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Manuscript Repositories Newsletter

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Fall 2005

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From the Chair: Parting Words

Cynthia Pease Miller

How strange it seems to now be remembering the up-beat, busy, happy times at the Annual Meeting in New Orleans, the delicious meals, the wonderful reception at the Aquarium, all a week before Hurricane Katrina devastated the Gulf Coast, followed by Hurricane Rita. Our thoughts and prayers go out to our colleagues and friends in the Gulf Region.

During SAA's Annual Meeting, the Manuscript Section meeting heard a fascinating and forthright talk by **Richard Pearce-Moses** on the Arizona Convocation model of statewide outreach to various institutions and constituencies. Break-out sessions followed on related topics: organizational collaborations, smaller repositories collaborating with SHRABS, records that are born digital, the A* Census and diversity issues, hidden collections, and new collecting areas. Summaries of some of these discussions are found below in this newsletter.

Congratulations to our new Vice Chair/Chair-Elect **Beth Bensman** of the Presbyterian Historical Society and to the new members of the Steering Committee: **Mat Darby** of the Center for American History, University of Texas-Austin, **Sammie Morris** of the Purdue University, and **Morna Gerrard** of Georgia State University. **Paul Atwood** joins **Karen Spicher** as Co-Web Liaison. Continuing on the Steering Committee are **Maria Estorino** of the University of Miami, **Fernanda Perrone** of Rutgers University, and **Jill Severn** of the Russell Library, University of Georgia.

Many thanks to **Tom Hyry** of Yale University, **Theresa Salazar** of the University of California Berkeley, and **Steve Sturgeon** of Utah State University for their ideas and contributions these past two years on the Steering Committee.

Special thanks to our Past Chair **Pam Hackbart-Dean** and our new chair **Amy Cooper Cary** for all their words of wisdom and support.

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Manuscript Repositories Section Response to Katrina

The Manuscript Repositories Section of SAA continues to be deeply concerned about the effects of hurricane Katrina on our colleagues and their repositories

on the Gulf Coast. The archival community has responded to the crisis in many ways, and we would like to encourage all Section members to assist in any way possible through these means:

The Society of American Archivists has formed a site that includes a hurricane-response volunteer list, for colleagues who wish to donate time to the rebuilding effort. Go to <http://www.archivists.org/news/katrina.asp>

The National Archives has mounted the following web resources on their site to assist in records recovery:

Information on records management and recovery:

<http://www.archives.gov/records-mgmt/vital-records/rm-hurricane-info.html>

Information to the public (including historical organizations) and state/local government on disaster response:

<http://www.archives.gov/preservation/disaster-response/>

There are over 4,000 missing federal workers from the disaster area. Approximately 1,400 are with the Veterans Administration. Agencies are trying to get the word out to communities throughout the country in an effort to find out what has happened to their people. Some may need assistance in proving their federal work status or to receive benefits (e.g. discharged military). This website can be a resource, if you know someone who needs help: <http://www.archives.gov/st-louis/katrina.html>

The Society of Southwest Archivists has responded by providing a clearing house for information about repositories, people and needs for repositories to rebuild. Their website, <http://www.ssacares.org/>, provides information on needs, jobs, supplies and space, as well as personal links to those in the affected area.

The Manuscript Repositories Section will work with SAA to identify potential areas where it can provide assistance to manuscript repositories in need.

If you have suggestions or comments, please send them to the Section Chair, Amy Cooper Cary at amyccary@sois.uwm.edu.

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Gift Tax Issue Involving Donations of Papers of Public Officials ***Cynthia Pease Miller***

Since the mid-1990s, an IRS interpretation of federal gift and estate tax law has caused many departing Members of Congress to transfer their papers to their chosen libraries under deeds of deposit instead of deeds of gift.

The IRS interpretation states that if the donor retains the right to control access to the papers, it constitutes a split-interest gift and thus renders the gift of papers ineligible for the charitable deduction and subject to substantial and undeserved gift and estate taxation. Many Members of Congress impose access restrictions to protect materials related to constituent matters as well as papers relating to sensitive national issues.

The general rule is that a gift tax is imposed on lifetime transfers by gift and an estate tax is imposed on transfer at the death of the donor. Gift and estate tax charitable deductions are allowed for the value of property transferred to charities. However, gifts with retained rights generally are the unintended victims of an anti-abuse provision regarding split-interest gifts.

No action was taken on legislation introduced in 1999 by Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan to modify the anti-abuse rule.

In 2004 the Senate Finance Committee again took up the issue, but it received no support in the House of Representatives.

Archivists who are concerned about corrective legislation are encouraged to write to the House Ways and Means Committee, whose members are listed below.

Bill Thomas, CA, Chairman

Charles B. Rangel, NY

E. Clay Shaw, Jr. FL	Fortney Pete Stark, CA
Nancy L. Johnson, CT	Sander M. Levin, MI
Wally Herger, CA	Benjamin L. Cardin, MD
Jim McCrery, LA	Jim McDermott, WA
Dave Camp, MI	John Lewis, GA
Jim Ramstad, MN	Richard E. Neal, MA
Jim Nussle, IA	Michael R. McNulty, NY
Sam Johnson, TX	William J. Jefferson, LA
Phil English, PA	John S. Tanner, TN
J.D. Hayworth, AZ	Xavier Becerra, CA
Jerry Weller, IL	Lloyd Doggett, TX
Kenny C. Hulshof, MO	Earl Pomeroy, ND
Ron Lewis, KY	Stephanie Tubbs Jones, OH
Mark Foley, FL	Mike Thompson, CA
Kevin Brady, TX	John B. Larson, CT
Thomas M. Reynolds, NY	Rahm Emanuel, IL
Paul Ryan, WI	
Eric Cantor, VA	
John Linder, GA	
Bob Beauprez, CO	
Melissa A. Hart, PA	
Chris Chocola, IN	
Devin Nunes, CA	

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Manuscript Repositories Section Meeting: Breakout Session Summaries August 19, 2005

*The Manuscript Repositories Section Meeting held break out sessions during its annual meeting, addressing a number of topics important to our members. Section members moderated and participated in the discussions. Below are summaries of some of these discussions. **We invite members to submit editorial comment and discussion on these issues for the next newsletter!***

Collaborations between Archives

Moderated by Dick Cameron, NHPRC, the group included archivists from a number of different types of archives-- medical archives, maritime museums, and archival collections within University Libraries, some remotely situated. The group discussed some of the problems they encounter as archivists such as being loan arrangers, the challenge of obvious colleagues for collaboration being spread geographically throughout the country, or being part of a museum or library whose mission is slightly different.

The group then discussed ways to collaborate -- even if statewide archivists cannot afford an extended program like the Arizona program which Richard Pearce Moses discussed in his opening talk. Suggestions were made to coordinate smaller groups for shorter times where folks can meet (e.g., archivists with similar concerns meeting for a 1/2 day meeting with lunch (to allow for informal conversation). It also might be necessary to coordinate with colleagues across the country if the archives is specialized (e.g. going to meetings that encompass the bigger organization -- museums, historical societies, etc)

Applying for grants may allow repositories to work together on collaborative projects, be they planning meetings, or set projects. Repositories can take advantage of opportunities through IMLS, NHPRC, SHRABs that can help foster collaboration without excessive cost falling on individual institutions.

Suggestions were made for successful collaborative meetings:

- Pearce Moses mentioned the Arizona Convocation model, which was informational and also served an important social role allowing individuals to network. For information on the Arizona Convocations, see <http://www.lib.az.us/convocations/index.cfm>
- Informal structures work well. Make sure to have long breaks so folks can meet with each other.

- Bring in speakers -- interesting and provocative speakers often help us change our mindset. Think of state and out of state resource people -- State Librarians, Special collections folks, folks who are good speakers and can inspire. (Richard Pearce Moses mentioned David Levy who wrote *Scrolling Forward*.)
- Use facilitators to guide and bring different perspectives to a discussion.
- Deal with similar, across the board training issues.
- Be strategic -- come together to talk about 1/2 dozen topics. Assign people to topics so that they have a chance to think about new ideas and options, and work with new folks.

Having positive point of view is important. Repositories must use the resources at hand to explore new options and opportunities (both internal and external to the institution). Though we're all busy, we must not let things stop the possibilities of meeting together and forming collaborations.

Diversity

Linda DeLoach, member of the SAA Diversity Committee and Brenda Banks, member of the A*Census Working Group facilitated the discussion.

After group members introduced themselves and Brenda Banks provided an overview of the information gleaned from A*Census related to diversity. The group began discussion of issues and needs associated with building diversity. The group agreed that archivists need to do a better job of marketing the profession of archivist to diverse audiences. The group also agreed that SAA and archivists need to do a better job of communicating the value of record keeping and documentation and the role that archives can play with traditionally underserved groups. The need for diversity follows two tracks:

1. To diversify the profession of archivist
2. To build diversity of the materials archives collect

The group identified some of the key ingredients for attracting under-represented groups to the archival profession:

- Advocate for better salaries that compete with the salaries of high tech and other non-archival professional careers
- Find new contexts to reach targeted audiences
 - Mention archives as a career in orientation visits to groups of students visiting your archives
 - Establish a regular program of outreach with library schools
 - Establish relationship with groups or organizations of targeted audiences (consult with fraternity or sorority groups or service organizations about caring for their records)

The groups also discussed ways to forge closer bonds with underserved groups with archival records.

- A member of the group proposed that SAA develop a program that selects an archives or community group (or possibly more than one group) in need of assistance in the city where the SAA meeting is taking place and then provides a team of trained archivists who will volunteer to come in and assist the group with its needs.
 - One of the group members suggested that the annual meeting committee should coordinate this effort, but that it should encompass the committees and groups of SAA as needed.
 - Brenda Banks suggested the program could be modeled after the one carried out by a Conservator's group with which she is familiar
 - Brenda Banks also pointed out that it was important to give this activity a name that emphasizes the positive opportunity for sharing and collaboration and not something along the lines of "a day of service"

Lynda De Loach closed the discussion by encouraging development of best practices manual for increasing diversity. This manual could be a clearing

house where people could submit approaches and initiatives that they found to be successful. Those interested in building diversity programs in their archives could consult this manual for ideas and strategies.

Hidden Collections

Manuscript Repositories Section Steering Committee Member Fernanda Perrone lead the session and began by explaining that "hidden collections" are those collections in repositories that are either unprocessed or inaccessible in some way. A 1998 Association of Research Libraries survey found that the institutions surveyed had an average of 27% of their holdings unprocessed and 44% did not grant access to unprocessed collections.

Other initiatives to study this problem followed including the Special Collections Task Force, which urged institutions to create a basic brief record for every collection, and a Yale survey which developed a point value (based on security concerns, use, etc.) to help institutions prioritize collections for processing.

The Greene-Meissner report (undertaken as part of a NHPRC fellowship to survey unprocessed 20th century manuscript collections) urged archivists to consider new ways to deal with hidden collections. This included re-thinking processing procedures by eliminating item level processing/preservation, do not re-folder, and limit description work. According to the report, archivists could process 400 feet per year by processing no lower than the series level. As part of a NEH proposal, thirty-seven repositories will test the Greene-Meissner theory by processing collections to their suggested standards.

After this overview, the group discussed how these new processing standards might affect access to collections and impact staff. Two group members were from institutions chosen for the NEH project and both were having difficulty selecting collections. They felt the Greene-Meissner model more appropriate for business, organizational, corporate, or government records than manuscript collections which often have no discernable order.

The group discussed privacy and confidentiality. If collections are processed only to the series level, how can archivists determine if the collection holds any sensitive material? In addition, archivists cannot identify correspondents, topics, etc.; series may not be coherently organized; and often materials are not received in folders. As one group member put it "if we don't examine and process collections, aren't we just file clerks?"

As a whole, the group felt that less preservation processing (removal of metal fasteners for instance) was a good idea. At one institution, fasteners are only removed if and when a patron requests copies and the work is done by the reference staff. The group felt less time on descriptive work might be acceptable as determining LCSHs takes up large amounts of staff time and the resulting headings are often not appropriate for manuscript collections.

Another area the group discussed was allowing access to unprocessed collections and if any institutions placed catalog entries for unprocessed collections in public (OPAC) or national bibliographic databases. Some did, some didn't. Those that do allow access to unprocessed collections reviewed the use statistics as a way to determine processing priorities. Since, as we know, whatever is "hidden" always piques the researcher's interest. The group felt that it was a delicate task to balance access restrictions (too many restrictions makes the repository appear obstructive) with privacy and confidentiality concerns.

One worry the group expressed was that administrators would see these new processing standards as a way to solve backlog without taking into consideration the long-range impact. The group hopes the survey will identify the type of collections appropriate for this new method and not use it to set benchmark processing statistics impossible to meet.

New Collecting Areas

Steve Sturgeon lead the break out in which eight people participated, representing the following agencies: Brigham Young University, the Huntington Library, the National Historical Publications and Records Commission, University of Georgia, University of Nevada Las Vegas, University of South Carolina, University of Texas at Austin, and Utah State University. The various archivists discussed programs and initiatives at their

own institutions, with the bulk of new collecting efforts being focused on ethnic and racial groups.

Brigham Young University: Working on developing minority community contacts through faculty members, religious groups, and community activists.

Huntington Library: Developing new contacts through participation in events such as History Day, as well as hosting public speakers from different segments of society. In particular the Huntington has been working on developing better ties to the African-American community in the Los Angeles area. One challenge is to overcome the perception that the Huntington only has the papers of "white people". Discussed an outreach effort by LA Public Library in the 1980s to proactively go out to black neighborhoods to obtain copies of family photographs.

NHPRC: Funded a project at Northeastern University to document African-American, Latino, and Gay & Lesbian communities, which relied upon the use of advisory boards composed of community leaders to help build connections between potential donors and the archives. This effort also involved creating pamphlets and other types of outreach. New York State Archives also is targeting other segments of society that have been overlooked in archival holdings. In particular they have been actively documenting the public mental health system and the efforts to "mainstream" patients.

University of Georgia: Historically did not collect much pertaining to the civil rights movement, something they are now seeking to rectify. They are focusing their efforts on documenting the experiences of rank and file "foot soldiers" rather than top leaders in the movement. Had to overcome the challenge of working in a library named after a prominent opponent of civil rights. They are focusing their efforts on developing faculty contacts and a website. Also actively documenting the activities of the Rural Electrification Administration in Georgia, which has allowed for outreach to rural parts of the state that have not traditionally had much contact with the university (mentioned that the Georgia State Archives has also done a photo outreach initiative in rural areas). UGA is focusing more efforts on documenting groups rather than individuals, and using oral histories as a component.

UNLV: Has had success in using regional ethnic newspapers to provide key contacts in different communities. Also, by virtue of location, actively documenting the gaming and entertainment industry. Seeking to document the experiences of rank and file workers, such as showgirls, in addition to the big names in the industry. Faces a challenge in that sometimes when they express an interest in a potential donation, the donor suddenly starts seeing dollars signs or wants to deal with a more "famous" archive.

University of South Carolina: Is using oral history interviews as a way to do outreach and build connections with other communities.

University of Texas at Austin: Has received the corporate records of the Exxon-Mobil oil company. As a companion to this collection, UT Austin would also like to do outreach to those groups, such as environmentalists, who were opposed to actions by the company in order to provide researchers with a more complete picture of Exxon-Mobil activities and the reactions they inspired.

Utah State University: Has been seeking to document environmental groups in Utah as an extension of the university's land grant/agricultural research focus. Also seeking to document the rapidly growing Latino population in northern Utah.

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The Ella T. Grasso Papers (1919-1981) opened to researchers at Mount Holyoke College Archives and Special Collections

The Mount Holyoke College Archives and Special Collections are pleased to announce that the Ella T. Grasso Papers are now open to the public. The 108 linear feet collection spans the years 1919-1981, with the bulk dating from 1970-1974, and primarily documents Grasso's work as a member of the United States Congress. The collection will be a valuable resource for scholars of

political science, history, and economics of the early 1970s as it provides primary sources on veterans' affairs, the Vietnam War, President Richard Nixon's impeachment, gas prices and fuel shortages, family planning and birth control, and education legislation. Of special interest are the files on family planning and control, as this was the period of the Supreme Court's decision on *Roe v. Wade*.

Grasso, who earned both B.A. and M.A. degrees from Mount Holyoke College became the first woman governor of Connecticut and the first woman governor elected in her own right. She began her political career working for the Connecticut State Department of Labor in 1942. In 1952 she was elected as a Democrat to the House of Representatives of the Connecticut General Assembly; she was re-elected in 1954. From 1958-1971 she served as Connecticut Secretary of State, and from 1956-1968 she was chair of the Connecticut Democratic State Platform Committee. From 1956-1958 she was Democratic Committeewoman. She co-chaired the Resolutions Committee for the 1966 and 1968 Democratic National Conventions. In 1970 and 1972 she was elected to the United States House of Representatives from Connecticut's 6th District. While in Congress she served on the Education and Labor Committee and the Veterans' Affairs Committee. In 1974 Grasso was elected as Governor of Connecticut. She was re-elected in 1979, but resigned from office on December 31, 1980 due to illness.

The processing project was funded by Mount Holyoke College alumnae Clara R. Ludwig, Mary Tuttle, Gwendolyn Glass and an anonymous donor. For the finding aid of the collection please see:

<http://asteria.fivecolleges.edu/findaids/mountholyoke/msh301.html>

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Connell Gallagher Named a Fellow of the Society of American Archivists

Connell Gallagher of the University of Vermont was named a Fellow of the Society of American Archivists on August 19, 2005, during SAA's 69th Annual Meeting in New Orleans at the Hilton New Orleans Riverside. Established in 1957 and conferred annually, the distinction of Fellow is the highest honor bestowed on individuals by SAA and is awarded for outstanding contributions to the archival profession. Gallagher joins 153 current members so honored out of a membership of more than 4,200.

Gallagher joined the University of Vermont in 1970 as its University Archivist and Curator of Manuscripts. He currently serves as the Director of Research Collections at the Bailey/Howe Library and is also a lecturer on archives and Vermont history. Within the archival profession, he has made numerous contributions to the theory of privacy and confidentiality—a perennial topic of abiding interest to archivists, but one of special and keen interest in today's political and social climate.

Gallagher is actively involved in a number of professional associations. He has served SAA in a variety of leadership capacities, including as chair of the Privacy and Confidentiality Roundtable, Congressional Papers Roundtable, and the College and University Archives Section. He is a member of SAA's Ethics Committee and has served as a mentor to new archivists. In addition, he is the past president of the New England Archivists and the Vermont Library Association, and is a long-time member of the Academy of Certified Archivists.

Gallagher has come to represent the very best of the archival profession. As one of his supporters put it, "Whether it be mentoring young archivists, serving our national and regional organizations, or publishing and presenting so the rest of us can learn from his work, Connie Gallagher has served the archive profession with distinction for more than thirty years." Many of his supporters singled out the mentoring he had provided to younger colleagues.

Others supporters remarked upon his demeanor: "... a quiet exemplar of the archival profession ... never [grandstanding] but always there when needed--one of the quintessential 'nice guys' ... [a] consummate professional, respectful though rigorous, thoughtful though articulate, patient though pointed." There is remarkable unanimity among Gallagher's colleagues and nominators who describe him in their letters of support as "kind," "wise," "dedicated,"

"steadfast," "intelligent," "modest," "knowledgeable," "patient," and "professional." The archival profession is lucky to have someone within its midst who so effectively embodies these assets.

Founded in 1936, the Society of American Archivists is North America's oldest and largest national archival professional association. SAA's mission is to serve the educational and informational needs of more than 4,200 individual and institutional members and to provide leadership to ensure the identification, preservation, and use of records of historical value. For a list of Distinguished Fellows, visit

www.archivists.org/recognition/fellows_list.asp

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Minutes Manuscript Repositories Section Steering Committee Meeting August 20, 2005, 7:00 - 8:30 a.m.

Present: Amy Cooper Cary (Chair), Beth Bensman (Vice-Chair), Mat Darby, Maria Estorino, Cynthia Pease Miller, Sammie Morris, Fernanda Perrone, Jill Severn and Karen Spicher.

The following issues were addressed:

Gift tax

Cynthia reviewed and clarified issues pertaining to the gift tax:

- No Senatorial collections are currently being donated under a deed of gift; all are deeds of deposit per the advice of Senate counsel
- Gift tax applies not only to Congressional collections with deeds of deposit but to any collection transferred under a deed of gift with restrictions
- Since mid-1990s, the gift tax provision has indicated that gifts with restrictions are not true gifts and are therefore taxed
- The restricted portion of the collection is the only portion which is taxed
- Legislation introduced by Daniel Patrick Moynihan sought to correct the gift tax provision, but it did not pass
- Senate Finance Committee, notably the Chair and Ranking member, is willing to take on this issue; House Ways & Means Committee, chaired by Bill Thomas, is not

Several questions/concerns arose:

- Is the tax applied if the institution restricts part of a collection?
- Need list of Ways & Means members so archivists could appeal to those whose papers might end up in their collections

Next steps:

- Cynthia will contact Ways & Means staff members and report back to Steering Committee with her findings
- Cynthia will write a piece clarifying the gift tax for the next newsletter (Deadline: October 1).

Endorsements

2006 meeting:

- Endorsements of sessions are suspended for next year's meeting

2007 meeting:

- Sections will be limited to endorsing 2 sessions each

Session proposals

Deadline for proposals: October 7

Suggestions:

- Long-term impact of disasters (Jill)
 - Previous proposal not accepted, but included representatives from National Archives, CSU Northridge + one other participant
- A different meaning of disaster: Public relations issues
 - Could look at concerns of various constituencies arising from disasters
 - Keeping the PR message clear among staff at all levels
 - "Communicating Chaos" or "When Bad Things Happen to Good People"

Other considerations:

- Format: panel discussion or papers?
 - Panel could consist of 5 people, 10 minutes each, followed by discussion
- Proposal should stress what people will take away from the session
- Would people be more candid if the discussion is not recorded?
- If "disaster" proposal not accepted, could use as basis for program

Next step:

- Jill will compose session proposal and present to Committee for feedback

2006 Section Meeting Program

Deadline for determining program: December or January

Program Committee: Amy, Fernanda, Jill, Maria

Publicity

- Need to publicize the Section program more extensively, both in the annual meeting program and throughout the week

Break-out sessions

- Worked well at this year's meeting
- Too loud; a larger room should be requested for next year. Note: Amy has contacted Program Committee to see if we can get a larger room.

Potential topics

- How to overcome predecessors' bad habits
 - Reprocessing legacy collections
 - "Translating" old finding aids
- Funding for processing
 - Grants
 - Donor funding
- Issues re: diversity in collections
 - Changing collecting policies
 - How increased diversity affects the identity of the repository and relationships with various constituencies
 - How to rein in collecting policies

Next steps:

- E-mail discussion among Committee members

Web liaison

Karen suggested relinquishing her duties as Web liaison to Paul Atwood (UC-Berkeley) and circulated his resume.

Proposal made to establish a 3-year term for Web liaison:

- 1st year: co-liaison

- 2nd year: solo liaison
- 3rd year: works with new liaison, if applicable
- If no new liaison is selected, the current liaison stays on

Next step:

- Amy will present language for amending bylaws to Committee for approval

Translation of SAA brochures

Maria proposed that the Steering Committee become the driving force for getting SAA brochures translated into Spanish.

Comments:

- SAA Publications Committee will offer translators publication or meeting credit
- Initiative could be organized in partnership with Diversity Committee
- Corporate sponsor could underwrite translation work [logo could appear on brochure]
- Amy suggested hiring a translation student from SUNY-Binghamton

Next step:

- Amy will contact Michael Doylen, Diversity Committee co-chair; Teresa Brinati, SAA Director of Publishing; and someone at SUNY-Binghamton's translation program

NEW DEVELOPMENT: Per Maria, SAA's Diversity Committee is already working with someone to translate the brochures. He has completed two of three translations. Next steps will be for the translation to be reviewed and to discuss publishing with Teresa Brinati. Amy will contact Michael Doylen to follow up on this.

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Leadership and Next Newsletter Deadline Manuscript Repositories Section

[Leadership](#)

**News items, articles, letters to the editor,
and comments are welcome.**

Next Newsletter deadline: March 1, 2006

Send to [Beth Bensman](#)

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