

Report of the 2007 Local Arrangements Committee, New York, NY

Chair: Susan Will

Committee Members: Nickie Phillips, Sarah Damaske (graduate student), and David Levinson

Annual Meeting Site: This year's site was the Roosevelt Hotel, Madison Avenue and 45th Street, New York City.

January 24-26, 2007 Site Visit: Michele expressed concern about the cost of the banquet at the Roosevelt Hotel and was interested in finding banquet options outside of the hotel. Susan Will contacted her committee members for recommendations of restaurants that could accommodate about 150 people for the banquet and 15-20 for the board dinner and then contacted restaurants in the area near the Roosevelt Hotel. The Board dinner was not to exceed \$30 (inclusive) and the price for the award banquet was not to exceed \$50 (inclusive). It did not take long to discover that in New York City the cost limits were unrealistic. Expenses were decreased by 8 ⅜% when Michele obtained tax exempt status for SSSP in New York. The second week in January, Susan Will and Nickie Phillips visited several restaurants to see if they could accommodate SSSP's needs. Three restaurants operated by Restaurant Associates were in close proximity to the conference hotel and could provide a menu near the society's budget for food alone (tip was extra), however, these restaurants were unacceptable because of layout. Susan and Nickie found two restaurants that could suit the society's needs—Sung Dynasty and Carmines on 42nd. Susan made reservations at three restaurants for Val and Michele to visit. Carmines was selected for the Board of Director's dinner on August 9th (\$60 per person plus 18% gratuity and 2% service -- total: \$72) and Sung Dynasty for the Board retreat dinner on August 8th (\$35.40 per person including 18% gratuity).

Susan was not able to meet with Val Jenness and Michele Koontz during the site visit because she had surgery on January 22, 2007. Nickie Phillips met with them instead.

Program: Nickie Phillips wrote and Susan Will modified the "Welcome to New York" message for the general membership that appeared on SSSP's website and in both the preliminary and final programs. It gave a general introduction to sightseeing, dining out and shopping in New York City. This year, Sarah Damaske, a New York University graduate student, wrote a "Welcome to New York" that focused on activities that would appeal to grad students' interests and budgets. Michele and Val reviewed both Welcomes. In June 2007, Susan was asked to review the preliminary program.

Conference Registration Materials: Registration materials were to be sent directly to the hotel. In November, Michele asked Susan to contact Janet Astner of ASA to find out who was handling who was handling the restaurant guide. Ms. Astner told me to contact Kareem Jenkins, manager of meeting services for ASA. At the end of June 2007, Michele asked me to find out the cost of restaurant guide. I sent an email to Mr. Jenkins. A couple days later, Michele contacted Ms. Astner. On July 6, 2007, Michele learned from Ms. Astner that the cost of this year's restaurant guide is 71 cents each, plus the shipping. Michele ordered 700 restaurant guides for the meetings.

Meeting Promotion: In November, Nickie and Susan compiled lists of universities, colleges, and community colleges located within a 150 miles of New York City. The list included the contact addresses and telephone numbers of sociology, social work, criminology, and social science departments at each university and college. Susan then sent the list to Michele.

Nickie and Susan worked on the press release detailing the mission of the SSSP, as well as sessions and other activities that were going to take place. Once it was approved by Michele, Val and Tom, Nickie and Susan contacted our respective college's public relations offices to send it out to local news media including newspapers and television stations.

Directions to and from the Roosevelt Hotel and ASA's hotels (Hilton New York and Sheraton New York).

Sarah Damaske provided Michele with directions on how to members can travel between SSSP's hotel and ASA's hotels.

Graduate Student Reception and AIDS Fundraiser and Auction: In March 2007, Susan compiled a list of AIDS organizations located in New York City. She checked their web sites to find out their mission, various activities, sources of funding etc. Then, she selected six organizations from the list and provided Val and Michele a short description of each along with their web address. Val choose this year's beneficiary—After Hours Project. After Hours is a community-based harm reduction program that, since May 2002, has addressed the continued spread of HIV/AIDS in the predominantly low income and minority neighborhoods of Bushwick, Bedford-Stuyvesant, East New York and Brownsville, Brooklyn and Ridgewood, Queens.

When Susan, Val, Michele, Claire and Yesim Bayar (the 2006 LAC Chair) meet in Montreal, Val indicated that she would like to try using Karaoke instead of a band at the Graduate Student Reception and AIDS Fundraiser. It has become increasingly difficult to hire a band for \$300. The set-up for Karaoke is not inexpensive. The company that the Roosevelt hotel suggested quoted \$1800 for 3 hours. I was able to find a couple places that would provide the equipment without a DJ for around \$300. Sarah was willing to hang flyer around NYU looking for a band if we gave up on the Karaoke idea.

I drafted three requests for members soliciting donations for the auction. The first was sent to Boston area residents (via email) on September 11, 2006 asking if they could obtain Boston based items for the auction. It was thought that Boston based items would entice members because the 2008 meetings will be in Boston. Unfortunately, this request did not generate donations. Perhaps the request was sent too early. Michele contacted the general membership via e-mail requesting donations for the fundraiser and a request appeared in the Winter 2006 edition of *Social Problems Forum*. This request did not produce donations. A second email request was sent to the general membership early in June 2006 and appeared in the Summer 2007 edition of *Social Problems Forum*. This request did generate donations. I also sent letters to several New York based corporations soliciting donations for the auction. The letter described SSSP, the AIDS auction, and The After Hours Project.

In an attempt to obtain additional donations, Susan drafted a letter (which was approved by Val and Michele) to be sent to approximately 24 New York based companies soliciting donations for the auction. As of July 25, 2007, she did not receive donations from this effort.

A variety of items were donated by SSSP members—books, a couple of piece of hand made jewelry, two paintings—a water color and an acrylic, photos taken by a member, and an ethnographic tour of Brooklyn. Judy Lohr of The Scholar's Choice arranged to have a copy of each of the eight C. Wright Mills Award finalists donated to the auction. I made a list of the items donated. I then prepared bidding sheets for each item. A limited number of them were chosen for the live auction while the rest were setup for the silent auction.

Book Exhibit: The Scholar's Choice shipped books for the exhibit directly to the Roosevelt Hotel.

I thank all my committee members for their work. I would like to give special recognition to Nickie Phillips. When I was ill, she picked up the slack.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Will
2007 LAC Chair