From the Chair

Andrew Near

Hopefully you have all enjoyed a restful and relaxing holiday season as we embrace the New Year! Personally, I look forward to 2018 with optimism.

I would firstly like to thank and show my appreciation for outgoing State Representative, Sarah Connors who is proactive in addition to being a wonderful person to work with. For the past few years, she pulled double duty as both Webmaster and Iowa State Rep, and in recognition that she was ready to slow down a bit, Sarah identified another excellent person to carry the torch for Iowa. Please allow me to introduce Angela Stanford, Curator of Collections and Registrar at the Museum of Danish America, and newly appointed Iowa State Representative. Angela has served as Vice Chair in the MRC several years ago, and was looking for a way to become more active again. As I figure it, anyone crazy or persistent enough to bike across the state of Iowa in the middle of summer is a good person to have in your corner; welcome Angela!

Voting membership in the Midwest Registrars Committee is open to those museum professionals who support the objectives of the MRC, who reside in the Midwest region (including Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio, and Wisconsin), and who hold positions such as registrar, collections manager, curator, volunteer, administrator, conservator, corporate registrar, or student.

A non-voting membership is available for individuals who are associated with for-profit organizations such as shipping companies, customs brokers, insurance firms, and other suppliers of materials and services, and individuals who reside outside of the Midwest region.

The membership period covers the calendar year (from January 1 through December 31). Annual dues are $10.00 per year. For more information on the Midwest Registrars Committee or to join MRC, visit http://midwestregistrars.org/
From the Chair continued

Hopefully you all had a chance to read the letter I emailed in October. Sorting out how to incorporate will most likely be the largest project of 2018. We met in early December to discuss our game plan and are looking at which state would be best to incorporate in. If you would like to join this process, let me know, and I’d love to get you up to speed.

There are a couple conferences to look forward to later this year including the AAM Annual Meeting, May 6-9 in Phoenix, Arizona; and AMM Conference, July 18-21 in Chicago, Illinois, in partnership with Illinois Association of Museums. State Representative Sara Hindmarch is participating in the AMM planning meetings, to give us a voice in how the conference is structured. I think we will try to coordinate some extra activities as it is the hub of several sponsors. I also suggest talking to your State Rep about organizing a local round-table for which grant money is available.

Finally, it is time to renew your membership! I look forward to hearing from you if you that comments, suggestions, or would like to become more active in the MRC. Please don’t hesitate to call 616-395-6402 or email near@hope.edu.

Good Luck in the New Year!
Andy Near

Be Sure To Renew Your MRC Membership for 2018!!

Renewing can be done in just a few easy steps:

- Visit the Registration and Renewal page on the MRC website.
  https://midwestregistrars.org/membership-2/joinrenew-membership/
- Complete the ‘Online Registration Form.’
- Use the BUY NOW button to submit payment via PayPal or send a check via snail mail to
  Tamara at the address listed below.

Boom! You are good for another year of great MRC benefits, which includes access to a fantastic professional network of like-minded professionals, workshop opportunities, funding assistance for state workshops, the opportunity to apply for travel stipends to attend the annual AMM Conference, the MRC Membership Directory and MRC’s newsletter The Courier
Travel Stipend Scholarships, 2017

Once again, the Midwest Registrars Committee, along with U.S. Art, Masterpiece International, and Terry Dowd, Inc., provided generous support to help three members of MRC attend the 2017 Association of Midwest Museums Annual Conference in Des Moines. Over the next two issues, recipients will share reflections on their time at Communicating the Value of Museums. Congratulations again to:

- Amy Heggenmeyer, Spurlock Museum, U. of Illinois (U.S. Art)
- Linda Endersby, Missouri State Museum (Masterpiece)
- Lottie Phillips, Peoria Riverfront Museum (Terry Dowd)

No Longer Paralyzed by the Collection

By Lottie Phillips, Assistant Curator of History/Registrar
Peoria Riverfront Museum, Peoria, Illinois

This past July, I was granted the opportunity to attend the Association of Midwest Museums (AMM) conference in Des Moines by the Midwest Registrars Committee. I had been with the Peoria Riverfront Museum for nearly five years and this was my first opportunity to attend a professional conference. When I was asked to assume the registrar position I looked for opportunities to network to better understand my new position. It became clear that attending a professional conference would be the best way to discuss collections issues with colleagues. Therefore, as a young emerging professional, I was truly excited when I was granted the stipend that allowed me to attend my first session at AMM. I was surrounded by emerging professionals who could relate to my situation, and also by the knowledge of seasoned museum professionals ready to take on my questions.

Two sessions in particular stood out to me. The first was Into the Vault: Integrating Collections Storage and Education which was presented by Gregory Wittkopp and Kelly Lyons from the Cranbrook Art Museum. This session was regarding the transformation of the Cranbrook Art Museum’s collections storage area. I found their museum model which integrated education and collections to be so exciting and something that Peoria Riverfront Museum was trying to resolve. When I first stepped into my current position, the understanding was that no one was allowed in collections aside from a few key-holding staff members. Now for security purposes, it is easy to understand that thought process; but, our collections facility is very secure. This strict policy created a sense that the collection was off-limits to any other staff members of the museum, including our educational staff. Many educational staff members, upper management, and donors were completely unaware of what was located in the vault. The educational staff would plan wonderful programs, and I’d ask, “Well, why don’t we include these fantastic mineral specimens, or this specific painting to help the students understand?” That question was always met with “I didn’t know that existed.” It was apparent that we were underutilizing the connection between the collection and our educators. After being inspired by the Cranbrook, the collections staff here decided to invite educators over to tour the collection and take photographs for future programming inspiration. In addition to these changes, the curatorial team plans to curate the storage space so that it is more inspiring for both the curatorial and education teams. It is our goal to strengthen the relationship between the two departments and think of new ways to use the Peoria Riverfront Museum’s collection to inspire all learners.
No Longer Paralyzed by the Collection continued

The second session, *Don’t Let Undocumented Collections Paralyze You: Practical Tips and Case Studies for Deaccessioning “Found in Collection” Items*, was impactful for the networking and camaraderie that took place during the Q & A session. According to the collections policy at Peoria Riverfront Museum, we are scheduled to complete a full collection inventory every five years. In the two years that I have been in this role, I have found items that have not been inventoried, items that were deaccessioned but never removed from storage, and various other issues. As a new staff member in this role the thought of completing an inventory in 2018 was completely overwhelming. The presenters in this session and audience members answered all of my questions thoughtfully and helped supplement their answers with thoughts on how they handled similar situations at their organizations. As Peoria Riverfront Museum gets closer to starting its inventory process, I will reach out to the museum professionals who offered their contact information to exchange documents or general ideas for best practices to successfully complete a collection inventory.

Coming from a midsize institution that is unable to send staff to professional conferences, I am extremely grateful for the opportunity that Midwest Registrars Committee granted me this past July. The previous examples are small and don’t truly reflect the continued impact that the conference had on my career. The networking alone has allowed me to swiftly answer collection conundrums that I have encountered over the past 6 months. I hope to continue to advocate to my organization the importance of professional development and the networking that can come from conferences such as the one hosted by Association of Midwest Museums.

How Times Change

By Linda Endersby, Registrar/Collections Manager

Museum of Art & Archaeology, University of Missouri-Columbia

I hadn’t been to a Midwest Museums conference in a few years because of changes of jobs and having been a bit disappointed the last time I was able to attend. But, this year in Des Moines had a wonderful offering of sessions that pleasantly surprised me. And, as Amy Heggenmeyer noted in her article in a previous issue of the *Courier*, Des Moines is surprisingly wonderful. I was disappointed to see that attendance wasn’t as high as usual. People missed a lot.

One session that I found really helpful was one that sounded a bit suspicious on the surface: “Pricing the Priceless: An Introduction to the Antiques Trade for the Museum Professional,” presented by Erika Holst, Springfield Art Association; Cedar Phillips, Hennepin History Museum; and Andrew Richmond, Wipiak Consulting & Appraisals. With the recent controversies over museums selling parts of their collection to fund non-collection things, I was hoping this wasn’t about that. But, there was a lot of information provided that was useful for those not even thinking about selling off their collection. It was great to have not only the museum view but also an outside consultant view on appraisals.

The big issue for many museums is what to tell the insurance company your collection is worth. This session provided some pointers. There are a number of auction sites that have publicly available information on what things at auction have sold for. If you can find something similar to the object you need a value on, you can use that price as an estimated value. Some suggestions were: [https://www.liveauctioneers.com](https://www.liveauctioneers.com), [https://www.invaluable.com](https://www.invaluable.com), and [https://www.bidsquare.com](https://www.bidsquare.com). For art collections, Christie’s auction house is a good place. All you have to do is sign up free on their website and you can search past auction results.
For those who do have funds for an outside appraisal, there were some suggestions from the appraiser on the panel, such as always do an hourly rate rather than a % of appraised value. In the Midwest, hourly rates can range from $125-$250. Some sources for information on appraisers are the Appraisers Association of America, the International Society of Appraisers, and the Appraisal Foundation (Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice). ([https://www.appraisersassociation.org/](https://www.appraisersassociation.org/), [https://www.isa-appraisers.org/](https://www.isa-appraisers.org/), [https://www.appraisalfoundation.org](https://www.appraisalfoundation.org))

The appraiser also gave some specific questions to ask the auction company if you’re looking to buy something at auction, such as “What happens after the sale?” I can speak from experience that some of those are great questions. One of our curators bought a piece at auction (with the Collections Committee’s approval), but she had neglected to ask the German auction house details about payment. It turned out they only took wire transfers! We almost lost the piece because it took us forever for our financial people to set it up. Who does wire transfers but won’t accept a check or credit card?

Oh, I just have to mention one other session: “Into the Vault: Integrating Collections Storage and Education,” presented by Gregory Wittkopp and Kelly Lyons from the Cranbrook Art Museum. They have an incredibly amazing new door into a collections area designed to integrate education and collections use. It makes collections look so cool! That’s my new impossible dream!

But, of course, the best part of conferences is often what goes on outside the sessions. I was lucky enough to hang out with a lot of good registrars and other collections specialists! In addition, I must say thank you to Masterpiece and the Midwest Registrars Committee for providing funds to help me attend Midwest again after a long absence.

Note: As co-editor of the Courier, I urge people to take pictures to go with news and articles. So, when it’s my turn, what do I do? I didn’t take any pictures! So, I will leave you with one of the more intriguing images from our collection. Someone recently came to look at this painting for a friend in Italy who had seen it in our online collections database.

Card Game of Death
Attributed to Joseph Heintz, the Younger: Oil on canvas, 1668
News From the Midwest

**Illinois**  Sara Hindmarch

Smart Museum of Art, Chicago

Over the summer, the Smart Museum of Art launched its new online collection database! The new site, [http://smartcollection.uchicago.edu/](http://smartcollection.uchicago.edu/), features more and larger images, increased searchability, and overall easier navigation. Over several months, their online collections taskforce worked with users including University faculty to streamline the site, implement additional search functions and features based on user feedback. They will next turn their attention to phase two of additional data cleanup and prepping additional modules to hopefully go live Spring 2018.

**Indiana**  Christa Barleben

Eiteljorg Museum, Indianapolis

On September 28 and 29, the Eiteljorg Museum hosted a free two-day workshop on XRF testing with Bruce Kaiser, the inventor of the Bruker portable XRF tracers. X-ray fluorescence is a non-destructive analytical technique used to determine the elemental composition of materials – both of the object itself and substances that may have been applied to the object’s surface. Museum professionals from around the state had a chance to learn about the scientific principles that make X-ray fluorescence analysis possible and collaboratively test objects from their own collections.

To learn more about the technology, visit: [https://www.bruker.com](https://www.bruker.com)

Evansville Museum of Arts, History and Science, Evansville

The Evansville Museum of Arts, History & Science is excited to announce the Museum has received a $25,000 Museums for America grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services. The one year grant will fund an inventory of the museum’s extensive history collections which include artifacts, archival material, photographs, historic costumes and uniforms and ephemera documenting the history of Evansville and the Tri-State.

In addition to the grant, the Museum would like to welcome Kaman Hillenburg as the first ever Collections Manager to oversee the project. This new position, grant funded in its first year, will continue on after the initial grant period to continue working on a major inventory and deaccession project in order to bring the museum’s Permanent Collection up to date. This project will lay the groundwork for future collections projects and exhibitions at the museum and make the collection more accessible for researchers.
Iowa  Sarah Connors / Angela Stanford

MRC would like to introduce a new Iowa representative, Angela Stanford, Curator of Collections and Registrar at the Museum of Danish America.

From Angela:
Hi everyone! I am so excited to have the opportunity to serve as the state representative for Iowa, and to become more involved in MRC again after serving as Vice Chair several years ago. My day job for the past 14 years has been acting as the Registrar and Curator of Collections at the Museum of Danish America in Elk Horn, Iowa. I have also been very involved with the Iowa Museum Association and with AAM’s Collections Stewardship Committee, formerly the Registrar’s Committee, serving on the board of each.

Ideas and suggestions are most welcome. I look forward to connecting our Iowa members and providing helpful learning opportunities!

Museum of Danish America, Elk Horn

The exhibit, Home-Grown Art, is on view through June 10, 2018. Art can take many forms and express many values. This exhibit features art from the museum’s permanent collection – all made in the local neighborhood of Shelby, Audubon, and Cass counties. Some pieces reflect ongoing Danish traditions, others reflect styles and events contemporary to the maker. All are examples of home-grown art.

The exhibit, Denmark – America’s Smallest and Biggest Ally, is on view through September 3, 2018. For over two centuries, Denmark and the United States have shared an uninterrupted diplomatic relationship. Though each nation has experienced dramatic change during that time, they have maintained an open communication about shared interests and concerns. This exhibition explores the stories of politicians, soldiers, and citizens whose experiences have been shaped by U.S-Danish relations. While this exhibition is on view, all military - active and veteran - will enjoy free admission to the Museum of Danish America. This exhibition is supported by a grant from Humanities Iowa and the National Endowment for the Humanities. Additional support is provided by the Albert V. Ravenholt Fund (Seattle), the T.G. Jensen Family, the Royal Danish Guard Society (Chicago), Peter and Irma Ørum, and Ole and Eva Sindberg.

Members of the U.S. Army National Guard and the Danish Home Guard have cooperated with officer training and joint exercises since 2012. Photo courtesy of South Dakota Army National Guard.
Michigan Julie Conklin

11th Annual Michigan Collections Management Round Table, Mackinac Island, Michigan

The Round Table took place September 8 on Mackinac Island and was generously hosted by Mackinac State Historic Parks (MSHP). This year’s topic was: Increasing Access to Collections. Twenty collections professionals from institutions all over the state attended the round table. Stephanie Gandulla from Thunder Bay Marine Sanctuary presented: Bringing Sanctuary Shipwrecks to the Surface! Maritime History Comes Alive through Digital Modeling and Social Media. Then the group heard from Nathan Kelber from the Detroit Historical Society on Digital Projects and Platforms: Sharing Perspectives from Detroit 67. After lunch, Dan Truckey of the Beaumier U.P. Heritage Center presented on their use of drones in recording ghost towns of Michigan’s Upper Peninsula from the air and sharing those with the public online in conjunction with postcards of those towns in their collections and how much the towns have changed over time. The fourth presenter was Sebastian Encina of the Kelsey Museum of Archaeology, U of M, who spoke on the use of photogrammetry with their collections and the effort to make them available online to researchers and the public.

Thanks to the very generous support of the Midwest Registrars Committee, the Tyler Supply Company/Burroughs, and the Great Lakes Shipwreck Museum. Not only were the morning munchies, coffee, soft drinks and boxed lunches provided for attendees, registration was free this year. Attendees were treated to a behind-the-scenes tour of the MSHP collections storage facilities on the Island. Afterwards, many of the attendees met up for dinner. For those that stayed overnight, there was also a behind-the-scenes tour of the MSHP mainland offices of the Petersen Library Center, Archives and Archaeological Storage and free admission to the MSHP mainland sites the following day.

Saginaw Art Museum, Saginaw

The Saginaw Art Museum’s temporary exhibition, Medieval to Metal: The Art and Evolution of the Guitar, has had a great run and has brought in a new and excited crowd to the museum. The exhibition closed on January 6th, and they are hard at work preparing for the Spring 2018 exhibition, Triumph: Portraits of Opposition, which features 51 paintings from artist Jac Lahav’s three portrait series: "Slaves," "48 Jews," and "The Great Americans." This exhibition encourages viewers to take a deeper look into the concept of "identity."
Saginaw Art Museum continued

The curatorial department has also been hard at work preparing for a smaller exhibition titled *Who We Are*, which focuses on the community of the Great Lakes Bay Region. Museum staff have been active in the community taking photographs of locals and asking them what it means to them to be from Mid-Michigan. This exhibit will be opening in March of 2018.

The Museum’s biggest fundraiser of the year – the 15th annual “Cheeseburgers in Margaritaville” – is right around the corner on March 2, 2018. This tropical event features unlimited cheeseburgers, live entertainment, a silent auction, a raffle, and of course, margaritas. The 2017 event was the most successful to date, and they are hoping that 2018 will be even better!

Gerald R. For Presidential Museum, Grand Rapids

*Louder Than Words: Rock, Power & Politics* is a traveling exhibit from the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame that explores the power of rock to change attitudes about patriotism, peace, equality and freedom. It’s open to the public through February 11, 2018. Using video, multimedia, photographs, periodicals and artifacts, *Louder Than Words* showcases the intersection between rock and politics. It explores how artists exercise their First Amendment rights, challenge assumptions and beliefs, stimulate thought and effect change. Beyond music’s influence on the civil rights movement, the Vietnam War and gender equality, the exhibit also features other significant moments and figures, such as Bob Dylan, who rallied people against social inequality, and the hip-hop music of the 1980s that discussed police brutality in poverty stricken neighborhoods.

The Gerald R. Ford Presidential Museum will celebrate Betty Ford’s Centennial in 2018 with a feature exhibition coupled with several special events. Museum staff are currently researching and planning the exhibit. The research has yielded several fascinating revelations over the past year. For instance, museum staff uncovered a program that includes Betty Ford (then a young Betty Bloomer) in a Martha Graham Dance Group performance at Carnegie Hall in 1938. The discovery shows she had a greater commitment to dance than realized in the published historical record. The special exhibit, planned for April through December 2018, will include many documents, photographs, and artifacts displayed publicly for the very first time. It’s an exciting project that will generate a renewed appreciation for Betty Ford and her many contributions.

Kalamazoo Valley Museum, Kalamazoo

Hoekstra’s Hardware Neon Sign Restoration, Sarah Humes

The Kalamazoo Valley Museum recently acquired a significant collection of items from Hoekstra’s Hardware Store in Kalamazoo. At 149 years old, Hoekstra’s was the longest running retail business in Kalamazoo when it closed in late 2016. Jurien Hoekstra, a Dutch immigrant, opened Hoekstra’s Grocery and Bazaar in 1867. Over time it transitioned into a housewares and hardware store. It remained in the Hoekstra Family until 1946 and has since been run by two generations of three local families.

In May 2017, Museum staff members were able to remove the neon sign that hung above the back door entrance to the hardware store.
Kalamazoo Valley Museum continued

In April of 2017, the owners of the store contacted the Museum, offering a collection of items including their neon sign, cash register, tools, price marker, scale, advertisement ledgers, and a stove pipe cutter and crimper. The only catch was that the Museum would have to remove the 6 foot long sign from the back door entrance of the store and although the sign had not worked for many years, it had become an iconic symbol of the long-standing business. A few weeks later, Museum staff returned to the store and, with the help of the store’s owners and National Storage Company who provided a forklift, the sign was successfully removed from the building.

Modern Neon Sign Company of Kalamazoo completed the restoration of the sign in August 2017, not only cleaning it, but replacing electrical wires along with two new transformers and installing new hand-bent glass tubing. By testing a piece of the original glass tubing, Modern Neon was able to determine that the neon ran red throughout the sign. While the sign is not currently on display, staff are working to create an exhibit that will showcase it in the near future. Many of the other items from the Hoekstra collection will be on display during the upcoming in-house-produced exhibit: Kalamazoo A-Z, an exhibit that allows visitors to dive into the KVM’s rarely seen collections as the story of Kalamazoo unfolds one letter at a time. Kalamazoo A-Z runs April 28, 2018-August 26, 2018.

Mackinac State Historic Parks

For the 12th straight year, Mackinac State Historic Parks (MSHP) finished the season with Fort Fright, the last big event of the year. On the nights of October 6-7, Colonial Michilimackinac in Mackinaw City became the backdrop for tales of werewolves, lutins and other mystical creatures from French folklore. Visitors entered the fort after dark and enjoyed storytelling, walking through the Haunted House and partaking in apple cider, cookies and other treats.

On Friday, September 8, MSHP hosted the Michigan Registrar’s Roundtable at Mission Church on Mackinac Island. [See details in separate article from Michigan on the Roundtable.] Thank you to the Midwest Registrars Committee for helping to sponsor this roundtable.

This fall, the park hired Jessica A. Marks to fill the archival internship in the Petersen Center Library. Ms. Marks is a graduate of Grand Valley State University and worked for Mackinac State Historic Parks in 2013 and 2014. She is working on several projects including scanning archival material, conducting inventory in the library and researching collection objects.
Mackinac State Historic Parks continued

Registrar Brian Jaeschke is writing a new vignette for the park that will document the three Confederate political prisoners who were housed at Fort Mackinac during the summer of 1862. All from Tennessee, the three men refused to take the oath of allegiance after Nashville fell to Federal forces and were arrested. The new publication will be available this spring through the Mackinac State Historic Parks museum stores.

In October, the park removed one of the last original exhibits at Colonial Michilimackinac from the King’s Storehouse. The building will be renovated to house a new orientation video along with exhibit panels about how the British army used the structure. The park is also making changes to the South Southwest Rowhouse which will house a new museum store called Hearthside. Old Mackinac Point Lighthouse will have new exhibits on the technology of the Fresnel lens and how lighthouse keepers maintained their lights.

Michigan Women’s Historical Center & Hall of Fame, Okemos

The museum has become the official repository for the Michigan Women’s March on Lansing (now Women’s March Michigan), the sister event to the Women’s March on Washington that took place on January 21, 2017. The collection includes official signage, protest signs from marchers, images and documents related to the day of the march.

Official Women’s March on Lansing signage

Three of the thirty-three protest signs

Visitors and volunteers at the 12th Annual Fort Fright
Michigan Women’s Historical Center & Hall of Fame continued

A collection related to one woman’s service in the WAVES (Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service) was also recently donated to the museum. Bettie (Archer) Johnson originally from Pontiac, Michigan served in the WAVES from 1944-1946 and was sworn in with other women during the seventh inning of a local baseball game. She was stationed in New York at the U.S. Naval Barracks and was in Times Square for V-E and V-J Day. In her later years, she was heavily involved in the Women In Military Service for America (WIMSA) Memorial project as a state representative and very active in the American Legion and WAVES National veteran organizations. Her collection includes two uniforms and photographs and papers related to her time in the service and veteran activities.

In October, ten incredible women were inducted into the Michigan Women’s Hall of Fame at the annual Induction Ceremony. Four women and one group was inducted into the Contemporary category: Mary Kay Henry, Dr. Bernice Morton, Dr. Rosemary C. Sarri, Elizabeth Wetzel, and the American Legion NUWARINE Post 535. In the Historical category Ella Mae Backus, Clara Bryant Ford, Elizabeth Denison Forth, Verna Grahek Mize, and iconic WWII symbol, Rosie the Riveter were inducted. It was also announced at this ceremony that the museum would be merging with the Michigan Women’s Foundation, a philanthropic non-profit organization, located in Detroit, Michigan.

Missouri

Stacie Petersen

National World War I Museum and Memorial, Kansas City

Kansas City’s philanthropic community continues to respond generously to the National World War I Museum and Memorial. The William T. Kemper Foundation has pledged $300,000 in support of the Museum’s
National World War I Museum continued

effort to preserve precious objects and documents from the Great War as well as to make them accessible online. The grant also assists with expenses for additional staff and critical digitization equipment.

The National World War I Museum and Memorial announced a $1.9 million gift from the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, one of the largest donations in Museum history. The grant from the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation is focused on building the long-term financial strength of America’s official World War I museum and memorial. The strategic investment is targeted toward accelerating the museum’s efforts to increase fundraising and awareness nationally and internationally. It also provides for a significant software upgrade to improve interaction with Museum stakeholders geared toward building membership and individual charitable support.

Nelson Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City

The Hall Family Foundation, in continuing its long support of the photography program at The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art in Kansas City, made a special $10 million grant to broaden and deepen this collection. Recognized around the world, this is one of the finest museum photography collections in the nation. The gift permitted a more intensive acquisition focus from 2015 to 2017. About 100 of the more than 800 newly acquired photographs will be on view in a Spring 2018 exhibition, The Big Picture: A Transformative Gift from the Hall Family Foundation, to coincide with the Foundation’s 75th anniversary.

A small grasshopper embedded for more than a century in the thick paint of Vincent van Gogh’s Olive Trees was discovered as part of research for a catalogue of the French painting collection at The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art in Kansas City. The discovery is just one of the exciting results that emerged as scientific study and art historical research were combined at the museum to better understand the artist’s process.

Saint Louis Art Museum

The Saint Louis Art Museum Board of Commissioners has authorized the purchase of Portrait of Charlotte Cram, a 1900 painting by John Singer Sargent, one of the most respected portraitists in American art history.

The Saint Louis Art Museum announced an extraordinary collection gift from New Jersey-based collector Ronald Maurice Ollie and his wife Monique McRipley Ollie. The collection adds significant depth and breadth to the museum’s holdings of works by African-American artists.

Museum of Art and Archaeology, University of Missouri, Columbia

In January 2018, the Museum will open a travelling exhibit, Electrify! It is a series of art pieces chosen through a national juried competition. The Kennedy Center and Volkswagen Group of America have teamed up for the Very Special Arts (VSA) Emerging Young Artists Program, to recognize and showcase the work of emerging young American artists with disabilities, ages sixteen to twenty-five. This traveling exhibition features fifteen selected artists who have created Electrify!

Museum staff have been working hard to prepare for this exhibit before the pieces arrive in January. They include 3 videos (which all go in one gallery), a plastic blow-up piece and a hanging cabinet (among regular 2
and 3-dimensional objects). At least staff doesn’t have to worry about how to preserve these items for the long-term.

As that exhibit arrives, Museum staff will be packing up artwork from *Simon Dinnerstein and the Fulbright Triptych*. At least, all the pieces go to one place – the next venue. They came together from 10 different institutions and individuals across the country – a registrar’s dream!

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**Ohio**

Robin Goodman

**Western Reserve Historical Society, Cleveland**

*Cleveland Starts Here*® is a new Cleveland history exhibit experience and digital portal sponsored by the Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Foundation. This new exhibit allows first-time visitors and life-long residents to immerse themselves in Cleveland’s stories from the 1790s to today. Using the latest technologies and digital media, rarely seen images, films, art and historical artifacts are now accessible for visitors to experience.

From the first Cleveland map and early survey tools, to a lunar descent engine and LeBron James’ championship shoes, *Cleveland Starts Here*® tells the stories of the triumphs and tragedies that define Cleveland. To learn more about *Cleveland Starts Here*® and the donors who made it possible visit [www.wrhs.org](http://www.wrhs.org).

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**Gund Gallery, Kenyon College, Gambier**

The Gund Gallery is now the new home for a complete set of the Rookery Mounds print series by Robert Rauschenberg (1925-2008). These eleven large-scale lithographs were produced in 1979 and represent Rauschenberg’s return to photography after a long period of using appropriated photos in his compositions. After a
legal challenge to this practice, Rauschenberg decided to start producing his own photographs to use in his collaged images. Once he began he felt "addicted" and captured thousands of images over a short period of time, during which he also entered into a collaboration with friend and choreographer Trisha Brown. From these many photographs, selections were used as the basis of the set design for a dance production entitled “Glacial Decoy,” one of Brown’s first pieces. These same images became the basis for the Rookery Mounds series and dominate the imagery of the prints. They also show up in paintings produced during the same period. These new prints are an excellent complement to the Rauschenberg intaglio print Intermission that already resides in the Gund Gallery Collection and are already in use by classes across Kenyon’s campus.

Wisconsin

Andrea Selbig

Andrea Selbig, Collections Registrar of the Chazen Museum of Art at the University of Wisconsin-Madison has volunteered to become the Wisconsin State Representative. Andrea has been with the Chazen for eighteen years and is excited to work together with colleagues to build a strong and inclusive collections community in Wisconsin.

Chazen Museum of Art, University of Wisconsin – Madison

The Chazen Museum of Art is under new leadership after longtime director, Russell Panczenko, retired after 33 years of service. Amy Gilman, formerly the deputy director of the Toledo Museum of Art, has been very busy acquainting herself with the staff and the University of Wisconsin. Gilman brings new energy to the museum and aims to prioritize educational programming and community and academic engagement. Meet her on YouTube! [https://youtu.be/grJjN1w449g](https://youtu.be/grJjN1w449g)

The Chazen has acquired a monumental new mural by Jim Dine, specifically created for the museum’s ancient gallery, and inspired by Dine’s own Glyptothek drawings from the 1980s. The massive painting, approx. 7.5’ H x 85’ L, divided into four panels, introduced new challenges to the museum staff. The panels were created in Dine’s Paris studio and shipped to Madison via ocean freight, railcar, and truck. Local riggers helped move the massive crates into the gallery and created a customized cradle to help safely lift the large trapezoid-shaped panels into place. Museum preparators and Dine’s assistants worked with engineers and LIDAR scans to prepare a secure cleat system to attach the panels to the vaulted ceiling. The outstanding teamwork led to a successful unveiling and very relieved artist and registrar!
Logan Museum of Anthropology, Beloit

In 2016, the Logan Museum of Anthropology received a $99,948 award from the National Endowment for the Humanities to catalog and make digitally accessible the Bristol Collection, an important collection of textiles from Oaxaca, Mexico, and its associated archive.

Museum staff and students spent the past year researching and cataloging the collection’s 420 textiles and artifacts as well as indexing and cross-referencing 36 field notebooks and roughly 5,000 associated slides and photographs. During the spring of 2018, the Logan Museum will launch the fully digitized collection and a comprehensive finding aid online through Beloit College’s web platform ContentDM.

Even before the completion of the project, the Logan’s work has prompted exciting potential partnerships and research projects. Through collaboration with researchers from Oaxaca, Mexico, it was discovered that the Bristol archive contains information that will be used to help study and revive local weaving styles. Additionally, in the spring of 2018, museum staff and students will travel to Oaxaca on a college-sponsored research and collecting trip. Students will meet with contemporary artists, and travel to and collect from the same markets and towns as the donor Frances Bristol, adding contemporary context to this rich historical collection.

This project was made possible in part by the National Endowment for the Humanities.

In 2016, the Logan Museum also received a $9,958 Museums for America grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services to rehouse its photographic collection into cold storage. The freezer is now installed, and vapor-proof packages of color photographs, slides, and negatives are making their way into their chilly new home.

Implementing the Anthropology Photograph Collection Cold Storage Project has been challenging because the majority of the Logan Museum’s photographic holdings, approximately 29,000 objects, are not individually catalogued. Many of the images were previously housed with accession records. In order to track their movement, and retain their archival contexts, we developed a comprehensive inventory that allows us to follow photographs’ paths from their old accession files to their new cold storage boxes.

The spreadsheet will be instrumental to developing a finding aide for the re-housed photographic collections. Once the materials are completely rehoused, and “in stasis” in cold storage, we will turn our attention to applying for further funding to digitize our highest priority photographic resources. These include nitrate negatives that can be quite volatile and deteriorate quickly unless placed in cold storage. The master spreadsheet will become the basis of our digitization plan, which will guide subsequent digitization efforts. This project was made possible in part by the Institute of Museum and Library Services.
Wrapping up 2017

Annual Report of the MRC Chair  Andrew Near

MRC Board:
Since it was a non-election year, our board members remain the same: Andrew Near, Chair; Rachel Vargas, Vice-Chair; Tamara Lange, Treasurer; Ashleigh Herrera, Secretary; Lauren Hancock, Archives; Terry Segal, Development; and Cristin Waterbury, Nominations; Liz Fuhrman-Bragg and Linda Endersby, Co-editors of the Courier.

State Representatives:
Our State Representatives include: Sara Hindmarch; Angela Stanford, Iowa; Julie Conklin, Michigan; Leslie Ory Lewellen; Stacie Petersen, Missouri; Robin Goodman, Ohio; Christa Barleben, Indiana; Andrea Selbig, Wisconsin.

MRC Business Meeting:
The MRC held their business meeting during the Association of Midwest Museums Annual Conference in Des Moines, Iowa, from July 12 – 15. We held our annual business luncheon, and went over the board reports. The board worked hard to provide collections sessions that were distinctly disaster related. We introduced the topic of incorporating, and revising our bylaws. We have continued to work on this, and held a board meeting on December 12, to discuss next steps. Our annual meeting lunch was sponsored by Huntington T. Block and the MRC evening social was sponsored by Dietl International.

Travel Stipends:
Three travel stipends were awarded by the MRC to support member attendance at the 2017 AMM Annual Conference. Coordinated by Development Chair, Terry Segal, recipients include: Amy Heggenmeyer, Linda Endersby, and Lottie Phillips. These stipends were generously sponsored by Masterpiece International, Terry Dowd, Inc., and US Art.

State Meetings:
The MRC sponsored two round table events held in Minnesota and Michigan. State Representatives are encouraged to organize events in their state.

Budget:
The MRC account balance remains steady as detailed in the Treasure’s report.
Annual Report continued

Membership:
MRC membership is up slightly from last year as detailed in the Secretary’s report.

Newsletter:
Three issues of the *MRC Courier* were edited and published by Liz Führman-Bragg and Linda Endersby, and distributed to members. Our newsletter contains special articles, information from the board and state representatives along with updates within the region.

Web Presence:
Sarah Connors maintains our website. Past issues of the *Courier*, contact information for the board and state representatives, and membership information are available at [www.midwestregistrars.org](http://www.midwestregistrars.org). Our Facebook page continues to be a good place for information sharing.

Looking Forward:
We will hold our annual business meeting during the AMM Conference from July 18-21 in Chicago, Illinois. The window for proposals for the 2018 AMM Annual Conference has already closed. Sara Hindmarch is on the planning committee.

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**Annual Report of the Vice Chair**

**Rachel Vargas**

**Travel Stipends**

In 2017, MRC had three travel stipend awards to support the recipients to attend the 2017 Association of Midwest Museums Conference in Des Moines, Iowa.

The 2017 recipients were:

- **The Terry Dowd, Inc. Annual Travel Stipend** was awarded to Lottie Phillips, Peoria Riverfront Museum in Peoria, Illinois.

- The MRC Travel stipend funded by *Masterpiece International* was awarded to Linda Endersby, Museum of Art & Archaeology at the University of Missouri in Columbia, MO.

- The MRC Travel stipend funded by *US Art Company* was awarded to Amy Heggemeyer, Spurlock Museum, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Congratulations to the winners, and thank you to our generous sponsors for supporting these awards! In 2018, we hope to award another 3-4 travel stipends to support travel to the AMM meetings in Chicago. Look for the Travel Stipend Application to arrive in mid-March.

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**Annual Report of the Archives**

**Lauren Hancock**

Are you retiring soon? Moving offices? Cleaning out old files? If you come across any MRC-related material, let us know! We keep by-laws, agendas and meeting minutes, summaries of election results, annual rosters and membership lists, reports and correspondence, materials related to annual meetings, and of course, this newsletter! If you have anything you think may be appropriate to add, especially if you are or have been a state representative or board member, please contact me at [lahancock@fieldmuseum.org](mailto:lahancock@fieldmuseum.org).

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Treasurer’s Report

Tamara R. Lange

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Funds held at Associated Bank NA, Green Bay, WI

Annual Report of the Secretary

Ashleigh Herrera

Membership in MRC remains strong at the end of 2017, with 127 current members. Heading into 2018, we still have 24 MRC members with unpaid dues. Don’t forget that MRC membership dues are for the calendar year- membership for all members expired on December 31, 2017. Look forward to an email from me in the coming weeks to update your member information or to renew your membership.

In the meantime everyone can pay their 2018 dues via PayPal or by check through this link: http://midwestregistrars.org/membership-2/joinrenew-membership or by visiting the “Membership” and then “Registration and Renewal” tab on the MRC Website.

Don’t forget about MRC when speaking with emerging professionals as well. MRC is a great way to get involved for a nominal $10 fee, and with many great networking and professional development opportunities!
Annual Report continued

This year, I’ve included a few new tables for your analytical enjoyment. Though we only seem to grow by a few every year, you’ll see that MRC Member base is a bit more fluid than the Year over Year numbers would have you believe. Many thanks to our State Representatives for their work in recruitment and retention in members!

For questions regarding membership status, please contact your state representative or Ashleigh Herrera at ashleigh.herrera@wisconsinhistory.org.

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Midwest Registrars Committee

CHAIR
Andrew Near, Collections Manager
Kruizenga Art Museum, Hope College
271 Columbia Avenue, PO Box 9000
Holland, Michigan 49422-9000
616-395-6402, near@hope.edu

VICE-CHAIR & TRAVEL STIPENDS
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Broad Art Museum, Michigan State University
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Evansville Museum
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815-244-1173, connors@preservationcenter.org

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Eiteljorg Museum of American Indians and Western Art
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Elk Horn, Iowa 51531
712-764-7001, angela.stanford@danishmuseum.org

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Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503
616-242-5020, jconklin@artmuseumgr.org

MINNESOTA
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Minneapolis Institute of Art
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Minneapolis, Minnesota 55404
612-870-3242, lory@artsmia.org

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National World War I Museum at Liberty Memorial
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Kansas City, Missouri 64108
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OHIO
Robin Goodman, Collections Manager and Registrar
Graham Gund Gallery, Kenyon College
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Gambier, Ohio 43022
740-427-5969, goodmann@kenyon.edu

WISCONSIN
Andrea Selbig, Collections Registrar
Chazen Museum of Art, University of Wisconsin—Madison
750 University Drive (mailing: 800 University Drive)
Madison, Wisconsin 53706
608-265-1156, aselbig@chazen.wisc.edu
The Midwest Registrars Committee formed in 1978 to provide a forum for the exchange of information and methods among museum collections professionals and registrars in the Midwest region. The MRC fulfills this objective by promoting an atmosphere of mutual aid and cooperation and by promoting professional practices to benefit colleagues, the museum community, and members.

The MRC is affiliated with the Registrars Committee of the American Alliance of Museums (RC-AAM) and the Association of Midwest Museums (AMM).

Who can join?
Voting membership in the Midwest Registrars Committee is open to those museum personnel who support the objectives of the MRC and who reside in the Midwest region, including:

- Illinois
- Indiana
- Iowa
- Michigan
- Minnesota
- Missouri
- Ohio
- Wisconsin

You don’t have to be a registrar! Collections managers, curators, volunteers, administrators, conservators, corporate registrars, students, or other collections care professionals are encouraged to join.

A non-voting membership is available for individuals who are associated with for-profit organizations such as shipping companies, customs brokers, insurance firms, and other suppliers of materials and services, and individuals who reside outside of the Midwest region.

Benefits of membership
- The Courier, MRC’s quarterly newsletter
- Funding assistance for state workshops
- Professional network
- Workshops
- Travel stipends to attend annual AMM Conference
- Membership directory

Membership fees
- Annual dues are $10.00 per year
- The membership period covers the calendar year (January 1 - December 31)
- Make checks payable to: Midwest Registrars Committee

Membership form
Date: __________________________
Name: __________________________
Position: _________________________
Institution: _______________________
Address: _________________________
City/State/Zip: ____________________
Phone/fax: _______________________
Email: __________________________

☐ New (voting $10)
☐ Renewal (voting $10)
☐ New (non-voting $10)
☐ Renewal (non-voting $10)

Make a difference!
Your active participation ensures the ongoing success of the MRC programs and activities. Please check the areas in which you would like to get involved:

☐ State representative
☐ Newsletter
☐ Programs/annual meeting
☐ Fundraising
☐ Membership

NEW FOR 2013—Renew and pay online!
Follow these two steps to renew your membership electronically:

1. Simply fill out this PDF form and e-mail it to: MRCDues@gmail.com
2. To pay for your MRC dues via PayPal, login to your account, click "Send Money", and send your dues to: MRCDues@gmail.com

-OR-

Send paper application and payment to:
Tamara R. Lange
Curator of Collections & Exhibits
Sheboygan County Historical Society & Museum
3110 Erie Avenue
Sheboygan, WI 53081