

# *American Folklore Society 2005 Annual Report*

## **Report of the President**

All of us on the Executive Board offer our sympathy over the devastation wrought by Hurricane Katrina. Executive Director Tim Lloyd initiated a clearinghouse in the AFS Policy Forum on the Society's website. It provides news of folklorists and folk artists in the Gulf Coast region. The clearinghouse also solicits information from folklorists and their institutions in the affected regions concerning items and professional services most in need of rebuilding. The AFS has established a fund to be used toward the costs of assisting folklore departments, centers, and programs in the region. By the third week of September several AFS members had proposed coalitions of folklorists from Texas to Alabama, referred to preservation endeavors, and suggested documentation projects. More information will be forthcoming soon on the website and at our meeting October.

One of the matters to be discussed at the annual business meeting is a proposed change to the Society's *Bylaws*. Article III specifies several categories of membership in the Society. In its efforts at retention and recruitment, the Executive Board seeks to establish two new categories: one for long-time AFS members reaching retirement and the other for new professionals in the field. Rather than requesting a narrow change in the *Bylaws* to create only these two categories, which leaves the underlying problem of too much specificity, the Board recommends that the present Article III be replaced with the following sentence: "The Executive Board shall have the authority to create, change, eliminate, and set the benefits and dues for all classes of membership in the Society."

At its mid-year meeting in March the Executive Board not only proposed the alteration to Article III of the *Bylaws* to submit to the membership this fall but also approved the appointment of Brent Björkman as Associate Director of the American Folklore Society effective September 1, 2005. For three years, ending August 31, 2005, the AFS had an agreement with Ohio State University's Center for Folklore Studies to the effect that the Center would provide services to the Society. Brent had worked for the Society on a part-time basis for five months, proving himself to be a talented and conscientious administrator. His responsibilities as Associate Director include administration of the annual meeting, development of the AFS web site, communications both inside and outside the Society, and work on selected special projects. Brent's appointment frees the Executive Director to carry out fundraising, partnership-building, and long-range efforts at strengthening the AFS programmatically and financially.

Selected by the Board at last year's annual meeting, Harris M. Berger and Giovanna P. Del Negro are now taking over editorship of *Journal of American Folklore*. They succeed Elaine Lawless who just concluded her five-year term. As Elaine did so admirably, Harry and Giovanna are bringing new ideas to the journal, contributing to its distinction in the field. A second change concerns the AFS representative to meetings of the American Council of Learned Societies. Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett is nearing the end of her second term. Like Barbara, her successor must have a strong academic reputation, be active in several scholarly fields, and have a history of connecting folklore studies to other disciplines. Lee Haring is clearly such an individual. I am pleased to report that he has agreed to represent our Society at the ACLS.

There have been several developments in regard to the Society's role on the International scene. First, I was invited by the China Folklore Society and Beijing Folklore

Museum as President of AFS to participate in the International Conference on Calendars of National-States: Studies of Traditional Festivals and National Holidays, held 14-15 February 2005. Prof. Zhong Jingwen, who died in 2002 at the age of 99, founded the China Folklore Society in 1983. The current officers are Liu Kuili, President; Gao Bingzhong, General Secretary; and Bamo Aga Qubumo, Deputy-General Secretary (Prof. Bamo was an invited scholar at the AFS meeting in Anchorage, 2001). Chinese folklore scholars seek closer collaboration with their American counterparts through the AFS, which is the reason for inviting the AFS President to the conference. Second, Professor Juwen Zhang in the Department of Japanese and Chinese at Willamette College, organized efforts this spring to petition the AFS for the Eastern Asia Folklore Section; the petition carried more than the three times the number of signatures than required, suggesting the interest in and need for such a section.

To conclude this report I would mention that this is my last year as President of the Society. I look forward to delivering the presidential address in Atlanta, and soon after that turning the gavel over to Bill Ivey. The Executive Board has been great to work with, along with our superb Executive Director. I appreciate having had the opportunity to contribute to the AFS as its President. Thank you.

*Michael Owen Jones*

### **Report of the Executive Director**

At the end of our fiscal year 2005 on August 31, we exceeded our financial goals and ended the year in the black. During the fiscal year, our cash reserve grew from \$350,000 to \$387,000. The total that has been pledged or given to our endowment fund through the “quiet phase” of our planned giving campaign stands today at \$524,433. I announced this campaign to the membership at the annual business meeting in Atlanta, and will bring the campaign to the membership as a whole shortly after the beginning of 2006. The cash balance of the endowment account, representing present gifts to the campaign that are part of that larger total, stands at \$64,809.

We have added several new AFS member benefits during the year, including a 20% discount on purchases from Smithsonian Folkways Recordings, an 85% [discount](#) for pre-publication purchases of the Modern Language Association/AFS annual international bibliography of folklore scholarship, online access for \$15 a year to [JSTOR](#)'s fully-searchable versions of every issue of the *Journal of American Folklore* from 1888 to five years behind the present, and access to a [directory](#), with areas of specialization, of folklorists willing to serve as promotion and tenure reviewers. At the beginning of 2006, AFS members will receive free access to fully searchable online versions of current and recent past issues of the *Journal* via Project MUSE.

Our 2006 annual meeting will take place in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, on October 18-22, and I will be traveling there toward the end of this year to meet with the program committee, members of which will also be meeting with us on Sunday morning in Atlanta. Discussion is just now underway about a possible theme for that meeting, and interest seems to be forming around international themes, including im/migration, diasporas, and creating connections among international scholars (with perhaps a Nordic focus), immigrant communities in the Upper Midwest, and US scholars with interest in those communities. We'll hold our 2007 annual meeting, a joint meeting with the Folklore Studies Association of Canada, in Québec. As a result of a good deal of traveling to site visits over the past few

months, I have just signed a contract to hold our 2008 annual meeting in Louisville, Kentucky. In 2009 we will meet in the western US.

In April and May 2005, I attended the annual publishers' meetings for JSTOR (which makes the back run of the *Journal of American Folklore* available online) and Project MUSE (which publishes online versions of current *JAF* issues), and I made a presentation as part of the JSTOR meeting. My participation at these meetings has even more strongly convinced me that we did the right thing by entering into agreements with both these organizations. While the decrease in library subscriptions to the *JAF* can partly be laid to the *Journal's* wider electronic availability, the use of the *Journal* in all formats has increased significantly as a result of this availability, and both JSTOR and MUSE are working hard to further increase their reach and (therefore) our royalties, which continue to more than offset decreases in subscription revenue.

Work has been proceeding apace on our Ethnographic Thesaurus Project, funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, which will create a completed thesaurus that will live and be maintained on the AFS web site. The six-person project team and their twelve-person advisory board has been meeting almost hourly by e-mail, monthly by conference call, and at least twice annually in person. We will be adding a day onto the team's meeting in January 2006 to take up discussion of a follow-up proposal to Mellon for the ongoing maintenance and expansion of, and public education about, the completed thesaurus.

Our work to provide the Veterans History Project with leaders for community-based workshops on conducting ethnographic interviews is continuing. To date, folklorists and oral historians working in this program have trained 4,697 participants in 229 workshops in 38 of the 54 states and territories. We are now working through the process of creating a new VHP workshop program contract with the Library of Congress for the 2005-2006 year—the fourth of five years we expect to work with the VHP.

We are nearing the halfway point of our work on the \$150,000 two-year grant we received from the National Endowment for the Humanities to work toward the preparation of a scholarly edition of the James Madison Carpenter Collection, primarily of folk music and folk drama, collected mostly in the United Kingdom in the 1920s and 1930s. A team of six scholars from the UK and the US is working on the edition. We submitted a proposal to NEH at the beginning of November, 2005, for the funds to carry forward our work on this project.

We have just received a \$15,000 grant from the Folk and Traditional Arts Program of the NEA to complete a documentary video on the “early years” of the present period of public sector folklore in the US, mostly comprising interviews with Archie Green, Bess Lomax Hawes, Alan Jabbour, and the late Ralph Rinzler. This is a project of the Society's Public Programs Section.

We have also just received a \$49,000 grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to support a meeting of representatives from the fields of folklore, ethnomusicology, and oral history, led by the AFS, to discuss the changing relationships of those fields to the academy. Background papers to be prepared for this meeting will offer histories of each discipline in the US with emphasis on its university connections, an assessment of the current academic situations in which each discipline finds itself and its members, and case statements about the value of each discipline in the academy in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Finally, my deepest thanks go to President Mike Jones, President-Elect Bill Ivey, the members of the Executive Board, the 17 donors to the “quiet phase” of our planned giving campaign, and those groups and organizations that supported AFS last year: the Center for

Folklore Studies and the Mershon Center, both of The Ohio State University; the AFS Public Programs Section; the Fellows of the AFS; the Georgia Council for the Arts; the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation; the National Endowment for the Arts; the National Endowment for the Humanities; the Veterans History Project of the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress; the Rialto Center for the Performing Arts, Georgia State University; and the Southern Arts Federation.

*Timothy Lloyd*

### **Report of the *Journal of American Folklore* Editor**

The editorship for the *Journal of American Folklore* has now been transferred from Elaine J. Lawless, University of Missouri-Columbia, to the new editors, Harris M. Berger and Giovanna P. Del Negro of Texas A&M University.

The journal continues to be published on schedule by the Journals Division of the University of Illinois Press in Champaign-Urbana.

The review editors for *JAF* remained the same during the past year: Book Review Editor, Patricia Sawin (University of North Carolina); Sound Review Editor, Peter Narváez (Memorial University of Newfoundland); Film Review Editor, Daniel Wojcik (University of Oregon); and Exhibitions and Events Review Editor, Pravina Shukla (Indiana University). We thank them for their unique expertise and contribution to *JAF* during their service.

With the new *JAF* editors, the review editors will be as follows: Book Review Editor, Patricia Sawin (University of North Carolina); Sound Review Editor, C. Kati Szego (Memorial University of Newfoundland); Film and Video Review Editor, Michael Evans (Indiana University); and Exhibitions and Events Review Editor, Tina Bucuvalas (Florida Folklife Program). The new *JAF* editorial staff at Texas A&M University consists of editorial assistants Amanda Sammons (Spring 2005) and Bobby Kuechenmeister (Fall 2005).

The incoming *JAF* Editorial Board consists of the following: Lila Abu-Lughod (Columbia University), Pertti Anttonen (University of Turku), Norma E. Cantú (University of Texas, San Antonio), Susan G. Davis (University of Illinois), Beverley A. Diamond (Memorial University of Newfoundland), Deborah Kapchan (New York University), Martha Norkunas (University of Texas, Austin), and John W. Roberts (The Ohio State University).

During the past year, the *JAF* staff prepared for publication 24 articles/notes/dialogues that appeared in issues #466, 467 (Creative Ethnography), 468 (Legend), and 469 (Africana Folklore). From September 2004 to September 2005 *JAF* received 61 new submissions, accepted 31 (29 articles, 1 address, and 1 note—many submitted the previous year), and rejected 62 articles (32 rejected outright, 25 rejected with option to revise/resubmit, 2 withdrawn). Currently, there are 15 articles “in process” (12 under various stages of production with the University of Illinois Press) for issues #470 and #471 (Public Folklore) and 3 articles still under the external peer review process.

Volume 119 (471) is the last issue under Elaine Lawless’s editorship, with the new editors taking over with 119 (472). The University of Missouri staff has been working closely with the Texas A&M incoming staff well ahead of time to coordinate the complete transition of the journal and expect it to proceed smoothly.

Harris M. Berger and Giovanna P. Del Negro are now actively soliciting articles for the journal. They would like to express their appreciation to Elaine Lawless, LuAnne Roth, and the entire staff at the University of Missouri *JAF* office for all of the work they have done to make the transition smooth and easy. They also thank Clydette Wantland and

Heather Munson at the University of Illinois Press and Tim Lloyd at AFS for their assistance during this period.

*Elaine J. Lawless, Editor*  
*LuAnne Roth, Managing Editor*  
*Lisa Rathje, Associate Editor*  
*Shelley Ingram, Assistant Editor*  
*(with Harris M. Berger and Giovanna P. Del Negro)*

### **Report of the *Journal of American Folklore* Book Review Editor**

Between July 1, 2004, and June 30, 2005, we received 161 books for possible review in the *Journal of American Folklore* and sent 39 out to reviewers. We have submitted 28 completed reviews to the main *JAF* editors for publication and have a number more in hand ready to be edited and forwarded. During the same period 18 reviews were actually published in *JAF*.

In the summer of 2005 we donated a number of unreviewed books that were more than two years old to the Friends of the Library at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. The Friends hold periodic sales of donated books to raise money for the support of the UNC libraries.

This was an especially hectic year since I was also serving as Acting Chair of the Curriculum in Folklore at UNC. The book review assistants, folklore graduate students Martin Johnson and Jaman Matthews, ably kept the books and reviews flowing, and I am tremendously grateful to them for their excellent work and especially for the combination of initiative and carefulness they have devoted to editorial tasks.

I am likewise grateful to every one of the scholars who has reviewed a book for *JAF* this year. The best of these reviews are testaments to the continuity of our discipline and the value of principled debate over the issues central to our work. I remain frustrated, however, by the difficulty of finding reviewers for all the significant titles that deserve to be recognized and evaluated in our discipline's flagship journal. The AFS website now has a link to the regularly updated list of books available for review. I encourage authors to check the list to make sure I have obtained a copy of their recent work and urge all members of the society to consult the list and to volunteer to write reviews or to suggest whom I should invite to review important volumes: [JAFbooks@unc.edu](mailto:JAFbooks@unc.edu).

*Patricia Savin*

### **Report of the *Journal of American Folklore* Film and Videotape Review Editor**

Since my last report, a small number of videotapes and DVDs were submitted for review in *JAF*. All of them have been assigned to reviewers. Because so few works were submitted, I solicited films and videotapes from filmmakers and distributors, and enlisted reviewers for these. Four film reviews have been published in *JAF*, four reviews have been edited and sent to *JAF*, and six are in process.

This completes my term as the Film and Videotape Review Editor, and I want to thank *JAF* editor Elaine Lawless, the editorial staff at *JAF*, and those of you who wrote reviews. I urge filmmakers to send their work to the new film review editor, Michael Robert

Evans, 222B Ernie Pyle Hall, School of Journalism, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN 47405; phone: 812/855-0550; e-mail [mirevans@indiana.edu](mailto:mirevans@indiana.edu).

*Daniel Wojcik*

### **Report of the AFS 2005 Annual Meeting Program Committee**

“Folklore, Equal Access and Social Justice,” the theme for the 2005 AFS Annual Meeting October 19-23, at the Renaissance Downtown Hotel in Atlanta, Georgia, brought in 712 people, making it the largest non-centennial meeting. This year’s program consisted of 340 papers (including 12 official withdrawals) in 90 sessions (including 5 poster sessions), 20 forums, 4 roundtables, 5 film/video sessions, 3 workshops, 10 professional development sessions, 3 plenary sessions, and a number of special lectures, sessions, and events.

This year’s meeting arrangements, spearheaded by the Southern Arts Federation, was coordinated by a committee of Southern folklorists from various agencies, states, and universities brought together by Teresa Hollingsworth: Chattahoochee AgriTourism Project, Georgia College & State University, Georgia Council for the Arts, Louisiana State University, Louisiana Tech University, Missouri Folk Arts Program, National Black Arts Festival, and independent folklorists from Georgia and South Carolina. Local arrangements were coordinated by Fred Fussell, Lisa Higgins, Teresa Hollingsworth, Adrienn Mendonca, and Aimée Schmidt. The program committee included Laurel Horton, Mary Magoulick, Susan Roach, Pamela Sezgin, and Carolyn Ware.

Thanks to pre-conference tours arranged by Aimee Schmidt and Teresa Hollingsworth, AFS participants had options to see important Georgia traditions in pottery and Civil Rights. We thank Henry Glassie and John Burrison for guiding an enlightening visit to the Hewell family, Michael Crocker, and Clete Meaders. A wonderful dinner on the grounds was served at the Hewell’s. The only improvement suggested for the tour was to have had merchandise available from Clete Meaders and to have had the bus leave on time for the tour. The Atlanta Civil Rights Trail tour, guided by Randy Grue, visited the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Historic District, the Jimmy Carter Museum and Library, and the national headquarters of The NAMES Project Foundation to view a portion of the AIDS Memorial Quilt, which was particularly meaningful to those who saw quilt panels honoring their deceased friends.

At the meeting’s opening ceremonies, Susan S. Weiner, Executive Director of the Georgia Council for the Arts welcomed AFS to Atlanta. Additional welcomes came from AFS Executive Director Tim Lloyd, and Teresa Hollingsworth, program committee co-chair, who introduced the program committee members. Michael Owen Jones presided over the opening, gave special recognition to the many international scholars and other special guests attending the meeting, and announced the recipients of AFS prizes for the year: James Leary, University of Wisconsin (the Benjamin A. Botkin Prize); Scott Edmondson, University of California, Los Angeles (the Zora Neale Hurston Prize); Enrique Lamadrid, University of New Mexico (the Américo Paredes Prize); and Roger Abrahams, *emeritus* of the University of Pennsylvania (the Kenneth S. Goldstein Award for Lifetime Academic Leadership). A special performance by the Atlanta-based holy hip-hop group The Remnant followed the awards.

Reflecting Atlanta’s prominence as home to key Civil Rights movement leaders and grassroots activism, the 2005 theme addressed the various relationships of folklore and

folklore study to equal access and social action. These relationships were echoed in Roland Freeman's well-received 2005 Program Committee Invited Address Plenary: "Do You See What I'm Saying?": A Personal Perspective on Folklore, Equal Access, and Social Action." Two other plenary sessions addressed theory and practice in the field: "Why There Is No 'Grand Theory' in Folkloristics" and "Archie Green, Thirty Years of the American Folklife Preservation Act and American Folklife," which celebrated the scholarship and accomplishments of Archie Green, who could not attend. Other AFS section-sponsored addresses were made by Gary Laderman, Tina McElroy Ansa, Mary Ellen Brown, and Jack Riggs.

Also in keeping with the conference theme, the reception honoring folklorist, documentarian, and activist Worth Long, sponsored by the Smithsonian Institution's Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage, was described as a "once in a lifetime experience." Family, friends and colleagues gathered to honor Worth, his countless contributions to the field, and his work for civil rights. Highlights included a photo exhibit curated by Roland Freeman, and tributes by David and Patty Crosby, Richard Kurin, Stephanie S. Hughley, Roland Freeman, and Worth's nephew Kermit DeGrafsenreidt. Bernice Johnson Regan closed the tribute singing, "I'm Gonna Sit at the Welcome Table." This tribute was scheduled at the same time as the Women's Section meeting, so some were not able to attend. We recommend that such special events not compete with other events.

The good news of the annual business meeting was Executive Director Tim Lloyd's announcement that the AFS has established a permanent planned giving program, through which members provide pledges and gifts to an AFS endowment fund through bequests in their wills. For the last two years, Lloyd has been engaged in the "quiet phase" of this campaign, during which he has solicited contributions from present and recent AFS Presidents and Executive Board members. To date, those pledges and gifts total \$524,433. This campaign will be opened to the entire AFS membership in 2006.

The unique musical presentation of the 2005 meeting Resolutions Committee report by the Annual Meeting Committee for 2006 will be hard to top. Presenting the resolution in fine musical form were Rick March on accordion, Jim Leary as the Head Cheese, and performers Janet Gilmore, James Miksche, Ruth Olson, and Anne Pryor.

The Saturday night concert and post-concert dance party marked a change of pace from the traditional dinner. Held at and co-sponsored by the Rialto Center for the Performing Arts, Georgia State University, the Sounds of the South concert featured Ralph Stanley and the Clinch Mountain Boys, Cephas and Wiggins, and Hugh McGraw and the Sacred Harp Singers—all of whose performances were excellent! A local restaurant, Fat Matt's Rib Shack, reduced their fee to provide Saturday night's BBQ with all the fixings. Two other anonymous donors provided beer and wine. The dance band, Daddy-O-Strut, reduced their fee for our party. The Saturday night ticket price of \$40 was a bargain for the quality of the performances, food, drinks and great dance band.

The accommodations provided by the Renaissance Downtown Hotel were more than adequate for the largest ever number of sessions per time slot, with only the Saturday afternoon Story Corps session actually needing more space. Technical difficulties with audio-visual equipment began with the first plenary address and continued sporadically throughout the entire meeting. We recommend that in future meetings a technician stay for a major address (such as a plenary) to be sure the equipment is working properly.

The online registration seemed to go well this year, with a few exceptions. A few registrants had trouble with the website and the link to submit papers online; an alternate link did work. We trust that link problems will not reoccur. Also a few papers were

submitted as posters instead of papers to be read. We suggest that there be a clearer delineation between posters and papers next year on the website. The poster sessions grew to five sessions with approximately four presentations each, thereby taking scheduling pressure off the other sessions, some of which were scheduled with 15 per time period. While this is a large number of sessions per time slot, most prefer it instead of the Sunday sessions. Although most of the sessions had four or even five presentations each, late withdrawals honed down some sessions to just one paper—which was unfair to both the remaining presenter(s) and attendees. People who withdrew before the August deadline were at least listed on the program changes; however, a few others did not withdraw or send papers to be read. In the future, we would like to encourage people listed on the annual program to send their papers to be read if they cannot attend.

We would like to thank the following for their generous support of the 2005 meeting and its activities: Georgia Council for the Arts, National Endowment for the Arts, Rialto Center for the Performing Arts and Georgia State University, Southern Arts Federation, Ohio State University's Center for Folklore Studies and Mershon Center, Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, National Endowment for the Humanities, Library of Congress American Folklife Center's Veterans History Project, AFS Public Programs Section, AFS Fellows, and the AFS Executive Board.

The program committee would like to thank and congratulate Tim Lloyd, executive director, and Barbara Lloyd for their untiring work on the meeting program. And Brent Bjorkman made all of our tasks much easier with his incredible support.

*Teresa Hollingsworth, Susan Roach, and Carolyn Ware, Co-Chairs*

## **Report of the Nominating Committee**

Lisa L. Higgins (chair), Sabina Magliocco, Amy Kitchener and John Dorst (AFS Executive Board liaison) are the members of the Nominating Committee. In the spring, Tim Lloyd circulated an announcement seeking names of individuals to be considered as candidates for the AFS Executive Board and Nominating Committee. This announcement was posted in the April 2005 *AFS News*, e-mailed to AFS members and posted on the Publore listserv. May 1 was the deadline for nominations. A reminder was posted on April 22 and spurred several nominations.

AFS members suggested a total of thirteen individuals to the Nominating Committee. The Committee met by conference call on May 27, 2005 and agreed upon six candidates for the Executive Board and two for the Nominating Committee, with alternates for both. Committee members then called or e-mailed potential candidates to confirm their interest in seeking office. By July 5, the Nominating Committee had confirmed a slate of candidates. Executive Board: Diane Goldstein, Sue Eleuterio, Jerrilyn McGregory, Olga Nájera-Ramírez, Daniel Sheehy, and Kay Turner. Nominating Committee: Lisa Gabbert and Mario Montaña. The Nominating Committee looks forward to presenting the 2005 slate of candidates to AFS members and to moderating the Candidates' Forum at the AFS annual meeting in Atlanta.

*Lisa L. Higgins, Chair*

## Report of the Electronic Publications Subcommittee

The subcommittee received two items of business in 2005, which startled many of us from a deep slumber, as we had not had any business for the previous three years. First, we were asked to consider the advisability of creating a folklore listserv as part of H-Net, the “gold standard” for scholarly e-communication in the humanities. There was strong support for forming an “H-Folk” listserv, but opinion was divided on whether reviews should be included in H-Folk, and if so how they would relate to those published in the *JAF*.

The second question we considered was the future of the *AFS News*. For several years *AFS News* has been delivered primarily by e-mail, but there are still around 380 members of the Society who prefer to receive a print version. Because of the costs involved in mailing hard copies, and wide availability of Internet access, it is proposed that *AFSN* become online-only beginning with the February 2006 issue. Later still, the Society would explore the option of abandoning the bimonthly publication schedule in favor of an online news facility that is updated as needed. A folklore blog has also been suggested.

It is past time to reconsider the usefulness of a separate group devoted to electronic publications. When the subcommittee was formed several years ago, electronic communications were still something of a novelty, but by now they are a normal part of the Society’s activities. In light of this, and given the relative lack of business that this subcommittee has had in recent years, it now seems more appropriate for matters pertaining to electronic publications be a part of the work of the Publications Committee. Maintaining separate groups to discuss publications versus electronic publications represents an increasingly artificial and unhelpful distinction.

We propose that the Electronic Publications Subcommittee be dissolved. In its place, the Society should ensure that the Publications Committee always include one or two members who have expertise in online communications.

*Moirra Smith, Chair*

## Report of the Committee on International Issues

The Committee on International Issues received a most generous windfall this year. An anonymous donor donated \$5000 to the committee to be used for supporting international scholars at AFS. We expect to use part of this donation to support the travel of international scholars for the “Homeland/Diaspora” theme of the 2006 Annual Meeting in Milwaukee.

The Committee offered four travel stipends in 2004-2005. Two were for North American Scholars attending a meeting abroad. Olga Najera-Ramirez of the University of California-Santa Cruz attended the Eighth biennial conference of the European Association of Social Anthropologists (EASA) in Vienna, September 2004, where she presented a paper, “(De) Constructing Authenticity in Mexican Folklorico Dance: Theorizing Folklorico as a Genre.” Nancy Cassell McEntire, Indiana State University, attended the meeting of the Société Internationale d’Ethnologie et de Folklore (SIEF) Working Group on the Ritual Year in March 2005 in Malta. Her paper was a comparative study of April Fool’s Day pranks.

Two international scholars attended the 2005 AFS meeting in Atlanta. They were Katerina Juvancic of the University of Ljubljana, Slovenia, and Elo-Hanna Seljamaa of the University of Tartu, Estonia, both PhD students. Ms. Juvancic presented “Towards Modern

Slovene Folklore: Issues of Resistance and Liberation” and Ms. Seljamaa presented “Changing the World Via E-Mail: Some Folkloristic Aspects of E-Mail Petitions.” (In fact, the committee offered five stipends, but international activities always involve some uncertainty: our candidate from Central Asia won a scholarship to Oxford and had to cancel, our African candidate was denied a visa by the U.S. Consulate, and a third candidate had a personal emergency.) In addition, the committee was able to provide hotel rooms for two additional international visitors.

The committee sponsored a well-attended panel at the Atlanta meeting, “Conspiracy Theory and Legend Scholarship: Transnational Flows.” The panel honored the contribution to legend studies of Véronique Campion-Vincent of the Maison des Sciences de l’Homme in Paris and was organized as an exchange between her and Bill Ellis.

Thanks to the committee members for their work: Veronica Aplenc, Regina Bendix, JoAnn Conrad, Lee Haring, Lauri Harvilahti, Galit Hasan-Rokem, Tim Tangherlini, and Mbugua wa-Mungai. Thanks also to Tim Lloyd and the Executive Board for their strong support of international matters.

*Dorothy Noyes, Chair*

### **Report of the AFS Task Force on Cultural Diversity**

Last year, as part of our mission to make AFS more fully representative of and more effective in serving, the peoples and the communities at the heart of our work, the Task Force on Cultural Diversity expanded its membership. Its membership now includes: Katey Borland, Olivia Cadaval, Norma Cantú, Xochitl Chavez, Guillermo de los Reyes, Enrique Lamadrid, Becky Morse, Diana N’Diaye, Solimar Otero, Jan Rosenberg, Cynthia Vidaurri, and Marilyn White. Due to demands of directing the Philadelphia Folklore Project, Debora Kodish declined continuing her service. However, the task Force members would like to thank her for the energy and focus that she brought to the group.

One of the Task Force’s duties is to administer the Gerald Davis Travel Fund Grants. Named in honor of folklorist Gerald L. Davis, the grants provide up to \$500 to persons of color who want to attend the annual meeting. Prospective applicants may be graduate students, community scholars, staff members of public folklore programs, or others who want to attend. In 2004, the grant enabled four graduate students to attend the annual meeting in Salt Lake City. A student at the University of Pennsylvania, Jing Li applied in order to present a paper, “Within and Beyond Reinvented Traditions: The Water-Splashing Festival and Identity Politics in XiShuang Banna, China.” Tyina Steptoe of the University of Wisconsin requested travel funds to network with folklorists en route to entering the profession. A graduate student from Indiana University, Kyoim Yun applied to present research that centers the appropriation by the South Korean government of shamanic rituals, “Commodification of Shamanic Ritual: Voice of Modernization and Globalization on Jeju Island, South Korea.” In addition, Tamara Xavier, a graduate student at Temple University and an intern at the Philadelphia Folklore Project, attended to learn more about what it means to do folklore-specific research.

The Task Force, along with the Society and several Society sections, awards prizes in the name of two famed folklorists, Zora Neale Hurston and Américo Paredes. The American Folklore Society offers the Hurston prize of \$100 annually to a graduate or undergraduate student for the best academic paper or for other media such as film, recording, or exhibition in African American folklore. On behalf of the Task Force, I would

like to congratulate 2004's recipient, Quan Lateef, for a research project, "Rap That Binds: The Evolution of Hip Hop." As an undergraduate at Western Michigan University, she belonged to the Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Scholars Program, and wrote this paper under the mentorship of Dr. Lawrence Potter, Jr. She is now a MA student in film at Howard University in Washington, DC.

The Américo Paredes Prize recognizes excellence in integrating scholarship and engagement with the people and communities one studies, or in teaching and encouraging scholars and scholars and practitioners to work in their own cultures or communities. In 2004, the recipients of this prize were C. Kurt Dewhurst and Marsha MacDowell, both of the Michigan State University Museum.

Partnering with the Politics, Folklore and Social Justice Section, the Task Force also sought for the Society to consider the cultural ramifications of the War in Iraq. In response, a Policy Forum was created on the AFS Website to solicit commentary. As an outgrowth, discussion began to formulate an Iraq Working Group "to investigate damage to tangible and intangible cultural heritage in Iraq since March 2003 and report back to the membership at the 2005 annual meeting in Atlanta." As a result, at the Atlanta AFS meeting a Working Group Forum, "Discussion and Action," is on the program. As the title suggests, this forum will allow dialogue to inspire courses of action.

The Task Force on Cultural Diversity looks forward to partnering with other relevant AFS sections and committees.

*Jerrilyn McGregory, Chair*

### **Report of the AFS Archival Liaison**

In our effort to provide a preservation copy of the AFS Papers, USU Special Collections and Archives continued microfilming the collection, using the AFS funds to purchase microfilm and pay for a part-time student employee.

*Randy Williams*

### **Report of the Acting Delegate to the American Council of Learned Societies**

Again this year, I had the honor of standing in for Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett as the delegate of AFS to the annual meeting of the American Council of Learned Societies, held in Philadelphia in early May. Our Executive Director, Timothy Lloyd, was also present, attending the conference of administrative officers. In the business meeting, it was noted that the Council hopes to compensate an administrative deficit with funding from its dependable donor the Mellon Foundation. This year's program was densely packed into a single day, which comprised reports on the innovative scholarship supported by ACLS, issues around academic freedom (a founding principle of the Council), and access to information. The latter theme recurred also in the annual meeting of the National Humanities Alliance (NHA), which followed on May 7.

On the evening before the meeting, I attended a session on international studies, which focused on translation. From work of the ACLS Social Science Translation Project, the session organizer set forth two principles which folklore fieldworkers and public presenters learned long ago: "translating is more difficult than it seems; when it comes to translating disciplinary texts, the optimal translators are people from that discipline who have

training/experience in translation, rather than professional translators." One question shocked me and others with its political naïveté: "As a practical matter, do you think that more international scholarship should be written in English, because it is the lingua franca with the greatest reach?" The ensuing discussion, a bit more sophisticated, raised issues of publication, financing, and rapport. Attendees asked him, as a representative of the ACLS staff, several questions about making international contacts. All the ACLS's international programs are funded from external donors. I doubted that the discussion would have much influence.

The annual Charles Homer Haskins Lecture, *A Life of Learning*, was given this year by Gerda Lerner, who, after experiences of anti-Semitism in Europe, emigration, unskilled labor, and community organizing in the United States, came into the scholarly world to become active in the university side of the women's movement. It was a heartening presentation and an inspiring life story. Over lunch, the delegates heard a friendly address by Bruce Cole, the Chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Predictably, the most interesting part of the program was the presentations of current research by four ACLS Fellows: a Renaissance historian, a literary historian, an anthropologist, and a philosopher. The ACLS research fellowship program, reduced this year after the ending of a certain grant to ACLS, offers unusually generous and flexible support to scholars at a relatively early career stage. The awardees shown off at the annual meeting are ample and flexible in their thinking. Especially interesting to me, of course, as a sometime Africanist, was the presentation by Rutgers anthropologist Dorothy Hodgson, who studies the relation of Maasai in Tanzania to the 'indigenous peoples' movement. The four presentations made delegates wonder about the crisis in scholarly publication (both economic and conceptual) and the role of technology in publication? How can fellowship recipients and their work achieve better recognition? Does the fellowship program reinforce a productive but now limited pattern of monograph / article? Vice-President Stephen Wheatley wisecracked about the "Mano a mano a monograph." There was also the perennial question about supporting and recognizing digital work. Were ACLS to offer such support in the future, the application procedure would require the new component of infrastructure design. One delegate suggested that fellowships might be followed with subventions--parallel to another innovation, the subsidizing of authors; i.e., faculty members, rather than of a press (as a few universities do).

The ACLS Commission on the Cyberinfrastructure for the Humanities, after its year of work, is recommending investment "in creating greater access to the cumulative record of culture through digital conversion, but also in such areas as developing and supporting standards, developing new models of stewardship for digital data, working to create information policies that widen access to culture for educational purposes, teaching digital literacy at all levels of education, and building technical skills in students and teachers alike" ([www.acls.org/cyberinfrastructure](http://www.acls.org/cyberinfrastructure)). Folklorists, with their special concern for the powerless and disadvantaged, may doubt whether the day is yet here when, as such commissions say, much of the world's cultural heritage is placed within the reach of nearly every citizen, but we must applaud the effort. In the NHA meeting, the recent announcement that five research libraries will become partners with Google to digitize much of their book holdings was discussed. Obviously this is a hopeful sign, as book costs keep going up. A particular challenge, however, is the "orphan" work, the work whose owner can't be found to give reproduction permission. The problem touches on copyright issues which folklorists have long been concerned with.

ACLS has received a grant from the MacArthur Foundation to help move the operations of the European Humanities University from Belarus, where it was closed by the government of President Alexander Lukashenko, to Lithuania where it will operate as a ‘university in exile.’” In discussion of putting American learned societies in touch with cognate societies abroad, it was pointed out that in many countries, there is no such thing as a learned society, which would give lateral communication amongst scholars. This might be a point where AFS’s Committee on International Issues could do research for our field. Another place where help is needed is getting visas for visiting scholars, which has become much more difficult since the events of September 11, 2001. Some hope is held out by the challenge of the American Civil Liberties Union to the constitutionality of the Patriot Act, a major obstacle.

It was a privilege to represent AFS at this annual meeting. After an inspirational speech by the new president of Drew University, I missed my chance to meet him and point out that a folklorist is the chairman of his anthropology department.

*Lee Haring*

### **Report of the World Intellectual Property Organization Delegate**

As many AFS members will know, the World Intellectual Property Organization, a global organization based in Geneva and associated with the United Nations, has for some years had an initiative on folklore, traditional knowledge, and genetic resources. The issue is primarily how, not to mention *whether*, intellectual property mechanisms—such as copyright, d.o.c., and trademark—apply to forms of cultural knowledge and cultural production traditionally outside the purview of such legal regimes. This is a remarkably complex, and often highly politicized, task.

An intergovernmental committee, made up of many national delegations and representatives of other groups, meets occasionally on this project, and WIPO staff continue the mandate in the times between meetings. In the past twelve months, the IGC—intergovernmental committee—met once. I was unable to attend that meeting, and the board was unable to find another official representative. AFS member Valdimar Hafstein, who has attended many of the IGC meetings as a representative of SIEF, was there and reported back to us. At that meeting, the IGC reaffirmed the project’s mandate, made some progress toward establishing more specific goals, and discussed the representation of indigenous people. Documents from that meeting are available at <http://www.wipo.int/tk/en/>.

Over the past year or so, a number of folklorists who have had involvement with WIPO, led by AFS Executive Board member Sandy Rikoon of the University of Missouri, worked on a proposal for funding for an international meeting of folklorists and others, designed to create a way for cultural specialists to advise WIPO. Very few cultural specialists are part of official national delegations, and the few who do attend are generally relegated to the back of the room, where the NGO (nongovernmental organizations) representatives are seated, speaking last. The intent of the proposal is to give expert voice more significant representation. Sandy wrote an excellent proposal, and we are hopeful that it will find funding.

One considerable benefit of AFS’s involvement with WIPO has been to bring key players from that organization and elsewhere into contact with folklorists in North America. WIPO has been represented at AFS meetings and other folklorists’ events over the past

couple of years, opening significant discussions. We need more of this sort of international involvement.

The next meeting of the IGC has not yet been announced.

*Burt Feintuch*

### **Report of the Liaison with the Modern Language Association**

At the 2004 AFS meeting, David Allred was elected by acclamation to replace Karen Beardslee on the executive board and plan the 2005 MLA sessions. Sarah Caitlin Barnhart was elected to the AFS@MLA executive board for the term 2004-2008. She joins Camilla Mortensen (2007), Christie Fox (2006), David Allred (2005) and Reinhold Hill (2004).

The 2005 MLA Convention will be held December 27-30 in Washington, DC. The AFS-sponsored session on "Folklore, Literature, and Ethics" will be on December 29 and will include Nicola C. Morris ("Steve Stern's Fiction, Emmanuel Levinas's Ethical Philosophy, and the Responsibilities of the Author"). Reinhold R. Hill ("Lee Smith and the Authentic Folkloric Voice in Fiction"), and Camilla Henriette Mortensen ("A Sly Ambulance Chaser, Slimy with Hypocrisy: The Ethical Intersection of Ethnography and Literature").

The session on "Literary Theory and Folklore Theory" will be on December 30 and will feature papers by Thomas Jay Lynn ("Folklore, Literature, and the Political Trickster"), Shuli Barzilai ("The Snake Charmer's Wife in Genesis Rabbah; or Stories of Women Who Wanted to Know"), and Jacqueline Fulmer ("Whose Tradition" Spinning Morrison's *Paradise*). David Allred will preside over both sessions.

AFS members who have ideas for future sessions or who wish to present their research at the Modern Language Association convention are urged to contact any member of the [AFS@MLA](mailto:AFS@MLA) committee for more information.

*Bonnie D. Irwin*

### ***AFS Fiscal Year 2005 Financial Summary (September 2004-August 2005)***

(All figures are unaudited.)

<b>REVENUE</b>		<b>EXPENSES</b>	
Memberships	85,048	Management and Administration	147,082
Publications	90,529	Publications	59,258
Annual Meeting	57,976	Annual Meeting	58,626
Investments	37,480	Program Activities	<u>216,411</u>
Grants and Contracts	227,909	<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>481,377</b>
Other Revenue	<u>17,818</u>		
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>516,760</b>	<b>NET INCOME</b>	<b>35,383</b>