

Friendscript

Harvesting the Fruits of Knowledge

Window celebrates education throughout generations

He calls it a “safe harbor” that offered a haven for study in his days as an undergraduate. Now that special space bears his permanent thanks via a printers’ mark window plaque commemorating his time there.

Russell Ewers ’69 ENG had just \$4 in his savings account when he graduated from the University of Illinois, but he began supporting his Alma Mater just as soon as he landed a job. In addition to the College of Engineering, which trained him in his lifelong career, Ewers also has long given back to the University Library.

“It was just a safe harbor,” Ewers recalled of the many hours he spent in the Main Library’s Reading Room. “It was a place I could always rely on to do the work I knew I had to do.”



Russell Ewers selected this Reading Room window because the lively children remind him of Noah, Alexander, and Colin, his grandsons. Printers’ mark windows in the Main Library may be named to commemorate various occasions.



Sharon Yates Ewers (far left) and Russell E. Ewers (far right) with grandkids (from left to right in the middle) Colin Ewers Whitson, Noah Ewers Whitson, and Alexander Yates Ewers

To Ewers, giving back has always seemed the right thing to do. And when he came across another opportunity—to dedicate a printers’ mark window in the very room that had nurtured him throughout his college years—he believed he had found “the perfect entrée” for making a significant donation.

And then, he came across the perfect window.

Printers’ Mark window No. 23 shows two boys striking fruit from a tree, with a third lad picking up the fallen crop. “That [window] speaks to me,” Ewers said, “because it included three boys. Yes, I have three grandsons.”

The 27 stunning windows that line the walls of the Reading Room and stairway leading up to it form one of the most remarkably beautiful spaces on campus. Each stately window showcases the insignia of an early printer in Europe—a mark to guard against forgeries as books became more widespread in the 15th and 16th

continued on page 3

LIBRARY.ILLINOIS.EDU/FRIENDS

INSIDE

2

Mix and Match

3

Building Project Reaches Milestones

4

New Collection Commemorates Area Jewish Life

5

Upcoming Events

6

Library Is Looking For

7

Thank You



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Friendscript is a publication of the Office of Library Advancement, 1408 West Gregory Drive, Room 227, Urbana, IL 61801. Ideas and suggestions are always welcome and should be submitted to Heather Murphy at hmurphy@illinois.edu or (217) 333-3758.

The Office of Library Advancement garners interest and secures external funds from Illinois alumni and friends, provides visibility for the Library through its programs and events, and promotes the Library within the Illinois campus and the community-at-large.

◆ **Kathryn Risor-Heise**

Assistant Dean for Advancement
krh19@illinois.edu

◆ **Javonda Pelman**

Director of Advancement
jpelman@illinois.edu

◆ **Hannah Brauer**

Assistant Director of Advancement for
Stewardship and Donor Relations
dole2@illinois.edu

◆ **Vicki Sparks**

Administrative Aide
vsparks@illinois.edu

EDITOR: Heather Murphy, Chief Communications Officer

DESIGN: Studio 2D

WRITER: Beatrice Pavia/InkWell

Help the University Library reduce its carbon footprint. Contact Heather Murphy if you are interested in receiving future issues of *Friendscript* by e-mail.

This publication is available in an accessible electronic format at www.library.illinois.edu/friends, or you may contact Heather Murphy to request an alternative format of this publication.

Printed with UV ink on recycled paper.

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John Wilkin

The Juanita J. and Robert E. Simpson
Dean of Libraries and University
Librarian

jpwilkin@illinois.edu

L. Brian Stauffer

Mix and Match

Illinois Legacy Challenge increases value of new planned gifts

Paul Garcy worked his way through college, earning three undergraduate degrees and one master's from the University of Illinois. That sweat and toil caused him to truly value his education and strongly believe in paying it forward.



**Paul
Garcy**

So when he found out that a recently launched endeavor could multiply his donations to the university, that was all the sweeter.

"It's all about how to best [maximize] your impact," said Paul '81 ENG, '81 LAS, '81 LAS, MS '85 ENG, who received undergraduate degrees in general engineering, Spanish, and genetics and development, as



well as a master's degree in general engineering.

Initiated in fall 2021 as part of the With Illinois fundraising campaign, the Illinois Legacy Challenge provides an unusual opportunity. With \$1 million in matching funds donated by a generous alumnus, any new planned gift or increased gift (for any Illinois purpose) documented with the University of Illinois Foundation can tap into that pool. That advantage directs 10 percent of the new donation (up to \$10,000) to *immediately* benefit one of five funds, including a UIUC college unrestricted fund of one's choice. The challenge ends when the \$1 million is completely used or June 30, 2022, whichever comes first.

It was an opportunity Paul couldn't pass up. The software engineer at Accenture has worked all over the world—including Saudi Arabia, France, Indonesia, and the Philippines—but never forgotten his beginnings as a young undergraduate at Illinois.

For Paul, the Map Library (then located in the Natural History Building) and the Main Library served as islands of respite during his busy days on both sides of Green Street (engineering on the north, liberal arts and sciences on the south). Searching for a quiet place to

continued on page 8

Harvesting the Fruits of Knowledge, *continued from page 1*

centuries. Window 23 references Reginald Wolfe, a Dutch bookseller and printer who later worked in London and became Royal Printer in Latin, Greek, and Hebrew under King Edward VI.

Fittingly, a banner on the design depicts the Latin word for charity. Ewers added a dedication of his own on the sill below, reading, “The fruits of Learning and Wisdom are to be harvested and shared for generations . . . through Knowledge.”

As a young man, Ewers felt an immediate affinity for the University of Illinois. Having endured a slew of visits to other campuses, he stepped out of his parents’ car, took one look at the Illini Union and Green Street, and declared, “This is it!” He formed close friendships with his fellow residence hall mates, and upon graduation, pursued a career in construction management. In Chicago, Nebraska, and Arizona, he helped build everything from water treatment plants to hospitals to golf courses. He and his wife, a librarian, currently reside in Davis, California, to be close to their children and grandchildren.

As a proud first-generation college graduate, Ewers’ educational experience holds great significance. “I feel a debt of gratitude,” he said, “both to the university and to those who helped me get there and helped me afterwards.”

Ewers hopes the dedication plaques below the printers’ mark windows make students more aware of the beauty, art, and significance that envelop them in the Reading Room.

“If one person . . . reads my dedication, even without knowing the back story,” he said, “I think that would be wonderful.”



Windows in the Library’s majestic Reading Room, as well as in the Grand Staircase, may be named to commemorate many occasions, including honoring a loved one, memorializing a special person, or recognizing you or your family’s dedication to the Library or the university. If you are interested in dedicating one of the 27 Printers’ Mark windows, please contact Kathryn Risor-Heise (krh19@illinois.edu) in the Office of Library Advancement. Gifts toward a named window are used to support Library facilities, such as building projects. As well as providing a beautiful and lasting dedication, your gift will ensure that our historic Library is beautifully maintained for future generations of scholars. For more information, visit library.illinois.edu/friends/window-dedication.

Building Project Reaches Milestones

At press time, the first phase of the building project (transforming the existing Undergraduate Library into an archives and special collections building dedicated for rare and archival collections) was on the agenda for the January 20, 2022 meeting of the University of Illinois’ Board of Trustees for approval. This comes after the project met several important milestones: the architect/engineering firms submitted the final schematic design documents on December 10, 2021, and the Library successfully secured funding for Phase One construction. Read more and view the latest conceptual drawings on the **Campaign to Transform the University Library** website at library.illinois.edu/specialcollectionsbuilding.



Preserving Our Legacy, Inspiring Our Future

The Library is central to the vibrant intellectual life found at Illinois, offering access to the finest and broadest array of scholarly resources available and providing the support of the best librarians and staff. Serving scholars around the world, the Library’s global presence reflects the university’s long-great values and its own rich heritage.

Understanding that the Library is essential to its mission, the University of Illinois has embarked on a multi-phased campaign to transform the library. The goal is to create an exciting, innovative and exciting education environment that is in step with our world-class university.

Starting with an ambitious plan to bring together the many voices in our archives and special collections, Illinois will build a facility to showcase these treasures, history, and artifacts under an arch spanning the past and inspiring the future. Please join us!



New Collection Commemorates Area Jewish Life

Everyday activities of central Illinois merchants, leaders chronicled

As a young girl growing up in Bloomington, Illinois, Sybil Stern Mervis '57 COM was gifted a typewriter from her parents to better record news for the neighborhood paper. Her enthusiasm for Girl Scouts taught her to be goal-oriented, her love of the Nancy Drew mystery series instilled a sense of independence, and her participation in IFJY (Illinois Federation of Jewish Youth) connected her to people who shared her culture.

It's no wonder that at the age of 86, Mervis, a longtime resident of Danville, Illinois, could channel that kind of energy and determination into a project she created from the ground up—the Central Illinois Jewish Communities Archives/Mervis Archives, a collection that chronicles the history of ordinary Jewish life in the region. The project will be housed in the Main Library's Illinois History and Lincoln Collections and is expected to open to the public by late spring.

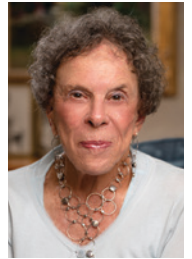
“The establishment of these archives provides a critical contribution to future research and engagement with the stories and contributions of Jewish communities in central Illinois,” said Krista Gray, archives program officer for IHLC. “We are grateful to have the opportunity to preserve and make these materials more broadly accessible at the University of Illinois Library.”

A longtime historian of Jewish life in the area, Mervis has written numerous books and articles on the topic throughout the decades. But it was the closing of Danville's Congregation Anshe Kneset Israel synagogue in 2012, due to a dwindling population, that sparked the glimmerings of the archival project.

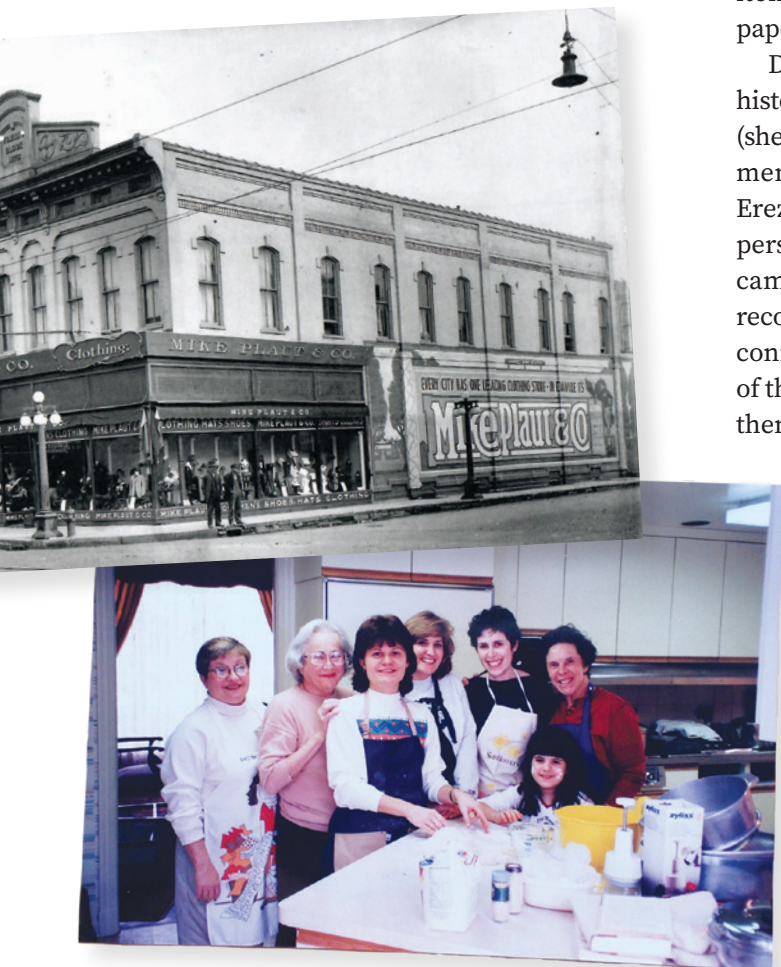
“So, I gave away the kosher china and brisket pans, the prayerbooks and prayer shawls,” Mervis said in a public lecture, recalling the heartbreaking dismantling process. But after dispersing myriad items—from Torahs to ark drapes—records and papers remained. These she stored in a warehouse.

Deciding she could not write the more recent history of Jews in Danville without appearing biased (she and her late husband, Lou, had been prominent members of that community), Mervis turned to Erez Cohen, hoping he might know of an impartial person to help. Executive director of Illini Hillel on campus, Cohen strongly believed the synagogue records should stay in central Illinois; he eventually connected the materials with Dara Goldman, head of the UI Program in Jewish Culture & Society, who then established the link to the University Library.

To additionally bolster the project, the Jewish community raised more than \$75,000 in four months' time to support the cataloguing of the collection and future programs and exhibitions.



**Sybil Stern
Mervis**



The collection includes a wide range of materials, including news clippings, oral histories, photographs, memories, calendars, cemetery records, and the like. Mervis has already heard from academics around the nation interested in using the resources and learning how the collection was set up. But most importantly, she wants to establish a record of how members of the Jewish population—its leaders, merchants, and families—embraced their environment, and what their settlement, from the 1800s onward, meant to both Jews and non-Jews alike.

“Very few people have written about small-town Jewish life,” Mervis said. As she commented in her lecture, “If you were a youngster, you knew that you could walk in any of those stores and get help if you needed it. It was a warm and comfortable way of life, now hardly even imaginable.”

“Those halcyon days and those owners are all gone, having passed into history, and that is what we are trying to preserve: their history as important contributors to their communities.”

Note: The Illinois History and Lincoln Collections welcomes inquiries from individuals or other small congregations across central Illinois interested in contributing their records to this archival collection. For more information about the donation process and what might be a good fit, visit go.library.illinois.edu/ihlc-cijca or email ihlc@library.illinois.edu.



Upcoming Events



In Search of Lost Time: The study of Earth history and chronology from the 18th to the 21st century

This exhibit is presented by The Rare Book & Manuscript Library in collaboration with the Geology Department. The related concepts of time, chronology, and history form the lens through which Earth scientists view, understand, and interpret a dynamic planet. This exhibit will explore how the chronology of the Earth was established, with a focus on six themes that gradually

led to the consensus view that the Earth is roughly 4.55 billion years of age.

- ◆ January 24–July 22, 9:00–5:00 (Monday through Friday)
- ◆ Visit library.illinois.edu/rbx for more information

Jai Chakrabarti Event

A reading and discussion of Author Jai Chakrabarti's book *A Play for the End of the World*.

- ◆ March 3, 4:00–6:00
- ◆ Asian American Cultural Center, 1210 W. Nevada Street, Urbana
- ◆ Visit go.library.illinois.edu/calendar for more information

Player Piano Virtual Demonstration

Join the Music & Performing Arts Library for a virtual lunch hour demonstration featuring the Library's Steinway Duo-Art reproducing piano and collection of piano rolls.

- ◆ March 25, 12:00–1:00
- ◆ Visit library.illinois.edu/mpal for more information



We encourage you to visit the Library's online calendar at go.library.illinois.edu/calendar for the most up-to-date information about events.

Library Is Looking For

To fund one of these items or to ask for additional titles in an area of interest, call (217) 333-5682 or email friends@library.illinois.edu.



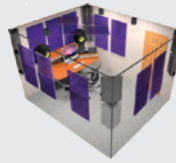
Any print issues of Pack-o-Fun magazines. First published in 1951, this scrapcrafting publication served as a springboard for youth clubs and troops to engage children (and adults!) in craft projects, made all the more fun and easy by repurposing common household items. The **Social Sciences, Health, and Education Library** currently holds no copies of the magazine and would love some to complement its children's and young adult literature collection. Vintage issues (1950s to 1970s) are of particular interest—check your book shelves and attics! For more information, contact Nancy O'Brien at npobrien@illinois.edu.



\$350 for the Zoom H6 Pro, the ultimate portable recorder. Touted as “the recorder that does it all,” the device will help the **Music & Performing Arts Library** develop new services and collections to support recording audio both inside and outside the library.

\$395 for the Oxford Encyclopedia of Inclusive and Special Education, 2021. By addressing these inextricably linked topics in a single collection, this expansive compilation proves particularly useful, with lessons learned in one area having significant implications for the other. This item is sought by the **Social Sciences, Health, and Education Library**.

\$595 for the Oxford Encyclopedia of Educational Administration, 2021, benefitting users of the **Social Sciences, Health, and Education Library** by offering a global view of research in educational administration and leadership. To effectively guide schools, leaders must consider topics such as government mandates, community members, educators, unions, students, and others.



\$1,065 for the Auralex Project 2 Roominator Kit, an all-in-one sound control solution. Sought by the **Music & Performing Arts Library** to convert an existing room into a reservable space for digital music creation, this new and developing service will support the School of Music's music technology program and a growing interest across campus in making beats.



\$2,500 for an albumen print showing Abraham Lincoln's funeral procession. As the slain president's funeral train made its way to Springfield, Illinois, it stopped in 10 cities; reportedly, up to 500,000 people attended the event pictured here in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. This carte de visite, sought by the **Illinois History and Lincoln Collections**, shows Lincoln's horse-drawn hearse carrying the catafalque and casket on a Philadelphia street on April 22, 1865.



\$3,662 for a facsimile of one of the earliest illuminated manuscripts of Dante's Divine Comedy (Medicea Laurenziana Library of Florence, Strozzini 152). While the original manuscript of Dante's seminal work has been lost, the **Literatures and Languages Library** seeks this richly adorned facsimile to enhance the study of Dante, Italy, the Middle Ages, and the history of the book. The item, produced in Florence, Italy, between 1335 and 1345, is a—well—simply divine opportunity and contains beautifully detailed, colored illustrations on every page.

An up-to-date, comprehensive list of items—including many more maps in need for the Map Library—is located at library.illinois.edu/friends/library-is-looking-for

Thank You

The following donors have adopted these items previously featured in Friendscript:

- ◆ **Sandra Lee Braber-Grove** for *Saussine Pictorial Broadside Game Board Map of World War I* in memory of Wayne E. Grove (Map Library)
- ◆ **Jonathan Buchbinder** for an e-DaVinci Book Covering Machine (Social Sciences, Health, and Education Library)
- ◆ **Christine and Ralph Burgess** for *Prevailing Religions of the World and Progress of Evangelization* (Map Library)
- ◆ **Lila Jeanne Eichelberger** for *The Guide to Toyland* (Map Library)
- ◆ **John Galvin** for *Miras—nasledie, Tatarstan—Krym: gorod Bolgar i izuchenie tatarskoi kul'tury v Tatarstane i Krymu v 1923-1929 godakh* (International and Area Studies Library)
- ◆ **Paul Garcy** for *Chicago To San Francisco Via The Burlington Route* (Map Library)
- ◆ **Pamela and Christopher Horn** for their gift toward chairs in memory of Ted Peterson (Communication Library)
- ◆ **Uriel Kitron** for *A Map Exhibiting the Dark Shadow of the Moon over England and Other Parts of Europe* (Map Library)
- ◆ **Philip H. Martin** for *The Great East Asia Battle Result Learning Map and Map of the Russo Japanese War* (Map Library)
- ◆ **Mardell J. O'Brien** for his gift in support of the Image of Research competitions (Scholarly Commons)
- ◆ **Jennifer L. Woodruff Tait** for her gift toward rotating exhibits in memory of Eugene and Esther Woodruff (Library Exhibitions Committee)
- ◆ **Elizabeth Van Jacob** for *Buenos Aires: Vision Fotográfica* in memory of Scott Van Jacob (Ricker Library of Architecture and Art)



Annual gifts strengthen the Library and ensure its standing as one of the world's preeminent public university collections. We invite you to join this tradition of private support, which makes a critical difference in the quality of the Library's collections, programs, and services.

Please mail this form with your gift to:

University of Illinois Foundation
P.O. Box 734500
Chicago, IL 60673-4500

Questions? Please call (217) 333-5682 or e-mail friends@library.illinois.edu.



Yes! I want to help ensure the Library's excellence with my gift to the:

- Annual Fund (332260) Library Building Transformation Fund (336946)
 Student Worker Fund (339087) Other _____

Enclosed is my contribution of: \$1,000 \$500
 \$250 \$100 \$50 Other \$ _____

My check is enclosed payable to the UIF.

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To make a gift with your credit card, please visit **go.library.illinois.edu/gift**

University of Illinois Library
Office of Advancement
1408 W. Gregory Drive, Room 227
Urbana, Illinois 61801
(217) 333-5682

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8 FRIENDSCRIPT WINTER 2021-22

Mix and Match, *continued from page 2*

study and park his heavy textbooks, he discovered the Reading Room, then chanced upon a pamphlet advertising the benefits of being a Library Friend—including access to a study carrel in the stacks. “This kept my sanity,” Paul recalled, as he juggled full-time work with the pressures of academics. “This was a gift from heaven.”

The two libraries hold a soft spot in Paul’s heart, whose contributions have supported a negatives restoration project at the Archives as well as the purchase of railroad maps. He urges people interested in giving to contact members of the advancement team, who have been “particularly creative,” he said, in listening to donors’ interests as well as opening eyes to previously unknown avenues.

“I want to be fully supportive,” Paul said of his ongoing enthusiasm for Library projects. When donating to the Library, “if we can connect passion, intent, and need, that’s always the better.”

Note: To learn more about how you can participate in the Illinois Legacy Challenge, contact Assistant Dean for Advancement Kathryn Risor-Heise (217-333-5682 or krh19@illinois.edu) or UIF Director of Gift Planning Jason James Shuba, JD (312-585-9038 or shuba@uif.uillinois.edu), or visit with.illinois.edu/ways-to-give/legacy-challenge/.



Kathryn Risor-Heise



Jason Shuba