

Adirondack Coast Cultural Alliance Minutes - Meeting of March 16, 2018



President Ellen Adams called the meeting to order at 8:33 am, Friday, March 16, 2018, at the Alice T. Miner Museum in Chazy. Thanks, Ellen and Leni for hosting and snacks! Note - this meeting had been postponed due to snow on the regularly-scheduled 2nd Thursday of the month.

Present: Ellen Adams (Alice T Miner Museum, pres.), Karen Batchelder (CEF Library System), Barb Benkwitt (Town of Schuyler Falls, Sec'y), Michael Betz (North Country THRIVE / AmeriCorps VISTA), Julie Dowd (CCHA & NNYACGS), Geri Favreau (CCHA), Helen Nerska (CCHA & NNYACGS), Valerie Pawlewicz (AARCH), Melissa Peck (ACCA coordinator, MLPBS), Rick Laurin (ATMM), Leni Vradelis (ATMM & Champlain History Center).

Introductions around the table welcomed visitor Michael Betz from THRIVE/AmeriCorps VISTA.

The **minutes** of the February 15th meeting were approved - Valerie moved and Ricky seconded.

There was no **financial report** this month. Some discrepancies were noted with the previous report. Melissa is following up with Alyssa at the Chamber. An updated report will be provided next month.

Melissa provided the **coordinator's report**. Our Museum Days are on Saturday and Sunday, June 16 & 17 from 10 am to 4 pm, coincides with Path Thru History weekend. All participants are encouraged to submit their events to Path Thru History (as they have to be submitted by an organization/ACCA can't submit them. Melissa has been in contact with the Press-Republican and they will again sponsor a full page of events in the newspaper. The question was raised regarding consistency of promotion and what to call the event. Consensus after much discussion came to "Clinton County Museum Days". Helen will speak with Carolyn Kehne at Lake Chaplain Weekly about also promoting Clinton County Museum Days. Melissa also mentioned the MANY conference (Museum Association of New York) to be held in Rochester April 8-10, and that Alyssa Senecal at the Chamber has and is sending out media kits and a report from the Chamber.

Museum Weekend Planning & Passport Prizes

Final Passport copy is under review. The suggestion was to provide a broader range of photos than what it seems the Chamber has in their files. To do that, groups need to send photos to Alyssa so they have them. Suggestion is to include photos on the back of the Passport. Ellen is handling Passport discussions with Alyssa at the Chamber; feel free to send pix through Ellen to Alyssa; a variety of photos is requested. Even if these photos are not used this year they would be available for the future.

Re Passport prizes – Geri Favreau volunteered for future prize coordination. The suggestion is to include kid-friendly Passport prizes, as many of those submitting Passport entries are families and children. Passport prizes for 2017 have fully been distributed. A press release was issued, and photos plus posted on ACCA Facebook.

Discussion ensued of the importance of events for children during Museum Days, and that these are promoted. The suggestion to give each child a prize that day when attending Museum Days resulted in decision, motion approved by acclamation – **Each child shall be provided a free ACCA coloring book at the museums they visit on Clinton County Museum Days.** Logistics of providing the coloring books to each site to be firmed up before June.

Again by consensus – **Planning and discussion of Museum Days should start in October** for the following year, to be able to have a meaningful impact on the Passport, plan for enhancements, develop a financial plan for banners, signs and so forth. Future discussion is needed re ACCA as a front-facing or back-of-the-house support organization for the history and cultural community, regarding event promotion and so forth.

Support from North Country THRIVE / VISTA - AmeriCorps program – presented by Michael Betz

[mbetz001@plattsburgh.edu]

Michael described that North Country THRIVE is a partnership of public/private/educational/non-profits/businesses in Clinton-Essex-Franklin counties that have banded together to improve the community and lives of its citizens of all ages. To support this, VISTA-AmeriCorps volunteers are located in our area on 1-year assignments designed to help enrich organizations, enlarging their capacities, and developing sustainable programs. VISTA – Volunteers In Service To America – is the 'domestic Peace Corps' with the goal of eliminating

poverty. The idea originated with JFK, VISTA was founded in 1965, and incorporated into the AmeriCorps program in 1993. The AmeriCorps goal is to help others by meeting critical needs in the community. Our area is rural, and there is poverty. Michael is one of the outreach volunteers, and moved here from the Midwest to live for a year on a modest allowance and serve in the community. Organizations that are working with VISTA volunteers include Cornell Cooperative Extension, Town of Plattsburgh, Literacy Volunteers, United Way, BHSN and SUNY Plattsburgh. His purpose in speaking with ACCA members is to share how some other groups use the volunteers, and encourage ACCA members to consider how such volunteers might assist them. They are not to 'do the work' but instead to share ideas, putting forward-facing programs into place. VISTA volunteers are on site at SUNY and available to develop publicity and promotion, volunteer coordination, grants research, 'train the trainer' for local history curriculum, and similar. North Country THRIVE provides a pipeline to the local schools that might be helpful. There are 12 school districts involved in student enrichment via VISTA volunteers. Pre-K, First 1000 days programs are examples.

To learn more and determine how VISTA-AmeriCorps might be able to assist your organizations, e-mail Michael Betz at mbetz001@plattsburgh.edu. We appreciate Michael sharing this information and opening possibilities for ACCA and its members.

Museum Reports

Clinton Country Historical Association & Museum [Geri]– As detailed previously, The Old Base Museum Campus branding continues with the Facebook page active. The Veterans' Park is south of the Museum Campus, with July 4, 2026 being the country's 250th Anniversary (the National DAR has a leading role in that effort). A new Town of Plattsburgh park is planned. And the Battle of Valcour (nearby) was key in the American Revolution as well, so there are lots of exciting happenings in this area. A Clinton County History Conference is being proposed. More information will follow after meetings with the County Historian Anastasia Pratt, and Bill Laundry of CCHA Board.

Adirondack Architectural Heritage [Valerie] –Tours and educational opportunities are being set up and promoted. The July 17 conference meet/greet in Saranac Lake will be a wonderful opportunity to connect.

Clinton-Essex-Franklin Library System [Karen] - A reminder to consider the libraries as community centers and to provide publicity for organizations and events. The libraries also work with THRIVE to promote early literacy, providing programs for families with young children. The summer reading programs this year will be "Libraries Rock" with emphases on music, STEM and STEAM, archeology and more.

Alice T. Miner Museum [Leni] - Leni had seen a link on the State Education department website connected to 'Fun Museums for Families to Visit' – including the Babbie Farm Museum and the Strand. Something to consider. At the ATM Museum – April 5 is marble papermaking. Miner Day is set for September 22.

Ellen mentioned that the Museum Corner column in Lake Champlain Weekly is still available – need authors! Contact Ellen. 600 words or less.

Meeting adjourned 9:52 am. Calendaring to be continued at next meeting!

NEXT MEETING –

Thursday, April 12, 8:30 AM at the Schuyler Falls Town Hall, 997 Mason St, Morrisonville

(May 10 meeting location – Clinton-Essex-Franklin Library System offices, Oak St, Plattsburgh)

Respectfully submitted,

Barb

Barb Benkwitt, ACCA Secretary