Celebrating Successes in Times of Crisis
April Aultman Becker, Dean of Library and Research Technologies

The Spring 2020 Semester will go down in history as one that required flexibility, teamwork, and lots and lots of recognitions of silver linings. Recently, the Library team met over Zoom for an All Staff Meeting. At the end of the meeting, after multi-faceted discussions about how we might consciously and safely re-open the Library and continue to promote our services and resources to the SRSU community, everyone shared a little bit about what they were most proud of accomplishing during this time. Mostly, people recognized that they were still working in a job they enjoyed. Many expressed pride in keeping their flow going, and in performing their daily functions amidst relative chaos. Some even acknowledged personal and professional growth: becoming more flexible and adaptive in response to a crisis.

In no ways have the last few months been easy. Everyone has had to juggle more stress, fear, and anxiety, for themselves and their friends and families, while finding ways to keep the Library moving and working by looking for the silver linings and finding ways to connect using Zoom, email, and social media.
In pivoting more services and resources online, we've identified new priorities to better serve our communities. We’re looking toward the future of our collection and having more conversations on campus about open access materials and OERs. Most of all, we really haven’t slowed down at all. Now, summer is here and we are still figuring out next steps. Read on for more highlights from the Spring and news for the future. Stay with us and remember that no request is too big or too small for your SRSU Library crew. We’ve missed you. What can we help you with?

**Spotlight On: eBooks at SRSU**

Did you know that your SRSU Library offers access to thousands of eBooks? This summer, we’ll be working on ways to increase your awareness of eBooks in our collections.

To some people, they’ll never replace the "real thing," but we’re here to tell you that eBooks have their place as a means of weightless access to vast amounts of information. It is true that getting started with eBooks can be a bit tricky, but we’re here to help.

*Access the eBooks at SRSU Library Guide here.*

**Virtual DeStress Fest**

This spring, the Library joined forces with the Academic Support Center’s Mabel Garcia to shift our traditional DeStress Fest and Study-A-Thon events to an all-Blackboard platform.

We were crushed to miss out on the opportunity to team up with Aramark to offer brain food and coffee (and a quiet, comfortable place to study) leading up to finals, but we were still able to host a workout
with Director of Recreational Programs Antuan Washington, and a meditation and mindfulness presentation from Director of Counseling and Accessibility Services, Becky Wren. We all learned a little bit more about technology and planning through this shift in venue, realizing that incorporating virtual DeStress Fest activities into future semesters will be essential and important -- for our entire SRSU community. (Click the image above, at right, to De-Stress With Other Peoples’ Pets.)

**Archives of the Big Bend Digital Collections: What’s Happening in the Digitization Lab**

Since the announcement of the Archives of the Big Bend’s Digitization Lab in March, the entire team has been working hard to get collections online.

Over the course of the Spring 2020 semester, a total of eight new collections were published to the Archives’ Digital Collections (screenshot at left), including Sul Ross yearbooks, *The Brand*, from 1921 through 1949, which have also been uploaded to the Internet Archive (archive.org), a non-profit digital library offering free universal access to eBooks, movies and music. (*Did somebody say eBooks?*)

Other recent collections include community collections such as a compilation of Alpine Street Scenes, and a collection of Mystery Portraits made up of negatives found in a home in neighboring Valentine, Texas. We encourage the use and sharing of these resources as the collections continue to grow.

**Library Services and Continuity during a Pandemic**

- Check our online alert at library.sulross.edu for most current information, including:
  - Library Services and Resources Continuity Guide
  - Official SRSU Emergency Alerts
Innovation Grant to Increase Information Literacy Efforts
In early May, the SRSU Office of Institutional Effectiveness announced the winners of their 2020-2021 Innovation Grant funding cycle which included Systems and Discovery Services Librarian Mike Fernandez’s proposal to increase patron awareness and utilization of the Library’s eResources.

Looking toward Fall 2020, Mike will work with Library staff to initiate and implement a relationship with Niche Academy, a third-party software company that provides tutorials for our subject-specific databases. Additionally, the tutorials cover a variety of information literacy topics essential for student success in conducting research and navigating the SRSU Library’s online resources.

With the implementation of Niche Academy, the Library will be able to supplement instruction with engaging visual aids. Anticipated outcomes of this project include increased efficiency of library workflows and collaboration among the Library, faculty, and support services staff.

Congratulations to Library and Archives Student Workers | Dean's List 2020!
The following student workers received recognition on the Dean’s List this semester:
Jennifer Aragon, Barbara Ewan, Dara Mahoney, Aylin Pereyra, Victoria Romo, Vanessa Salazar, Amber Spears, and Edwin Urias

Library and Archives Clippings
The March 2020 issue of Texas Monthly featured an article by Sterry Butcher on our beloved Hancock Hill Desk (photo at right by Jessica Lutz) and the notebooks from various desks throughout the years, stored in the Archives of the Big Bend. Read The Desk on Hancock Hill from Texas Monthly online.

The April 2020 issue of Texas Highways shared a photo of Santa Elena Canyon from the Thomas V. Skaggs Papers held by the Archives of the Big Bend as part of their Traces of Texas series.

On April 22, 2020, The Big Bend Sentinel published Campus WWI Exhibit Transitions to Online Format, recognizing combined efforts of the Library, Archives, and Museum of the Big Bend, to display an exhibit from the Smithsonian's traveling exhibits collection. 🐺