UA LIBRARIES SPONSOR FIRST ANNUAL STUDENT BOOK COLLECTING CONTEST

Book collecting contests sponsored by college libraries, while not common, are a major event at some of America's most prominent colleges. Always ready to adopt a good idea, University Libraries, after a thorough evaluation of contests at other colleges, decided to launch its own book collecting contest. The purpose of the contest was "to increase the Libraries' visibility among students, campus faculty, and administrators, and donors while simultaneously promoting the book," announced Dean Louis Pischmann when giving the go-ahead for the contest.

Settling on the definition of a "book" was the first challenge for the ad hoc committee of librarians established to administer the contest. Committee member Jessica Lacher-Feldman, Public & Outreach Services Coordinator for Hoole Library, saw the contest as an opportunity "to showcase the interests and changing book collecting habits of students in the 21st century." Accordingly, a broad definition of "book" was agreed upon and the contest rules were written to accept such things as comics and graphic novels, manga, 'zines, as well as more traditional formats.

Contest winners received cash prizes of $500 for 1st place, $250 for 2nd place, and $100 for 3rd place in each of the two categories, undergraduate and graduate students, and were honored at a reception to announce the contest winners in Gorgas Library on October 25, 2006.

In addition, contest winners receive a one-year membership in the Rotunda Library Society. Winning book collections will be displayed in Gorgas Library through the remainder of the Fall 2006 semester.

The graduate winners are: John Codega, 1st place; Brooke Parks, 2nd place; and David Martin Drab, 3rd place. Undergraduate winners are: James W. McFarland, Jr., 1st place; Mary Tubbs, 2nd place; Paul Zachary Williams, 3rd place.

John H. Sandy
head
Rodgers Library for Science and Engineering

A distinguished panel of contest judges included Lakey Tolbert and John Crowley, both prominent book collectors; Steve Miller, an expert in the book arts; and Clark Center, curator of the Hoole Special Collections Library. Judges looked for well-defined collections on any subject or theme, evidence of creativity in the building of the collection, and a degree of uniqueness or special flavor of the collection. All entrants were required to write an essay describing the collection, and the judges looked at the quality of the essay as part of their judging. Collection size, monetary value, and rarity of books in the collection were not a major consideration.
Citation