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# Inside Information Fall 2008

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# *inside* information

INFORMATION SERVICES @ CONNECTICUT COLLEGE

Fall 2008

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## Change in newsletter editors

This issue of Inside Information marks a change in newsletter staff. Longtime editor Laurie Deredita, Director of Special Collections, is retiring in January (see article on page 4). Laurie edited Inside Information for nine years, seeing dozens of articles from start to finish. The Information Services Public Relations committee will miss her!

The new Inside Information editor is Amanda Watson, who arrived in July as Shain Library's new Research and Instruction Librarian and Special Projects Coordinator. Amanda hails most recently from Philadelphia, where she completed her Master's in Library and Information Science at Drexel University. She has taught first-year college writing and copy-edited for a community newsletter and a law review, so editing is familiar territory for her. She's excited to take over the editorship and to join the staff of Information Services.

## Special Collections and Archives Move into New Lear Center

After three and a half noisy and disruptive months of construction, the dust has cleared (literally!) in Shain Library. On the second floor, a beautiful new home for Special Collections and Archives has emerged from behind the demolition wall that enclosed it during the construction project.

Thanks to a very generous gift from Linda Lear, a member of the Board of Trustees and of the Class of 1962, the dream of creating an expanded Special Collections and Archives has been realized. The functions of Special Collections and the College Archives are now integrated into one unit.

The new Linda Lear Center for Special Collections and Archives has a large and beautiful new reading room for researchers, with exhibition space around the walls for books and artworks. The old Palmer Room has been refurbished as an improved seminar room. It now has audiovisual facilities for classes using material from Special Collections and Archives—a particularly valuable feature, since more classes and students than ever before are using historical and archival

material. There are two staff offices and ample work space for processing collections and working on projects. With the addition of new compact shelving, the stack area has doubled.

Special Collections and the College Archives formerly occupied two different floors of the library. It will now be possible for Special Collections and Archives staff to support scheduled classes in the Palmer Room and to take care of researchers in the new reading room at the same time. The new facility also provides enhanced security, improved climate control, and better conditions for the preservation of materials.

The project was designed by the Boston architectural firm of Einhorn, Yaffee, and Prescott. The Konover Construction Company did the work, which began on the day after Commencement. To celebrate the renovation, there will be an open house in the Lear Center on the afternoon of October 24 and an exhibition of interesting books and material drawn from Special Collections and the College Archives. Please join us!



## *Message from the VP*

“...it’s all about the good life  
and stayin’ easy with the world...”

—Guy Clark, 1971

As I thought about describing Laurie Deredita, who is retiring in January (see article on page 4), this phrase from an old Guy Clark song popped into my head. I think it encapsulates Laurie’s nature and explains, at least somewhat, why she is such a delight to work with. Laurie is currently the Ruth Rusch Sheppe ’40 Director of Special Collections and Archives and has been an invaluable member of the Shain Library staff for over 20 years. In January, I suppose, she’ll have time to read the *New Yorker* from front to back every week. She and John will have more time for their twin passions: their grandson, Zachary, and opera. (They spent a good bit of August in one of my favorite places, attending performances at the Santa Fe Opera.)

Laurie has always been dedicated to making the College better, whether as a cataloguer or as the leader of the Special Collections and Archives department. She routinely brings more to her position than the job description requires. I think this happens when people really enjoy their work and their colleagues. I also think Laurie’s grace, intelligence, and service attitude bring people back to work with her.

Laurie has had campus-wide impact. This past year alone, she organized the “Celebration of 30 Years of Shain Library” and created programming to celebrate the legacy of Rachel Carson in the centennial year of Carson’s birth. Both stand out as highlights of the year. She also organized several faculty book talks, a Japanese Tea Ceremony, and the Sound Lab

Foundation Dinner and Lecture, where Elizabeth Kolbert gave a frightening (and frighteningly good) talk on global warming. In addition, she taught and

**She routinely brings more  
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supported a dozen classes in the Palmer Room using special collections materials, and worked individually with numerous Honors students.

As if all that wasn’t enough, Laurie has also overseen the remodeling of the Special Collections space to become the new Linda Lear Center for Special Collections and Archives (see article on page 1). Thanks to her attention to detail, the new Center is a gorgeous space that will honor Linda Lear’s generosity and serve the college and the intellectual community for decades to come.

We’ll miss you, Laurie!



*W. Lee Hisle, Ph.D.*

*Vice President for Information Services  
and Librarian of the College*

# Moodle: A New Way to Manage Course Web Pages

In 1999, Information Services introduced a new service to the campus: course web pages via WebCT. WebCT, a commercial product originally developed at the University of British Columbia, served Connecticut College well for many years, with more and more faculty and students using it each semester. In early 2006, however, WebCT was acquired by a competing company, Blackboard, and it became clear that it was time for the College to begin to look at other options.

Moodle, which stands for Modular Object-Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment, was one of those options. Moodle is a free, open-source course management system designed to be learner-centered, rather than tool-centered. Many of the College's

peer institutions are already using it with great success. Moodle is also designed to be modular, making it possible for individual institutions to customize the system and develop new functionality as needed.

With the guidance of a faculty committee, the college piloted Moodle in the spring of 2008. Faculty and students involved in the pilot reported that they found Moodle easier to use and more consistently available than WebCT. A phased roll-out was discussed, but on the advice of the faculty committee, IS decided to move forward and adopt Moodle as the College's one and only course management system beginning this fall. The college will continue to license WebCT until June 2009 year in order to ensure plenty of time to migrate

course materials from WebCT to Moodle. In addition to courses, Moodle is currently being used for faculty advisee groups, committees, and the Research 101 information literacy tutorial for incoming students. IS will continue to explore how Moodle's new tools and environment can provide new opportunities for faculty and students.

So far, student and faculty response has been very positive. Most have found Moodle intuitive and easy to use. If the experiences of other liberal arts colleges are any indication, we can be confident of a successful conclusion to the transition from WebCT.

If you want to learn more about Moodle, please contact Diane Creede at [decre@conncoll.edu](mailto:decre@conncoll.edu) or call extension 5145.

English (en\_us)

## Connecticut College Moodle

**My courses**  
Research 101

**Calendar**  
September 2008

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

**My courses**  
Research 101  
Teacher: Kathleen Gehring

Search courses:

**Upcoming Events**  
Voluntary Withdrawal Period begins  
Thursday, September 25  
Go to calendar...  
New Event...

**Messages**  
No messages waiting  
Messages...

**Online Users**

# Laurie Deredita Retires



Laurie has curated many exhibitions in Shain Library, including this display highlighting the Shinbach Delftware collection.

Laurie Deredita, Director of Special Collections and Archives, joined the Shain Library in 1981 as a part-time Assistant Cataloguer. In those days, catalog cards were generated using OCLC (a computerized library resource sharing system) and filed in the rather imposing card catalog. In 1984, Laurie became a full time Catalog Librarian, supervising the conversion of catalog cards to machine-readable data and working closely with her counterparts at Trinity College and Wesleyan University to develop agreements about the shared catalog.

In 1999, after Brian Rogers retired, she was named Acting Special Collections Librarian; her promotion to Director of Special Collections and Archives became permanent in July 2000. As a Catalog Librarian, Laurie had been responsible for cataloguing rare and unusual acquisitions. This familiarity with some of the library's choicest and most valuable materials served her well when she assumed responsibility for Special Collections. With Laurie's guidance, the department has grown, most recently with the opening of the newly expanded Lear Center for Special Collections and Archives (see article on page 1).

The Lear Center isn't the only part of the library to gain a new look under Laurie's leadership. Laurie also oversaw the creation of the Charles Chu Asian Art Room on the first floor of Shain Library in 2001, and has worked with the curator on the Chu-Griffis Asian Art Collection. Her interest in the visual arts extends to artists' books. She created a collection of artists' books within Special Collections and organized a symposium and exhibition on artists' books in 2002. She considers the artists' books collection, together with her involvement with the Digital Commons electronic repository, to be among her biggest achievements at the library.

Laurie is looking forward to spending more time with her grandson in California after she retires. Information Services, and Shain Library in particular, are much the stronger for her commitment and for the personal and professional integrity that has always informed that commitment. She will be greatly missed by everyone!



The new Linda Lear Center for Special Collections and Archives includes a renovated seminar room.



Laurie demonstrates the Linda Lear Center's space-saving compact shelving.

# Lori Blados Retires



Lori supervised 30 students who worked in the circulation area. Here she is with Melanie Joubanian '10 and May Chinavanichkit '09.

Lori Blados, Shain Library's Circulation Supervisor, will be leaving the library after eighteen years of service effective October 1, 2008. Lori began her career in the library working in the Interlibrary Loan and CTW office. She eventually moved into the Circulation Supervisor position in July 1993, where she has overseen dramatic changes to the physical layout of the building and supervised numerous student workers. She enjoys meeting new Connecticut College students every year and thanks the many who have worked in Circulation for their dedication and hard work.

As much as she loves working with the staff and students at the library, she has decided the time has come to move



Lori inspects a recent journal issue in the Periodical and DVD Collection.

on. Lori, who has a Master's in Fine Arts from Yale, will be spending her time pursuing her art career full-time. When she takes a break from painting in her studio, it will be to work on plans for the house she and her husband are building in Costa Rica. Lori will be sorely missed by those of us who work with her in the library for many reasons—her sense of humor, her warmth, her intelligence (not to mention her extensive collection of European shoes)—but we wish her well in her new, warmer and more colorful endeavors!



"Leaving/Leafing," a new bookmark designed by Lori Blados. Lori's artistic talents lie behind several of the bookmarks Shain Library has distributed over the past few years.

# Classroom Renovations: Transforming Bill 106 into the Silfen Auditorium

If you stopped by Bill Hall Room 106 this summer, you could see that something big was happening. In addition to the usual sounds, sights, and smells of construction that accompany our classroom renovations, something different was going on. You would have seen a second floor, about ten feet

the fixed wood tablet arm chairs were replaced with comfortable flexible seating and tables that extend the length of each tier. Each student now has a generous space for writing notes or using a laptop.

The design of the room follows guidelines established in the 2004 Connecticut College Classroom Improvement Plan, created by the architects Ellen-zweig Associates in consultation with faculty, staff and students. The goal of the plan is to renovate each general access classroom into a modern, comfortable, flexible space that supports both traditional and new ways of teaching

and learning. This room is a stellar example of the plan in action.

Lyn Silfen '67 and David Silfen, understanding the importance of effective learning spaces for current and future generations of students, generously provided the funding for the renovation of Bill 106. Teaching and learning styles, as well as academic resources, have expanded since 1939, and the room offers many enhanced features for instruction. An unused door at the front of the room was removed, and the blackboard was extended and blackboard lights installed. The room's instructional technology capabilities exceed those in any other space on campus.

Using a new media lectern equipped with a touch panel control, professors and speakers can display a wide variety of media on the large wall screen that

descends from the ceiling. The screen can display one large image, or two images side-by-side. Formats that can be displayed include paper, transparencies, or 3-D objects placed on a document camera; projection from a built-in laptop or from a laptop brought into the room; videotape, DVD, or (drum roll, please) high-definition Blu-ray DVD, a rapidly growing technology that allows high-resolution video projection. The room has wireless network access for instructors and students, and a surround sound system provides excellent audio. To support technology use, adjustable lighting and room darkening were installed. The controls are well-labeled and easy to use, but Media Services can be easily reached by a phone near the lectern in the event of technical difficulties.

Many beautiful design features enhance the room. The old painted windows were replaced last summer to provide natural light and fresh air. Wood is used extensively in the room for warmth and character: in the furniture, under the windows,

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Photo by Barbara Nagy



Bill 106 temporary construction floor and mechanical lift, as viewed from the front of the room, Summer 2008

off the ground, extending from near the front of the room all the way to the back wall. This temporary floor, built on scaffolding, provided workers with better access to the room's high ceilings and upper walls. The ceiling in Bill 106 extends even higher however, so workers used creative techniques (including stilts) to reach the upper areas of the room. In the front of the room workers accessed the lower ceiling and walls using a mechanical lift.

The first photograph shows the temporary floor from the front of the room and the orange mechanical lift. The next photograph shows the temporary floor from the back of the room, where it appears as a normal floor. After the ceiling was completed, the temporary floor was removed so work could be done on the actual floor. The concrete tiers were retained, but



Photo by Barbara Nagy

Bill 106 temporary construction floor as viewed from the back of the room, Summer 2008

## Classroom Renovation (cont.)



Bill 106 before renovation, Spring 2008

molding around the blackboard, and as decorative trim. Archival photos of the college, from the time the building was built, adorn the walls. One photograph, taken in 1939, shows Bill 106 just after it was completed. The other, taken in 1942, shows two students on the roof of Bill 106 serving as Civil Defense Spotters for New London during World War II. The frames for these image match the ones in other

Bill Hall classrooms. Each academic building has its own distinctive design theme, with elements honoring the architecture of the building.

The room was renovated with eco-friendly materials, the technologies are Energy Star compliant, and the lighting control encourages the use of natural light. The College has applied for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification for the room. LEED standards are part of a Green Building System developed by the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC), a non-profit organization that promotes sustainability in building materials, construction, and use. The Silfen Auditorium will serve as both a model teaching and learning space and a model of green renovation.

Classes across the disciplines will benefit from this renovation. During this first semester since renovation, the room has housed courses in Humanities, Social Sciences and Physical Sciences, including Chinese, French, Geology, Math and Psychology. The room is also used for film viewing, meetings, and seminars open to the public.

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The Silfen Auditorium (formerly Bill 106) after renovation, Fall 2008



## Classroom Renovation (cont.)

Two other classrooms in Bill Hall were renovated this summer. Bill 212 is an attractive and comfortable seminar room with a plasma wall screen for displaying from a laptop anywhere on the seminar table, or from videotapes or DVDs. The room now has a second blackboard and flexible room lighting and darkening. This renovation honors Bill 212's history as the Philip Arnold Goldberg Seminar Room. In memory of this beloved faculty member of the psychology department, his friends and students had renovated the room in the 1980's and added artwork in his honor, including a sculpture created by his friend and faculty colleague David Smalley. The artwork was incorporated into the renovated space.

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**Bill 212 is an attractive and comfortable seminar room**



Bill 212 before renovation, Spring 2008



Bill 212 after renovation, Fall 2008

## Classroom Renovation (cont.)



Bill 401 before renovation in Spring 2008

Bill 401 was renovated into a comfortable, updated lecture space. Tables and chairs on wheels provide flexibility. Typically, the tables face the front of the room for lectures, but they can be rearranged to form a seminar space to encourage discussion, or in smaller groupings to support group work.

Steve George, the college's Manager of Planning Design and Construction, led the renovation of each of these classrooms as a partnering project. Representatives from each constituent involved in the renovation, including Information Services, Physical Plant, Ellenzweig Associates architects, Konover Construction, General Drafting and Design, Noble Construction, State Wide-Electric, Yankee Remodeler, V. M. Brett Painting, and others, committed to work as a team. The team collaborated to create a safe work environment, support each other, and resolve any issues that arose, resulting in excellent products in which every member of the team can take pride. This very successful work style has guided every one of our classroom renovations and has earned national recognition and awards.

**Bill 401 was renovated  
into a comfortable,  
updated lecture space**



Bill 401 after renovation in Fall 2008

# Shain Library's Spring Exhibits

The following public exhibitions and events will take place in Shain Library during the fall semester:

“Visualizing: An Exhibition of Photographs by Professor Alex Roberto Hybel.” September 18 to December 17. In the Haines Room on the second floor of Shain Library.

Alex Hybel is the Susan Eckert Lynch '62 Professor of Government. Professor Hybel was a photographer for the U.S. Army in Vietnam before he became a professor of Government. The photographs in the exhibition were shot in recent years during his travels in Spain, China, Malaysia and Thailand.

11th Sound Lab Foundation Lecture: “The Great Transformation: How China Is Changing and What It Means for the World,” by Professor Howard W. French of Columbia University, former Shanghai Bureau Chief for the New York Times. On Monday, October 6th, 8:00-9:30 p.m., in the Charles Chu Asian Art Reading Room.



## New Year, New Microsoft Office

Returning students and faculty will notice that familiar Microsoft Office programs have a different look this fall. Office 2007, the latest version of the Microsoft Office suite, has arrived at Connecticut College. As you read this, the campus is moving to the new and improved Microsoft Office suite. To date, Information Services has installed it on well over 100 computers, including many of the computer labs and classrooms around campus, as well as many staff and faculty machines.

Those of you who are concerned with compatibility should take note of a few issues. Office 2007, by default, saves files in a format that is not readable by previous versions. As a solution, all of the lab computers managed by Information Services now have Office 2007, but are set to save documents automatically in Office 2003 format. In addition, all newly issued computers on campus, including those issued to faculty, staff, and computer labs or classrooms, are already loaded with the Office 2007 converter pack. This allows both new and old versions of Office to open files without problems.

Information Services will be providing training sessions on the transition to PowerPoint 2007, one of the most popular Office applications, on the following dates:

- Wednesday, October 15, 1:00–2:00 p.m., Davis Classroom
- Monday, November 17, 4:00–5:00 p.m., Davis Classroom

Please register online for these sessions at <http://training.conncoll.edu/>. Office 2007, for PC users, and Office 2008, for Apple users, are available to anyone with a college-issued computer that is less than 2 years old. If you are interested in having this new Office suite installed on your system, please contact Kevin DiMinno at extension 5127 or at [kevin.diminno@conncoll.edu](mailto:kevin.diminno@conncoll.edu).

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