

## SUQ

### Denise Browning

This has been a very eventful year for the Suq. It started just after the opening in June of the new streetscape in front of the Oriental Institute, which brought in many new visitors. Then in September we changed the hours of the Museum and the Suq, closing a little earlier during the week and opening earlier on Sundays. It seems to have worked very well as we cut back on our slow hours, and opening earlier on Sundays didn't even seem to need an adjustment period. The result was a healthy 15.5 percent increase in our net sales.

Of course most of our success is due to our incredible volunteers, who give our customers impeccable service. Many thanks to Judy Bell Qualls, Ray Broms, Norma van der Meulen, and Jane Meloy. Norma, thankfully, is still creating her much-sought-after jewelry for the Suq.

Unfortunately, we did say goodbye to long-time student employee Dylan Genest, and long-time volunteer Judy Bell Qualls. Dylan worked for us both as an undergraduate and as a



*Figure 23. A selection of merchandise available at the Suq*

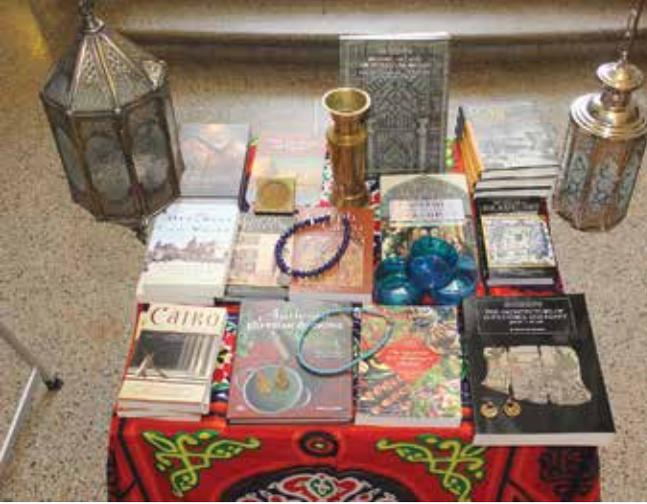


Figure 24. A selection of merchandise available at the Suq

graduate student. She is now working full time in Chicago. Judy decided it was time to retire. We will all miss Judy. Her good sense of humor and knowledge was enjoyed by everyone.

During the year we hosted two book signings that were very popular with our members. Eric Cline autographed his popular book *1177 BC: The Year Civilization Collapsed*. Adina Hoffman and Peter Cole graciously autographed their book, *Sacred Trash: The Lost and Found World of the Cairo Geniza*, in conjunction with our special exhibit, *A Cosmopolitan City: Muslims, Christians, and Jews in Old Cairo*.

This special exhibit enabled us to bring in lots of new merchandise for the Suq. Since it was a more modern exhibit for us we were able to take advantage of the many wonderful handicrafts still made in the Middle East. We brought in many beautiful glass and cut-metal hanging lamps, hand-blown glass vessels, beautiful arabesque jewelry, and many interesting books from the American University Press in Cairo, including children's books (figs. 23–24). Wahied Helmy brought back from Egypt beautifully hand-painted papyrus specially made for the exhibit with either Arabic calligraphy or the Ten Commandments written in Hebrew.

Our new lamassu t-shirts made their debut in June. They are available in black with a white, almost three-dimensional impression, or in heather tan with a black line drawing enhanced by Josh Tulisiak's Photoshop expertise (fig. 24).

We are looking forward to another exciting year working with all of the volunteers, students, and customers.

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