



NASIG Newsletter

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Profile

Steve Shadle, NASIG President

Susan Davis, Profiles Editor

Steve is currently the Serials Access Librarian at the University of Washington Libraries in Seattle. He already responded to some questions about being a new board member in the previous *Newsletter* (<http://digitalcommons.usu.edu/nasig/vol26/iss2/38/>); however, as incoming President, he is certainly entitled to a more in depth profile on other aspects of his life!

How did you end up becoming a librarian?

My becoming a librarian was a foregone conclusion. I was always a bookish kid who was encouraged to read (my undiagnosed nearsightedness at an early age probably contributed to that bookishness). Weekly visits to the public library and summer reading programs were formative experiences. I worked at public libraries while in college and after graduating from the University of Washington (with a BA in Linguistics...now there's a degree that makes you a hot commodity on the job market!), the librarians I worked for at King County Library encouraged me to consider becoming a librarian.

I also admit to having the cataloger gene. My maternal uncle (who I most resemble of my family members) was a cataloger at Cal-Tech (and if Elliott were still alive, he would be appalled by the quality of cataloging copy in OCLC). I also come from a line of preacher/teachers on my mom's side of the family and my mom has become a dance teacher in her later life, so I've got the genetic

material for not only being a cataloger, but also a teacher.

Did you have a previous career or any jobs before you became a librarian?

Nope, no previous career. The only jobs I've had outside of libraries were part-time college jobs flipping burgers at a local Spokane drive-in and teaching school kids to folk dance.

[Editor note: We have something in common—I worked at a burger joint (large national chain without the arches) one summer!]

Have you always lived in the Pacific Northwest?

Mostly. I was born and raised in Spokane and moved to Seattle when I was 20. After library school, I lived in the Washington, DC area for about 3 ½ years and in Albany, NY for about a year before returning to Seattle. When I was 22, I rented a row house in a north London suburb for about 4 months, doing door-to-door market research to pay the rent.

Steve, you indicated in the May 2011 profile that you enjoy traveling. What are your favorite travel destinations and why?

They're so predictable and cliché. I like big cities in general, the energy, the culture, the people-watching. *J'adore Paris* (anytime except summer). I get to use my college French (even though when I open my mouth Parisians wince and miraculously remember how to

speak English). Even with the dog poop, Paris is an amazingly beautiful city. Lucy Wadham's recent book *The Secret Life of France* provided me with a better sense of the French psyche and why they are so interesting to watch (and so beautiful to boot).

[Editor note: Steve, as a former French major who has been to Paris 3 times and would totally agree that it has a certain *je ne sais quoi* that is distinctly Parisian; I'm inspired to give this book a try!]

Steve continues with his travelogue.

Oktoberfest in Munich. Germans are the ultimate rule followers, so seeing Germans being silly is just enjoyable for me. You haven't lived until you've been in a beer tent full of adults, all doing the chicken dance and hitting each other with squeaking plastic hammers. Plus the countryside of the Bavarian and Tyrolean mountains just puts my heart at ease.

Washington, DC in the spring when the city is in bloom and the wealth of free museums and culture is not yet overrun by tourists and school groups. Plus, I get to visit with some of my dearest friends.

Road trips along the West Coast (any place where I can be near water, hear/feel the ocean, watch the sun set...like I said, really cliché). One of my favorite souvenirs is a glass float I made at a glass art studio in Lincoln City, Oregon.

...and the guilty pleasure that most of my friends know about, my love of a Disney theme park. Where else do you get to be a kid again and where everyone is treated as a "guest" by "cast members" who appear extremely interested in making sure you enjoy yourself? I have very few items on my bucket list, but one is to visit all 11 theme parks worldwide.

Tell us more about your musical talents. When did you start playing the clarinet? We want to know more about your Balkan group.

Music was a big part of my life. Starting with clarinet and piano when I was 8 years old (the uncle I mentioned earlier was a very talented pianist and bought our family a spinet so I could learn piano). At church, I sang with and accompanied the youth choir and played in the hand bell choir. I played clarinet and alto sax in high school concert band and in a number of small ensembles.



When I moved to Seattle, I learned about Balkan music, dance and culture from performing with the *Radost Folk Ensemble* off and on for about 8 years. Towards the end of that time, the ensemble was in need of musicians, so a small group of us formed a band that was the genesis for the group I now play in: *Orkestar RTW* (*RTW* stands for *Radio-Televizije Wallingford*; Wallingford is the Seattle neighborhood where our accordion player lived at the time). The name is taken from a tradition of naming radio/television station house bands in the Balkans (e.g., *Orkestar Radio-Televizije Sofia*), similar to the *BBC Symphony* or the *NBC Orchestra*.

We're a five piece band: accordion, clarinet, tambura, electric bass, drums with the tambura player and I doing vocals. We play mostly Bulgarian and Macedonian music that was popular with the American folk dance community during the 1960s & 1970s as well as more recent popular songs and styles from the broader Balkan region (including Albania, Bosnia, Greece and Serbia). We have a regular gig at a local Greek

restaurant and play for the local recreational folk dance communities.

What other interests/hobbies to do you have, such as favorite authors, movies, dinner companion of choice?

I do so little recreational reading these days (mostly on planes) and what I do is either related to travel/cultural (like Lucy Wadham's recent book) or escapist fantasy. I managed to read all of the Harry Potters on flights to Hawaii and California last fall. I enjoy the wordplay of Piers Anthony and my favorite series is *Incarnations of Immortality*. As part of my Disney obsession, I went through everything I could get my hands on a couple years ago on the history and development of Walt Disney Imagineering and the theme parks. Bus reading is typically *The New York Times*.

My favorite dinner companion is my partner of 15 years, Rick. Unfortunately, his taste in movies is strictly comedies and musicals ("If I want stress in my life, I'll just talk to one of my children.") So when I do see movies, they are typically of the Pixar variety. We have a friend who hosts an Academy Awards party every year and the only year we decided to be informed voters was the year of *Slingblade*, *The English Patient*, and *Fargo*. Never again.

As for other hobbies, I waste an obscene amount of time playing *Civilization 5*. And we regularly babysit Rick's two grandsons (ages 6 and 8).

Since I have to seriously bend my neck to look up at him when I'm talking to Steve in person I thought I'd ask him what it's like being the tallest NASIG member?



Is that true? Never really thought about it.

[Editor note: Now there's an idea for a fun thread on NASIG-L—who is the tallest member and who is the shortest?]

Last question and this is a serious one. Do you have any special goals or themes you plan to focus on during your NASIG presidency?

We need to increase the value of a NASIG membership. Historically, the primary benefits have been a reduced rate for conference registration, discussion list and newsletter subscriptions, and access to resources on the website. In the last two years, we've negotiated a reduced member rate for *Serials Librarian* (in which the conference proceedings are published) and have worked with NISO and others to provide reduced registration rates for serials-related continuing education. I would like to see us do more to offer services to members that don't attend the conference. One idea I would like us to explore this year is to take the "best of the best" content from the conference and make that content available in other forums, possibly as regional workshops or as webinars.

I asked Steve if there was anything else he'd care to share that hasn't been covered elsewhere. He thought I probably already had plenty of material to fill the profile, so I'll just end with a personal observation that Steve has a great sense of humor and is incredibly approachable, even if I have to look up when I talk to him. Have a great year as NASIG President!