively use The Christian Recorder, “the premier journal for news about emancipation and civil rights,” for news stories about legal cases from the 1860s through the 1880s and “the activism of black communities around the country.”

Last fall several of Dr. Giesburg’s students used the Recorder to find want ads “placed by former slaves looking for lost loved ones in the ‘Information Wanted page,’” school integration cases argued in … Pennsylvania and elsewhere, and the paper’s coverage of the passage of Reconstruction amendments and the 1876 Civil Rights Act.”

Dr. Giesberg notes that students will now have access to the full run of the newspaper and “will be able to expand their understanding of the nineteenth and early twentieth century antecedents to the 20th century civil rights movement.”

Mason’s cousin, Gail Ciociola, Ph.D., an assistant professor in the English department, said, “It comes as no surprise to me that Jim left a bequest to Villanova and, in particular, to the Library. He loved the University and with his passion for reading knew there was no better way to serve it in his passing than to honor the Library where he likely spent so much of his time.” Mason died in 2009.

Jutta Seibert, coordinator for Academic Integration and liaison to history and sociology, and University Librarian Joe Lucia were instrumental in obtaining The Christian Recorder for Falvey.

(To access The Christian Recorder (1861-1902) go to the library catalog entry or use the African American Newspapers link under Databases A-Z on the library home page.)

By Alice Bampton
Falvey Featured Events

Black History Month Lecture Highlights Life of Octavius Catto
This year’s annual Black History Month lecture, presented by Africana Studies and co-sponsored by the history department and the Library, brought two Philadelphia Inquirer journalists to campus to discuss Civil War history. Daniel R. Biddle and Murray Dubin, co-authors of *Tasting Freedom: Octavius Catto and the Battle for Equality in Civil War America*, spoke in the Library on Feb. 23.

Octavius Catto was an educator, Civil War activist and well-known baseball player in 19th century Philadelphia. Outspoken on slavery and the need for black rights, Catto served as a major in the First Division of Pennsylvania’s National Guard, and later worked to protect African American voting rights. Biddle and Dubin provided a look at Catto’s life and the history of the fight for black rights in America.

How to Capture Someone’s Attention, with Charles Folk
The Outstanding Faculty Research Award for 2010 was given to Charles L. Folk, Ph.D., a professor of psychology and the director of the Villanova University Cognitive Science Program. As part of the Scholarship@Villanova lecture series, Dr. Folk spoke about this research in the Library on March 9.

“When we decide to pay attention to something in the environment,” Dr. Folk explains, “we are allocating limited cognitive resources to the processing of that object or event. Certain kinds of events, however, seem to have the ability to ‘capture’ attention, such that we involuntarily allocate attention to them.” Dr. Folk’s talk summarized the research on attentional capture and the implications of this phenomenon for real-world circumstances such as driving. He has also co-edited a book, *Attraction, Distraction and Action: Multiple Perspectives on Attentional Capture*.

Mothers In Charge Founder Dorothy Johnson-Speight on Transforming Grief into Action
On March 15, in celebration of Women’s History Month, Falvey Memorial Library hosted a moving lecture by the founder and executive director of Philadelphia-based non-profit Mothers In Charge, Dorothy Johnson-Speight, MHS, LPC.

Mothers In Charge is a grassroots organization working for violence prevention, education and intervention for children, young adults, families and community organizations. Johnson-Speight founded the organization after the 2001 murder of her 24-year-old son. The murder was over a parking space dispute. Johnson-Speight spoke on how she survived this tragic loss and used her grief to spur her into action in her community.

Academics In and Out of the Ivory Tower
On March 24, Scholarship@Villanova featured Karyn Hollis, Ph.D., and Silvia Nagy-Zekmi, Ph.D. Dr. Nagy-Zekmi, is a professor of Hispanic and Cultural Studies, the director of the graduate program in Hispanic Studies and the director of the Cultural Studies program. Dr. Hollis is an associate professor in the English department and the director of the Concentration in Writing and Rhetoric.

Coming together from diverse educational perspectives, the two recently co-edited a book on the need for intellectuals in public debate. Dr. Hollis and Dr. Nagy-Zekmi spoke on this book, *Truth to Power: Public Intellectuals in and Out of Academe*. 
"The notion that public intellectuals in the U.S. are in decline has again become fashionable," Dr. Hollis explained, "and they are often portrayed as trapped between academe and the 'real' world, or between the private and the public spheres." But, as the book argues, the need for intellectuals engaged in public debate has never been greater.

**Lecture Honors the Legacy of Pope John Paul II**

Falvey Memorial Library held its annual lecture in honor of the legacy of Pope John Paul II on March 31. The lecture, which featured Sister John Sheila Galligan, IHM, S.T.L., S.T.D., delved into John Paul II’s preaching, teaching, writing and personal witness to mercy.

John Paul II lived and proclaimed the theological, pastoral and liturgical aspects of the mystery of God’s mercy with a remarkably universal impact. Situating his pontificate historically between Vatican II and the end of the millennium, he himself acknowledged his mission to practice, proclaim and pray for mercy.

Sister Galligan is a professor of theology at Immaculata University where she teaches a course entitled “John Paul II: A Remarkable Life.”

**Irish and Irish-American Poetry Feted**

To celebrate National Poetry Month and conclude the Scholarship@Villanova lecture series for the spring, Falvey Memorial Library welcomed three poets: Joseph Lennon, Ph.D., Mary Madec, Ph.D., and Nathalie Anderson, Ph.D. The three poets read their own poetry on April 13.

Dr. Lennon recently released his first volume of poetry, *Fell Hunger* (Salmon Poetry), and read from this collection. He writes about Ireland, he explained, in large part due to his childhood. “I grew up in an Irish-American household and was always interested in Ireland, but after living there for a year, following my B.A., I grew more interested.” He went on to focus on Irish literature in his graduate work, and now serves as director of the Irish Studies program at Villanova University. In addition, Dr. Lennon is an associate professor in the English department at Villanova.

Dr. Madec is the director of the Villanova Study Abroad program at the National University of Ireland, Galway. Dr. Anderson is the director of the program in creative writing and a professor in the department of English literature at Swarthmore College. She also currently serves as poet-in-residence at the Rosenbach Museum and Library in Philadelphia.

By Alexandra Edwards; Graphic design by Joanne Quinn
Ramaan McBride is a new member of the Access Services team who also covers the Information Desk. He graduated in 2010 from Temple University’s Fox School of Business and Management with a bachelor’s degree in marketing. While a student, he worked in the Samuel L. Paley Library for three years, first in Media Services and then in Access Services.

Luisa Cywinski, Access Services team leader, said, “As a Temple graduate and former Paley Library employee, Ramaan brings a strong base of public technology experience to Villanova.”

Jesse Flavin also recently joined Falvey’s Access Services team as an interlibrary loan technician. Originally from Glenelg, Md., Jesse graduated from West Chester University with a bachelor’s degree in anthropology. He then moved to Athens, Ga., where he worked in the interlibrary loan department at the University of Georgia Libraries.

Cywinski commented that “Jesse comes to us with thirteen years of interlibrary loan experience that will lend itself to our operations.”

Rebecca (Becky) Whidden joined Access Services in April. She works as supervisor on duty, with course reserves and at the information desk. With a bachelor’s degree in English from Union College in Schenectady, N.Y., and a master’s degree in elementary education from Lesley University, Cambridge, Mass., Becky worked in the book industry for nearly twenty years. Before coming to Falvey, she was part of the technical services department of the Radnor Memorial Library in Wayne, Pa.

Phylis Wright, manager of Access Desk Services, said, “Becky comes to us from Radnor Memorial Library. Her public library experience gives her an added dimension that will contribute to our library as we strive to enhance our own services here in Falvey.”

Barbara Haas, originally from Larned, Kan., is the new Falvey stacks assistant. A graduate of the University of Kansas, Lawrence, with a bachelor’s degree in education, Barbara began her library career in Wheaton, Ill., as an archives and special collections assistant in Wheaton College’s Buswell Memorial Library. The next stage of her career took Barbara to the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. Her job in the Harlan Hatcher Graduate Library’s Preservation Office inspired her to pursue graduate courses in library science, which included an apprenticeship in Michigan’s Bentley Historical Library. After completing her apprenticeship, she secured a position as a technical library assistant in charge of university publications. More recently, Barbara has worked at the Easttown Library and Information Center in Berwyn, Pa.

Domenick Liberato, Access Services stacks manager, said, “Barbara is a great asset to both the shelving operations in general and the Library as a whole.”

Alexandra (Alex) Edwards, a graduate student in the English department and a graduate assistant to Falvey’s Outreach and Communication teams, presented a paper, “Succession of Language: Women Talking to Women in Shakespeare’s History Plays,” at Villanova University’s annual Elizabeth Cady Stanton Student Research Conference on April 17, for which she won the award for the best graduate student paper. Alex wrote “Succession of Language” for Dr. Alice Dailey’s “Shakespeare’s History Plays” fall 2010 course.

Three members of the Falvey staff presented talks at the Code4lib 2011 Conference held Feb. 7-10 at Indiana University, Bloomington, Ind. Code4lib is a “loosely-structured conference for library technologists.”

David Lacy, library software development specialist, spoke on “(Yet Another) Homegrown Digital Library System, Built Upon Open Source XML Technologies and Metadata Standards.” He discussed Falvey’s “homegrown digital library” and its workflow process, demonstrated the software’s flexibility and features, and showed how it allows “rapid digital preservation and online access” to the Falvey Digital Library.

Demian Katz, library technology development specialist, presented “VuFind Beyond MARC: Discovering Everything Else.” He explained how “VuFind has grown to accommodate just about anything you can throw at it,” and explained new workflows and tools and “some of the non-traditional applications of VuFind.”

David Uspal, web specialist for library and scholarly applications, gave a “lightning talk” titled “Generating a Sitemap from a Solr Index.” Lightning-talk speakers were allowed five minutes.

Compiled by Alice Bampton
Head of Information and Research Assistance, Jacqueline Mirabile Retires

Over the years, Jacqueline (Jackie) Mirabile has won the respect and affection of her colleagues for her expertise, conscientiousness and affability. Falvey Memorial Library’s team leader for Information and Research Assistance, Jackie retired at the end of May after almost 30 years of exemplary service.

Born and raised in Vermont, Jackie majored in history with a minor in mathematics at Trinity College, Burlington. After earning her master’s in library science from Simmons College, she was offered positions both in Detroit and Philadelphia. Fortunately for us, Jackie decided to come to Philly where she worked for nine years at the Free Library of Philadelphia and then several more years at a regional patent company. In 1982, Jackie was hired as Falvey’s second full-time reference librarian by then Head of Reference Louise Green, who became her close colleague (and who recently retired in 2009).

During an era of sweeping changes in academic libraries, Jackie was unsurpassed in the art of information retrieval whether using no-baud print, 500-baud Telex or broadband Internet. Uncle Sam owes her a debt of gratitude as well for her competent management and thorough knowledge of U.S. government documents.

Popular with faculty and students, Jackie served as a reference librarian and taught research strategy classes in a variety of disciplines.

According to Jackie, “the real effort to provide service” is the one thing that has remained constant throughout the evolution of her professional career, and her favorite aspect of the job is still “finding what the patron wants” — something all librarians know well as the love of the hunt.

Jackie also served on Falvey’s Management Policy Group and as librarian liaison to the education and human services and psychology departments. Previously she worked with the communication and theatre departments and served for many years on the Villanova Quality Improvement (VQI) effort and the Library’s Communication team.

Information Specialist Donna Chadwick is grateful to Jackie for patiently teaching her “how to do better reference work” and will miss “her friendly, ever-present smile, her commitment to her work and the knowledge that I could count on her for help.” Fellow Scrabble player Luisa Cywinski bows in homage to Jackie as the undefeated “Queen of Scrabble.”

Jackie’s retirement plans include volunteering in public library literacy programs and spending time with her new grandson.

By Barbara Quintiliano

Resource Management Team Leader Featured in EBSCO Advertisement

Resource Management team leader Susan Markley recently participated in a case study of EBSCO customers and their perceptions of customer service and online access. As a major database provider, EBSCO was interested in Markley’s feedback, featuring her photo and direct quotations in an advertisement that appeared in the journals C&RL News, Library Journal and Against the Grain. Markley points out that “patrons expect instant access … and they also expect instant resolution to access problems.” Both are handled very well by EBSCO, according to Markley. The database vendor’s ad also included information about Villanova University and Falvey Memorial Library, including references to Falvey’s Facebook and Twitter presence and information about the facility and on site resources, such as laptops and group study rooms.

By Luisa Cywinski
Marc Fields  Continued from back cover

Marc Fields and Bad Data takes its name from the MARC (MAchine Readable Cataloging) system, developed in the 1960s to automate the exchange of bibliographic data. A library cataloging mainstay for decades as libraries gradually introduced computers into their cataloging workflow, the MARC system is now in the process of being phased out in favor of more Internet-friendly standards.

As for Bad Data, this band is hotter than an inaccurately loaded catalog record; as singer Huey Lewis once sang during the MARC system’s heyday, “Sometimes bad is bad!”

The band members were Brian Camfield, Susan Cheney, Stephen Efstrand, Scott Garrison, Clayton Garthwait, Andy Jones, Dave Lacy, Joe Lucia, Sharon Neal, David Pinto, Stephen Spatz, Dick Swain, Cathy Wilt and Phylis Wright.

Nursing Research Instruction: Falvey Librarian Plays a VITAL Role

Instructional Design Librarian Barbara Quintiliano described the online, web-delivered course component she developed in collaboration with nursing faculty to teach research skills to students enrolled in the “Nursing Care of Adults” courses. Quintiliano presented “Teaching InfoLit in Cyberspace: Jing and SurveyMonkey as Weapons of Mass Instruction” to an audience of faculty colleagues attending Teaching and Learning Strategies 2011 on May 11, sponsored by the Villanova Institute for Teaching and Learning (VITAL).

Back cover photograph by Luisa Cywinski

The Printed Saint Augustine  Continued from page 1

The earliest books, incunables from 1450-1500, were printed in Naples, Cologne and Basel. Incunables are works “produced during the infancy of printing.” The focal point of this part of the exhibit was a large volume, De Civitate Dei Cum Commento (The City of God with Commentary), open to a color illustration showing Saint Augustine as a scribe above a city with angels and devils. Incunables, found mainly in monasteries and the libraries of royalty and nobility, did not have wide readership.

Other early English translations on display were from the 1600s, 1800s and one from 1900. The 1900 edition, from a limited edition of 400 copies, was part of the 1900 World’s Fair display of book arts. Although it is modern, it appears much older because of the decorative style. The cover was made by a technique called vellucent, invented by Englishman Cedric Chivers. To protect the design on a book's cover, translucent vellum (calf skin) is placed over the paper on which the design is made. Volumes on display had covers of applied gold and mother-of-pearl inlays as well as colorful images of Saint Augustine, an angel and a floral interlace.

Joanne Quinn, graphic designer for the exhibit, based her image of Saint Augustine on one found in a 15th century manuscript. Laura Bang, Special and Digital Collections curatorial assistant, designed four posters on “Saint Augustine in the Digital Age,” which accompanied the exhibit. She included QR codes on the posters, linking viewers to a URL of the Digital Library. (A QR or quick response code, a type of barcode with small square modules on a white background, can be read by smartphones with a QR application.)

Also contributing: Gerald Dierkes, Luisa Cywinski and Judy Olsen

To highlight undergraduate research and the Library’s role in facilitating such research, Falvey Memorial Library honored five students whose achievements have distinguished them as Falvey Scholars: Lynz Parker, Monica Mazzoli, Kristopher Doll, Eric Bifolck and Ronald Ballouz. The ninth annual Falvey Scholars Award ceremony took place on Friday, April 29, on the second floor of the Library.

Ronald Ballouz (astronomy and astrophysics) delivered the first presentation on two of his research projects: “Disk Accretion onto White Dwarfs in Cataclysmic Variables” and “The Shrinking Orbit of the Exoplanet HD 189733b.” Ballouz, who has already presented ten papers at various conferences, combined striking visual images, clever comparisons to familiar concepts and careful explanations of complex ideas to help his audience understand his research. Edward M. Sion, Ph.D., and Edward F. Guinan, Ph.D., professors of astronomy and astrophysics, served as faculty mentors.

Eric R. Bifolck (economics) discussed “How Much is Too Much? The Effect of Malpractice Premiums on the Supply of Obstetricians/Gynecologists within New York.” In addition to including examples to illustrate key concepts and reviewing his topic’s history to establish context, Bifolck spoke about the research process itself and his solutions to obstacles he encountered. His faculty mentor, Assistant Professor of Economics Mary Kelly, Ph.D., remarked on Eric’s “commitment to the research process.”

Kristopher Doll (mechanical engineering) missed the event to present a paper at a conference in California. Jeffrey Eisenberg, Programming & Outreach team, rendered a summary of Doll’s research project, “Evaluation of Elastic Modulus of Hydroxyapatite-Nanocomposites for Bone Implants Using Finite Element Method.” Ani Ural, Ph.D., assistant professor of mechanical engineering, was Kristopher’s faculty mentor.

Monica Mazzoli (English) discussed her project “Parting the ‘Mystic Shade’: Poetic Imagination and Prophetic Interpretation in Lucy Hutchinson’s Order and Disorder and John Milton’s Paradise Lost.” Mazzoli received assistance from Lauren Shohet, Ph.D., faculty mentor, and Michael Berthold, Ph.D., second reader.

Lynz J. Parker (nursing) delivered “Health and health care correlates of lower back pain and selected mental health alterations among adult respondents to the 2008 National Health Interview Survey.” She emphasized “treating each individual holistically” and explained connections between a patient’s mental health and physical ailments. Nancy Sharts-Hopko, Ph.D., RN, FAAN, served as Parker’s faculty mentor.

The Falvey Scholars Award was established in 2002 by Joe Lucia, University librarian and director of Falvey Memorial Library, “to recognize and reward exceptional undergraduate research.” Librarian Darren Poley and he collaborated with the Honors Program and the Center for Undergraduate Research and Fellowships to present this year’s program.

The Digital Library at Falvey is digitizing all Falvey Scholar Award recipients’ theses.

Contributed by Gerald Dierkes; photographs by Alice Bampton and Jeffrey Eisenberg
Band of librarians make merry at ACRL
Packed ballroom enjoys Marc Fields and Bad Data

By Stephen Spatz

Yes, librarians are resourceful, intelligent and helpful, but on March 31, during the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) Conference in Philadelphia, a group of librarians billing themselves as “Marc Fields and Bad Data” demonstrated that they can also be musical and even theatrical—in short, “librarians rock!”

Over the course of three 45 minute sets, Marc Fields and Bad Data led a packed ballroom of colleagues and friends on a musical journey through styles ranging from folk and bluegrass to sixties rock and electric jazz. The musicians performed with a diverse collection of instruments, which, in addition to the drums, bass, guitars, and keyboard of a typical rock band lineup, included viola, harmonica, tenor sax, banjos and concertina.

Crowd favorites were the original songs with library themes composed by band members especially for the event. These songs covered topics of interest in the library world, such as the demise of MARC cataloging, the malfunction of printers, and the authorship of open-source library applications.

Marc Fields and Bad Data formed in response to a call for librarian musicians by Falvey Memorial Library Director Joe Lucia. Lucia’s concept paired music with librarianship in a...