To Beeghly Library Friends:

The executive committee of the Friends of the Beeghly Library welcome you to the annual fall newsletter. We think you will enjoy the article by committee member Jim Gooch about Prof. David Hsiung, an acclaimed teacher on Juniata’s faculty. We also hope you enjoy a few book recommendations by the president and vice-president of the committee. Best wishes and good reading!

**Friends of the Library Award**

Salih Eba, from Mauritania, won our Friends of the Library Award in the spring. Salih headed home this summer to enjoy reading and writing. He has written articles from poetry to politics, and his work has been published in Mauritania. Mr. Eba is going to pursue American literature in Morocco at a university at Fes, and will study for a Ph.D there; he would like to become a college professor in the United States (we hope at Juniata). Salih enjoys reading, especially the “Beat Poets,” and Japanese literature, including Mishima. A favorite novel is “No Longer Human,” by Desai.

Salih describes his time in America as wonderful, and in fact beyond description. We have been glad to make his acquaintance in the library and look forward to hearing about the great things he will achieve. In the picture below, Friends Vice President Robert Wagoner and Salih meet in the library following the May Awards Ceremony.

**The Several Worlds of David Hsiung**

Dr. David Hsiung, member of Juniata’s History Department since 1991, published his first major work in 1997, *Two Worlds in the Tennessee Mountains: Exploring the Origins of Appalachian Stereotypes* (University of Kentucky Press). This book is based on Dr. Hsiung’s dissertation at the University of Michigan and it was the winner of The Appalachian Studies Award upon publication.

Dr. Hsiung argues that the original white settlers of East Tennessee founded a relatively egalitarian society, with bonds of mutual assistance among the isolated settlements vulnerable to natural disasters and Indian attack. During the 19th century the wealthier landowners and town dwellers were aware of wider political, cultural, and economic currents, and strove to integrate East Tennessee into national markets. They preached progress and internal improvements. Other citizens, for the most part subsistence farmers on marginal land, were more content with local traditions. Whereas the boosters aired their viewpoints in speeches and newspaper editorials, which Dr. Hsiung quotes liberally, the “silent majority” were just that, silent. Dr. Hsiung gleans information about this group indirectly, from anecdotes, travelers’ tales, court records,
After the Civil War the stereotype of the isolated and peculiar mountaineer took shape. According to Dr. Hsiung this image was created, in part, by the go-getter elements of East Tennessee society. The stock mountaineer served them as a scapegoat as the economy of East Tennesse fell behind that of other regions of the upper South. Dr. Hsiung maintains that the cultural division was exaggerated, and that the poorer citizens were undeserving of the label of shiftless, graceless barbarians.

We may ask: why did David Hsiung – not a doctor yet – glance southward from Ann Arbor and choose this subject of study? He answers that his family toured the American West when he was ten. Raised in the pancake-flat environs of Chicago, at his first glimpse of the Rocky Mountains, young David said “Wow!” This thing about mountains stayed with him. When it came time to select a thesis subject he consulted specialists in Appalachian studies and came across an intriguing history of Washington County, Tennessee, a place as mountainous as anyone could wish.

More recently Dr. Hsiung has written a number of articles and book chapters, and has edited books by other hands. Appalachian history and sociology figure in most. Of special interest to Pennsylvanians, he has delved into the history of mid-18th century central Pennsylvania during the final contest between Great Britain and France for an American colonial empire. It was a time when Indians, traders, settlers, and soldiers rubbed shoulders on the frontier of those tempestuous times.

On a final note, an interdisciplinary area is taking shape that combines history with environmental science. The many ways societies draw upon the resources of their environment, in the process enhancing or degrading it, and adapting as best they can to the changes they have brought about are the subjects of environmental history. Dr. Hsiung recently employed this wide-angle approach in an article entitled “Food, Fuel, and the New England Environment in the War for Independence, 1775-1776,” *New England Quarterly*, (2007). He writes about the siege of British troops in Boston by the Continental Army in 1775, showing that the problems of requisitioning supplies and the solutions to these problems were more urgent day-to-day matters than fighting for besiegers and besieged alike. Like his Tennessee book this article won an award for excellence.

### My Favorite Books—(From time to time we plan to include some comments on favorite books from our Friends Executive Committee members.)

**From Harriet Kaylor:**

*Noah’s Flood: The New Scientific Discoveries About the Event that Changed History*  
by William Ryan & Walter Pittman

Because there are accounts from biblical history and the epic of Gilgamesh of a catastrophic flood somewhere in the Middle East, these two geophysicists, scientists at the Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory of Columbia University set out with sophisticated instruments (sound waves and coring devices) to see where the truth lay. They discovered there was a flooding event 7600 years ago in what is now the Black Sea. How they worked, what amazing things they found, what other scientists from Russia and Bulgaria contributed, and waves of cooling and warming of the earth have revealed proved to be so fascinating, I reread the book as soon as I finished the first reading.
Librarian Jason Mickel throws himself into his work in the re-designed Reference Area.

My Favorite Books—From Robert E. Wagoner:

Walden by Henry David Thoreau
Walden was the first philosophy book that I read as a teen-ager. It taught me something about the rewards of close observation and reflection, as well as the uses of a rich vocabulary.

The Brothers Karamazov by Dostoevsky
This book opened my eyes as a young man to the incredible complexities of human aspirations and to their potential for both self-destruction and enoblement. Ivan’s story about the dramatic encounter between the Grand Inquisitor and the silent Christ remains vivid to me still.

As always, thank you for being a Friend!

My Favorite Books—From Geraldine Suvak

The Bible
The Bible has been important to me throughout my life. I own five different Bibles. It offers comfort, joy, hope, forgiveness, and peace through the use of parables, stories and poetry.

The Statue of Liberty
This book written by many authors on many levels of difficulty was another collection of books that impressed me. That the sculptor would devote so many years to complete one project demonstrated to me the patience and perserverance that is needed to make a masterpiece.
As always, thank you for being a Friend!

View From the Director’s Office:

Besides watching Jason dive into the table, all else has paled this year in comparison. But the Library remains a vibrant place on campus, and was re-designed a bit this fall. More student spaces were created in the reference area while at the same time not giving up the resources that are still very valuable. The Director now teaches using a wafer thin I-pad, which can be slotted into a briefcase, thinner and lighter than a grading book, and carried downstairs to class effortlessly. This same I-pad is a very effective motion picture camera as well as presentation tool, and is extremely quick on the wireless network. Wonders will never cease but more lies ahead we are sure. Reading a book on the I-pad will not be difficult, although our surveys show that most of our community still prefer print. As the Library now has 100,000 e-books, both choices are available. Enjoy the fall!

As always, thank you for being a Friend!

Kind regards,
John Mumford