



Letter from the dean

Wow, I can't believe that the spring semester is over and we're into the summer. The time certainly flies. We are late getting our newsletter out this year, because we have had a lot going on!

If you've tried to visit the library this summer, you will have noted that the west side is closed. A large number of our staff, including the administrative team, had to move to temporary offices at the end of the semester, in order for the second phase of our HVAC and electrical upgrades on the west side to be completed. We are all looking forward to having better heating and cooling in our offices and hope the students notice the difference as well. In addition, thanks to the Sumner Library Endowment, we are able to provide our cataloging and acquisitions staff with new furnishings and some reconfigured office spaces. Something that we've needed to do for quite some time!

In addition to our building changes, we've also made a big change to our online presence. Since November, a core team of library staff have been working on migrating and implementing a new integrated library system, essentially the backbone of all of our operations. This system handles everything from the public interface to search for items, the payment of invoices, materials cataloging, and circulation records. Since 2005, we've been on a system called Aleph and our transition was to the company's newer system, Alma/Primo. We successfully went live on June 26th. A lot of our attention has been devoted to this project, and while it was a fairly smooth transition, there are inevitably several things we need to cleanup. We also will continue staff training now that we are in the live environment.

Aside from these projects, we had several fun events this past spring. Personally, the most enjoyable for me, and I hope for those of you that joined us, was our delightful evening hosting and honoring Dr. Ron Tyler, our recipient of the 2024 Texas Book Award for his book *Texas Lithographs: A Century of History in Images*. With Ron living in Fort Worth and having so many local ties, we had a good number of people attend to help celebrate this extraordinary publication.

As we look forward, I am excited that the library is gearing up to celebrate the centennial of the Mary Couts Burnett Library in 2025. While the library itself existed before the Mary Couts Burnett building, the building has held such iconic importance on our campus through the years, and it is worth celebrating its 100th! We'll keep you posted on the upcoming events, so you can note them on your social calendar.

I wish you all the best for the remainder of the summer and look forward to seeing the students back in the building this fall. I hope to see you as well!

Tracy L. HullDean of the TCU Library



Julie Christenson found mysterious pages recycled into a medieval manuscript; Ariel Feldman discovered their origins. The text is part of the TCU library's special collection of books on Jewish faith and culture.

PAGING THROUGH HISTORY

A project to catalog a Jewish collection at the TCU library uncovers a mystery in a medieval manuscript.

by Laura Samuel Meyn, Endeavors 2024

THE PAGES OF A HANDWRITTEN HEBREW MANUSCRIPT discovered

in the Mary Couts Burnett Library have changed countless hands during the last 400 years: the author who wrote them, the contemporaries who read them, the bookbinder who tore them apart and used them as scrap paper, the collector who brought them across the ocean, the librarian who discovered them and the professor who unlocked their history and meaning.

In 2020, a rare-books librarian at TCU discovered the pages pasted inside a small volume containing two medieval books on Jewish spirituality. She emailed photos of those pages to Ariel Feldman, the Rosalyn and Manny Rosenthal Professor of Jewish

Studies at Brite Divinity School.

The librarian, Julie Christenson, recognized that these endpapers, which attach a book to its front and back covers, were recycled; small holes on the edges showed that the endpapers had come from another bound book.

"Binders would use scraps to kind of reinforce the binding. And so they would tear up old books," Christenson said. "But now we often value that waste more than the printed book."

Feldman was excited by the discovery; he follows "Books Within Books: Hebrew Fragments in European Libraries," an online project in which scholars document such finds. His wife, Faina Feldman, a technology expert who is fluent in Hebrew, also was intrigued.

"We blew up the images," Ariel Feldman said, noting that the text, much of it abbreviated, was difficult to read. His ongoing scholarship on the Dead Sea Scrolls places his expertise in a much earlier era.

As the couple began deciphering the text, they unlocked a single sentence. It read, "I am going to die."

JOURNEY TO TCU

The volume came from the collection of Israel Otto Lehman, who had worked

as rare-books curator at Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati. Lehman had traveled through the Middle East, amassing a personal collection of books about Jewish faith and culture.

In 2002, TCU purchased Lehman's library of more than 100 books. When Christenson arrived at TCU 15 years later, she found that the collection hadn't been cataloged.

As she began leafing through the volumes — some still packed in cardboard boxes or plywood crates — she recognized several rare books. Christenson invited professors to bring their classes in to examine the items as she cataloged them.

"Julie has spent long hours making our Judaica collection visible and turning it into a great tool for teaching," Feldman said.

Once the Feldmans cracked that first ominous phrase, their work picked up speed. Originally, they suspected that the endpapers might have been from somebody's last will and testament. As they continued reading, they found biblical names and quotations.

Feldman compared the text to a preacher giving a sermon and ascribing meaning to a biblical phrase, only to then offer second, third and fourth possible meanings for the same words. He noted the writing's strong mystical stream of thought, called Kabbalah.

"One striking feature was kind of the prevalence here in this text of the idea of an immortal soul that ... transmigrates, or what we call reincarnation," Feldman said. He knew the idea existed in Judaism but didn't know how central the belief had been for medieval Jews and Kabbalists.

"It's actually a very powerful view of being. It gives explanation to so many things: 'I suffer in this life because I've done something in the previous life, and God gives me a chance to amend, change, maybe become better.'

Once the Feldmans translated the pages, he entered the text into Google to try to determine the origin of the words.

"We couldn't find a match," he said, "but we did find a partial one."

The book was *Ba'ale Berit Avram* (*The Allies of Abram*), a 400-year-old commentary on the Bible by Jewish mystic Abraham Azulai. The original manuscript is held by the Jewish Theological Seminary library in New York. Feldman found that while the well-known Kabbalist's book had much in common with the endpapers' text, it wasn't the same.

A note in the margin of Azulai's book revealed that while writing his 700-page manuscript he had used a commentary on Bible verses written by anonymous "men of old." That margin note, Feldman said, was the missing piece of the puzzle.

"What Azulai copied from that source fit my text like a glove," Feldman wrote in an account of his research. "Now I finally knew what was in those handwritten pages glued into the covers of the book from the TCU library. It was the long-lost source that Rabbi Azulai had in Gaza in 1619 and that has now miraculously re-emerged in Fort Worth."

"Besides the TCU library," Feldman said, "there is not any other place in the world we know of that source existing."

SHARING THE RESEARCH

In March 2023, Christenson organized an exhibition, "Uncovering TCU's Hidden Treasures: Rare Bibles of the TCU Library," spotlighting volumes from Lehman's collection. Feldman joined Christenson for the exhibition's opening, where each spoke about the collection's significance.

The Feldman's published "New Binding Waste Fragments: A Source of R. Abraham Azulai's Ba'ale Berit Avram?" in the 2022 edition of Materia Giudaica, an Italian journal of Judaica studies.

The article includes the full Hebrew text from the endpapers; it also documents parallels with Azulai's The Allies of Abram, making the case that Azulai quoted from the pages found at TCU.

In September, Feldman traveled to St. Edward's University in Austin, Texas, where he shared the research as part of his lecture on Jewish-Christian dialogue.

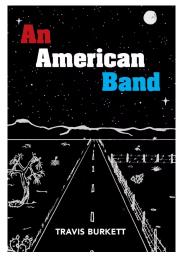
The research also inspired a new class, From Enoch to Kabbalah: Introduction to Jewish Mysticism. Feldman's offering debuted in fall 2023 at Brite and is also open to TCU undergraduates. As with his other classes, this course includes a visit to special collections to examine rare Jewish texts.

"I'm not a mystically inclined person, but I have to say that when I read this text ... I do find quite a bit of nourishment for spiritual quests or interests that I have always had," Feldman said. "It's very interesting to see what others have been thinking and how they understood scripture and how it was making them think about deeper questions of good and evil, sin and righteousness."



Julie Christenson arrived at TCU in 2017 and discovered a collection of books purchased 15 years earlier that hadn't been cataloged. She stumbled upon a medieval find. Photo by Rodger Mallison

PRESS New Book Releases



An American Band

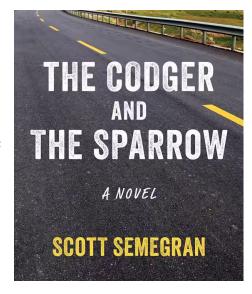
by Travis Burkett

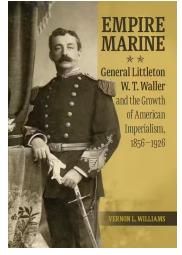
Javier Espinoza manages a young rock band short on money to record their debut album. When the slog of playing their hearts out for tiny crowds in Texas border towns gets to be too much, a dangerous idea takes hold of Javier: smuggling migrants across the border for cash. He knows a thing or two about it, after all. He made his own perilous journey from a farm in Coahuila to the United States at age eleven, surviving brutal coyotes and dodging authorities. So he and the band find a ramshackle tour bus and an alibi and are soon plunged into the heart of Juárez, where the harsh realities of human trafficking, impassive border agents, and ruthless cartels are waiting.

The Codger and The Sparrow

by Scott Semegran

Hank O'Sullivan, a 65-year-old widower, lives a routine life, nursing his loneliness with cocktails at his favorite local bar in Austin, Texas, until a brawl with an acerbic barfly lands him in jail. The judge pities the old codger and sentences him to do community service, picking up trash beside the interstate highway alongside a 16-year-old troublemaker, Luis Delgado. Luis lives with his stern, single father in a small apartment and has remarkable artistic abilities, but his penchant for sneaking out and trespassing onto rooftops late at night lands him in community service. These loners form an unlikely friendship in an inhospitable setting. When Hank tells Luis about his desire to drive to Houston, Texas, to reconnect with an old flame, Luis asks to tag along. Luis's estranged mother also lives in Houston, and he has been saving money for a trip, dreaming of reconnecting with her. Hank agrees, setting in motion a raucous road trip in a hot pink 1970 Plymouth Barracuda. With humor and a bit of grace, The Codger and the Sparrow is a rambunctious story about an unusual friendship stretching across the generations.





Empire Marine: General Littleton W.T. Waller and the Growth of American Imperialism

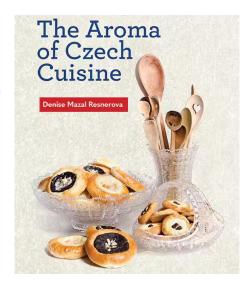
by Vernon L. Williams

Empire Marine examines the role that Littleton W. T. Waller played in the development and growth of the Marine Corps within the emerging empire of turn-of-the-century America. The grandson of the governor of Virginia, Littleton W.T. Waller grew up during the post-Civil War years when his widowed mother struggled to provide for her sons. Unable to attend university or a professional military school, Waller secured a commission in the Marine Corps in 1880 and began a long and successful military career. Waller's service corresponded with the growth of the Marine Corps and the exportation of American imperialism in the 1890s and beyond. Particularly significant were the episodes of U.S. political and military expansion in South America, the Philippines, China, Panama, Cuba, and Haiti. Waller's experiences reflected the new emerging role that marines would play in the execution of American policy across the globe.

The Aroma of Czech Cuisine

by Dense Mazal Resnerova

Says author Denise Mazal Resnerova, "With my cookbook, The Aroma of Czech Cuisine, I am proud to showcase the national Czech food, or as we call it, "Staročeská kuchyně" (recipes of our grandmothers)." Throughout the book, notes and mini stories accompany the recipes, unfolding a myriad of facts about Czech culture, recipe origins, folklore, and Czech influence in the United States. "As the founder of Little Gretel, a Czech restaurant in Boerne, Texas, I am devoted to my craft and to putting smiles on the faces of anyone who takes a bite out of my delectable Kolaches. Since 2009, I have been serving the Boerne and surrounding communities by integrating my traditional Czech culinary skills into the wonderful Texas culture. All the recipes included in this book have been prepared and served in my restaurant for over a decade. These recipes exhibit the finest of Czech culinary tradition and impart the humility of Czech culture by passing down the ability to take simple ingredients and make miracles."



REFLECTIONS ON WRIGHT Essays on the Career of Speaker Jim Wright



Reflections on Wright: Essays on the Career of Speaker Jim Wright Edited by James W. Riddlesperger and Anthony Champagne

Reflections on Wright is a collection of essays on Jim Wright from his early years through his retirement from the House of Representatives. Wright was one of the most influential members of Congress in the latter part of the twentieth century and had a major role in policies such as the interstate highway system and American policy in Central America. Foreclosed from moving to

the Senate, Wright eventually sought to become Majority Leader and won in a hotly contested race against California's Phil Burton. Both as Majority Leader and as Speaker, Wright proved himself an exceptionally strong leader. Indeed, Wright pushed his agenda so strongly that it led to grumbling among members of his caucus. With attacks on his ethics by Georgia Republican Newt Gingrich, attacks that heralded a new level of viciousness between the two parties in the House, Wright resigned and returned to Fort Worth. For most of the remainder of his life, he taught at Texas Christian University.

The TCU Press has traditionally published the history, culture, and literature of Texas and the American West. As the press has grown steadily in stature and in its ability to bring credit to its parent university over the last sixty years, it has been praised for publishing regional fiction, for discovering and preserving local history, and for contributing to meaningful discussions of social issues, such as race, class and gender.

In June 2023, the TCU Press launched a new website, www.tcupress.com, in conjunction with joining Longleaf Services for warehousing and distribution, title management and other services. Previously, TCU Press had been associated with the Texas A&M Book consortium. All titles, both current and back list, may be ordered from Longleaf by calling 800.848.6224 or by visiting www.tcupress.com.

TCU PRESS STAFF

Dan Williams, Director Abby Jennings, Production Manager Marco Roc, Editor James Lehr, Marketing Coordinator

Summer 2024

ten texas book award



Tracy Hull, dean of the TCU Library, presents Ron Tyler with a \$5,000 check and plaque.

On April 1, 2024, Friends the TCU Library awarded its eleventh Texas Book Award at a dinner given by the library and TCU Press.

The evening was filled with an amazing mix of friends, great food and plenty of wonderful conversation. Honestly, it was a highlight of the semester.

The Texas Book Award is awarded every two years to the winning author at a special dinner event. This year, we celebrated author Ron Tyler for his book Texas Lithographs: A Century of History in Images. A stunning and comprehensive collection of lithographs from 1818 to 1900 Texas. Tyler was presented with a \$5,000 award and plaque sponsored by the Friends of the TCU Library.

The TCU Texas Book Award recognizes the talent of an author who has written a significant book about Texas.

Winners of the TCU Texas Book Award are chosen according to their contributions to Texas history, culture and letters. Past winners have included scholarly histories, historical and contemporary fiction, coffeetable photography books and memoirs.

Dean of the Library, Tracy Hull, stated, "It was a wonderful event and always is a pleasure to honor authors who publish strong works highlighting Texas's cultural heritage."

Ron Tyler is a pillar of the Texas art and history communities having served as director of both the Amon Carter Museum of American Art in Fort Worth and the Texas State Historical Association, and is a noted professor of history. He is the author of a number of publications, including Audubon's Great National Work: The Royal Octavo Edition of The Birds of America, Western Art, Western History: Collected Essays, and The Art of Texas: 250 years. He also served as editor of the Southwestern Historical Quarterly and The New Handbook of Texas. Throughout his career he has organized a number of exhibitions and lectures widely on the international circuit.

It was an incredible evening as guests were immersed in lessons of history as Tyler gave an amusing narrative, accompanied by beautiful

and astonishing images ranging from documentary maps and portraits to advertisements and book illustrations. With deep research and lucid prose, he explained and showed the art of the nineteenth century and how printmakers navigated the challenges to picture Texas as it was or maybe as they hoped it could be.

"Ron Tyler shared his work with the audience and provided insight to his research and inspiration behind the book," says Hull. "Ron Tyler's presentation was captivating and a learning experience for everyone at the awards celebration."

Right: The famous American artist and ornithologist John James Audubon visited Texas with his son, John Woodhouse Audubon, in 1837 as he was finishing his majestic *The Birds of America* (1827–39). John Woodhouse drew this now-famous portrait of the Texas jackrabbit for Audubon's second large book *The Viviparous Quadrupeds of North America* (1845–46). Members of the Republic of Texas Congress nominated Audubon as an honorary citizen of the Republic, but the nomination hit a snag in committee.



TEXAS LITHOGRAPHS
A CENTURY OF HISTORY IN IMAGES . RON TYLER

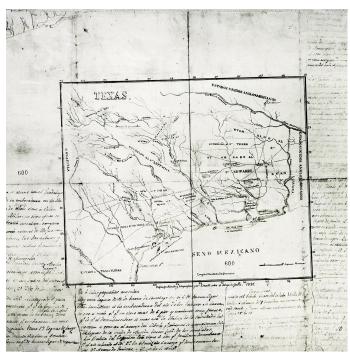
ABOUT THE BOOK

A stunning and comprehensive collection of lithographs from 1818 to 1900 Texas.

Westward expansion in the United States was deeply intertwined with the technological revolutions of the nineteenth century, from telegraphy to railroads. Among the most important of these, if often forgotten, was the lithograph. Before photography became a dominant medium, lithography—and later, chromolithography—enabled inexpensive reproduction of color illustrations, transforming journalism and marketing and nurturing, for the first time a global visual culture. One of the great subjects of the lithography book was an emerging Euro-American colony in the Americas: Texas.

The most complete collection of its kind Champ d'Asile and quite possible the most complete visual record of nineteenth-century Texas, period—*Texas Lithographs* is a gateway to the history of the Lone Star State in its most formative period. Whether they depict the early French colony of Champ d'Asile, the Republic of Texas and the war with Mexico, or urban growth, frontier exploration, and the key figures of a nascent Euro-American empire, the images collected here reflect an Eden of opportunity—a fairy-tale dream that remains foundational to Texans' sense of self and to the world's sense of Texas.

"Texas Lithographs is a gorgeous testament to Ron Tyler's long and deep fascination with the subject. The images—whether of people, cities, wildlife or cartoons—are beautifully reproduced and enhanced by Tyler's thematic chapters," Andrew R. Graybill of Southern Methodist University said. "[They] tell the story of nineteenth-century Texas in a striking new way. This is a book to savor."



The first separately published map of Texas, taken from one of Stephen F. Austin's maps submitted to the Mexican government.

IMAGES OFFER JUST A GLIMPSE AT THE VAST COLLECTION THAT IS TEXAS LITHOGRAPHS



First lithograph relating to Texas, an imaginary view of Napoleonic veteran in the East Texas wilds along the Trinity River. The refugee settlement was called Champ d'Asile (Field of Asylum or Refuge) and became a *cause célèbre* among anti-monarchists in Paris.

An absolutely wonderful book. The prose is crisp, direct, and a delight to read—all the way down to the footnotes. Beyond contextualizing the world of Texas-related lithographs, Tyler provides a unique vantage for viewing that most iconic of Texas centuries. I thought I knew nineteenth-century Texas well, but I found myself learning something new and fascinating in every chapter because I had not encountered the art of the era in this way.

— Andrew J. Torget, University of North Texas, author of *Seeds of Empire: Cotton, Slavery, and the Transformation of the Texas Borderlands*, 1800–1850

If you're searching for an exquisite illustrated book on Texas history, Ron Tyler's Texas Lithographs certainly fits the bill. Here's the catch: This 518-page book is far more than simply a pretty book to display on a coffee table. Tyler's book is a hybrid of stunning period images and tightly woven sentences that relate the origin story of Texas in a refreshingly new way.

— Wild West Magazine

Windows Into The Future

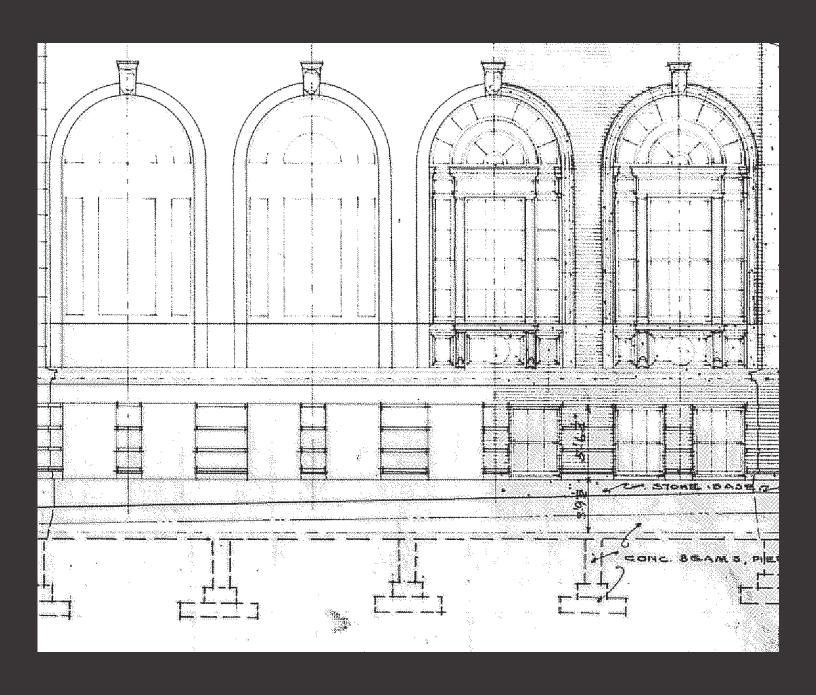


Image derived from the 1924 blueprints used to construct the Mary Couts Burnett Library. Construction on the historic building with its collegiate architecture began in 1924 and was completed in 1925.

As we near the 100-year anniversary of the Mary Couts Burnett Library, we are already beginning preparations for the next 100 years.

Completed in 1925, the Mary Couts Burnett Library was the first TCU building constructed on the east side of University drive.



The heart and soul of Texas Christian University, the Mary Couts Burnett Library, originally constructed in 1924, was a beautiful, small library designed to accommodate 500 to 1,000 students.

Since its opening, the building has been expanded three times — 1954, 1982 and 2015. The original portion of the library maintains the distinction of the historic Mary Couts Burnett Library. It includes the popular Gearhart Reading Room and its wood paneling as well as the government documents area on the second floor.

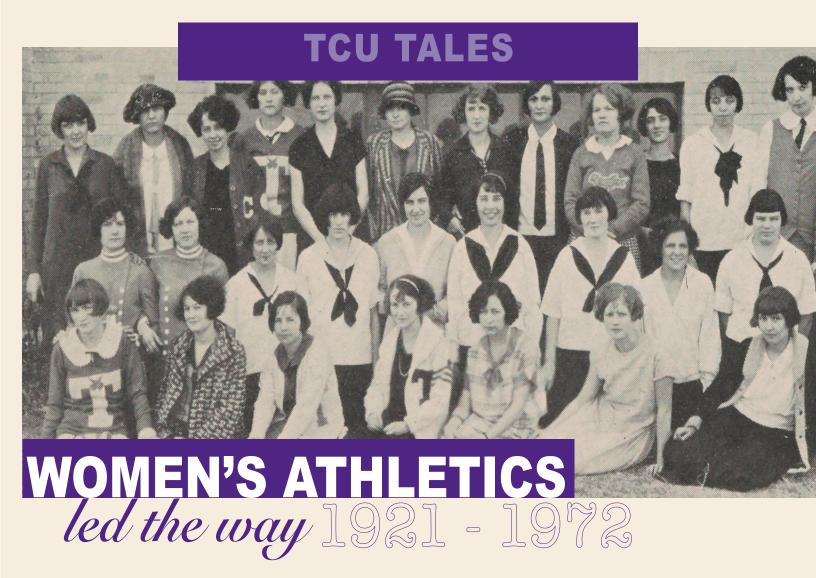
Despite the renovations, the library still holds the original windows on the south side a lovely fixture of the Gearhart Reading Room.

Save the Vate

Celebrate 100 Years TCU Mary Couts Burnett Library

An Evening of Great Conversation

February 27, 2025



In the early 20th century, female students played club sports, including tennis and basketball, and even established the Women's Athletics Association to formalize membership.

The Women's Athletic Association (WAA) was one of the most represented organizations at TCU. It was organized in 1921. The ideal being promoted was women's interest in physical education and physical athletic activities to include the woman of average as well as of exceptional ability. The WAA discouraged fast and hard competition indulged in varsity-type girl athletes. According to the Dec. 5, 1928, issue of the *Skiff*, "the sports girl of today is not mannish but loves to play for the sake of playing and not for the athletic prowess which she may gain."

At TCU, the contention was "every girl has her sport," some use a tennis racket, others swim, others do more organized "varsity" group sports. It was important for girls to know how to play sports but to also know the rules and etiquette of the major sports.

The Women's Athletic Association was largely responsible for the change in college girl athletes, strongly believing a well-rounded education for women should include a

knowledge of sports and health education.

The WAA held meetings the second Tuesday of every month and collected an annual dues of two dollars. One of the first requirements for membership in the association was good sportsmanship and a spirit of fair play. Its aim according to the Constitution and By-Laws was "to promote

Above: Women's Athletic Association 1925, wearers of the "T"

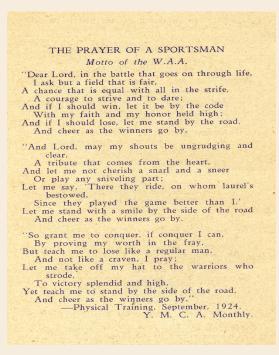
Left: Mrs. Donaldson, Girl's Athletic Director at TCU, 1925

all physical activities to encourage a spirit of good sportsmanship, loyalty, honor, fair play and love of the game as such."

It maintained a point system based on physical activity in each sport:

- 1. 100 points Letter
- 2. 600 points "T" Pin
- 3. 900 Points "T" Sweater
- 4. 1400 Points "T" Blankets

The WAA Council was "the nucleus" around which the association worked. It included social activities and the annual week-end





Left: Motto of the Women's Athletic Association, "A Prayer of A Sportsman"

> 1925 Girls' Basket Ball Team: Hayden, Horton, Bush, West, McCall, Funkhouser, Russell, Ellington and Mills (Captain)

camp to Lake Worth where hiking, swimming, canoeing, leadership training and more were part of the activities that every girl in the WAA looked forward to.

Title IX of the Civil Rights Act was enacted in 1972 to prohibit discrimination based on sex in education programs and activities. Tennis and rifle became the first varsity women's sports at TCU. Today, TCU offers thirteen women's sports.





Left: Women's
Athletic Association:
TCU Swim, Tennis,
and Basketball
Teams in 1925.
Other sports
included baseball,
handball, hiking,
skating, track
volleyball and
outing club.

The Special Collections department collects and preserves rare and unique materials including rare books, oral histories, university archives, historical manuscripts, maps, photographs, art and artifacts. TCU Tales are compiled from photos, papers, memorabilia and documents in the University Archives.

Friends of the TCU Library

One of the University library system's most valuable resources is our network of passionate advocates, Friends of the TCU Library. Since 1972, the Friends have advocated for a strong library system. Their assistance has allowed the library to expand resources, services, operations and improve our facilities. The Friends are committed to helping the library maintain its excellence and has funded more than \$1,000,000 in materials and library services over the years. Their mission is to build a greater realization of the importance of the library to the future development of the University. Friends receive:

- Borrowing privileges
- Invitations to special events
- A subscription to the Windows newsletter

Friends' benefits range from borrowing privileges to accessing databases, depending on the membership level. For more information about the Friends, visit library.tcu.edu/friends.

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Mary Couts Burnett hosts artist Brenda Ciardiello



Artist Brenda Ciardiello with pieces of her artwork.

As part of the library's Visiting Artist Workshop series, Fort Worth artist, Brenda Ciardiello, shared her creative concepts and inspiration with students as they learned to create a botanical watercolor painting.

Brenda Ciardiello is a Mexican-American interdisciplinary artist and poet born in Mexico City and based in Texas. Incorporating painting, sculpture, and elements of photography, she describes her work as a manifested yearning to propagate roots, to cultivate connection through engagements with the natural world and memory over the course of a lifetime—her art gives her a different lens to view the world.

Throughout her career, Ciardiello has focused on education and art. During the workshop, she introduced students to the wonderful world of watercolor art—from color mixing and brush techniques to creating beautiful composition. Ciardiello's knowledge and artistry helped nurture students skills, develop creative confidence as well as ignite artistic passion.

"I love the wild and serendipitous results you get from painting with water. Often something turns out more beautifully than I could have ever made happen on purpose – and that's thrilling," Ciardiello said.

"When looking through the artists who responded to our call, Ciardiello's work, with its focus on botanicals and memory, seemed like a perfect workshop to introduce TCU students to contemporary art and contemporary art concepts," said Christine Drake-Thomas, the library's innovation collaborator.

The art workshops are made possible thanks to a generous donation from Ross Matthews to the College of Fine Arts.





Left: Brenda Ciardiello introducing creative concepts to students.

Student learning to paint a desert cactus using watercolors and step-by-step instructions. (photos by Paxton Crews)



