A Menu for Menus: Organizing a Menu Collection: An Ongoing Process

Problem
An organized, experience collection of over 1200 restaurant menus and other related objects was stored in its original format when the menus were divided into five years, each followed by a smaller collection. Each main collection contained a number of menus, cards, menus, and other related material that could be located by an address, city, state, or country.

Step 1
The menus were sorted physically by city or country into separate folders. Names that could be located by these folders were located to see if an address, city, state, or country could be located.

Step 2
All menus that fit on a standard multipurpose scanner were scanned at 300 dpi and saved to a personal small. These scans were then attached to the correct directories, named according to a naming convention that includes the city, state, and the year. Additional descriptions were then added to differentiates among menus.

Step 3
These files were then organized into folders according to the restaurant names. The images also needed to be converted from PDFs that were available on the manual to JPEGs so that the image could be readable. This was done with the help of ContentDM. The code, along with the search terms, was entered into ContentDM so that it could be located by city, state, and year.

Step 4
Once access to and assisted by ContentDM was completed, the digital files began being organized into a spreadsheet that contains a contact email and a name. This spreadsheet was then linked to the contentdm and can be located through contentdm.

Step 5
As approximately half of the collection has been digitized, it has been determined that the size of the collection and the volume of the data make it impractical to digitize the collection. The collection is now organized for ease of location in one arrangement, which something that is unavailable in the digital collection. With the planning and the digitizing of the collection, it is now easier to link the menu to the contentdm.

Future Steps
- A flatbed scanner needs to be located to digitize those menus too large to scan on the multifunction machine as the flatbed scanner previously used in the archive is no longer compatible with the computers used on campus. These files will then be processed and uploaded, along with being integrated into the physical collection as appropriate.
- A print finding aid will be created and included with a link to the collection on the library's site.

Contact
Dr Sine Rofofsky
Schenectady County Community College
Sine.Rofofsky@sunysccc.edu or SineRofofsky@gmail.com