

## Love Our Literary Scene In Florida?

A self-made millionaire named Fred Ruffner, vacationing in Miami during the 1960s, noticed one morning the temperature differential between South Florida and his hometown of Detroit.

"It was 89 here and nine below back home," says Ruffner. "That got my attention."

To escape the Michigan cold, Ruffner soon made Fort Lauderdale the winter base for his family, and for his company, Gale Research, a pioneering publisher of library reference books.

It was one of the best things that ever happened to Florida literary culture.

Everyone using a Broward County library, or attending the Key West Literary Seminar, or listening to a free lecture at Nova Southeastern University during the annual LitLive! Festival, owes Ruffner a debt of gratitude.

Now 81, Ruffner funded, staffed or led the organizations that gave rise to all those institutions at critical times in their development, much of it through his leadership and support of the Friends of the Library.

And yet, not one building or organization bears Ruffner's name.

"That's the mark of Fred's success as a philanthropist," says Jean Trebbi, retired founder of the Florida Center for the Book. "He plants a seed that's strong enough and inspires enough people that it carries forward without him."

### A new page

As a boy, Ruffner was a voracious reader, taking home an armful of books from the library each Saturday. His favorite was *The Swiss Family Robinson*, because the family sought daily to improve life, though marooned on a

desert island.

"I've lived my life by the philosophy of the French psychologist Emile Coue," Ruffner says. "His motto was, 'Every day, in every way, I'm getting better and better.'"

As a market researcher for an auto company in 1954, Ruffner could not find a directory of associations at his local library.

"It seemed to me this was a basic kind of book," Ruffner says. "In my ignorance, I quit my job and hung out my shingle as a publisher. I knew zero about publishing."

Working first at his kitchen table, Ruffner and wife Mary put together the *Encyclopedia of Associations*, a reference book he terms "a tiny success." But it was the beginning of Gale Research, which he built into a reference publisher with 1,000 titles and 400 employees by the time he sold it in 1985 for \$66 million.

The next day, he opened Omnigraphics, also a reference publisher, with his son Peter Ruffner — even though he'd signed a two-year, non-compete clause.

"I had no hassle with Gale because I scrupulously avoided anything similar to what Gale was doing," Ruffner says. "It's never been a problem."

Omnigraphics, with 10 employees and "a lot of freelancers" in Detroit and Fort Lauderdale, has annual sales of about \$5 million today, publishing books and periodicals such as *Biography Today*, used by students.

"There is absolutely a market still for reference books, even though a lot of information is online," he says. "I use the Internet every day. But some things are best served by ink on paper."

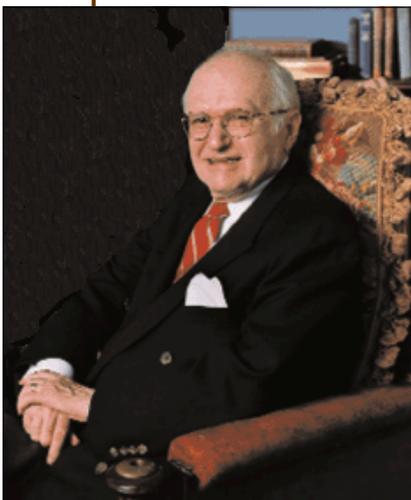
Cecil Beach, director of the Broward County Library in 1978, worked closely with Ruffner and the Friends of the Library on a bond issue referendum to build the main library in downtown Fort Lauderdale and begin an expansion of regional locations. It passed by a margin of 1 percent, Trebbi says.

"Fred has supported libraries all over the country, and he's done so without making a big fuss or seeking publicity for himself," Beach says. "It was good public relations for his company, which sells to libraries, but aside from that he really has an interest in libraries and the good they can do."

Beach points to Ruffner's \$25,000 grant setting up the Broward County Library Foundation, which raises money to augment the

### Inside this issue:

Literary Scene	1,7
Presidential Address	2
Updates	3
Communiqué	4-5
Awards	6
Tampa Archives	8



**Fred Ruffner**

Photo from [www.omnigraphics.com/aboutomni.php](http://www.omnigraphics.com/aboutomni.php)



**John Nemmers**  
SFA President

## Presidential Address

Dear SFA Members,

I am pleased that my first message to the membership as president can be on a topic that I believe has far-reaching, long-term implications for archivists in Florida.

Once again, the Preserving the American Historical Record Act (PAHR) has been introduced in Congress. If it passes, this act will change significantly the amount of and the manner in which federal funds are used to support archives, libraries, museums and other repositories of cultural heritage materials in Florida. This proposed legislation (H.R. 2256) authorizes formula-based grants to every state and territory to protect historical records. If you haven't done so already, take a few minutes to read the language of this important bill. The proposed formula used to allocate funds includes a large percentage based on population and geographic size. Each state, regardless of size, will receive an equal share of 10% of the available funds, but the other 90% of the funds will be allotted based on population and geographic size. As the fourth most populous state, Florida's allocation is projected to be in the neighborhood of \$2.5 million.

These funds, which will be distributed by the State Library and Archives with the guidance of the Florida State Historical Records Advisory Board (SHRAB), would be made available for preservation, access, education and outreach, digitization, consultations, training for archivists, and many other purposes. The funds would be in addition to the existing national grants offered by the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC), which should be funded at its full authorization level of \$10 million.

I know that for many of you, this is not new information. Many of us also are members of the Society of American Archivists, the Council of State Archivists, or the National Association of Government Archives and Records Administrators, and we're aware of the advocacy occurring nationally. Burt Altman, our liaison with the SAA, has done an outstanding job keeping us informed about PAHR by distributing information frequently via email and in this newsletter. During Burt's tenure as president, the Board voted to officially endorse the PAHR legislation. We also have heard about the importance of PAHR from Gerard Clark and members of SHRAB during recent SFA meetings. And, several members have informed me that they have written or spoken to members of Congress in support of the legislation. That is an excellent start, but considering the amount of funds at stake here, I really think that we can be doing more.

I will be forming a special task group charged with identifying key members of Florida's Congressional delegation, particularly those serving on committees through which the bill must pass. The task group will ensure that these Congresspersons are contacted, either by members of the group or by SFA members in the Congressional districts. The task group also will be charged with contacting other Florida associations including the Florida Library Association, the Florida Association of Museums, and the Florida Historical Society to encourage their official endorsement of PAHR and to explore ways in which our associations can work together.

In the meantime, do take the time to contact your Representative. At the very least, simply make them aware of PAHR and encourage them to support the legislation. More importantly, ask them to sign on as a co-sponsor of the legislation. As many of you know, good bills die in Congress every year not because of opposition or partisanship but because they do not get enough support to make them a priority. If PAHR gets enough co-sponsors it will receive the attention it deserves and it will have a far better chance of reaching the floor for a vote. Given how much we stand to gain, I think we have to do everything we can to make PAHR a reality.

Information about PAHR, including the full text of the bill and a draft letter you can use to write your Congressperson, is available on the SAA web site at <http://www.archivists.org/pahr/>

## Updates

### PALM BEACH COUNTY NEWSPAPER ARCHIVES SOON AVAILABLE ON LINE

Google has been working with newspaper publishers to digitize Florida newspaper archives and make them available on line. Currently Google is only working directly with newspaper *publishers* and only collections available on microfilm.

The Boca Raton Historical Society and the *Boca Raton News* are pleased to announce that back issues of the *Boca Raton News* are now searchable on-line from the first issue in 1955 through present. BRHS and the Boca Raton Library provided copies of microfilm of back issues to Google, which has added the hometown paper to their on line newspaper archive.

The *Boca Raton News* back issues from 1955 through mid 1970 are still available through the BRHS website [www.bocahistory.org](http://www.bocahistory.org). Google will be adding these early issues, which were provided to them at no cost, to their searchable archives as well.

To search the *Boca News* from 1955 to mid 1970 go to [www.bocahistory.org](http://www.bocahistory.org), click on Boca Raton's History, click the Newspapers page, and "click here for directions on how to search the hometown newspaper collection" or simply "click here to access hometown newspapers." To search the *Boca News* from 1970 on go to <http://news.google.com/archivesearch> and then hit "advanced news archives search." Be sure and enter the *Boca Raton News* as the source.

Google is also partnering with the *Palm Beach Post* to digitize the Post and a number of Cox-owned papers including the *Miami News*. The Post and Google have generously agreed to include a number of historic newspapers under the "umbrella" of the Post project, microfilm copies to be provided from the collections of the Historical Society of Palm Beach County. These include the historic *Tropical Sun*, the *Palm Beach Independent*, and the *Miami Metropolis* amongst others. This project will bring an invaluable resource for students of South Florida history to the internet. For information on the Palm Beach Post/ Google project, contact Gerry Barker, (561) 820 3715 or email him at [gbarker@pbpost.com](mailto:gbarker@pbpost.com). By Susan Gillis, Curator, Boca Raton Historical Society



### WEST FLORIDA HISTORIC PRESERVATION, INC. AND PENSACOLA HISTORICAL SOCIETY MERGE

Richard Brosnaham, executive director of West Florida Historic Preservation, Inc. (WFHPI) is pleased to announce that the Pensacola Historical Society (PHS) has merged with WFHPI, a direct support organization of the University of West Florida. The PHS was founded in 1933 to promote and preserve Pensacola's history through publicly accessible research archives, catalogued collections, publication, and public education programs. WFHPI, originally organized as the Historic Pensacola Preservation Board in 1967, is dedicated to the collection, preservation, and interpretation of the history of Northwest Florida. The merger of these institutions has resulted in an even stronger base for the preservation of the history of the greater Pensacola area.

PHS continues to operate under its own name from its office at 110 East Church Street. The PHS display artifacts have been moved to a staging area in preparation for their integration into the WFHPI holdings. The combining of the two collections has greatly improved the display options for the museums operated by WFHPI.

All research materials from the two institutions have been centralized in the PHS office, which serves as the research center for WFHPI. The vast collections include maps, a non-circulating library, photographs, family papers, scrapbooks, correspondence, business documents, early publications about Pensacola, and a wide variety of other items.

The extensive photograph collection begins in the mid 1800s and extends up to 2009. It includes portraits, street scenes, notable buildings, residences, fortifications, ships, industry, the Navy, and festivals; as well as a myriad of other subjects. There are also several collections of glass negatives by local photographers. The flat files house hundreds of maps, including copies of some of the earliest maps of the area, subdivision plans, and rail lines. The non-circulating library contains many out of print and hard to find volumes about the local area. The collection of Sanborn® Fire Insurance Maps of Florida, city directories, and telephone books offer a wealth of information about the growth of the city, the residents, occupations, social organizations, and education.

The PHS museum, the Pensacola Historical Museum, has also become a part of WFHPI. At the present time, the Pensacola Historical Museum will continue to offer changing exhibits on the first floor. The permanent exhibits, documenting the history of Pensacola from pre-Spanish settlement through the mid-twentieth century, are unchanged.

The merger of the WFHPI and PHS collections has resulted in a comprehensive, one stop research facility. Open Tues - Fri, 10 am - 4 pm, the facility is open to all researchers. There is a full time curatorial staff at the PHS facility to assist visitors with their research. If you have any questions, you can call the research library at 850.595.5840 or email Jacki Wilson at [jwilson2@uwf.edu](mailto:jwilson2@uwf.edu).

## Communiqué

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Delray Beach Historical Society honored the 1964 Founding Board members at the dedication and ribbon cutting of the new Ethel Sterling Williams History Learning Center this past May 20th. The 1908 Hunt House had an open house and showcased the new permanent home of the research center and archives. Attending the festivities (L-R):



Bonnie Dearborn from Preservation Research Inc., Dottie Patterson, archivist at the DBHS, and from the Boca Raton Historical Society, research assistant Pat Jakubek and curator Susan Gillis.

... H.R. 2256, Preserving the American Historical Record (PAHR) legislation, will be referred soon to the House Subcommittee on Information, Census, and the National Archives, chaired by William Lacy Clay (D-MO). For information and to help ensure passage of PAHR by the 111th Congress—go to <http://www.archivists.org/pahr/index.asp>.

... Dr. Thomas C. Battle of the Moorland-Spingarn Research Center at Howard University was asked to provide testimony on the Archivist of the United States position by the Subcommittee on Information Policy, Census, and National Archives of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform on May 21. Although Battle was not able to appear before the Subcommittee due to a scheduling conflict, he submitted written testimony on behalf of SAA that places on the record the “A New Archivist of the United States: Qualities of a Successful Candidate” document developed by SAA and a coalition of archives, records, and history organizations. See <http://informationpolicy.oversight.house.gov/story.asp?ID=2452>. The document also outlines issues of concern to the archives community. Battle is a leader in the archives profession, a former SAA Council member, and an SAA Fellow.

... SFA now has a presence on LinkedIn, a business- and professionally-oriented collaborative networking site. LinkedIn allows registered users (at no charge) to maintain a

list of contact details of people they know and trust in their professional and business fields. The people in the list are called Connections. Users can invite anyone (whether a site user or not) to become a connection. One can build up a contact network that may be used to find jobs, people, business, and professional opportunities recommended by someone in one's contact network. In today's economy, LinkedIn can be a valued resource.

To access the SFA LinkedIn group, simply go to [www.linkedin.com](http://www.linkedin.com), join LinkedIn, select "Search Groups" from the pull-down menu at the upper right of your screen, and type "Society of Florida Archivists." When you get to the group page, click on the "Join this group" option. At that point, you can start or submit news for a discussion, check or post job notices, or create a professional profile for yourself that others seeking professional contacts will see. It has a lot to offer.

Submitted by Burt Altman, SFA Website Manager.

... The Old Courthouse Heritage Museum, Downtown Inverness, ([www.cccourthouse.org](http://www.cccourthouse.org)) presents a new traveling exhibit titled: *Living Waters: Florida's Aquatic Preserve* on display through the end of December 2009. This multimedia exhibit and documentary features the work of world renowned nature photographer Clyde Butcher and film producer Elam Stoltzfus of the Live Oak Production Group.

### BOOKS

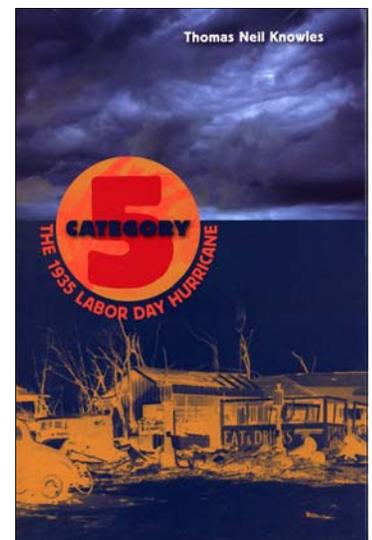
The University Press of Florida has released several books recently including: *The Highwaymen Murals* by Gary Monroe, ISBN 978-0-8130-3359-4, \$39.95. *Tabloid Valley: Supermarket News And American Culture* by Paula Morton, ISBN 978-0-8130-3364-8, \$24.95. *Category 5, The 1935 Labor Day Hurricane* by Thomas Neil Knowles, ISBN 978-0-8130-3310-5, \$29.95.

For all the books above, contact Stephanie Williams, Publicity Manager, 352-392-1351x. 243 or [sw@upf.com](mailto:sw@upf.com). ... *Sunshine, Stone Crabs and Cheesecake: The Story of Miami Beach*, 128 pg, due to be released soon by The History Press ([www.historypress.net](http://www.historypress.net)). This new Miami Beach history covers hotels, restaurants, clubs, churches, temples, schools and businesses. To order with a 10% discount off the cover price of \$19.99

(+tax) for \$19.60. The book can be inscribed. Contact Myrna Bramson at 305.757.1016 or [mrfec@yahoo.com](mailto:mrfec@yahoo.com) or visit [www.sethbramsonbooks.com](http://www.sethbramsonbooks.com).

### CAREER NEWS

Tomaro Taylor, Special and Digital Collections Librarian and Archivist at the University of South Florida Tampa Library, has



been named by the Society of American Archivists to the Joint Committee on Archives, Libraries and Museums (CALM). The committee includes members from the ALA, SAA, and AAM. The committee's purpose is to help the organizations cooperate on issues and activities of common interest and to develop common standards. CALM has a total of fifteen members, five from each organization.

... Megan Waters Bernal has left The Miami Herald. She is now the Associate Director for Library Information & Discovery Systems at DePaul University in Chicago.

... Susan Gillis is a new board member with the Hollywood Historical Society.

#### CONFERENCES/WORKSHOPS

The Society of American Archivists 73rd Annual Meeting takes place August 11-15, 2009 in Austin, TX.

... The National Federation of Genealogical Societies' annual conference will be Sept 2 - 5, 2009 in Little Rock, AR.

[www.fgs.org/2009conference/index.php?sssdmh=dm13.202835](http://www.fgs.org/2009conference/index.php?sssdmh=dm13.202835).

... Introduction to Basic Mountmaking Workshop, Sept. 30, 9 am - 3:30 pm. Orange County Regional History Center, Orlando. Workshop is free. E-mail Stephanie Gaub for info at [stephanie.gaub@ocfl.net](mailto:stephanie.gaub@ocfl.net).

... The Tribal Archives, Libraries and Museums 2009 National Conference will be held in Portland, Oregon, October 19-22, [www.tribalconference.org](http://www.tribalconference.org).

... The Florida Library Association ([www.flalib.org](http://www.flalib.org)) is accepting proposals at its 2010 Annual Conference in Orlando, April 7-9.

... The 2010 AAM Annual Meeting will be in Los Angeles, May 23-27. Session proposal forms are available at [2010 annual meeting webpage](http://2010.annualmeeting.webpage) ([aam-us.org/am10](http://aam-us.org/am10)). Deadline is Aug. 31.

#### RESEARCH

A new, free service allows customers to access historical phone directories through an online database now available at Broward County's Main Library. The database allows anyone to look up names, phone numbers and addresses from cities in both Broward and Miami-Dade counties. Directories available are: Fort Lauderdale, 1936-37 to 1981; Hollywood, 1940 to 1983; Pompano Beach, 1955 to 1982; Suburban Fort Lauderdale 1975 to 1986.

... New research pages - flahdudc ([rootsweb.ancestry.com/~flahdudc/](http://rootsweb.ancestry.com/~flahdudc/)) — Annie H. Darracott Chapter (FL) UDC [United Daughters of the Confederacy]. Previously published in *RootsWeb Review*: 8 July 2009, Vol. 12, No. 7.

... OCLC is digitizing 242 back issues of the *American Archivist* from January 1938 through Fall/Winter 2000. The first batch of 47 issues was dispatched for digitization in April. The entire run of this important body of scholarship will be available electronically for the first time.

#### OTHER

Florida Trust's Eleven Most Endangered Historic Sites for 2009 (in no particular order) [www.floridatrust.org/jeopardized](http://www.floridatrust.org/jeopardized): Bonnet House, Fort Lauderdale; Fernandina Post Office; Dr.

#### **Summer Research Team Showcases Past Golden Personalities**

While many faculty-student summer research collaborations focus on future developments in the areas of science and art, one team of scholars is taking a step back and researching the past. Led by Associate Professor of History Julian Chambliss and Professor and Head of Archives & Special Collections Wenxian Zhang, four students are documenting the lives of leading citizens of both Rollins College and the City of Winter Park.

Their research project entitled, "[Golden Personalities](#)," takes its name from Hamilton Holt's belief that certain individuals possessed singular qualities that allow them to have impact on contextual events and society. Holt believed that these personalities were "men and women of learning whose sole love was teaching, who enjoyed associating with young people, individuals with noble characters."

Throughout his twenty-five year tenure (1925-1949), Holt dedicated himself to the task of bringing such personalities to Winter Park. To honor Holt, the team of students, along with Chambliss and Zhang, is creating an online biographical database of early settlers, college professors and administrators, and noteworthy citizens from Winter Park and Rollins that are true Golden Personalities.

Student members of the project team include: Alia Alli (Class of 2011), Angelica Garcia (Class of 2010), David Irvin (Class of 2010) and Kerem Rivera (Class of 2010).

<http://r-net.rollins.edu/news/2009/06/golden-personalities.html>

<http://tars.rollins.edu/olin/archives/golden/index.html>

Henry Nehrling's Palm Cottage Gardens, Gotha; Sanford Grammar School; Hialeah Park Race Course; Coconut Grove Playhouse; Model Land Company, St. Augustine; Miami Marine Stadium, Biscayne Bay; Boynton High School/Mangrove Park School; Chert Structures in University of Florida Related Neighborhoods, Gainesville; Bob White Citrus Packing House & Strawn Sawmill; National Register Historic Districts, DeLeon Springs

... How to Find a Low-Stress Job? - Chronic job stress, which the World Health Organization has called a "worldwide epidemic," is not the occasional aggravation of a dysfunctional copier or an annoying coworker. It's the energy-draining, psyche-straining, day-to-day mental grind that results in accidents, insomnia, irritability, fatigue, and overall lower quality of life.

But work doesn't have to stress you out. Hate time pressure? Archivists, who plan and oversee the arrangement of exhibitions, have a more leisurely pace of work than many other professions. Average annual earnings of archivists were nearly \$41,000, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics - [www.hotjobs.yahoo.com/career-articles-how\\_to\\_find\\_a\\_low\\_stress\\_job-824](http://www.hotjobs.yahoo.com/career-articles-how_to_find_a_low_stress_job-824).

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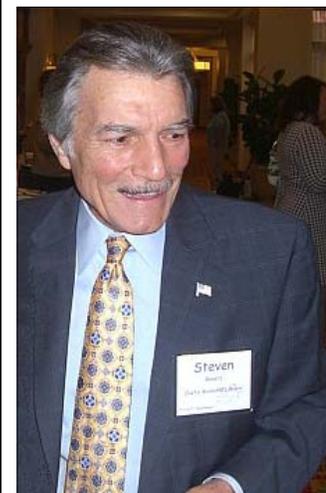
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(Left) Dottie Patterson from the Delray Beach Historical Society was the recipient of the 2009 Award of Excellence from SFA.



(Bottom) In recognition of his retirement in June 2009 as Director of the Eustis Memorial Library, E. Steven Benetz, Jr. received a Certificate of Appreciation from SFA for his leadership in the archives and library profession. Benetz served as Vice President of SFA from 1999 - 2001 and as Secretary from 1997 - 1999. He was appointed by Gov. Jeb Bush in 2004 and by Gov. Charlie Christ in 2007 to the Florida State Historical Records Advisory Board, of which he is currently the Chair.

Gerard Clark said of Benetz, "he was the best darn SFA vice-president I ever had!" and "The Archives community in Florida is a better place because of him."



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*The Society of Florida Archivists is an organization of individuals and institutions who share a concern for the identification, preservation, and use of records of historical value. It is dedicated to the dissemination of information about such records and about sound archival methodology.*

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michael.zaidman@jim Moran foundation.org

## TAMPA BAY HISTORY CENTER OPENS RESEARCH CENTER

The Tampa Bay History Center, together with the Tampa-Hillsborough County Public Library System, is pleased to announce the opening of the Currie B. and Lavinia Sparkman Witt Research Center, located on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the Tampa Bay History Center.

The Witt Research Center is a non-lending library focusing on Florida History and features a diverse collection of books, maps, periodicals, microfilm, photographs, subject files, and family histories. In addition to this collection, several computers, a copier and a scanner will be available to help visitors meet their research needs.

“We are excited about our partnership with the Hillsborough County Library System. The Witt Research Center adds another dimension to what the History Center has



*Witt Research Center - ribbon ready!*

to offer the community,” said C.J. Roberts, president and CEO of the Tampa Bay History Center.

The library is named by Lavinia Witt Touchton, in honor of her parents, Currie B. Witt and Lavinia Sparkman Witt, both native Tampons who were very involved in the community during their lifetimes.

The library launched on June 18 with an open house, a ribbon-cutting ceremony and tour. On-going library hours will be Monday-Friday from 10am to 12pm and 1pm to 4pm, with Saturdays by appointment only. The library is free and open to the public. Call (813) 228-0097 or visit [www.tampabayhistorycenter.org](http://www.tampabayhistorycenter.org) for more information.