Eastern Illinois University

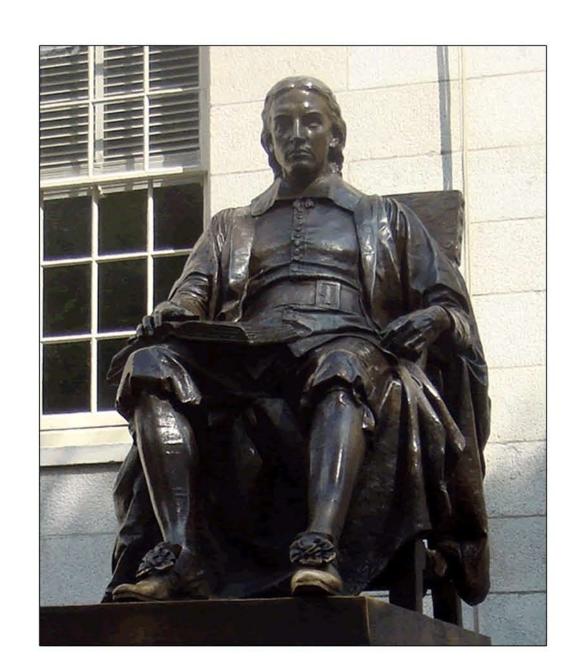
From the SelectedWorks of Bradley P. Tolppanen

October 20, 2011

Book Donations: Trash or Treasure?

Bradley P. Tolppanen, *Eastern Illinois University* Janice Derr, *Eastern Illinois University*





Benefits

- New items added to the collection
- Strengthens a collection or creates a new area of specialization
- Rare or one of a kind items are received
- Items brought in for a book sale
- Encourages community support of the library



Sample Donation – Baseball books, videos, and DVDs

Donation of 2655 items received in June 2009

Added 2010 items to the collection

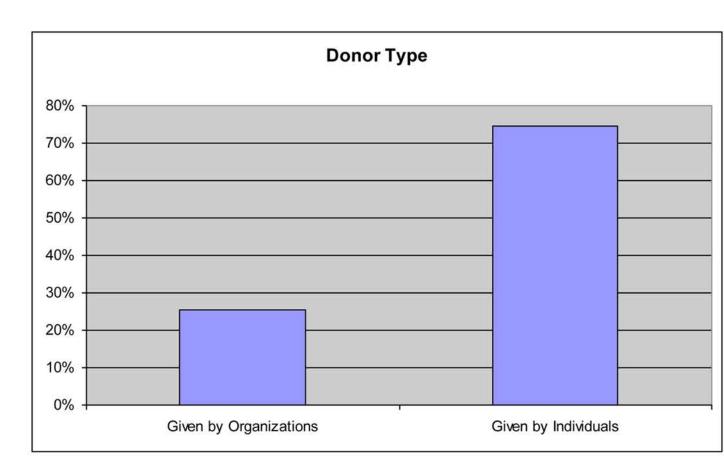
1300 of the added items were on baseball

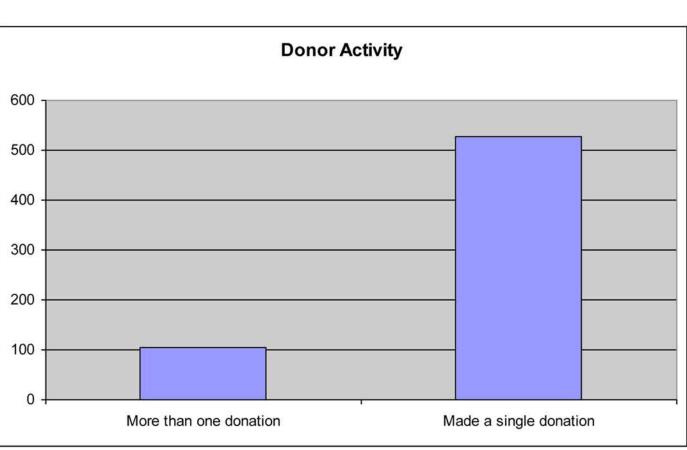
Donation more than doubled the baseball materials in the library collection

In 3 years the items on baseball have circulated 702 times

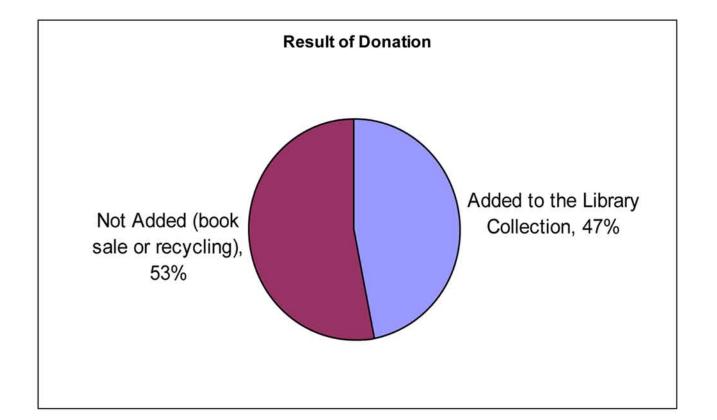
Booth Library, EIU Experience with Donations, FY04-FY11

Donations Received: 873 donations by 633 separate individuals/organizations





# of Items	# of donations
1 item	297
2 items	92
3 to 5 items	80
6 to 10 items	58
11 to 20 items	59
21 to 50 items	87
51 to 100 items	77
101 to 200 items	57
201 to 500 items	47
501 to 1000 items	12
1001+ items	7



Book Donations: Trash or Treasure?

Libraries, of all types and sizes, have benefited from donations. Some of the world's greatest libraries were founded or expanded by donations including John Harvard willing his 400 books to what became the Harvard Library in 1638; Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester donating his books to Oxford in 1439 and 1444; and George II presenting the royal collection to the newly established British Museum in 1757.

"Academic libraries are cautioned to consider whether a gift is really a gift. [...] The problem [is] to ascertain whether the cost of collection transport and library staff labor [is] worth the yield in number of materials actually added to the collection."

John Ballestro and Philip Howze, 2005

"Gifts, bequests, legacies and deposits are to libraries what clots are to the circulatory system in that they obstruct the

Rinaldo Lunati, 1975

"Anybody who's worked around libraries knows that people love to give us books. The problem is that by the time we get those books they are usually too old, too passé, or too tattered and worn to be added to the library collection, so they just end up in the book sale. Even the few we do take for the collection often require special handing and processing and may cost us more than they are worth."

Steve Coffman, 2006.

Donation Best Procedures

Promoting Donations

• Don't be afraid to ask for donations! Donations can be requested in the library newsletter, on the library's website, etc.

Donor Relations

- Establish a library contact person to deal with donors.
- Some donations will be a simple anonymous drop off, while others will involve detailed negotiations.
- Plan ahead if the donation needs to be picked up. A pick up requires vehicles, bins, and enough people to easily load and unload the donation.
- Establish a time frame with the donor for convenient pick up.
- · Be prepared, some donors will be hesitant to give up their books.
- Be honest with donors about the donation process. It is important to let the donor know that not all items will be added. Many donors think that their books are very valuable and do not want to hear that their materials might end up in the library's book sale.
- Be prepared to say no to a donation if the materials do not meet the needs of your collection, or if the donor has too many conditions.
- Some donors will want the library to value their donations, do not do it; the library can only acknowledge the number of items donated.

Initial Processing of the Donation

- All donations will require preliminary processing before being sent for cataloging.
- A library can add books not already owned; a second copy for highly circulating titles; or a copy to replace a worn out or lost library copy.
- Books in poor condition should be recycled.
- Books not needed for the library can be offered to another library or sold at the annual book sale.

Recognizing the Donor

- Book plates with the donor's name can be added.
- All donations should be acknowledged with a thank you letter.
- News releases for the newspaper and library publications are a nice way to thank donors of large or important donations.
- Creative displays showcasing newly donated items promote use as well as recognize donors.
- In all acknowledgements of the donation respect the privacy wishes (if any) of the donor
- Follow up with the donor to let them know how frequently and in what ways their donation is being used.

Flow Chart of Donations Time required varies greatly Negotiations with the donor Time required varies from a few Picking up donation minutes to day long commitments Time required averages 4 minutes Processing the donation per item for all items whether it is added, recycled, or sent for the (unpacking, staging, processing for keeping, book sale. recycling, or sending to the book sale) Time required varies. It is the EIU Cataloging experience that gift books take longer to catalog than new materials due to their age and variety. News Releases for Circulation for Promotional Important donations shelving **Exhibits Ned Brasel Southwest Book Collection Donated to Booth** An impressive collection of approximately 1200 books related to the southwest United States wa ecently donated to Booth Library. Collected over the lifetime of Western aficionado Ned Brasel the books range in age from the late 19th century to the present decade. The collection is in xcellent condition overall. It includes general histories, biographical monographs about unfighters, cowboys, and cattle ranchers, art catalogs on famous Western artists such as Frederic

Disadvantage

- Staff time required (also directs tech services staff away from newly purchased materials)
- Not the items you want
- Poor condition materials
- Takes up space in storage rooms
- Could require lots of work for little gain
- Negative donor reaction to donation being sent to the book sale
- Brings in bugs & mold

Lemington, and cowboy fiction by popular authors including Larry McMurtry (best known for the Pulitzer Prize winning novel Lonesome Dove and the screenplays for The Last Picture Show

over the years. Particular thanks are due to Mr. Joel Stoner, nephew of Mr. Brasel, for thinking o

Booth Library as a fitting place for the collection to reside. Booth Library's holdings will be permanently enhanced by these unique and valuable materials. Questions regarding the collection can be directed to the Reference Department at 581-6072.



Janice Derr, Eastern Illinois University jmderr@eiu.edu

Bradley P. Tolppanen, Eastern Illinois University bptolppanen@eiu.edu

Poster Session
Illinois Library Association 2012 Conference