Draft minutes, Membership & Professional Development Committee

Midwinter meeting
Saturday, January 20, 2007
8:00-10:00 a.m.
Red Lion Hotel on Fifth Avenue, Bainbridge Room

In attendance: Ellen Ellickson (Chair), Yale; John Cullars, Univ. of Illinois-Chicago; Susan Walker, Lewis Walpole Library (recording); AnneMarie Lane, University of Wyoming; Stephanie Joseph, University of Iowa; Hjordis Halvorson, Newberry Library; Diane Warner, Texas Tech Unversity; Mary Lacy, Library of Congress; Laila Miletic-Vejvociv, Washington State (members); Donna Davey, New York University; Sarah Fass, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill (visitors)

Not present: Kathleen Burns, Yale; Susan Fagan; Veronica Reyes, University of Arizona; 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.
2. Selection of recorder and finalization of agenda
Susan Walker was selected as recorder and the agenda presented.
3. Approval of minutes from the June 24, 2006 meeting
Minutes of the last meeting were approved with two corrections: one, a typographical error and, two, to reflect the fact that Steve Cox was a visitor, not a member of the committee.
4. Housekeeping: Committee membership, Committee roster
Ellen pointed out that there are two versions of the membership roster on the ACRL website. Several members completing their first two years of service were willing to renew their membership on the committee. Because they were coming to the end of their second term, Anne-Marie Lane and Hjordis Halvorsen would rotate off after Annual, resulting in two more vacancies on the Committee at that time. As Anne-Marie was not going to be able to attend annual, Ellen took the opportunity to tell Anne Marie how much her work was appreciated and how nice it was to work with her.
5. Buddy Program - M. Lacy
Mary Lacy reported that there were five pairs of Buddies for this midwinter meeting, and that she had a small supply of back-up buddies if needed.
6. Mentoring Program
Ellen summarized the background of the Mentor program, noting that there had been 39 pairs of mentors and mentees since the program started. She has put out a call for mentors, but the response has not met demand. She currently has six mentees and only four mentors available. The scarcity of mentors was discussed. Several committee members volunteered to serve as mentors. Also addressed were some difficulties of making contact with mentees and the possibility of an evaluation form. The committee agreed that there is a need to make changes to the Mentor/Mentee application form, particularly to include a way to identify if the mentee is a member of RBMS and to

eliminate choices like “would you like a mentor in your geographical area” that the scarcity of mentors makes it impossible to accommodate. Ellen will bring some of these issues up at the meeting of the Executive Committee.

7. New members' activities at Midwinter

The Chair reported that new chair of RBMS had requested that some event be organized for new members at midwinter and although several suggestions had been made, it had not been possible to pull anything together in time beyond the Buddy Program, which, all agreed, was a great success. The idea of organizing something social for after Info Exchange seemed most feasible for future consideration. Ellen emphasized that she had put “Visitors are very welcome” at the top of the agenda for this meeting. She also reported that Kathleen Burns will work with Local Arrangements again to arrange a New Members’ activity in Baltimore.

8. Diversity Committee

Ellen told the Committee that Kathleen Burns wrote a report on what the Outreach group of the Diversity Council is doing. Two presentations were arranged focusing on underrepresented groups: one at the University of Washington Career Services Center and another for an African-American Studies class at Seattle University. There is continuing development of the online Diversity Presentation Toolkit. A request has been made by Diversity for RBMS demographic information from ALA’s Office of Research and Statistics.

9. Task Force on Core Competencies for Special Collections Professionals - H. Halvorson

Hjordis informed the Committee that the Core Competencies Task Force was busy writing and revising the draft with the goal of having the next draft ready to disseminate by June. The task force had received feedback through discussion group held at the pre-conference in Austin, and also from those who attended ALA annual, including non-members. The current draft was disseminated on Listservs and is on the web.

10. ABAA Book Fair liaison

Ellen reported that M&PD has been asked to provide a liaison for the ABAA Book Fairs. At each of the three annual ABAA Book Fairs there is an RBMS which needs to be staffed by volunteers. Instead of Eric Holzenberg getting volunteers for all the fairs, there will be a point person for each venue. Fernando Pena will be the point person for New York; John Overholt for Boston; and E.C. Schroeder will be working on finding people for the California fair, which is alternately in San Francisco and Los Angeles. The M&PD liaison would be keeper of material like brochures and banner. Discussion ensued. There was general agreement that it would be less work and possibly less expense ultimately to have three banners made, one for each venue, and batches of brochures at each location as well. Ellen said that she would go back to E.C. that the topic would be brought up at the meeting of the Executive Committee.

11. RBMS presence at the ACRL booth

Ellen and Anne Marie were going to help man the ACRL booth at the Exhibits Hall. Leila said she would also volunteer. Adam Burling had sent out a FAQ for the booth volunteers about ACRL which was very helpful.

12. Liaison reports: ACRL Professional Development Coordinating Committee, ACRL Membership Advisory Committee

Ellen recounted that ACRL has not put Professional Development together with

Membership in one committee, and the former meets at the same time as the current meeting while the latter meets at the same time as Info Exchange, so Ellen cannot attend either ACRL meeting.

13. Educational Opportunities directory

Ellen sent 53 queries to library school deans to update school information for the online listing and had received 24 replies as of November 10 when she wrote to the webmaster to hand over the updates. The website should be updated shortly. Ellen had had a conversation with David Szewczyk (ABAA member and proprietor of the Philadelphia Rare Books & Manuscripts Company) about ABAA's expressed interest in placing Library students and librarians as interns with booksellers. He had asked for a list of Library schools where internships were accepted for credit. Ellen provided that list and will send a copy to the Committee members.

14. Letters to new/dropped/reinstated members

Ellen has begun to write to new members electronically. This practice means a big savings in time, paper, and postage. She tells them where they can view the brochure online. She noted that other sections do this, and it seems acceptable.

15. Preparations for the Preconference

Henry Raine joined the meeting and discussion turned to the topic of the New Members' Orientation. The change in format was discussed as part of a broader consideration of the purpose and value of the orientation. Sarah Fass offered the perspective of a new attendee at Austin. Suggestions were solicited on how to make the session more meaningful and informative and less boring. It was generally agreed that the change was an improvement and the orientation should continue to be conducted in three parts: an introduction to the preconference, with Henry welcoming, explaining the schedule in detail, locations, what's happening; an introduction to and history of RBMS, with E.C. presenting ;how to get involved in RBMS, with Ellen providing the nuts and bolts of that process, including a stand-up identification of committee and discussion group chairs, in groups. Other ideas included: having an informal discussion group similar to what was held for Core Competencies Task Force, to talk about what it means to be active in RBMS; providing a printed summary of what went on at the last meeting, similar to what people report at Info Exchange, or minutes of committees; having a printed handout of the Committees and their charges; pointing out the networking benefits and other professional development aspects of the preconference and that discussion groups are a good way to get involved if one can't get on a committee right away. Henry also pointed out some other ways of welcoming new attendees, including the evening going out for drinks and having a new attendees page on the website. He agreed to talk to Tory about getting badge i.d.s for new attendees as well.

16. Scholarship assessment project

The scholarship group, a subcommittee of M&PD, is made up of a member from M&PD (Kathleen Burns), a member from Diversity, a member from Budget & Development and a member from Exec. ACRL wants to know how many scholarship winners have become members of RBMS. E.C. and Ellen have the lists of RBMS members which they will compare with a list of scholarship winners that Fernando Pena (former M&PD member who was part of the scholarship group) will compile.

17. M&PD sponsorship of round tables, seminars, papers for future Preconferences

Ellen reported that M&PD has been encouraged to submit a proposal for a seminar.

Kathleen Burns had proposed a seminar on Creative Alternatives for Professional Development; for example a class in hands-on bookbinding should be counted as professional development. Other ideas were added, including something on mentoring; exploring what other groups do; local, regional and alternative opportunities; getting involved on a shoestring. It was suggested that ideas and reactions be solicited from new members. Sue Walker will convey the ideas to the Seminars Committee and let the M&PD Committee know the response.