

SUFFOLK COUNTY VANDERBILT MUSEUM

Board of Trustees

A regular meeting of the Suffolk County Vanderbilt Museum Board of Trustees was held on January 10, 2002 in the Planetarium Lobby, Centerport, New York.

The following were in attendance:

Dr. Steven Gittelman - President
Dr. Anthony Pecorale - Treasurer
Michael Broxmeyer - 2nd Vice President
Marjorie Kossoy Fuhrmann - Secretary
Carl Luecke - Trustee
Edward J. Hahn - Trustee
R. Douglas Shaw - Trustee
Donna deLuca Periconi - Trustee
Susan LeBow - Trustee
Bertram E. Seides - Trustee
J. Lance Mallamo - Executive Director
Leslie Tannen - Todd Shapiro Associates
Rita Beckman - Staff
David Bush - Staff
Florence Ogg - Staff
Maryann Zakshevsky - Staff
Mark McHugh - Staff
Barbara Oster - Staff
Elizabeth McQueeney - Staff
Zachary Studenroth - Staff
Bill Dieck - Staff
Ann Marie Pastore - Stenographer

Absent:

Gary C. Fischhoff - 1st Vice President
William Macchione - Trustee
Robert LaBua - Trustee
William Rogers - Trustee

(Dr. Steven Gittelman called the meeting to order at 7:50 p.m.)

DR. GITTELMAN:

Good evening, everybody. This is a regular meeting of the Suffolk County Vanderbilt Museum. I thank you for attending. Do we have a list of guests and other attendees?

MS. PASTORE:
Yes.

DR. GITTELMAN:
Is there anybody who wishes to address the Board or ask us questions? Again, thank you for joining us. Approval of the minutes, Marge.

MS. FUHRMANN:
Just a second. I move that the minutes be approved with one correction for December 10, 2001. Somebody second it, please.

MR. LUECKE:
Second.

MS. FUHRMANN:
Thanks. The one note I have made is on page five, paragraph four, first line. It says, "Actual meteor," and then it says, "rights." I don't know where that came from, so the word should be eliminated.

MR. MALLAMO:
Could it be meteorites?

DR. GITTELMAN:
I think it's meteorites.

MS. FUHRMANN:
Yes, it does make sense. I think you're right. It was meteorites, one word.

DR. GITTELMAN:
All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Motion carries. (Vote: 8/0/1/5 Abstained: Ms. Periconi. Not Present: Ms. LeBow. Absent: Mr. Fischhoff, Mr. Macchione, Mr. Rogers & Mr. LaBua.)

MS. FUHRMANN:
I have a secretarial moment.

DR. GITTELMAN:
A secretarial moment.

MS. FUHRMANN:
If you wouldn't mind. Everyone was faxed a list of Trustees, which said, "Members of the Suffolk County Vanderbilt Museum Board of Trustees, updated January 3, 2002." There are a number of corrections that need to be made to this. I was going to do it orally here, but I have not been able to reach every Trustee, and I only wanted to have to do this once. So sometime within the next week I will fax everyone an updated corrected list of names, addresses, telephone numbers, e-mails, etc. End of secretarial moment.

DR. GITTELMAN:
Thank you. Okay, moving on from secretarial moment, election of officers for 2002. Gary is not here. Who from the Nominating Committee - I guess it's out of the

hands of the Nominating Committee. Would someone who was on the Nominating Committee please tell us the candidates that were nominated?

MS. FUHRMANN:
Do you want to do them?

MR. LUECKE:
I don't remember them.

MS. FUHRMANN:
Okay, I do. The Nominating Committee presented the following slate: President, Steve Gittelman; 1st Vice President, Gary Fischhoff; 2nd Vice President, Michael Broxmeyer; Secretary, Marjorie Fuhrmann; Treasurer, Tony Pecorale.

DR. GITTELMAN:
Are there any nominations from the floor for any position? Okay, there are no nominations. Do I have any motions?

MS. FUHRMANN:
I will move that the slate be accepted.

MR. LUECKE:
Second.

MS. FUHRMANN:
And I'll vote for the -

DR. PECORALE:
I'd like to add to that, that the Secretary be -

MS. FUHRMANN:
I was just doing that.

DR. PECORALE:
Oh, you were?

MS. FUHRMANN:
I was just saying that. I will cast one vote on behalf of the Board approving the proposed slate, as Secretary.

DR. GITTELMAN:
Do I have a second for that?

MR. SEIDES:
Second.

DR. GITTELMAN:
Discussion? No discussion? There is usually not a discussion on a vote. Okay. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Motion carries. (Vote: 9/0/0/5 Not Present: Ms. LeBow. Absent: Mr. Fischhoff, Mr. Macchione, Mr. LaBua & Mr. Rogers.) Thank you. Public Relations' Report.

MS. TANNEN:

Good evening. I don't have any videos to show tonight, but there is a little bit of catch-up work to do. That's why you have three reports in front of you. Included in that first report we have the Living History Tour, the Planetarium Shows and Children's Theater. You unveiled the new Loony Toons' Porky Pig Postal Stamp here at the Vanderbilt Museum. We have Zachary Studenroth coming here as the Director of Development and the transportation exhibit on the Vanderbilt, Ships, Trains and Cars.

In November the focus was on the First Annual Fall Family Hoe-down held here. We also have the Children's Theater, once again, by the Arena Players, the Planetarium Shows, Historic House Tours, transportation exhibit, Ships, Trains and Cars, the Planetarium Program that was held for the Leonid meteor showers, the Candlelight Tours, the World of Tomorrow Radio Review, and a Christmas tree lighting.

In December the focus was on, once again, the transportation exhibit, the tours, the Children's Theater, the Radio Review, Holiday Reception, Planetarium shows, and the candlelight tours.

I understand that in the year 2002, the mummy is going to be celebrating her 3,000th birthday. We're looking forward to doing outstanding publicity for that.

MR. MALLAMO:

Give or take 500 years.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Any questions about that report?

DR. PECORALE:

Steve.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Yes, Tony.

DR. PECORALE:

Two things. First, we do have some additional information about the sinking of the Plymouth, which was the Alva, which was owned by Vanderbilt. Members of his staff can give you that information, if you'd like it.

The second thing is, I understand that the week that schools are closed there is going to be a major change in the programming for that week of activities that we will have here. It will be important to be able to get that into the newspapers well in advance of that week that school is closed.

MS. TANNEN:

We're working on that already.

DR. PECORALE:

And the third thing is that I understand from our Director that the closing of the purchase of Normandy Manor is going to occur sometime this month. When that occurs, I think there should be some PR about that. Maybe, Steve, you and Lance -

MR. BROXMEYER:
A ribbon cutting.

DR. PECORALE:
Excuse me?

MR. BROXMEYER:
A ribbon cutting.

DR. PECORALE:
A ribbon cutting would be a great idea. We should do something to highlight that because that will be a major event for the Museum. If that is going to occur within the next two weeks, plans should be made to do something along those lines. Those were the only additions I had. I would hope we would do something about that.

DR. GITTELMAN:
Those are good ideas. Any other comments, questions, discussions? Leslie, thank you for that report. It's nice to see you back.

MS. TANNEN:
Thank you.

DR. GITTELMAN:
Education and Exhibits, Marge.

MS. FUHRMANN:
Thank you, Steve. Grant writing season has begun. Stephanie is spending her time working on the grant writing process. She is particularly trying to get a grant called "Save America's Treasures," which would be to rehabilitate the dioramas and update those exhibits. She has to show the dioramas as learning tools. She has also done major maintenance, which is annual light bulb changing and whatnot like that.

It's been a very, very busy month for school groups. They have had 20 days of school groups. The Planetarium staff would like everyone to notice that in the month of December between December 2000 and December 2001, they more than doubled the number of attendees for school programs at the Museum.

They have also asked me to ask if any of the Trustees have a contact that could do DNA of our mummy for us. If anyone does, please let me know or speak directly to Kathy.

The five-day program for the February break is in place. Each of the five days will have a different program. There is a flyer that went out about it to all of the schools. They are being placed in book bags. They are doing windsocks, an Egyptian program, a program on heraldry, a program on castles, and something called "Beacon Feet," which is about birds.

Cornell Extension is also going to be doing a program on bioluminescence for fourth through sixth graders.

For the first time on the back of the flyer for the vacation programs that was sent to schools they also listed all of the general Vanderbilt events for the month of February, which I thought was a great idea.

Kathy has submitted a grant to Northrop Grumman. We will hear about that in July. She has submitted one to Sweezey's, which is a continuing grant.

The Christmas decorations, holiday decorations, are down in the mansion. It was a huge success. For the first time they did a flyer about the different rooms so that people could maintain contact with the theme throughout, which was 1939. It was very well, received and we will be doing the same thing next year. It also listed all the donors who have given this year to the Museum.

The next LIMA meeting is March 11th, and it's on grant sources.

There was an article in the last - I believe it's the last "Long Island Forum" by Al Velocci concerning the tollbooths on the Long Island Motor Parkway. Specifically, he tried to determine how many there were. The article received a great deal of commentary and press.

On April 2nd Florence will be doing a lecture at the Shelter Rock Library in conjunction with an exhibit.

We are lending the Long Island Museum a couple of posters and the original sheet music from "Vanderbilt the Musical."

The collections are still being added to our database. She has done an analysis of the ship's logs, which is where she found the information about the Alva, which she shared with Tony. She also is doing grant writing.

(Ms. LeBow entered the meeting at 8:10 p.m.)

As some of you may recall, our Planetarium Director, Mark, wrote a school program called, "Introduction to Solar Systems," which we are booking for the younger grades, first and second. That program this year earned - this December earned \$6,587.25. That was more money than all programs in the month of December in the year 2000. That was \$6,497.25. In the month of December of 2001, the programs took in \$14,903.30. Everything is totally booked, all the school programs.

We want to give a special kudos to Debbie Plant, who is our Reservation's Clerk. She has revamped the scheduling of the Planetarium shows as well as handling all the bookings and promoting the Museum with every phone call. She doesn't let anyone get off the phone without booking something. With her redoing the scheduling the way she did, combining things and whatnot, we were able to add additional programming and then have additional revenues as a result.

Mark has been concentrating his efforts on adding and modifying shows and writing a new one. This past year the emphasis was on the educational shows. They have been updated. A couple of new ones have been written and are showing. Between January and March 2002, they are going to have the same emphasis on public shows. They are going to rewrite them so that they are thirty minutes a piece.

They are also going to be doing a joint show with Cornell. Beginning in February of 2002, there will be a magic show on weekends in the Planetarium in conjunction with the Planetarium shows.

We have also, by rearranging shows and scheduling, made laser shows, though not the type we had before which were very loud with the emphasis on rock and roll. There are also shows that are show tunes, classical pieces, and Disney, for example.

One of the new programs that Mark has developed is called "Tides are Affected by Moon's Gravity." This was done as a special request for a teacher. It's approximately thirty minutes long. It's going to be redone so that it can become more of a public program or an additional school program.

We also have "Wonder of the Seasonal Skies," which is now a more timely program. We have a thirty-minute program on the moon. We have "Jupiter." Some of the other shows that he's looking into developing - he's looking into developing a Jupiter program to go along with the Mar's program. There will be a program called, "Other Moons in the Solar System."

The idea is to have five shows on Saturday. The trip show will be shown twice on Saturday's at eleven and two to increase the number of children that get to see it. These shows will be swapped around about every six months so that it stays fresh. Things will not be shown for awhile and then brought back. All shows are going to be prerecorded this year so that there is a consistent quality in the narration. They hope to have all of these revised, public shows started by April of 2002.

Betsy continues her work on the invertebrates, but it's being put to good use.

Next week there is a high school marine biology class coming in. She will be giving them a lecture on cuttlefish and some kind of sponge -- she did give me the name, but I didn't write it down -- that houses hermit crabs. It seems hermit crabs don't always live in shells.

She is continuing the research reports. Once those are done, then she gets to start the condition reports on what conditions these specimens are in.

It's been a very, very full and exciting December for education and exhibits. We think that 2002 will allow us to continue to expand our programming areas and increase the number of school children we see, which is over 60,000 a year. Thank you.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Any questions or comments regarding that report? Okay, we'll move on to Development, Carl Luecke or Mike.

MR. BROXMEYER:

Zachary has just completed and submitted an application to IMLS to obtain a fairly substantial grant. Hopefully, that works out for the Museum.

The balance of the meeting, which we had prior to this Board Meeting, was spent discussing planning for the "Cocktails with Gershwin" event in August. We have two possible dates. We're working with August 2nd and August 9th. If you can get back

to Lance and tell him if either of those don't work, we're trying to fit everyone's schedule into the event.

Zachary will be working on setting up the list for mailing out the "Save-the-Date" letters for the event. He will be working on sponsorships for the event, as well. Zachary and Donna will be meeting soon to discuss the catering, all the details, etc.

That is my report. Again, just please speak to Lance about those two dates, August 2nd and August 9th, so we can try to fit in everyone's schedule for the event. Thank you.

DR. GITTELMAN:
Questions or comments?

MR. SHAW:
Steve.

DR. GITTELMAN:
Yes, Doug.

MR. SHAW:
I'd just like to comment on that IMLS application. I have been traumatized by that application a number of times, and I'd really like to commend Zach and the rest of the staff on their work in putting that together. It's a very substantial piece of work.

DR. GITTELMAN:
You are so complimented.

MR. STUDENROTH:
Thanks.

DR. GITTELMAN:
Any other comments or questions? Then we'll move on. Finance Committee.

DR. PECORALE:
All of the Trustees should have in their packets a copy of the Treasurer's Report. These are the actuals through the end of November. The December receipts and expenditures are still being collated. You will have them at the next meeting.

If you'll note, you can see that our September admissions was down substantially due to the tragedy at the World Trade Center, as it was throughout all of the nation.

The fiscal situation for the Museum continues to be very tight. It's important that each Trustee, if they have an opportunity to speak to their local Legislator, they speak to them about the \$1 million guarantee. It's essential when this comes up for a vote that each of the Legislators is aware of the absolute necessity to have this guarantee again for this next year.

There is one thing that I want to bring to the attention of each of the Trustees. I have a suggestion, and that is that the Legislature and the Treasurer are again looking at our firm, in our case, it's Fleet Bank that handles our endowment. I would

think that somewhere along the lines either the President of the organization, the Executive Director, or the Treasurer should be invited to the meeting so that we are at least aware of what's being discussed and to have an opportunity to comment on any of the possible changes that are being considered. Certainly we should be aware of what they're discussing and what's going on. So I would think that we might send a letter to the Suffolk County Treasurer requesting that we be notified of the date of the meeting and that we be committed to have either the President, the Executive Director, or the Treasurer attend the meeting when it comes up for discussion.

DR. GITTELMAN:

I think the original scheduled date for the meeting was the 8th.

MR. MALLAMO:

They had to be returned by the 8th, the proposals.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Yes, the proposals had to be returned by the 8th.

DR. PECORALE:

The meeting I don't think has been scheduled yet.

DR. GITTELMAN:

The meeting -

DR. PECORALE:

Do you know when it is?

DR. GITTELMAN:

I don't know when it is. We have a call in to them to find out.

DR. PECORALE:

Don't you think either you or Lance or --

DR. GITTELMAN:

I think you should go.

DR. PECORALE:

If I know the date and I'm available, I'll go. If I'm not available, I'll be sure to tell Lance so that perhaps he could go. I think one of us should be there to at least be aware of what is being considered.

DR. GITTELMAN:

In the original round when Fleet was put on, Carl was there.

MR. LUECKE:

Correct.

DR. GITTELMAN:

But you were there as a voting member.

MR. LUECKE:

Correct.

DR. GITTELMAN:

In this round, they decided to not have the Board have a voting member. That being legislative privilege, I think we can - we have asked them if they would add us as a voting member, but we were denied. I think that it would be proper for us to ask if we can attend and perhaps offer commentary as to what we need in this proposal. I would be pleased to have the Treasurer represent us.

DR. PECORALE:

How do you suggest we do that, in a letter or a telephone call?

DR. GITTELMAN:

In both manners. I think the letter could come from you requesting the Treasurer, John Cochran, to allow you to attend, not necessarily as a voting member, but to at least speak before the committee and to give perhaps an assessment of the way you view Fleet's performance.

DR. PECORALE:

Okay, I'll talk to Lance, and we'll put something together. That's the report.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Thank you. Any questions or comments? Okay, Personnel Committee. Gary Fischhoff is not here. Are there any personnel issues?

MR. MALLAMO:

No.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Membership, Doug Shaw.

MR. SHAW:

Membership from your numbers continues to grow at a pretty rapid pace, and we're very pleased with that. We have set some very ambitious, but we feel, reachable goals for the coming year. We're looking at developing some new programs, both to attract new members and also to provide incentives for existing members.

With the way the numbers have been increasing, we have acknowledged the need for some sort of information management system to capture information from our members, where they came from, what kind of other donations they are making to the Museum, and using that also as a source for new Museum volunteers. In the coming month, we'll be looking at some software and see what type of information we need to capture.

The Membership Committee has merged with the Development Committee. We'll be working toward the same goal.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Any questions or comments? Thank you for that report. Dinosaur Committee, Ed Hahn.

MR. HAHN:

I don't have a report tonight other than to inform the Board that the Committee is meeting next week, Thursday, the 17th at 10 a.m. to go over and discuss any

outstanding issues, especially the accounting that's due from NYIT and what we can do to facilitate that account taking place and being given to us. That's basically where we're at.

DR. PECORALE:

Where are you meeting?

MR. HAHN:

At Michael Broxmeyer's Office.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Questions or comments? Thank you for that report. Buildings and Grounds, Bert.

MR. SEIDES:

Bill Macchione and myself would like to report that Bill Dieck is keeping the grounds in terrific shape. We're very pleased with his efforts.

I would like to report that he plans to have a meeting with KeySpan Energy here to review the concept of bringing gas to the site. It's approximately seven-eighths of a mile to come to the Museum. It would also involve the neighbors as to whether or not they would be interested or inclined to participate in the installation.

Down by the seaplane hangar, the seawall has been reviewed by seven or eight contractors. It will be going out to bid by the 17th.

The project for the irrigation, depending on the weather, there should be a walkthrough for reviewing the site for that proposal in the next couple of weeks.

The project for fencing, which is needed, looks very good. The contract has been awarded. The replacement of the fence around the perimeter will occur soon.

A walkthrough of the walks behind the mansion on the east side of the mansion have been graveled. There has been a change in the proposal for the brick work to be done to replace the gravel, so that we don't have a problem with maintaining the gravel on that east side of the mansion.

The statuary has been covered in the pools. There have been heaters provided in the pools to prevent freezing so that the goldfish will remain alive for next season. That's the end of my report.

MS. FUHRMANN:

I have a question.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Marge.

MS. FUHRMANN:

In our Education and Exhibits Committee meeting we had a discussion about that there was a problem with heating the mansion, in that certain exhibits had to be moved because the rooms were so cold, certain offices couldn't be utilized because it

was 32 degrees in them. Do you know anything about this? Has it been resolved on more than just a slapstick basis?

MR. SEIDES:

The mansion has a problem with the heating system in that there is a separate pump for bringing fuel into the mansion. Bill is here. He could probably expand that discussion a little bit. I would like to ask Bill to -

MR. DIECK:

The pump has been fixed.

MS. FUHRMANN:

I'm sorry. I didn't hear you.

MR. DIECK:

The pump has been fixed. The heat has been restored.

MS. FUHRMANN:

So it was just not a -

MR. DIECK:

It was a four day affair until they could get the new part in. They didn't carry the part in stock.

MS. FUHRMANN:

Okay. The other question I have is, was any damage done to any of the exhibits as a result of this extreme cold?

MR. DIECK:

Not that I'm aware of.

MS. FUHRMANN:

Not that I'm aware of either. Okay. Thank you.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Any other questions or comments? If not, thank you for that report. Director's Report, Lance.

MR. MALLAMO:

I'll just pick up on where Marjorie left off to talk a little bit about the heat. We have had recurring problems with several areas in the mansion with heat this year. To fix it to top condition would require thousands of dollars.

We are happy to report that the band-aid approach we have been implementing will be supplemented by the replacement of the entire heating plan. That bid has been awarded to R.J. Williams. We anticipate the work will start around March. Frankly, we hated to invest big bucks of money for equipment that was going to be ripped out in two months. So we have been trying to do this on a band-aid basis. Hopefully, the pump that Bill is talking about that's been repaired isn't even going to be here in April.

We look forward to that project. That project, I think, has been on the drawing board for at least six years. It's a \$3 million project. It's a very involved, complex

issue. We were a little worried that we weren't going to get a bidder when they came to inspect it. Their heads were spinning a little bit. We're happy that that bid was awarded.

The electric bid is still in the process. Is that right, Bill?

MR. DIECK:

Yes. Their lowest bid was well over.

MR. MALLAMO:

So they're negotiating with that contractor to see if we can come to terms with that.

The Department of Public Works has authorized phase two of the plumbing projects to be planned, so plans are beginning on that aspect right now. We also had a meeting with the Planetarium staff and the County Architect several weeks ago about replacing the Goto projector. We are asking for a waiver from the RFP process for that to select a special technical team on that project. The RFP would be by invitation. I am going to be requesting that very shortly in the next few days.

I'd also like to thank all the staff members that worked to move the Dino-exhibit back here so swiftly and safely, to get everything out of Central Islip and moved back here to the Museum. We're very proud of the way that that was done. I think we all learned a lot from that, including Zachary and myself.

I know Zach would want me to express his gratitude to all the staff members that helped him with the IMLS grant. There were many people that added to that effort and made his job a little bit easier. It took me all night to read it, so I know the effort that was put into it. It was an excellent document, and I think we can use that for a number of other applications during the coming year.

I met this morning with seven other museum directors from the Long Island region, both from the north shore, the west end, and the east end. This was kind of an effort to see where we all stood at this point in the year. I was pleasantly surprised the standing we're in. Many museums were absolutely decimated by the September attacks and have yet to recover. Their attendance is down. Their income and even endowment income in certain cases is down over 50 percent in some cases. In light of all that, I walked away feeling pretty good where we're at. But we're far from out of the woods in our situation. Steve and I have been talking recently about how we need a more collaborative effort, and I think this might be the beginning of it today. This whole group of people came in to talk and see how we can work together to help each other out during these very difficult times. That's my report.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Questions or comments?

DR. PECORALE:

Steve.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Tony.

DR. PECORALE:

Where do we stand on the habitat?

MR. MALLAMO:

The habitat will be in the heating and electric project that was just awarded. That area will be rehabilitated with those functions. Once that work is complete, we will be replastering and repainting the room. The only thing that was left out of the equation is the restoration of the dioramas and the whale shark. We're working at those two projects on a two-pronged approach. Stephanie is working on the grant that Marjorie talked about with the dioramas, and we're working on another project to secure funding for the whale shark itself. So the habitat has been delayed indefinitely because of the work that needs to be done in there. Now that those contracts have been awarded - still, even with these contracts, the HVAC, I think they expect to take two years to install.

MR. DIECK:

Approximately.

MR. MALLAMO:

That will be done on a wing-by-wing basis so that we're not closing entire wings or we're not closing the entire museum or mansion at one time. The way I think this will work is we will begin in the nursery wing and move on to the entry hall, dining room, organ room, then the memorial wing area, and then back through the bedroom area on the second floor. The habitat, of course, will be included with the nursery wing.

DR. PECORALE:

So we have a light at the end of the tunnel.

MR. MALLAMO:

We absolutely have a light at the end of the tunnel.

MS. PERICONI:

Steve.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Donna.

MS. PERICONI:

To follow up on Tony's question, what is the condition of the dioramas? Are they all right?

MR. MALLAMO:

They're in, I would say, fair condition. I'm judging that by looking from the outside.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Don't look too close.

MR. MALLAMO:

They're going to need a lot of attention, I think.

MS. PERICONI:

Are they deteriorating just because of the fact that they are not being cared for now?

MR. MALLAMO:

Well, they're deteriorating because of weather infiltration that has taken place years ago. That problem has been fixed. We have stopped the water infiltration. But the lack of heat, cold, and the excess humidity has taken somewhat of a toll. They are still remarkably beautiful. If I could just judge by the condition of the wall surfaces with the painted effects, they're in fine condition. Usually that seems to be the first to go. You will see cracking in the alligating on the walls. I'm hoping that the damage isn't too severe, that a conservation effort can bring those back.

DR. PECORALE:

But after many years we can at least start to see a direction. I think that's important.

MR. MALLAMO:

I think that's probably the single most frustrating comment we get from visitors who come and don't see progress there, but we've really been held up. We don't want to put cosmetic work in and then have it all ripped out from under us. So this project is going ahead, I think, as a major step forward.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Any questions or comments? I certainly agree with Tony that it seems like a long tunnel. When you look at some projects -- I don't know how long Carl has been on the Board and Tony and Donna and some of the Trustees who have been on for a long time, some of these projects seem to take forever. But we put in for the HVAC, I think it was six years ago, the \$3 million. It was one of our earliest grants that we got through County government. It's been a very long wait, but we have to do that first before we can get to the habitats. But the habitats, for me, are a symbol of where we were. It remains there. I still think we should put a sign by the saltwater pool saying, "We'll get to this someday, but not yet." I think we should let people know what the progress is. We might just want to put up a sign that explains what the procedure would be.

MR. MALLAMO:

Actually, Steve, we have worked it in with the Living History Tour because it was hit in the hurricane of 1938. We're saying we're waiting for the insurance to cover it and settle it.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Yes, Tony.

DR. PECORALE:

I don't think many people realize how much has been done in the last three to five years.

DR. GITTELMAN:

I know you know. Not many people do know. We will have to put together a list of what has been done and side-by-side pictures for reaccreditation. Then we all ought to have a little party and look carefully because it is a lot. We ought to celebrate some of those accomplishments. Carl, what is it, twelve or thirteen years?

MR. LUECKE:

You're probably correct. It doesn't seem that long, but it probably is.

DR. GITTELMAN:

We started a few months apart. This will be my ninth year as President. I'm very honored that you chose to make me President for another term. My priorities will be to support Zach, to move reaccreditation forward, to let our staff do the good job that they have been doing, and try not to step in their way.

I think we have to focus on fundraising. It would be good to get the dinosaur exhibit functioning well on our side of the fence and our control. There certainly have been problems with it. I'd like to see it running more smoothly. I guess seeing things finish, seeing things start, watching the process, and being part of it has been a great privilege for me.

I want to tell you a story. It's something that happened to me this weekend. I received a letter from my mentor when I had gotten my Ph.D. His name is Fred Streams. It was the saddest letter I have ever read. Hazel, his wife, had passed away around Christmas time. Fred had gotten my holiday card, and of course, I didn't know. So he sent me this letter telling me. I try to keep in contact with him. I always feel I have to, since I'm the only student of his who didn't go the traditional pathway. He had six doctoral students and I'm the black sheep.

I was talking to him for an hour. He just kept telling me that the skies out in Cape Cod were so gray, and he felt so lonely. He felt his life was so empty. I said, "I know your life isn't empty. I know you have had a tremendous effect on me." But I couldn't break through his sadness. I couldn't make him understand how much of a difference he made to me.

Then finally, I told him for some reason about John the Gardener. I told him about that plaque up on the Hall of Fishes. I told him that John the Gardener asks everyone to ask themselves, "Why are there so many animals?" All of a sudden I heard him laugh. He said, "Oh, you do remember." He started to tell me about that article and that he remembered when he gave it to me. I said to him, "Yes, it was published." We started talking and all of a sudden his mood changed.

I want to thank you for giving this in my life and also for that moment. Actually, I thought he got off the phone pretty happy. I felt I wanted to share that with you because it was a special moment for me.

I have no other comments. Any comments or questions?

MS. FUHRMANN:

I have a question.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Sure.

MS. FUHRMANN:

That was a nice story. Are you going to be redoing any of the committee assignments?

DR. GITTELMAN:

Well, that's a good question.

MS. FUHRMANN:
Thank you.

DR. GITTELMAN:
I like the committees we have. This is a terrific Board, a terrific group of Trustees. I have not thought of that.

MS. FUHRMANN:
I'm not trying to put you on the spot.

DR. GITTELMAN:
By next month I will come back and during that period, if anybody has any question, would like to serve on a different committee, would like a leadership role, or would like a change, please contact me and let's discuss it. I'm very satisfied with the performance of all of you in committees and the Chairpersons. So please let me know if there are any changes.

That would be my report. Any unfinished business? Any new business? We have not established a need for an executive session. Does anyone wish to establish an executive session? May I have a motion to adjourn?

MS. FUHRMANN:
Motion.

DR. GITTELMAN:
Do I have a second?

DR. PECORALE:
Second.

DR. GITTELMAN:
All in favor? Opposed? We are adjourned. (Vote: 10/0/0/4 Absent: Mr. Fischhoff, Mr. Macchione, Mr. LaBua & Mr. Rogers)

(Dr. Steven Gittelman adjourned the meeting at 8:50 p.m.)

SG/ap
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