How can you raise awareness of preservation within the "community" you serve?

Many unique local and regional treasures may be overlooked because they lack the national or international cachet of a Mount Vernon or British Museum. Your community may not realize that preservation is just as critical in their own backyards. For many, the concept of preservation may be off-putting, with images of objects under glass, guards at the door, and arcane knowledge held by a chosen few. Making preservation relevant to those you serve is essential to building support from your community. Begin by telling a story and sharing your passion!

- **What success stories can you share?**
  - Advocacy begins at home!
    - Just begin – do what you can and grow from there.
    - Train your staff – turn worst practices into best practices.
    - Have a preservation site survey done by an **outside,** reputable consultant. Using the services of someone outside of your organization will lend more weight to the resulting recommendations, and avoid the risk of a critique appearing to be too personal. The survey can lay a foundation for your conservation program and justify support for it.
    - Funders want specifics: use the site survey or your local conservators to identify costs of preservation activities. Knowing these costs will help you to define your preservation priorities or establish an "Adopt-an-Object" program
    - Dedicate one staff member to conservation.
    - Think big! Dedicate an entire department to conservation.
    - Collaborate with other colleagues. Conservators at local and national organizations are (almost) always really happy to help smaller organizations- they definitely consider it part of their duty. Conservator details are available through AIC (http://www.conservation-us.org/) or local museums/libraries.
    - Have an open house and show off what you have done.
    - Give in-house presentations on conservation and preservation – PowerPoint and a digital camera can be your best friends!
  - Go beyond your immediate institution – do outreach on preservation!
    - Educate your donors – What is meant by preservation? What is meant by conservation? Demonstrate the difference.
    - Make your message relevant to your audience. If possible, and if appropriate for your audience, hook into popular culture. (See the Kelsey Museum's references to Indiana Jones at http://sitemaker.umich.edu/kelseymuseum.digdiary/home.)
    - Work with your PR department to get air time and news coverage .
    - Take your presentations on the road – think "Antiques Roadshow!"

        - Host workshops, symposia, lectures, etc.,
    - If you have a Web presence, make sure it is maintained and remains fresh.
    - Find other partners for training, sharing, presenting.
        - Consortia (e.g., BCR, AMIGOS, SOLINET, etc.)
        - Other institutions (libraries, museums, universities, etc.)
        - Professional organizations (AIC, AAM, SAA, AKCHO, WAAC, etc.)
        - Outside resources (NEDCC, OCLC, etc.)
  - Show and tell
    - Look at your collections with new eyes – through a conservation lens!
    - Create special exhibits about conservation and accompany them with symposia, workshops, lectures, catalogs, etc.
    - Make your displays relevant to your audience.
    - Use interactive kiosks or Web sites to engage your audience – but be sure to keep them current!
    - Create an exhibit of "needy" objects, with a conservator hired in advance to recommend required treatments and estimated costs. Publish a catalog in advance. At the opening reception, invite potential donors and solicit their support on the spot to fund the needed treatments…. "adopt-a painting"!
    - Pull together a mini annual report or bulletin on your preservation activities. It doesn't need to be big but, over time, this type of structured approach is helpful in-house and as you reach beyond the institution to raise funds.
- **Based on past experiences how you might do some things in the future**
  - Continue to publicize projects in-house.
  - Continue to publicize projects to an audience outside of the institution.
  - Feature conservators at work as part of exhibits.
  - Use institutional tours strategically.
  - Keep outreach friendly and relevant to the audience.
  - Make more use of PowerPoint, digital cameras, the Web, other communication technologies.

- **What strategies can be developed for broadening the preservation constituency to include individuals in the community, decision makers in institutions, and members of governing boards in order to build consensus on the need to support preservation activities in all kinds of collections?**
    - Create a conservation page for your institution.
        - Describe the duties of your conservation department.
        - Create a Blog aimed at treatment of specific items. Be sure to update it periodically!
        - Link to streaming multimedia of conservators at work.
        - Think of ways to make your page relevant to your audience. Hook them with something that will make conservation relate to their own lives.
            - Family Bibles, scrapbooks, etc.
            - Old photographs
            - Historic documents
            - Artifacts
            - Community history
            - Antiques
            - Their own personal research projects/interests
    - Show (with pictures!) what can happen in a world without preservation – here today, gone tomorrow! (See IPI's "Stored Alive" interactive Web site at http://www.imagepermanenceinstitute.org/shtml_sub/storedalive.html.)
    - Turn a conservator into a celebrity and create a following. (If chefs can do it, why not conservators!)
    - Provide placements for work study students and encourage them to work on preservation projects with you. Your preservation efforts can even become great material for middle or high school projects and even small children love behind the scenes tours.
    - Show how preservation can benefit the local community by contributing to economic development and promoting tourism. Get your local community actively involved in special projects, if possible. See a great example, "Please Touch – It's Hands On for Historic Preservation" at http://www.preservationdirectory.com/preservationblogs/ArticleDetail.aspx?id=767&catid=4.
    - Develop an advocacy group to:
        - Spread the word about conservation
        - Identify resources to support the program
        - Help in fund raising for specific projects
    - Create a small leaflet about conservation.

        - Explain the why and how of what you do in language that your audience will understand.
        - Explain why you have certain rules, but keep it friendly!

Discuss your natural partners – either for your particular organization or for your type of organization (library, museum, archive, historical society).

During tough economic times, finding partners to promote and support preservation can be one way to keep the momentum going. Whether it is networking with colleagues and sharing expertise, having access to specialized equipment or a lab, using economies of scale to make affordable training available, or simply finding moral support from like-minded individuals to keep going, partnering can yield a variety of benefits. In cases where you are able to provide expertise to your partners, you benefit and gain institutional credibility by being able to serve as a source of information or skills for the larger community. By being a part of a professional network and establishing relationships with partners, you keep on top of developments in the field and may also be eligible for various types of support.

- **What success stories can you share?**
    - Partners can be:
        - Educational institutions
        - Museums
        - Libraries
        - Archives
        - Hospitals
        - Religious institutions
        - Regional consortia (e.g., AMIGOS, SOLINET)
        - Professional organizations (AAM, SAA, AIC, ACRL, WAAC)
        - First responders
        - Foundations (e.g., Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, FAIC, Heritage Preservation, etc.)
        - Public agencies (IMLS)
        - Local, regional, national, or international
    - Partners can provide:
        - Resources (space, equipment, emergency response collaboration)
        - Volunteers
        - Expertise
        - Creative solutions
        - Training
        - Financial support

        - Publicity
        - Moral support
- **How has partnering brought strength to your organization?**
    - What's in it for your institution?
        - More expertise
        - More technical resources
        - Financial resources
        - More energy
        - More publicity
        - Access to specialized equipment
        - Institutional respect
        - Invaluable man- (or woman-) power
- **Were there weaknesses or threats in partnering?**
    - Choosing the "wrong" partner.
        - The partner may have nothing to bring to the table.
        - The "fit" doesn't work (apples and oranges).
        - The partner may be less of a co-operator and more of a competitor
    - Lacking enough resources to do a good job (spread too thin).
    - Failing to balance the needs of your institution with the needs of the partners.

Community sponsors anticipate that they will receive something from the relationship in turn for what they give (e.g., funding, radio time, gifts).

- **What type of sponsorships have you developed?**

  Some institutions, especially in the public sector, may be restricted by law or ethics rulings from offering particular goods or services in return for donations. At the very least, recognition and appreciation for sponsorship in the form of a certificate and recognition event, can be given in return. Other sponsorships, where permissible, can take the form of:
    - Naming rights for a building, wing, conservation endowment, conservation chair (corporate or personal)
    - Adoption of objects, books, or buildings needing conservation (corporate or personal)
    - Volunteers (community service, corporate)

- Donations of equipment, supplies, products, services (corporate or personal)

- **How were you able to convince the sponsor that they would benefit from the relationship? What type of benefits were you able to show them?**

  "What in it for me?" Benefits should be geared to the interests of the sponsor. Depending upon the institution, as mentioned above, benefits can range from a simple certificate of recognition to naming rights on an entire building or endowment. Benefits can include:
  - Self esteem
  - Tax deduction
  - Perpetuating a family or corporate name
  - Favorable publicity
  - Special privileges (e.g., behind the scenes tours, VIP access, donor receptions, etc.)
  - Contributing to the public good
  - Knowing that history will be preserved for their descendents
  - Learning how to take care of their own family/corporate treasures
  - Tangible results – seeing how an object looked before and after treatment.

  It should be said that many donors simply want to help a valid cause that excites their imagination- in these cases, the only prerequisite for support is a genuine need combined with the right connections, a little passion for the project, and the time to make the case.

What strategies can be developed to convince decision-makers to put financial support behind local and statewide preservation efforts? Consider:

- **Federal government**

  Show how preservation efforts can provide an economic stimulus at both local and state levels, thus providing a return on the investment of federal dollars. Examples:
  - The economic stimulus generated by tourism dollars, including souvenirs, hotels and restaurants, airlines, rail, automobile rental, service stations, etc.)
  - The economic stimulus generated through the purchase of supplies and equipment required by conservators as well as materials and labor needed for the construction of exhibits
  - Jobs created in construction and other trades through the construction of new museums, libraries, and archives

  Demonstrate how combining federal, state, local, and non-profit dollars can create financial strength in numbers to move preservation efforts forward.

  Professional organizations can be excellent advocates for preservation by lobbying members of Congress. (An excellent example is the advocacy page of the American Association of Museums at http://www.speakupformuseums.org/.)

The National Trust for Historic Preservation has an in-depth page on advocacy at http://www.preservationnation.org/take-action/advocacy-center/ as well as links to potential advocates, such as the Congressional Historic Preservation Caucus. And we should add the C2C website that has an array of links on fundraising for preservation: http://www.imls.gov/collections/.

- **State government**
  - Show how the investment in preservation can stimulate the economy at the state level, providing tax dollars to fund state government.
  - Show how preservation efforts can be used to educate school children and make them more informed citizens.
  - Explore opportunities to partner with state and local advocacy groups. The American Association for State and Local History (AASLH) has an advocacy page at http://www.aaslh.org/htopics.htm. "The Gift of History" on their Web site (http://www.aaslh.org/documents/GiftOfH.pdf) provides a compelling argument, in lay terms, for why preservation matters.
  - Advocate for the value of preserving local history and regional collections.

- **Local – city or county – governments**

  Present the projected financial benefits of supporting preservation in the local community:
  - Local businesses will benefit from tourism dollars
  - Preservation projects will provide publicity and recognition to the local community
  - Preservation efforts will contribute to civic pride
  - Preservation efforts can make history come alive for local school children

- **Granting agencies and Foundations**

  Utilizing multiple sources of funding, such as grants and foundation dollars, for well-defined projects can result in economies of scale and sharing of resources. Successful projects can be magnets for potential donors. Doing a "show and tell" can illustrate the benefits of giving in a way that makes preservation come alive for the lay audience. Great examples of successful projects include:
  - SOS! (Save Outdoor Sculpture!) (http://americanart.si.edu/research/programs/sos/), a collaboration of the Smithsonian American Art Museum and Heritage Preservation, made possible by major contributions from Target Stores, National Endowment for the Arts, Pew Charitable Trusts, Getty Grant Program, and Henry Luce Foundation, among others.
  - Treasures of American Film Archives (http://www.filmpreservation.org/), a cooperative project funded by the National Endowment for the Arts and The Pew Charitable Trusts.