Imagine having access to the book collections of not one, but seven Ivy league library systems. You need not imagine! BorrowDirect is a reality.

BorrowDirect (http://tinyurl.com/borrowdirect) allows Columbia University students, faculty, and staff with library borrowing privileges and active e-mail accounts to borrow books directly from Brown, Cornell, Dartmouth, UPenn, Princeton, and Yale.

A notable advantage of BorrowDirect is that it allows users to independently request books outside of the Columbia system. (Hence the “Direct” in the name). It’s a self-mediated system that allows you to borrow a book that Columbia doesn’t have, or a book that has been checked out here at Columbia.

Newly re-vamped, BorrowDirect now offers six-week loan period, plus the option for one six-week-long renewal. Users can now see their BorrowDirect books in their My Account page in CLIO, listed alongside the books they’ve borrowed from within the Columbia library system. Also, users can choose from more libraries to pick up their BorrowDirect materials: Butler, Burke, Business and Economics, Engineering, Lehman, Social Work, Health Sciences Library, and Barnard.

It is not surprising that David Lane doesn’t have any big retirement plans. He doesn’t look like someone who is about to retire. Tall, slim and mild-mannered, David could easily pass for a college professor even in the absence of the stereotypical bow tie. In his forty years as a psychiatrist librarian at the New York State Psychiatric Institute (PI), David has seen many changes. The old European style, high-ceilinged psychiatry library—located in the building that is now the Mailman School of Public Health—“was a pleasure to use,” in spite of its lack of air-conditioning, he says. The new library—clean, modern and well air-conditioned—looks more like a corporate library, but for the past twelve years, it has housed the books and bound journals in psychiatry and emerging fields, including imaging, post-traumatic stress disorder, violence against women, age-related studies. The new library, mirroring the recent developments in psychiatry, has been a labor of love. David was instrumental in its planning, moving the old library into the new location, and continuing to build its collections. “The last ten years have been pretty interesting and stimulating,” says David.

We talk about the changes in libraries and the virtual disappearance of psychiatry libraries, of which this is one of the last ones standing, he says. He thinks that electronic journals and the transformation of psychiatry into a more medicalized field—connected with new disciplines such as genetics and imaging—are some of the factors that have accelerated the change. “People don’t step back to get the big picture that comes from books anymore,” he muses. Also, electronic journals have replaced printed ones, and small libraries such as his can hardly bear the financial burden.

David went to Columbia’s library school in the late sixties during the riots. I ask him how he chose the field of psychiatry and his gentle smile appears. “I was a college psychology major, and I had the naivete,” he says, “to think that studying psychology would help me to understand people.” The clinical aspects did not appeal to him as much as the theoretical ones, so becoming a librarian in the field seemed a happy solution. He thinks that his knowledge of psychology has made his job as a librarian much more interesting.

Since we’re in a psychiatric library, invoking old ghosts doesn’t seem so out of place. David doesn’t need much prodding to retell the story of Dr. Jacob Shatzky, the Judaic scholar and creator of the PI Library, the man instrumental in transferring Freud’s personal library from Vienna to the Psychiatric Institute. In 1956, at the age of 61, Dr. Shatzky died suddenly of a stroke in the library, and, apparently, his last words to his assistant were “take good care of the library!” David still follows that plea more than half a century later.

There is one thing that David knows he will do when he retires. He is planning to move to Plymouth, Massachusetts, his wife’s hometown. A friend’s retirement advice was that he should get out of the house and have an intelligent conversation with someone every day (talking to grocer doesn’t count.) “Maybe I’ll get a big dog and walk around a lot,” David says. Sounds like a good plan.

-Interview by Anca Meret, Health Sciences Library
In a recent move that surprised many, Google joined with Verizon in drafting a proposal that includes the ability to charge higher fees for some types of service on the Internet. Previously Google had been seen as a strong proponent for net neutrality, the concept of unrestricted speed and access via broadband service providers to any web site or service regardless of its content or purpose. While the joint proposal recommends that the FCC would be able to better enforce this on wired broadband services, it also recommends that there should be exceptions for Internet access via cellphone networks and some developing services on broadband such as, according to Google, “health care monitoring, the smart grid, advanced educational services, or new entertainment and gaming options.”

The proposal was met with much publicity and debate, including a petition against the proposal that collected over 300,000 signatures. Staunch advocates of net neutrality believe that allowing any type of “premium” access – whether it’s to better connect to leisure activities, educational or any other program or service – opens loopholes for companies that will end up discriminating against competitors and preventing innovation that would benefit the general public. Google, Verizon and others who want to allow for different levels of access to the general “information superhighway” argue that being able to charge for the different types of access will spur innovation and help with issues such as security and building new infrastructure more quickly. Whatever your own beliefs, keeping up on changes in net neutrality news today and voicing your opinion could greatly affect how we use the Internet in the future.

Videos that provide an overview on the wireless network at CUMC and Pharos printing services have been posted on the CUMC IT web site. These can be viewed online on any computer using Adobe Flash, or on iPhones and other devices that can play streaming m4v files.

We’re happy to be able to provide information in a newer format that is convenient and easy to use, and will be working on more simulations in the future. Please send us suggestions for any technology resources or topics that we could provide in this format (e-mail: 5help@columbia.edu.)

20 Dell computers in the Computer Lab on the 2nd floor of the Hammer Building have been upgraded from XP to Windows 7. These computers are located between the CUMC IT Service Desk area and the Photocopy Center. More systems will be upgraded going forward.

If you haven’t tried using Windows 7 yet, please stop by and spend some time working on one of the upgraded systems. In Windows 7, the Start Menu and Programs list have changed but are still easy to use, and most Microsoft programs now use the Ribbon tool and menu bar to provide a uniform set of commands and options. Our FAQs at the bottom of http://www.cumc.columbia.edu/it/getting_help/faq-student-software.html include help on using the Ribbon.