

# THE FINE PRINT

MURPHY LIBRARY UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-LA CROSSE FALL 1992 NO.10

## Introducing FirstSearch

A new concept in electronic access to information has been introduced in the past year by OCLC Online Computer Library Center, Inc. Murphy Library is now offering this service, FirstSearch, to the UW-L community. FirstSearch currently offers access to 26 databases which include some familiar indexes (ERIC, BIOSIS, MLA, PAIS, the Wilson indexes) as well as full-text files on company data, quick facts and conference information. OCLC continues to add databases to the service; the number of files has increased by 50% in the last six months.

The on-screen prompts and simple menu interface allow this service to be searched easily, and access to FirstSearch is available over Internet, eliminating telecommunication charges. The straightforward cost structure, based upon the number of searches rather than the online connect time and number of printed/displayed references, means predictable and very reasonable pricing. Another FirstSearch advantage is that information on whether or not the host library owns the journal title/item is provided in most of the bibliographic databases.

One database provided exclusively by OCLC on this service is WorldCat. More than 26 million items make up this file which largely represents book records, but also covers audiovisual materials, musical scores and computer files held in 13,000 libraries worldwide. The database can be searched by subject, as well as by author, and the search can be restricted by language, by year or by material type. For example, using this database it is possible to formulate a search to retrieve a lengthy bibliography of books written after 1988 in English on the topic of "critical thinking."

Another database recently added to FirstSearch, Contents1st, provides information on current journal issues, listing the table of contents. Contents1st covers some 11,000 titles and allows researchers to track the

literature in relevant journals not owned by Murphy Library. New records are added on a daily basis and the information provided is considerably more up-to-date than most of the traditional indexes covering the same journal titles in particular fields.

FirstSearch presents several solutions and approaches to a research problem. A business researcher studying the telecommunications industry, for example, may want to access Wilson Business Abstracts to identify journal articles on the topic, then check Disclosure Corporate Snapshots for data on a telecommunications company. Next, a look at Newspaper Abstracts may be appropriate to identify recent articles appearing in the *Wall Street Journal* or the *New York Times*. Information related to government policy and the telecommunications industry could be identified by checking GPO (which indexes government documents) and PAIS Decade. Searching WorldCat would uncover the latest monographs related to the telecommunications industry. Other FirstSearch files would provide references to pertinent articles in popular magazines.

**FirstSearch**<sup>™</sup>  
*A world of information online*

Beginning this term, reference librarians are using FirstSearch to assist in answering reference questions. Faculty and academic staff also can search FirstSearch from their offices. Training sessions will be held in November, and anyone receiving training can purchase a block of 25 searches for a subsidized fee of \$5.00. For more information about FirstSearch, stop by the Reference Desk or contact Anita Evans at 8805.

*Anita Evans*  
*Online Services/Coordinator of Public Services*

## **Status of Building Project**

The building addition to Murphy Library continues to progress at a slow rate. The existing deficiencies and problems related to the heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems have required the architects to design alternative corrective solutions to fit the \$7.6 million dollar project budget. The refurbishing of the existing system and the addition of a sprinkler system to meet fire codes represent almost \$300,000 in unforeseen costs.

The Building Commission is expected to approve the final concept and design report in October. Bids will be let in January and construction will be set to begin in April, 1993.

The new facility will include two computer labs, the College of Education Curriculum Center, a map library, an extended hours reading room, three library instructional labs and additional graduate carrels. Project completion has been targeted for September, 1994.

*Dale Montgomery  
Director of Library and Media Services*

## **Murphy Library Hosts Conference, October 28-30**

Murphy Library staff members are responsible for arranging many of the details of the Wisconsin Library Association Conference scheduled to be held in La Crosse at the end of October.

1200 Wisconsin librarians are expected to attend the three day conference which includes addresses by Patricia Glass Schuman, Past President of the American Library Association, and award-winning author William Least Heat-Moon. Not least among conference highlights will be Ed Hill's tour in the La Crosse River Marsh on Wednesday morning, and a performance by the UW-L Screaming Eagles Polka Band on Wednesday evening.

A copy of the the program can be obtained by contacting Cris Prucha, WLA Local Arrangements Chair. Free exhibits passes will be available at the registration desk on the 28th through the 30th. Walk-in registration is welcomed. The one day fee for non-members is \$50.

*Cristine Prucha  
Bibliographic Instruction Librarian*

## **Sons and Daughters of Pioneer Rivermen Receive Murphy Award**

Since 1986, Murphy Library, in cooperation with the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse Foundation, has given an annual award in recognition of a notable contribution to the library's mission and program.

On October 14th, in a ceremony in Cartwright Center, the Murphy Award was given to the Sons and Daughters of Pioneer Rivermen, an organization which has provided over seventy-five thousand dollars in grant support since 1983 for the library's steamboat and river history collection project.

This steady and generous support has been a primary factor in the successful collecting and photographic copying of steamboat and river history photographs, to the point where Murphy Library now holds the nation's pre-eminent steamboat photograph collection. Joseph W. Rutter, chair of the J. Mack Gamble Fund, accepted the award on behalf of the Sons and Daughters of Pioneer Rivermen in a recognition program which included river songs by Eddie Allen and an exhibit of riverboat photographs.

*Ed Hill  
Special Collections Librarian*

## **New Fiche List of Journal Holdings**

The newest edition of the UW-L Periodical List has been completed, with many previous errors corrected. Titles in multiple formats are listed with the current volume holdings first, followed by any bound locations and any microform locations.

Sue Burkhart is working steadily on an inventory project which will clean up incorrect holdings information. Some of these corrections are reflected in this edition of our holdings list, but the bulk of the changes will appear in subsequent revisions.

Suggestions or comments about the fiche list should be forwarded to Kathy Schmidt at extension 8738.

*Kathy Schmidt  
Serials Librarian*

## Subject Encyclopedias: A Response to the Information Explosion

The publication of subject encyclopedias is not a new phenomena but new titles in print have increased tremendously in recent years. This trend has been fed by the explosion of information available in numerous topical areas and by the realization of publishers that there is a market for a well organized compilation of articles for specific subject areas. General encyclopedias cannot be all things to all people. They must be concise and often do not meet the needs of the consumer requiring more detailed information.

Subject encyclopedias may be useful for the person looking for a brief overview and good bibliography on a specific topic. Currently, however, the articles in specialized encyclopedias go into much greater detail and are not intended for "quick" digestion.

Subject encyclopedias generally take two forms, those that cover a specific field of knowledge and those devoted to a particular subject. Classic subject encyclopedias such as *The Encyclopedia of Education*, *Encyclopedia of World Art*, and *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, are examples of the former. Examples of the latter would include titles such as *Encyclopedia of Adolescence* and *The New Century Italian Renaissance Encyclopedia*.

Recently purchased titles include examples of both types of subject encyclopedias. They also are representative in that some are new titles while others are new editions of old titles. Some examples of titles purchased in the last two years include:

*The Cambridge Encyclopedia of China*. 2nd ed.  
*The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Space*  
*Dictionary of the Middle Ages*  
*Encyclopedia of African-American Civil Rights*  
*Encyclopedia of Careers and Vocational Guidance*  
*Encyclopedia of Continental Women Writers*  
*Encyclopedia of Early Christianity*  
*Encyclopedia of Educational Research*. 6th ed.  
*Encyclopedia of Genetic Disorders & Birth Defects*  
*Encyclopedia of Homosexuality*  
*Encyclopedia of Sociology*  
*Encyclopedia of the Holocaust*  
*Encyclopedia of the Third Reich*  
*Encyclopedia of World Cultures*

*Grzimek's Encyclopedia of Mammals*  
*Historic U.S. Court Cases*  
*International Directory of Company Histories*  
*International Higher Education*  
*McGraw-Hill Encyclopedia of Science & Technology*. 7th ed.  
*Political Parties & Elections in the United States*  
*The St. James Encyclopedia of Banking & Finance*

No matter what the subject area, there is an excellent chance that Murphy Library has a reference tool that will serve as a fine starting point for you or your students. In many instances that tool will be a subject encyclopedia.

There are several ways in which you can identify the subject encyclopedia suitable for your needs. One method is to consult bibliographies such as *Guide to Reference Books*, *First Stop: The Master Index to Subject Encyclopedias*, or *Topical Reference Books*. These reference works will allow you to identify subject encyclopedias in many fields of study. Subject encyclopedias may also be identified by searching the online catalog under your subject interest and then selecting subheadings for "Dictionaries" or "Encyclopedias." Reference librarians would be glad to point out these resources and review access methods.

Getting started is often the most difficult aspect of library research. The subject encyclopedia may be the right tool for that purpose.

Randall Hoelzen  
Head of Reference/Interlibrary Loan

## A Reminder as the Holiday Season Draws Near

Murphy Library's *La Crosse in Light and Shadow: A Pictorial Recollection*, edited by Edwin Hill and Douglas Connell, makes a wonderful gift. This hard-cover book commemorates 150 years of La Crosse history with 244 photos, all carefully researched and captioned. It is available at the Cartwright Center Bookstore and at Murphy Library, which also will provide autographed copies on request. The price is \$40.00. Add \$3.00 for mailing.

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### *Murphy Library Endowment Fund*

The Murphy Library Endowment Fund, established just a few years ago, has grown to over \$13,500 today. The fund was set up to further the library's contributions to the University and the community by providing funding for special equipment, collection and new technologies purchases and programs beyond what the university library budget can provide. Interest earnings will be allocated once a \$50,000 minimum account balance is achieved. Those wishing to support the fund by payroll deduction or single contribution can contact the Chair of the Library Department, Karin Sandvik (785-8397) or the UW-La Crosse Foundation Office (785-8489) for more information.

*Anita Evans*

*Online Services/Coordinator of Public Services*

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## Discovering Ethnic Newswatch

Last May the Library received Ethnic Newswatch, an innovative full-text CD-ROM product. Ethnic Newswatch offers the other side of the story, providing a minority and ethnic perspective on current events. It indexes and includes articles in newspapers and magazines from African American, Asian-American, Euro-American, Hispanic American, Jewish American, Arab American, and Native American presses.

Our latest disk holds the full text of over 17,000 articles, editorials, columns, reviews of books, movies, music, and plays from 1991 and 1992. It can be fascinating to read a somewhat jaundiced review of a New Age book on Indian prophecies in *News from Indian Country* or a column on Asian American admission rates to California universities in *AsianWeek*.

Searching Ethnic Newswatch is easy, and can be very productive. Here's a sample search: I typed Los Angeles and riots into the article key word index and received a list of 28 articles. Among them were two especially useful ones: "The Los Angeles Riots: An Asian American Perspective," by Sam Chu Lin in the May 8th *AsianWeek*, and "A Tale of Two Riots," by Betty Pleasant in the May 13th issue of the Black-owned *Los Angeles Sentinel*. Lin's article discusses the tensions between Korean shopkeepers and the residents of south-central

Los Angeles and community anger in response to the light sentence given a Korean shop owner who shot and killed a Black teenager. Betty Pleasant has special insight into the recent riots since she also covered the 1965 Watts riots. She compares the two, concluding that the recent riots were far worse in extent of area, loss of life, damage to the businesses of both Korean-Americans and African-Americans, and greed of the racially mixed looters.

Ethnic Newswatch can be searched by key word, subject, words in titles, authors, dates, names, geographic location, ethnic group, or name of publication. It's usually best to use the F2 Browse key to scroll through the fields other than the Key Word field.

Included in this database are two publications of local interest: *News from Indian Country*, published in Hayward, Wisconsin, and *Asian Pages*, which covers Twin Cities Asian groups including the Hmong.

Most Hispanic publications are in Spanish; all other publications are in English. A separate directory offers more information on the publications indexed.

Ethnic Newswatch was funded by the UW-L Foundation, with a grant which covers a year's subscription and equipment. It is located on the first floor behind the Reference-Information Desk. If you would like demonstrations for your classes please call Cristine Prucha at 8740.

*Sandy Sechrest*  
*Documents Librarian*

## Staff Notes

Cristine Prucha, formerly Circulation Librarian, was appointed Bibliographic Instruction Coordinator in September.

Mary Jo Sandheinrich joined the Circulation staff in September.

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***FINE PRINT* is published Fall and Spring Terms for UW-L faculty, staff, students, and friends of Murphy Library.**

**Cristine Prucha, Editor**  
**Dale Montgomery, Director of Library**  
**and Media Services**  
**Karin Sandvik, Department**  
**Chairperson**

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