

Message from the President

Ridgeley Williams
Visitor Studies Association

Thanks again to our excellent conference hosts in Minnesota and to the presenters and delegates from around the world who helped make last summer's annual meeting such a memorable occasion. It was memorable for many good reasons, the stimulating presentations, new ideas, new and old friends, and visits to exceptional museums, but in addition I will have a lasting memory of the efficient movement by museum staff of our delegates into an exhibition basement to shelter from a tornado. Visitor service and conference bonding at its best! Work on the conference proceedings, potentially the largest volume ever, is moving along well with a publication date planned for early in the new year. Delays on the 94 proceedings have been resolved and they too should be available by the same time.

We next meet in Colorado and I urge you to get your presentation proposals and abstracts in by the December 15 deadline. Conference organizers are working hard to provide the most exciting conference yet!

Professional development workshops have been an essential component of our conferences. As many as a third of

conference participants take advantage of the associated workshops, and many workshop participants indicate that workshops are a principle reason why they attend. Workshops also contribute significantly to the financial success of the conferences. In 1996, these conference workshops will take place in Denver's world class museums.

Elsewhere in this issue you will find a questionnaire designed to obtain your advice on future directions for VSA professional development, which will help the Professional Development Committee design workshops for next year's annual conference and other venues. Evaluations of previous workshops and analysis of workshop attendance patterns have provided useful information. Clearly, introductory courses aimed at novice practitioners or those new to the museum world are fully subscribed year after year but those who attend them, frequently show cyclical attendance patterns, suggesting a limited potential audience. Should the scope of introductory courses be expanded, perhaps to deal with interview techniques, statistics, and other basic methods? Are there audiences, for example managers or educators, that have been overlooked but could be reached with different workshops? What subjects or style of professional development would benefit the established and experienced evaluator? What should the ideal curriculum contain for training visitor studies professionals? Please send Steve Bitgood or members of your Board your ideas and comments.

Don't forget to renew your membership for 1996!

VISITOR BEHAVIOR

Psychology Institute, JSU

P. O. Box 3090

Jacksonville, AL 36265-9982

NON PROF. ORG.
U. S. POSTAGE
PAID
JACKSONVILLE, AL
BULK-RATE
PERMIT NO. 2