Academic Year 2016 – 2017 has certainly not been a dull one, but the McDermott Library continues to make progress. Since the last Friends meeting, we have made several significant changes.

Renovation of the main floor of the Library is proceeding as one of the Superintendent’s top priorities. All the books were removed from third floor, the reference and circulation desks were combined into a services desk on fourth floor, and the third floor was transformed into a large number of individual and 14 small group study areas, with the possibility of developing three more. All study areas will have power and wireless network connectivity for mobile devices. The new furniture is ordered, and we hope the area is fully functional by late May. This renovation supports the USAFA Library of the Future planning.

The Library is fortunate to have had the same online integrated library data system for the last 17 years, so we know exactly which items have been used during that period. Of the more than 880,000 items in the Library, only 173,000 have been used at least once in the last 17 years. But, we also know that approximately 200,000 of our items are unique to the McDermott Library. Further, we know that the average cost for storing one bound volume is now calculated at $4.80 per year. That is a very high price tag to store the 707,000 books that have so far not been used and may or may not be used in the future. Consequently, we foresee that in the next two years, the Library will reduce its printed book collection by more than 400,000 volumes, while keeping all those rare books as well as those that continue to be used. Moreover, when given a choice between print and electronic, the library is purchasing books in electronic format.

A similar modernization is occurring with journals. We know which journals are available on the Library’s various databases, through which both cadets and faculty have instant access in their rooms, offices, classes, or in the Library itself for the majority of journals to which the Library ever subscribed. In fact, when I came in 1995, the Library subscribed to almost 2,000 print journals; we are now down to fewer than 300 subscriptions; most of the journals that were available on at least two on-line databases were cancelled. Consequently, the Library deaccessioned more than 80,000 bound journals last summer; the rest were relocated on the fourth floor, along with the greatly reduced print reference collection, and the remaining books from the third and fourth floors. The Library is again considering the merits of joining the Colorado Alliance of Research Libraries (CARL) as a way to improve access to scholarly materials shared by all.

As you may know, we have a personnel freeze for most vacant civilian positions in the federal government. The Library currently expects five vacancies by this summer. Over the past four years the Library has experienced a loss of 10 positions. The remaining members of the Library team are focused on providing the highest level of service possible.

Over the years, The Friends has provided a margin of excellence by providing funds to support primarily Special Collections, but other Library activities as well. The purchase of rare books, the curation of special donations, the creation of special exhibits, the publishing of the Gimbel catalog, *The Genesis of Flight*, and the printing of special brochures are a few that come to mind. I am certain that there will be many opportunities for your support in the future.

I have announced my retirement effective 1 July 2017 after 51 years of service as an academic librarian, the last 21 at the Air Force Academy. A Search Committee for a new Library Director has been appointed, and the hiring action for a replacement will proceed as soon as the current Federal hiring freeze is lifted. On a personal note: please provide my successor with the same superb support and encouragement that you have given me. It will make the new director’s tenure more effective, and I will be honored by your continued dedication.