COLLEGE INFORMATION RESOURCES
N E W S L E T T E R

From the Director

by Bob Kieft

Readers picking up this Newsletter may well be wondering what it's doing in their mailbox. Many on the mailing list have been receiving the Library's Newsletter since the late 1980s; others, especially on-campus readers, have been receiving a newsletter from Academic Computing. Looking at the contents, readers will note that what they're holding in their hands combines elements of both.

Well, wonder no longer. In the fall, Haverford changed its organization chart in a way that has become increasingly familiar among colleges in the last ten years. Provost David Dawson decided to reconfigure into one unit the curriculum support departments reporting to him, and he asked me, who has been Librarian of the College since the fall of 1999, to become the first Director of a new department we named College Information Resources (CIR).

In addition, then, to my responsibilities for the library departments of User Services and Collections, Bibliographic and Digital Services, Special Collections, and the science and music libraries, I now have oversight of Networking and Systems and Academic Computing Services as well. Along with these direct reports, I am also charged with promoting increased coordination between these departments and Administrative Computing, which reports to the Vice President for Finance and Administration.

Five years ago, recognizing that information technologies were creating overlapping, even convergent interests among many departments in the College, President Tom Tritton appointed a committee consisting of the then Directors of Networking and Systems, Academic Computing, Administrative Computing, and the Library, together with a faculty member, to serve collectively as the College's Chief Information Officer (CIO). This CIO "collaborative" improved communication among these departments and helped to establish the sense of common purpose that the Provost institutionalized with the creation of CIR in September.

No Strings Attached: Wireless Computing at Haverford

by Barbara Mindell

Going 'unwired' has become one of the newest and most exciting technology projects on Haverford's campus this year. Wireless access points have been added to many campus locations in recent months to allow for use in the library, several classrooms and science labs, as well as to provide access in numerous student common areas. Students and faculty alike can now bring their laptops to multiple places on campus in order to continue their work, or just to relax, while still maintaining full network access.

With over seventy percent of the student population bringing laptops to campus, most of which come preconfigured to use wireless, students take advantage of wireless capability as fast as we make it available. In one instance, we received a call asking questions about how to log onto the wireless network during the time it took to turn on the wireless access point and walk back to our offices! Many of our faculty are also opting to replace their current desktop systems with wireless enabled laptops and are equally interested in the possibilities afforded by using wireless.

In addition to the ease of use and mobility that wireless access affords our students and faculty, we are currently exploring ways to use wireless technology to enhance the classroom experience and encourage collaboration and the exchange of ideas. Professor Rob Scarrow in the Chemistry Department has his students use wireless laptops for use with data acquisition electronics, and has been able to have an entire class run tutorials on the use of molecular modeling software in a classroom that could not previously support that use. Other faculty members are also excited by the possibilities such technology affords them as they design their courses for next year. Already you can see students working in the hallways both alone and in small groups and while waiting outside faculty offices in the KINSC. The ability to carry your work with you, anywhere you choose to go, can provide enormous opportunities, both in and out of the classroom.

Requesting Materials Made Easier

by Donna Fournier

"So much information, so many good citations; now how do I get stuff that's not on my campus?" This has been a question that more and more users have been asking themselves and asking us. We librarians know the answers but they are so full of if/then statements related to the type of material and the type of library that it's very confusing to explain verbally or in a webpage. We came to realize that we were asking our students and faculty to make too many choices and that to best serve our users we needed to make requesting materials from other libraries much easier.

To that end, a group of tri-college colleagues representing interlibrary loan, circulation, and science departments put our heads together. Calling ourselves, ANAMOLI (a not-at-my-own-library initiative) we did usability studies, statistical analysis, and lots of brainstorming to think of ways to simplify our requesting processes and make our instructions as clear as possible. The end result was a web page offering the following four choices:

Books, dissertations, videos, sound recordings, etc.	
Tripod	Request it yourself from another Tri-College Library (use the "Request" button in Tripod) and have it sent to your campus (1-2 days).
E-ZBorrow	Request it yourself from a regional partner library (3-5 days).
Interlibrary Loan	Let our interlibrary loan department track it down for you (5-10 days).
Journal articles	
Article Delivery	Let us pick the fastest route for all article requests (1-10 days).

Simplifying the requesting process has added a bit more work for our library staffs but it's a tradeoff we think is well worth the effort. We hope you like the results. Comments are welcome to dfournie@haverford.edu. May your research be as stress-free as possible!

-Donna Fournier is
Coordinator for User Services & Collections

Blogs in the Library (part 1)

by John Anderies

A two-part series on the rise of the online publishing medium known as blogs. Part one describes what blogs are and how they work. It looks at how blogs are being used in libraries.

There can be little doubt: 2004 was indeed the year of the blog. Howard Dean's *Blog for America*, the first-ever presidential campaign weblog, helped to catapult him to national attention by bringing out a new breed of voter and bringing in huge amounts of money. Dozens of delegates, reporters, and free-lancers blogged in real time from the Democratic and Republican National Convention floors. More recently, savvy bloggers were at the heart of the Dan Rather/CBS forged document debacle.

No surprise then when Merriam-Webster announced that "blog" was the most looked-up term in its online dictionary. The Pew Internet and American Life Project claims that more than 8 million Americans have created a blog and more than 32 million Americans read blogs. Yet, the Pew study also found that only 38% of all internet users actually know what a blog is. So if you find yourself in the 62% majority, read on.

Let's start with the Merriam-Webster definition:

> **Blog** *noun* [short for *Weblog*] (1999) :
> a Web site that contains an online
> personal journal with reflections,
> comments, and often hyperlinks
> provided by the writer.

True enough, this does describe many blogs, especially the earliest ones. But I would offer this definition: A blog is an online collection of successive entries presented on the web and produced by special software that makes editing and updating a snap. Some blogs are highly personal, others newsy. Some are created by individuals and others by groups. Most blogs present entries in reverse chronological order. Some blogs allow comments from readers or trace the connections between a network of related blogs.

Blogs have become popular in libraries for a range of uses. Our own Tri-College Library Consortium uses blogging software known as Movable Type to

Fresh Look for Blackboard

by Julie Miran

As part of a Mellon Grant in the Spring of 2000, Haverford found itself looking at and assessing the value of course management systems along with our tri-college counterparts. Now finishing our fourth full year of using Blackboard, it has become the mainstay of many courses.

Support for Blackboard (BB) takes many forms and affords those of us in computing and the library the opportunity to merge our expertise trying to find the best model for our faculty and students. This semester there are 145 courses using BB in a variety of ways. Some people have the library scan all their course materials and utilize only that portion of BB's functionality in a manner very similar to the old ERES system. Still others utilize the announcements, digital dropbox, gradebook and discussion boards as additional tools to enhance their classroom experience. For instance, in a
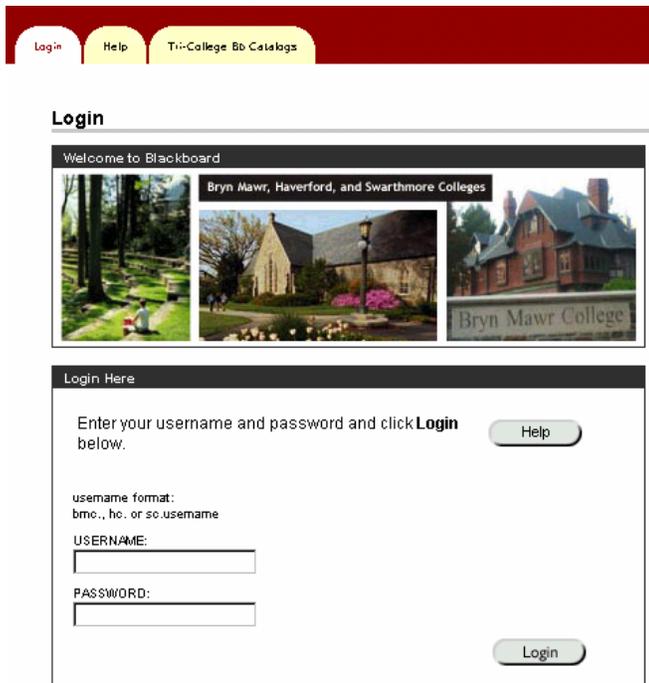
Blackboard's new splash page

class for which I am providing library instruction, students submitted search strategies from databases into the digital dropbox, and I was able to look at them before coming in to teach and address some issues that arose from their search attempts.

Academic Computing Center Helpdesk Reorganized

by Barbara Mindell

The Academic Computing Center Helpdesk, which provides computing assistance to all faculty, students and academic staff, has recently undergone a major reorganization in an effort to offer more complete and efficient services to the academic community. Helpdesk is now open weekdays from 9am to 5pm and we recently added a full time Helpdesk Coordinator to the Academic Computing staff.

Helpdesk was created initially as a support center for students and was open just a few hours a day. It was staffed by computer savvy students and required only a small amount of ACC staff supervision. Faculty support was handled by the ACC staff directly through the liaison program, which assigned certain departments to each staff member. As computing use mushroomed over the years, it became difficult in Helpdesk to sustain the level of support required to keep student's computers working effectively. In order to meet those demands, additional student staff were hired, which required ACC to provide increased supervision as well. As staff members began spending more time assisting in Helpdesk, it was an easy transition to having all calls for assistance from students and faculty go directly through helpdesk as the first point of contact. Hours were expanded and faculty were encouraged to call Helpdesk for quick answers to routine problems. When ACC underwent some staffing changes last summer, we took the opportunity to re-fashion one of the staff positions so that we could commit a full time computing staff member to coordinating an increasingly active and busy Helpdesk.

By assigning a full time staff member to Helpdesk, Academic Computing has been able to create a multi-tier system for our users. Helpdesk now provides first tier support for calls from students, faculty or academic staff. If the Helpdesk staff can address the problem, it is taken care of immediately with the advice and guidance of the Helpdesk Coordinator. In the event the problem is too complex to handle over the phone or with a quick house call from one of the student helpdesk staff, our liaison program will provide second tier support for faculty and academic staff.

Staff News and Notes

Compiled by Mike Persick

John Anderies, *Music Librarian*, gave presentations at the National Institute for Technology in Liberal Education meeting in Chicago and at the Center for Educational Technology at Middlebury College in November. The talk was an overview of the Conference on Music and Technology in the Liberal Arts that John helped organize the previous summer. The second annual conference will take place in June at Vassar College.

Norm Medeiros, *Coordinator for Bibliographic & Digital Services*, was an invited speaker at the Association of American Publisher's roundtable, *Consortia and Site Licenses 102: What's In It for Me?*, held November 17, 2004, in New York City. Norm's talk, entitled "Cheaper by the Dozen: A College Librarian's Reflections on Consortia Deals and the Role of Serials Agents in the Electronic Age," described the opportunities and challenges of consortium-based purchases of electronic resources.

The library welcomed yet another baby girl to the library family this month, continuing a tradition (sometimes called a "streak," other times disputed, but nevertheless statistically unlikely) of girls born to Magill staff. Stretching back to 1976, the count is now up to 11. **Jess Poland**, *Reserves Specialist*, gave birth to a baby girl on Friday, February 11, at 9:08 AM. Olive Joan Richter weighed in at 6 lbs., 12 oz.

We have hired **Theresa Donahue** as *Reserve/Reference Services Intern*. Theresa is a graduate student in the University of Pittsburgh Library and Information Science Program. She will fill an internship designed to cover Jess's maternity leave. We are excited to have Theresa with us and to have this opportunity to promote librarianship and provide real-world experience for her.

The library has welcomed several other new employees since the last newsletter:

Adam Brin has joined the Tri-College Consortium as *Systems Applications Coordinator*. Adam is a graduate of Brown University, and worked most recently at Luna Imaging as Manager of product Strategy and Client Relations. Prior to this position, he was the Production Manager for The AMICO Library.

From the Director … continued from p.1

As these trends toward integration of interests around technology continue, we see the potential for closer working relationships between the staff who work with the resources used by students and faculty (traditionally librarians) and the staff who provide the infrastructure of services and equipment needed to make those resources available on the network, in class, and at the desktop (traditionally computing staff). Such configurations as CIR take many shapes at the campuses that have created merged information organizations, some of them, like Kenyon's, going so far as to integrate the jobs of librarians and computing staff. At Haverford we are not making sweeping changes in staff job descriptions, but we are seeking the highly coordinated approach that unified reporting lines affords. Library positions and computing positions retain distinctive elements and require different talents and skills, but both must work in a context where the interactions among resource-access tools or devices and resources themselves are increasingly dependent and complex. A multitude of routine tasks and the ongoing development of systems and services already in place continue to occupy most of our daily work; I hope, though, that both these customary occupations and those possibilities commonly lumped together as the proverbial "big picture" will benefit from CIR's new working partnerships.

This spring the College Planning Committee will charge a working group, which I will chair, to consider the future of information technology at the College. Our investigation will result in a plan for the technology-related aspects of the College's work from library collections to classroom technology to the configuration of public computing facilities, from the relationships among the several information systems on campus to the many aspects of digital asset management, the impact of technology on student and faculty work habits, and the College's web presence. We will also be discussing the possibilities for collaborative projects between CIR and the Humanities Center; educating students, staff, and faculty about the ethical, legal, social, and cultural aspects of technology; and ensuring that faculty and students have effective access to basic productivity software, the specialized software needed by individual departments, and technologies for specific curricular and pedagogical purposes.
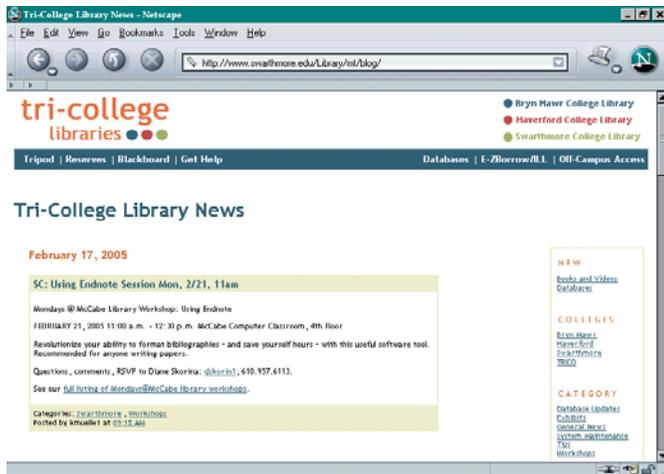
Blogs in the Library … continued from p.2

produce our online "Library News" <http://www.swarthmore.edu/Library/mt/blog/>. We used the same software this past year for communications among staff about the redesign of our online catalog, Tripod, and our Interlibrary Loan webpages <http://www.swarthmore.edu/library/opac/>.

The Tri-College Library News blog

A number of librarians around the country have extremely popular professional blogs. Three of my favorite technology-related library blogs are Stephen Cohen's *Library Stuff* [http://www.librarystuff.net/], Jessamyn West's *Librarian.net* <http://www.librarian.net/>, and Jenny Levine's *The Shifted Librarian* <http://www.theshiftedlibrarian.com/>.

A blog I participate in producing is the Music Library Association's Information Sharing Subcommittee's blog called *infoshare* <http://haverfordlibrary/typepad.com/infoshare/>. Here we chronicle our meetings and convention programs and collect links to music-related blogs. This past February we used it to do real-time blogging during the Music Library Association's annual meeting in Vancouver, BC. This last use will be the subject of the second part of this series on blogs to appear in the Fall issue of the *College Information Resources Newsletter*.

-John Anderies is Music Librarian

Fresh Look for Blackboard … continued from p.3

This semester the login page <http://blackboard.swarthmore.edu> was redesigned to make it easier for people to find basic support for Blackboard, from how to set a new password, to something more complicated like where to go for specific support on the three campuses. It should make the shopping week easier for users to navigate as guests. Also new this semester is a model of liaison support for faculty <http://www2.haverford.edu/acc/about/liaisons.html> that merges staffs from both computing and the library.

The process of assessing Blackboard's value to our community is an ongoing one as we try to make an out-of-the-box application provide as many of the necessary tools as needed for every course across all the departments. We are fortunate to have the combined expertise of our tri-college colleagues as we explore these issues in the future.

-Julie Miran is Science Librarian

Academic Computing … continued from p.3

By centralizing and expanding our Helpdesk services, and providing ongoing direct staff supervision, we can now offer more efficient and better quality support through Helpdesk. This has freed up the liaison staff to focus on more sophisticated technological problems and will allow ACC staff more opportunities to work closely with faculty in helping develop and implement technology-based projects. In addition, this restructuring affords ACC staff the ability to work more closely with our new partners in the library to focus on how to effectively incorporate technology within our broader instructional goals.

-Barbara Mindell is
Director of Academic Computing Services

The College Information Resources Newsletter is available on the Web at

http://www.haverford.edu/library/about/news/news.html

No Strings Attached ... continued from p.1

One of the challenges to implementing a wireless network involves security, which has been a key issue for all computer users in recent years. Haverford has taken the first step in containing these potential problems by requiring everyone wishing to connect via wireless to log onto the "wireless" network with a username and password. We are continually working to simplify these procedures while also striving to expand wireless services to include all who might wish to use Haverford's network while on our campus.

As new wireless access points are activated, we expect to be able to provide wireless service on Founder's Green and in other open spaces before the end of the summer.

For more information on how to connect "no strings attached" at Haverford, see our website at <http://www2.haverford.edu/acc/docs/network/VPN> .

-Barbara Mindell is
Director of Academic Computing Services

Staff News and Notes ... continued from p.4

Vanessa Gorman, our new *Acquisitions Assistant,* comes to us with experience working in the Department of Educational Studies at Swarthmore College. In fact, Vanessa is a 2001 graduate of Swarthmore.

Heidi Scott is the libraries' new *Administrative Assistant,* helping with equipment, supplies, payroll, record-keeping, and student assistants. She comes to Haverford with a degree in fine arts and 20 years experience in medical office management.

Welcome to all our new colleagues!

-Mike Persick is Acquisitions Librarian &
Assistant Catalog Librarian

From the Director ... continued from p.4

Welcome, then, to our new Newsletter. We hope you continue to find it useful for staying abreast of the many faces and dimensions of information resources at the College.

-Bob Kieft is Director of College Information
Resources & Librarian of the College