

The Value of Faculty Recognition Programs for Libraries

More Than Just “Good Will”

John Riddle, Binh Le, and Rebecca Mugridge

Developing and nurturing effective faculty relations has long been a requirement for successful academic libraries. Most often faculty and librarians interact through library instruction, reference and research support services, collection management projects, or their mutual service on campuswide committees. The value of social contact between faculty and librarians has also been noted. Douglas Ferrier, for instance, in arguing that “librarians should continually address the question of how the major audiences of academic libraries view us and search for ways to make these views more positive and professional” urges them to find or create venues for merging professional and social contacts with campus colleagues.¹

One particularly valuable form of librarian-faculty interaction that can combine both professional and social aspects is the faculty recognition program whereby campus faculty are honored by the library or through library sponsorship for having achieved significant professional milestones, for example, scholarly publication or the awarding of tenure. Such programs are not a new idea. For instance, in encouraging librarians to honor their faculty, Joseph Jackson reports on a program initiated in 1987 at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga where the library recognized faculty authors with an annual reception.² Similar programs have started at California Polytechnic State University and Southern Methodist University.³ In a variation on the theme of faculty recognition events, the North Carolina Author-in-Residence Program has received wide acclaim.⁴ Bucknell University started a “Books That Made a Difference” program in which faculty and administrators are invited to speak at the library about a particular book of their choice that has affected their lives.⁵ To recognize faculty’s achievement of tenure, the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign instituted a bookplate and reception program, which inspired the similar program at Penn State discussed here.⁶

Though one of the prime values of these programs is the good will they generate between faculty and libraries, if the library or campus administration limits the value of faculty recognition programs to good will alone (that is, if other wider and more central goals are not also met with these types of programs), they will most likely slip into the periphery of the overall library function. More ominously, Wade Kotter notes that for library programs to avoid becoming budget casualties when the inevitable financial

crisis comes, their value must be perceived to extend beyond mere good will.

This paper argues that faculty recognition programs can in fact contribute in a meaningful way towards broad campus and library goals. They can become integral components of libraries’ public relations and development efforts, work towards improving faculty morale, contribute to campus marketing plans, reinforce the idea of “library as place,” and help bridge relations among three central campus constituencies: administration, faculty, and the library. As examples, three such faculty recognition programs at Penn State University are discussed below. These programs and their related events are very resource-effective, both in terms of staff time and dollars spent. Other libraries wishing to inaugurate faculty recognition programs can envision these Penn State programs as a kind of library of scale, emulating a large, medium, and small campus program, with the costs and resources expended appropriate to each sized institution.

Penn State University Promotion and Tenure Recognition Program

The promotion and tenure recognition program at Penn State University is a cooperative effort of the university libraries and the President’s Office. The goal is to recognize those faculty in a given year who have been granted tenure or promotion by inviting them to select books to be added to the library collection.

After learning about a tenure recognition program at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Penn State’s vice provost brought the idea back to Penn State, where the executive vice president and provost enthusiastically endorsed it. Since the library would play a key role in developing and managing the program, the university libraries’ assistant dean for collections and scholarly communication was brought in to help adapt the Illinois program to meet the needs of Penn State’s multicampus

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system. Unlike the other two Penn State faculty recognition programs discussed in this article, the tenure and promotion program extends to faculty throughout the university, at all twenty-four campuses. The challenge for both the library and the provost's office was to create a process to manage the many steps that would need to be accomplished in the relatively short period of time between the granting of tenure or promotion (May), and the reception to honor those faculty (November).

In the spring, faculty members who have been granted tenure or promotion are invited by the executive vice president and provost to select a book meaningful to them, which will be placed in the library of their respective campus with a bookplate attached honoring their achievement.

Given the great success of the reception and the wide enthusiasm of the faculty, it is anticipated that the promotion and tenure recognition program will become an annual event at University Park.

In a follow-up letter, the university libraries ask faculty for pertinent information regarding their selection, such as their title and rank, book title and author, and a brief paragraph as to why they selected that particular book.

The library created a process to manage all the steps that acquisitions, cataloging, and other units would need to accomplish for this program. For instance, a different process is implemented depending on which book the faculty selected. If the book is already in the collection, and did not previously contain a bookplate for recognition of a prior donor, it is used as the faculty member's selection. If the book is already in the collection and did have a bookplate, another copy is purchased. If the book selected is already in the collection, but at a different campus library from where the faculty member is located, another copy is purchased for that faculty member's campus. Finally, if the book is not already in the collection, a copy is purchased. Faculty are asked to select a book costing no more than one hundred dollars and available from a domestic publisher. The latter proviso is needed to ensure the book will be acquired in a timely manner. Other than cost and publisher, there are no restrictions on the choice of a book to be purchased. As it turned out, for the inaugural program in 2003, only fifty books needed to be purchased for a total cost of \$2,077.82. Faculty also are allowed to select titles in alternate formats. In the first year's implementation of this program, one musical score and one video were selected.

As noted, there is a relatively short period of time for the library to accomplish the many tasks relating to the program. For that reason, the acquisitions and cataloging service units process all of the materials as rush orders and rush-catalog items. Numerous other steps are also implemented in their appropriate order, for instance, retrieving selected books that are already in the collection, modifying

bibliographic records to indicate the book was selected or purchased to honor a particular faculty member, affixing commemorative bookplates in the books, arranging for them to be displayed at the reception, and then relocating the books to the faculty members' home campus library.

In November 2003 Penn State held a reception for all faculty who had selected a book commemorating their promotion or tenure. The reception itself was sponsored by the provost's office and was presided over by the dean of the university libraries and the university president. It was held in the attractive and recently renovated Paterno Family Reading Room in the Pattee Library at the University Park campus. The books selected also were put on display, along with the comments that the faculty provided about their selections (see sample comments in appendix A). The names of the honorees, the titles of their selected books, and comments were collected in an album that will be permanently housed in the university archives. A complete list of the 2003 honorees

and the books they selected can be found at the promotion and tenure recognition Web site (<http://apps.libraries.psu.edu/ptrecog>). Given the great success of the reception and the wide enthusiasm of the faculty, it is anticipated that the promotion and tenure recognition program will become an annual event at University Park.

Penn State Abington College Faculty Author Reception

The Penn State Abington campus, located north of Philadelphia, serves approximately 3,000 students and has more than 150 full-time and part-time faculty. Though campus faculty regularly engage in scholarly activities as part of their tenure process, the campus had done little to publicly recognize significant publishing successes or artistic accomplishments. This may have been largely due to the fact that without student residence halls, the campus had developed a commuter culture that fostered very few extracurricular academic programs.

Recognizing a certain lack of intellectual vivacity on the campus in 1999, the Abington faculty senate formed an academic environment committee with the charge to promote and enhance the scholarly climate at Abington. One initiative of the committee was the creation of faculty author recognition receptions to honor campus faculty who have been successfully published. Unlike the university-wide promotion and tenure program, the Abington author reception was only for faculty of the Abington campus.

A co-chair of the committee was the campus reference librarian who volunteered to initiate and organize the inaugural author reception. This was a logical decision, as the assistance of the library would be invaluable in helping

to identify and acquire the books published by faculty. The librarian began by conducting numerous searches to locate books, published in either print or digital formats. As a benchmark, the committee selected only books that were recognized by the various promotion and tenure committees that had reviewed faculty during the previous ten years. As such, the inaugural reception would be retrospective, including both current and past faculty authors. Also, to avoid inadvertent omissions, the librarian contacted all current and former faculty requesting they submit a bibliography of their published manuscripts. The librarian also arranged to acquire those books that the library did not already own.

Once the faculty authors were identified, each was invited to a reception recognizing his or her accomplishments. The honorees were also invited to make a brief statement about their research or scholarship during the reception. In addition, though the author recognition receptions were the brainchild of the senate committee, the campus administration quickly saw the value of such events, and the chief executive officer and dean of the college, at her own initiative, sent letters to the honorees commending their accomplishments.

The reception was held late in the afternoon in early April 2003 at the campus banquet hall. After opening remarks by the librarian, who served as MC, the dean and the associate dean, faculty members gave brief presentations about their research and publishing activities. This segment turned out to be the highlight of the reception as many honorees recounted fascinating stories and anecdotes about their research, in some cases indicating that student interest had shaped and fueled much of their research focus. The various books by the honorees were also displayed. Though it snowed that day, the reception was well attended by more than eighty-five faculty and staff and virtually all the honorees, including those on sabbatical.

Though the Abington faculty author recognition program was deemed a great success, it was not accomplished without certain challenges and obstacles that the librarian who organized the reception had to address creatively and diplomatically. First, faculty in the sciences expressed a concern that their scholarly output, predominantly peer-reviewed articles, would be slighted if the reception recognized only authors of books. After consultation with the associate dean, it was decided that henceforth two receptions would be held, one each for authors of books and for authors of articles. The decision to host separate receptions was based mostly on logistics. There simply was not enough space in the campus banquet area to accommodate comfortably and respectfully large groups of people. A second concern came from faculty in the arts who felt that their unique forms of scholarship, artistic, and theatrical endeavors, would go unrecognized as well. Again, in consultation with the associate dean, it was decided to include recognition of their accomplishments with the reception for authors of peer-reviewed articles. To continue with the evolving inclusive nature of the recognition receptions, editors of journals

or of special issues of journals would be honored in future receptions. Finally, though students were not invited to the inaugural reception, the committee decided that future receptions should be open to the entire campus.

Penn State Fayette Campus Author Celebrations

The Penn State Fayette campus, in southwestern Pennsylvania, is significantly smaller than Abington, with approximately one thousand students and eighty full- and part-time faculty. However, like Abington, Fayette is a commuter campus. As such, the intellectual climate is somewhat more limited than what would be ordinarily found at larger campuses with resident populations. Though the campus had for years sponsored periodic colloquia highlighting current faculty research, very little had ever been done to formally recognize or honor significant faculty milestones, that is, publishing or tenure.

In 2002, the head librarian of the Fayette campus developed the idea of creating a series of author celebrations for faculty who have successfully published books. Since it was deemed valuable to make this recognition campuswide and to help offset the anticipated expenses for the receptions, the head librarian decided to cosponsor these events with the director of academic affairs and enlist the support of the campus executive officer.

The Fayette author celebrations differ from the Abington receptions in a number of ways. Unlike Abington's annual receptions, a Fayette author celebration is held separately for each faculty member once his or her book is published. As such, there may be numerous celebrations during the year or none, based solely on the the prolificacy of the faculty authors. Also, the Fayette celebration program is not retrospective, as with the Abington reception. As in the case of the university's promotion and tenure program, they did not recognize past faculty accomplishments.

The Fayette library staff manages virtually all aspects of the faculty author recognition program. The celebrations are kept fairly simple, balancing the informality of a reception with the proper respect and recognition due to the faculty author. All campus faculty and staff are invited (though, as with Abington, currently students are not—primarily for logistical reasons). Following a reception, brief welcome and introductory comments from the campus executive officer, the director of academic affairs, and the head librarian, the author is invited to speak on any aspect of the book. In all cases, the speaker's remarks have been excellent, blending a more serious discussion of the book's content with interesting and amusing anecdotes of their scholarship. Just as important, the authors have an opportunity to thank family, friends, and colleagues. In a number of cases, family members came to the celebrations to share the author's success.

A number of issues needed to be resolved to ensure the success of the Fayette author celebrations. First, the

definition of what actually counts as authoring a book was intentionally kept liberal. Single author, multiple author, or edited books suffice. Likewise, faculty who publish with small publishers, or who publish in fields outside of their specialty, are eligible for celebrations as well. Since a central purpose of the celebrations is to recognize faculty accomplishments and to strengthen relations among faculty, library, and the campus, a too-restrictive policy could become self-defeating. Also, the books do not have to be of a scholarly nature. While initially there was some concern that the scholarly nature of the celebrations would be reduced if the standards for what constituted published works were lowered, it was felt that the majority of books would in fact be of a professional scholarly quality.

The fall reception was considered a great success. More than 130 people attended, of whom 55 were honored faculty.

Perhaps most importantly there are no author celebrations for faculty who primarily publish articles or create works of art. The author celebrations are for book publication alone. The decision for this was twofold: scheduling and logistics. The plan for the celebrations all along was to have not more than a few per semester, so as to retain their uniqueness. Given the size of Fayette's faculty and their anticipated rate of book publishing, this appeared quite manageable. Furthermore, the logistics and costs of hosting a great number of celebrations would have become burdensome.

So as not to slight the authors of articles, the Fayette library instituted a special collection for all books and articles published by faculty or staff, past and present. This collection also can accommodate faculty who create art or performance pieces (they are invited to submit photographs or videos of their accomplishments), as well as faculty in the campus's technology programs who may produce blueprints or site plans as their professional output. The creation of this special collection now allows the Fayette author recognition program to balance nicely the uniqueness of the individual author celebrations held throughout the semester with the permanency of the campus author collection. A display has been set up in the library lobby for this collection and a reception was hosted in the library for its grand opening. The display is now also a regular stop for the campus tours of prospective students and their families.

Results of the Penn State Faculty Recognition Programs

Probably the most fruitful way to analyze the effectiveness of the Penn State faculty recognition programs is to chart the number of faculty who participate in them, their disciplines, the subject matters of the various books

involved, and the related costs of managing the programs. To determine the satisfaction of the participants through some sort of attitudinal survey would be of little use as most people find such programs enjoyable and rewarding. Such surveys would most likely return near-unanimous assent. However, since a major goal of the programs was to achieve widespread faculty involvement and thereby advance library public relations and outreach, the sheer numbers of participants, represented disciplines, and range of books can be quite telling.

Of the 175 faculty who had been awarded promotion or tenure in 2003, 135 selected books for recognition. Breaking down the faculty in broad subject disciplines, 25 were from arts and humanities, 40 from the social sciences, and 70 from the natural sciences and mathematics. It is also interesting to note that faculty did not always select books from their specific research or teaching focus or even their general subject area. Many chose novels or books of general interest because they had been particularly inspired by these works during their lives. The fall reception was considered a great success. More than 130 people attended, of whom 55 were honored faculty.

In its inaugural faculty author reception in the fall of 2003, Abington honored eighteen authors and editors and their collective forty publications. Of these, eighteen titles were in arts and humanities, nineteen from the social sciences, and three from the natural sciences. Thirty-one of the books were single or multi-authored, and nine were edited. Included also were four digital or electronic publications. As noted earlier, though there was a snow storm on the day of the reception, eighty-five people came to the event.

Since its inception in the fall of 2002, Fayette has hosted seven author celebrations. Attendance has averaged from twenty-five to forty people, which is quite good for a campus of Fayette's size. Three of the faculty honored were in the social sciences, four in the humanities, and one from the natural sciences. In addition more than one hundred books and articles have been added to the campus author special collection.

It is interesting to note how the disciplines of the arts and humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences were represented at the three Penn State programs. The faculty author programs at Abington and Fayette tended to draw more faculty from the arts and humanities and social sciences, while the university-wide promotion and tenure recognition program had a much broader distribution, and in fact the natural sciences significantly outweighed the other two. It will be interesting to see if there are changes in these distributions in future programs. A few explanations may account for these variances. A promotion and tenure program will be able to recognize a broad range of scholarly accomplishments from faculty, not just the publishing of books. Depending on the promotion and

tenure criteria at a particular school, faculty in the natural sciences, who are more likely to publish articles, have a greater chance of being so honored in a program such as this. Also noteworthy was the large number of natural and applied science faculty honored at the promotion and tenure program. A large state school such as Penn State is likely to have numerous academic programs in such fields as engineering or technology, applied science, and medicine, nursing, or dentistry, and so this may account for the greater number of faculty from the natural sciences. A smaller private college that may have a more proportionate distribution between arts and humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences would perhaps see a greater balance in faculty participation in a similar promotion and tenure recognition program.

Finally, the overall costs of each program were relatively modest. The promotion and tenure recognition program cost the library a little more than \$2,000 for book purchases, plus the associated costs for the reception. In its inaugural year, Abington spent about \$1,000 in all, \$750 for books and about \$250 for their annual reception. Each author celebration at Fayette costs only about \$125 for the purchase of two copies of each book (for both the circulating and campus author special collection) and the cost of the reception. Finally, as noted previously, in many cases the costs of the programs are shared among campus administrative units. In all, the feeling is widespread that the great benefits gained from the programs far outweigh their modest costs.

Good Will and Beyond: The Benefits of Faculty Recognition Programs for Academic Libraries

Faculty Recognition Programs and Library Public Relations

Positive public relations is the most obvious benefit to libraries that host faculty recognition programs. Academic libraries, for a variety of reasons, increasingly turn to marketing programs to boost their visibility in the campus and wider community. From a survey of academic library directors, Nancy Marshall found that improvements in both faculty relations and the campus attitude towards the library in general are the most effective benefits of academic library public relations.⁷ Though, as noted previously, faculty recognition programs can generate much good will, other public relations benefits can accrue from these programs as well.

Faculty recognition events are excellent occasions for developing prospective and current library donors. Alumni, campus boards of advisors, and other prominent supporters of the university or college certainly should be invited. Faculty recognition programs also provide opportunities for libraries to showcase the skills of library direc-

tors and staff to pull off effective public relations events. Campus administrators may come to perceive their library in a valued new light when they see a well-organized and attended faculty recognition program, especially if the program is hosted in the library itself. Finally, available campus and local media outlets should be notified of these types of events. The Penn State faculty recognition programs received wide coverage in both the university and local news media, and efforts are underway to achieve national press coverage for the university-wide promotion and tenure program.

Faculty Morale, Retention, and Campus Marketing Plans

The level of morale and the degree of intellectual vivacity will of course vary from campus to campus. Likewise, faculty recruitment and retention issues are generally cyclical, based as much on general economic conditions as on campus policies and climate. However, programs that recognize significant faculty success can only add, even in small ways, to the morale of the campus and demonstrate to both prospective and current faculty that the administration does appreciate their scholarship, teaching, and service.

Each of the Penn State programs has been incorporated into the campus marketing efforts. The university's promotion and tenure recognition program's Web site links to both the university library and provost pages. The Fayette program has led to a number of press releases, and, as noted earlier, the campus author special collection is displayed prominently in the library lobby. The Abington faculty author receptions are now successful components of the campuswide effort to foster a greater academic environment.

There are many reasons faculty choose to join a particular campus and endeavor to remain throughout their professional career. A faculty recognition program can become quite an effective component of a library's strategy of demonstrating to the administration and the greater campus that it too can play a significant role in faculty retention and campus morale. Likewise, library services have thrived and will continue to thrive to the extent that they can become fully incorporated into the broad campus mission, including its marketing goals.

Library-Administration-Faculty Partnerships

Faculty recognition programs can effectively bridge three distinct campus constituencies: administration, faculty, and the library. Each of the programs discussed here involved close cooperation among these groups. The university's promotion and tenure recognition program was initiated by the vice provost, and the library was brought in as a key player for program management. The Abington faculty author reception, while started by a faculty senate committee and managed by a librarian, clearly became

a campuswide program through the involvement of the senior administration. At Fayette, though the author celebration series was the original idea of the head librarian, the campus administration was brought in as a cosponsor from the beginning. Though of course there would be no such programs at all without the achievements of faculty themselves, the programs acquired the status as publicly celebrated, campuswide events through broad administrative and library cooperation.

In fact, the case could be made that each program described in this article achieved a distinct quality solely due to the close association of administration and the library. In each case it is very likely that the faculty accorded significantly greater prestige to the program due to the fact that they were initiated and managed by multiple administrative units, working closely together. Most significantly, the highest administrative officer at each campus attended the various recognition events.

Can the Words “Joy” and “Library” Be in the Same Sentence?

At first glance, faculty recognition programs are social gatherings to honor faculty success. They are celebrations, joyful. Faculty, like everyone else, can use the occasional pat on the back for a job well done. It is well known that among the most important factors in job success is simply the enjoyment of one’s work, the deep satisfaction that comes when important and challenging tasks have been accomplished, and recognition and appreciation for those successes by one’s peers and administrators.

However, the benefit faculty recognition programs offer to libraries may be quite unique. Libraries are well known for their provision of scholarly and research services and functions. Yet too rarely are the words “joy” and “library” mentioned in the same sentence. Faculty recognition programs can offer libraries ways of broadening their campus image to become places for periodic social conviviality and celebrations that at the same time foster scholarly endeavors. Libraries are one of the central campus venues for scholarship. There is no reason why they also should not be the locale for finding celebration and joy in scholarship as well.

The Library As “Social-Scholarly Place”

Closely related to the idea of celebration in the library is the sense of library as place. In both the university-wide and Fayette programs, the events were hosted directly in the library. Though Abington’s faculty author reception was held at the campus banquet hall, a campus librarian played a leading role in its organization and management and is contemplating hosting future receptions in the library itself. In all three cases the library was at the forefront of faculty recognition programs.

Though the large Paterno Library at University Park is no stranger to donor receptions and other social occasions, people at the much smaller Abington and Fayette campuses were able to see the library and their librarians in a new and refreshingly different light due to these faculty recognition programs. In contrast to the traditional perception of the library as a large, somewhat stuffy building designed mostly for doing solitary research, as well as the more recent idea of the library as a disembodied cyber collection of Web sites and databases, a presence of social space can also be effectively added to the common view of library services and missions. Rod Henshaw, in talking about the library as place, has advocated for new libraries to create as much people space as book space.⁸ We would argue that this people space should encompass a sense of social, even convivial, space as well.

Many academic libraries are adding cafés and lounges in their buildings. As these bring a new sense of sociality into the library, faculty recognition programs can further strengthen the link of scholarship and conviviality. One of the enduring legacies of the post-modern turn of thought is that knowledge creation is as much a social act as a function of individual cognition. By creating not only spaces for social learning but also actual events and programs of a scholarly convivial nature as well, libraries will continue to more fully integrate themselves into the broader intellectual and social missions of the campus.

In so many ways the advent of digitally accessed collections and the provision of cyber services, such as virtual reference services or desktop interlibrary loan services, have severely reduced the sheer physicality of libraries as public buildings and places of scholarship. Though *cyberspace* has created new *sites* for scholarly communities, and *online* researchers may feel more *connected* to each other than ever before, much of this is at the expense of the felt *presence* of libraries, which often recede into the digital *background* of cyberspace. (Words indicating various connotations of “place” are intentionally highlighted in the previous sentence to emphasize the shifting and often disorienting senses of the location of libraries.) So often we ask, not at all rhetorically, “Where exactly *is* the library?” “What does it mean anymore to be *in* the library?” Hosting faculty recognition programs can help readjust the balance of the library between being simultaneously a real place and a cyber place, so that the physical presence, the “place” of the library as the center of scholarship on campus, can be reaffirmed.⁹

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9. Debra Engel and Karen Angell, "The Life of the Mind: A Study of Faculty Spaces in Academic Libraries," *College and Research Libraries* 65, no. 1 (2004): 8-20. Engel and Antell have recently found that many faculty express great attachment, even passion, to the idea of library as place as it pertains to private spaces and carrels provided for their research. Our article suggests that faculty recognition programs, especially those hosted directly in the library, will likely increase this passion for "library as place" by creating a unique sense of joy towards the library as the location where not only they actually did their research but now also where they are so honored by the campus.

Appendix A

Here are three comments from faculty who participated in the Promotion and Tenure Recognition Program. The comments reflect why the particular book was chosen.

***Lonesome Dove* by Larry McMurtry**

Selected by: William James Lamont Jr., Professor of Vegetable Crops, University Park

Comments: You are probably scratching your head and wondering why an Extension Vegetable Specialist would be choosing *Lonesome Dove* as his selection for the library. You probably thought that I would select some intellectual read on vegetable crop physiology or vegetable crop production by some well-known author in my field. I started to do exactly that but then paused to reflect on what I thought Dr. Erickson was trying to accomplish with this program. He stated that we should choose a book that has some special meaning to us, and it will be identified as such with a nameplate honoring our achievement of tenure and/or promotion. That is why I chose *Lonesome Dove*.

For those [who] have never read the book, I suggest that you check it out and give it a read. For those [who] look at the cover, I am sure your first thought will be that it is just another western novel. I suggest that it is actually a tale about life, although the setting is the Old West and its characters cowboys. For me it holds many truths that I have tried to follow in my journey through life and in my career in academia. It is about being a visionary, about friendships strong and lasting forged in the heat of

conflict, about overcoming great hardships, about giving one's word to a friend and keeping it. It is about loving and caring, about dealing with impending death, about honor and a code of conduct that means even one's friend is not exempt from punishment. It is about leadership, and about having the skills needed to survive; not boasting about them but having a quiet confidence in one's abilities. I keep *Lonesome Dove* on my file cabinet in my office as a powerful reminder of the simple and lasting truths of life hoping that I would have been worthy to ride with Captain Call and Gus.

***Les Miserables* by Victor Hugo**

Selected by: Urs A. Leuenberger, Professor of Medicine, Milton S. Hershey Medical Center

Comments: Although written almost 150 years ago, this book has been a great source of insight and inspiration to me. Its portrayal of human nature is highly acute and timeless, and the story of the transforming power of forgiveness, compassion, and love becomes a compelling moral compass. In a larger sense, this is a book about the human soul and about its aspiration for decency and progress.

***Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* by J. K. Rowling**

Selected by: Roy B. Clariana, Associate Professor of Instructional Systems, Penn State Great Valley

Comment: Rowling's books will save at least one generation from illiteracy.