

# CSAA Presentation Synopsis

## Monday

### **“From Grassroots to Grants: Preserving 12 Former Country Schools”**

Part I- Ronni Pue      Part II-Dr. Jim Lindley

#### Part I

“They are selling our schools,” was the outcry of a group of rural Gillespie County citizens, who for the last 40 years had taken care of 12 former schools. Technically they belonged to the school district, which was considering a sale, as there was no legal means to transfer them to private entities. This presentation demonstrates how a novice group can start a grassroots movement; engage the citizens of Texas to approve an amendment to the Texas Constitution allowing the transfer of the properties under a long-term rental agreement. Novices? No. The Friends are now well organized and successfully obtaining grants and funds to restore buildings and moving forward with their vision to preserve the traditions of the schools, the community clubs, and the history of Gillespie County for future generations.

#### Part II

The preservation and restoration of any old historic structure requires an organized approach with consideration of the historic significance of the structure, degree of degradation of the structure, a cost benefit analysis and what will be the use of the restored structure. I will explore some aspects of each of these points related to our 12 unique schools and sources of funding related to the process.

### **“Lessons Learned from Schoolgirls Samplers”**

Keynote Speaker: Vickie LoPiccolo Jennett

Although embroidery itself dates to ancient times, sampler-making as a learning tool did not appear until sometime in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Today early samplers are studied and prized not only for their aesthetics, but also for what they reveal about samplermakers and their lives, sometimes where they lived and even what was important to them. From the simplest marking sampler to the most intricate pictorial sampler, there is much to be gleaned from this humble art form. The value of the samplermaking is not limited to carefully placed stitches on a canvas. While needlework fell from favor as a subject in a curricula more than a century ago, its’ practice does have value in 21<sup>st</sup> century education. A look back at the history of the schoolgirl—and the occasional schoolboy—sampler will reveal some useful lessons and applications that enhance the experience of students both inside and outside the classroom. We celebrate the talent of early needleworkers as we consider opportunities to weave these skills into education today.

### **“Learning from the Land: Practical and Experimental Agricultural Education in School Textbooks from 1905-1911”**

Dr. Carla Abreu-Ellis and Dr. Jason Brent Ellis

We will provide an in-depth overview of five selected school textbooks, from 1905-1911, indicated by Benjamin Marshall Davis (1911), as providing a practical approach to the topic of agricultural education. He observed that while having a preponderance of texts related to the topic of agriculture in education, very few school textbooks were written putting the emphasis on students using agriculture as a platform for laboratory or experimental methods in the primary and secondary classroom. This perspective is congruent with other educational theorists such as Grace Marian Smith (1912) in her observation that “agriculture is not a book subject. The way to teach agriculture is the ideal way to teach anything. Assign a topic for experimental work.” Thusly, this presentation will discuss the tensions of this time period toward the pedagogical foundations of rote knowledge versus active, participatory discovery with a special emphasis on country schools.

### **“The Rocky Road to the Schoolhouse Door”**

Susan Fineman

From the end of the Revolution it was not an easy task to establish a nationwide system of “common schools,” but Americans persevered. Learn of the problems, pitfalls, and successes of a scrappy and diverse populace whose greatest wish was to produce literate, moral, responsible, and disciplined citizens who would uphold the hard-won republic. Our nation’s one-room schools, at one time numbering over 200,000, were testimony to the determination of communities large and small to guarantee their children’s future through education. This presentation will take you on a gentle romp through the evolution of these truly “public” schools with a focus on the local community as the backbone of American education.

### **“Children’s Books, Making History Come Alive”**

Dr. Mary Outlaw

Today the young visitors to country schools and living history centers often do not have the experiential background to understand and appreciate the role that country schools played in the education of students from earlier generations. The staff and teacher find themselves attempting to relate history that was real for their parents and/or grandparents and seek to make it come alive for the young visitors.

This presentation will include suggested activities using children’s literature (1) before the visit, (2) during the visit, and (3) after the visit. An example of a “book box” will be available to demonstrate another strategy for making connections for the young visitors.

An annotated bibliography of books that have a country school connection will be available. Participants will be invited to share books they have used successfully, and to generate ideas for creating a book box.

### **“A Day in the Life of a Country Schoolchild 1918-1918”**

Stephen Baethge

My presentation will primarily be remembering and/or reflecting on the daily routine of a 1915-1918 schoolchild in the Gillespie County, Texas area. I will begin with the child waking up on the farm and doing his/her chores, having a hearty breakfast and then traveling to the local schoolhouse, either on foot or riding a horse, donkey or mule. I will describe, upon arrival at school, the activities and games that were common on the school grounds during this time period. After the games and activities were completed, school began and I will focus on the lessons learned and daily routine of a 1915-1918 schoolchild. Lunchtime—remembering the lunches the children carried, and the games activities after lunch were consumed. After lunch, returning to the instruction received. I will insert a little humor as I describe pranks the children might have played on the teacher and other students. After the school closed for the day, I will tell how the children wound up their school day, and returned home. Once they returned home, I will reflect on their afternoon chores, homework and family life, and preparing for bed.

### **“Those Who Can, Teach: The Normal School Experience in Wisconsin”**

Larry and Ann Scheckel

The Normal Schools were designed to prepare young men and women to teach in the 6,000 rural schools in Wisconsin. The idea of a “ecole normale” originated in France and spread from Lexington, Massachusetts (1839) and across the landscape of our new nation. The presentation will focus on the Vernon County Training School of Southwest Wisconsin, which started in 1907 with classes in an old high school. In 1918 a new three-story brick building was built and was considered “the best planned and best built school in the state, designed to stand the test of time”. Over 2,000 graduated from 1919-1971. Most were young women, most got jobs, and most were very good. The presentation will include interviews with several graduates of the Vernon County Normal School. I asked “What was it like when you went to Oak Grove in the fall of 1945?” “My dad drove me up to the school in the middle of nowhere, I was 20 years old, and scared to death.” I will tell the rest of the story.

### **“Introducing the Common School Narrative: Schools in Nineteenth Century Fiction”**

Dr. Allison Speicher

I will introduce readers to an exciting new archive for understanding the expansion of popular education in the 19<sup>th</sup> century: the common school narrative. I have recovered a largely untapped collection of 130 stories about common schooling, published between 1820 and 1890, which bring the country school to life through vibrant description. These stories were wildly popular in the 19<sup>th</sup> century: they appeared in the North, South, West and Midwest, were written by well-known authors like Mark Twain as well as by long-forgotten magazine writers, and captivated America’s literary imagination for over 70 years. Despite their geographic and generic diversity, these stories share four basic plot lines: school exhibitions and spelling bees, violence against teachers, student-teacher romance, and teachers adopting their students. Each of these plots taps into major concerns about common school reform, offering us fresh insights into the ways ordinary Americans negotiated the changes wrought by the growth of popular education.

### **“Rattlesnakes, The Wrath of the Itch, and Ringing the Recitation Bell: Authentic Student and Teacher Narratives from the Texas One-Room Schools”**

Susan Webb

The experience of attending early 20<sup>th</sup> century Texas country schools can best be described those who attended, so the presenter of this session will relay a variety of stories which have been documented from interviews with real life Texas students and teachers. I will play the part of a Texas historian who has gathered an array of early 20<sup>th</sup> century students and teachers (played by the audience members) and will engage them in conversation to review the interviews recorded by Luther Bryan Clegg, author of the *The Empty Schoolhouse*, published by Texas A&M University Press, 1997. During the course of this presentation, attending audience members will become better acquainted with the challenges of providing and receiving an education in the rustic settings of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century Texas countryside.

### **“The Iowa Amish School Controversy: 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Photograph that was Worth More than 1,000 Words”**

Dr. Mark Dewalt

This presentation will focus on the Amish Iowa School Controversy that made national and international headlines in November of 1965. The events of that day were centered at an Amish one-room school in Iowa. Attendees will first learn about several key components of Amish culture. The discussion will then turn to the topic of Amish education and the events of November 19, 1965, including the photo worth more than 1,000 words. The resulting brouhaha eventually led to a new law in Iowa that allowed religious groups some freedom from education laws required of public schools in the state. As a result, Iowa is now home to more than 50 Amish one-room schools. The US and Canada have now more than 2,000 one-room Amish schools today, including one in Beeville, Texas.

### **“Country Schools in Our Family Tree”**

Sally Murray

The tri-fold poster display will display the importance of country schools in the Sowell and Williams Families. A variety of illustrations and artifacts will be displayed. The oral presentation will help the audience understand the role of education in the two families.

### **“How a One-Room School Ended Up on the Iowa Quarter”**

Bill and Faith Sherman

In 1998, the U.S. Mint launched a state quarter program. Each state was asked to develop a design that would represent their State. In 2004 Iowa Governor Thomas Vilsack selected a painting by Artist Grant Wood for the Iowa quarter. The painting, “Arbor Day”, featured children planting a tree in front of a one-room school. The presentation will review the process used to make this selection and how Iowans reacted to featuring a one-room school on their quarter. The hidden symbolism included in this painting will be analyzed. The impact that the selection of “Arbor Day” for the quarter had on country school preservation will be summarized. Also some other proposals for the Iowa quarter will be shown.

### **“The Bairfield School, A One-Room School from the Texas Panhandle”**

Carolyn Sowell

The tri-fold poster display will explain the importance of the Bairfield School to the children who lived in sparsely settled Texas Panhandle. Today it continues to provide knowledge to those who visit it in its current location at the National Ranching Heritage Center on the campus of Texas Tech University in Lubbock, Texas.

### **“Janes Teachers: Teaching Agriculture and Domestic Science in African-American One-Room Schools”**

Dr. Pamela Stover

Janes teachers were African-American supervisors of teachers funded by Philadelphia Quaker Philanthropist Anna Janes. These teachers were placed in industrial schools and in one-room schools. They were to promote higher standards of living and adapt to the needs of the community, including the teaching of gardening, all types of domestic science, farming, health, and hygiene. Some Rosenwald schools had an additional room for domestic science training. Tomato and Corn Clubs were popular. Girls typically joined the Tomato Club and learned to germinate seeds, grow the tomatoes, can the

tomatoes, and prepare food or sell tomatoes. Jeanes teachers, numbering from 129-426, were funded from 1908-1968 in the 13 southern states. Jeanes teachers were directly involved in the construction of Rosenwald schools in ensuring that the black community had raised its funds necessary to earn Rosenwald's matching funds.

## **CSAA Presentation Synopsis**

### **Tuesday**

#### **“How A CSAA Book Came Into Being: More Than 200,000 Country Schools”**

Dr. Lucy P Townsend

During the World War I era, most American children attended a one-room country school. In fact, over 200,000 of these schools once dotted the landscape. Today, most of these buildings are fading into dust, but some people have turned ruins into beautifully restored schoolhouses. Others have guided school groups in hands-on-history reenactments. Still others have published books, hosted conferences, and taken photos. A publication of the CSAA, *More Than 200,000 Country Schools* tells the stories of 13 successful projects related to country schools. It also invites you to research, preserve, and educate the public about these schools. Copies of the book will be on display.

#### **“You Can Count On It! Math With A Student-Created Abacus”**

Eileen Whited

Using an abacus is helpful in teaching math because it gives students a concrete and often colorful object to associate with numerical values. Even without having the abacus in hand, students can mentally picture an image of the beads and more quickly do mental calculations. Going one step further, by constructing their own abacuses, students will achieve pride in creating their own learning tool and will be more eager to learn how to use it.

A short historical overview of the use of the abacus: first, its traditional use in Asian cultures and secondly, its educational use in western cultures in teaching mathematical concepts.

To make clear the value of an abacus in teaching math concepts, some quick lessons for kindergarten and the lower grades will be shown, showing how the abacus helps to visualize both number values and simple operations.

You will see a traditional abacus, an abacus used in western lower grades, and an abacus made of natural materials. A demonstration of construction of an abacus of twigs, hollow stems, and wire, as well as a counting tray style abacus made of clay and berries.

#### **“Endowed Funds—Why you Want Them”**

Paul Urban

What is an endowment?

Why have an endowment?

What are the benefits of having an endowment?

#### **“Some Assembly Required: Schoolhouse Furniture 1845-1945”**

Debbie Schaefer-Jacobs

This presentation about the American school desk traces the history of several styles of desks. Desks from several periods include those hand made for schools by locals, and as well as those manufactured and shipped “knock down state” for assembly in the classroom. The discussion will include rationale for development and improvements as documented through patent model specifications and subsequent production of actual desks as well as examples of health benefit debates over materials, hardware, and how furniture should function which varied from rural to urban school environments.

This presentation is richly illustrated with images of school desk patent models that illustrate a selection of the 115 pieces from the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History's education collection. Examples of manufacturers' catalogs, trade literature, firsthand accounts from teachers and administrators, and other archival materials have been included to support the conclusions drawn by studying the artifacts.

### **“How To Help Your Donor Prospects Create A Legacy That Benefits Your Great Cause: From An Endowment Donors’ Perspective”**

Dr. Alice White

Small-group informal conversation time for folks who want to learn more about how one person learned how to more effectively get and give resources to causes in which she believes.

### **“A School Legal Challenge: Pleasant Hill Rocky Community School”**

Dorothy Uecker and James Sultemeier

In 1927 Alfred Lindig conveyed to the Blanco County, Texas, Board Trustees a tract of land for school purposes. School was held there from 1927 through 1950 for grades 1-8. In 1952 the Blanco County School Board Trustees conveyed this property to the Trustees of the Pleasant Hill Improvement Association to maintain and care for the premises as a community center. Since 1952 the schoolhouse has been used for meetings of various clubs, precinct voting site, reunions, community fair, parties, and since 1958 the annual Smorgasbord fundraiser benefitting local non-profit organizations. In 2013, the great grandson filed suit against the Community Club to claim the property, claiming reversion after no school was held. In December 2014, the 424<sup>th</sup> District Court ruled that the Club is rightful owner. The Third court of Appeals and the Supreme Court have affirmed this ruling. The club continues to carry on their activities despite years of legal dispute.

### **“Volunteers: Strategies For Finding And Keeping Them”**

Dr. John “Rusty” Brooks, Consultant to CSAA

This presentation will examine volunteerism and its importance to the small non-profit organization. The difficult questions of “how do I find volunteers?” and “how do I keep volunteers?” will be addressed during the presentation. Information will be given on how to re-define volunteers and re-configure strategies for successfully attracting volunteers and potential donors.

Dr. Brooks believes that any marketing problem can be solved. The problem of reliable volunteers can also be solved. Several examples will be presented that demonstrate creative solutions and strategies.

You will learn how to re-assess volunteer needs and profiles. Creative suggestions will be given on how to engage millennials as part of a volunteerism strategic plan.

Dr. Brooks will also comment on strategies for re-visioning mission and purpose with respect to the changing donor, supporter, and consumer markets.

### **“On The Land, Learning At Hand: African American Experience From Cotton To Crochet, Quilts, And Dressmaking”**

Dr. Janell Drone

Cottons’ evolution from agricultural to commodity scattering: is a sustainable labor and critical revenue generator for rural America. The conference theme aligns the African American experience as foremost contributor to this end. The presentation discusses cotton crop planting and harvest. It continues with coloration, cross-stitching and designing. Ultimately, a display of visual art and history—textiles gathered from lessons in crocheting, quilts dressmaking materialize. This presentation is constructed for Multicultural Teachers and Curriculum Developers. It teaches family traditions and culture connected to celebrating and gifts for African Americans’ birth, weddings and burial rites.

### **“Education In The US Army: Schools At The Forts”**

Nancy Jacoby

This program will focus on the establishment of schools at many US Army posts following the Civil War. These schools were built with the purpose of educating the newly enlisted black regiments, known as Buffalo Soldiers, who were largely former slaves with little or no educational background. The program will talk about how and why these units were formed and how they differed in organization from standard white units, in particular the introduction of the Regimental Chaplains that were dual-purposed as religious and educational providers. We will talk about some of the experiences of the black soldiers and various chaplains had at some of the schools throughout the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century as well as how the establishment of these schools in Texas directly affected the frontier lifestyle and economy.

### **“Curtains, Stage, Performances And Celebrations”**

Gloria Hawkins

Throughout the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, troops of vaudeville actors traveled from town to town performing on the stages of opera houses located in small town America. These stages were draped with hand-painted curtains ranging from ornate “Grand Curtains” to small stage curtains and flats. One style of these curtains is known as an advertising drape or curtain. Opera curtains are now being re-discovered and restored across the US, but what many don’t realize is that advertising curtains once hung in country schools. They provided backdrops for Christmas programs, end of school performances, and celebrations of the student and the people of the community.

### **“Riding Astride: The Sidesaddle And The Schoolmarm”**

Dr. Veronica Ent

The Victorian schoolteacher arriving to her class upon a sidesaddle is a nostalgic legend that is often associated with tales of teacher transportation in the 1900’s. Whether or not this type of transportation was common for teachers, this session will demonstrate the use of the sidesaddle and its use in both western and English seats. The western sidesaddle differed from its urban partner in the east. The design and equitation of each seat varied from travel, work, hunting, and entertainment. Participants will have an opportunity to experience an actual sidesaddle and learn its history through photographs and equestrian instructional materials throughout the turn of the century. A discussion will follow the session on the actual use of the sidesaddle by women employed as teachers, tutors, nurses, nannies, etc.

### **“The Edwin Washington Project: Documenting African-American Education In Segregated Loudoun County, Virginia”**

Larry W. Roeder, Jr.

In 1867, formerly enslaved Edwin Washington toiled in Leesburg, Virginia for a modest compensation and the privilege of attending school between errands. He also wrote of his love of learning. This project is a monument to the African-American students, their parents, patrons, and educators of that time, through to the end of segregation in Loudon County.

The investigators are creating the first ever definitive list of “colored” schools in Loudon, who studied, who instructed and what was learned. They also examine how resources were distributed between white and “colored” schools and local African-American resistance to segregation and their demands for better schools. This is done by interviewing former students and educators and reviewing a century of records recently recovered after being lost for over 40 years in an abandoned school, as well as deeds and other documents preserved by the Loudon County Circuit Court and private owners.

### **“Why Come to New Hampshire in 2017? ... Your Invitation!”**

Susan Fineman, Coordinator 2017 CSAA Conference

What do we have in store for you in 2017? Hear of our venue, Colby-Sawyer College, local hotels and inns, NH attractions, and the lure of our schoolhouses. Collect information so you can start planning your trip to New England!