

Inside this issue:

Staff Awards and Recognitions	2
Grand Winners in the Run to the . . .	3
Cultural Heritage Reception	3
Keeping Up With Technology: imspk	4
NLSC: November Library Staff . . .	4
Turn Down the Volume Please!	5
C.D.'s Picks	6
Hats Off to Fall—Photos	7
Martian Meanings	8
November Professional Forum	9
A Year of Library Larry Humor	10
How is Your Outlook?	10
Library Larry	11
Answer to October Library Staff Puzzle	11
Contributors to November Issue	11
November Library Calendar	12



UTA LIBRARIES

The University Club

We will be seeing some construction around Davis Hall in the next few months. The finished product, scheduled for completion in March 2006, will be a unique place for staff and faculty to relax and eat lunch.

When the committee began planning the club, its members expressed a desire to have something casually elegant. The club needed to be something modern, yet feel comfortable and inviting. The idea was to make the space more than a place to go for a meal; instead, diners should feel special just being there.

Davis Hall was chosen for the club's site, and will include the garden area so we can eat outdoors on those days when the weather in Texas is just right for a picnic. The menu was next on our agenda. After much discussion—and I do mean much—we decided upon soup, salads, pasta dishes, and sandwiches.

After getting the club's loca-



Interior View. Artists installing works that are similar to the proposed river of glass

tion and menu planned, we started the fun part. It was time to decide upon the window and ceiling design. The designer gave us three choices.

The first was called *Mondrian* because of its Neo-Plasticism style. Neo-Plasticism is a Dutch movement founded and named by artist Piet Mondrian. It is known for its rigid form of abstraction and use of a very limited color palette. The window would be sectioned into various sized rectangles by horizontal and vertical lines. It would look almost, but not

quite, like stained glass. While the effect would be pretty, we would lose our view of the garden area.

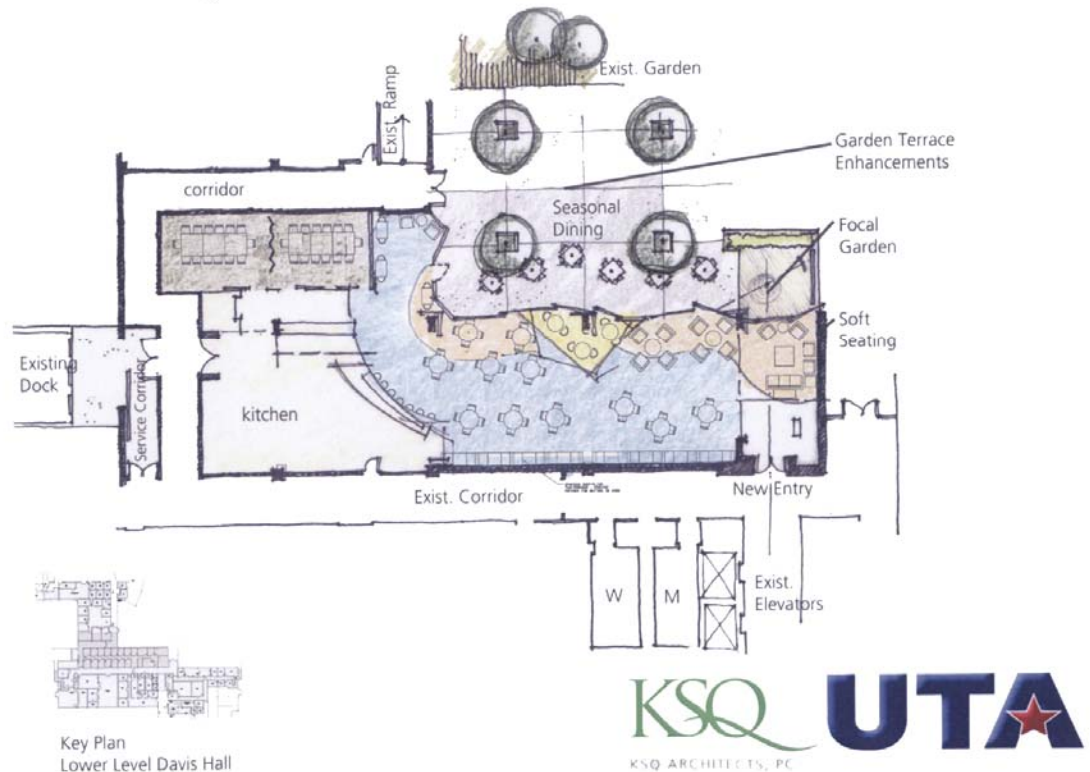
The second choice was called *Grid*. The windows would be divided into several panes. The look was reminiscent of a bakery or bistro window.

The third choice, our favorite, was *Garden* (see architect's plan on page 2). The window is big and doesn't come with all the frills of the other two designs, so it almost fades away bringing the outside and the inside together. We were also excited about the ceiling design. Blown glass and hidden lights will be fastened to the ceiling in such a way as to give the appearance of a colorful river bursting through the ceiling and snaking its way to the other end of the room and then, finally, spilling into a real waterfall. We chose the furniture and finishes at our last meeting.

# Connections

## University Club (cont.)

### *UTA University Club*



### KSQ Architects UTA University Club Garden plan

We tried out at least 15 different styles of chairs; examined samples of flooring, fabrics, paint chips, and tiles. We talked about lighting, sound systems, tablecloths, and traffic patterns. After all this, someone mentioned the blue tile surrounding the elevators near

the University Club's entrance. After a moment of stunned silence, we realized that something will have to be done there. The blue definitely clashes with our color scheme of reds, blacks, and tans. The tiles might be replaced during the building of the Club, or as

a quick fix, could be painted, and dealt with later. That decision will be made as construction gets underway.

—Loretta Barker

## Staff Awards and Recognitions

### Hidden Heroes Award

- Larry Lassiter (Library Systems)
- Sarah Jones (Digital Library Services)

## Grand Winners in *Run to the Border Fitness Challenge*

Antoinette Nelson, C.D. Walter, and Donna Kelley, in the Science and Engineering Library team (SELERY) were the first to arrive at UT Brownsville in October and win the fourth stage of the *Run to the Border Fitness Challenge*. As three-time winners of the four-stage race they earned the most points and are the Grand Prize Winners of the coveted *Official Tacky Trophy* with its chocolaty contents and cash prize. "Before we started I could not walk up three flights of stairs. Now, I can go all the



Grand Winners. Antoinette Nelson, C.D. Walter, and Donna Kelly

way up to the sixth floor in Central without problems," commented Antoinette Nelson.

The race began in April with the goal of walking 557 miles

to the Texas-Mexico border in four stages to promote fitness. Participants were encouraged to wear a pedometer and record the number of miles they walked each day. There was considerable variation in individual entries due to fitness and schedule.

One person hiked 728 miles in five months while another, the author, strolled a mere 243 miles.

—Lea Worcester

## Cultural Heritage Reception

Information Services (IS) and Special Collections (SpCo) hosted a reception in honor of Hispanic Heritage Month on Wednesday, October 2. While this is the first reception held for Hispanic Heritage Month, it is the second cultural heritage reception held this year.

Kathleen Marquez-Houston and Ellen Baskerville used imagination and treasures from personal collections to create a showcase for selections from UTA's multicultural book col-



Hispanic Heritage Month Reception organizers Kathleen Marquez-Houston and Ellen Baskerville

lection, SpCo documents and artifacts, and the works of student artists Fernando Capeda (*Mi Angel* and *Suenos*) and Arturo Menchaca (*Pipes* and *Guardians*).

Cathleen Spitzenberger, Blanca Smith, and Maritza Arrigunaga selected and arranged manuscripts and photos for display in two cases.

Visitors included Dr. Susan Gonzales Baker, Center for Mexican American Studies, and Georgina Vasquez, Special Programs Coordinator, UTA Multicultural Services, who shared family stories.

—Kathleen Marquez-Houston & Lea Worcester



*Pipes* by student artist Arturo Menchaca (in background)

# Connections

## Keeping Up With Technology: imspk

Instant messaging (IM) allows two individuals who are separated by any distance to engage in real-time, written communication over a network such as the Internet. Although IM relies on the written word to transmit meaning, users frequently disregard standard writing conventions and use shortcuts such as acronyms and symbols. Their messages often read like vanity license plates. Needless to say, some IM lingo is specific to the workplace or school while others are in general use. A quick glance at the recent user survey for UTA Libraries' Information Round-Up and student papers shows that IM terms such as *GR8* (great) are spreading to other formats.

It is helpful to understand basic *imspk* (instant message speak) to correspond with students

and so that librarians are perceived as up-to-date. IM language uses phonetic replacements, acronyms, abbreviations, and inanities. Examples include:

URI	you are number one (phonetic replacement)
DHT\$	don't have the dollars (acronym with symbol)
NP	no problem (acronym)
ESP	especially (abbreviation. Most are not new to English language)
KEWL	cool (inanity or nonsensical variation of a word)

While the examples above are capitalized to distinguish them from the translation, many would be lowercase in a real IM. Frequent users tend to

omit capitals and punctuation to increase speed.

The following online resources have charts with the most common terms:

America Online. *Acronym Dictionary*. <<http://www.aim.com/acronyms.adp?aolp=>>

NetLingo.com. *List of Acronyms & Text Messaging Shorthand*. <<http://www.netlingo.com/emailsh.cfm> >

Webopedia. *Text Messaging Abbreviations*. <[http://www.webopedia.com/quick\\_ref/textmessageabbreviations.asp](http://www.webopedia.com/quick_ref/textmessageabbreviations.asp)>

—Lea Worcester

## NLSC: November Library Staff Challenge

Using the clues from the information above and your skills on the Internet, translate the following IM terms:

**LRF**  
**YYSSW**  
**CB**  
**RFL?**

Send your solution to Lea Worcester

([lworcester@uta.edu](mailto:lworcester@uta.edu)) with the word "Contest" in the subject line.

—Lea Worcester

*The winners of this and other contests in Connections will be determined by putting all of the correct answers in a "hat" and randomly drawing the winner. Winners will be announced in the next publication and treated to a lunch at the end of the year where they qualify for entry in the grand prize drawing.*

—the Editor

## Turn Down the Volume Please!

As Internet use continues to rise and the volume of new information grows, everyone is overwhelmed. Librarians and information professionals continually try to guide users away from the noise of the Internet toward quality resources, but it is difficult to be heard. There is tremendous competition for people's attention from electronic information, but when mass media and other forms of communication are thrown into the mix the volume is staggering.

Approximately 31 billion emails are sent each day on the Internet and elsewhere, a figure which is expected to double by 2006 according to International Data Corporation (IDC). The average email is about 59 kilobytes in size, thus the annual flow of emails worldwide is 667,585 terabytes. Email ranks second behind the telephone as the largest information flow and accounts for over 35% of time spent on the Internet.

Disillusionment with the Internet and email was inevitable, as everyone values their time. With the average knowledge worker receiving over 100 email messages per day,

the volume is just too high. How did this happen? In years past the sender bore the burden of time as it took considerable effort to write or type a letter, address an envelope, pay for postage, and get to the post office. With email, the burden of time has shifted to the receiver. Every passing thought and impulse becomes instant communication, and every email begs a response.

What can you do to help turn down the volume, both as a sender and a receiver? Try a few simple yet effective tips in your email communication:

- Use a subject line to summarize, not describe
- Make action requests clear
- When you copy a number of people mark out why each person should care
- Separate topics into separate e-mails

Once you have put these habits into practice and trained all the folks you correspond with to do likewise, shift your efforts toward a well-organized email archive. First of all, give yourself permission to weed as you read – in other words, you don't have to save everything. If a message does not request action or contain important

information, let it go. Or let your sent file become your matter of record; if you respond to a message whatever was important will be in the body of that message.

For the emails you do want to save and organize, take a lesson from librarians and the good old card catalog. Remember the access points of author, title, and subject? Decide which of these access points is most likely to work for you, and set up a group of folders. Since topics can often overlap, many people find that sorting by sender (author) is best. So your folders may look something like this:

- one for every mailing list you are on
- one for coworkers
- one for your boss or team leader
- one for the family
- one for friends
- one for people you do not know but may want to contact in the future

Many email software programs offer their own tips and tools for organizing email. If you find you still need more direction, toss a few terms into any popular search engine and you'll find endless ideas. In the end, it's your computer and

Continued on page 7



# Connections

## C.D.'s Picks

### Science for Everyone

Recommendations for the non-scientist who loves science

#### ***The Elegant Universe: Superstrings, Hidden Dimensions, and the Quest for the Ultimate Theory*** by Brian Greene

QC794.6 .S85 G75 1999

This book is an excellent choice for anyone interested in exploring string theory (or M-theory), a concept that posits that all matter in the universe consists of tiny strings. The strings' vibrations produce all fields and wave-like properties, such as forces, light and sound.



Greene, a Columbia University professor who is one of the world's foremost string theorists, writes in an entertaining and accessible way. He clarifies difficult concepts using everyday analogies. The book was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize in 1999.

The PBS show Nova made a television series based on this book, with Dr. Greene hosting the show. He proves to be as

entertaining and engaging on film as he is on paper. While the show didn't delve nearly as deeply into the subject as the book, it provided a good overview of the concepts and provided visual queues that clarified some ideas that may not come across as clearly in writing. Anyone who enjoyed that series would greatly improve their understanding by reading this book.

UTA's collection also contains another book by Dr. Greene, which I am currently reading. *The Fabric of the Cosmos: Space, Time, and the Texture of Reality* (QB982 .G74 2004) provides insight about current issues in physics.

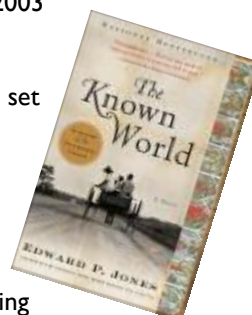
### On the lighter side

Non-scientific reading available from UTA Libraries

#### ***The Known World*** by Edward P. Jones

Central: PS3560.O4813 K58 2003

This novel, set before the American Civil War, provides an interesting twist to the slave/master story.



Slave owner Henry Townsend is black.

One might assume that this situation was unique, or at least unusual. Apparently this assumption is incorrect. According to a 1997 article in *The Barnes Review*, historian Robert M. Grooms states, "The statistics show that, when free, blacks disproportionately became slave masters."

This book is not an easy read, not because the prose is difficult, but because the subject matter is difficult. It succeeds in changing the focus of the issue of slavery from race to the internal battle between one's own interests and the interests of others. In this, we all participate, and we are all culpable. When one frames the question in this way, it becomes more difficult to feel morally superior to slave owners.

*The Known World* succeeds in painting a more nuanced portrait of the slave owner—and of the slave. The issue is not black and white (in more ways than one), but a human ques-

Continued on page 7

## Hats Off to Fall—Photos



Above: Ruthie Brock and Sunday Phillips making their contest entries at the Hat-O-Matic



Above: Antoinette Nelson, and Michelle Buchanan enjoying a snack. Hats worn by other staff members in the background.

View more pictures on Central Library's staff lounge bulletin board



Right. Antoinette Nelson receiving the Best Character Hat Award from Donna Kelley

### Hat Contest Winners

#### Macho Hat

Jonathan Scott

#### Tres Elegant Chapeau

Evelyn Barker

#### Wacky Hat

Donald Quarles

#### Most Creative Hat

Donna Kelley

#### Most Intricate Hat

Donna Harrison

#### Judge's Choice

Treva Lyday

#### Best Mixed Media Hat

Debbie Carter

#### Best Character Hat

Antoinette Nelson

#### Department Representative Hat

Ruthie Brock

## C.D.'s Picks (cont.)

tion, a question we wrestle with in modern society. Is it acceptable, in the pursuit of one's own dreams, to climb the ladder of success on the backs of others?

The title is apt. Our world view is limited by our own experience of the world. Just as the concept of "wet" means

nothing to a fish, we can't step outside our culture and see how it looks from out there. Reading this book made me wonder how many of the ideas I take for granted will be considered ill-conceived and ignorant by future generations.

It is uncomfortable to compare one's self with slave owners,

or with any member of a group we consider morally corrupt. But by doing so, by reading books like this—books that mirror our own souls by reflecting those we fear and dislike—we just might decrease the possibility that we will be like those people.

—C.D. Walter

## Turn Down the Volume Please! (cont.)

your time, so find a system that works and stick to it. If we all do our part to become more efficient email citizens, we will help turn down the volume.

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# Connections

## Martian Meanings

Several months ago, an e-mail circulating on the Internet claimed that Mars would make its closest approach to Earth in over 60,000 years sometime during August. It also claimed that Mars would appear as large as the moon. Although the story turned out to be a hoax, it still had a few elements of truth.

Mars recently made one of its closest approaches to Earth in many years, but that happened in October instead of August. It came even closer a few years ago, which was probably when the e-mail actually originated. However, Mars never appeared as large as our moon; the planet would have to come perilously close to Earth for such an impressive view. Although we cannot actually see Mars as the e-mail story promised, the appeal of such a rumor underscores the fascination we Terrans still have with the planet. The rumor also inspired the Science and Engineering Library's exhibit planned for November.

Named after the Roman god of war due to its blood-red color, Mars seemed for years the planet most likely to sustain life beyond Earth. Observa-

tions of Mars during the 19<sup>th</sup> century seemed to confirm this possibility. To observers, bluish-green patterns dotting the red surface hinted at water and Martian vegetation. In addition, the presence of "canals" on Mars made observers believe that intelligent life inhabited the planet.

Interest in life on Mars filtered into the popular imagination. H.G. Wells' novel *War of the Worlds* (1898) is one of the first major fictional works to portray Martian life. In Wells' novel, the behavior of the Martians matches the planet's symbolic reputation. With "intellects vast and cool and unsympathetic," the Martians lay waste to Victorian England before succumbing to an unlikely fate themselves.

Although Wells conceived *War of the Worlds* as an ironic reversal of Great Britain's position in the imperialistic scheme of things, adaptations of Wells' story over the years have reflected a variety of concerns. In the infamous 1938 radio adaptation, Orson Welles treated the story as a news broadcast primarily centered in New Jersey. As a result, some listeners who missed the introduction believed that an actual

Martian invasion was happening. Impending war in Europe likely exacerbated listeners' concerns, as did the imminent approach of Halloween. Fifteen years after Welles' broadcast, Paramount's cinematic adaptation of the story moved the action from *fin de siècle* England to 1950s America. This time, invaders from the Red Planet arrived in movie theaters as Americans kept a wary eye on the Soviet Union.

On celluloid and in print, a variety of invaders came from Mars, as well as other planets. However, not all Martians were portrayed as malevolent beings. Originally published as separate stories, Ray Bradbury's *The Martian Chronicles* (1951) envisioned a future (our present) when humans arrive on Mars and exploit its resources, with casual disregard for the planet's inhabitants.

Belief in the possibility of Martian life declined as space exploration became a reality. In 1976, the Viking probes found no evidence of life on Mars. Although popular imaginings of Martian life subsequently faded, a geographical feature resembling a humanoid face appeared in an aerial photograph of the



## November Professional Forum

Professional forum sessions offer opportunities for professional development where participants discuss hot topics and share ideas and experiences.

On Wednesday, November 23 in Professional Forum, we will all give thanks. We will give thanks to working for a fine library that is very supportive

of professional endeavors. Therefore, the main agenda item will be a round-table discussion of professional activities that we are involved in including:

- Conferences attended
- Presentations given
- Courses taught for credit
- Papers written

I know that this is super-close

to Thanksgiving, but if you are going to be here, please attend.

If you contribute to the ever-evolving world of Information & Library Science, please come and share your contributions with us. You might be surprised at how many of our staff are involved in these activities.

—Josh Been

## Martian Meanings (cont.)

planet's Cydonia region. This image led some people to believe that intelligent life inhabited Mars at some point in its history. In 1998 and 2001, the Global Mars Surveyor photographed the same area. The higher-resolution photographs revealed a mesa, indicating that coincidental plays of light had created the illusion of a face in the 1976 photograph. Still, some people believe that the Face on Mars is a real phenomenon, and that NASA is involved in a conspiracy to downplay its implications.

Although scientists have found no solid evidence for past or present civilizations on Mars, they are looking at other clues that might point towards the possibility of microbial life on the planet. In 1993, scientists

in Antarctica found an ancient meteorite whose chemical signature indicates that it came from Mars. It also contains other clues indicating the possibility of life, including some worm-like patterns resembling bacteria. More recently, scientists studying Mars' atmosphere detected sufficient quantities of methane to indicate the potential for life; most likely, microbes living underground.

Whatever we learn about life on Mars, the planet remains an object of fascination for Earthlings. Aside from our moon, Mars seems the most likely destination for inhabited space missions. After sifting through technical logistics and ethical issues, we might fulfill the pipe-dream of making the planet

hospitable to Terran life. By that time, we should know for sure about life on Mars.

—Jason Neal

### Further Reading

UC San Diego. *California Space Institute's Mars Library*.  
<<http://calspace.ucsd.edu/marsnow/library>>

Nautical Aeronautics and Space Administration. *Methane on Mars*. <[http://solarsystem.nasa.gov/news/display.cfm?News\\_ID=10006](http://solarsystem.nasa.gov/news/display.cfm?News_ID=10006)>

Nautical Aeronautics and Space Administration. *Unmasking the Face on Mars*. <[http://science.nasa.gov/headlines/y2001/ast24may\\_1.htm](http://science.nasa.gov/headlines/y2001/ast24may_1.htm)>

# Connections

## A Year of Library Humor

Enjoy a year of

# Library Larry

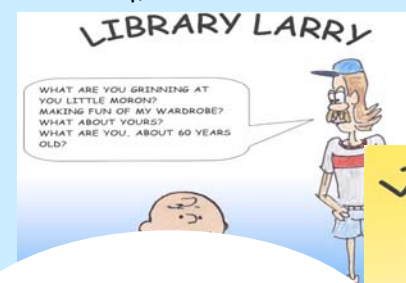


UTA Libraries' Staff Association Scholarship Committee is selling Library Larry calendars. The proceeds of the sales will be used to encourage library staff to continue their education and advance their career goals through scholarships.

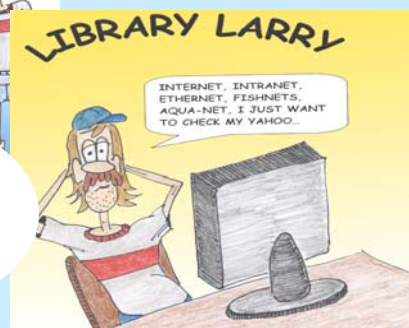
The calendar comes in two sizes:

- 8 1/2 X 11 (one page) \$4.00
- 11 x 17 (two pages) \$6.00

and has state employee and traditional holidays.



Mark Mustacchio's  
Library Humor



Coming to your desk soon—fliers with price and ordering information.

## How is Your Outlook?

Keith Wingo, Office of Information Technology, is teaching a class on how to use Outlook Calendar for UTA Library staff .

Participants will learn the basic types of Outlook Calendar

entries, be able to book activities into their calendar efficiently, share their calendar with other staff members, and stay on top of important dates with more advanced features such as recurrence and reminders.

### Outlook Calendar Classes

Place: 315A

Date and time:  
Monday, Nov. 14, 4:00 p.m.  
Friday, Nov. 18, 11:00 a.m.  
Wednesday, Nov. 23, 9:00 a.m.

## Library Larry

# LIBRARY LARRY

*Centerfold*



Mark Mustacchio

## Answer to October Library Staff Puzzle

The puzzle last month challenged staff members to identify the title of a seasonal or themed book that a Books-4-U Library staff member was looking for.

The clue was in Circulation Cindy's query, "I remember that I have three books by *Safari Guide's* author Robyn Brode: one titled *October*, one *November*, and one called

what?" Circulation Cindy's co-workers noticed that she had included the third title, *Safari Guide*, in her question.

The October library staff challenge was similar to the familiar puzzler, "George's mother had three children: one named April, one named May, and one named what?" The answer to that brainteaser is George.

Many staff members suggested *December*, another title by Robyn Brode. Because they did identify a title by the author, their names were entered into a drawing. Heather Scalf in Access Services was the lucky winner. Many thanks to everyone who entered the contest.

—Lea Worcester

## Contributors to November Issue

- Loretta Barker
- Josh Been
- Kathleen Marquez-Houston
- Mark Mustacchio
- Jason Neal
- C.D. Walter
- Lea Worcester

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*Connections* is the library staff newsletter published the first week of each month. The newsletter introduces new staff members, highlights departments, reports on library staff events, and is a forum for items of interest.

Suggestions and contributions are welcome. Please contact:

Lea Worcester, Editor

817.272.5747

lworcester@uta.edu

**November 2005**

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Sat/Sun
	1	2	3	4	5 6
7	8 Election Day	9	10	11 Veteran's Day  Last day to drop classes	12 13
14	15	16 9:00 to 3:00. UTA Technology Fair— Bluebonnet Ballroom	17	18	19 20
21	22	23	24 Thanksgiving Winter Session and Spring registration begins	25  Thanksgiving Holidays	26 27
28	29	30			

**Connections is archived online at:**

**<http://libraries.uta.edu/connections/index.htm>**