

U.S. GRAIL REPORT TO GRAIL NATIONAL COUNCIL

Date: 4/10/2019

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Period Covered: January-March 2019

MISSION

- I attended the second week of CSW. Too much/so many opportunities we are not accessing. Will be submitting a plan to do so with budget for 2020.
- One option that came out of a CSW session was repatriation of some of our art collection. Many items we have NO information on (including origin) and therefore cannot truly tell our story. If we CAN repatriate it would be in keeping with best museum practices (see the “Decolonize This” movement)
- Art at the Oratory went well for initial exhibit. Attached please see draft synopsis for rolling out a series at Oratory 2020/2021. Highlight so far, MUSE Women’s Choir is interested in having one of their 2020 concerts as part of the series—including Lyn Malley musical selections. NOTE: NONE of the Grail members listed have been approached-just my ideas.
- Learning Labs are moving along. Slow pick-up but that will change soon as the two modules (composting and edible forest) are now ready to publish. Have already had 1 meeting with the Girl Scout District Office (to discuss the Learning Labs and other options for Girl Scouts) and having a second one next week (specifically about the Gold/Silver/Bronze Award opportunities).
- Slowly building on the “Threads We Are Weaving” concept connecting Grail members, their Grail mission efforts and the UN SDGs. Each NGN will cover a SDG—and any specific project a member is undertaking to illustrate. Concern that MDET is starting a separate “mapping” project despite knowing that this project is ongoing. I have heard from Shirley Piazza finally and will follow up with she and Emily Snyder within the next 2 weeks.
- Connecting who we are/what we do/why we do it wherever possible: new signs in fields about projects, yard signs about SDGs, kiosk sign about history are all examples.
- Connecting with community on passions and pop-up programs. Like the Bird Bio Blitz, the 1-Acre Wood Winter Solstice and upcoming Spring walks, and the planned nature classes for kids.
- Plans for Anti-Racism Conference are moving along nicely. That group has utilized the services of our Meetings Coordinator, Beth, quite a bit which is excellent (taking many tasks off mine and Elizabeth’s plates). Beth has been connected to the YWI as well to support their efforts. Originally she was to be tasked only with YWI, but since the demand on her time has not been maxed out, it was a natural fit to also have her support the Anti-Racism group, planning for next year’s GA, and any Council meetings as needed.
- Over the last few months there was an attempt to build spiritual community by offering twice weekly communal vespers in the oratory (led by Mary Lu Lageman and Joe Schickel). They have gone to 1 day a week and have asked to continue until June. So far this as not caught on, but since the space is not otherwise utilized I have no problem giving them more time to build.
- Holy Week events will occur Thursday through Sunday as usual. This will be the 4th year that it has been member not staff organized and led. The attendance

and donations have decreased each year. It will be interesting to see numbers for this year. We do try to support via publicity and other support. I do hope that there are new faces.

- Working to bring Diversity and Inclusion and Equity to the office. Connecting with other institutions to talk about how to remove barriers and create a space that would be supportive. I look forward to the Anti-Racism conference this fall and bringing in that work to staffing.
- Continue having meetings with City of Loveland, Clermont Parks, Little Miami Inc (the org that “manages” our conservation easement on north side) and a private citizen to connect all the trails from East Loveland Preserve, through Grailville and on through Parks land. We see this as a great public/private partnership. We have discussed doing signage and handouts that indicate different options based on ability so that folks who may have accessibility issues can still take part.
- I have been asked to be on the Steering Committee for the Cincinnati Festival of Faiths (https://www.cincifestivaloffaiths.org/about-us?fbclid=IwAR2VV8WAa-X0clzG3OUH7Wh7J0DHq3BJx_5Xz3flVamZEtwrNmHDEuWaXNM)—occurring Sept 8. We are also a sponsor so will have our information in their materials and have a table. I hope to have a strong Grail contingent on site.
- I will be presenting again at Ohio Local History Alliance Annual Conference (on Relevance Part II) in October.

MEMBERS

- Continue to work with ECWG on death notifications and hope to have a process in place to handle “emergency contacts” before summer
- Website re-do taking longer than anticipated but moving forward. I am pleased with how it is looking.
- Continue reaching out to individual members for help, input and advice. Some are very happy to help as they can, others do not return calls. We keep trying though and hope to bridge some divides by finding the right building blocks.
- The giving forms went out this week with updates but without addressing the bigger issues (should it be required of members, do donations to non US grail entities count towards that requirement, and how do we handle overseas gifts going forward). At last Council meeting, it was decided that MDET and Finance meet to discuss these issues. Since then MDET sent their request to Council.
- The bright yellow member list is in process. Lucy and Mary Omeda are working with Elizabeth to clean up International pages. Deborah Sullivan has been asked to review the committee and regional contact sections for accuracy as well.
- Elizabeth is checking on any address mismatches—which through one discovered TODAY 9/10/2019) that Emerita member Carole Spearin McCauley died in AUGUST and no one knew in Grail office/leadership. This underscores the bigger issues we are trying to wrap our heads around, like: how do we check in on members if they AREN'T the Elder Care Work Group responsibility? WHO is responsible? And HOW do we go about it?
- Beth Wasmer noted that she enjoyed receiving the Birthday card from The Grail, and then was disappointed b/c it was from staff not her grail sisters, and asked if we would have Grail members do this task. I let her know that that was the

original plan—to have MDET take this on (either the cte directly OR by them asking elders who might be homebound to do them—like 10 each—as a way to keep them active and connected. MDET did not move forward on this, so staff (Elizabeth) does it. Beth Wasmer agreed that it is a challenge and said if ok with me (it is) she would see if there is anyone who might want to take that on. That was in January. No update.

ADMINISTRATION

- Working to bring staffing to appropriate levels. Meetings Coordinator on board, next up is the Communications Coordinator. This one is harder b/c we need to have a communications plan in place to know what we need. We are a test for a local university course on doing just that. It completes work May 8. I have a draft job description to go to Personnel. Goal is a contractor not staff but want their buy in on scope.
- Archives work continuing. With Terry Marshall's fall work has halted. I have offered to bring out boxes to her at twin Towers since she and Marian are both there now. I did tell her to wait until doctor gave her the go ahead. I reiterated this offer to Mary Lu and Barbara Gibbons as well.
- About 130 boxes came from Cornwall for archives work.
- Collections still had a large chunk of art to inventory. Items found tucked away and collected into a space and now being sorted out. Kendall Neyer has come back as a volunteer to do this work. She is partnered with another volunteer who will do the data entry and boxing.
- There will be a full audit this year (as this is the 3rd year in the cycle). This will happen June/July (date not set yet), therefore we ask that budget conversations for 2020 be delayed until AFTER the audit (so August meeting).

CENTERS

GRAILVILLE

- We have a Community Service Day coming up in May with University of Cincinnati students to tackle sheds and barns
- We currently have 2 “volunteers” through the county Ohio Means Jobs programs. One who is here 19 hours a week (Leda) and one who is here 6 hours a week (Jennifer). Jennifer actually knew Mary Lu years ago when her mom was part of the Grailville CSA. She is helping Mary Lu on several tasks. Leda is helping with office work for now but will be tackling many projects.
- We are creating a Youth Cadre of seasonal hourly as-needed workers. We do this already (Nick, Scott, Jake) but have never actively recruited folks. This year we are recruiting from different schools and community organizations about a dozen 15-22 year olds. They will be doing the work we have used temps for and other on-call staff for in the past.
- We continue to rent Tidings for some overnights and meetings, and Oratory for weekly meetings and weddings. Trying to encourage more community groups to use the Oratory space.

- This year we are finishing up the outside Oratory work and turning attention to inside. Want to create spaces slightly more accessible, for example looking in to a chair lift that is added to the stairwell (like you see in houses).
- This fall we will do landscaping around Oratory. Mary Lu is collecting plants/trees to be transplanted throughout the season. She will be working with Grail members and our landscaping team.
- Tidings we will have a landscaped border in delineating our property from Bonnie's by mid-May. Trying to end a long-time challenge.
- I do not plan on doing anything else to Tidings until there is a decision on keep or go. Right now recommendation is once Cornwall is settled it is a go. We rent it b/c we can, but the money is break even to slight loss. If we decide to keep, it needs to have a plan.
- All utilities for southside are officially off Friday 4/12. Water was capped off last week. The internet will be "shifted" to boost power on north side until the contract runs out this summer then that will "shut off".
- Mary Lu and Doris's "keep" items have all been taken from Pneuma and stored at Tidings. What remains in Pneuma will go to a charity. Habitat and Goodwill will be contacted in the next week for a pick-up.
- We have NOT heard from the schools about soil core testing, but they also know they do not need to check in with the office. The schools will be putting out their master plan in April so has to happen soon.
- Grailville is the start/end for Amazing Charity race this year. (I am on their board). In the past they have used spaces, but this is first time start and end both here. The Grail will be listed as sponsor in all materials.

CORNWALL

- Mary Ann and Cindy have ended their time at Cornwall as staff. Kathi remains on staff until 8/31.
- Residents have all had time extended until 8/31. We are working with them all on sorting out any accounts that are in their names, or names of deceased or hospitalized members (and there are many cases of this). They also have been given a 6/30 date to sort through emails before we archive what is there and shut off service.
- I still plan to bring in a property manager for the space starting this summer. This will reduce Kathi's hours to almost nil, but I need to have someone in and learning the place by August. She IS aware that her hours will be few and far between from here on out.
- I continue making monthly—mostly—work weeks at Cornwall.

DECISIONS NEEDED:

1. OK to move budget prep to August
2. Approval to explore repatriation of art