Joe Nosek increases Coe’s collection one book at a time

“I’m looking for things for myself, so I might as well look for things for Coe too,” says 1974 Coe grad Joe Nosek, as he describes the process he’s used to bring Coe a steady stream of books over the past two years.

“These are books we really are searching for,” adds head librarian Richard Doyle. He explains that Nosek spots titles in his weekly issues of American Bookman that look as if they might be of interest to Coe, then he checks with Doyle to see if he’d like them for the collection.

“The next thing I know, Joe is walking in with the books and giving them to the library free of charge,” says Doyle with some disbelief. So far, Nosek has given Coe 27 books as gifts-in-kind. They are in a wide range of fields—nine National Book Award winners, William L. Shirer’s (Coe ’25) book An August to Remember, an autographed copy of Paul Engle’s (Coe ’31) West of Midnight, and The History of Cedar Rapids by Janette Stevenson Murray (Coe 1896).

An October 1990 copy of The Pulse magazine published every six weeks by Washington High School students came to the Coe library after Nosek noticed the masthead. The staff artist listed for that issue was Grant Wood (he’d done the cover illustration), and assistant staff artist was Marvin Cone (who had drawn a cartoon of teacher Sam Coneybear and his bride on an elephant in Siam during their honeymoon).

“He’s making me a better archivist,” says head librarian Richard Doyle of Nosek. “His interests are so broad.” Doyle illustrates this by noting that Nosek first gave the library $500 to buy biology books in memory of Prof. R.V. Drexler. “Then his (Nosek’s) interest in local history brought historical titles, followed by art books concerning Wood and Cone, and later poetry of Engle and Jay Sigmund.” Nosek’s employer, Quaker Oats, matched his gift with $600, enabling the library to purchase 44 books in the last year.

When these 44 are added to the 27 titles Nosek hand-selected and gave to the college, the total of new books for Coe’s library grows to 71—an impressive number coming from one individual.

Nosek has also brought new visitors to Stewart Library through his efforts on behalf of the Coe-Mounds View Neighborhood Association. After extensive research into the local history of the neighborhood bordering the Coe campus, Nosek organized Grant Wood Neighborhood Days to call attention to the historic area around Polk School and Central Park Presbyterian Church.

He prepared a self-guided walking tour brochure to identify historic homes associated with artist Grant Wood, his teachers, and his family, who lived at 318 14th Street for 14 years. “I’ve noticed that some of the people living in these houses today have started fixing them up. They’re feeling some pride in the history,” says Nosek, who has also distributed 1,200 marigold seeds to the children at Polk School.

Last fall he and his organization planned an ice cream social, trolley tour of the neighborhood, dedication of a memorial stone, and display of historic memorabilia among the Grant Wood murals in the Coe library to launch the first Grant Wood Day.

The second Grant Wood Day is planned for this coming July 2, in conjunction with Cedar Rapids week-long Freedom Festival.

Nosek adds, “I feel Coe was kind of instrumental in getting us going too,” noting that the college provided a place to meet and sends a representative to the monthly meetings. Coe’s library will again display historic clippings and photos on July 2.
Treasures among new additions to archives, alumni collections

Thanks to gifts from alumni and purchases through the Coe College Library Association, 71 new publications by and about Coe alumni and faculty have been added to the library's archives since last summer.

Several volumes were given by alumni who saw last summer's alumni book display in the Richter Room and thought of additional books they could contribute.

Jean Coneybear Mills recalled a published translation she had by her Spanish professor at Coe, Dr. Boyd G. Carter. Another book, *Dawn to Dawn: About Alzheimer's Disease: A Love Story*, was sent by alumna author Kathryn MacPike Beaudreau. Using the pseudonym Sidney Groves, Beaudreau wrote this book to share her experiences coping with her husband's illness with Alzheimer's Disease.

Coe Prof. William Flanagan's new book, *Contemporary Urban Sociology*, is among the additions, as is Dale Mayer's *Lou Henry Hoover: Essays on a Busy Life*, which contains an essay by Coe Prof. Rosemary Carroll.

Wherever possible, a copy of these books is available for use outside the library in addition to the copy held in the archives. However, this can't be done for such rare finds as the newly acquired autographed copy of 1931 alumnus Paul Engle's *Break the Heart's Anger*, written while Engle was a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford.

A complete list of the year's new titles for the archives' alumni collection follows, in what is to be an annual Bibliophile feature:


Licorice for learning?

When head librarian Richard Doyle sampled some complimentary strawberry licorice Tim Walsh (Coe '67) had sent to Vice President David Ostrander (Coe '74), Doyle wanted to order a supply for student library users to enjoy during finals week. Walsh, who operates the American Licorice Company in the Chicago area, sent 12 free cannisters of the company's finest product to the Coe li-

rary for the students.

Appreciative students posing with December's readied supply are, from left, Doug Lee, Liz Lucas, and Pat Krumholz.

Word quickly spread that each day's supply was set out at about the same time each morning. Students soon began coming downstairs early from their study perches to ask, "Is it gone yet?"

A Cedar Rapids landmark from the library's Winnifred S. Cone Gallery is on tour in New York through June.

"Little Bobemia Tavern," the 1941 oil painting by Marvin Cone that is a favorite with visitors to Coe's galleries, has been lent to the Nassau County Museum of Art in New York.

Included in an exhibition titled "American Realism Between the Wars," the painting depicts the popular Cedar Rapids tavern still operating on Third Street S.E.
Six Conger Metcalf works added to Coe collection

Six new additions to the Conger Metcalf Collection have come to the library galleries this spring. They are from the private collection of Boston friend of the college George P. Fanning, and were given by him and the artist.

2 Otis Place (1964) is an oil and graphite interior of Metcalf’s home in Boston. Two related works—preliminary sketches of the subject—were also given as an example of the creative process and the central focus of drawing in all of Metcalf’s work.

The second new group of pieces includes two early works. Stone City Landscape (1932-33) was done while Metcalf was a student at Grant Wood’s summer Stone City Art Colony School. Apple and Pears Still Life is another early oil work, and it was given by Fanning, Metcalf, and friend and business associate Marguerite Gurekian.

Drawing on Seventeenth Century Paper is a 1976 pen and ink drawing with ink wash that was included in Metcalf’s 1990 Retrospective Exhibition, as was 2 Otis Place. The drawing was given by Fanning and Metcalf.

These additions bring to 43 the number of works in the library’s Conger Metcalf Collection.

Library and Gallery Hours

Stewart Memorial Library and Galleries are open Monday - Thursday from 8 a.m. to midnight, Friday 8 a.m. to 10 p.m., Saturday 9 a.m. to 10 p.m., and Sundays 1 p.m. to midnight during the academic year. Summer hours, starting May 23, will be Monday - Thursday 8 a.m. to 10 p.m., Friday 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., and Sunday 1 to 5 p.m. The library is closed on summer Saturdays.

Admission is always free. Coe alumni and Cedar Rapids visitors may check out library materials by registering at the circulation desk.