BREVE NOTES

Newsletter
Southeast Chapter
Music Library Association

No. 132

August 2026

SEMLA 2026

Annual Meeting Preview

Photo courtesy of Sara Manus

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SEMLA

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The Southeast Chapter of the Music Library Association, Inc. (SEMLA), is a non-stock, non-profit organization dedicated to promoting the establishment, use, and growth of music libraries and collections of music materials in the Southeast. It encourages communication and cooperation with libraries and music collections not affiliated with the Music Library Association to determine how the Chapter may be of assistance to the individual library. SEMLA provides a forum for the exchange of ideas regarding all aspects of work with music materials as well as initiating and encouraging activities to improve the organization, administration, holdings, and public services of such libraries and collections. The region covered by the Chapter includes the states of Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North and South Carolina, Tennessee and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

Membership Information

Membership in SEMLA is available at three levels:

Regular ($15.00 U.S.)
Institutional ($20.00 U.S.)
Student/Retired ($5.00 U.S.).

Dues are collected through the Music Library Association website at https://www.musiclibraryassoc.org/page/JoinMLA.

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SEMLA-L

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From the Chair

Peter Shirts, Emory University


Shirts

As we prepare for our annual meeting in Coral Gables, Florida, October 29–31, the theme of this newsletter issue, let's consider this question—why do we continue to have our annual meeting in person? After all, in today's post-pandemic world, almost everything can happen virtually. Here's some reasons I can think of:

- Professional networking (meeting new people, remembering names, learning about their career path and the collections they steward) is much easier in person, and is especially important for those early in their career.
- Doing things physically together creates memories and binds us together as an organization.
- Visiting the cities, schools, and libraries of others can educate us on the scholarly resources available through the Southeast and prompt ideas about how to improve our own operations and teaching. It's also fun to visit new places!
- For those who cannot attend the national MLA conference this year (or any year), we provide a similar experience on a less expensive, smaller scale.

Recognizing these benefits, SEMLA has done the following to incentivize the highest in-person attendance possible:

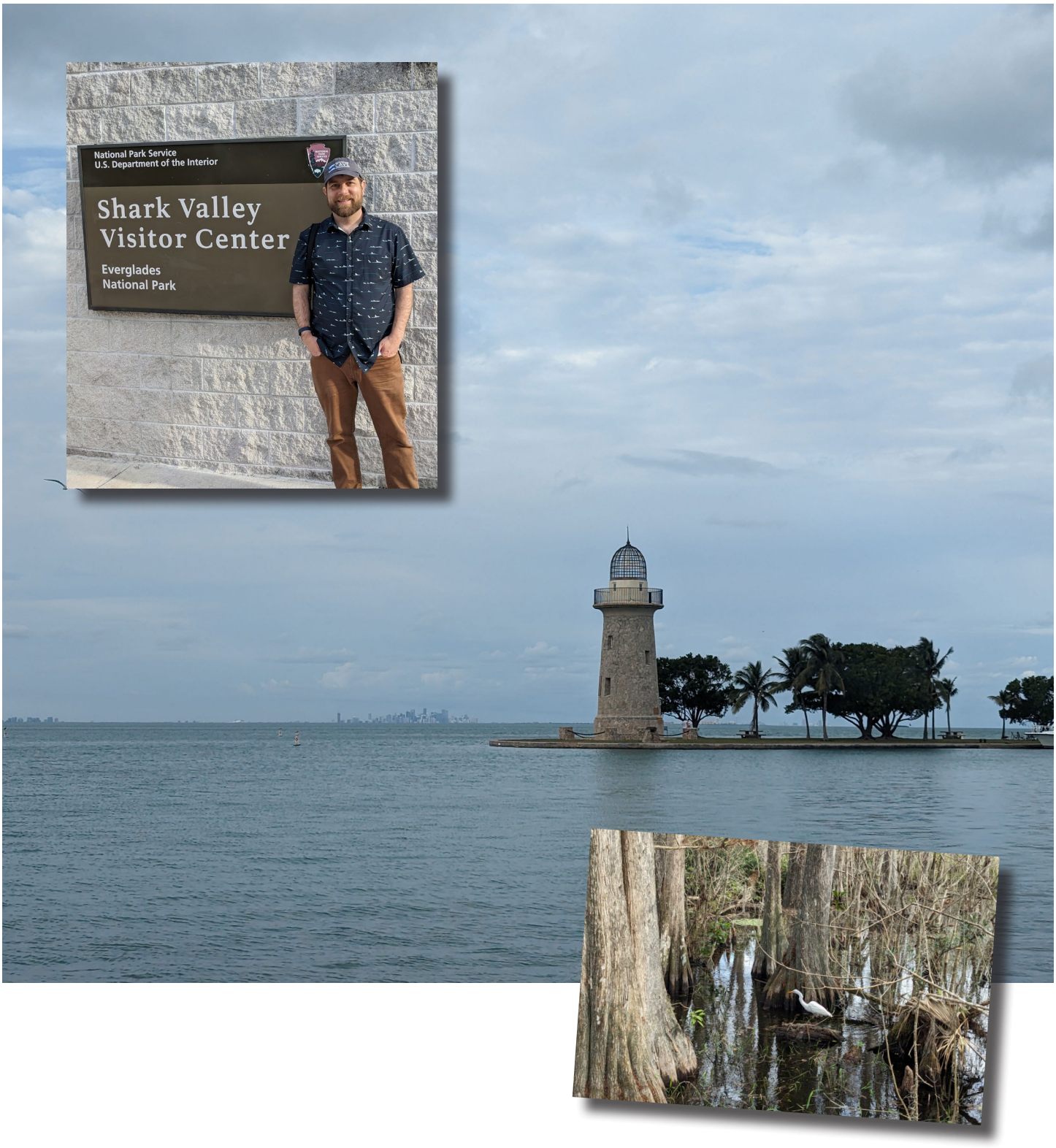
- The Board voted to keep conference prices the same as last year, a price that has not increased since at least 2013.
- Our local arrangements committee chair, Sara Manus, has found a quality affordable hotel in an excellent location with a great connection to public transportation.
- Due to the generosity of Neil and Marty Hughes, our traditional meeting banquet is less expensive for participants than a Chipotle burrito.
- The Board voted to increase the award amount and loosen the eligibility of the Pauline Shaw Bayne Travel Grant, which funds travel to the annual meeting and is still supported by the regular generous giving of the eponymous donor, Pauline.

At the same time, we know that some library professional development budgets and personal pocketbooks have recently been hit hard, while gas prices and airfare are going up, up, up. We recognize that for some, it may be quite hard to get to Coral Gables in person. While we hope you come in person, we're committed to offering a virtual option, which we can provide for our small, one-room annual meetings for a fraction of what it would cost national MLA.

I'll end my message with the same way I ended April's message—let's look around to our professional colleagues and personally invite anyone we know to come to Coral Gables who is, or has been, or should be a member of SEMLA. Preferably in person, but if not, virtually. And start planning those Halloween costumes!

see *From the Chair* — continued on **page 4**

From the Chair — continued from **page 3**



Background picture: Looking across Biscayne Bay to Miami and Coral Gables from Boca Chita Key in Biscayne National Park. Photo courtesy of Peter Shirts (2023).

Picture #2: Shark Shirt(s) in Shark Valley, Everglades National Park, about 1 hour from Coral Gables. Photo courtesy of Peter Shirts (2023).

Picture #3: Great Egret in Big Cypress National Preserve, about 1.25 hours from Coral Gables. Photo courtesy of Peter Shirts (2023).

SEMLA *Annual Meeting Prevew*

University of Miami, October 29-31, 2026

Sara Manus
University of Miami
Local Arrangements Chair

Rebecca Shaw
Appalachian State University
Program Committee Chair

The University of Miami is one of the nation's top research universities located in a vibrant, multicultural city that serves as the gateway to the Caribbean and Latin America. Chartered in 1925 at the peak of the South Florida land boom, the University of Miami today encompasses three distinct campuses: the Miller School of Medicine located in downtown Miami's Health District, the Rosenstiel School of Marine, Atmospheric, and Earth Sciences on Virginia Key, and the main Coral Gables Campus where the SEMLA meeting will be held. The Coral Gables campus is home to the internationally acclaimed Philip and Patricia Frost School of Music and the Marta and Austin Weeks Music Library. Miami offers a dazzling variety of restaurants, entertainment, and culture, plus easy access to beautiful beaches, Biscayne National Park, and Everglades National Park.

Hotel

The official conference hotel is the Hampton Inn Coconut Grove. The room rate is $156.00 per night (single or double bed). The tax rate is 13%, bringing the total nightly room cost to $176. Free parking, Wi-Fi, and hot breakfast are included. The Hampton Inn is directly across the street from the Metrorail station that offers direct access to the University of Miami's campus. The cutoff date for booking at the SEMLA rate is September 15, but it is highly recommended that you book your room as soon as possible.



There are many other hotels and rental options like Air B&B and VRBO in Miami. Rentals in Coconut Grove, Dadeland, and Coral Gables are closest to the University of Miami. Since Miami is a heavily congested city, staying near a Metrorail stop is the quickest way to get to campus during rush hour.

Opening Reception

The opening reception will take place on October 29 from 5:30 to 8:00 pm in the Kislak Center, located on the ground floor of the Otto. G. Richter Library at the University of Miami. Sponsored by the University of Miami Libraries, the reception will include vegetarian options, soft drinks, beer, and wine. The Kislak Center is the home of the University of Miami's Special Collections and University Archives, and the gallery will feature several exhibits, including The Legacy of Sofía Ímber: Pioneering Journalist, Museum Founder and Director and From Feudalism To Empire and Revolution: Innovation and Social Change in Western Society.

see ***Miami*** — continued on **page 6**

Miami — continued from **page 5**

Conference Location

Sessions will be held in the Otto G. Richter Library's third-floor conference room. This room is designed to support hybrid meetings, and it includes integrated cameras and mics. We will also have onsite support from the University Library's Information Technology Team.



Dining

Miami offers nearly unlimited dining options, including Cuban, Haitian, and Peruvian cuisine, celebrity chef destinations, and Michelin Star restaurants. The Miami Restaurant Guide is a great place to find evening dining options. For lunch on Friday, the following options are recommended:

On-Campus Dining

The Archivist Café – located next to the Kislak Center in the Richter Library – serves Peet's coffee, fresh pastries, and sandwiches.

Hurricane Food Court – Cucina Fresca (Italian), Halal Shack (Middle Eastern), Panda Express, Pollo Tropical, Subway, Sushi Maki, and Vicky Café (Cuban – try a cortadito for an afternoon pick me-up).

Smoothie King – located in Lakeside Village (across the Fate Bridge).

SoCal Taco – located in the Whitten University Center.

The Rathskellar (The Rat) – Located in the Shalala Student Center, a student-run restaurant that serves burgers, salads, sandwiches, wine, and beer.

Other Nearby Lunch Options

Miami's Best Pizza - 5833 Ponce de Leon Blvd, Coral Gables, FL 33146.

Moon Thai & Japanese – Thai and sushi; 1118 S Dixie Hwy, Coral Gables, FL 33146.

Pura Vida Miami – Smoothies, cold-pressed juices, sandwiches, bowls, and all-day breakfast; 1100 Stanford Dr, Coral Gables, FL 33146.

Titanic Brewery & Pub – Local brewery with a variety of entrees, including several plant-based options; 5813 Ponce de Leon, Coral Gables, FL 33146.

Banquet

The banquet will be held on Friday evening in the Kislak Center. The menu will feature Cuban food with vegetarian, vegan, and gluten free options, plus beer, wine, and soft drinks. The Frost School of Music has not posted the fall concert schedule, but an e-mail will be sent to the SEMLA list once programming is known.

see *Miami* — continued on **page 7**

Miami — continued from **page 6**

Travel

Getting to Miami

It is recommended to fly to Miami International Airport (MIA). The airport is 6.5 miles from the hotel. There is convenient public transportation available from the airport to the hotel and from the hotel to the University of Miami campus. Car rental and Uber/LYFT are also available but be forewarned that Miami is heavily congested and driving is not fun here.

It is also possible to fly into Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport (FLL). This airport is 31.8 miles from the hotel. Car rental would be your best option from this location.

Using the Metrorail

Miami's Metrorail is an easy, low-cost option for travel from the airport and from the conference hotel to the UM campus. Single ride tickets are $2.25; an unlimited day pass is $5.65. Download the GO Miami-Dade Transit Mobile App to view the transit map and to purchase individual or daily tickets.

Transportation from the Airport to the Hotel

Public Transportation

Take the MIA Mover (located on the third level between the Dolphin and Flamingo parking garages) to the Miami Intermodal Center. This is where the airport's Metrorail station is located. Take the Orange Line to Coconut Grove Station. Orange trains run every 15 minutes from 6:00 am until 8:00 pm, and every 30 minutes from 8:00 pm until 12:00 am.

Driving Directions

Uber, Lyft, and car rental are also available from Miami International Airport. Follow this link for driving directions from MIA to the Hampton Inn.

Transportation from the Hotel to the University of Miami's Richter Library

Public Transportation

Take the Green Line (South) from the Coconut Grove Station to University Station. University is the second stop after Coconut Grove. The Richter Library is approximately 0.5 miles from University Station. You can decrease your walking distance by taking the free Hurry 'Canes Shuttle Service which has a stop at University Station. Take the Stanford Route to Stanford Circle. The Stanford Circle stop is at Admissions in the Whitten University Center. Walk past Whitten, keeping the building on your left. Cross the Foote University Greene and through the double row of royal palms to the Richter Library. If you prefer to walk from University Station, follow Stanford Avenue until you reach Stanford Circle and then follow the previous directions.

For more detailed information, see the Campus Parking & Shuttle Map.

Driving to Campus

The Otto G. Richter Library's street address is 1300 Memorial Drive, Coral Gables, Florida 33146. Regrettably, the University of Miami does not have any free parking available for visitors. Your best option for parking is the Pavia Garage, 5615 Pavia St, Coral Gables, FL 33146. Use the metered visitor parking spaces. The daily rate is $14.00. You can pay with the PayByPhone app or via a Pay Station in the garage. Follow this link for directions from the Hampton Inn to the University of Miami's Pavia Garage.

see *Miami*— continued on **page 8**

Miami— continued from **page 7**

Program Details

We had an abundance of proposals submitted this year, all of them top tier which made for some difficult decisions on the part of the programming committee. However, we cannot change the laws of physics and therefore could not fit all of them into the program. Thank you to everyone who submitted a proposal. Thank you also to the members of the Program Committee (Rebecca Shaw - Chair, Sara Manus - Local Arrangements, Deb Morris, Reed David, Liza Weisbrod, and Jennifer Martin) for their hard work on this program. Keep an eye on your email about the "Pets of SEMLA" slideshow.

Friday morning will feature a wide variety of presentations ranging from the Blues history of Florida (Greg Johnson), to AI literacy instruction (Enrique Caboverde, Christopher Jimenez, Tom Moore), to faceted vocabularies (Amanda Scott) and cataloging/circulating musical instruments (Jake Schaub & Michael Jones). Part way through the morning there will be a short coffee break.

After an hour and a half lunch, we will finish off the day with Sonia Archer-Capuzzo presenting "I Failed Today!: Learning and Teaching Failure in the Music Library," and Jane Cohen presenting "Diary of the Season: Studying the Lives of Itinerant Circus Musicians at the Turn of the Twentieth Century." Following a short afternoon break, we will be treated to a tour of the Cuban Heritage Collection and Special Collections.

Saturday morning will kick off with a round of lightning talks given by Divya Ramesh, Madison Henson, and Bret McCandless. Divya will be presenting on a pilot study examining whether children with amblyopia experience greater difficulty reading musical notation. Madison will be presenting on early literacy music and movement, while Bret will be presenting issues around accessing playscripts. Our final presentation of the morning by Kyle Johnston will be on the Complete Moravian Chorales Project. This presentation will include performances by musicians from local-area Moravian Churches. There will be a short coffee break before the annual business meeting. Since Saturday is also Halloween, costumes are strongly encouraged though not required. For those who wish to participate, there will be a costume contest with prizes being provided by Local Arrangements Chair, Sara Manus.



Photo pg. 5: Courtesy of Hampton Inn Coconut Grove
Photo pg. 6: Richter Library, Courtesy of Sara Manus
Photo pg. 8: Weeks Music Library, Courtesy of Sara Manus

SEMLA BOARD NOMINATIONS • *Vice Chair/Chair Elect*

Archer-Capuzzo



Sonia Archer-Capuzzo is Clinical Associate Professor of Library and Information Science at the University of North Carolina Greensboro (UNCG). She teaches music librarianship, cataloging and classification, other information organization courses, and a course on failure. She conducts research on a number of topics, including access to the RDA cataloging standard, heavy metal, and music librarianship education. In addition to her work for UNCG, Sonia is also a contract cataloger, which she enjoys immensely (nerd!), and teaches cataloging workshops for several organizations, including SEMLA.

Sonia's service experience is extensive. In addition to serving on and chairing multiple committees at UNCG, she has made a point of being continually involved with SEMLA and MLA since her first meetings in 2011 and 2012 respectively. In SEMLA, she first served on the Pauline Shaw Bayne Travel Grant Taskforce, then went on to serve as a Member-At-Large. In MLA, she served on a number of committees, including as Chair of the Education Committee and the Committee Management Team and as a Member-At-Large. These experiences have driven home two important lessons: 1) you cannot serve or lead alone – you need to lean on others' ideas, assistance, and support; and 2) you should always be prepared to screw up – unexpected things will happen, you will mess up, life will happen, but you can always recover from that, especially if you have a support system (see lesson 1). If elected as Vice Chair/Chair-Elect of SEMLA, Sonia will endeavor to help the organization continue to thrive as the vibrant, supportive, and welcoming community she first fell in love with at her first meeting 15(!) years ago.

Sasser



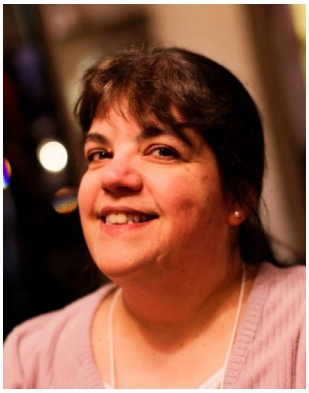
Patricia Puckett Sasser is a Librarian at Furman University, where she has directed the Maxwell Music Library since 2014. At Furman, she teaches research methods in music and the humanities, as well as overseeing collection development, reference services, and bibliographic instruction for music and dance. She earned her undergraduate degree in piano performance at American University, her graduate degree in musicology from the Peabody Conservatory of the Johns Hopkins University, and her MLIS from the University of South Carolina. More recently, she participated in the Leadership Institute for Academic Librarians at Harvard University's Graduate School of Education.

Her own research focuses on the material culture of opera and ballet in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, with a special focus on Europe's northern periphery. This work has appeared in *Notes*, *Fontes ad musicae, Dance Research*, *Cambridge Opera Journal*, the *Journal of Music History Pedagogy,* and *Music Reference Services Quarterly*, among others. She is the recipient of the Carol June Bradley Award from MLA and the Vladimir Fédorov award from IAML.

Her administrative experience includes a term as Interim Associate Director for the Furman University Libraries (during which she managed all public-facing activities and services across three libraries) as well as a wide range of leadership roles in SEMLA, MLA, and the American Musicological Society. She is currently the chair of MLA's Reference Sources Subcommittee and will be a guest editor for a forthcoming special issue of *Notes*. Having served SEMLA in various capacities (including Member-At-Large, various program committees, and local arrangements chair), she would be honored to take on this new role and to contribute to the success both of the chapter and so many wonderful colleagues.

SEMLA BOARD NOMINATIONS • *Member-At-Large*

Morris



Deb Morris is the Assistant Librarian for Online Resources and Liaison to the Dempsey College of Liberal and Performing Arts at Southern Arkansas University in Magnolia, Arkansas. Originally from Webster, NY she received a degree in Music Education and Performance from Ithaca College, focusing on the clarinet. Further music studies took her to Indiana University in Bloomington, Indiana for a Master's degree in Clarinet Performance and then a summer at the Aspen Music Festival in Colorado, working as a student orchestra librarian. She then received an MLS degree at the State University of New York at Buffalo. She worked as an Assistant Librarian at the Chicago College of Performing Arts Library in Roosevelt University as a music cataloger until 2020.

She serves and has served on various committees at the chapter and national levels of the Music Library Association and has co-written grant proposals and gave and participated in presentations during that time. In her spare time, she performed in many concert bands, community orchestras and pit orchestras for musicals as well as small chamber group performances. Deb has many hobbies including sewing, embroidery, reading, studying her faith, biking, hiking, and baking cookies.Her goals are to continue developing as a librarian, performing musician and educator to serve the academic and local communities.

Nance



Alyssa Nance has been the Cataloging and Metadata Librarian at Furman University since 2022. She catalogs all formats acquired by the University Libraries, and particularly enjoys the challenges posed by music and special collections materials. She currently serves as a member of the MLA Cataloging and Metadata Committee Content Standards Subcommittee and as a member of the Acquisitions, E-Resources, & Cataloging Committee for the PASCAL consortium in South Carolina. Alyssa has previously served SEMLA in various capacities, including as a member of the Local Arrangements, Nominating, and Program Committees. She has also previously served on the MLA Legislation Committee, as MLStEP Chapter Liaison for SEMLA, and on the PASCAL Cataloging & Metadata Working Group, chairing in 2024-2025.

Alyssa obtained her BM from Appalachian State University in 2012 and her MLIS from the University of North Carolina Greensboro in 2019. Her current research focus is the application of genre theory to the bibliographic record, on which she recently presented at the 2026 IAML Congress. Outside of work, Alyssa enjoys hiking, sewing and crafting, hanging out with her cats, and choral singing.

Warner



Lian Warner is the Instruction and Public Services Librarian at North Greenville University. She teaches information literacy and research courses across all disciplines, including music. She graduated with a Bachelor of Music in Saxophone Performance and an MLIS from UWM. In her free time, she enjoys writing, designing stuffed sharks, and playing and teaching the saxophone.

Member News

ON THE MOVE


Watson

Shane Watson, at the beginning of August, will be trading one ASU (Appalachian State University) for another Arizona State University. As the Music Librarian at Arizona State University, Shane will be in charge of music collection development, instruction, reference, and outreach. The biggest thing Shane will miss about SEMLA is all the people, but he'll still get to see most of you at MLA.

KUDOS

Jake Schaub of Vanderbilt University attended the Georgia Archives Institute from June 1-12, 2026, at the Georgia Archives campus in Morrow, Georgia. The two weeks of content included numerous tours, classes on a range of archives-related topics, and an internship working with completely unmusical items (i.e., labor relations documents) at Georgia State University. He can now masquerade as an archivist slightly more convincingly than before.



Schaub

TEACHER SPOTLIGHT



Lauren Lundy of Furman University recently traveled abroad on a May Experience Class exploring sacred art and music in Türkiye. They spent six nights in Istanbul, two in Ankara, four in Cappadocia, six in Izmir, and four nights on a chartered Gulet (traditional Turkish yacht). The students were able to explore a variety of religious sites and compare the musical and artistic practices of different faith traditions. Some of the highlights were seeing the Hagia Sophia, climbing through cave churches in Cappadocia, and attending an authentic Sema service in a caravansarai. They visited several iconic libraries, including the Library of Celsus in Ephesus and the Royal Palace Library at Topkapi Palace, and the students engaged with a variety of musical traditions. The students were able to learn about Byzantine Chant, Islamic Sacred Music, Sufi worship traditions, Western conceptions of Turkish music and culture through eighteenth-century Western art music, and more. Lundy ate a lot of good food, developed a deeper understanding of the Islamic world, and mentored some really fantastic students. She'll have plenty of pictures to show anyone who asks at SEMLA in Miami!

Image: Standing in front of the Library at Celsus in Ephesus. Couresty of Lauren Lundy.

see ***Member News*** — continued on **page 12**

Member News

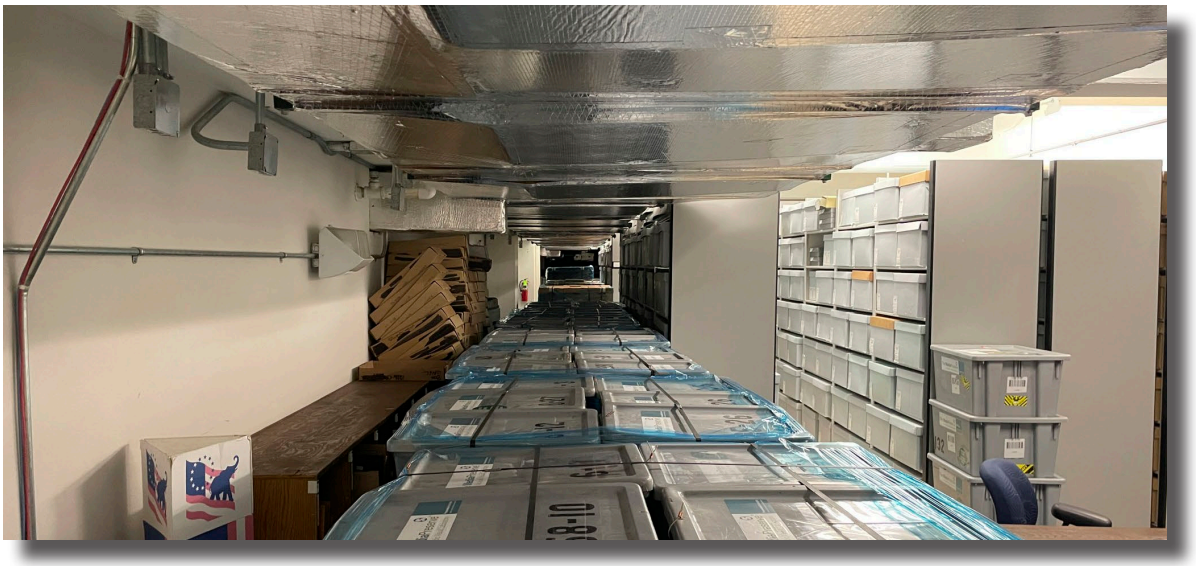
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COLLECTIONS NEWS

The team behind the University of Mississippi Libraries' "Digitizing Mississippi's Archives" project, funded by a grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC), is one step closer to uploading approximately 16,000 newly digitized audiovisual assets to the University of Mississippi's institutional repository, eGrove. Principal investigator **Greg Johnson**, Head of Special Collections and Blues Curator, along with Project Manager Katherine Tutor is overseeing the progress on this project, including this year's initiative to transcribe all materials according to ADA accessibility standards. Digitized content of particular interest to music librarians and researchers includes interviews with blues musicians, footage from concerts and festivals, and recording session master tapes. Stay tuned for more updates about how to access these rare materials!



Images: Before and After photographs/ Courtesy of Greg Johnson.



SEMLA Invites Applications for the
Pauline Shaw Bayne Travel Grant

The SEMLA Travel Grant Committee is now accepting applications for the **Pauline Shaw Bayne Travel Grant**. The grant supports portions of the expenses related to attending this year's annual chapter meeting at the University of Miami in Coral Gables, FL, October 29–31, 2026. Awardee(s) will have the conference registration and banquet fees waived and may apply up to **$750 in grant funds** to other conference costs. Reimbursable expenses may include: conference lodging, travel, and meals and incidental expenses at the **GSA rate**.*

The application deadline is **September 7, 2026. Music library paraprofessionals, support staff, early professionals, and library school students are eligible** for this opportunity and are encouraged to apply. We expect to notify the awardee(s) before September 15, 2026.

Eligibility Requirements
Applicants must:

1. **Join SEMLA** before applying for the grant.
2. Reside at the time of the meeting in one of the states or territories comprising SEMLA (Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Puerto Rico) or attend a library school located within that area.
3. Belong to one of the following categories:
    - **Library School Student:** A graduate student (by the time of the conference in October 2026), aspiring to become a music librarian/archivist.
    - **Recent Graduate:** A recent graduate of a library program who is seeking a professional position as a music librarian/archivist.
    - **Early Professional:** A music librarian/archivist in the first five years of their professional career or who has recently been assigned music as a subject.
    - **Paraprofessional/Support Staff:** A library paraprofessional/support professional working with music materials as a significant portion of their job responsibilities.

A strong candidate will also demonstrate financial need and interest in the field of music librarianship. Priority will be given to those who are attending their first SEMLA conference. More than one grant may be awarded. Applicants willing to share a hotel room may receive special consideration.

To Apply:
Applicants must submit the following to SEMLA Travel Grant Committee Chair, Grover Baker (grover.baker@mtsu.edu), by 11:59 p.m. CDT, September 7, 2026:

1) A letter that includes the following information:
    a) Reasons for attending the upcoming SEMLA meeting.
    b) Explanation of eligibility.
    c) Description of your funding needs, including:
        i) An estimate of your anticipated costs.
        ii) Information about any other grants, matching funds, or institutional support you expect to receive.
2) A current résumé or curriculum vitae.
3) Contact information (email and phone number) for one reference.
4) Use the subject line "Application for the Pauline Shaw Bayne Travel Grant" for your email.

If you have any questions, please contact Grover Baker by email at grover.baker@mtsu.edu or phone at 615-494-7784.

* The request for reimbursement must be submitted to the SEMLA Secretary-Treasurer by December 1, 2026. Please note that SEMLA may elect to pay directly for hotel expenses on the recipient's behalf and only supply the balance, if any, of an award following the meeting. If mileage for a privately owned vehicle is awarded, it will be paid at the GSA rate at the time of the conference.

Don't Forget...

Hi, SEMLA folks!

Just a reminder that it's membership renewal time! If you have not yet paid your dues for the **2026-2027** membership year, you are currently in arrears. Please note that if a member is in arrears for one year, one's membership is considered terminated.

Dues are collected through the Music Library Association website at https://www.musiclibraryassoc.org/page/JoinMLA.

Regular (individual) members: $15.00
Student or retired members: $5.00
Institutional members: $20.00

If you have questions or comments, please contact Alison Nikitopoulos (anikitopoulos@ebrpl.com).

Alison Nikitopoulos

Alison Nikitopoulos
SEMLA Secretary/Treasurer
East Baton Rouge Parish Library