

Images

The newsletter of the VRA

August 2011 vol.8, no.4

Memo from the President

By Maureen Burns Burns (Archivision and IMAGinED Consulting)
President, Visual Resources Association

Just arrived in Albuquerque for the Mid-Year VRA Board Meeting and all I can say is that you better make sure to put April 18th-22nd on your 2012 travel calendars. This is a fantastic venue for the 30th anniversary VRA conference. As I flew in, I could see the Rio Grande River winding through town with a spectacular mountain backdrop and clear blue sky. I have dim memories of driving through ABQ on cross-country driving trips as a child, stopping at New Mexico's national parks and monuments, but am really looking forward to exploring the city as an adult. The Hotel Albuquerque is a lovely conference venue and there are beautiful areas to stroll and gather, inside and out. Old Town is an easy walk, just a few blocks away (as are the museums and botanical gardens), making it easy to picture VRA members bumping into each other in this neat historic area with so many interesting restaurants and shops. You might also want to add some vacation time in Santa Fe to the front or tail end of the conference. The discount room rate of \$149 per night will be extended to the hotel's sister properties in Santa Fe, so conference 2012 can make for an economical and luxurious vacation, in addition to the annual regeneration of connecting with VRA colleagues and learning about current trends in the field.

The Board is thrilled to be in this wonderful place right now for the Mid-Year Meeting (we do plan on testing the pool out, along with the elevators), even if we have a great deal of work to do. This meeting is where a great deal of the planning for the conference and the year ahead occurs. We are starting out with a Strategic Plan implementation reality check on the evening we arrive and then moving into 2 ½ full days of intensive meetings to plan the conference program, meet with hotel staff and local planners about arrangements, determine the annual budget based on current financial reports, and review all the officer, appointee, committee, task force, and chapter reports. In short, based on all your hard work, the Board tries to facilitate and support VRA leaders and keep the momentum of the entire organization moving forward. This face-to-face opportunity allows us to brainstorm ideas, solve problems, search for efficiencies, and think creatively about the future of VRA. It certainly makes me appreciate the volunteer efforts on the part of so many VRA members and thank my lucky stars for being able to work with such a bright, capable, creative, and fun Executive Board. Thank you to all of you who do the heavy lifting for the organization.

For those of you who haven't yet participated much in VRA, there will soon be a variety of opportunities for we plan on returning home and calling for volunteers for a number of new and ongoing activities. So, expect to hear more in the coming weeks about ongoing work and new initiatives, not to mention final decisions about the conference program. Thank you to everyone who sent in proposals, there was a terrific response and we will do our best to include your great efforts and intriguing ideas into the schedule to make your trip to the beautiful southwest worthwhile. Don't miss out on celebrating 30 years of VRA with us in Albuquerque!

Tech Tips Editor

The position of column editor for Tech Tips is vacant. If you are interested in applying for this job, please let me know. The successful candidate may act as a co-editor. Please send inquires to

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Technical Staff

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Chapter News

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Contributions to **Images** are due the 15th of the month before the issue. Please send your copy in ".doc" format and Arial font to Marlene Gordon - mgordon@umich.edu.

Chapter News

Compiled by Trudy Levy (Image Minders)

California VRA Conference

By Karen Kessel (Sonoma State University) and Jackie Spafford (UC Santa Barbara)

The conference was held at the University of California, Santa Barbara June 16-17. Participants generally agreed that CAVRACon, the June conference co-organized by John Trendler, Scripps College (and Chair of the Southern California VRA Chapter) and Karen Kessel, Sonoma State University (Chair of the Northern California VRA Chapter) with co-hosts Jackie Spafford and Christine Fritsch-Hammes at the University of California at Santa Barbara, was an unqualified success. Valuable logistical assistance was provided by Greg Reser of UC San Diego, and Ryan Brubacher of Occidental College (and SoCal Chapter Secretary/Treasurer) who professionally managed all registration matters, badges and programs. The only complaint from the two days was the drizzly foggy weather (typical "June Gloom"...) from those hoping for some SoCal sunshine.

The conference attracted 60 participants to 2 days of information-filled sessions, from the technical to the organizational. On the first, Patricia Harpring discussed the new CONA authority tool being developed at the Getty Research Institute, and illustrated how it will integrate with their other established authority tools. Plenary speaker, VRA President Maureen Burns, described the current state of the VRA and the profession. UCSB Digitization Unit Manager Tom Moon talked about adapting new procedures in a workflow for efficient production.

These sessions were followed by an opportunity for attendees to stretch their legs for some UCSB open house tours. Tom Moon provided a tour of the library's digitization facility with a specialized setup for photographing books. Susan Moon, Head of the Arts Library, gave a tour including a special display of some of their more unusual artists' books. Jocelyn Gibbs, Curator of the Architecture and Design Collection, displayed examples of the diversity of materials in that collection. And the library's Special Collections opened their doors to show off some of their treasures. The tours finished up at the Image Resource Center, where attendees could enjoy an afternoon coffee break and tour the facility, including the "Museum of Technology" that occupies their corridor.

The afternoon continued with the VRA/SC and ARLIS/SC travel award recipients, Jennifer Patton, Associate Curator at UC Riverside, and UCLA MLIS student Amanda Milbourn, reporting on their experiences at the Minneapolis VRA/ARLIS conference. George Helfand of Luna Imaging gave a presentation on adding books to a digital image database. Art Historian and photographer James Bartholomay (Barry) Kiracofe showed examples of the photographs from his extensive travels in the Near East and North Africa which he has available for purchase.

And that was all in Day One! Day Two kicked off with two case studies: Jocelyn Gibbs spoke on overhauling UCSB's Architecture and Design Collection's records, practices and workflow. Karen Kessel presented on subject cataloguing for images, adapted from her Minneapolis conference paper. These were followed by Greg Reser and Sheryl Frisch presenting on the VRA custom XMP file for embedding metadata. We had a brief demonstration of eBeam 'Engage,' which can turn any digital projection into an interactive presentation, by a Troxell representative. Then Lois McClean and Rick Tessman presented Content Clips, a tool used mainly in K-12 but with the potential for higher education, which allows students to move images around on a virtual blackboard.

After we had some much-needed sustenance, Jan Eklund talked about her experience working on UC Berkeley's initiative to provide support for various digital image collections with differing subject content (CollectionSpace). This was followed by a demonstration of Shared Shelf by Megan Marler of ARTstor. Finally, Marcia Focht of Binghamton University, New York (our sole out-of-state attendee!) joined Maureen Burns and Jackie Spafford to talk about shared image collections, ranging from Jackie's positive experience reaching out to offer hosting via MDID to other collections on campus, to Marcia's more discouraging experience with a system-wide collection sharing

project that is faltering, and Maureen's overview of the UC Shared Images project.

Hosts Jackie and Christine took care of every detail including room bookings, tour arrangements, maps, signs and directions, catering, speaker gifts, and hotel and restaurant information. The conference made it possible for people who cannot afford to go to the national conference to hear some of the presentations, as well as providing new content for everyone. Hopefully we will be able to experience another California-based conference in the near future.

Below are links to additional resources, and some presentation notes, from CAVRACon:
<https://sites.google.com/site/cavraconference/additional-resources>

Northern California Chapter

Trudy Levy (Image Minders)

It is with great pleasure that we announce the election of Abby Dansiger as Co-Chair and Blanche Chase as Secretary of the Northern California chapter. We want to thank Samantha Shipman for her participation and look forward to all their contributions to the Chapter.

Texas Chapter

Katherine Moloney (Amon Carter Museum of American Art)

VRA-TX kept their cool this summer with a virtual meeting in June. Adrianna Stephenson, Director, Lady Tennyson d'Eyncourt Visual Resources Library at Southern Methodist University, offered up an overview of her experiences at the Summer Educational Institute. This was a tantalizing taste of the SEI experience for those who have not attended and an eye opening reminder of how much has changed/stayed the same for past attendees. Those of us who are SEI grads suggested that a "reunion" and update session might be a good idea for the annual conference.

Plans were announced for our joint chapter meeting in the fall with our ARLIS friends. October 27 – 29, 2011 is the time and Fort Worth will be the place for a variety of events including museum tours and interesting presentations concerning museum conservation efforts and cataloging projects. Visitors are welcome! Contact Katherine Moloney at katherine.moloney@cartermuseum.org for more information