

EXTENSION OF REMARKS

Robert Case

Mr. Shalom Staub, Director of State Folklife Programs, spoke at the Pennsylvania Library Association meeting a few weeks ago. He had some interesting things to relate regarding the activities of the Pennsylvania Folklife group and he explained that the group is surveying the state to identify the cultural distribution of folklore and folklife material.

He recently compiled three directories which should be made available to those who apply for humanities grants. One directory lists resource people who have expertise in some area of folklife studies, or who can lecture on Pennsylvania folklore. He has also compiled a directory of Pennsylvania folk festivals. Librarians should be aware of folk festivals such as the annual one that is held at Three Rivers Stadium in Pittsburgh. Many of the resource people listed in these directories are willing to come to your area and speak on folklife. They can help you generate ideas for local folklife programs. Folklore scholars represent a valuable resource for those who want to formulate programs dealing with Pennsylvania's folklore.

Jane Grey

How can rural libraries plan humanities programs when they are understaffed? Sometimes we think that the staff itself has to plan programs, but community members should do it. The librarian may be the motivating factor, but a project won't be successful

unless the librarian can get the community involved in the planning process. You should start small with a group of two or three people and hold a brainstorming session. Identifying resource people in the community is a significant part of the planning process. It takes detective work on the part of the librarian to find out what talents people have to offer.

I want to say a few words about the grant writing itself. There are many printed guides available from both the state councils and the NEH. Don't be afraid to write a grant. The reviewers who read grants don't want you to sing the "Stars and Stripes Forever." They are perfectly satisfied with one verse and a chorus. They don't want to read pages and pages, they want to see evidence that you have developed a thoughtful proposal and plans that will make the project work. They want to know how much your project will cost, whether the money is being budgeted effectively, and whether the grant will sponsor something tangible. They want to know what your objectives are. This is the basic way in which these grants are reviewed.

I also want to remind you that the public library is the institution that has the greatest impact on most people once they get out of school. Very often the small community's library offers the only window to the larger outside world.

Elliot Shelkrot

As Bob Case was talking I was reminded of another project that is being sponsored by the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts. The

Pennsylvania Writer's Council has begun a program that will involve libraries in collecting special materials written by Pennsylvania authors. It seems to me that this is a fascinating area, one that might be explored through a minigrant funded by the Pennsylvania Council on the Humanities.

This program will feature lectures on the works of Pennsylvania authors. These lectures will be presented by speakers from local colleges and universities. The Writer's Council is working on some catchy publicity campaigns such as "Take a writer to lunch," "Take a writer to the Beach," and "Take a Pennsylvania author to bed."

We do not do enough to take advantage of the local talent that exists in our communities. This sample program from the Council on the Arts could be tied in with the minigrants that are available from the Pennsylvania Council on the Humanities.

Thomas Phelps

I want to tell you that The National Endowment's Annual Report shows that grant monies are going to Philadelphia and to Pittsburgh for the most part. This is not necessarily the Humanities Council's fault. As a grant-making officer myself, I realize that grants can only be given to those who apply for them. It is my concern, at the national level, that rural areas become served. But if rural libraries don't apply, we can't show in our annual report that we gave rural areas any money. Perhaps the best way to serve rural areas is to hold workshops such as this one. I want to

encourage you in small groups, and individually, to apply to these state councils. I think we can do more than just offer encouragement. I want to emphasize the fact that staff members at both the national and state levels will help you write a grant proposal if you come forward with a basic idea.

If you are the slightest bit interested in writing a grant proposal, do come forward. Let your imagination run wild. I am sure you can come up with some ideas. The councils have resource people who will come to your town in order to help you put a project together.

We are currently working on some workshops that are being planned with the cooperation of the American Library Association. This project will serve both the PLA and ACRLE. Six regional workshops will be held within the next year and a half. These workshops will combine the resources of the state humanities councils and those of the National Endowment for the Humanities and will take the form of two and three day sessions on the subject of grant-making. These workshops will be advertised. In order to participate in these workshops it will be necessary to enlist the support of a community college or other academic institution so that they will send a representative humanist and an academic librarian to accompany the public librarian.

You can adapt this idea on a regional basis. These three day workshops will be intense, but I think they will help you learn how to administer a grant, how to write a proposal, and will help you formulate ideas for humanities programming.

Richard Cheski

Let me tell you what we have done in Ohio to get more rural areas involved in grant projects. Let's say that you have an idea, but you are not sure if it relates to the humanities. We encourage you to call your state humanities council and talk with staff members. They can help you polish your proposal. The main problem that most grant-writers face is trying to locate humanities scholars to work with.

Many of the councils offer minigrants. These are great grants because all of the paperwork can be done on just one page. Contact your state humanities council; they can give you the address of a humanities scholar in your area who has some experience in writing grant proposals. These \$200 grants are very small. They are intended to provide a little incentive for the humanities scholar who can not afford to donate his time and energy to your project. The humanities scholar meets with the librarian and members of the community to assist in developing a grant proposal. I know that the state humanities councils give these minigrants, and I think they also give technical assistance grants. You don't have to worry about writing the grant proposal, you can get help every step of the way.

We helped a library design a program that examined the historical background of the local Mennonite community. The program investigated how the Mennonites had affected the government and growth of the community. We identified several humanities professors at Blufton

College (a Mennonite college) who were familiar with the cultural background of the Mennonite people. This program was very effective in spite of the fact that it was not funded by a large grant.

QUESTION FROM THE AUDIENCE

I am from Clearfield County. I drive a bookmobile and cover an area that has a population of 74,000 people. A lot of the children who come to the bookmobile come from families with parents who do not read. My question is, "How do you get these parents involved in reading?" These are people who are poor readers, but they need the information that reading can supply them with.

In my area many people have GED diplomas. It does not necessarily follow that they are in a position to derive enjoyment from reading. What kind of program would appeal to these people and get them involved in reading? I thought the Great Books Program that was discussed this morning sounded interesting, but how can we get poor readers to become involved in these programs?

RESPONSE FROM ROBERT CASE

Your concern is probably shared by others. I can understand your frustration. You probably spend forty hours per week on the road in the bookmobile and have little time to plan programs.

Unfortunately, many parents do not take the time to read with their children in order to reinforce the readings skills they learn in school. This situation is not merely a rural phenomenon. Within your jurisdiction you have reading consultants, intermediate

units, and other reading experts available who can be consulted. I believe you may have a literacy volunteer program and you have the GED program. I suggest that you get in touch with four or five people and discuss the problem. A number of reading programs are being tested and implemented right now. The Virginia Matthews Community Reading Program that is currently being used at Stanford could yield some interesting tips.

How can we relate these reading programs to the humanities? How can we use the humanities to resolve this problem? Talk to your state humanities council. See if anyone has developed a program along these lines. Find other people who share your concern. Together you can develop some kind of strategy. Don't think that you must write the proposal alone, implement the project alone, and do the programming. There are others who can help you with this.

RESPONSE FROM ELLIOT SHELKROT

This may sound heretical coming from a librarian, but I think the approach in that kind of situation should be to abandon reading for the time being. One rural library in Pennsylvania that tried to sponsor programs found that every time they planned something, they ran into competition with a tractor-pull. They decided to have a series of programs on tractor pulls! They examined what makes people so interested in the idea of challenging tractors.

I thought this was an interesting idea for a small humanities grant proposal. This program attracted people to the library

who had never been there before. This represented a back-door approach to library programming, but libraries exist to disseminate information, and tractor pulls are part of the culture of many rural communities. If some people were encouraged to read about tractors, then the program was successful. I am suggesting that perhaps we should take the back-door approach to promoting the humanities.

RESPONSE BY ROBERT CASE

I may be way off base, but I wonder if some local industries could work together to encourage reading? The manager of a local industry could indicate to his employees that reading can contribute to their success on the job. He could stress the fact that we must read if we want a business to grow and make a profit. The bonuses and salary increments could depend upon employees improving their reading skills over a period of time. People who wanted to keep their jobs and earn more money would be motivated to read. I'm not certain how such a project could be related to the humanities, but there are others who could help you in this respect.

QUESTION RAISED BY DR. VAVREK

I have a question I would like to ask the audience and the speakers. This will change the direction of our discussion a bit. How would you react to some people who claim that the public library has emphasized adult services too much and that this emphasis on adult services needs to be changed?

RESPONSE BY ROBERT CASE

I do not believe that public libraries have emphasized adult services too much. The adults who attend programs at the Lancaster County Library represent less than two percent of the total population of the area. I don't think the people who say that adult programs receive too much emphasis are speaking for the 300,000 people in my area who haven't even come to the library.

There is strong support for children's programming, and we can do exciting things for children, but to drop programming for anyone over the age of 12 or 14 would be a mistake.

Earlier this morning someone remarked that the library is the peoples' university. It offers an alternative education program, and provides current awareness services. If we don't provide these things, we are not doing our job. We have to accept the responsibility for providing programming for all ages. Even though the Office of Aging has a lot of money and they sponsor activities for senior citizens, libraries should offer other kinds of programming for older Americans. If we don't provide programming for adults, we are saying that they don't count--that the adults who pay taxes and support the library just don't count.

QUESTION FROM THE AUDIENCE

Some years ago I worked on a Senior Citizen Outreach Program that was sponsored by a library. I talked to various agencies in Clarion County that provided programs for senior citizens. I went to a hot meal program that was held in a fire hall. The

program that day included the hot meal, blood pressure testing, and a craft program. Many of those who attended were concerned about the high cost of drugs.

I realized that there is a group of affluent retired senior citizens in this rural area who never come to these programs. Perhaps they would support a humanities program. However, people who live in county homes, and people who are housebound are also entitled to a humanities program. Transporting these people to the library to attend a program presents a problem.

I think that some person who has the time should identify these unserved groups and begin to design programs for them. Someone should coordinate the activities of the various agencies, the extension agents, the senior citizen groups, and the college community.

RESPONSE BY RICHARD CHESKI

Several issues have been raised. I think we need to identify basic library services to housebound senior citizens. We need to distinguish between basic library services and special humanities programming. If a librarian receives more than two humanities grants a year, he is fortunate. Humanities programming is not a service that is offered day after day, week after week.

As a librarian works in a community, he becomes familiar with the concerns expressed by community members. In order to sponsor a successful humanities program the librarian must know his community and be aware of the underlying influences. Librarians can not implement humanities programs all by themselves. They need to

involve other people in the planning process.