



Boundless:

Artists in the Archives
at the University of Tennessee Libraries



What is Boundless?

A unique way to link the University of Tennessee Libraries Betsey B. Creekmore Special Collections and University Archives with the local community by commissioning regional artists to come into the Special Collections and University Archives, to peruse the materials they find there, and to use those materials as inspiration for the artists' creative endeavors.



Boundless is also a partnership between the George F. DeVine Music Library and the Creekmore Special Collections and University Archives

Some other past and one present partnering projects between these two groups:

- The Sheet Music Digitization Project
- The Harp of Columbia Digitization Project
- The Derris Film Collection Project
- The David Van Vactor Project and Event
- The Gottfried Galston Studienbuch Project



The Origins of the Boundless Idea

- UT Libraries Dean Steve Smith's daughter discovers the local band "Count This Penny". She quickly interests her dad in the band.
- Dean Smith's interest in Count This Penny is further piqued when he finds that the band had previously participated in a project similar to Boundless that was sponsored by the Wisconsin Veterans Library.
- He discusses his idea for the Boundless project with Allen and Amanda of Count This Penny and they decide together to give this project a try in Tennessee.

Wisconsin Veterans Museum Project

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7sZRAjZrbJk&t=23s>



Here's Where I Come In!



Dean Steve forms the Boundless Committee:

- Jennifer Beals – Head of Special Collections
- Robin Bedenbaugh – Head of Libraries Marketing
- Count This Penny (Allen and Amanda Rigell) – The Talent
- Chris Durman – Coordinator, DeVine Music Library; Consultant, Road Crew, Eventual Boundless Committee Chair

This Project Also Took Many Ad Hoc Members

- Special Events Coordinator
- Project Manager (Marketing)
- Photographer/Videographer
- Graphic Designer
- Editor (Remarks, Marketing Copy)
- Sound Tech
- Special Collections Personnel
- Facilities Personnel
- Libraries Business Manager
- Licensing Consultant
- I know I'm neglecting to mention a few folks, too!



A Few Initial Questions

- How should we select the Artist(s)?
- How should we select which collection to use for their inspiration?
- How much funding to allot for Artist(s), recording, mastering, and for contracting additional musicians?
- What licensing statement should we ask them to apply to the works they create? Creative Commons 4.0 International License with Attribution-Noncommercial pertaining to both music and lyrics.



Five Main Goals of the Boundless Project

1. Promote our collections.
2. Demonstrate innovative uses of our archival collections.
3. Support musicians, especially those with local or regional connections.
4. Encourage musicians to preserve and consider placing their papers in an appropriate archive (hopefully ours!)
5. Enhance collections and relations between UT Libraries and the local community through meaningful engagement and partnerships.

Now, How Do We Encourage the Making of Art On A Timeline?

- Gather team.
- Enlist Artist(s).
- Determine a reasonable timeline.
- Create a list of artists' responsibilities.
- Arrange for Artist(s) to visit Special Collections.





Making Art On A Timeline (continued)

- Give the artists time to create.
- Consult with them concerning recording preferences and ensemble size.
- Coordinate Libraries Marketing Department visits with artists while they are working in Special Collections and in the Studio.
- Work with studio and artists to have recordings professionally mastered.
- Begin planning and advertising performance event where the song(s) will be performed publicly for the first time.

Making Art On A Timeline (continued...again)

- Coordinate food, drink, and decorations for the debut event.
- Arrange for someone to set up and run the sound system.
- Arrange for someone to videorecord and/or photograph the performance.
- Edit videorecordings to make a variety of promotional videos.
- Create project website where materials may be accessed.
- Select and recruit next Artist(s).



Aligning the List of Artists' Responsibilities with the Calendar

June and July – Complete selection and contracting of the Artist(s) for the next session, arrange meeting between them and the Boundless Committee which may or may not include the immediately preceding Artist(s), and introduce incoming Artist(s) to Special Collections personnel.

August, September, and October – The Artist(s) will visit Special Collections, select the collection with which the Artist(s) would like to work, peruse the collection, identify materials that will serve as their inspiration, and write the song or instrumental work.



Aligning the List of Artists' Responsibilities with the Calendar

November – The Artist(s) will then work with members of the Boundless Committee to finalize details related to recording the work such as selecting the studio and determining how many additional musicians will need to be included (and paid!)

December-January – While recording the work, the Artist(s) will coordinate with the Libraries' Marketing Department to film and/or photograph the musician(s) in the recording studio. The studios will be encouraged to include any product created by the Libraries on their website and in their social media.



Aligning the List of Artists' Responsibilities with the Calendar

February-Early March – Once the recordings are completed the Artist(s) will work with the Boundless Committee to determine where the recording will be mastered. At present, we have used a single engineer for this in the hopes that this will better allow the diverse works to “fit” audibly with each other on a future release.

Late March – The Artist(s) will work with the Boundless Committee to contribute ideas concerning promotional materials and tactics to advertise the performance and the recording release.



Aligning the List of Artists' Responsibilities with the Calendar

April – The Artist(s) will work with the Boundless Committee to plan the performance event.

At the performance, the Artist(s) will discuss their process and inspiration for creating the work, perform the work, and play a few more of their works to give the audience a greater perspective of their compositional range. The Artist(s) is expected to arrive at least 1 hour early to facilitate a sound check and they are expected to stay for the duration of the event so that interested attendees have time to discuss the project with the Artist(s) after the performance.



Aligning the List of Artists' Responsibilities with the Calendar

May – The Artist(s) will meet with the Boundless Committee to advise concerning who should be the next Boundless Artist(s).

May-June – The Artist(s) will wrap up any unfinished responsibilities and, if requested, make arrangements to meet up with the incoming Boundless Artist(s) in July.

We plan to invite past Artists to all future performance events. They are certainly not required to attend, but we hope they will!

The First Session with Count This Penny

- Count This Penny (aka Allen and Amanda Rigell) were steered towards the Wilma Dykeman and James R. Stokely, Jr. Papers.
- Wilma Dykeman and her husband James R. Stokely, Jr. were authors from East Tennessee who collaborated on several books concerning the South and the Civil Rights Movement. Ms. Dykeman was also a journalist and celebrated author who taught creative writing at the University of Tennessee.
- Amanda chose to work with Dykeman's novel "The Tall Woman" and letters written by the author to inspire Amanda's song "An Even Draw"
- Allen chose as inspiration for his song "Broad River" the book "Seeds of Southern Change: The Life of Will Alexander" by Dykeman and Stokely.



Boundless:

Vol. 001

Count This Penny



Boundless: Artists in the Archives

Count This Penny

will perform original music inspired by the
Wilma Dykeman & James R. Stokely Jr. Papers

Reception begins at

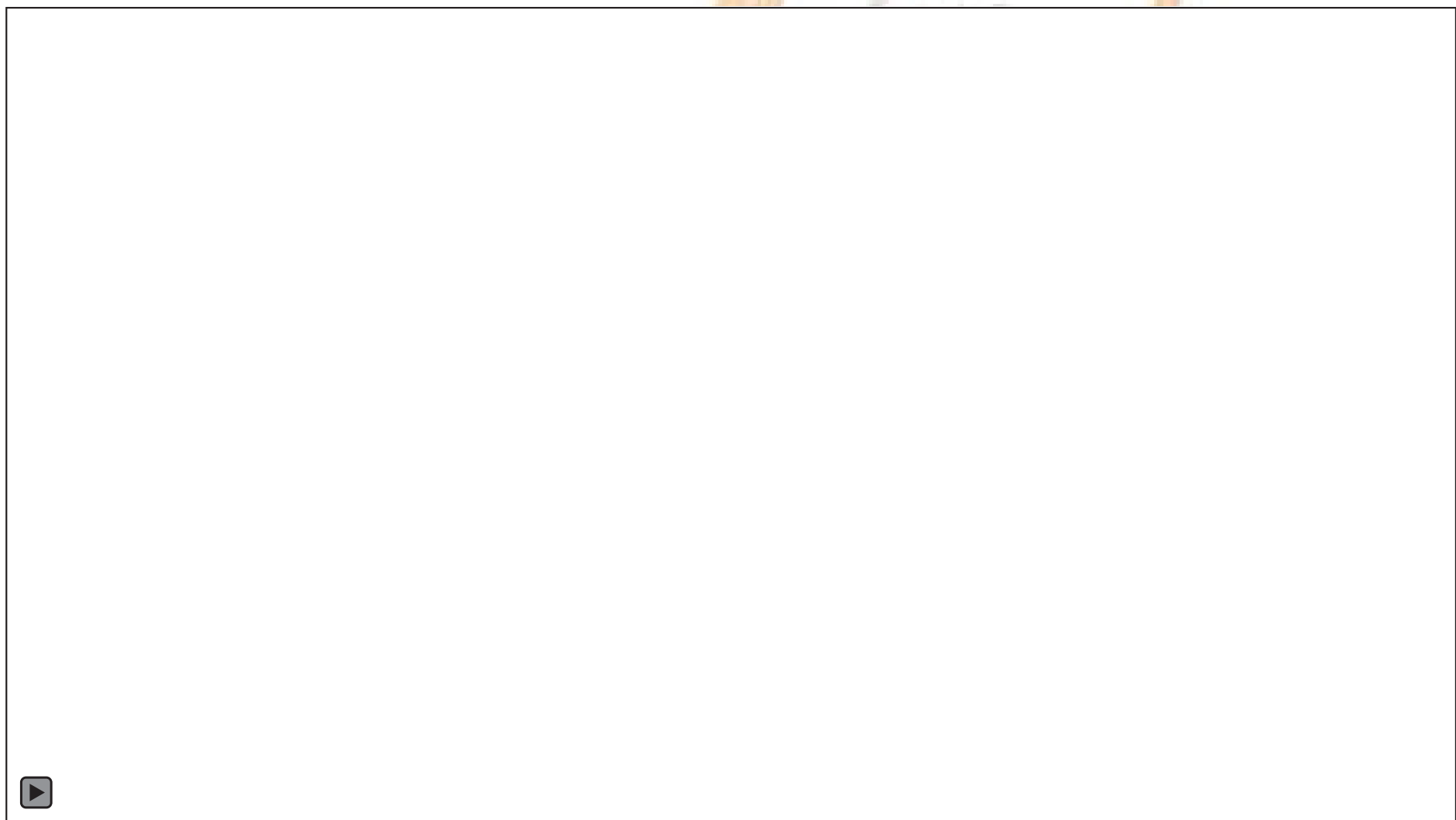
5:30 p.m., Thursday, November 16

Special Collections Reading Room

121 John C. Hodges Library

UP ONE FLOOR

A ground-to-first-floor elevator is
in the corner of this lobby. →





Deliverables from the First Session

- The recorded songs
- The performance
- The working documents and drafts Count This Penny made while writing the songs
- Promotional materials for the series
- A model for how this series could work going forward.

Library Development Review Article Released With 45 rpm Count This Penny Record



Questions for the Second Session

- Will it be helpful to retain the previous Artist(s) to serve as advisors for the current artist?
- Should we change our performance location?
- In what format or formats will the recordings be released?
- Who will be our next Artist(s)?
- With what collection will they work?



Boundless: Session 2 with R.B. Morris

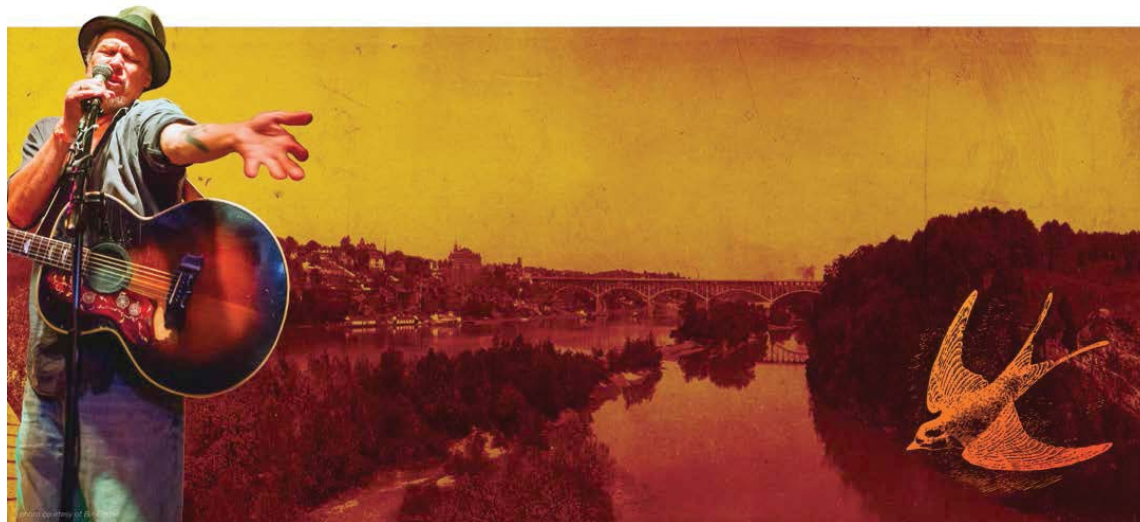
- Knoxville singer/songwriter, poet, and playwright R.B. Morris was selected by the Boundless Committee to be the artist for the second session of the series.
- R. B. Morris is:
 - Knoxville's first Poet Laureate
 - Author of "The Man Who Lives Here Is Looney" (a one-man play taken from the life and work of author, critic, and screenwriter James Agee)
 - Writer of "Take That Ride" a previous song that focused on James Agee
 - One of the driving forces behind the creation of the James Agee Park



R.B. Morris and James Agee

- Agee and Morris were both raised in Knoxville's Fort Sanders neighborhood which is the primary setting for Agee's posthumously published, Pulitzer Prize-winning autobiographical novel "A Death in the Family".
- That novel, the additional text that Agee may or may not have meant to be included in the novel, and the poem, "Knoxville: Summer of 1915" which was published as a preamble to the novel all served as inspiration for Morris' song, "The Story of the World"
- Obviously, the Agee poem also served as inspiration to an earlier composer.

Working with R.B. Morris







Deliverables from the Second Session

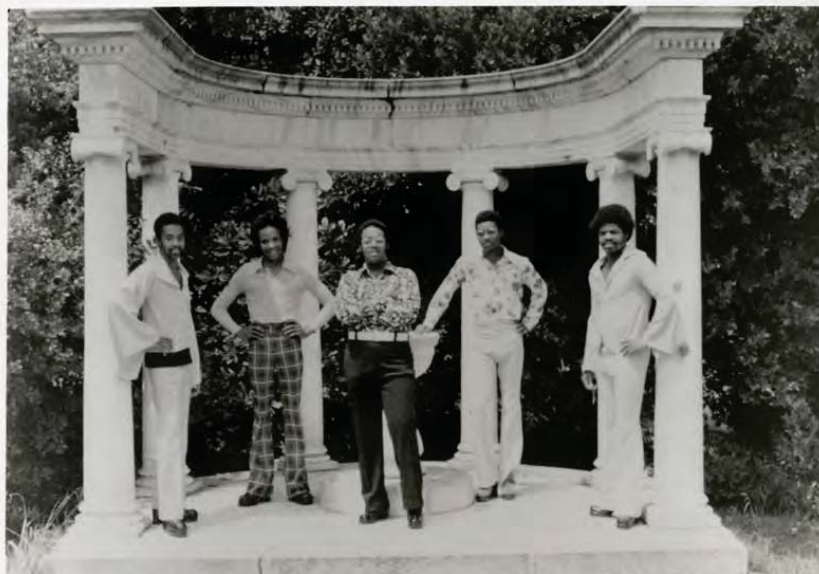
- The recorded song
- The performance
- The working documents and drafts Morris made while writing the songs
- An essay by Morris on the creation of the song
- A second essay by Morris on Agee, his work, and the novel he left unfinished at the time of his death, “A Death in the Family”.



Questions for the Third Session

- May we include more diverse Artists?
- Will it be helpful to retain the previous Artist(s) to serve as advisors for the current artist?
- Should we change our performance location?
- Who will be our next Artist(s)?
- With what collection will they work?
- Should we even be steering future Artists towards a collection?

Boundless: Session 3 with Marcel Holman (coming soon!)



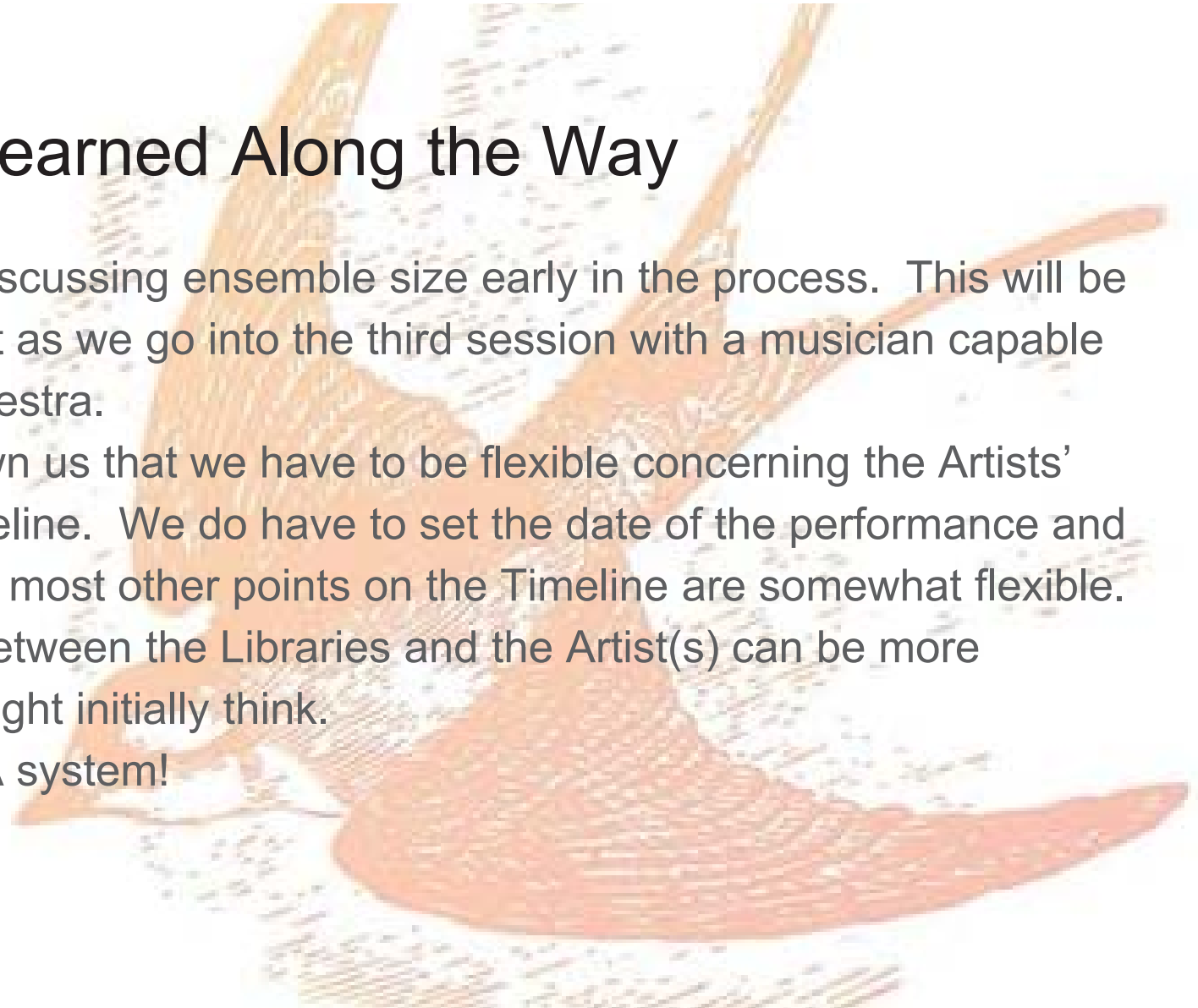
The Live Expo

REPRESENTED BY:
 5094 ALROSE AVE.
MEMPHIS, TN 38117
901-767-8887



Things We've Learned Along the Way

- The importance of discussing ensemble size early in the process. This will be particularly important as we go into the third session with a musician capable of writing for an orchestra.
- Practicality has shown us that we have to be flexible concerning the Artists' Responsibilities Timeline. We do have to set the date of the performance and hold to that date, but most other points on the Timeline are somewhat flexible.
- Creating contracts between the Libraries and the Artist(s) can be more complex than one might initially think.
- We need a better PA system!



Future Plans and Desired Outcomes

- We hope to eventually record enough material to produce an album to be released in the future in whatever format makes sense at that time.
- We hope to identify more opportunities to present and publish on this program.
- We are currently working on a dedicated website where all the recordings and related materials may be accessed.
- We hope, as mentioned in our goals, that our Artists will consider donating their papers to the UT Libraries.
- We hope to inspire more involvement by the UT Libraries and librarians in the local art scene.
- We hope other libraries might consider similar projects.

Questions?





Thank You!

Chris Durman

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With help from Robin Bedenbaugh

(UT Libraries Coordinator of Library Marketing and Communications)

