ASERL launches Kudzu

The Association of Southeastern Research Libraries (ASERL) launched Kudzu, a system of linked online catalogs at 13 research libraries across the Southeast, connecting more than 180,000 students and faculty to more than 23 million volumes. The system allows users to browse the catalogs of participating libraries using a single interface, and to submit interlibrary loan requests directly to the source library. Using existing systems at each participating site, most documents can be delivered within two days. Preview Kudzu at www.aserl.org.

Paul Gherman, ASERL's board president and university librarian at Vanderbilt University, said, "This is one of the largest shared catalog systems in the region, and something for which we are truly proud."

Participating institutions are Wake Forest University, Tulane University, Clemson University, Auburn University, Virginia Commonwealth University, Vanderbilt University, Mississippi State University, and the Universities of Mississippi, South Carolina, Kentucky, Tennessee-Knoxville, Alabama-Birmingham, and Louisville.

LC and OCLC collaborate on digital reference

The Library of Congress (LC) and OCLC signed a cooperative agreement to develop a prototype for a new reference service based on the Collaborative Digital Reference Service (CDRS) pilot, begun in 2000 by LC and 16 participating libraries. Now in its third phase, the pilot project has expanded to include more than 60 libraries and other institutions internationally.

The goal of CDRS is to provide professional reference service to researchers anytime, anywhere, through an international, digital network of libraries and related institutions. The 24/7 service will deliver the direct benefits of quality reference service to a broad spectrum of users: a reliable and authoritative knowledge navigation service, a large searchable archive of authoritative answers, and increased visibility and support for libraries.

Diane Nester Kresh, director for Public Service Collections at LC, said, "By linking libraries for reference services, the CDRS would combine the power of local collections and staff strengths with the diversity and availability of libraries and librarians everywhere, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. There would always be a librarian available to provide to users located anywhere the interchange and experience of trained assistance in providing access to collections and resources both analog and digital."

Univ. of Nevada opens new library

After two years of construction, the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV), opened its new main library, Lied Library, a $55.3 million, 302,000-square-foot facility.

The University of Nevada recently opened Lied Library, a $55.3 million, 302,000-square-foot facility. The technologically advanced library manages its collection with the 3M Digital Identification System.