

CONGRESSIONAL PAPERS SECTION NEWSLETTER

"Historical documents guarded with great care by National Archives. Washington, D.C., Nov. 22. The treatment and careful handling of valuable historical documents . . . National Archives by a worker who uses a specially hand made truck". Library of Congress. <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/hec.27694>



Psst... Have a favorite photo you'd like to showcase? Send us photos when we ask for submissions for the next CPS newsletter!

CPS CHAIR'S MESSAGE

I don't know about the rest of you, but I found the first three months of 2025 exhausting. Amidst the uncertainty of the economic client, the challenging environments on many of the college campuses where our members work, and the political dramas that we are experienced at documenting, we are seeing some of the fixtures in our community moving on to other opportunities or into well-earned retirement. With so much going on, I admit it has been hard to stay focused.

But I continue to find excitement for the work of our community. Last week, we had our first virtual meet-up of the year to talk about campaign records, and 22 members attended. Our members are working on a supplement to Cynthia Pease Miller's seminal work *Managing Congressional Collections*. Next month, many of us will be traveling to Mississippi for one of my favorite professional meetings of the year, the ACSC Annual Meeting. Our members continue to publish their work and experiences in numerous venues. We continue to intentionally and determinately document the history and work of representative government. All this gives me hope and the energy to keep showing up and being the best archivist I can be. And I want it to be the same for all of you.

I want this section to continue to be a place of warm welcome, collaboration, and support for all its members. I want to foster a group that is seen as a net good for anyone working in the world of political papers. I hope others find the same excitement I do in working with such excellent and admirable colleagues. Just like Congress, I think we are working best when we are working together. So, if there is something that you want to see the section do, or talk about, please reach out to congressionalpaperssection@gmail.com. I'm checking our new Google account weekly, so I promise your ideas and feedback will be heard. I'm looking forward to continuing to work with all of you.

Happy spring CPS!

-John Caldwell, CPS Chair

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **ACSC Annual Meeting, May 20-22**
- **CPS Annual Meeting, July 24, 4-5:30 pm EDT**
- **Call for CPS nominations closes Wednesday, May 28.**

Collection Update: Senator Richard Burr

Wake Forest University has received the political papers of Senator Richard Burr. Richard Burr was a U.S. Representative from 1995-2005 and a Senator from 2005-2023. He was the Chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee from 2015-2020, and some of his legislative accomplishments include the FDA Modernization Act of 1997, the Pandemic and All-Hazards Preparedness Act, and the creation of the Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority. Project archivist Kate Trathen has been working to process the Richard M. Burr Congressional Collection since January 2023. As the project enters its third year, significant progress has been made. Processing of the physical collection, including memorabilia, is on track to be completed by the end of the academic semester. Processing work on electronic records is ongoing—one series (press files) is nearing completion, with significant work being done on digital photos and legislative files as well. Some digitized videos are already available online as part of our [digital collection](#). We do not have a release date for the rest of the collection yet, but we are anticipating that it will be ready and open for research by the end of 2025.

Also of note was a recent trip to Washington, D.C. Kate Trathen and Tanya Zanish-Belcher, Director of Special Collections and Archives at Wake Forest, gave two talks in conjunction with Dina Mazina, Deputy Archivist and Records Management Training and Services for the U.S. Senate. We talked about our work on the Richard Burr Congressional Collection and other experiences with political papers. Thank you, Dina, for lending your expertise to our panel!

Collection Update: Senator Patrick J. Leahy

The University of Vermont Silver Special Collections Library has released the first two series of the Senator Patrick J. Leahy Papers for public access. Senator Leahy (D-VT) is Vermont's longest-serving U.S. Senator and the third-longest serving senator in American history. The papers document the work of his office and 1300+ staffers over the course of his 48-year career, spanning 1975-2023. This first part of the collection includes materials from the Senator's travels and congressional delegations as well as his eight election campaigns. Consisting of approximately 3000 boxes of records and 20 terabytes of digital material, the collection is being processed by project archivists Shir Bach, Sally Blanchard-O'Brien, and Erica Donnis with a five-year \$2.5 million Preservation Partnership Grant funded by the United States Senate Historical Office. The grant includes substantial funding for student internships and will provide more than 50 undergraduates with experiential learning opportunities that introduce them to archival work by the end of the project. For more information, view the [finding aid](#) and contact the Silver Special Collections Library at uvmsc@uvm.edu.



A 1974 brochure vowing to fight inflation is one of many items in the campaign series.



A campaign example brought up during our virtual meetup!

History, Art & Archives, U.S. House of Representatives, "Campaign Collectibles: Running for Congress,"
<https://history.house.gov/Exhibitions-and-Publications/Campaigns/Introduction/>
(April 28, 2025)

CPS Meetup details

Friday, April 4, was our first virtual meet-up of 2025 discussing campaign documentation. We had six speakers: Dina Mazina (U.S. Senate Historical Office) talked about the rules separating official work from campaign work and thus the challenges and limitations in capturing campaign materials; Sara Stefani (Indiana University) discussed donor relations and collection guidelines for what campaign material to take and what to decline; Shir Bach (University of Vermont) walked us through the processing campaign records; Sally Blanchard-O'Brien and Erica Donnis (University of Vermont) shared their experience using campaign materials in an exhibition telling the story of the 1974 Senate race in Vermont and related programming; Carly Dearborn (Ohio State University) described her copyright review work to digitize campaign bumper stickers; and John Caldwell (University of Delaware) talked about collecting political campaign documentation more broadly, including web archiving and building artificial political ephemera collections. After the lightning talks, we had a good discussion about the obscure campaign ephemera in our collections and how challenging it can be to get researchers to use campaign files. Join us for our next meet-up in the fall, hosted by the CPS Electronic Records Committee.

Staffing update: Senator's Office

We'd like to extend a warm welcome to Karma Foley, Deputy Archivist for Senators' Offices. Here's a quick introduction:

"I have 20 years of experience in the archival field, having worked with paper, electronic, and audiovisual records in a variety of cultural heritage, documentary production, and corporate settings. Most recently, I led the archives department at Smithsonian Channel. I have a Masters in Library Science from the University of Maryland at College Park and a Bachelors in Anthropology."

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS: CPS LEADERSHIP 2025-26

If you have ever considered getting involved in CPS leadership, your time is now! The Nominating Committee is seeking nominations to the Congressional Papers Section Steering Committee. Please consider nominating yourself or a colleague for any of the following positions:

- Two open seats on the **Steering Committee** who will serve two-year terms. During the first year, these members will also serve on the Nominating Committee, and during the second year they will serve on the Program Committee.
- **Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect** is a three-year commitment. In addition to serving on the Steering Committee for three years, the Vice-Chair will co-chair the Electronic Records Committee during their first year. In the second year, the individual becomes Section Chair. In the final year, the past-chair serves as Chair of the Nominating Committee.

All candidates must be members of the Society of American Archivists and the Congressional Papers Section. For more details about the duties of these positions, please see our section's Standing Rules: <https://www2.archivists.org/groups/congressional-papers-section/standing-rules> Or feel free to reach out to current members - we'd all be happy to discuss the positions and our experiences.

Nominees should supply the following to the Nominating Committee:

- Name, title, and institutional affiliation.
- A brief biographical and candidate statement. Feel free to address any topic of concern to the section, including education, experience with congressional collections, what you bring to the Steering Committee, and/or any goals you have in mind for the section.
- A headshot (optional)

Nominations will be accepted through Wednesday, May 28.

We encourage anyone who's ever considered to run. Serving in section leadership is a good way to learn more about SAA's operations, gain valuable leadership experience, and build a resume/CV. The time-commitment is not exhausting, and the members of this section have a history of supporting one another. The CPS Steering Committee welcomes members with diverse viewpoints and levels of experience. Early-career professionals are just as qualified to stand for election as long-time veterans.

Feel free to contact any members of the Nominating Committee listed below with nominations or questions.

CPS Nominating Committee:

Kate Gregory (kgregory@library.msstate.edu)
Lori Schwartz (lschwartz@unomaha.edu)
Shir Bach (sbach@uvm.edu)