HALE LIBRARY
Recovering from disaster, rebuilding for the future
If you’ve spent time in Hale Library over the years, there’s a good chance you’ve experienced a fire alarm. K-State Libraries employees have been through dozens, so they know the drill. Leave the building. Guide other occupants away from the entrances. Use the walkie talkies to communicate with the building manager, who communicates with administration and the fire department.

Eventually, they call the “all clear.” Everyone reenters the building. But on Tuesday, May 22, 2018, events unfolded differently. Employees in the Academic Learning Center on the fourth floor called the building manager to say that they smelled smoke.

Minutes later, the fire alarm went off. Fire crews swarmed the building. No one called the “all clear.” No one reentered Hale Library.

More than seventy emergency personnel responded to the three-alarm fire, which burned intermittently for nearly ten hours.

ON MAY 22, A FIRE DEVASTATED HALE LIBRARY. SINCE THEN, WE’VE WORKED TO SAVE THE COLLECTIONS, PRESERVE THE BUILDING’S HISTORICAL ELEMENTS AND FIND NEW WAYS TO DELIVER SERVICES TO THE K-STATE COMMUNITY.

BY SARAH MCGREER HOYT

If you’ve spent time in Hale Library over the years, there’s a good chance you’ve experienced a fire alarm. K-State Libraries employees have been through dozens, so they know the drill. Leave the building. Guide other occupants away from the entrances. Use the walkie talkies to communicate with the building manager, who communicates with administration and the fire department.

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Meanwhile, in Dallas, Tex., Dean of Libraries Lori Goetsch was getting ready for the closing banquet at a conference when she received a K-State alert via text. That’s how she received the news that a fire was in progress.

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In Manhattan, Mike Haddock, associate dean, paced around the building trying to make sense of what he was seeing.

“If you looked up at the east end of the Great Room near the roof, there’s a little window, and you could see thick brown smoke coming out of it,” he said. “This is a long way from where they smelled smoke in the Academic Learning Center, so I’m thinking, ‘Why is there smoke coming out there?’ Then I walked around to the other side and there was smoke coming out from under the eaves on the north side of the Great Room.”

Meanwhile, firemen wearing oxygen tanks meant to last 20 minutes were rotating in and out of the building in teams. Because the smoke was so thick and so much exertion was required for them to make their way to the far end of the building on the fourth floor, the first responders went in for about fifteen minutes at a time.

“I watched them when they came out,” Haddock said. “They ripped their stuff off, and then they would lie on the ground. A couple of them were given oxygen while the next group went in.”

ON THE GROUND

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THE UNKNOWN

Before inspections by the federal fire marshal, structural engineer and others were complete, before Libraries employees were allowed in the building and before crews started the massive process of packing out books, answers were in short supply. Were the collections dry? Would the technology be salvageable? Would Hale Library open in days, weeks or months? Librarians were dogged by questions, but information was scarce.

In fact, for most employees with offices in Hale, work came to a screeching halt: They had no access to the building, computer files or library resources. There was nothing to do but wait.

Meanwhile, IT Services personnel worked nonstop to restore vital online systems that went down during the fire, including the university’s website, email, payroll, financial aid and teaching software, all of which ran on servers in a Hale Library basement data center. Much of the campus community was paralyzed without the tools they needed to do their jobs.

On May 23, Goetsch got off a plane and went straight into a two-hour debriefing. During a break, she walked over to see Hale Library for the first time since the fire.

“It was heartbreaking,” Goetsch said. “As we walked up, you could hear the water flowing inside the building. Waves of smoke were still coming out of the windows and doors, and the smell was overpowering. Honestly, I was devastated.”

— DEAN LORI GOETSCH

Water pools across the Great Room floor. Historic Farrell Library was the most severely damaged portion of the building. The original oak library tables in the Great Room were warped beyond repair.

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The fire burned through the south side of the Great Room roof in two separate places. While the murals below suffered extensive water damage, every effort will be made to save them.

A collapsing drop ceiling drapes over the equipment check out desk. Water cascaded from the Great Room into information technology offices on the second floor.

The post-recovery inventory itemized more than 1,970 pieces of technology—monitors, laptops and more. Most were unsalvageable.

Portions of Farrell Library’s roof, attic and ceiling were destroyed. The hole was covered by a temporary roof (at top); charred plaster, debris and beams remained.

Portions of plasterwork were damaged by water and fell from the walls, like this decorative capital.
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Things only got worse on May 24 when Goetsch and President Myers were among the initial group who were allowed to survey the damage. “Water was cascading down the walls in Room 117 and standing in pools in the Great Room,” Goetsch said. “I can’t convey how difficult it was to comprehend the scope of the destruction. We walked through all five floors, and the one silver lining was that our special collections on the fifth floor were dry.”

As soon as Belfor Property Restoration, an international disaster response agency, was on the ground, they began working with the employees most responsible for collection management, especially Talbot and Michelle Turvey-Welch, head of metadata, preservation and digital initiatives. The first course of action was to remove wet books as quickly as possible.

“We knew that the longer our materials sat exposed to water and covered by toxic soot, the more difficult the recovery process would be in the long-term,” Johnson said. “Once we could finally get in, we had to act fast, and Belfor’s crew of nearly 200 put in long, hard shifts, working round-the-clock in twelve-hour shifts for the first several weeks.”

While everyone was eager to help out, the conditions—no lights, no air conditioning, poor air quality—meant that a limited number of Libraries employees were able to participate in the recovery efforts. Others waited anxiously to hear when they would be able to go back to work.

Joelle Pitts had started her new position as interim head of academic services on May 20, just two days before the fire. Her department includes the subject librarians who work intensively with campus faculty and students. “I think almost everyone was in shock,” Pitts said. “For our librarians, one of the things that compounded the stress was the need to respond to students and faculty. We’re used to being able to provide answers, and they all wanted to know how the fire would affect their fall classes and the collections they rely on for their research. But because everything moved so quickly between first responders, the disaster recovery team and administrators, it seemed as if the information we were able to provide was only good for a few hours before the situation changed again.”

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— ROBERTA JOHNSON

Goetsch, former Provost April Mason and Johnson reviewed the situation in the early days of the recovery process.

Mold broke out in isolated portions of the collection. Wet materials were sent to a specialized preservation lab in Texas.

The electrical infrastructure was destroyed, so generators powered temporary lighting. Hale Library still lacks house power.

Talbot was one of the librarians who led efforts to protect the collection and implement its relocation to off-site storage. Their recovery efforts were complicated by a lack of reliable power in the building.
Once the details emerged, here is what became clear:

- The accidental fire started on the roof.
- Several hundred thousand gallons of water were used to fight the fire. Sprinklers ran longer than they might have had to because the smoke was so thick that shut-off valves were unreachable.
- The 1927 Farrell Library experienced the greatest damage. This specifically affected the Academic Learning Center (an athletic tutoring facility) on fourth floor, the third floor Great Room, IT Services offices on second floor, and Room 117 on first floor. All had severe water damage.
- Salvaging wet materials became priority number one. Wet books were packed and stored in campus dining center freezers until they could be shipped to a facility in Texas that remediates water damage.
- On all levels of the building, soot stained everything it touched, especially on fourth floor. Typically, soot can be wiped off, but for reasons that aren’t yet clear, the soot in Hale Library was almost baked on. In fact, samples were sent to the Library of Congress preservation lab for further testing.
- The building lacked power, so recovery efforts were complicated: Since there were no elevators, crews had to work and navigate multiple flights of stairs in near darkness and oppressive heat.

One week passed like this ... then two. In order to bring everyone back to work, alternate spaces had to be identified. By June 5, nearly 150 K-State Libraries and IT Services faculty, staff and student employees had been relocated to 13 different buildings spread across campus.

At this point, the question was no longer “When will we get back into Hale Library?” but instead, “How can we get the materials out of the building? We will be working out of alternate office spaces and rebuilding Hale Library not for just a few months but for about two years.”

**SINCE THEN**

Three months after the disaster, the building was nearly empty and most of the shelving was gone.

At first, Turvey-Welch and Talbot hoped that some of the dry, soot-stained books in the stacks and all of the materials in the Richard L. D. & Marjorie J. Morse Department of Special Collections could be cleaned onsite. However, because the building lacks consistent power, the spaces experienced unacceptable fluctuations in temperature and humidity. Ultimately, more than 1.5 million items were moved offsite to ensure their safety.

By early September, more than 140,000 boxes of books had been relocated to three separate warehouse locations that provide a total of 78,000 square feet of storage and workspace for cleaning materials. Additional storage will be required for clean books to avoid recontamination.

“The Belfor crew that cleans the books is a well-oiled machine,” Talbot said. “The systems they have put in place to organize and track more than a million books are amazing. I am optimistic about the future of our collections because we have them on board.”

The books aren’t the only thing that’s been packed out of the building. Crews have gutted dozens of spaces that were declared a complete loss. They have also disposed of more than 100 industrial-sized dumpster loads of furniture, along with all of the carpet, the drop ceiling and an enormous amount of drywall.

“We’re looking at a blank slate,” Johnson said. “The first floor renovation that was supposed to start this summer was only the first steps of Hale Library’s renovation.”

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“The reality of the situation started to sink in ... and frankly, it continues to sink in,” Goetsch said. “While the blaze was limited to an area above the Great Room, the damage was not. We will be working out of alternate office spaces and rebuilding Hale Library not for just a few months but for about two years.”

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step; we planned on renovating other floors eventually. Now all of it will happen at once. That’s part of what allows me to get up every day. Knowing that the end result once we get through all of this is going to be better for the students at K-State.”

President Myers notes that the Libraries employees are working hard to provide high-quality support for faculty, students and staff for as long as it takes to get Hale Library back online.

“Certainly we are all very disappointed that the building won’t be available this year, but an impressive number of library services are available in locations across campus this fall,” Myers said. “The best news is that when the library opens its doors, it will be a very modern facility with all the services and support expected of a top-notch university. This is something that we could only dream of before the fire gave us the opportunity to rebuild.”

In July, architecture firm PGAV began meeting with Libraries administrators, employees and other constituents in order to create renovation plans. Their vision will dovetail with the pre-existing first floor plan from architects Hoefer Wysocki.

Goetsch is both stoic and hopeful when reflecting on life since she received that May 22 text.

“We did not know then that the damage would be so extensive, the recovery process so lengthy or the need to re-envision Hale Library so vital,” Goetsch said. “But an opportunity has arisen that no one could have anticipated. It’s our new reality, and we intend to use this moment to create a new, improved Hale Library. K-State deserves nothing less.”

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SUPPORT OUR EFFORTS TO BUILD A HALE LIBRARY FOR K-STATE’S FUTURE!

Make a donation to Help for Hale through the KSU Foundation: give.evertrue.com/ksu/help-for-hale or contact Chris Spooner, associate vice president of development programs, at 785-532-7697 or chriss@ksufoundation.org.

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A raised floor was created on top of scaffolding to allow crews to dismantle and repair the Great Room ceiling and roof.

The original wooden beams and decorative work, including the 50-pound oak acorn finials, will be restored for use in the renovated Great Room.

The Great Room’s massive oak beams were deinstalled. Everything that is salvageable will be refinished and put back in place once the space is repaired.
Nearly three decades ago, Joyce and H.D. “Joe” Hale of Shawnee Mission, Kansas, helped transform the Kansas State University campus by giving the lead gift to build Hale Library. That investment brought a much-needed addition to Farrell Library, building space for essential resources and learning spaces for students. The Hale family is investing in K-State again by contributing to the upcoming Hale Library first floor renovation.

When Alan Hale learned about the library renovation and the need for funding, he took the idea of supporting the project to his siblings, John Hale, Dana Nelson, Karen Young, Lisa Hale and Mollie Carter.

“We believe strongly in education, so efforts like the library renovation speak to the values we hold.” — Alan Hale

Despite the May 22, 2018 fire that affected this beloved and historic campus landmark, the first floor renovation will continue — and will likely now expand in scope. In fact, the creative thinking and innovation that inspired the first floor renovation will now fuel the recovery and expedited renovation of the other floors of the building.

“We recognize that our world is changing and academics are changing,” Mollie said. “The way people learn and even the competencies that universities are teaching; all of it is changing, so it seems really important for the infrastructure to keep up with that. The library is a convening spot and clearly, with this project, the university recognizes this and developed a forward-looking plan to address it.”

Prior to the fire, the Libraries were on the cusp of a privately funded $5.8 million first floor renovation. Now that the need is even greater, philanthropy will play an integral part in helping reimagine the Hale Library of the 21st century.

The recovery process will start on the first floor. We hope to open the doors to the new space—including an inviting new café area named in honor of the Hale family—in Fall 2019.
World War I raged in Europe during the summer of 1918, and U.S. leaders were unsure how long it would continue. In preparation for a long-term conflict, they created the Students’ Army Training Corps (SATC) at over 500 educational institutions across the U.S., including K-State. Ceremonial inductions occurred nationally on October 1, but since the armistice occurred on November 11, the SATC lasted for less than three months. Despite its short life, the SATC helped K-State strengthen its relationship with the military and recover enrollment losses from earlier enlistments.

For decades, K-State provided “military tactics” instruction as dictated by the Morrill Act of 1862, which established land-grant institutions. In fact, the familiar campus program known as the Reserve Officers’ Training Corps (ROTC) formally began at K-State in January 1918. Then, in August 1918, the Committee on Education and Special Training in the War Department wrote President William M. Jardine that the SATC “is intended, as an emergency measure, greatly to increase the scope of military instruction at colleges and so to provide a larger number of educated and trained men for the Army’s needs.” The committee noted that any existing ROTC cadets could transition directly to the SATC while the ROTC was inactive during the war. At K-State, the SATC induction ceremony for the 1138 men featured three speakers: President Jardine, Major General Leonard Wood (responsible for training at Camp Funston) and Captain George Sturges (K-State SATC commander). In the roughly 10 weeks that the SATC operated, more than 2,000 soldiers came through campus to prepare for military service. In fact, men’s enrollment had decreased one-third from fall 1916 to fall 1917, yet recovered 10% by fall 1918.

K-State’s academic courses for these soldiers helped prepare them to serve as blacksmiths, carpenters, electricians, farriers, foundrymen, machinists, mechanics, radio operators, vehicle drivers and welders. Divided into two main groups of multiple companies, Section A had over 700 who were academically qualified as college students, and Section B had over 500 who received vocational training. SATC members earned $30 each month plus free education, health care, uniforms, housing and food. Each week they had eleven hours of military training, two hours of theoretical instruction and fourteen credit hours of classes. For housing, some slept on cots in Nichols Gymnasium, others bunked in hastily constructed barracks (one of which K-State Facilities uses today) and still more stayed in the YMCA or one of nine fraternity houses.

The soldiers faced a significant challenge from the influenza pandemic. It was severe enough that their work stopped twice for a total of five weeks—almost half of the SATC’s existence. While nearly all recovered—thanks to excellent local care—there were eleven soldiers who died. Because of their status as soldier-students, they have not been included in K-State’s memorial to World War I veterans. At 3:00 a.m. on November 11, 1918, bells and whistles in Manhattan announced the signing of the armistice to end the war. After stores closed and classes were canceled that afternoon, the SATC band led its men, civilian cars and schoolchildren in a parade from the courthouse to City Park. There attendees enjoyed an SATC military review to celebrate the conclusion of the Great War.

The end of war meant demobilizing the SATC. Soldiers began mustering out early in December and concluded on December 17. Some soldiers remained as students while others decided to return home. Shortly thereafter, plans were formalized to keep military training on campus by bringing back the ROTC. Notwithstanding the SATC’s brief existence, it provided an adaptable framework to sustain the development of the ROTC on campus and continued a tradition of military service for K-State students.

The Richard L. D. and Marjorie J. Morse Department of Special Collections at K-State Libraries preserves and collects Kansas State University’s history. K-State Keepsakes are compiled from photos, diaries, memorabilia and documents in University Archives. Because of the fire, materials have been moved offsite. They will be available to the public once our collections are returned to a renovated Hale Library.
BY SARAH MCGREER HOYT

It might be difficult to think of a more thoughtful gift.

Late last year, alumni and donor Richard D. Rees presented a book by Dwight D. Eisenhower to the university, K-State Libraries and Richard and Mary Jo Myers. Rees made the gift in memory of his late parents, Leonard and Beatrice Rees, who were also K-Staters.

Eisenhower wrote “Crusade in Europe” in 1948, a few years before he became president. Only 1,426 copies of the book were printed, and the first 25 copies were bound in leather and included a slipcase. Those volumes were reserved for Eisenhower to give to family and friends.

Rees gifted No. 7, which has a tremendous importance to K-State. It is the copy Eisenhower presented to Milton Eisenhower, his youngest brother and president of the university from 1943-50.

Inside the book, which is now part of the Richard L. D. and Marjorie J. Morse Department of Special Collections, Eisenhower wrote: “For Milton and Helen — In the realization that I could have had the help of Milton in preparing this work its value, if any, would have been multiplied for every reader. With lasting devotion and affection from their brother, Ike.”

Rees, who was born in Manhattan and earned degrees from K-State in 1961 and 1964, acquired the book from a rare books dealer in Pennsylvania. While presenting the book in President Myers’ office, Rees said, “When I learned that the book was lost, it was likely in the same home that President Myers now lives in,” said Cliff Hight, university archivist.

In addition to the book’s provenance as a volume from Milton Eisenhower’s personal library, its military subject matter and connection to Abilene also make the gift meaningful. “Crusade in Europe” chronicles Dwight Eisenhower’s experiences in World War II, where the five-star general served as the supreme commander of the Allied expeditionary forces. Myers also enjoyed a distinguished military career as a four-star Air Force general and chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Rees’ parents and Mary Jo Myers are all from Abilene, the hometown of Staff. Rees’ parents and Mary Jo Myers.

“Crusade in Europe” was one of several volumes written by Eisenhower to Milton, which chronicles Dwight Eisenhower’s career as a four-star Air Force general and chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Rees’ parents and Mary Jo Myers.

Rees has been a generous K-State donor for years. He has given to the Libraries and to the Historic Costume and Textile Museum in the College of Human Ecology, in memory of his late wife, Janet, who died in 2010.

“Tremendously happy,” Rees said. “It makes its way back to K-State. It’s an irreplaceable treasure.”

BY RICHARD D. REES

ON BEHALF OF THE UNIVERSITY, I THANK DICK FOR THIS INCREDIBLY THOUGHTFUL GIFT. IT’S AN IRREPLACEABLE TREASURE.

— PRESIDENT RICHARD MYERS

THE KIRMSEr UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH AWARD

The Kirmser Award recognizes and promotes outstanding undergraduate scholarship. Applications are evaluated in part on use of library resources. The grand prize winners receive $1,000, and their work is deposited in the online K-State Research Exchange.

Individual freshman category: Ayana Belk, freshman in landscape architecture, Kansas City. Ms. Belk completed “Reviving Troost: Using Phytotechnology to Decontaminate Troost Avenue’s Vacant Lots” for Topics/Developing Scholars Seminar taught by Anne Beamish, associate professor of landscape architecture and regional and community planning.

Individual non-freshman category: Scott Heise, senior in communication studies, Manhattan, completed “Follower Behavior and Followership Identity: A Follower’s Perspective” for Senior Colloquium taught by Natalie Pennington, assistant professor of communication studies.

THE MORS€ SCHOLARSHIP

The $3,000 Marjorie J. & Richard L. D. Morse Family and Community Public Policy Scholarship is awarded to an undergraduate project that encourages the development of public policy for improving the quality of family and community life. The 2018 winner is Nick Bouzianis, junior in nutritional sciences and pre-medicine. Tecumseh, Kan. His project is “Rethink Together: A Critical Reflection of an Immersive Community Organizing Experience in Rural, Midwest America.”

THE MORSE SCHOLARSHIP

BY LAURA KRUEGER

RECEIVED THE SUPPORT STAFF OF THE YEAR AWARD.

BY DEBBIE WASINGER, accounting specialist, received Support Staff of the Year honors for her dedication and ability to work successfully across the organization. Wasinger received her degree in accounting/business management from Fort Hays State University.
GET YOUR HALE T-SHIRT TODAY!

On May 22, 2018, a fire at Hale Library caused catastrophic damage. Join us in building a next-generation library for K-State students and researchers: Show your support with our new t-shirt. Proceeds will help restore and rebuild Hale Library.

ORDER ONLINE: bit.ly/haleshirt
(Or scan code with your smart device camera.)