

Report to CPC membership:

Circle Pines Center Archives

October 5, 2024

Respectfully submitted by Christyl Burnett

In the spring of 2024, I approached the CPC board and Western Michigan University's Zhang Legacy Collections Center about Zhang acquiring the CPC historical archive. If Zhang's regional history center were to be interested, it would mean the historical CPC archive would be removed from the farmhouse attic and be archived and publicly available (for supervised, reading room use only) at Zhang on Western's campus in Kalamazoo, Michigan. As an archival administration graduate student at Wayne State University, I would survey, inventory, appraise, clean, arrange, describe and catalog the collection for public access at Zhang. I would do this work free of charge for my capstone practicum, under the direction of archivist Lynn Houghton at Zhang. Lynn is one of the most respected archivists in the region and is in charge of the regional collections at Zhang. Lynn is interested, and we are working together to see if the CPC collection is something Zhang would like to house. Below is a shortened version of my report to her from September 9<sup>th</sup>. Lynn has reviewed the report and is now interested in having me estimate linear feet for the portion I suggest they house at Zhang. Thus far I have spent about 20 hours on the project. My practicum is for a minimum of 135 total hours.

Zhang is a good choice to house our collection due to its nearness to Circle Pines. If Zhang determines they do not have the room for the collection I will be seeking alternative public archival institutions such as the Bentley at the University of Michigan, where the Chester Graham papers are housed for those of you who have read my 2020/2021 published early history of Circle Pines. It is my hope that we can secure the collection for research in a professional, standards-based institution in order to preserve it and make it available for research. Presently it is not secure and is subject to bugs and animals, extreme heat and humidity, unchecked borrowing and theft, damaging reorganization and disorganization, and it is in constant competition for space.

Note that this proposal is for the physical archive only, at this point. I do have the digitized audiovisual collections managed by Fred Beshears and others in mind though and I am considering solutions for hosting. Likewise, there is more to add to what Fred has collected. All of this is exceptionally valuable and so it is also top of mind for me.

I welcome your thoughts and comments.

Christyl



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Recommendations for Zhang's consideration:

- 1) Promotional Materials, inception to present.
- 2) Pine Needles Newsletter, weekly in summer starting in 1938 and turning to monthly by the 1950s, inception to present.
- 3) Written histories; published and unpublished, some one-page recollections and some five or six pages in length.
- 4) Biographical sketches and other materials regarding the involvement of noteworthy figures in Circle Pines history, such as former directors, members, volunteers, campers, artists and musicians.
- 5) Circle Pines bound anthology publications, randomly produced for anniversary years like the 10<sup>th</sup>, the 25<sup>th</sup>, the 50<sup>th</sup>, the 65<sup>th</sup> and 75<sup>th</sup> year.
- 6) Board and committee meeting minutes, largely quarterly.
- 7) Documents regarding governance changes, such as the change from a co-op to a nonprofit in the 1970s, and changes to the membership fees and process.
- 8) Historical files and items.
- 9) Historical scrapbooks.

- 10) Two unpublished manuscripts of the first director David Sonquist.
- 11) Significant architectural drawings built and not built over the years.
- 12) Budget and year-end financial statement to 2015.
- 13) Audio Visual materials in the form of photos, negatives, slides, VHS, cassette and reel to reel. It is not my recommendation to consider the Circle Pines website for archiving at this time.

Further thoughts:

Accruals could be many and significant. I am not planning to go anywhere and will happily appraise such suggested donations for inclusion as they come forth. Likewise, if Zhang expresses an interest, I will be happy to oversee volunteers and interns in the digitizing of any part of the Circle Pines collection for hosting on Zhang's website.

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