

President's Letter

Susanne Friend

Dear Membership,

In a scant few weeks we will meet for the 2008 annual meeting in lovely Malibu. Plans are underway to make it as informative and enjoyable as possible. Yosi Poseilov's workshop leading to digital photography enlightenment is back by popular demand for the two days prior to the meeting. Instead of a banquet we will have a second reception at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, giving us an opportunity to see the considerable changes that are taking place at that great museum. Talks are flowing in and should be the usual interesting blend of institutionally correct to the slightly left of bizarre. This is what we have come to prize and others to admire in WAAC.

My year as president has passed quickly and more smoothly than I would have believed. I am grateful for the help of many people within our host institutions, but most especially to the members of the board.

I think most of you are aware how these annual meetings get organized, as this is such a small organization and so many of us have volunteered for various positions. Every year we vote for Members At Large (MALs) and the vice president, who ultimately becomes the president. These positions change regularly, and we know who these people are from their bios. However, they are not the only people on the board toiling behind the scenes to make things seamless. The president must find someone to be secretary, who dogs our every word at board meetings, organizes the minutes, and acts as a front man for general information and new memberships. The president also has to find a treasurer. The treasurer handles the finances and taxes as well as receiving membership dues and annual meeting registration and workshop fees. A savvy mathematical brain is required above and beyond the humdrum skills of conservation. Then there is the membership secretary, publications fulfillment, newsletter editor, and website editor. Who are these people? These positions often roll over from year to year when people are kind enough to continue in their capacity. I thought you might be interested to hear a little about some of these less visible board members.

You all know Chris Stavroudis, currently just (is that all?) membership secretary, so I need only say that the appellation Mr. WAAC was not accorded lightly. In my tenure as president I have probably called him more than twenty times with various questions and problems, often minutiae that only he would know. Although past presidents have written many things down for the benefit of those who follow, there

really isn't a WAAC President's Manual. Although I'm sure he would not wish to be known as such, Chris is that manual. He has stepped in to fill the breach on countless occasions and for that, well above and beyond his regular duties, I cannot thank him enough.

I asked Natasha Cochran to be our treasurer this year after she agreed to run as MAL but lost. That was my gain! Natasha was a math major and is an associate objects conservator at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art where she has worked since 2003. Prior to working at LACMA, she was conservator at the Stymphalos archaeological site in Greece for two seasons and also spent a season at the Roskilde Amts Conserverings center in Denmark working on Iron Age ceramics. In 2007 she was certified to teach Kundalini Yoga. She is also training for a triathlon – hiking, swimming, and running, at the end of September. She will swim while her mother and sister will do the other parts, although she does not discount the possibility of doing the entire triathlon herself in the future.

Terri Moreno is our WAAC secretary. She was just promoted to associate conservator at the Arizona State Museum at the University of Arizona in Tucson, where among other duties, she trains preprogram and third year interns as well as supervising university students. She particularly likes interacting with other university departments such as materials science, art history, engineering, classics, and anthropology, and becoming involved with different types of collaborative projects with other faculty in these departments. She says you never know what will happen! Terri started out as a classical archaeologist and became concerned with not knowing what to do with the newly unearthed finds that rapidly deteriorated. This led her to conservation. Every summer she goes to Greece on archaeological digs on a collaborative project between the University of Arizona, the University of Pennsylvania Museum, and the 39th Ethorate of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities in Tripoli. Terri and her partner Julie have two chihuahuas, Chili and Zula. She likes to run and ran the NY marathon a few years ago. She has embarked on a new hobby as gardener, experimenting with lots of peppers. She loves the desert.

Walter Henry is our website editor. He started life in conservation as book and paper conservator at Stanford University. From there he morphed into being a full time computer jockey. He was pushing conservation into the digital world long before the WWW came on the scene. According to his resumé, Walter is lead analyst in the Preservation Department at the Stanford University Libraries and Academic Information Resources (SULAIR) and Digital Library Systems

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and Services (DLSS)—Development and Research (D&R). I couldn't say this any better, so this is lifted directly: "My topmost pre-occupations at the moment include rules engines and rule-based systems, test-driven development, software development methodologies, XML, Eclipse, and Java, all areas in which I am woefully ill-qualified but disarmingly enthusiastic. Outside the D&R work, my current efforts are devoted to the apparently endless, tedious, soul-killing process of trying to upgrade the family of sites services that make up Conservation OnLine (CoOL) while fixing, uh, I mean maintaining, current systems and getting an instance or two of the Conservation DistList edited and distributed every week or so." He was instrumental, along with Liz Welsh, in putting all the back issues of the WAAC *Newsletter* on line and coordinating their digitization. Walter's non-Stanford interests include riding extraordinary distances on his bicycle.

Carolyn Tallent is in her 14th year as *Newsletter* editor, for which we are all undyingly grateful. She came to conservation after working as an electron microscopist performing biomedical research in the Bay Area and Los Angeles. Eventually tiring of fish gills, rat lungs, and pituitary cell cultures, she made a list of ten things she wanted to do before she died. One was conservation. I don't know what happened to the other nine, but I guess she figured she was destined for long life... Thus she proceeded from Winterthur to the National Gallery to Oberlin, finally returning in California in 1991. She set up her private practice in paintings shortly thereafter. She loves traveling almost anywhere, and tries to attend the Merrie Monarch hula competition every year in Hawaii, staying in odd B&Bs on the Big Island. (*Akiko's Buddhist Bed and Breakfast, north of Hilo. Ed.*) She has a 1969 red Mercedes 280SE that is in the process of being restored (*very, very slowly*). (*There was more, but I cut it because I needed the space, and it was starting to sound like a personal ad.*)

Donna Williams is your publications fulfillment officer. This nifty and suggestive title means that she is the one who ensures that past *Newsletters* and other WAAC printed material get sent out to you in a timely manner. Not always an easy task, but she gets it done. In working life she is an objects conservator in private practice in Los Angeles. Donna is a serious swimmer and often trains with West Hollywood Aquatics; she particularly likes strenuous Hawaiian Ocean swims. She is easily recognized by her wonderful leopard patterned hair, which is handily kept up by her husband Paul. She has a beloved great dane, Kona, who probably weighs more than she does.

Last month the board members local to Los Angeles gathered together at my house to stuff envelopes with the annual meeting information. Chris' daughter Calandra and my children, Rila and Raef Chartier, contributed too. Together we spent several hours collating, folding, moistening, stamping, addressing, and segregating the hundreds of envelopes to be sent out to members world-wide. It was a convivial gathering, and the work went all the more quickly for being well-lubricated with cocktails made by my daughter (expert

mixologist) and the promise of a glorious cheese and charcuterie plate donated by the Cheese Store. (How else was I going to bribe them?) It also went quickly because all of these people are fun, intelligent, and have a great sense of humour.

In the anticipation that this year's meeting will be a success, I would like to thank everyone who helped and supported me. In addition to those already mentioned, I am deeply, deeply indebted to MAL Marie Svoboda for greasing the wheels at the Getty; I could not have done it without her. Camilla van Vooren stepped into her MAL position when Scott Carlee vacated it to become Vice President; her experience and particularly her sympathetic shoulder will always be appreciated. Dana Senge and Marie Laibinis-Craft have consistently and cheerfully stepped up to the plate when asked; I am sure one of them will make a great president in two years.

See you in October!

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