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New library a work in progress

By Valerie Bundy
Staff Writer

The new library, which is currently a melee of tractors and dirt, will be available to students in the Fall of 2001. However, though it will be available, it may not be completed.

The library, which is the largest academic building built by Biola and its largest fundraising project, is an endeavor that will cost Biola \$15 million.

Currently, Biola has \$12 million of available cash and

pledges to fund the new library. This means that there are no funds to support the completion of the upper floor of the library.

The floor is planned to include 23 group study rooms, open tables, six kinds of lounge stations, and a study terrace complete with its own coffee bar. Nearly one-half million dollars is needed to complete the floor. An estimated \$200,000 will be needed for shelves and furniture.

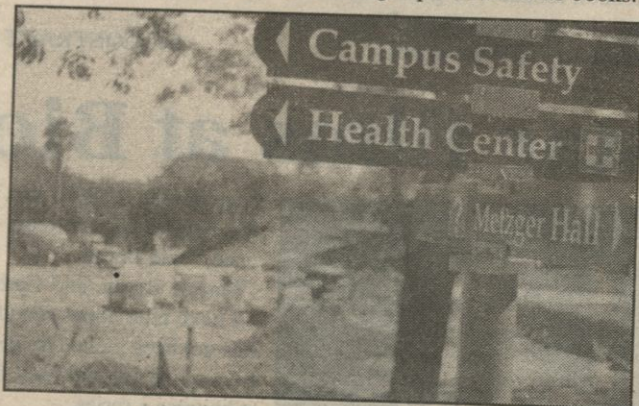
Shelving from the current library and used shelving will be bought in order to save money.

The third floor's study terrace could be finished on current funds, so if the third floor is not finished when the library opens, a pathway will be made through it so that students may use the terrace.

Not only is money needed for construction, but it is also needed for books.

"The original budget had money for increasing book purchases, but the increase in construction costs may have eaten that away," says Rodney Vliet, Director of Library Resources.

At this point the library does not have enough space for all its books.



Photos by Ann-Marie Harbour

A construction worker drills holes for foundational poles as Biola tries to stay on schedule.

"It's a catch 22 -- when we get more space we'll get more funding so that we can provide more books," says Vliet.

Currently Biola is conducting "Monthly Fundraising" for the new library. Facility Planning is in a critical six-month period for decisions regarding the completion of the third floor. Biola will run out of available cash in about nine months, so fundraising hopes to raise two to four million dollars by that time.

However, according to Ken Bascom, head of Facility Planning,

it would be most economical to receive the remaining money within 4-5 weeks, so that needed construction material could be bought in bulk at a less expensive price.

"As the library begins to appear, gifts will hopefully come in to help with the smaller purchases," says Bascom.

Biola is raising funds primarily through the Phonathon, mail solicitations, and a video of the groundbreaking ceremony. The video is complete with an endorsement by President Cook, and is presented privately to donors.

Despite the current lack of funds, all of Biola's library books are still scheduled to be moved in August 2001.

Should the opening be delayed, the books could be moved in the Fall of 2001 or as late as January 2002.

According to Bascom, the main challenge for the new library is keeping things on schedule. Aside

from collecting funds, the opening date of the library depends on elements such as construction progress, suppliers and contractors, and the weather. A wet and rainy winter could delay construction.

"Though we've had a few delays, the last word from the contractor is that we expect to be on schedule," says Vliet. "If we are off schedule it will only be by a few days."

Those most involved with the library construction continue to have a healthy perspective on the progress of the library.

As Bascom says, "What is most important for this year is that the whole Biola community see God moving in a visible way on campus."

