

July 2014

## Portland Community College: Two very different libraries

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### Recommended Citation

Swanson, B. (2014). Portland Community College: Two very different libraries. *OLA Quarterly*, 2(1), 14+. <http://dx.doi.org/10.7710/1093-7374.1399>

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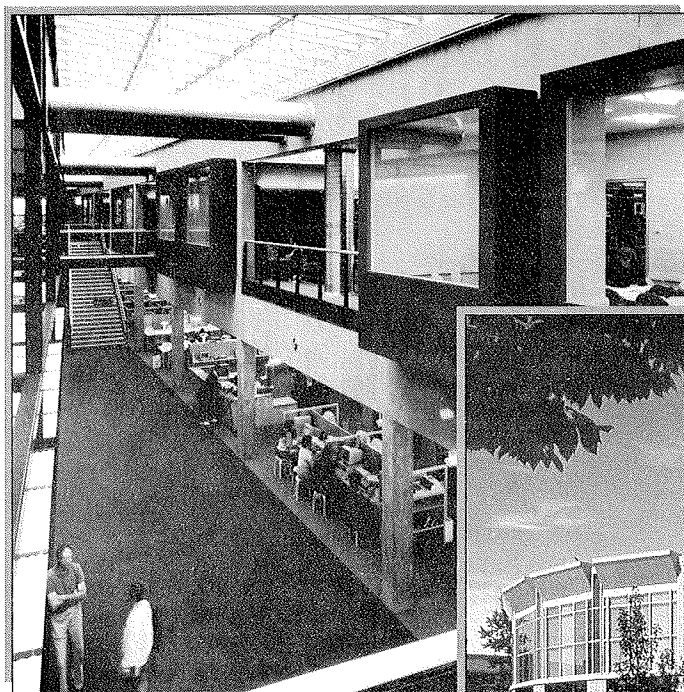
*OLA Quarterly* is an official publication of the Oregon Library Association | ISSN 1093-7374

tants and technical consultants can work with students, faculty and staff members.

The new portion of the building is designed to support compact shelving. In addition, the library is completing an off-site storage facility a block from the Valley Library to store seldom-used materials.

"We expect to house older journals in the compact storage space on the same floor as the current materials, and even older journals in the off-site storage center," says Karyle Butcher, Associate University Librarian. "Altogether, we estimate that the regular shelving, the compact shelving and the off-site storage should house about 2,000,000 volumes."

We hope the new Valley Library prepares us to reinvent library and information services as we continue to introduce developing technologies to serve the instructional and research activities of the University. The merger of the library, computer services, telecommunications and media services came at the ideal time at OSU to permit us to plan a central facility that leverages the contributions of all Information staff members to better support what the university is really about—the preservation and evaluation of old ideas and the creation of new ideas.



The traditional architecture of the Cascade campus's library (right) contrasts strongly with the architecture of the Sylvania campus's library (above).



## Portland Community College:

### *Two Very Different Libraries*

*by Barb Swanson*

*Director of Learning Resources*

Portland Community College opened two new library buildings in two years. The new facilities, on PCC's Cascade and Sylvania campuses, were made possible by the successful 1992 bond election, which provided the college with close to \$62 million for construction, equipment and building maintenance. PCC has built eight other facilities on and off its three campus locations and has invested in needed maintenance and repair. The college serves more than 80,000 students in a five-county area.

The libraries were high on PCC's list of priorities and had been for many years. The college had grown dramatically in the 1980's and library space was half what it needed to be for its student enrollment. It was typical for students to sit in hallways or study in their cars rather than attempt to find a seat in the library. PCC tried unsuccessfully to secure money from state and federal sources to correct the situation, but in the end, the local voters came through.

The new buildings offer study space for 11 percent of the students and include a number of small rooms for group study. (These are highly used by students.) Each also was designed for expanded services and the use of new technology. Each center also has model classrooms for bibliographic instruction, computer labs for students, and multimedia production areas for faculty. A fiber-optic network provides access to electronic journals and links the libraries with the Internet, PORTALS databases, and regional catalogues.

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## Turi

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North Bend had done an excellent job of introducing Rich to the world of public libraries. She and Rich cruised the state evaluating recently constructed buildings to evaluate floor plans and functional elements. I'm the first to say that we "borrowed" a substantial portion of our floor plan from North Bend, and I suspect that two or three of Rich's later projects were based somewhat on the design of our building in Florence. As the proverb says, "what goes around comes around."

The "Turi" libraries share similarities. As Carol Ventgen of Coos Bay said, when you hire Rich you get the benefit of the accumulated insights of each of the eight library directors he has worked with during the past decade. Rich likes to use natural lighting and high ceilings to open up the building and provide a more welcoming atmosphere. He works closely with staff to ensure that the entry is designed to lead library users to a staffed information desk and that the general layout of the building flows logically and is well signed. As Judy Romans of Bandon observed, Rich also designs efficient, easily managed buildings. In almost every case, one or two staff members can view nearly every nook and cranny of the facility without leaving an assigned workstation.

But each of the eight libraries also incorporates unique features that reflect local preferences, priorities, and procedures. North Bend has a drive-up book drop attached directly to the workroom and features a combined reference and circulation station. Siuslaw Public Library preferred the circulation desk and workroom to be adjacent and asked for a separate reference area. Betty Hazel of Douglas County Library noted that Turi created a floor plan for her library that follows the contour of a

neighboring creek. Hazel is proud of her building, which is considered by many to be the most attractive building in Douglas County. "And we came in under budget," boasts Hazel, "which shored up our credibility with area taxpayers."

While Rich gets two thumbs up from each of the library directors he has worked with in Oregon, life wouldn't be life without a few snags. Rich discovered that concrete roofing tile doesn't work as intended in a windy coastal environment, and Siuslaw has had to remove tiles to place a water-proof lining directly on the building in several locations. Betty Hazel has replaced some lighting fixtures in Douglas County Library because they interfere with barcode readers. And Brookings has added acoustic tile to reduce noise. The tile was included in the original specs, but was later removed to reduce costs. None of the criticisms casts a shadow on the overall success of the project.

Reading about library facilities is interesting, but visiting a building is the only real way to get a feel for an architect's work. The next time you are out on the road looking for adventure, and it rains, drop by any of these libraries for a brief busman's holiday. Each offers a good introduction to library facility design and provides a pleasant refuge from inclement weather. The directors share a common trait: Each is proud of his or her library and is willing to provide a guided tour—complete with an in-depth discussion of esoteric topics ranging from bathroom color selection to shelving behind the circulation desk.

If you're into library construction, it's fascinating stuff, but it's not recommended for non-library spouses. **Q**

## PCC

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Faculty and staff were closely involved in planning the buildings. The process began with listing the desired services and "sizing" through a set of standards what the services would require. The look and feel of the buildings were also very important—the new needed to blend with existing structures and reflect the personality of each campus. At Cascade, the library is more traditional and has a sense of Monticello with its rotunda entry, pillars and cherry casements. At Sylvania, nature surrounds and flows through the windows with views of fir groves, the Willamette Valley and the Coast Range.

Art enlivens the atmosphere of the buildings as well. The college set aside one percent of the pro-

jects' funds for art, and again campus committees selected items. At Cascade, the faculty commissioned three local artists to create a mobile that plays visually with language and ideas. The Sylvania committee chose a variety of Northwest art in a juried process and framed prints donated by the Leach family of Seattle. Rembrandt now hangs beside "Fried Eggs."

The libraries are popular with students and staff. Circulation at Cascade has more than doubled in just a year, and the monthly gate count at Sylvania is about 40,000. The buildings are open to the public and PCC welcomes visitors. If you would like a tour, call Barb Swanson at (503) 977-4497. **Q**