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The purpose of this paper is to study the libraries in five retirement communities, and to describe the history, collections, circulation practices, interlibrary lending practices, cataloging or organizational systems, staffing, and physical space of these libraries. The researcher conducted interviews with one contact at each of the five libraries. In addition, the researcher observed the library settings in order to gain an understanding of the context in which services and use is conducted.

The study found that all of the libraries have some system for organizing the collections, although the extent of organization varies; all of the libraries include at least some donated materials; the libraries all include a variety of materials; four of the libraries have some circulation procedure; and three of the four libraries expressed a need for more space.

Headings:

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A STUDY OF RETIREMENT COMMUNITY IN-HOUSE LIBRARIES

by
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Approved by

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Introduction:

In a context in which a number of adults are growing older and retiring, librarians and information scientists have written about the need for library scientists to consider more carefully the needs of older adults. Some of the articles written by information scientists or librarians mention libraries in nursing homes or retirement communities. Chatman, Ring, Parkkinen, Burek Pierce, Wagenaar, and Wicks have all written articles that have at least mentioned nursing home or retirement community libraries. Although there has been some discussion about libraries and older adults, and an acknowledgement that retirement communities and nursing homes sometimes have libraries, there has been little research about the libraries that are located in the retirement communities where many older adults live. There is very little in-depth research about how common it is for retirement communities to have in-house libraries, or having to do with how these libraries are run. Most of the literature that does present an in-depth picture of libraries in nursing homes or retirement communities is more than ten years old and needs to be updated. This lack of recent attention to retirement community libraries is particularly important because, as other researchers have noted, at least some types of retirement communities are becoming more popular (Adams, Sanders, and Auth, 475; and Program on Community and Aging).

Older adults living in retirement communities might use in-house libraries for many reasons, and having the library and the library materials inside of the retirement community might be particularly important to some of the older adults in these living

environments. Marja-Leena Parkkinen, in an article about a library in a nursing home, argues that "[i]n institutions, books have an irreplaceable social value: they anchor individual people to their own personal worlds, offer awareness and a feeling of a 'private self'" (19). If libraries in retirement communities are providing services to older adults, librarians and information scientists should have an understanding of how these libraries are established, maintained, and staffed.

This paper will look at five different retirement community libraries, and will describe how these libraries function. The point of this paper is to gather some basic information about retirement community libraries. The point is not to compare, or even necessarily evaluate, the services, collection, or staffing of the libraries. Since the researcher began without much idea about the kinds of libraries she might find in the retirement communities, the research was intended to provide some general ideas about how a few individual libraries are run. In examining how these specific libraries work, however, we will get a better idea about how library services are provided in institutional libraries, and we may be able to draw some conclusions about how these services can and should be improved in other retirement communities. Some of the findings might also apply not only to retirement community libraries, but also in nursing homes, hospitals, or other institutional settings.

Review of the Literature:

Library and information scientists have written quite a lot about older adults and the public library, and some of these articles illustrate, at least indirectly, why in-house retirement communities might be beneficial to some older adults. Julie Stafford has written an article about ways that public libraries can work with older adults. She

discusses programming ideas for the older adults who frequent the library, and for those who cannot visit the library. In addition to discussing older adults in the context of public libraries, she also discusses a specific assisted living facility library and suggests that "[t]his in-house library may start a trend for future facilities to supply library and media resources to elderly residents" (29). Another person who has written about older adults and the public library, Mary Tower, discusses how libraries can use bookmobiles to provide services to older adults who do not visit the library. Don Wicks argues in an article about older adults that, "[m]uch of the attention given in the library science literature to older adults concerns specific types of services provided for this age group" (3), and based on a recent review of the library literature, Wicks' statement appears to continue to be true.

Many articles written about institutional libraries do not address serving older adults in particular, but are nonetheless helpful for those interested in how retirement community libraries are, or should be, run. An article about church libraries describes how they are maintained and staffed by volunteers, and it discusses how volunteers learn about running church libraries by using manuals and by interacting with other librarians (Hannaford, 219). Another short article about the Lutheran Church's library volunteers describes how church library volunteers attend Lutheran Church library conferences (Nelson, 20). Writing not about church libraries, but about institutional libraries more generally, Lethane Parks has identified several characteristics that libraries in institutions should have, including "central location on the ground floor" (320) and a "noninstitutional appearance and homelike atmosphere" (321).

One issue that comes up in the literature about institutional libraries is cooperation. In a discussion about librarians in institutional libraries, Genevieve Casey discusses cooperation between libraries. She cites the Standards for Library Service in Health Care Institutions' suggestion, from the Association of Hospital and Institution Libraries, Hospital Library Standards Committee, that institutions should try to work together in terms of providing resources and services (Casey, 431-432). However, Richard Miller points out that many libraries in institutions do not in reality work with other libraries. He explains: "Isolation often plagues institutional libraries – few are members of multitype library cooperatives; some are in physically isolated locations; the librarian may rarely see other librarians; and training and travel funds are limited or nonexistent" (Miller, 120-121).

There are some researchers and library and information science professionals who have written specifically about in-house libraries in retirement communities or nursing homes. In conducting research about how older adults prefer to get information, Don Wicks found that older adults living in the institutions he studied used in-house libraries (16). He describes the libraries as being made up of donations and explains that "organization of the collections and access to them was informal" (16). In an older study of women in a retirement community and information-seeking, Elfreda Chatman, like Don Wicks, found that the women she studied used the retirement community's in-house library. She explains that when she asked about participants' use of the Garden Towers library, they talked about their in-house library: "Although the question asked specifically about their use of the public library (meaning use of the main or branch library), except in one case, the respondents interpreted the question in light of their use

of the Garden Tower's library" (Chatman, 293). In her discussion of the Garden Towers

library, Chatman suggests that having resident volunteers staff the in-house library might

make other residents less likely to ask the volunteers questions (294). Chatman's

description of the staffing of the in-house library in her study, and an article written by

Jennifer Burek Pierce about a retired librarian who now has what Pierce calls a "mini-

library" in the retirement community where she lives (85), make it clear that some

retirement community libraries are staffed by volunteer residents.

In an article that briefly discusses retirement community libraries in the

Netherlands, but also provides useful descriptions of hospital libraries, Helen Wagenaar

describes where libraries should be located within retirement communities, and discusses

how they are staffed (147). In a section about hospital libraries, she describes two

libraries in detail, and discusses staffing, hours of operation, size and diversity of the

collection, and marketing of the libraries (Wagenaar, 143-145). Wagenaar's description

of these hospital libraries provides a good outline to which researchers who study and

evaluate retirement community libraries might refer.

Perhaps the most important research about in-house libraries for older adults is

Anne Ring's article about the nursing home library that she helped start, and about which

she wrote an article in 1986. In addition to Ring, a librarian, who staffs the library, there

are also resident and non-resident volunteers (Ring, 255, 1986). Ring discusses the

location of the library, "on the first floor in a separate room near the dining room and

beauty/barber shop," (257) and the size of the collection, "about 1,500 books" (257).

Ring also discusses the collection's diversity, programming, a resident committee for the

library, and marketing (257-263). Ring argues that the library has changed the mood in

the nursing home: "Many residents seem happier and more sociable. Topics of conversation have changed during the last year. Instead of talking about physical ills and complaining the residents talk to the library staff about books and programs" (Ring, 267). Ring's article is divided into the following sections: Furniture/Equipment, Facilities, Materials, Equipment, Programs and Services, Resident Committee, Stimulation of Interest, Librarian Part of Winchester House Staff, Statistics, Impact on the Residents, and Impact on the Nursing Home. Because Ring identifies the community in her article as a nursing home, it may differ in some ways from the retirement communities studied in this research. However, like Wagenaar's article, each of Ring article's sections provides details which can be used as a guide by researchers studying retirement community libraries.

Methodology:

The purpose of this study is to explore the collections, organization, and staffing of retirement community libraries. The study is broad and qualitative, and the researcher interviewed a representative from each library. This study is limited in scope in that it examines libraries in five different continuing care retirement communities in the southern part of the United States, and does not directly address libraries located inside of nursing homes or assisted living communities. Because the researcher interviewed representatives of the libraries, including more than five libraries, or including libraries in nursing homes or assisted living facilities, would have been difficult given the researcher's time constraints.

According to one source, continuing care retirement communities "are communities that provide a continuum of care to older adults under a contract for the life

of an individual or for a period longer than one year" (<u>Continuing Care Retirement Communities: 2006 Reference Guide</u>, I). Within the communities are areas that are shared (<u>Continuing Care Retirement Communities: 2006 Reference Guide</u>, I). A description from Williams and Guendouzi is helpful: "Retirement communities, in which extra help with daily activities is characterized as more the result of choice than of need, tend to stress the independence and activity of their residents" (66).

The specific retirement communities selected for this study range in age from more than twenty-five years old to just a couple of years old. They all include independent housing, with some housing options that include more assistance. Before beginning the project, the researcher knew of the existence of some retirement community libraries. The researcher also visited websites for retirement communities to locate some that mentioned in-house libraries. Once the researcher identified the five retirement communities that she wanted to include in this paper, she contacted the Activities Coordinators for each community by telephone, explained the project, and requested that she be put in contact with the "contact person" for the community's library. The Activities Coordinator then either called the researcher with the name and phone number of the contact person or provided the library's contact person with the researcher's name and phone number.

At each retirement community, the researcher conducted in-person interviews with the person identified by the Activities Coordinator as the contact person for the library. The contact person interviewed in each of the retirement communities is a resident of the community. The researcher applied for, and received, permission from her University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) to conduct the interviews with library

representatives, and the interviews were approved by the IRB before the researcher began collecting data for the study.

The fifty interview questions were written in advance, and the questions covered the library's collection, staffing, financing, programming, interlibrary lending, marketing, and history. The interview questions were based heavily on the descriptions of libraries in Anne Ring's article and Helen Wagenaar's article, both of which were discussed in the literature review, and also drew from other articles mentioned in the review of literature. The interviews lasted between one and two hours. Before beginning the interview, the researcher asked each participant to read and sign a consent form which explained the research study and included contact information if the participant had questions about the study. The researcher also provided the participants with a copy of the consent form. All of the interviews were audio taped, and the researcher also took notes during the interview. The interviews were scheduled over the telephone, in advance, and they were conducted in various public locations inside of the retirement communities.

In addition to the interviews, the researcher also explored the libraries either independently or during a tour given by the interviewee, and the researcher took note of aspects of the library she found to be important during the exploration of the library. Although the researcher took notes as she looked around the library, she did not have a systematic list of things for which she was looking, but rather noted what she felt to be important during the observation of the library.

After conducting the interviews, the researcher compiled the answers for each interview question for each library. The researcher used her written notes from the interviews, and listened to the audiotape of the each interview. While listening to the

audiotape, the researcher added to her handwritten notes where necessary. The audiotape of the interview was mainly relied upon in cases where the researcher's notes were not clear, or when some additional information that the researcher considered to be important was included on the audio recording, but the researcher had not made a note of it during the interview.

In addition to the interviews, and to supplement the information gathered during the interview, the researcher used the notes that she took based upon her observations of the libraries. At each library the researcher either explored the library on her own or was given a tour of the library by the interviewee. The observation notes were included in this paper when relevant. In the results section of the paper, the researcher does not distinguish between data that was gathered during the interview, and data that was gathered during the researcher's observation of the library. Since some of the researcher's observations help provide additional detail about the subjects covered in the interviews, it makes sense to incorporate them into the results section without distinction.

In writing the results section of this paper, the researcher included any answers or information from her notes that she felt fit into each category. She looked at each category included in this study, and pulled out information from her notes that the researcher felt was pertinent to that topic. The researcher did not limit the data in each category to answers that the interviewee gave in response to questions asking specifically about that category. Instead, although the researcher did look at answers to questions that she asked about that specific subject, she also included any notes or answers that the researcher determined fell into that category, even if the answer was part of the response to another question, or was something the researcher noted during her observation. Any

of the information gathered at any point during the interview or observation was included in any part of the study into which it seemed relevant.

Results:

History of the Libraries:

The history of the libraries in this study were similar in the sense that each of libraries in this study was established when the retirement communities themselves were established. One of the interviewees explained when we discussed the establishment of the retirement community's library, "a library is a part of life." Although all of the libraries were established in some form along with the communities, two of the libraries have had some type of physical change to the space since first being established, and one of these libraries has also changed its location since the library was first started.

Collection:

The number of total items in the collections varied. There were two libraries that provided answers to a question about the total number of items in the collection: one library has about 10,000 items, and the other has between 3000-3500 items in total. Three people with whom I spoke did not know the total number of items in the collection. In response to a question about the total number of books in the library, four of the interviewees provided some number. One library has at least 8,000, one interviewee estimated that the library contains somewhere around 5,000 books, one interviewee answered about 2,500, and an interviewee at another library provided an estimate of several hundred books. Because some of the interviewees did not sound certain about the number of items in the collection, the figures should not be taken to be certain.

The interviewees were also asked how many magazines the libraries have in their collection. Two of the interviewees did not provide a number. Of the three libraries that did provide a number, one participant said the library purchases five or six subscriptions, and others are subscribed to by residents and then brought to the library. This interviewee estimated that a total of about twelve magazines come in as subscriptions, and there are also others that are donated. Another interviewee answered that the library probably has forty magazines. The third library providing a number for magazines in the collection answered that it is close to one hundred. The researcher did not make it clear, when asking the question, whether she wanted to know the total number of magazines, or whether she wanted to know the total number of magazine subscriptions, so it is not clear which question the interviewees actually answered. What is clearer is that only one library actually subscribes to magazines. Two interviewees did mention that their libraries subscribe to a newspaper, or to newspapers.

The researcher also asked about CDs, audiotapes, and records. One library has about 300-400 but the interviewee could not be specific about the numbers. Another library has about 234 audiotapes and is starting a collection of books on CD. Two of the interviewees said that their library has a lot of these items. One interviewee did not provide a number. When the researcher asked about videotapes or DVDs in the collection, the interviewees had various responses. Of the five interviewees, one person did not know. One person said that the library has some and is building its collection of those items. One interviewee responded that the library has lots. One of the interviewees answered that the library has probably less than 100. Finally, one library has probably 222 DVDs and 1,000 or more videos.

New items for the collections are sometimes donations. All five of the libraries receive donations of library materials from community residents. One library mentioned receiving donations from staff as well. In addition to donations, some libraries have an amount of money that they spend on purchasing items. Three libraries have some amount of money to spend on purchasing books. One library uses a yearly book sale to raise money to purchase books.

Each of libraries in this study has some sort of process for adding items to the library collection. All of the libraries have resident volunteers who decide what gets added, and one interviewee mentioned a collection management team and a collection policy. Four of the interviewees specifically mentioned checking for duplicates before adding items to the collection. Four of the interviewees indicated that some weeding of the collection is done. It was mentioned at two libraries more specifically that if books were not used during a period of time they were candidates for being discarded: one looks at items that have not been used for three years, and another looks at items that have not been used for five years. Although only four of the five interviewees specifically mentioned weeding the collection, the researcher did not have a written interview question specifically addressing weeding the collection, so no conclusions should be drawn from the fact that one of the interviewees did not discuss weeding.

Types of materials in the collections:

There are a variety of non-fiction and fiction books at each library. All five of the libraries have large print books. All of the libraries have reference materials. All of the libraries contain both hardcover and paperback books. Each of the interviewees mentioned, or the researcher observed, some sort of distinction between hardcover and

paperback books. When asked which types of books were well-represented in the collection, four of the interviewees mentioned mysteries, three mentioned biographies, three mentioned history books, two mentioned fiction, and two mentioned large print books. Each of the following categories was mentioned at one of the five libraries as being well-represented: self-help books, paperbacks, audio books, romances, and state-specific books. In addition to books, all of the libraries have at least some CDs or audiotapes, some DVDs or videotapes, and some magazines and newspapers.

Organization of the Library Collection:

Each of the library collections is organized, or classified, in some way, although the extent of the collection's organization varies. Two of the libraries organize their materials on the shelves by subject. Three of the libraries classify their items using the Dewey system, or some form of the Dewey system. Some of the libraries have a catalog, or list, of the items in their collection. One library does not have a catalog or list of library items. One library has a directory that lists subjects and their corresponding shelf locations. One library does not currently have a catalog or list but will have one once a new system is implemented.

Two of the libraries have card catalogs. The libraries that have card catalogs both have author and title access to their collection. Both libraries also have some more general form of subject access. One of them has a subject drawer where patrons can look up a subject, and locate a number to look for, but the subject catalog does not give specific names of books. The other library has, in addition to author and title access in the catalog, a poster that patrons can use to look up a subject and find the number and know where on the shelves to look for the subject.

Circulation/ Use of Library:

Four of the five libraries have some form of circulation or check-out system. In three of the libraries, there are cards in the items, and the resident signs the card with his or her name, address, and the date, and leaves the card at the library. The library then uses the card as a record of who has the item. One of these libraries supplements this card system with a notebook in which residents record the library items they check out that do not have cards in them. A fourth library has a card for each resident, and the resident records the item he or she checks out, and the date, on this card. This library also has a sign up sheet in the library where residents sign out new books. The library using the resident card system, however, will be changing over to a system where each item has a card that will be signed by the resident and left in a container.

One library has no check out period for most items, but a two week check-out period for new books. One library has a check out period of around one month, and another has a check out period of one month. At one library it is asked that materials be returned within a "reasonable time." Three of the libraries send out overdue notices at some point.

Interlibrary Lending and Relationships with Other Libraries:

None of the libraries has official Interlibrary Loan services. Three libraries have the services of a bookmobile or someone from a public library that visits their retirement communities twice a month. One of the libraries has a person from a local university who is paid by the retirement community to visit twice a month to bring books to residents, and to pick up books that the residents want to return. Three of the interviewees mentioned that they visited other retirement community libraries. One

library has donated books to another community's library, and talks to people at the other community's library. All five of the libraries donate books to public libraries

Computers:

One of the libraries has a computer with Internet access in the library for residents to use, and there is someone on their Library Committee who can show the residents how to use the computer. Three other libraries have one library computer that is only for the use of those working in the library, and is not available for resident use. All five communities have computers for residents in locations other than the library. Three interviewees mentioned that many residents have their own computers.

Physical Space:

Four of the libraries are located on the ground floor of a building. One of the libraries is located on the second floor, which is accessible by stairs or elevator. All of the libraries are located in the same building as, or in a building that adjoins, some other recreational or dining spaces. All of the libraries included at least one table with chairs. All of the libraries had at least some other chairs where people might sit. As was mentioned in the section on history of the libraries, two of the libraries have had changes made to the physical space in the last few years. One of the libraries rearranged the space and added lights that go on and off automatically, and new carpeting. The interviewee who described the changes to the researcher also described a focus on the library being comfortable and pleasant. The second library that has had recent changes was enlarged by over six hundred square feet. The interviewees from the libraries that have had the changes in physical space both mentioned some focus on library users who use walkers,

carts, or wheelchairs. Both interviewees mentioned carts and wheelchairs and one mentioned walkers.

Library Hours and Staffing:

Three of the libraries are open 24 hours a day. One of the libraries is open from 8am until 9pm, and one library is open from 7am until 9pm. In addition to the hours that the library is open, some of the libraries have certain times during which the library is staffed. One library is staffed for two hours in the morning and two hours in the afternoon everyday except on Sundays. One library is staffed for two hours in the morning and two hours in the afternoon Monday through Friday. One library is staffed during the morning everyday except for Sundays. A fourth library has designated one day a week as the library work day and people come in to shelve items. Another library has volunteers come by to see if things need to be done on a constant basis.

Each of the five libraries is run by volunteers who are community residents. The number of residents involved in the library work varies by community. One library has forty residents who work in the library. One library has between twenty-five and twenty-six residents working with the library. One library has a library committee of about twenty-five people. There are about twenty people serving on another library's committee. A fifth library has approximately three residents who work with the library. One interviewee did not mention how many residents work with the library. At one of the libraries, the interviewee commented about the library: "It's a very popular place to work. A lot of people want to work here."

Use of the Library:

When asked if residents use the library, every person interviewed said that residents do use the library. One person explained that someone comes through to re-shelve every day. Another person pointed out that not only residents use the library- staff use the library as well. Two interviewees discussed how many books get checked out. One library had several hundred books checked out at the time of the interview. Another interviewee shared with the researcher that about 1900-2000 items go in and out of the library every month. One interviewee's response to the question about resident use was that the library is used, but that it would be used more if there were more space. Two of the libraries keep some kind of statistic about usage. One of them is keeping statistics on which kinds of books are checked out for a one month period. The other library that keeps statistics does so by counting the books that are returned and keeping statistics on into which categories they fall. A third library is not currently keeping statistics, but expects to be able to when they switch over to a new cataloging system.

The researcher also asked interviewees whether the library is used by a wide or smaller group of residents. Two interviewees said that the library is used by a wide number of residents. One interviewee said the library is used by a pretty wide group. One person said that it is hard to judge, but because of the location of the library it is used by a large number of people. One interviewee said that it is hard to say, but it is a large select group of users.

Advertising/Marketing:

Two of the libraries have monthly columns in the community newsletters, and two more libraries sometimes write something for their community newsletters. The

things mentioned by interviewees that the libraries might include in their monthly

columns are information about the collection, rules, reminders, new book lists, things that

are happening, or anything "remarkable." In response to the researcher's question about

marketing, one interviewee responded that the library is so well-known now, and that it is

a fixture.

Programming:

Four libraries mentioned some sort of programming when asked about the

library's programs for residents. One of the libraries offers a program once a week where

a resident chooses a book and does a reading from the book for other people. Whoever

volunteers to do the reading chooses what to read. One library has a couple of book clubs

and participates in county and statewide programs. One library houses books for a

resident book club, but the book club is not organized by the library. One of the libraries

has a display on a table outside the library that focuses on a specific topic, and changes

the display each month.

Services to Residents Unable to Get to the Library:

In response to a question about providing library materials for those unable to get

to the library for medical reasons, three of the interviewees said that their libraries bring

items to their retirement community health centers.   Two interviewees said that this is

informal. One of the libraries has a subcommittee of the library committee that takes care

of the materials in the health center, and about once a week someone goes over to the

healthcare center. One of the interviewees explained that her retirement community

library set up another library in the community's assisted living, and someone over there

now oversees the library. Two interviewees mentioned that a person from the health

center checks out materials for the residents in the healthcare center. One interviewee explained that if a resident does need help getting an item, they can get help getting it.

Use of Library Outside of Library Activities:

All of the libraries are used for something other than just checking out items. Three of the interviewees said that residents come in to read. Two interviewees mentioned residents using the library as a place to do some sort of their own work. One interviewee said the library is used by people doing jigsaw puzzles, and one interviewee said the library is a gathering place for residents.

Suggestions for Improvement:

The researcher specifically asked the interviewees how they would like to see their libraries improved. As was described in an earlier section, two of the libraries have recently made improvements. One of the interviewees mentioned that some people want an online catalog, and discussed the lack of a subject catalog. Another interviewee said that they may need another book carousel. Three of the five people interviewed said that they would like more space. One person would like more furniture for readers.

Discussion:

The fact that each of the libraries was a part of the retirement community from the time they were built is notable. Anne Ring, who is discussed in the review of literature, has written about establishing a library, but the libraries in this study seem to have been anticipated by the people who started the communities. The inclusion of libraries in the retirement communities might be a function of the fact the they are located in an area with universities and colleges, and many of the residents might have been, and may still be, affiliated with these academic institutions. The other notable thing is that two of the

five libraries included in the study have undergone some change, or improvement, to their physical space.

Although there is a range in terms of the number of items included in the libraries, no real conclusion can be drawn from this range since some of the interviewees were not certain about the total number of items in the collection. The fact that many of the items in the libraries are donated is consistent with what Don Wilkes mentioned about the materials in the library at the community he studied. In the discussion about adding materials to the collections, it was clear that not all donations are added to these libraries' collections, and one assumption that might be drawn from this is that they have no shortage of library materials. This assumption is made based upon the fact that not all materials are added to the collection. It is also significant that four of the five interviewees discussed weeding the collection. The diversity of items in the collections was wide, and the collections are all large enough to require the libraries to make some distinction between paperback and hardcover books.

Although the libraries have different ways of organizing their collections, they are all organized at some level, and two of the five libraries currently have title and author access via card catalogs. The fact that three of the four libraries having a check out system use the same system, and have check-out cards in the books, might suggest that this system is one that works. This conclusion is further supported by the fact that a fourth library is planning to switch over to a book card system as well.

Although the libraries do not seem to have official Interlibrary Loan services, four of the libraries do appear to have some relationships with either pubic or academic libraries. These relationships might make the provision of Interlibrary Loan services for

residents of the community unnecessary. Something that can also be considered a form of interlibrary lending is the services that the libraries provide to residents in the healthcare centers.

None of the libraries have many programs for residents. This lack of programming is probably explained, at least in part, by the fact that the retirement communities provide programming already, and additional programming by the libraries might be not be necessary. Two interviewees mentioned the programs that the retirement communities offer outside of the library in response to a question about library programs. One interviewee described the programming at the retirement community, and outside of the library, as including concerts and lectures. Some of the libraries do participate in programs that are sponsored by other groups.

Perhaps the most significant finding of this study is that each of these libraries is run and maintained by resident volunteers, and the quality or quantity of library services does not appear to be adversely affected by the lack of paid librarians. In the opinion of the researcher, based on the findings of this study, some retirement community libraries are well run by residents and may be run as well, or better, than they would be if an outside employee were to be paid to work in the library. The one person mentioned during the interviews who is paid for work is the person who helps arrange the check-out of books from a local university, and this might be one area where paid staff is most useful. No library with paid staff was included in this study, however, so the researcher has no point of comparison. This staffing situation might also be one thing that is not easily transferable to situations where residents are less able to be active, such as nursing homes or assisted living facilities.

Something that came across clearly during the interviews is that the retirement community libraries provide library services to residents in their communities, but they also participate in their larger communities and towns. It is extremely significant that all five libraries donate books to public libraries. This is one way that the retirement community libraries are participating in their larger communities and is an important way that they contribute to society. One library has also done something a bit different, and sold their extra books to the retirement community's employees at a rate of $1.00 for hardcover books and 50 cents for paperback books. The library gave the money raised during the sale to the employees, who used it to have a party. In addition to donating books, two interviewees mentioned selling books to bookstores or book buyers.

Although two of the five libraries have recently had some change to their physical space, the three libraries that have not been changed all need more space. When asked about what improvements should be made to the library, three of the five interviewees mentioned more space. This is clearly an area where retirement communities might want to focus attention. The other part of this issue is that all of the libraries appear to the researcher to have significant collections, which is going to put a strain on the limited space in the library. On the other hand, it is a testament to the number of items included in these collections, and to the libraries' abilities to generate donations of materials.

One resource that could serve the libraries more is something that is commonly found in public libraries: Pathfinder-like materials, such as annotated bibliographies on certain topics, or suggested readings. In addition, although there is some communication among retirement community libraries, there could be a cooperative system where the libraries meet regularly to discuss changes in the library collections, or new ways of

doing things. The retirement community libraries could work with other retirement community libraries to plan special programs together. They could learn from church libraries and have meetings where volunteers can meet and train together.

Limitations:

The most apparent and important limit of this research is that it is extremely limited in scope. First of all, the researcher visited only five retirement communities, so it is not possible to make any general statements about retirement community libraries based upon this research. Secondly, the researcher did not choose the retirement communities using any random sampling method. Each of the libraries studied was located in a retirement communities that obviously has some active and involved residents, and the libraries were run by or staffed by these residents. Any nursing home community library or assisted living facility, or even a retirement community, with residents who are less active might face more challenges in providing library services.

The information gathered about the libraries studied came from only one representative of each library, and the researcher explored each library for only a short period of time. The researcher did not keep track of the amount of time she spent observing, but estimates that she spent roughly between five and ten minutes exploring each library. The study may have been more comprehensive and accurate if the researcher had spoken with more than one person involved with each library, and had visited the libraries for a more extended period of time. In the case of at least one of the libraries, the researcher's time constraints probably did mean that the researcher had a less than full picture of the library. A representative from one community who was interviewed encouraged me to also speak to a second individual, but although the

researcher did make contact with the second person, an interview was not scheduled. The researcher was bound by her own time constraints, and found that she did not have time to interview the second person. A second interview would most certainly have added to the researcher's understanding of that particular library.

Another thing that became an issue during the interview process was that some interviews were conducted in the libraries, or in other public or semi-public areas, where the researcher and interviewee did not necessarily have absolute privacy. In some cases, it might have been possible for others to overhear parts of the interview, and in an ideal interview situation, the interview would have taken place in a completely private environment.

Finally, because the scope of the interview was so broad, and because this paper is intended to be a very general overview of the libraries included in this study, the researcher was able to gain only a superficial understanding of the libraries included in the study. One example of this limitation is that because the researcher had not done previous research about retirement community libraries, there were certain things that the researcher did not include in the interview questions. In many of the libraries, the researcher noticed, or the interviewee mentioned, the presence of children's books. However, because the researcher did not specifically include a question asking about children's books as part of her questionnaire, she could not be certain, in reviewing her notes, whether every library had children's books or not because it might have been the case that she failed to note their presence in a particular library.

This also relates to the issue of observations made by the researcher. Again, as was the case with the interview questions, the researcher did not know exactly what she

might be looking for in each library, so the notes for each library consisted of what struck the researcher as important. It would have been easier to compare, and would perhaps have lead to a more accurate comparison of certain aspects of the library, if the researcher had included as part of her observation a checklist of things to look for in each library. In attempting to describe so many different aspects of each library, the researcher was unable to describe any aspect in great detail.

Future Research:

The limited scope of this study leads to a variety of ideas for future research. In terms of exploratory, or descriptive, research, someone might interview a larger sample of continuing care retirement communities in a more systematic way to find out what percentage of retirement communities have libraries, and what these libraries look like. Another survey that should be undertaken is to examine what percentage of nursing homes, or assisted living facilities, have libraries, and what challenges libraries in nursing homes or assisted living facilities face. A study that surveys a large number of retirement communities, nursing homes, and assisted living facilities to find out some basic information about their libraries would be informative.

Another approach that a researcher might take is to do a more in-depth study of a smaller number of libraries. A focused study of one in-house library, similar to the approach used in the Ring article, might provide some useful information. One of the most important future studies that might be done is to examine one aspect of the libraries, such as cataloging systems or collection development. Studying all aspects of the libraries generally will probably not provide sufficient details about any one area of the libraries.

This study focused on retirement communities where volunteer residents are a big part of the library. There may be libraries, however, that are not run or staffed by volunteer residents. A future researcher might investigate which aspects might be imported into communities with less active residents, or in communities that hire outside staff for the library. A researcher might also look into communities in which libraries are not incorporated as part of the original community plan, and find out how they are later added as part of the community, as Ring did in her article.

Related to the point that these libraries are staffed by active volunteers is the point that the retirement communities included in this study are located in a unique area that is near large academic research universities. Retirement communities located in different demographic areas might have very different libraries, or might be less likely to have libraries. A researcher might look at libraries in a more isolated area where the residents have fewer resources.

Conclusion:

The retirement community library contacts that were included in this study were generous with their time and impressed the researcher with their willingness to share information about their libraries, and to talk about their collections. This research was exploratory, and one of the important conclusions that can be drawn from this study is that, in at least some retirement community libraries, there is much that can be studied and analyzed. There are people who work in some of these libraries who have much to share about how they work. Library scientists interested in collection development, cataloging, staffing and volunteers, or management of special libraries should find something to study within some retirement community libraries. Because the scope of

this study was small, this study did not explore any of these subjects in depth. It is clear, however, that retirement community libraries can and should be studied by librarians.

Retirement community libraries are important, as well, outside the context of providing library services to older adults. The libraries in this study are all success stories from the standpoint of special, smaller libraries, and might provide some ideas for libraries in other kinds of institutions.   Much of the literature about institutional libraries discusses libraries in other types of institutions, and some of these environments might be able to learn from the retirement community libraries in this research study. Each library that was included in this study might serve as an example for libraries in other institutions, and not just communities or institutions that serve older adults.

APPENDIX A

Recruitment Script- Telephone recruitment:

My name is Jessica Gibson and I am a graduate student in the Library Science program at UNC-Chapel Hill. I am calling because I am writing my Master's thesis, and am researching libraries in retirement communities. I would like to interview you because you have been identified by (the Activities Director) as a contact person for your retirement community's library.

If you do choose to be interviewed, I will interview you and will ask questions about how the library works, including questions about the collection, staff, and marketing of the library. I expect that the interview will take approximately 1-2 hours, and will not require any follow-up questions after this interview. I will audiotape the interview. Participation is completely voluntary, and you may choose to stop the interview at any point. You may also ask that the interview not be audiotaped at any point. I have a consent form explaining more about the interview and the process, which I will ask you to read and sign before we begin the interview. Do you have any questions for me at this point about the process or the interview?

If you would like to participate, I would like to schedule a time and place to meet with you at the library in your community.

APPENDIX B

University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill
Consent to Participate in a Research Study
Adult Participants
Social Behavioral Form

IRB Study #_____
Consent Form Version Date: February 12, 2007

Title of Study: A Study of In-House Libraries in Triangle-Area Retirement Communities

Principal Investigator: Jessica Gibson
UNC-Chapel Hill Department: School of Information and Library Science
UNC-Chapel Hill Phone number: 919-962-8362
Faculty Advisor: Dr. Claudia Gollop
Faculty Advisor's email: gollop@ils.unc.edu

Study Contact telephone number: 919-932-1249
Study Contact email: gibso@email.unc.edu

What are some general things you should know about research studies?
You are being asked to take part in a research study. To join the study is voluntary.
You may refuse to join, or you may withdraw your consent to be in the study, for any reason, without penalty.

Research studies are designed to obtain new knowledge. This new information may help people in the future. You may not receive any direct benefit from being in the research study. There also may be risks to being in research studies.

Details about this study are discussed below. It is important that you understand this information so that you can make an informed choice about being in this research study. You will be given a copy of this consent form. You should ask the researchers named above, or staff members who may assist them, any questions you have about this study at any time.

What is the purpose of this study?
The purpose of this research study is to learn about libraries in retirement communities. We are interesting in finding out about many different aspects of the library, including their collections and how they are maintained or cataloged, what programs (if any) they offer, staffing, marketing of the library, and how residents obtain books that are not available in the library.
You are being asked to be in the study because you are involved with running or

maintaining the library in some way, or you are a contact person for the library.

How many people will take part in this study?
If you decide to be in this study, you will be one of approximately 4-5 people in this research study.

How long will your part in this study last?
Your participation in this study will be limited to an interview which will last approximately 1-2 hours. There will not be a follow-up to this initial interview.

What will happen if you take part in the study?
If you participate in the study, a student from the graduate school at UNC-Chapel Hill's School of Information and Library Science will interview you about the library. The interview should take approximately 1-2 hours.

What are the possible benefits from being in this study?
Research is designed to benefit society by gaining new knowledge. You may also expect to benefit by participating in this study because the researcher will provide you with a copy of her paper, including findings about retirement community libraries.

What are the possible risks or discomforts involved from being in this study?
There are no known risks.

How will your privacy be protected?
Participants *will not* be identified in any report or publication about this study. Although every effort will be made to keep research records private, there may be times when federal or state law requires the disclosure of such records, including personal information. This is very unlikely, but if disclosure is ever required, UNC-Chapel Hill will take steps allowable by law to protect the privacy of personal information. In some cases, your information in this research study could be reviewed by representatives of the University, research sponsors, or government agencies for purposes such as quality control or safety.

The interviews will be recorded onto audio tape. The tapes will be transcribed by the researcher within one month of the interview, and will be destroyed upon completion of the study. The researcher anticipates that the study will be completed in May 2007. You may request that the researcher not record the interview, and you may also request that the recording be stopped at any point during the interview.

Will you receive anything for being in this study?
You will not receive anything for taking part in this study.

Will it cost you anything to be in this study?
There will be no costs for being in the study

What if you have questions about this study?

You have the right to ask, and have answered, any questions you may have about this research. If you have questions, or concerns, you should contact the researchers listed on the first page of this form.

What if you have questions about your rights as a research participant?
All research on human volunteers is reviewed by a committee that works to protect your rights and welfare. If you have questions or concerns about your rights as a research subject you may contact, anonymously if you wish, the Institutional Review Board at 919-966-3113 or by email to IRB_subjects@unc.edu.

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Participant's Agreement:

I have read the information provided above. I have asked all the questions I have at this time. I voluntarily agree to participate in this research study.

_____   _____
Signature of Research Participant   Date

_____
Printed Name of Research Participant

_____   _____
Signature of Person Obtaining Consent   Date

_____
Printed Name of Person Obtaining Consent

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR RETIREMENT COMMUNITY LIBRARIES:

(1)   Do you know how many books are included in this collection?
(2)   If so, approximately how many are included?
(3)   Do you know how many magazines are included in this collection?
(4)   If so, approximately how many are included?
(5)   Do you know how many CDs, audiotapes, or records are included in this collection?
(6)   If so, approximately how many are included?
(7)   Do you know how many DVDs or videotapes are included in this collection?
(8)   If so, approximately how many are included?
(9)   Do you have any idea what the total number of items in the collection is?
(10)   If so, what is the total number of items, and how is this data collected?
(11)   Where do the items in the collection come from, and how do they get added to the collection?
(12)   What types of materials are in the collection? Is there any type of material that seems to be more well-represented than the others?
(13)   If a resident wants to borrow an item, does the resident have to "check it out" in any way?
(14)   If a resident wants a book that is not in the library, is there any way that the library can help them get it?
(15)   If so, who is responsible for getting the book, and how does this work?
(16)   Is there any specific manner in which the items are organized?
(17)   If so, who organizes them, and how often is this done?
(18)   Is there any kind of catalog or list of the items in the library?
(19)   If so, how old is this catalog or list, and how often is it updated?
(20)   Are there any computers in the library?
(21)   If so, how many are there?
(22)   If there are computers in the library, do they offer internet access?
(23)   If the library does not have computers, are there any computers for residents located in other parts of the retirement community?
(24)   If so, where are they located?
(25)   Where is the library located in relation to other spaces in the community, such as the dining hall or other recreational space?
(26)   How long has the library been located here?
(27)   During what times is the library open?
(28)   Does anyone work in the library?
(29)   If so, who works in the library and what are the different job responsibilities?
(30)   How often is there someone working in the library?
(31)   Does the library offer any kind of programs at all for the residents?
(32)   If so, what kind of programs are offered to the residents?
(33)   How often does the library have programs for the residents?
(34)   Who is responsible for the library's programs?

(35)   Do any of the residents use the library space for any activities not directly related to the library?
(36)   If so, what else is the library space used for, and how often is it used?
(37)   Does the library provide any services to those residents who are unable to get to the library for medical reasons?
(38)   How old is the library?
(39)   How was it established? (For example, did the retirement community make it part of the community when it was first built?)
(40)   Does the library get any funding at all from any source?
(41)   If so, who helps fund the library?
(42)   Does it appear that the residents use the library?
(43)   Do you keep any statistics about the use of the library?
(44)   Do you have any sense about whether the library is used by a wide number of residents, or by a smaller group of residents?
(45)   Does the library have any kind of advertising or marketing within the retirement community?
(46)   If so, how is it advertised or marketed?
(47)   Does the library work at all with other retirement community libraries, or with public libraries?
(48)   If so, in what way does the library work with other libraries?
(49)   With which libraries does it work?
(50)   In what ways do you think that the library should be improved?

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