

# NEWSLETTER

University of Central Oklahoma

SPRING 2025

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## COLLECTION HIGHLIGHT

### The Clara Kessler Collection: Artifacts from a Broncho with a Spirit of Adventure

Clara Kessler's roots in the history of Edmond and the University of Central Oklahoma run deep. Her family moved to Oklahoma Territory in 1906, and to Edmond in 1918.

She received her high school degree from the Demonstration School on the campus of what was then Central State Normal School and graduated from Central State Teachers College (now UCO) in 1934. She earned her M.A. degree at Columbia University and went on to teach English in various Oklahoma schools, including the Edmond public schools.

Able to take summers off because she was a teacher, Kessler spent the summer of 1943 working for the Army Air Corps in Washington, D.C. in support of the effort of the United States and the Allies to achieve victory in World War II.

In the fall of 1943, she became an Assistant Professor of English and head of the English and Speech department in the Demonstration School at Central State Teachers College. During her time as a faculty member at Central she was a member of the American Association of University Women, faculty sponsor of the senior class, and president of the local chapter of the Kappa Delta Phi education honor society.

In 1947 Kessler accepted a position as an Associate Professor of English at Eastern Washington College in Cheney, Washington. Six years later, she was awarded a Fulbright grant to teach English at the Women's University in Tokyo, Japan. An article in the July 23, 1953 issue of the Edmond



Clara Kessler

Booster reported that "Miss Kessler has been granted a year's leave of absence from Eastern Washington College in Cheney, Washington, and will sail for Japan on August 22."

Once in Japan, Kessler immersed herself in exploring the country and experiencing Japanese culture. Photos and postcards in her collection reveal that she visited Osaka, Kyoto, Hiroshima, Kobe, and various rural villages (known as Satoyama) and notes on the backs of the photos and cards indicate that she sampled sukiyaki and sushi and made many friends among the students and teachers at the Women's University in Tokyo. Many of the people with whom she formed friendships continued to correspond with her after she returned to the United States.

Kessler's experiences while teaching in Japan led her to become interested in international education. On her return to Eastern

Washington College, she assumed the role of foreign student advisor of the college in addition to her position as an associate professor of English. Three years later she toured six South American countries as part of a group of U.S. educators. During the tour, she and the other members of the group were guests of the ministries of education in the cities and countries they visited.

In 1969, Miss Kessler retired and returned to her roots in Edmond, bringing with her the correspondence, photographs, personal documents, postcards and souvenirs she had accumulated during her travels and her career.

The collection was donated to UCO and resides today in the UCO Archives and Special Collections Department of Max Chambers Library. Persons interested in the collection can view an exhibit of a selection of the souvenirs and postcards in the library display area on second floor. They may also contact the Archives and Special Collections department by phone at 405-974-2888 or by email at [archives@uco.edu](mailto:archives@uco.edu) to access the collection for research.



# LIBRARY REPORT

Every three years the library has hosted the LibQUAL survey on campus, and we ran it again this year from March 24 – April 20. This online survey is sent to all students, faculty, and staff to seek out information on how we are doing with our spaces, materials, and services. Additionally, we gather more input at the library using white boards on each floor to find out information such as what types of spaces students enjoy in the library, how much time do they spend in the library outside of class, and what kind of services or equipment would they like to see more of in the Innovation Studio. Since students often study in the same spaces each time they come to the library, the questions are moved around the library each week to gather opinions from different library users. These responses are gathered alongside the LibQUAL survey responses and will help us identify a bigger picture regarding any gaps in our services. We look forward to seeing how we can continue to meet the needs of our campus community.



*Risa Jensen-Jones, Director of Research and Library Engagement*



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# EXHIBITS

## THE ROYAL AIR FORCE IN OKLAHOMA

The Royal Air Force (RAF) formed on April 1, 1918. As planes and gliders improved toward the end of World War I, demand for them surged. When World War II began in 1939, the German Air Force (Luftwaffe) bombarded and confused the British people. London and the British countryside lived under constant fear of being shelled by planes overhead. After enduring blackouts, with British citizens covering all light sources in their homes, and experiencing extreme rationing on rubber, books, canned food, fresh food, and many other comforts, most British teens joined the RAF, eager to contribute to the war effort.

When the British commanders decided on which cadets were to be sent to their respective schools, the cadets going to Oklahoma were told to be extremely polite. A little blue book called, *Notes for Your Guidance*, was issued to the cadets. In this book, it stated that the American Prairie was filled with hardworking, honest people. The cadets were expected to be on their best behavior, how to politely answer questions and follow other guidelines related to hospitality. At both Darr and Spartan schools, the RAF cadets were greeted with a warm welcome and soon began Link Training.

Link Training was the process used at the time and eventually evolved into our modern flight simulators. Cadets would climb into the cockpit of the Link Trainer and the instructors would lead them through a detailed flight plan to see how the student would do under stress. Ponca City had four female Link instructors, one of whom was Lillian Bowles (Taylor). At the age of 19, she earned her student pilot license. Lillian began to work for Darr School of Aeronautics as a secretary. She went on to marry Harold Taylor, she was quickly fired after because it was against school policy to marry the RAF cadets. Lillian went back and fervently requested for her job back. She used her pilots license to obtain the position as Link Instructor.

The RAF pilots who saw the end of World

War II were offered to reinstate their status as civil workers. A few stayed in the military because of their love of flying and some went to work for commercial airlines. Quite a few of the men went on to become businessmen, teachers, bankers, jewelers and cab drivers. Some even started working with the new and ever advancing world of computers.

The Special Collections received this collection from Paula Denson. After a career of dentistry, she founded a non-profit organization that is vested in researching and preserving history in north to central Oklahoma. As a Ponca City native, Denson served on the board of the Friends of Marland's Grand Home Foundation. Lillian Taylor's personal items had been at the Ponca City airport before the Marland Foundation acquired them and later allowed Denson to use them for her book. Much of the collection Denson donated consists of primary sources, with a few secondary sources included. You may visit the library's website to learn more about the [RAF Collection](#).



*Darr School Flight Instructors*



*Darr School of Aeronautics sign*



*Lillian Bowles Taylor, early 2000s*

# INNOVATION STUDIO SPOTLIGHT

## *THE CRICUT MAKER 3*

The Cricut Maker 3 has been one of the most popular tools in the Innovation Studio this semester, with over 20 students and staff utilizing it for both personal and academic projects. This smart cutting machine allows users to create intricate designs on materials like vinyl, cardstock, fabric, and more. The Innovation Studio provides this tool to give students, faculty, and staff hands-on access to professional-quality crafting and design technology, supporting both creative projects and academic work in an accessible, collaborative space.

From designing stickers and buttons to crafting intricate cards, magnets, and car decals, the possibilities are endless. Patrons have used the Cricut for everything from creative expression to class assignments, showcasing its versatility and ease of use. For example, student organizations have used the Cricut to create custom stickers and buttons to promote their events, while graphic design students have incorporated it into coursework, designing event materials as part of a hands-on assignment.

To highlight its capabilities, we recently hosted an open house where patrons had the opportunity to design and create their own bookmarks using the Cricut. The event was a great success, drawing in students eager to explore digital design and precision cutting. Time and time again, we see that hands-on creativity sparks engagement, and the Cricut continues to be a favorite tool for bringing ideas to life.



# JEAN LONGO RETIRES

Congratulations to Jean Longo on her retirement this May! Jean has served UCO as a research and learning librarian for 11 years (with a brief hiatus at OUHSC). She is a hard-worker who will be sorely missed by the faculty, students, and, most especially, her library colleagues. Her colleagues point to her kindness, helpfulness, perseverance, and general cheerful demeanor as some of the things they will miss about Jean and her work at the library.

In a conversation with Jean, she called these colleagues her “work family.” These “wonderful people who help without pause” are what make retirement such a tough decision and what she will miss the most when she leaves. The ease of working with Jean and her happy personality helped her forge relationships across campus. One example is the work she has done with the nursing department, making library instruction and research assistance an integral part of the learning process. Jean considers this work her greatest accomplishment and notes the feelings of appreciation she received from students and faculty alike.

Within the research and learning team at the library, Jean has been a joy to work with and we are sad to see her go. She is truly irreplaceable. Yet, we are excited for her to begin her retirement adventure – biking, sailing, and having more time to create her art. If Jean could leave us all with one statement, it would be this: “Thank you for making my job so enjoyable.” The sentiment is mutual, Jean. Thank you for making our job so enjoyable.

“I’ve been fortunate enough to have been able work with Jean for both of her stints with us over the past 11 or so years. Jean is so many things it is hard to define her or know where to begin—she’s been a nurse, a librarian, she sails, bikes and is an amazing visual artist. But what I am going to miss the most about her is hearing her laugh. Jean always has fascinating stories of life and being able to laugh along with her has been one of my most favorite things during my time here. She has a way of really brightening our office area and I am going to miss our talks and all of the shared laughter. Best in all of the things you are going to accomplish in retirement, Jean!” -Jeff Musslewhite

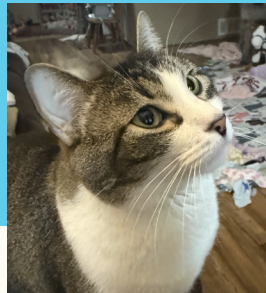


*Jean Longo, Research and Learning Librarian, Coordinator of Undergraduate Research Services*

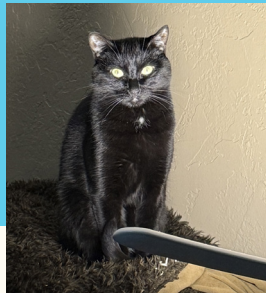


# AROUND THE LIBRARY

## PETS OF THE CHAMBERS LIBRARY



*Bellamy*



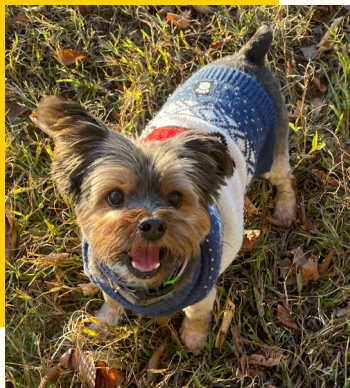
*Claire*



*Panzer, grey and white,  
and Scar, orange and white*

### THE LONG FAMILY

The Long Family is full of furry friends and belong to Library Specialist, William Long. Bellamy, who is a noble cuddle bug (on his terms), Claire, the extremely gentle “biscuit maker”, Panzer, a happy soul who loves to follow dad around the house, and Scar, who likes his alone time!

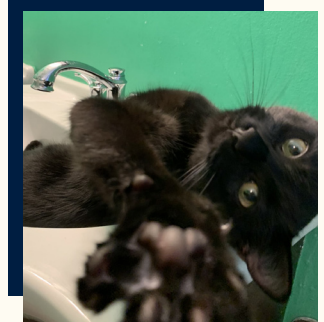


### TUCKER JEGELEWICZ

Tucker is a 12-year-old Standard Yorkie and belongs to our Graphic Designer, Casadee Jegelwicz, but he acts like a puppy! He loves to snuggle with mom, go for walks, watch his birds on the bird feeder, and nothing makes his day brighter than playing fetch with his favorite pop tart toy!

Meet Randy, he belongs to Kaitlyn Palone, our Metadata and Cataloging Librarian. He is 10 months old and is obsessed with water. He gets in the shower with us almost daily and loves to lie in the sink. His mom says “He’s a real piece of work who picks on his older brother Wiley several times a day and has a real biting problem, but we still love him.”

### RANDY HICKS

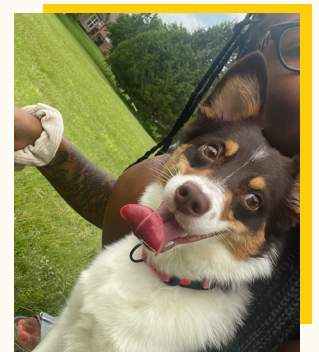


### HENRY BAKER



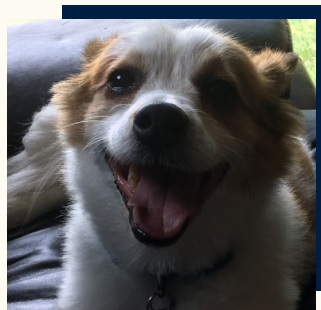
Henry belongs to Julie Baker, our library Business Manager and is best described as resilient. While he has been blind for the last four years, he does not let his inability to see get him down. He is energetic and loves to go for walks and play ball in the backyard. Henry is very expressive and vocal. If he could talk, we know he would have a lot to say.

### KORA STEVENSON



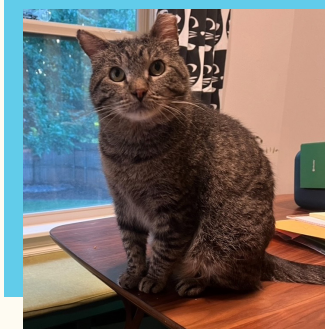
This is Kona, the beloved pet of Library Technician, Rachel Huddleston. He is part Corgi/Papillon/dryer lint. He was surrendered twice to the shelter for his epilepsy. If they had known, he would have been put down. We don’t mind his foibles. Like any good herder, he knows who the weakest person in the room is and will guard them. Unless someone else has food. 10/10 Good Boy.

### KONA HUDDLESTON



Kora belongs to Amaya Stevenson, our Social Media Specialist. She is two years old, and she’s an Aussie-Corgi mix. She loves to play outside, cuddle, go on car rides, and bark at the broom!

### MR. BIG & CLAUDIA MUSSLEWHITE



Mr. Big and Miss Clawdia are the cats of Library Specialist Jeff Musslewhite and his wife Julie Whittinghill. Mr. Big began his life on the streets as a feral cat but later decided he liked the inside life better and “adopted” a foster family from whom Jeff and Julie then adopted him. Despite a hard life as an outside street tom-cat Biggs is a loving boy who enjoys nothing more than sleeping in a sunny window and destroying every drinking straw he comes into contact with.

Miss Clawdia was one of the adoptable cats at the Don’t Stress Meowt Cat Café in downtown OKC. She very quickly ingratiated herself on Jeff and Julie after only one visit and then subsequently was adopted by them. In addition to being a ferocious stuffed mouse hunter, Clawdia loves sleeping exclusively on furniture she’s been told not to sleep on and ignoring every expensive bed or cat perch that Julie has purchased specifically to keep her off said furniture. Julie and Jeff thank Safe Haven Animal Rescue and Don’t Stress Meowt for bringing these two into their lives.

### NEW EMPLOYEES



*Juliet Alavicheh, ILS Admin and  
Software Developer*

#### JULIET ALAVICHEH

Juliet is from OKC and a graduate of UCO where she studied primarily liberal arts, language, and art/design. She has worked and volunteered in libraries her entire life, including with the Metropolitan Library System at the Choctaw, Edmond, and Village public libraries. Most recently she served as an engagement specialist providing STEAM and other programming, as well as reference and technology assistance and instruction for the public. She also served as a staff trainer during the ILS transition at Metro. Outside of work, she enjoys all kinds of games, speculative fiction (she owns a copy of the Silmarillion), nonfiction (too many), and art. Also, if you speak another language, she wants to hear about it!

#### WILLIAM LONG

Will’s love of history and literature began in his childhood. He was homeschooled for most of his younger years, his dad traveled a lot for work and he and his mother would tag along. She made sure that he read a good number of books and took him to every museum and historical site she could. Closer to graduating high school, he chose to attend culinary school at OSU-Okmulgee Institute of Technology and worked in the industry for a very short time. Right after graduation, he was offered to play college tennis at Southwestern Christian University in Bethany. He graduated with a bachelor’s in liberal arts and minor in Biblical Studies. He worked for a semester as a substitute teacher and realized that it was not for him. Will found the Museum Studies program at the University of Central Oklahoma. After graduating with his Master’s, Will worked at the Museum of the Bible until being laid off during the pandemic. He worked at his family’s gun shop, where he earned firearm instructor status, until he started working for UCO. Will has a wife and two beautiful daughters and is also a cat lover, of which he has four.



*William Long, Library Specialist,  
Special Collections*



# STAFF IN THE NEWS



*Kaitlyn Palone, Librarian II,  
Metadata and Cataloging*

## ZINE COLLECTION HIGHLIGHT

The Melton Zine Library has a new home at Chambers Library, and they are ready for checkout. Zines are small self-published magazines, and our collection covers everything from punk rock to women in commercial fishing.

One of Kaitlyn's very favorite zines in our collection is a small zine titled *You've Got This! Little Peach's Pocket Guide to Felling Okay* by Elsa Hingley-Knight. She thinks everyone can see a little of themselves in Little Peach. Adorably illustrated we see Little Peach sassy and full of confidence one day, to not feeling so great the next. Little Peach gives a little advice on how they cope with it that everyone can relate to, and if you can't, come take a look there's definitely something in the collection for everyone.



*Risa Jensen-Jones, Director of Research and Library Engagement*

## RISA JENSEN-JONES

This year, Risa was elected to the OK-ACRL board as an at-large board member serving for 2025 and 2026, trained as a campus Title IX procedural advisor, became a juror for the 2025 American Library Association/American Institute of Architects Library Building Awards, became a member of the UCO Artificial Intelligence Community of Practice, and was certified as an Alma Administrator and Primo Administrator.

## AI BEHIND THE HEADLINES

On February 1st, Risa Jensen-Jones (Director of Research and User Engagement) and Nicole Sump-Crethar (Director of Library Technology and Data Management) led a presentation at the Edmond Public Library titled "Artificial Intelligence: Behind the Headlines." We explored a variety of headlines over the previous year touching on AI in medicine, education, and social circles. We also discussed the wide variety of ethical implications for the use of AI, including disinformation, hallucinations, the impact on jobs, and how to stay safe in the age of AI. The session had over 20 attendees who were very engaged on the topic. Attendees were so interested in what was covered, that the session lasted past the hour it was scheduled for, and many asked for additional sessions to dive deeper into how to use AI.



*Nicole Sump-Crethar, Dir. of  
Technology and Data Management*



*Shay Beezley, Assistant Director,  
Metadata & Cataloging*

## FELLOW FOR THE MOUNTAIN PLAINS LIBRARY ASSOCIATION LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

Shay Beezley, Assistant Director of Metadata & Cataloging, has been accepted as a 2025 Fellow for the Mountain Plains Library Association Leadership Institute. Held in Estes Park, CO this May, the program is dedicated to empowering library professionals to drive innovation, enhance services, and build stronger partnerships. Participation in the institute is determined through a competitive application process, and Shay is one of three Oklahoma librarians selected to participate. Additionally, Shay was selected as one of two inaugural recipients of the Past Presidents' Scholarship, which provides \$1,000 towards the cost of the Institute, in recognition of her service to MPLA.

## OKLAHOMA LIBRARY ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT

Shay Beezley, assistant director of metadata and cataloging at Chambers Library, has been elected by the Oklahoma Library Association (OLA) to serve as its next president. Beezley's three-year term begins in July 2025. She will serve as president beginning in July 2026. Founded in 1907, OLA is an active community of more than 750 librarians and library workers across the state. The membership has endeavored to remain true to OLA's mission, promoting and strengthening Oklahoma libraries. OLA has done this through advocacy to lawmakers, support for intellectual freedom, development of continuing education opportunities and much more. Beezley has been an active member of the association through service in various capacities, including chair of the University & College Division and leading several committees.

"Shay has achieved a new height in her professional development. To receive this level of recognition from statewide peers is nothing but a great honor. This brings joy and satisfaction to all of us as it demonstrates that our work matters and makes a difference. Shay's achievement highlights the high caliber of Central's workforce. I am very proud of Shay's impactful dedication and certain that more success is awaiting her." -Library Executive Director, Habib Tabatabai

Since beginning her career at Central in 2012, Beezley has embraced the university's value for leadership. In addition to overseeing metadata and cataloging operations at Chambers Library, she has advocated on behalf of her colleagues in Staff Senate and has nurtured connections between Chambers Library and other institutions through shared institutional repositories, cooperative cataloging programs, leading conference programming for the Ex Libris-Users of North America and creating the award-winning Metadata Justice in Oklahoma Libraries & Archives Symposium. Programs such as Leadership UCO, OLA Gold Leadership Institute and an upcoming Mountain Plains Library Association Leadership Institute have allowed Beezley to continually hone her leadership skills for the betterment of both the university and the library community. In OLA's more than century-long history, Beezley will be the fifth librarian from Central to serve as president.



*Karl Siewert, Emerging and Immersive  
Technology Librarian*

## BOOK COLLABORATION

Karl collaborated on a chapter in the new book *Grabbing Tea: Queer Conversations on Identity and Libraries* from Litwin Books. <https://litwinbooks.com/books/grabbing-tea/>





## CONGRATULATIONS, DR. EDWARDS!



*Dr. Christine Edwards, Librarian III, Co-ordinator of Graduate Research Services*

On August 16, 2024, UCO's Graduate Studies Librarian Christine Edwards received her Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) in Learning and Organizational Change from Baylor University. Her dissertation research focused on librarian turnover after the COVID-19 pandemic and during the subsequent Great Resignation. The population for her study included academic librarians at public universities in the South Central United States (Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Texas). Her convergent mixed methods approach identified statistically significant and socially impactful connections between librarians' affect, role ambiguity, role overload, and turnover intentions. She presented her findings at the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) conference on April 4, 2025. ACRL is the academic libraries division of the American Library Association (ALA) and she was part of less than 50% of submissions that were accepted for this year's conference. She hopes to publish her findings in a research journal soon.

## EMPLOYEE OF THE QUARTER



*Amaya Stevenson, Marketing Specialist*

### AMAYA STEVENSON

The Library is proud to congratulate Amaya Stevenson as our Employee of the Quarter. Amaya has been with the library for two years and works as the Marketing Assistant. Amaya has continually been dedicated to her work and always goes above and beyond to ensure that the library's messaging gets out in a fun and unique way. She has stepped up and taken on new responsibilities with Nicole Willard's departure and made certain that this time of transition has seemed nearly seamless. In her free time, Amaya enjoys reading Stephen King novels, going to the movie theatre, and spending time with her dog Kora! Thank you, Amaya, for all that you do!



*Casadee Jegelwicz, Graphic Designer*

### CASADEE JEGELEWICZ

The Library is proud to congratulate Casadee Jegelwicz as our Employee of the Quarter. Casadee has always produced great work that truly sets the library apart from other groups on campus. Our advertising and graphics are consistently among the most eye-catching around campus. She always approaches designs with a sense of what is best for the message or event while imbuing each design with elements that make you want to stop and look to see what new the library has going on! Her sticker designs are the envy of the campus and highly anticipated each semester. Even during this semester of change and transition she has continued to step-up and take on more responsibilities to ensure that nothing we have done in the past was forgotten or eliminated. Her work continues to set us apart and makes you smile each day! Thanks Casadee for all you do!



**Friends of Chambers Library**  
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Max Chambers Library  
Campus Box 192  
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**MON. - THURS. 7:30 A.M. - 9 P.M.**

**FRI. 7:30 A.M. - NOON**

**SAT. 10 A.M. - 6 P.M.**

**SUN. NOON - 9 P.M.**