

SAA PUBLIC LIBRARY ARCHIVES/SPECIAL COLLECTIONS ROUNDTABLE
ANNUAL MEETING -- WASHINGTON, D.C.
AUGUST 11, 2010

MEETING CONVENED.

INITIAL REPORTS/BUSINESS.

Introductions & welcome by present committee members:

- Heather Kramer, Houston Public Library [Provisional Steering cmte]
- Valerie Wingfield, New York Public Library [Provisional Steering cmte]
- Renee DesRoberts, McArthur Public Library [Provisional Chair]

Opening remarks - Heather Kramer

- As of today we have 384 members
- Big goal right now is to provide information to our members.
- THANK YOU FOR JOINING US!

History of PLASC - Renee DesRoberts

- **Late spring 2009** - Russell James working on putting together a book on public library special collections. Many volunteers for chapters, but not enough to move forward. Project shelved. In an email exchange with Renee he mentions the idea of a public library roundtable.
- **2009/07/21** - Renee asks A&A list whether there is an interest in a roundtable for those in public library setting; gets great response.
- **2009/08/01** - Creates Google Group workspace to hash out mission statement and other foundation documents for submission to SAA. Many people lend their ideas and opinions over the next four months, with a core working group consisting of: VALERIE WINGFIELD, JUDITH TURNER, NOAH LENSTRA, MARY KOEGEL, and RENEE DESROBERTS. [The substantive conversations were saved in PDF and placed on the SAA hosted PLASC website for reference.]
- **2009/11/30** - Start gathering petition support. Petition full and submittable with foundation documents by December 29.
- **2010/02/02** - Council approved the petition and the Public Library Archives/Special Collections Roundtable is born. Renee (who submitted the paperwork) is Provisional Chair. A Provisional Steering Committee is appointed to continue planning & organizational work until voting can take place at the annual meeting in August.
- **2010/08/11** - First meeting of the Public Library Archives/Special Collections Roundtable of the Society of American Archivists.

SAA Executive Council

- PLASC's Council Liaison **Deborah Richardson** came to support PLASC and share the following:
 - 3 resolutions for bus meeting on Saturday
 - primary contacts/institutional members - can they be fellows?
 - 90 day grace period for dues in arrears (from 60 before/30 after instead of 90 after)
 - dues increase (graduated over 3 months)
- Items passed by the Council
 - Instituting the Foundation Board: all awards to be moved under a philanthropic foundation
 - Best Practices for Working with colleagues and patrons with disabilities accepted
 - Statement on diversity - [TIE WORK TO THE STRATEGIC PRIORITIES OF THE SAA: TECHNOLOGY, ADVOCACY, AND DIVERSITY] Diversity: especially socio-economic diversity

SAA/ALA/AAM Joint Committee on Archives, Libraries, and Museums (CALM)

- Co-Chair **Dr. Fred Stielow** stopped by to show CALM's support and encourage us to keep CALM informed of our activities and opportunities for collaboration.

Government Funding Opportunities. *Representatives from each of these orgs stopped by to encourage us to APPLY!*

- **NHPRC** - <http://www.archives.gov/grants/> Archives Basic Processing Grants -- that is what that money is for. Local and regional significance. Will be in exhibit hall tomorrow.
- **NEH-Preservation Assistance Grants for Smaller Institutions** - <http://www.neh.gov/> more money for training, supplies. Also have a booth at the exhibit hall.
- **IMLS** - <http://www.imls.gov/> Usually work in partnership with state agencies. American Heritage Preservation Grant Program to take care 1 small, 1 series - for conservation, housing: to draw community attention to the collection management challenges/needs. Also at exhibit hall.
- [In Massachusetts] - environmental monitors on loan to create reports which you can use to back up your reports/applications.

OPEN DISCUSSION FORUM

Moderated by Heather Kramer

Debate about tax dollars supporting public libraries-what's going on around the country? How does this translate to **ADVOCACY needs/opportunities?**

- Houston PL is very large (500 employees) - discussion whether lib should be still supported by tax dollars going on in Houston now.
- Article by Mary Dempsey of Chicago Public on services provided. Against arguments that "everything is on the web".
- Ballot initiatives in Colorado to pull apart entire library system, especially due to TABOR law. BHAG (big hairy audacious goal) to advocate to educate.
- In NJ there is snapshot day where everyone takes images to show just how much is going on in the library. [Maine too]
- Advocacy in Archives: how do we show that we make money for the library? Carson City Nevada library has a good model for how they contribute to city center.
- Jennifer Arnes USC analysis of return on investment studies for public libraries.
- Libraries need to focus on things they do that noone else does: job centers; disaster recovery centers (in MASS.) which resulted in a significant reduction in cuts.
- Oral history collections in public libraries: local library setting, local museums can really engage community by tying those audio resources to other collections. *Any way we can move toward proving that the community creates and participates in the history of the community will create buy-in.*
- Rogers Memorial Library, Southhampton, NY program with oral histories, working with historical society. Also works with local newspapers for advertising. Also have a Friends group.
- *Our spectacular service is what makes us shine*
- *ADVOCACY KIT: Show what you do for the community. I found my --- in the archives. Show what they would lose by losing us.
- *Friends of the library is a wonderful group to have working for your library. Great advocates/ action groups when municipal (or whatever) issues.

***Dealing with the notion that "Everything is on the internet."**

- RED FLAG: Who is saying this? Do they know what they're talking about.
- But how long will the internet remain free?

No budget for acquiring new collections. How to get people to donate? (More **ADVOCACY)**

- TALK TO PEOPLE.
- History day or community festival. Go out into the community. History fair with booths, school involvement. National History Day (AASLH)--advocate within schools then they talk to their families.
- Exhibits in the library and reading room.
- Volunteer to do things outside of the libraries scope to make inroads. "Bother" people in the community, call folks. Make connections with older folks in the community (oral history); retirees w/o kids and a solid connection. Making inroads when you are a transplant to a new community.
- Blog [newsletter] about what's going on behind the scenes. Send out press releases like crazy. Facebook/twitter/blog all tied in together. Community relations (by DC Public) talks about

how to preserve your family treasures -- "Donate a Digital" day where people bring in copies and they get scanned. Be willing to invest years/time to create the trust in the community.

- People like to be asked by folks they know: get someone who "knows everyone" to serve as the intermediary. Face to face makes a big difference. A lot to be said to appealing to peoples egos.

Outreach Fundraising and Awareness Webinar

- Coming out on the Heritage Preservation website in the near future. <http://www.heritagepreservation.org/> *

Big Gap - Public Libraries which do not have an archivist on staff.

- What do/can we do? Get grant funding to hire an archivist who can come in and arrange and describe collections?

ELECTIONS

Moderated by Heather Kramer, Valerie Wingfield and Renee DesRoberts

The Steering Committee needed to fill one vacant seat; members were also asked to vote on Heather Kramer taking over as Chair for provisional Chair Renee DesRoberts. Renee DesRoberts, Valerie Wingfield, and Gregg Grunow all agreed to remain on the Steering Committee.

Steering Committee candidates:

Stephanie Bayless - Central Arkansas Library System

Teresa Yoder - Chicago Public Library

Teresa Yoder won by a vote of 9 to 3.

Chair (uncontested):

Heather Kramer voted first Chair by an affirmative vote of the majority.

2010-2011 PLASC LEADERSHIP:

HEATHER KRAMER - CHAIR

RENEE DESROBERTS - STEERING COMMITTEE

GREGG GRUNOW - STEERING COMMITTEE

VALERIE WINGFIELD - STEERING COMMITTEE

TERESA YODER - STEERING COMMITTEE

MAIN GOALS FOR THE 2010-2011 YEAR:

- Engage the public, advocate who we are, to market what we need: funds, materials, partnerships.
- Electronic elections.
- Utilizing web site for information exchange (news, grants, resources).
- Develop a newsletter.
- Committee to look at state of public library special collections - survey work, metrics.
- Program for 2011 "Archives 360°" - proposal deadline soon. [Speakers need to be lined up and speakers are committed, good description of proposal (150 words) as complete as possible -lots of competition- also make sure grammar, etc. is good. Remember the proposal is the only thing the committee sees, so make it as clear and concise as possible. Form will have details regarding 75 and 150 word blurbs.

MEETING ADJOURNED.

The Committee would like to say a special thanks to SAA staff René Mueller and Brian Doyle for their patience and help over the last year. We also want to formally recognize Noah Lenstra, Judith Turner, and Mary Koegel for all their hard work in the early days and beyond, and Russell James for the great

idea.

Respectfully submitted by Renée DesRoberts.