

Minutes of the Second General Assembly of the
Canada/United States Chapter of ISKO [1pm February 25, 2010]

The second General Assembly of the Canada/United States convened in Room IV of the Villa Montefiore, the La Sapienza University of Rome. In attendance were Amelia Abreu, Erika Banski, Thomas M. Dousa, Rebecca Green, Lynne Howarth, Barbara Kwaśnik, Kathryn La Barre, Dorothy McGarry, Hope Olson, Richard Smiraglia, Rick Szostak, Joseph T. Tennis, Marcia Lei Zeng, and Sergey Zherebchevsky, with La Barre, as president of ISKO-C/US, presiding over the proceedings.

After convoking the assembly, La Barre set forth the agenda for the meeting:

- (1) Officer reports on the current state of ISKO-C/US
- (2) Discussion and formulation of plans for the upcoming NASKO-3 (North American Symposium on Knowledge Organization).
- (3) Open discussion of any remaining questions, suggestions, etc.

(1a) President's report: La Barre opened the officer reports by discussing Ergon Verlag's response to reports of the irregular, and, in many cases, non-existent, distribution to members of printed copies of the journal *Knowledge Organization*. La Barre announced that, in recent weeks, the situation had begun to improve markedly, with members reporting receipt of the most recent issue of KO. This reflects a new structure for direct communication to Ergon of address and membership changes, and for reporting missing journals [i.e., via direct e-mail to Ergon's contact person for the distribution of *Knowledge Organization*, Stephan Specht, whose e-mail address can be found at <http://www.ergon-verlag.de>]. Most delivery problems were traced to the poor performance of a subcontracted delivery agency, now replaced with a more reliable agency. Ergon is also seeking to address continuing problems with postal delivery. La Barre further noted that Specht, who attended the conference as Ergon's representative, had assured her that he is committed to providing the full complement of issues for 2008 and 2009 to any and all ISKO(-C/US) members registered during those years who had failed to receive their copies. La Barre stressed that, in order to receive any missing issues, members should contact her or Dousa and specify which issues they are missing: this information would be passed along to Ergon.¹ She also expressed confidence that Ergon will live up to its promise not only to replace all missing copies, but to distribute future issues of *Knowledge Organization* in a more regular and timely manner.

(1b) Treasurer's report: According to Dousa, the membership of ISKO-C/US remained stable between 2009 and 2010: the chapter had numbered 47 members in 2009 and, as of 25 February, 2010, it had 46 members who had renewed, or expressed their intention to renew, for 2010.² As of 25 February 2010, the chapter was comprised of

- 33 regular members (i.e., those paying the 80-Euro rate),
- 12 student or retired members (i.e., those paying the 25-Euro rate),³
- 1 honorary member for life (namely, Nancy Williamson).

¹ In a later post on the ISKO-C/US listserv with subject line "KO Delivery Update", dated 5 March 2010, La Barre stated that, if members hadn't contacted her or Dousa yet about missing issues, they could contact Ergon Verlag directly and lodge claims for missing issues with Specht at <http://www.ergon-verlag.de>.

² Since the Assembly meeting, another person, whose intentions to renew his membership for 2010 had unclear, indicated that he indeed wished to renew: with the inclusion of his name in the membership list, the number of members, as of 7 March, 2010, stands again at 47.

³ Since the Assembly meeting, the addition of a member falling under the "student and retired" category has raised the number of such members by one: as of 7 March, 2010, it stands at 13.

With regard to the geographical distribution of its membership, as of 25 February 2010,

- 35 members resided in the United States,⁴
- 10 hailed from Canada,
- 1 came from Mexico.

Dousa noted that one of the participants at the Assembly, Erika Banski, of the University of Alberta Libraries, had joined that very day and members of the assembly extended a welcome to her.

After reporting on membership, Dousa gave a *précis* of the current financial status of ISKO-C/US. As of 19 February, 2009, ISKO-C/US had \$1269.87 USD in its checking account and \$ 5.00 USD in its savings account, with an additional \$3386.71 USD in its Paypal account.⁵ The latter sum, which represents membership dues, would be transferred to the checking account upon Dousa's return from Rome and then remitted to the central ISKO account via wire transfer. Dousa stated that, because of the high transaction fees involved in such wire transfers (\$ 45.00 USD per transfer), he would prefer to make only one wire transfer per year for *renewing* members: he noted with approval that, as of 25 February, 2010, 40 out of 46 renewing members had paid their membership dues for 2010, almost all of them doing so via the Paypal button on the Membership page of the ISKO-C/US Website, and thanked them for their cooperation in this.

The expenditures for the latter half of 2009 and early 2010 had been: (1) a bank transfer fee (\$ 45.00 dollars), as well as (2) a Webspace rental fee (\$ 66.72) to Hostgator and (3) an annual domain name fee (\$ 9.25) to Dynadot.

(1c) Program report: Dousa gave this report on behalf of Nicolas George, ISKO-C/US's Program Officer and Webmaster, who was not present at the meeting. The location of our new Website is: <http://www.iskocus.org/index.html> for which fees have been paid for one year. The original Hostgator web hosting rate of \$ 66.72 had been a special discounted start-up rate, from the usual \$ 83.40 per year. George suggested that if ISKO-C/US were to pay in advance for a three-year bloc, the rate *per annum* for those three years would fall to only \$ 59.40: this prepayment of fees would amount to a total cost of \$ 178.20. If ISKO-C/US continues to pay fees annually, over the next three years the total amount paid would be \$ 250.20 (= \$ 83.40 x 3). In light of these considerations, Dousa put forth the motion that the chapter authorize him to make a prepayment of three years when he next paid the web hosting fee: this motion was seconded and carried by acclamation.

(2) NASKO-3 discussion: With the conclusion of the Treasury report, La Barre yielded the floor to Smiraglia to discuss plans for the upcoming NASKO. Smiraglia announced that he and Abby Goodrum would be hosting the conference at Ryerson University in Toronto, Canada, on the Thursday and Friday of the 2nd or 3rd week in June, 2011. The dates available would thus be 9–10 or 16–17 June. Smiraglia asked if chapter members had a preference for the earlier or the later date. McGarry stated that it was important to ensure that the date chosen would not conflict with any other conferences such as ALA, SLA, or IFLA—a view to which several other members voiced their assent. Tennis further noted that it would be best to pick a date that would be least likely to conflict with the academic calendars. After further discussion, a majority of members of

⁴ Since the Assembly meeting, the addition of a member living in the United States has raised the number of such members by one: as of 7 March, 2010, it stands at 36.

⁵ The receipt of an additional dues payment since the Assembly have slightly increased this number: as of 4 March, 2010, it stood at 3516.81.

the assembly stated a preference for the later date and so 16–17 June, 2011, is currently scheduled as the date of the conference.

Smiraglia next opened the floor to discussion of the theme of the conference, and observed that the theme should be as inclusive as possible. Dousa recalled that, in earlier discussions at the 2009 NASKO and at the informal ISKO-C/US gathering held in Vancouver during the 2009 ASIS&T conference, two themes had been broached as possibilities: one, based on Grant Campbell's paper on the relation of Ricouer's categories of "language" and "discourse" to KO at the 2009 NASKO, would be "Language and Discourse in North American KO", while the other would deal with the subject of "Domains and Domain Analysis". Tennis noted that Allyson Carlyle had observed that 2011 would be the Year of the Catalog and that it might be appropriate to take this into account in formulating a theme. Seeking inspiration, Smiraglia suggested reading through the list of general KO research questions that had received the greatest number of votes during the workshop on the state of KO research in North America held at the 2009 NASKO. Kwaśnik noted that these did not yield any particularly salient theme. All present agreed with Smiraglia's call that the conference theme cast as wide a net as possible and so many members found Tennis's proposal for a theme like "KO: The State of the Art" to be an appealing one. No definitive decision was made on the formulation of the theme: this is a task that awaits the program committee, in consultation with the chapter, over the next few months.

Further discussion of the form of the conference ensued:

The first issue addressed was whether or not to have a keynote speaker. Smiraglia noted that the inaugural 2007 NASKO did not have a keynote speaker, but rather a keynote panel. The 2009 NASKO had neither a keynote speaker nor a panel, although there had originally been plans to have the former. Kwaśnik suggested that, if the decision were made to have a keynote speaker, then Cheryl Metoyer, of the University of Washington, who had given a very interesting presentation at the 20th Annual SIG-CR held in Vancouver in 2009, would be good candidate. After further discussion, however, it was decided not to schedule a keynote address for the 2011 NASKO.

The group next addressed the question of whether to schedule a formal banquet into the conference program. Smiraglia noted that neither the 2007 nor the 2009 iteration of NASKO had included a banquet on its program: in light of the great expense that this would entail, he advised that no banquet be planned for the 2011 version. This proposal found unanimous approval among members of the assembly.

The group discussed the format of the presentations for NASKO. It was noted that the 2009 conference had been composed of free-standing papers and that no posters had been presented. The suggestion was made that, if the theme of the conference is to be broad, it would make sense to organize it in double-tiered form, including workshops of two or three papers clustered around a theme, as well as free-standing papers: the assembly agreed that such an approach was worth trying and that the call for papers should reflect it. Furthermore, Smiraglia suggested that, in the call for presentations, there be an explicit call for posters. He noted that, all too often, posters are treated as consolation prizes for proposals that have been rejected for presentation as full papers: an explicit encouragement of poster submissions might not only increase the number of KO research projects represented at the conference, but might also increase participation.

Finally, Smiraglia brought up the issue of the review process for the conference. He proposed that it follow the procedure used for the 2009 iteration—namely, an extended abstract is to be

submitted to reviewers who decide to accept it or not, and then a paper is to be submitted for the electronic proceedings. This suggestion found general assent within the assembly. Smiraglia also noted that there would be need for reviewers of the proposals for presentation at the conference and passed around a sheet of paper for people interested in serving as reviewers to sign.

(3) General discussion: La Barre next opened the floor to general discussion of any matters that members might want to bring up. Kwaśnik asked about whether ISKO-C/US was developing a presence in Web 2.0 social media: in particular, she asked about whether an ISKO-C/US account would be opened on LibraryThing as a means of sharing information about KO publications. La Barre responded to this question that she was in the process of setting up accounts for the chapter on Facebook, Twitter, and Library Thing, and that these would soon be available to members and linked to the ISKO-C/US Website.⁶

No further matters came up for discussion and so, ca. 1:35 pm, the General Assembly was called to a close. Several group photographs of the chapter members in attendance were taken, by a small fountain with pool located in the park outside of the Villa Montefiore, where several pictures were taken. It is hoped that these photos will be made available on the chapter Website soon.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas M. Dousa, Treasurer, ISKO-C/US

Acting as Secretary for the Second General Assembly of ISKO-C/US. 9 March, 2010.

⁶ All three accounts have been set up as of 7 March, 2010. Facebook @ ISKO C/US; Twitter @iskocus; LibraryThing <http://www.librarything.com/groups/iskocus>