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### Not Even in Your Wildest Dreams: The Realities of a Forced Weeding Project

Marlene M. Bishop

Rebecca Bealer

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# Not Even in Your Wildest Dreams: The Realities of a Forced Weeding Project

Marlene M. Bishop, MLIS, AHIP, Head, Collection Development & Rebecca Bealer, MLIS, Head, Serials/Systems Librarian  
Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center New Orleans Library



## About the Library

- LSU Health Sciences Center New Orleans serves six schools: Allied Health, Dentistry, Graduate Studies, Medicine, Nursing, and Public Health
- Isché Library is located in Downtown New Orleans
  - Opened in 1931 and moved to present building in 1989
  - 3 floors (Floors 3, 4, and 5 of Resource Center)
    - 3rd Floor: Circulation, staff offices, reading room, Technical Services, Administration
    - 4th Floor: Monographs, Old and Rare, study rooms, offices, seating
    - 5th Floor: Journals, seating

## The Space Taking Meanie Appears

In February 2020, we were informed that we might lose the entire 5<sup>th</sup> floor and all of our print journals. We started an analysis to identify current online holdings, what could be purchased online, and what content would be lost. We also completed a title-by-title space measurement. However, COVID and a university administration overhaul stopped that project. In February 2023, we were informed that 1/3 of the 5th Floor would be reallocated for the construction of an IT server room. We would ultimately lose 28 of the 68 rows of shelving. We were given less than one year, with weeding and shifting to be completed by December 2023.



## Selecting Journals and Volumes for Weeding

Acta pathologica et microbiologica Scandinavica. Section B: Microbiology and immunology. 1970-1974	v. 78-82 (1970-1974);"1.1 1970-1974 01-12 01-31"
W/1/By read in part Acta Pathol Microbiol Scand B	is archives
ARCHIVES	
Acta pathologica et microbiologica Scandinavica. Section C: Immunology. 1975-1981	v. 83-89 (1975-1981);"1.1 1975-1981 01-12 01-31"
W/1/By read in part Acta Pathol Microbiol Scand C	is archive
ARCHIVES	
and/or incomplete	
Acta pathologica et microbiologica Scandinavica. Supplement. 1947-1948 01-12 01-31;"1.1 1933-1936 01-12 01-31"	v. 1/3/5-8/10-11/13/15-16/18-20/23-27;"2 (1926/1930/1930-1931/1932/1932/1933/1934/1935-1981)"1.3 1956-1956 01-12 01-31;"1.2 1947-1948 01-12 01-31;"1.1 1933-1936 01-12 01-31"
W/1/By	is archive (incomplete)
ARCHIVES (?)	

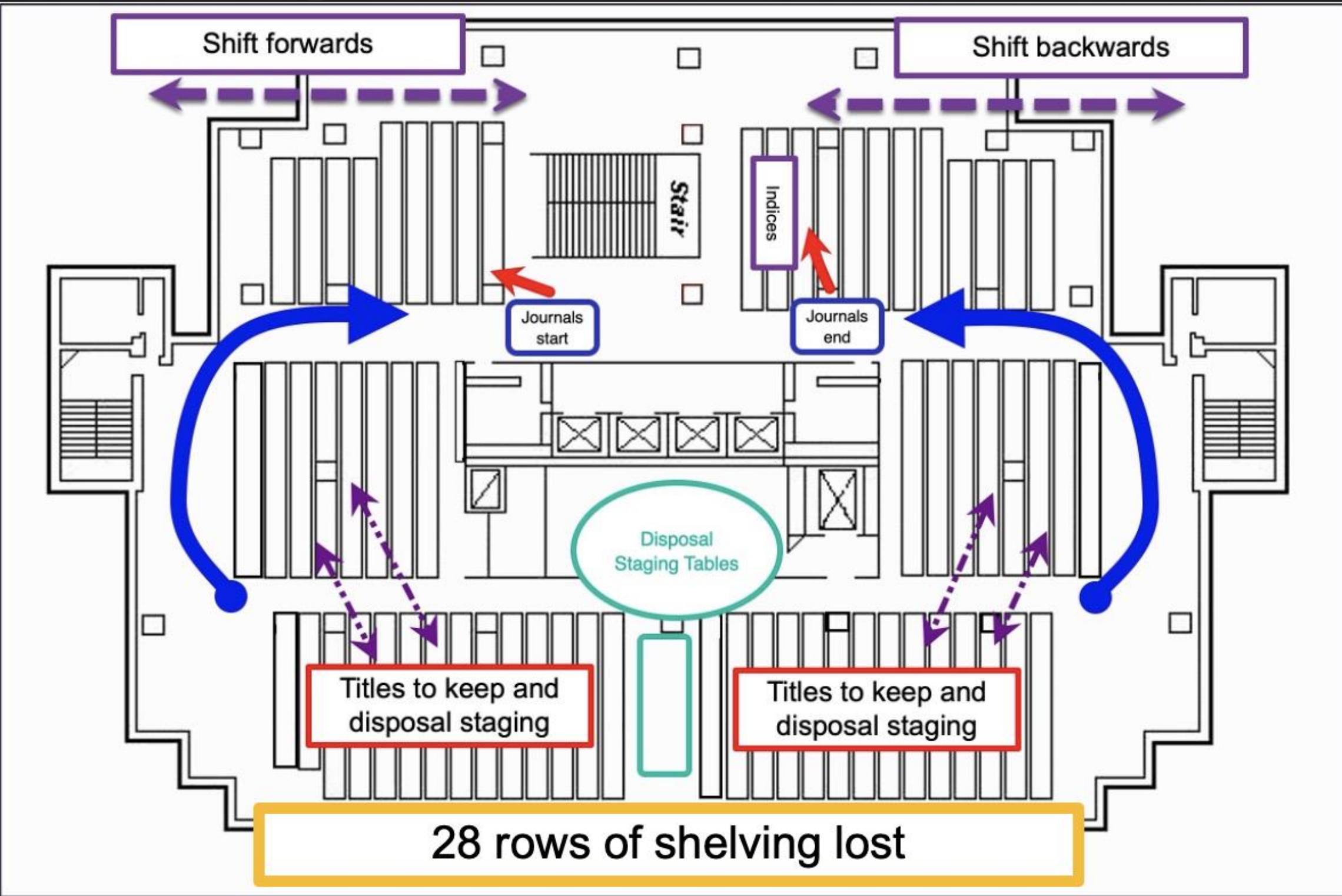
As a result of our displacement after Hurricane Katrina, in 2006/2007 we purchased perpetual access archives from Blackwell, Elsevier, and JAMA. We made additional archives purchases more recently that covered long-run titles such as NEJM and Science. Any volumes covered by these perpetual access archives were first on our list of volumes to remove. However, the archives purchases did not free up enough space for what we needed to clear. We expanded our withdrawals to include titles on PubMed Central, as well as government and WHO publications. As we neared the end of the project, we still did not have enough space cleared, so we chose out-of-state medical society titles and foreign language journals. These are the now-infamous "Panic Removals."

## The Physical Process

For many months, the 5<sup>th</sup> Floor looked like a sticky note factory had opened there. Each row displayed notes showing which journals and volumes would be removed. The notes at each title made it easy when pulling the volumes for removal. We had instances where the entire runs of titles would be removed, and others where only some of the volumes and issues would be withdrawn.



## Print Journal Shifting and Withdrawals

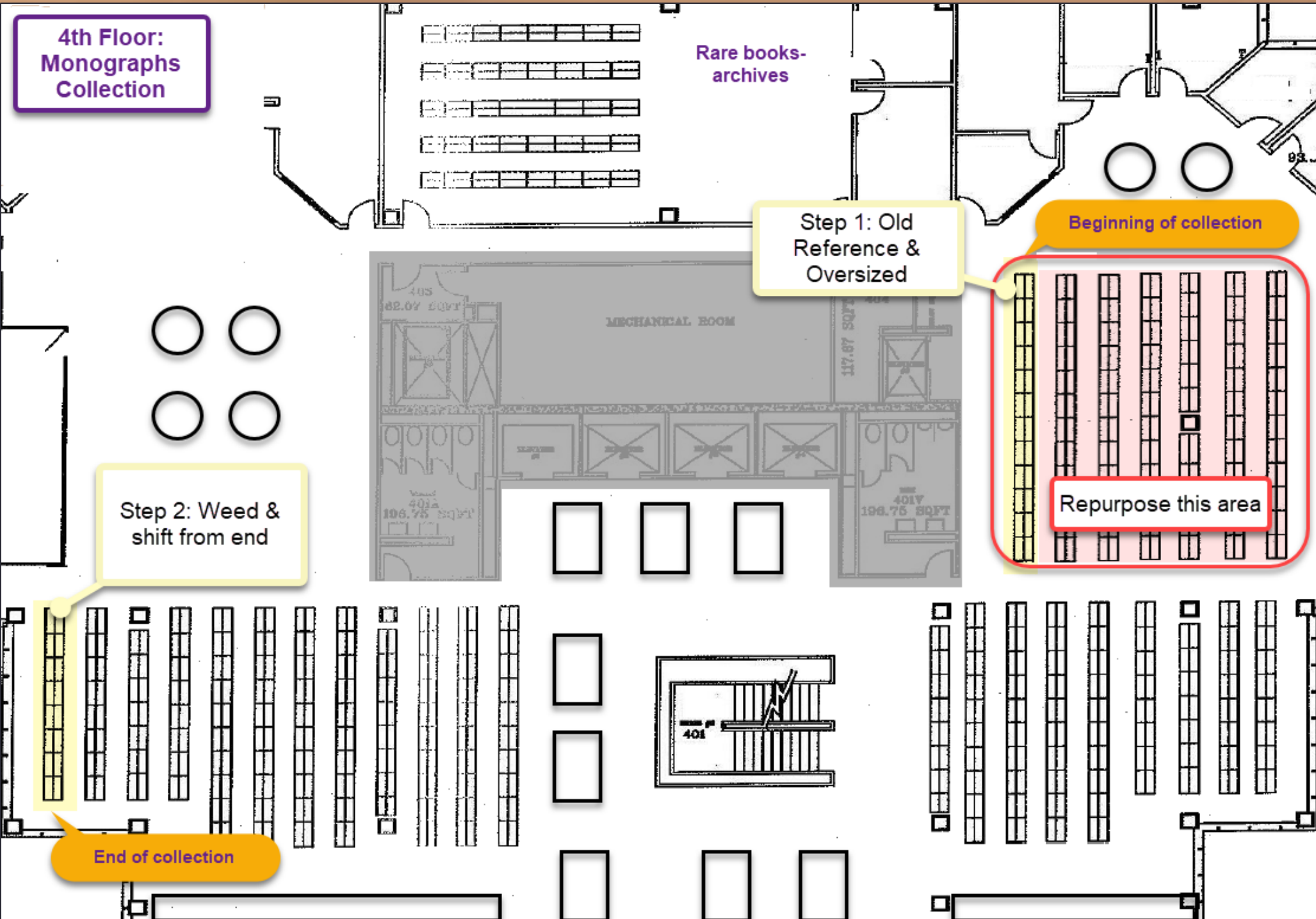


We simultaneously pulled volumes to withdraw, staged for disposal, and shifted the remaining volumes into the 40 rows of shelving we were allowed to keep. Shifting started at both ends of the collection, working from the A titles forward and the Z titles on backwards. We started pulling in May 2023, shifting began July 2023, and everything was done by January 2024. In the end, we removed 33,661 bound journal volumes.

## Weeding and Disposal



## Monographs/4<sup>th</sup> Floor Project



Since we had disposal services available, we decided to weed the monographs on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor. We focused on out-of-date materials and works that are available online. This included our "old reference" and oversized collections along with government publications, World Health Organization publications, and series for which we own the backfiles, such as Methods in Enzymology. We also started weeding and shifting from the end of the collection to eventually free up a large area to be repurposed for study space. Once the journals area was emptied, we had to pause the monographs weeding project. We were able to weed 2,321 items, and we have a good system established to move forward when the time is right.

## Reports and Inventory

Volumes withdrawn from print collection:		35982
Total print book titles withdrawn (bibliographic records)	1051	
Total print book volumes withdrawn (item records)	2321	
Total print journal titles affected by withdrawals (bibliographic records)	716	
Total print journal volumes withdrawn (item records)	33661	

At the end of each fiscal year, we report the number of withdrawn items to university administration. With a project this large, we wanted to include more details and be able to create similar reports in the future. We utilized the fixed and variable length fields in the item records to accomplish this. With the changes implemented, all figures can now be supported by data from our library catalog and spreadsheets, and we can continue to use the same principles to code and report future withdrawals. This set a new standard for recording and reporting our inventory.