

Draft minutes, Membership & Professional Development Committee

Annual meeting, Washington D.C.

Saturday, June 23, 2007

8:00-10:00 a.m.

Four Points Sheraton, McPherson Room A/B

In attendance: Ellen Ellickson (Chair), Yale; John Cullars, Univ. of Illinois-Chicago; Stephanie Joseph, Haskell Indian Nations Univ.; Verónica Reyes, Univ. of Arizona; Kathleen Burns, Yale (recording); Susan Fagan; Hjordis Halvorson, Newberry Library; Mary Lacy, Library of Congress; Diane Warner, Texas Tech Univ. (members); Sarah Fass, Univ. of N. Carolina, Chapel Hill; James Ascher, Univ. of S. Florida; Jessica Pigza, New York Public Library; Anne Posega, Washington University; Donna Davey, New York Univ.; April Brewer, Univ. of N. Carolina, Chapel Hill (visitors)

Not present: Susan Walker, Yale; Anne Marie Lane, Univ. of Wyoming; Laila Miletic-Vejzovic, Washington State Univ.; Adam Burling, ACRL liaison

1. Welcome and introductions

Ellen welcomed those in attendance and noted the absence of several committee members. Those present introduced themselves. Visitors were especially welcomed and the committee was pleased to recognize the presence of two 2007 preconference scholarship recipients.

2. Selection of recorder and finalization of agenda

Kathleen Burns was selected as recorder and the agenda presented.

3. Approval of minutes from the January 21, 2007 meeting

Minutes of the last meeting were approved.

4. Housekeeping: Committee membership, Committee roster

Ellen explained that there are two versions of the membership roster, one on the RBMS website and one on the ACRL website. The ACRL list is up-to-date and includes the terms of members. Several committee members were renewing their terms. Ellen and those attending thanked non-renewing members, Hjordis Halvorson and Anne Marie Lane, for their great service to the committee and to the section. The committee also congratulated and thanked Mary Lacy, who is leaving the committee to assume her role as RBMS Chair in 2008.

5. Preconference Orientation & Introduction to RBMS

Ellen asked for comments from those who attended the conference orientation, and reported that the 2007 program, which has been trimmed to be more streamlined and useful to attendees over the last couple of years, was well attended. Ellen provided some background about the session, and the various ways that introductions have been handled in the past. Feedback was positive for the pace of the orientation and the content. There was discussion of the handouts that Ellen prepared for the orientation. One person felt

that including the schedule for the meetings at ALA Annual in the packet was confusing; Ellen explained that new members often do not know that business meetings for RBMS are held at Annual rather than at the preconference. The overall reaction for the handouts was positive, with particular praise given to the list of committee chairs, listing both their email and their institutional affiliation. Ellen brought forward an idea to create a slide show to run during the presentations that would show the name of each committee and a picture of the chair, since not all chairs can attend the orientation, and those that can often cannot be easily noted by all in attendance. The slide show's purpose would be to help new members familiarize themselves with RBMS leadership and identify who to approach about becoming involved in the work of the section. Discussion ensued about whether committee chairs would cooperate with this effort by supplying photographs, and how the committee might ensure that all chairs are represented. The committee was enthusiastic about this proposal.

6. New members' activities at the Preconference – K. Burns

Kathleen reported on the successful New Member/First Time Attendee social event that was organized for the 2007 Preconference in Baltimore after outlining the history of the event. She noted John Buchtel's critical assistance as Local Arrangements liaison charged with identifying and arranging a venue for the event. The gathering was held the first night of the preconference at "The Spy Club" and was well attended. Kathleen reported positive remarks received from first-time and experienced RBMS members. An Evite was again created to promote the event; Tori Ondrla, ACRL liaison supplied email addresses for first-time attendees. An effort was made to encourage invitees to bring along buddies, mentors, and established members of RBMS, to make this an inclusive event. Kathleen also made a public announcement at the Conference Orientation. Susan Fagan has agreed to oversee this event next year in Los Angeles and Kathleen will prepare guidelines and a timeline to help with the transition.

7. Buddy Program – M. Lacy

Mary reported another active year for the Buddy program. 19 pairs of buddies were matched total: 18 pairs for the RBMS preconference and 1 pair for Annual ALA meeting. Mary reported "spontaneous positive feedback" from some participants. Verónica Reyes has agreed to assume responsibility for the Buddy Program.

8. Scholarship Program – K. Burns

Kathleen informed the Committee that 19 scholarships (14 full and 5 partial, totaling \$11,675) were awarded this year from a pool totaling more than fifty applicants. Seven recipients were from ethnic communities under-represented in the profession. The jury was chaired this year by Fernando Peña (Budget and Development Committee), and included representatives from the Membership & Professional Dev. Committee and the Diversity Committee, as well as a Member-at-Large. Kathleen also reported that RBMS Exec organized a breakfast for scholarship recipients at the Preconference, which was well-attended and offered a chance for recipients to be recognized, meet each other, and mingle with RBMS leadership. The scholarship continues to be a very strong tool for recruitment and outreach.

9. Mentoring Program

Ellen summarized the background of the Mentor program, noting that there have been 46 pairs of mentors and mentees since the program started. Ellen reported that the mentoring application form has been revised, removing questions that suggested an applicant could be matched with a mentor with a similar ethnic background or from the same geographic area. The scarcity of mentors prevents the guarantee of such accommodations. The new form also explicitly asks applicants to identify how long they have been a member of RBMS. During the meeting, Ellen was able to recruit four new mentors. The committee discussed the idea of an evaluation form for mentors to fill out about their experience. Ellen mentioned that the responses she usually receives are anecdotal; committee members felt that these accounts can be quite helpful in understanding the mentoring relationship. Members agreed that any evaluation form should gather both qualitative and quantitative feedback. Committee members discussed uneven mentoring experiences, and whether there might be ways to create alternative resources or edit the application form to identify and assist those who might need specific advice but aren't seeking a full-blown mentoring experience. Suggested ideas included creating a FAQ and developing a referral infrastructure for specific topics that would forward email queries to responders with defined areas of expertise.

10. Diversity Committee – K. Burns

Kathleen reported that the Diversity Committee is finalizing an online “tool kit” for RBMS members interested in locally undertaking outreach and recruitment sessions that target communities underrepresented in the section [an idea first proposed by former M&PD member James Fox], mirroring the presentations that Diversity Committee has organized to coincide with two past Midwinter meetings. The tool kit includes a tip sheet with hints for how to set up and structure a presentation, and will also link to examples and templates of brochures, posters, and other materials that can be used for local outreach. Kathleen also reported that the Diversity Committee is identifying likely campuses in Philadelphia at which to present after the 2008 Midwinter meeting, and mentioned that she and Penny Welbourne will be guest co-editing a special issue of the *RBM Journal* devoted to Diversity and Special Collections. She also mentioned that the Diversity Committee is dedicated to moving forward a number of diversity-related seminar topics, which the committee hopes will attract speakers and attendees from underrepresented communities while educating the general profession.

11. ABAA Book Fair liaison – S. Fass

Sarah Fass has volunteered to coordinate provision of materials at the RBMS booth at the three annual ABAA Book Fairs and liaison with a “captain” for each city where the fair takes place (Fernando Peña, New York; John Overholt, Boston; Jennifer Nelson and Shannon Supple, San Francisco / no one has yet been appointed for Los Angeles;). Fernando was prepared for book fair in New York in the Spring, so Sarah's liaison work will begin this fall. The idea of having a banner at each site has been rethought because of the expense of producing the banners; there will be only one. Sarah is charged with reminding captains to send it along to the next fair site and checking whether the captains require restocking of any promotional materials for the booth.

12. Letters to new/dropped/reinstated members

Ellen reported that all letters and reminders are now being sent electronically, and mentioned that 266 new members have been welcomed this year. She noted variations in new member applications from month-to-month, some of which is explained by scheduled events like the Midwinter and Annual meetings.

13. Educational Opportunities directory

Ellen reminded the committee that a mass emailing to 53 library school deans had netted 24 replies and that the website was updated in April.

14. RBMS presence at the 2007 ALA New Members Round Table orientation and at the ACRL booth

Ellen sent out an email requesting volunteers to staff the ACRL Booth at the Exhibits Hall, and Mary Lacy volunteered. The New Members Round Table Conference Orientation was being held concurrently with M&PD meeting, with no known RBMS representation at the event.

15. Liaison reports: ACRL Professional Development Committee, ACRL Membership Committee

Ellen explained that she is the liaison for the ACRL Professional Development Committee and ACRL Membership Committees, but because of scheduling conflicts with both has not attended either. ACRL Professional Development meets during RBMS Info Exchange, while ACRL Membership conflicts with the RBMS M&PD Committee Meeting.

16. M&PD sponsorship of roundtables, seminars, papers for future Preconferences

Mary Lacy spoke about the theme of the preconference during her term as Chair, which will be the 50th preconference held by the Section. She hopes the preconference will celebrate the Section's history while looking forward to its future. Kathleen Burns suggested a possible seminar topic to be shepherded by M&PD for this preconference, bringing together representatives from various generations of RBMS to discuss issues facing each group, gain feedback about how to successfully interest these groups in the section, and ascertain how well the Section offers opportunities for involvement in RBMS. The session could be built around the "[Members for the Future: the View From Newcomers to RBMS](#)" seminar that was successfully held in Toronto in 2003.

17. New business

Mary asked if anyone was planning to attend the ACRL 101 sessions scheduled during Annual. She provided the times and locations of the sessions, and shared the description in the ALA Program Guide. The sessions are targeted at first time attendees and new members; there was general uncertainty over the format of the session. Some members said they would try to attend.

Ellen ended the meeting by noting her imminent surgery. John Cullars and Donna Davey volunteered to act as back-ups for the Mentoring program during Ellen's recovery.