

Minutes of the SAS General Meeting at the Society for American Archaeology
Atlanta, GA, April 24, 2009
Sandra L. López Varela

In attendance: Rob Sternberg, Sandra López Varela, Chris Prior, Anne Skinner, AJ Vonarx, Dana Rosenstein, Rob Tykot, Christian Wells, Destiny Crider, Charles Kolb, Jay VanderVeen, David Hill.

1. Election results for President-elect.

The number of votes in favor of Dr. Patrick Degryse (106 votes for, 4 against, 10 abstentions, one write-in vote for Hector Neff) confirms his election as Vice-President/President-elect of the Society for Archaeological Sciences (2009-2011).

2. R. E. Taylor Poster Award.

SAS was unable this year to award the R. E. Taylor Poster at the SAA, as it had done for more than ten years. The SAA and SAS have agreed to continue offering the award as of next year. The R. E. Taylor poster award will be advertised and promoted in the SAA Archaeological Record and webpage. SAS has agreed to offer its regular prize (publications, money bonus), exempting from this award the regular membership to our association that had been offered. Students will subscribe via the SAA webpage to the Taylor Poster Award in advance. As of 2010, posters will be exhibited during the weekend at the SAA. Posters in general will be received well in advance by the SAA, including those posters registered for the R. E. Taylor Award. By receiving them in advance it will be possible to announce the winners at our respective business meetings. Coordination is needed between SAA and SAS to set up a link to download those posters under competition for the R. E. Taylor award. The SAA is evaluating too how to solve the fact that posters will be exhibited during the weekend after the award winner has been announced. A possibility will be to move all business meetings to Saturday evening.

This year's competition will be advertised through our webpage, as a Spring competition, restricting participation to those posters presented at a professional venue in April 2009.

Claire Smith, President of World Archaeology Conference (WAC), is very interested in establishing a closer collaboration with SAS and it is interested in offering the R. E. Taylor poster award during WAC's international congress taking place every four years. Contrary to the SAA, the President of WAC does not object to SAS offering a membership subscription to the winner.

Actions: 1. AJ Vonarx and Sandra López have agreed to prepare a note for the SAA Archaeological Record to advertise the R. E. Taylor Poster Award as soon as possible, as the registration forms have already been mailed. 2. Sandra Lopez will continue coordinating with the SAA to set up the award and to link the information and downloading to our webpage. 3. Sandra Lopez will continue coordinating with the President of WAC to set up the award and to mutually support our associations with activities and linking of our pages. 4. Adrian Burke should follow up in maintaining our liaisons with these societies.

3. Archaeological and Anthropological Sciences Journal. During our meeting it was agreed to support and endorse this new journal, and to allow our members to subscribe at a discounted rate through their membership fees in SAS, as is currently done for JAS and Archaeometry. Robert Tykot is in communication with Springer and has informed them of our decision. The SAS logo will be printed in their journal. Negotiations are on their way to have a SAS representative as part of the Editorial Board.

4. New Editor of the SAS Bulletin 2010. After a remarkable journey of dedication to publish the SAS Bulletin, Christian Wells announced his retirement as Editor. SAS wishes him all the best and hopes to continue having Christian Wells back on board very soon. After a careful search for a new editor of the SAS Bulletin, SAS is happy to report that Dr. Jay VanderVeen, faculty member in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at Indiana University-South Bend, has agreed to join our team as our new Editor. SAS welcomes Jay and offers him all of our support.

Actions: Christian Wells and Jay VanderVeen will be working closely together in the coming months on the production of the final two issues for 2009 and to transition the processes in place for publication and shipping.

5. Joining SAA-Council of Affiliated Society. The Society for American Archaeology works cooperatively with a number of affiliated societies, known collectively as the Council of Affiliated Societies. The purpose of the CAS-SAA is to mutually advance the practice of archaeology. The cost of annual membership is \$30.00. SAS has agreed to join the SAA, pending clarification of objectives and extension of commitments. SAS considers joining CAS to improve our visibility and improve our identity as a well recognized academic society.

Actions. Sandra López will investigate further on the mission of the CAS-SAA, and whether an affiliation would impose any limitations on the SAS, before submitting an application.

6. ISA. 2010. The 38th International Symposium of Archaeometry (ISA 2010) will take place in Tampa, Florida between May 10-14th, hosted by the Laboratory of Archaeological Science, Department of Anthropology, University of South Florida, having Robert Tykot as Chairman. Robert Tykot is evaluating the publication of the ISA 2010 proceedings. Given the new trends in publication, it is preferable to offer an on-line version of the proceedings, not only in terms of costs but also in terms of accessibility. However, libraries and individuals are still interested in printed copies so finding a publisher that can offer both options will be ideal.

Actions. Rob Tykot will keep SAS informed of the progress of ISA 2010 and how SAS can be of service. Exploring the possibility of publishing previous proceedings seems to be an option with Left Coast Press.

7. Membership. As of April 2009, SAS is experiencing its lowest membership of the last fifteen years. In her report, AJ Vonarx relates the situation to: 1) the current economic recession, despite the low cost of membership, 2) the growth of other small archaeological organizations that encourage cross-disciplinary work and the development

of specialty groups within large organizations, a problem shared by the SAA too, 3) the lack of visibility of our association in the last few years. To this overview, our discussion considered the critique that our current image apparently promotes an interest only in science and technology, without emphasizing the anthropology behind it.

Given this situation, we have discussed several lines of action to reposition ourselves as a leading organization. However, this requires commitment and hard work from all of our Board members, if indeed we need to revert this tendency, loyalty to our goals is an essential component but we need to demonstrate it with different strategies and actions, but mostly, with everyone's efforts:

1. Improve our identity. Revamp our webpage immediately. Portray a more human face to our association. Strengthen our links with other associations, perhaps offering workshops at different venues.
2. Closer contact with our membership. Elaborate a welcoming statement by the President. Communicate who are we through our webpage and the SAS Bulletin. Interview our membership on the importance to be part of our association. Interview our Board. Constant participation to feed the already established blog and wiki by the General Secretary.
3. AJ Vonarx and Rob Sternberg will explore where (web page, wiki, Google docs, etc.) and how to host a lab directory for SAS members, with a goal of going online by Sept. 1
4. Boost membership. Have López Varela call those that did not renew their membership and invite them to rejoin SAS. Promote SAS among our colleagues.

8. Budget Approval. SAS approved the budget for 2009 and reviewed the 2008 finances. Currently, our total assets are on the order of \$37, 000 US.

Action. SAS approved the General Secretary to request help from a professional accountant or an accountant student to use more formal accounting practices in presenting the annual SAS budget.

9. Webpage. Webhosting service by Bluehost continues, but needs another two-year renewal for 2010. SAS listserv is the primary portal for information distribution to our membership. It is noticed that not all users are members. Members are not receiving communication through the listserv, partly attributed to a technical problem due to bouncing of former subscribers.

Actions. Detect unregistered membership and invite them to join SAS. Invite members to subscribe to SAS listserv again either individually or through a bulk message. Consider setting up a membership directory. Report any changes on Board membership to update webpage.

Our next business meeting will be at the International Symposium on Archaeometry, Tampa, 2010.