Members Absent: Phil Kemp
Guest: Sarah Schneider

Elaine asked that Alice add to the January minutes the five names of the persons who were interviewed by the oral history class; with that addition, the minutes were approved. Alice stated that the trolley for the field trip has been ordered and paid for and it will go regardless of how many retirees show up for the trip. She added that every DES member received a paper invitation for the luncheon. Alice has received 34 replies for the luncheon, but more are expected. Rosa Perez and a BCBS representative will be attending to answer questions about the prescription drug program. Maureen Talbot, Sarah Schneider, and Brad Hielgeland were also invited. The committee complimented Alice on the invitations.

Tanya will be the guide for the DuSable Museum tour. The trolley should be back by noon so the luncheon can begin. Elaine will welcome new members, thank Jack Leahy for his service on the committee, and remember the six members who have passed away since the last luncheon. She will also insert a promo for the blog, Facebook and website and summarize what each DES committee does asking attendees to consider joining one of the committees. Father Richardson is expected to address the group for 20 to 25 minutes and then take questions.

Discussion turned to simplification of the election process. Alice summarized the problems with the current process, including having possibly 75 people nominated and having to contact each one to see if they were willing to run. Some of the nominees were not even local. After discussion, it was determined that nominations would be requested in the December newsletter, thus eliminating a mailing. Then the nominating committee, comprised of members of the DES steering committee, excluding any individuals up for re-election, would vet the nominees and do the contact calling. The nominating committee would be headed up by the vice chair. If the vice chair was running for re-election, then the Chair would head the committee. This process will be revisited at the next steering committee meeting. The possibilities after nominees are determined would be to send out the nominees’ names in a mailing for a vote, to have a vote at the May luncheon, or simply create a nomination slate and bring it to a meeting for approval. Alice said she thought mailing the ballots out was doable.

Jack Leahy suggested that all committees draw up a job description of the purpose of the committee, its duties, and its expectations. Elaine said she would create a template. Denny then asked the committee’s opinion on sending out another survey to the members. After debate, it was determined that Denny and Jerry would develop some criteria, e.g., percent of change in membership, and bring their suggestions to the next
Steering Committee for when it makes sense to do a survey. Questions such as Friday luncheon date, blog and FB usage, and field or other trips could be added to the survey at that time. Have the needs of the membership changed since the last survey? What ideas do the new members have?

Jack read his year end wrap-up report for the Special Events and Projects Committee and asked the Steering Committee’s opinion on his outline for the Oral History Outline project. He was attempting to put together a general plan to pull together all parts of the project. How to select a chair and how to do the interviews were not included in his report. Someone has to follow up on the selection of interviewers and the types of interviews and questions asked. The OH Project has a good foundation on which to build. The History 396 aspect of the OH Project has not been as satisfactory. The questions were drawn up by the students and the transcription process was inaccurate. This underlines Jack’s points about how this entire process should be run. The DES should do all we can to continue this project and work with the different groups of interviewees. Al Erlebacher is still interested in being involved in the project.

Father Ed stated that he is fully committed to the Oral History project. He would also like to expand this project to include more than interviews of DES members. He felt that all individuals as they retire every year should be given the opportunity to be interviewed with open-ended questions. Others with specific jobs or logistics at DePaul or personalities who are retiring or who have left the University should also be included in longer interviews. Appropriate transcriptions should be done and a program should be built. The longer one waits to do the interviews, the more one loses. The University has the facilities and equipment now to go forward on the interviews. People should be identified and interviews should be scheduled. Fr. Ed said he was willing to assist with the longer interviews.

The interviews done by History 396 are not really serving the purpose of the OH Project. A strategic plan is needed which outlines details and jobs. As soon as retirees for a specific year are determined, they should be contacted and interviews should be done within six months. Alice will set up appointments for interviews. Open-ended questions have been drawn up for an interviewee to answer without the aid of an interviewer, but it was felt that an interviewer would be an asset to the interview. Since someone with a sense of history would be required for the interviews, Elaine agreed to perform this interview for staff and Dick agreed to do it for faculty. Father Ed also agreed to assist. By our October meeting all new retirees will have been interviewed and one substantial interview will have been completed. However, someone has to stay on top of this process.

Subsequent to the Steering Committee Meeting, Fr. Udovic shared the following process in an email to Elaine Beaudoin. Our staff met this morning to get on the same page for the DES Oral History project. Here's where we stand.

Brian will adjust the website and post. He will also download these to DVD's and send them to Kathryn DeGraff.
Fr. Richardson's presentation to the DePaul Geographic Society about his years in Kenya
Al Erlebacher's interviews with Paul Camenisch, Cornelius Sippel, Dick Houk, and you.
The 1992 flood montage
We will not use the student interviews. Their quality is too poor. We may want to re-interview some of these.
Alice will contact Nancy Rospenda to see if she's willing to work on the transcripts for the Erlebacher interviews over the summer.
Alice will contact this year's retirees at the time of their welcome DES letter to invite them to do a short exit interview. We will schedule those as soon as we hear back from our new members.
Mission and Values will hire David Sims to work as an interviewer on this project. David has the DePaul History and the skills. We'll ask David to cut his teeth on an interview with Al Erlebacher.
In the next DES newsletter Alice will invite any present retiree who would like to record their quick reminiscences. Any who respond will be scheduled over the summer as well.
At the fall meeting we'll compile a list of in-depth interviews that we would like to do.

Denny announced that since last year was a banner year for collection of funds for the DES scholarship, we now have an endowed scholarship fund with the ability to award larger and guaranteed amounts to the recipients. The amount of giving was up, but the amount of donors was down, yet we still collected over $15,000 last year, doubling the amount donated the previous year. The Steans gift program may have encouraged more donations and they should be thanked for that. It was felt that Dick and Denny’s personalizing of the request letters was also a help in increased collections.

Now that the DES Scholarship fund is endowed, Dick raised the possibility of annually gifting some of the money raised rather than putting it all into the endowment and only spending the interest. As an example, of the $15,000 collected this year, it was suggested that $7500 could go to the endowment and $7500 could go to spendables plus the interest on the Endowment. It was suggested by Fr. Ed that this should be used as an additional fund-raising strategy showing how more students today can be assisted. The DES will remain committed to raising funds for this scholarship program. A motion was made by Dick Meister that in the future DES would use half of the funds contributed for that year for the scholarship and half would go to the endowment. The amount of funds available for the year would be determined by the total amount of giving at January 31. The amount of the scholarship would be the 50% plus the percent of endowment interest. Sarah said she would see that this was included as an amendment to the endowment agreement. The motion was seconded. Multiple scholarships were suggested, with at least $2000 guaranteed to one or more students. The rotation of colleges would continue to be observed. The motion passed unanimously. The committee asked that Sarah draw up a list of donations by month to see which month attracted the most money.
Jerry stated that Rosa Perez would be at the luncheon to discuss the prescription drug costs with the membership. Retiree sessions will be conducted by HR during the next health fair to be held in the fall, but no dates have been set as yet. Gretchen has been invited to the luncheon. It was suggested that Diana, who is a gem, also be invited.

Alice announced that all minutes and newsletters were now up on our website. Elaine said she had checked and there were still some minutes that had not been posted. Alice said she had provided them to Brian and would check. Elaine added that our blog received 3000 hits since it went up in October and there are now 29 people on FB.

Elaine thanked Jack for his service on the DES steering committee and Alice presented him with a small token of our appreciation. Elections were then held, with Elaine retaining the position of chair, Dick retaining the position of vice-chair, and Nancy retaining the post of secretary. The chairs of the various committees remained the same, i.e., Jerry Goldman, Benefits; Nancy Rospenda, Communications; Denny Shea and Dick Meister, Philanthropy; and with Phil Kemp taking over for Jack Leahy on the Special Events and Projects committee and serving out the remaining two years of Jack’s three-year term.

Suggested speakers for the October luncheon were the dean of the new College of Health and Science (Jerry Cleland), the curator of the new art museum, or a performance by the Theater School. If the Art Museum curator is selected, possibly a trip to the art museum could follow the luncheon. Dick Meister will follow up with Louise Lincoln regarding the Art Museum. The October luncheon will also include the memorial Mass.

The next meeting of the committee will be held on August 24 at Noon.