

Minutes of 2008 Business Meeting of the Southeastern Division of the Association of American Geographers (SEDAAG), Greensboro, NC, November 25.

SEDAAG President Derek Alderman called the meeting to order.

Preliminaries

Meeting Agenda Approved

Minutes of Previous Business Meeting (Charleston, SC) Approved

Necrology

The passing of C.P. Lo (UGA) was noted. Dr. Lo a major scholar in the region.

New Officers and State Representatives Announced

Vice President - Jonathan Leib, ODU

Secretary - Jamie Strickland, UNC-Charlotte

Regional Councilor – Doug Gamble UNCW

Thomas Chapman (GA), David Holt (MS), Bill Graves (NC), Ron Kalafsky (TN), and Kevin Curtin (VA)

New Committee Appointments and Other Positions Announced

New Historian – Richard Sambrook – EKY

New Member of Endowment Committee--Allan James USC

SAGE Regional Coordinators – Helen Ruth Aspaas -Virginia Commonwealth University and Tom Howard -Armstrong Atlantic University

Thanks Offered to Officers and State Representatives Rotating Out

Russell Ivy (Vice President), Hilda Kurtz (Secretary), Tyrel Moore (Regional Councilor), Doug Oetter (GA), John Rodgers (MS), Dan Royall (NC), Esra Ozdenerol (TN), Jonathan Walker (VA)

Comments from Doug Richardson, Director of AAG

Expresses support for regional divisions, notes an expanded AAG insurance policy; SEDAAG still needs to contact AAG and get a sheet from insurance company. AAG does bookkeeping for some regions, but it is not anxious to take that on. Thankfully, SEDAAG doesn't need that support with finances well in hand. In response to a request for AAG support of regional journals, Doug notes that AAG would be happy to develop an ad which lists out regional journals and to help promote them. Doug thanks Derek Alderman for this suggestion. Doug announces a new AAG policy of providing \$1000 to every region. Some of the regions that need the support the most are smaller regions.

Doug thanks SEDAAG for initiating the stand alone geographer initiative and, in particular, Helen Ruth Aspaas and Tom Howard for their leadership. The stand alone geographer program is going to be successful at the regional and national level. Stand alone geographers have special needs and it is necessary to create an internal communication and support network for this community of geographers. AAG has created a stand alone affinity group, and developed a listserv for a discussion among

stand alone geographers. All regions have been asked to appoint a stand alone geographer coordinator. SAGEs will benefit from having a broader community of scholars, and the organization benefits from their inclusion.

Doug Oetter had a question for Doug Richardson: Did AAG pay off building? What is the next big spending project? Doug Richardson replied that the next big project is continuing to build AAG's endowment. It is too easy to slip back into a deficit, the government did it easily. Funds will be put into long term funds to support the discipline, to meet needs that we can't perceive today, but which will present themselves in the next decade or two. AAG has a whole set of new initiatives that would have been impossible without financial strength, that have been used to bring new members into the region, and to support work of regions and nationally. According to Doug Richardson, the national organization and the regions are working together to solve problems we face in a world that is changing rapidly. In that context, the role of organizations may change. Organizations can be expected to some degree to maintain positions and to some degree to adapt to change.

Derek Alderman thanked Doug Richardson for his work on behalf of AAG and SEDAAG.

Regional Councilor Report: Doug Gamble

Doug reiterated that every region will be embracing the SAGE initiative. He also reported on the new dues structure of AAG, which will result in some dues for people going up while others going down based on how the income categories are refined. Doug reminded members about the *Annals* special issue (#5) on global change. A call for abstracts went out recently.

President's Report: Derek Alderman

- Journal will be moving to quarterly publication in the next year.
- Noted Hilda Kurtz's efforts to launch a listserv – helpful for distributing information in the future
- Bill Carstensen stands ready to make improvements to web site and add content. It is just a matter of SEDAAG members sending material to Bill.
- Katie Algeo has taken a proactive approach to managing the finances with staggered CDs. This information will be addressed in the Treasurer's Report.
- There are some changes to the Endowment Committee, making it more active, and creating new early faculty research grant award. Endowment chair Stephen Birdsall is commended for shaping the direction of this new award. The message of the endowment is that we want to invest in SEDAAG members' scholarship, we want to invest in their future.
- Alderman announced the creation of a Student Representative position on the Steering Committee, a change which is long overdue, fair, and a good way for the Division to get a more direct input from students about their needs and hopes for the organization
- Upcoming meetings are 2009 Knoxville, TN and 2010 Birmingham, AL.

Results of Steering Committee Meeting

Derek Alderman announced some significant changes resulting from the Steering Committee Meeting earlier at the Greensboro conference.

1. Newsletter: There will be an effort to streamline the newsletter, clarify directions for paper and poster submissions, and move some elements out of the newsletter and onto the web page.

2. Discussants: The task of assigning discussants for each and every paper has become nearly impossible. The meeting has changed dramatically in the last 5 years and the Division is running into a scale issue. The steering committee voted unanimously that discussants will no longer be required of every paper. This does not mean that papers will not undergo peer review. Each paper will be reviewed. If a member organizes a session, then he/she is encouraged to assign a discussant, either for each paper or one for the entire session. This change will not result in participants being able to present longer papers. This change does not require a change in the bylaws since the bylaws only specify that all papers have an opportunity to be discussed.

SEDAAG Student Representative Vote

Students are a significant stakeholder in the Division, but they have a position on the Steering Committee. The creation of a Student Representative was proposed in summer 2008 newsletter and the action requires an amendment to the by-laws (Section 5 Officers and Elected Committees). The following motion to amend the bylaws was offered and seconded:

A student rep shall be appointed *by the executive committee* to the steering committee for a one year term, to begin at the close of the annual business meeting. The student shall be a graduate student member of the Division at the time of appointment. Appointment of the student rep will rotate annually among the ten member states of SEDAAG.

Final vote: 37 in favor, 3 opposed; 1 abstain.

Nominations and Honors Elections for 2009

Lisa Davis will serve as the Chair for the Nominations Committee for 2009

Ross Meentemeyer will serve as the Chair of the Honors Committee for 2009

With Secretary Hilda Kurtz presiding, elections were conducted for the Nominations and Honors Committee. Elected to the Nominating Committee were: Josh Inwood of Auburn University and Joanne Halls of UNC-Wilmington (Chair-elect). Elected to the Honors Committee were: Jeff Popke of East Carolina University, Jennifer Speights-Binet of Samford University, David Holt of University of Southern Mississippi, and Maria Fadiman of Florida Atlantic University (Chair-elect).

Vice President's Report: Russ Ivy

Russ offered thanks to the members of the Program Committee for their thorough review of paper and poster submissions for the Greensboro Meeting. The Program Chair received a total of 137 papers (including 13 honors submissions) and 68 posters

(including 2 honors submissions) for possible inclusion into the program. In the end, 3 papers were rejected and no posters were rejected. There were a total of 36 sessions at the 2008 meeting. Russ pointed to the challenges of accommodating the many poster submissions. As a result, the Division hosted a Sunday night poster session.

Treasurer's Report: Katie Algeo

Katie reported that some of SEDAAG funds are now in staggered Certificates of Deposit. The operating budget is over \$74,000. The John Fraser Hart Fund has \$10,000, and earns interest of approximately \$250, which is not enough to sustain the fund and its annual award of \$1000. Derek Alderman proposed launching a capital campaign, in conjunction with honoring Hart at the Knoxville 2009 meeting. Katie pointed out that she would like to see the Endowment Fund grow as well, so that we could support the Early Faculty Grant Award long-term and fund more than one award.

There has been substantial growth in the proportion of non-student members from 2007 to 2008. However student membership has not changed much. The Division has an opportunity to increase outreach to students, and encourage more membership. Jonathan Walker asked: How much do we need in the Hart fund to get the required amount? Katie responded: The Hart Fund needs to roughly quadruple, but it is hard to predict what interest rates will do. Skeeter Dixon asked: Is it the intent to pull from capital in Hart account to make up the difference? Katie responded that the Steering Committee decided to make it up from the operating account next year, just that year, and then to launch a capital campaign. Skeeter asked: If the money from meeting goes into the operating account, could we put meeting overages into Hart account and use it to prime for next meeting – specifically in the form of sponsorships? Katie agreed that it is a good idea to use overages to jump start meeting costs. Derek already indicated that SEDAAG can cover initial outlays. Skeeter responded that if future potential hosts have cold feet, such funds could be useful. Jonathan Walker suggested that we include a line on the membership form that allows members to make a donation to the Hart Fund. Derek responded that the move to UNC Press eliminated that possibility.

Audit Committee Report: Maria Fadiman

Thanks were extended to members of the Audit Committee. The numbers all looked good. There are plans for the Committee to review the longer Excel form next year.

Finances of Greensboro Meeting: Gordon Bennett

Gordon indicated that he believes that registration fees did cover expenses, even though the Honors banquet was included. Jim Nelson managed and Jeff Patton made available from his department all AV equipment. In addition, Jeff, Jim and Mike Lewis built all the poster stands. Gordon joked that if you can save money here and money there, pretty soon you have enough money to take 282 of your best friends to dinner. Gordon reported that the meeting had 467 attendees. Skeeter asked: Would it be possible to make poster easels available to next meetings, given the numbers of posters keep going up? Answer: This is uncertain given the logistics of transporting the poster easels, but Ron Kalafsky (organizer for the Knoxville meeting) will consider this as an option.

Endowment Committee: Steve Birdsall

The Endowment Committee sponsored a small research grant competition for early faculty in the Division, and received six submissions, all with considerable merit. These were circulated amongst members of Endowment Committee. Shrinidhi Ambinakudige (MSU) received the inaugural grant award. Steve Birdsall, Chair of the Endowment Committee, hopes to make the grant program more focused; at the same time, the Committee hopes to get twice as many submissions in the future. Derek commends the Endowment Committee for defining and administering the award. The \$750 awarded does not dip into principal. This is a three year project. The Endowment Committee is appropriately cautious, and SEDAAG will re-evaluate after three year trial period.

Secretary's Report: Hilda Kurtz

Kurtz reported that two issues of the Newsletter were produced in 2008. The Spring Newsletter was 15 pp. and the Summer Newsletter was 18 pp. long, excluding participation forms and the like. Continuing with the transition to electronic distribution of the newsletter launched in 2006, the Summer Newsletter was the first to be sent out by listserv.

Ballots were sent to 349 members and 130 received. Treasurer Katie Algeo did a lot of work to clean up SEDAAG's membership and address list, and this effort was very much felt at balloting time. In 2007, the Secretary received more than thirty undeliverable ballots back in the mail. By 2008, the number was down to three. A listserv of SEDAAG members was established in August 2008, and is currently based at the University of Georgia. The listserv improved the efficiency of sending out the newsletter, and includes a very useful address error monitoring function. Doug Gamble, in his 2006 Secretary's Report, made reference to the eventual "complete migration of SEDAAG to a 'digital' organization". Kurtz agrees with Gamble's recommendation.

Southeastern Geographer: Graham Tobin & Bob Brinkmann

SEG has gone electronic, in terms of submissions, reviews, etc. The editors have got the review time down to 49 days. Chris Meindl has stepped down as Book Review Editor, being replaced by Spencer Fleury. The former editorial assistant moved on to another institution, and was replaced by Leslie North as the new editorial assistant. She is being paid by college, which is a significant form of support from the college for the SEG initiative.

In 2009 the journal will be published quarterly. In 2008 there were three issues, two special issues and a standard issue. Of the special issues, one focused on Florida, and one on Puerto Rico. Graham would like to make a call for more special issues. They don't have to be regional in focus, for example Derek Alderman has proposed one on slavery. The journal needs more submissions. This relates back to the quest for ISI citation listing. The journal needs more submissions to improve application for ISI. That means Division needs members to submit good articles to the journal, and SEDAAG also needs members to cite articles in their publications.

In a nutshell, the editor's request of SEDAAG members is: Submit articles, submit special issue ideas, agree to review manuscripts, and review in timely manner. Bob Brinkmann added that another initiative is to use podcast technology. If one assigns a paper to the class, one can get access to an interview with the author. A lot of students are using podcasts.

Honors Committee Report: Joby Bass

Great honors year. There were 13 honors paper submissions. The committee selected 10 papers for two sessions. There were only two honors poster submissions. Members should encourage colleagues and students to submit papers and posters. Joby offered a few recommendations. The Division needs more faculty award nominations. The Honors Committee received nominations for all the faculty awards, but in only one instance (the teaching award) did the Committee receive more than one more than one nomination per awards. The Committee was forced to extend the deadlines for faculty awards. Joby recommended staggering award deadlines away from the meeting paper deadline. The Division has had to extend the deadlines two years in a row. Also he suggested that no more than one faculty from one institution serve on the Honors Committee, because those faculty have to recuse themselves from that decision. Two faculty members from same institution means only three are voting on student submission from that same institution.

Nominations Report: Eric Fournier

Eric offered a special thanks to Katherine Hankins, Chairs of the Tellers Committee, who handled not only regular SEDAAG elections but also the labor intensive election for Regional Councilor. Eric added that Katherine recommends that pursue a strategy for improving the response rate for ballots. We should think more about electronic balloting.

Southern Studies Committee: Tink Moore

The Southern Studies Committee is the longest standing committee in SEDAAG. At the AAG in Boston the committee sponsored a successful session. The committee is forwarding plans for a plenary session sponsored jointly at the Las Vegas meeting.

EDGE: Doug Gamble

Doug reported that the EDGE sessions at the SEDAAG meeting went well.

SAGE: Tom Howard & Helen Ruth Aspaas

SEDAAG supported the attendance of two Stand Alone Geographers to this year's meeting. Derek added that he inserted in state reports form a question to assist in identifying stand alone geographers in the various states. Historically Black College and Universities are often the source of these stand alone geographers. SAGE is a great way to work at being diverse as well as address the needs of colleagues working alone in promoting geography.

Derek thanked new Historian Richard Sambrook for stepping into that job, replacing Ron Mitchelson, who has prepared a report suggesting roles for future historians.

Study of the American South AAG Specialty Group: Bill Graves

The specialty group is gearing up on great ideas generated at a breakfast meeting at the SEDAAG meeting. A potential plan is to partner with the Political Geography specialty group and have a joint meeting/pre-conference with them in Las Vegas. If members of the specialty group are not on the listserv, they are encouraged to subscribe. The listserv is hosted by Tom Chapman (Georgia Southern). Members should also check out the specialty group web site hosted by Bill Graves (UNC-Charlotte). The specialty group is in discussion with one of the major university presses about a major student award. The specialty group sponsored sessions at the Boston AAG and will sponsor sessions in Las Vegas.

Resolutions Committee

L.J.Palmer-Moloney read the annual resolutions. Resolutions approved.

Dot Mason moved to adjourn

Jonathan Leib seconded the motion

Meeting Adjourned