115 years
To Stay or not to Stay!

FDLC Conference

August 24, 2006

Ruth C. Shoge

Director

Washington College

Clifton M. Miller Library

Washington College Clifton M. Miller Library

- Founded 1782
- Small independent liberal arts College
- Located in Chestertown on the Eastern Shore of Maryland
- Student population of 1350

Documents Collection: Our Service Community

- Eastern Shore of Maryland - from Annapolis to Salisbury.

- Predominately farm land

- Chesapeake Bay and estuarine concerns

- Washington College

Documents Collection: Profile

- Selective Depository since 1891

- Predominantly print and microfiche

- Selected GPO % is 28

What Happened?

- The Director of 20 years Retired
- The Government Documents Specialist of 29 years retired with 2 weeks notice!
- All available shelves and shelving spaces were at capacity.
- A new strategic plan for the library required restructuring of existing spaces

And what else…?

- No one in the library knew anything about managing the documents collection!!

Prevailing Challenges

- Lack of Space
- Lack of Staff (Total of 4 librarians)
- Lack of expertise to manage the collection
- Low usage of materials
- Multiple formats
  - Duplication of titles

We Needed Help!

- The Librarians' recommendation:
  - Let's get rid of the collection

  - Administration's recommendation:
    - Let's get rid of the collection.

Met with Regional Librarian

- We should stay!!! - Why??
- 115 year!!! - So??
- Geographic Location
- Great historical documents - Yeah, but who is using them?

Rethinking the Possibilities

- ▪ ***To Stay or Not to Stay: The Decision***
- ▪ *Points to Consider*

Is the collection relevant to the institutional needs?
Is the collection relevant to community needs?
Is there another depository library near by?
Does the library have adequately trained staff?
Does the use of the collection justify the cost to maintain it?
Is there space for a growing collection?

Consider Points in the Following Sources

- "Stay with the Program" *FDLP Desktop.* http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/staywiththeprogram.html
- "Subject: Summary of Responses: Benefits of the FDLP" *FDLP Desktop*, <http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/dep-benefits.html>

Consider Points in the Following Sources

"Suggested Responses to Frequently Cited Reasons for Leaving the Depository Library System." Compiled by the Depository Library Council & the DLC Operations Committee on Attrition and Retention.

The Answer?

- Stay and transition to an electronic collection.

Managing the Transition

Read the Following FDLP Documents:

- *Tips to Effectively Transition to a More Online Depository Library Collection* <http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/coll-dev/online_coll_tips.pdf>

- *Managing the FDLP Electronic Collection: A Policy and Planning Document* (GPO, 1998)

<http://www.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/pubs/ecplan.html>

Managing the Transition

Read the Following FDLP Documents:

- *FDLP Electronic Collection FAQ* <http://www.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/ec/faq.html>

- *Substitution List: Official FDLP Permanent Full-Text Databases* <http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/coll-dev/substitutions.html>

- *FDLP Guidelines on Substituting Electronic for Tangible Versions of Depository Publications* <http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/coll-dev/subguide.html>

Administrative Communications

- Communicate with Regional Librarian and GPO staff for guidance, advice and help.
- Draft a brief plan for the future of Government Documents Collection for the administration. Include these points:
- Integrate the government documents plan into a larger development plan for the library.

Administrative Communications

- Offer up the newly created space for new and innovative services or activities e.g. multimedia center, collaborative work space, or information commons.

- Outline the need for temporary staff to complete the project in a timely manner.

Let the Real Work Begin

- Write a Collection Development policy for Government Documents.

- Appoint a Project Manager and assign a team of workers.

- Draft a project timeline – be realistic, this is a 3-5 year project depending on the size of the collection.

- Plan for additional staff, especially student assistants.

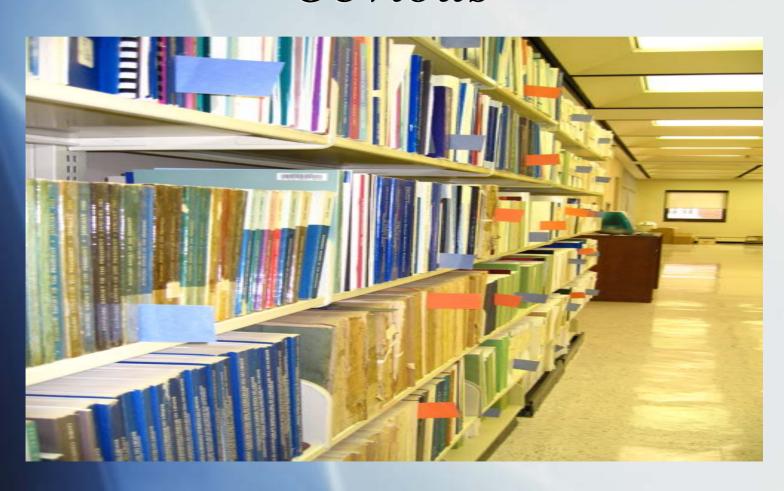- Contact local recycling contractors regarding their policies.

Tips

- Use the Substitution List as your pilot project.
- Person making decision will review every single document.
- Submit notification to stop receiving deselected materials.
- Color Code the categories.
- Compile list and include box number.

Tips

- Keep all lists on one computer (with backup copies on another computer).

- Upload Needs and Offers lists to your website and send the link only to the govdoc listserv.

- Update your profile with GPO and with OCLC.

- Cataloger must be on board early in the planning stage.

Color Code Keeps the Process Obvious

Documents On The Go!

Greatest Challenge

- Online catalog needs to be cleaned up.
- Many documents predate the online catalog and were not cataloged.
- Some were cataloged retrospectively.
- Statistics of discarded volumes were not tracked.

Greatest Challenge

- Cataloging the remaining materials
- Keeping the momentum and enthusiasm going (incentives e.g. pizza party. Music while you work)
- Discarding most of the Microfiche collection
- Discarding most of the CD collection

How Are We Doing?

- About 80% print has been deselected.
- We have compiled over 400 pages of N&O items.
- We should complete this project in 2 more years - except for retrospective cataloging.