The Ronald Reagan Presidential Library and Museum

Alyssa Thurston
An Announcement from the SCALL Board

Dear SCALL members:

I write to inform you that Kelsey Chrisley has resigned as President of SCALL due to personal reasons. On behalf of the Board, we thank Kelsey for the time and energy she contributed during her term as Vice President, particularly for her hard work in organizing a successful Institute. We appreciate the courage it took for her to step down knowing she is unable to fully perform the duties of President because of her present circumstances.

In accordance with our bylaws, I now serve as your President. The Board and I are still discussing how best to address some of the workload issues brought up by this recent development. We will keep you informed throughout this process and rest assured that with full support from the Board, the Institute is going forward as planned.

Sincerely,

SCALL Board

Victoria Williamson, President
Jessica Wimer, Treasurer
Amber Kennedy Madole, Secretary
Judy Davis, Board Member
Michelle Tolley, Board Member
Paul Moorman, Past President

The Ronald Reagan Presidential Library and Museum

By Alyssa Thurston

President Barack Obama’s second term in office will not end until January 2017, but plans for his future presidential library have already long been underway. In mid-August 2014, several sites in cities from Honolulu to Chicago all submitted bids for consideration as the future site of the Barack Obama Presidential Library. The Barack Obama Foundation will announce a site finalist in early 2015.

The Obama Presidential Library will be the fourteenth of its kind. Of the thirteen presidential libraries currently located throughout the United States, two are here in Southern California: (1) the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library and Museum in Simi Valley and (2) the Nixon Presidential Library & Museum in Yorba Linda.

Presidential libraries are not typical libraries. As the National Archives website states, they are both archives and museums, “bringing together in one place the documents and artifacts of a president and his administration.” The concept of a presidential library began in 1939, when President Franklin D. Roosevelt donated his personal and presidential papers to the National Archives and a presidential library was built with private funding. Congress later passed the Presidential Libraries Act in 1955 to formally establish the presidential library system. These libraries are built with private and non-federal public funds, and then are turned over to the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) for operation and maintenance.

Given the media interest in the site of the future Obama Presidential Library, I recently visited the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library to get a sense of what these institutions offer. Opened in 1991 and newly renovated in 2001, the Reagan Library houses twenty-four galleries chronicling Reagan’s life and political career. These galleries showcase an impressive collection of items from Reagan’s California governorship and U.S. presidency, as well as personal keepsakes from his life and marriage to Nancy Reagan.

continued on page 3

Statues of the Reagans at the beginning of the exhibits.
continued from page 1 (Ronald Reagan)

Highlights of the museum include an Oval Office replica room and the Air Force One Pavilion, where visitors can climb aboard the actual aircraft that served Reagan and six other U.S. presidents from 1973-2001. The Library also offers rotating exhibits on a range of subjects; the temporary exhibit on display at the time of my visit, “Baseball! Celebrating Our Great American Pastime,” featured an astounding collection of historical baseball memorabilia.

Technology is thoroughly integrated into the Reagan Library exhibits. Visitors in the rooms on Reagan’s early life and career can sit in a “green screen” room and pretend to act with Reagan in a scene from one of his films. Television screens in other areas play back excerpted video recordings of selected Reagan speeches and appearances, allowing visitors (especially those born in or after the 1980s) to see for themselves how Reagan came to be called “The Great Communicator.” For example, visitors can use interactive touch screen displays to scroll through different White House state dinner menus or play educational games highlighting the impact of Reagan’s economic policies. Finally, a free Reagan Library app is available for Droid and iPhone; a $2.99 payment unlocks visitor tips and tools such as an audio tour, a map of the Library, and more.

As a presidential library administered by NARA, the Reagan Library also serves as a repository for Reagan’s presidential papers and other materials related to his life and political career. Its Research Room mainly holds secondary reference materials related to Reagan’s life and political career, as well as books on domestic and international affairs in the 1980s and 1990s. The Library’s Archives, which is not accessible to the public, holds over 55 million pages of text materials and over 1.6 million audiovisual items, including photographs and videos. Selected materials are also made available online; these include the text of many of Reagan’s speeches and a portion of the Library’s photographic holdings.

Finally, the Reagan Library appears to play an important part in the life of the surrounding community. It regularly hosts public events such as book signings, concerts, and visits from prominent politicians.

Stationed throughout the Library are a large (and very friendly) contingent of volunteers. One volunteer to highlight is Herb Cihak,
retired Associate Dean for Library and Information Services at Pepperdine University School of Law, who volunteered at the Reagan Library as a docent for four hours a week from 2007-2012. Mr. Cihak has a master’s degree in political science specializing in the American political system, and had worked on a phone bank during the 1980 Reagan presidential campaign. He first decided to become a volunteer at the Reagan Library after reading a newspaper advertisement. Several weekends of orientation and eight months of training later, Mr. Cihak became a regular docent whose duties included leading adult and youth tours and staffing other areas of the Library as needed. He expressed that “the opportunity to tell the Ronald Reagan story” and the friendships he made with fellow docents made for a fulfilling volunteering experience at the Reagan Library. Mr. Cihak now lives in Utah but retains Docent Emeritus status.

The Reagan Library is open to the public from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily (except for New Year’s Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas Day), and the Research Room is open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday (except for federal holidays). There is an admission fee for entry to the museum exhibits. Appointments to visit the Research Room are not required but are strongly recommended; access to the area requires a security guard escort, and advance notice of your visit allows the archivists to check on the availability of your desired materials and to bring documents to the Research Room for your use.


Alyssa Thurston is the Research & Electronic Services Librarian at Pepperdine University School of Law Library

---

Save the Date!
The annual SCALL Holiday party is December 9th. Check your email for time and location.

---

Treasurer’s Report
By Jessica Wimer

SCALL Balance
As of October 4, 2014: $40,546.17.

Budget Detail
Not available.

Submission Deadlines
The SCALL Newsletter team welcomes submission of any articles of interest to the law library community. Contact Christina Tsou, SCALL Newsletter Editor: ctsou@law.uci.edu.

All submissions should be received by the following dates:

- Nov. 10, 2014: Nov./Dec. issue
- Jan. 12, 2015: Jan./Feb. issue
- Mar. 9, 2015: Mar./Apr. issue
- May 11, 2015: May/June issue

---

Your Library is an Important Investment

From FILING LOOSE LEAF SUPPLEMENTS to Management Systems, Processing and Library Reorganization.

Count on a professionally supervised Library Service.

CALL TODAY for a free consultation/estimate with one of Southern California’s oldest and most respected Library Services.

LOOSE LEAF
FILING SERVICE, INC.
C. Fastlaben
(323) 283-5801
(626) 285-6868

“Keeping you up to date since 1972.”