

VRT Business Meeting Minutes, ALA Annual 2001

Monday, June 18, 2001

Randy Pitman called the meeting to order at 9:40 am.

After introductions, the minutes of the previous meeting and various reports were distributed. The minutes were approved.

Nell Chenault gave the treasurer's report. She noted that VRT had kept Gala and booth expenses down at last year's ALA Annual, and that Gala has turned a profit two years in a row. As a result VRT has a budget surplus. This year 125 tickets were collected at Gala, a reflection of attendance not sales. Curiously, the boat company that hosted Gala reported 113 guests on the boat, but the ticket count was deemed more authoritative. Thanks were extended to Tom Fowler and Gary Handman for their efforts in setting up Gala, and to booth volunteers and Annie Pitman for selling tickets.

Somehow VRT has more T-shirts on hand than last year, apparently forestalling a need to create more. Members were reminded to send Nell copies of expense reimbursements even if the reimbursement is being handled through VRT's ALA liaison, Danielle Alderson.

At Midwinter, Nell attended the ALA Planning and Budget Assembly at which a new business plan model was presented. It was adopted by the board. At the Assembly's spring meeting, ALA's strategic membership plan was discussed. It was noted that ALA has a high (85-90%) retention rate and wants to raise membership to 95,000 by 2005. The New Association Manager suite was adopted and an e-commerce package for membership services discussed. A copy of the treasurer's report will be on file in the archives.

Jim Scholtz reported on the recent VRT election results. Mike Boedicker has been elected Vice Chair/Incoming Chair. The electee was not able to be in attendance and receive kudos.

Randy Pitman delivered the chair's report, noting that it's been a very successful year.

Cecelia Hurt, VRT's long-sought Webmaster, while involved in a discussion about siting and improving control of the VRT website, will be keeping the site on the ALA server. Nell noted that ALA is revising their website to which the VRT website is linked.

Randy reported that the Cornerstone of Democracy project's book, Libraries and Democracy, is being published and has Cataloging in Publication (CIP) from the Library of Congress.

On the issue of seeing promotional posters about video and other media similar to "Read" posters from ALA Graphics, Kathy Coster reported a favorable response. However, ALA Graphics is concerned about encroaching on the "Read" model, so a "View" poster is not under consideration. The endeavor is moving on, the membership was assured.

Rue Herbert and Rick Provine reported on the proposal for establishing a video librarian award or grant. It was noted that 11 of the 18 ALA Round Tables offer one or more awards, grants or scholarships. Suggested titles for the VRT award were:

VRT Distinguished Service Award,
VRT Achievement Award,
VRT Certificate of Merit,
VRT Video Librarian of the Year, and
VRT Outstanding Video Librarian.

A discussion of actualizing this proposal included suggestions that the award go to someone outside the VRT membership, that the objective of giving an award is increasing VRT visibility and tying the award in with posters and other initiatives in pursuit of heightened visibility. It was suggested that a mentoring program be explored, and Becky Albitz will do so in her role as New Member Round Table liaison. A new committee was appointed to continue efforts in this area.

Members are: Rue, Rick, Jim and Mary Konkell. A copy of the proposal notes will be in the archives.

Reports from standing committee chairs were given.

Membership committee chair Tom Fowler reported that, due to changes in his professional responsibilities, he will no longer be involved with video materials, and therefore Video Round Table. Quarterly membership reports from ALA have stopped coming, and the new membership chair needs to re-initiate the regular delivery of said reports.

Nominating committee chair reported no report, a result of no pending elections.

Program 2001 chair Gary Handman reported 80 attendees at VRT's 2001 program, The Reel Nitty Gritty : Secrets of Video Librarianship Revisited. He further reported good reviews with many attendees inquiring about the possibilities of a pre-conference on the same topic. Discussion touched on expanding the program into a pre-conference, sending follow-up messages and membership solicitations to the names on the sign-up sheets, and giving subsequent membership recruitment-oriented projects to the membership committee. A discussion of evaluation sheets from the program called for more effective solicitation and collection of attendee comments and posting evaluation forms on the VRT website in the future.

Publications committee co-chair Lisbeth Goldberg reported looking forward to revitalizing and possibly expanding the VRT newsletter in the next year. Nell's efforts in creating the Notable Videos brochures were commended. Lisbeth's efforts on behalf of the Pocket Guide to ALA in San Francisco (which listed video-related events at Annual 2001) were noted by the membership. The subject of the newsletter migrating from print to electronic format was revisited without reaching a consensus.

Gala 2001 co-chairs Randy Pitman and Tom Fowler reported on the previous evening's festivities. Tom noted the difficulty of finding an affordable venue for Gala in San Francisco. He also noted that VRT had paid \$500/hour for the boat, but we were shorted by a half-hour of cruise time. Tom will pursue this matter. Randy noted that Gala could not have been mounted without Tom's efforts. Thanks also went out to Nell, Lisbeth, Marc Sober, Mary Konkel, Carleton Jackson and Jim for helping out.

In Kris Brancolini's absence Rick Provine gave the Notable Video's for Adults report. He encouraged members to make more nominations, providing the nominated videos had actually been viewed and were notable. The form for nominations is on the website, and nominations may also be made by emailing Kris. A discussion of the prohibition of nominations from VRT members who work for vendors affirmed strong sentiment for keeping the prohibition, though not by consensus.

Liaison reports were called for.

CC:DA liaison Mary Konkel reported the publication of a new AMIM compendium. (AMIM concerns archival cataloging of visual materials including videos). On other fronts:

OLAC has a task force for developing guidelines for cataloging DVDs. Results will be posted on the OLAC website. They also have a committee on Internet cataloging.

Library of Congress reported cataloging 194,508 non-print visual materials.

A report on general materials designations (GMDs) showed that librarians want the information GMDs provide in the catalog and would like to see DVD and CD-ROM added to the approved list of GMDs.

Mary also reported as ACRL liaison. ACRL Media Resources committee's program was staged on Saturday. The title was Media Resources 101 : a Video Primer. The panel members for the program were all VRT members, with assorted other VRT members in attendance. Evaluations were generally high, and only one attendee reported not having his/her needs met. There was no indication what those needs were.

Sally Mason Robinson reported on the Reeling 'Em In program sponsored by ALA Public Programs and National Video Resources (NVR). They had more attendees at the end of the program than at the beginning, and a main sponsor (NEH) was very happy with the program. She extended thanks to VRT for co-sponsoring the program.

Becky Albitz reported that the ACRL ARTS committee's program for Annual 2002 in Atlanta will concern artists' books. Becky is the incoming planning committee chair for ACRL ARTS.

ALA liaison Danielle Alderson and ICF/OIF liaison Ron Sigler were unable to attend.

Carleton Jackson reported that the 23rd National Media Marketplace will be held October 18-21, 2001, in Las Vegas. It was posited from the floor that this might be a good place to look for potential new VRT members.

The PLA AV committee sponsored a program on audio books on Saturday. According to liaison Adele Bellinger they had a full house and the program included a demonstration of a digital audio book. This committee's program at Annual 2002 will be titled "Let There be Music." At PLA 2002 in Phoenix they will hold a table talk on handling audiovisual materials.

Jim Scholtz reported on the Round Table Coordinating Committee, an important committee for VRT to monitor since we are one of the smaller round tables. Jim observed that this committee is a source for background on ALA planning procedures and how situations like the one involving labor actions at the Marriott Hotel at this conference arise. [There is an ongoing dispute between the San Francisco Marriott management and the local hotel workers union. It has resulted in noisy demonstrations that target ALA attendees for attention.]

Jim also reported as YALSA liaison, explaining the nominating process for Notable Videos (and DVDs) for Young Adults. He also reported on YALSA's Monday evening program, Video Visions.

Becky Albitz reported as liaison to New Members Round Table (NMRT), noting poor attendance by many ALA groups at NMRT's regular Saturday orientation session. A VRT Gala attendee who came because of meeting Becky at the NMRT orientation illustrates the value of having a VRT representative present at this event at each Annual conference. Rick Provine suggested that VRT should get new brochures to NMRT.

At this point Randy thanked the membership for its help in his chairmanship, singling out Jim and Gary for special attention, and the meeting paused for a break.

After the break, Gary Handman assumed the chair and called for new business, the first order of which was naming outgoing general chair Randy Pitman chair of the nominating committee.

Lisbeth Goldberg spoke in support of expanding the publications committee's purview to include publicity and website oversight. Lisbeth will oversee print endeavors and Cecelia will handle the Web. Gary suggested adding members to an ad hoc committee to oversee projects related the Web and to ephemera like VRT buttons. Marc Sober and Scott Breivold volunteered for Web committee duty, and Diane Sybeldon will handle the buttons as a member of a newly constituted publicity committee. A desire to see a new button was voiced, and Diane will undertake a new design. Tom suggested a refrigerator magnet be considered and a general discussion of promotional trinketry ensued. Among the suggestions: a CD/DVD opener. Lisbeth recommended Collette Ford to assist on publications and Jim suggested a follow-up email from the chair regarding revised committee assignments. The chair delegated this duty to the secretary. Good luck.

Mary Laskowski was appointed membership committee chair, and a call for interest in chairing the notable videos committee was invoked, with action deferred until later in the meeting.

Lisbeth spoke to the question of appointing the VRT publicist to the VRT executive board, in part to raise the visibility and effectiveness of public relations for VRT. A discussion yielded questions, such as whether the VRT publicist would be a separate position from chair of the publications committee. (It was reiterated that Collette has been appointed to help on the newsletter.) The suggestion was made that according to the bylaws, the VRT publicist may already be a member of the executive board. Lisbeth will work on a draft in anticipation of an examination and/or reworking of the by-laws, a project to be undertaken by a committee suggested by Carleton. Jim made a motion to change the name of the post of Publications Committee Chair to Publications and Publicity Committee Chair, and to appoint an ad hoc committee to study bylaws changes. Randy seconded. The motion carried and Carleton, Lisbeth and Cecelia were appointed to the newly renamed Publications and Publicity Committee. Gary, remarking on the importance of perusing the by-laws with an eye to revising them in relation to the current strategic plan (which is posted on the website), posited that Vice Chair/Incoming Chair Mike Boedicker should be included in this undertaking. Mike, Nell and Cecilia were then appointed to the previously mentioned ad hoc committee to study the by-laws.

Randy Pitman reported on the potential need for a VRT statement supporting the importance of video materials in libraries. A public librarian contacting VRT for help in retaining a branch library's video collection initiated concern for this matter. A wide-ranging discussion ensued with a frank exchange of views and no consensus for action. The matter was deferred to MidWinter.

Preliminary discussion of the 2002 Program and Gala centered on the need for enlisting local sources for help and support. CNN was mentioned, and the secretary will explore obtaining a contact there. Program ideas included preservation issues, video as a news carrier, planning media facilities, extending the 2001 program and a mini vendor expo including vendors of hardware and the always-popular cutting edge technologies. Shelving vendors and vendors involved in planning and supplying facilities might also be included. Volunteers for the program committee were sought. Scott Breivold, Rick Provine, Nell Chenault and Carleton Jackson will serve with Mary Laskowski chairing.

The meeting was mercifully adjourned at 12:35.