

MINUTES OF THE APD COMMITTEE MEETING SEPTEMBER 18, 2013 (held in EBLA)

STAFF REPORT

Katherine Gottschalk informed us that the Department of Adult Programs is transitioning to a new online Volunteer Management Software system called Volgistics. The system, which is already utilized by many comparable museums around the country, allows for more interactive data management. Through an online portal, volunteers will be able to view their schedule anytime and update their personal contact information, preferred shifts, number of visitors on tours, etc. The program is currently being used on the administrative side and Katherine hopes to start training volunteers in November or December. More information on the software, including sample accounts and videos, can be found at www.volgistics.com.

Wil Scott reported on the following issues:

The East Building Lecture Hall will remain open through the Mellon lecture series which generally ends in May. It should reopen approximately a year later.

De-installation of the East Building galleries may conclude sooner than the original December 7th date; it could be as early as next month.

Béla Demeter's *Dragons in Art* tour and the subsequent write-up in the Washington Post have generated some concern and a change of policy. The Chief of Procurement has determined that docents may not serve as a volunteer and an independent contractor at the same time. Accordingly, docents who develop thematic tours that are of interest to the Gallery must choose to be hired as a paid contractor or volunteer (by definition, free of charge.) Wil encourages anybody wishing to develop a thematic tour to contact him with the caveat that certain guidelines be observed. To wit, a volunteer with professional credentials and expertise in a specific field may develop and give a tour that pulls in this specialty and its relationship to the collection. All previous criteria for submitting an outline to Wil for approval and validating the tour still apply.

The recent coverage in the press about NGA's budget was well received by the administration – their view is that the coverage outlined our mission very well. That said, the House of Representatives is said to be preparing a less flexible budget than in years past. That, in addition to the fragility of the Continuing Resolution process, behooves us to stay tuned.

Wil, in response to a question, told us that it was perfectly acceptable to use one or two works from Feature Exhibitions in the WB on our permanent collection tours, in light of the fact that there will be additional pressure on galleries due to the closing of the EB. However, he stressed that we need to be aware of the space and crowds in a potentially popular exhibit.

Diane Arkin's comments to the group covered the following:

New signage and promotional flyers for the Sculpture Garden tour seems to have increased visitor attendance. In addition, visitors attending the tour received coupons for a 10% discount at the Pavillion.

In addition to Tuesday's *Views of 17th C. Life* tour, a new one will be added to the Thursday schedule at 11:30.

Pre-registration for the trainings as indicated on our Education Calendar begins 30 days prior to that training. Katherine prefers that we register via email. You should get a response, if not, contact her again.

The Dutch galleries have had new wall text added.

Note the APD Reference Sheet and the *Tell it with Pride* brochure in our packet.

As we plan our tours over the coming year, Diane asked us to consider:

- What are we really here for? How can we help visitors make their OWN connections
- Use "other voices" in your tours - quotes from the artist, critics, art historians - as appropriate – adding multiple perspectives to our tours
- Give visitors a sense of the multiple POSSIBILITIES presented by the work
- Use inquiry-based techniques; LISTEN to different points of view.

Finally, Diane encouraged us to take advantage of the many Curator and Lecturer-led tours offered throughout the year. These tours deepen our knowledge and enrich our experience as National Gallery docents!

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Béla Demeter amended the minutes of the April 3, 2013 meeting to include the following correction: The first sentence "...Chagall work will be in the Sculpture garden by April." was changed to "...Chagall mosaic should be open to the public in the Sculpture garden in October." A motion to approved the minutes was made and seconded.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Dianne Maffia reported (for Deb Pietras) that the balance at our April meeting was \$1,922.43, which a dues payment of \$30 brought to \$1,952.43. This amount was offset by the net cost of the spring luncheon (\$787.50) and gifts for Anne Marie, Diane, Wil and Arlette (\$228.65), bringing the current balance to \$936.28. Dues will remain at the \$30 level. Checks should be made out to: "NGA Adult Docent Program". Please mail your check to Deb Pietras at: 10210, Oxfordshire Road, Great Falls, VA 22066

BOOK DISCUSSION REPORT

Betty Sullivan took votes for the following books for the next book club discussion: *The Art Forger* (B.A. Shapiro, 2012), *What is a Masterpiece* (Kenneth Lord Clark, 1981), *Leonardo and the Last Supper* (Ross King, 2012) and *The Art Spirit* (Robert Henri, 1923). The members in attendance chose *The Art Spirit* by Henri. The book discussion will be held at Sandy Horowitz's home on Thursday, October 24 at 10:30 a.m. Please email Betsy at sulliplace@msn.com by October 17 if you plan to attend.

EDUCATION

After our October 30th training Laura Symcak will coordinate a docent-lead education session (around 12:30) in the galleries which will focus on three works/areas: *The Bagpipe Player* by ter Brugghen, *St. John of the Cross* by Gijon, & Gallery 81 (i.e., the exotic or erotic room). The docent leading the discussion at each work will provide some background on the work, state 2 or 3 points that she/he would like visitors to take away, and suggest some questions designed to engage visitors. Laura asked docents attending the session to come with two or three main points they would like visitors to retain and; at least one question designed to encourage dialogue and closer looking. These works/rooms are in areas not usually used by school docents or outside tour groups; can be used in more than one tour and; can be discussed in multiple ways. Please direct questions or comments to Laura personally or via email.

ENRICHMENT COMMITTEE REPORT

Stephanie Frasher reported on the upcoming enrichment offerings:

October 10th at 10:15 (in conjunction with NGA's "Tell it with Pride Exhibition" on the Shaw Memorial) the African American Civil War Museum is offering us a tour entitled "Glorious March to Liberty: Civil War to Civil Rights." The Museum is at 1925 Vermont Avenue NW -10th and U Street and the tour is free. Following the tour those interested can walk to 14th and V to Busboys and Poets for lunch on their own. We will call ahead and let them know how many will be lunching. Please email Stephenie by October 7th at stephfrash@comcast.net to reserve a place for the tour and let her know if you will be staying for lunch.

November 21st there is a tour of Glenstone in Potomac Maryland. The day will begin at 11:00 with a private collection tour at the amazing mansion of Gisele and Ben Huberman. We will be viewing an extraordinary art and fine craft collection. That will be followed with lunch at Nur Nussoli's home. Then we will arrive at Glenstone 15 minutes before the 3pm tour. This Enrichment is limited to 15 and will be on a first come, first serve basis.

There is a possible train trip in January to view *The Surrealists: Works from the Collection Philadelphia Museum of Art*, on view from November 3, 2013 - March 2, 2014.

CHAIR'S REPORT

Dianne Maffia closed the meeting with the following comments:

School tours begin September 30th. It will be helpful to all of us to review the sections "Tour Precedence - School Tours", and "Tour Precedence - Outside Tours" in our APD REFERENCE SHEET. An updated Reference Sheet was in the packets we received yesterday. If for some reason you don't have a copy, Dianne will be happy to email it to you.

The new NGA website seems to be improving – it is richer and is definitely showing improvement. Diane Arkin meets regularly with Linda Stone, Head of IT and Volgistics to discuss issues and improvements. Linda is well aware of the importance of the website to our preparation and research.

Friday volunteers would be of immense assistance to Diane Arkin and Katherine Gottschalk, please contact them if you can spare a few hours.

You have till the end of October to catch a Sculpture Garden tour. If you haven't seen one yet, it is very edifying.

Please access the docent website: <http://www.nga.gov/volunteer/> for Council minutes and updates to calendar.

The next APD Committee meeting is December 4, 2014

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted

Béla Demeter, Secretary