

# Volunteers *at* GRAM

A Newsletter for and about Volunteers at the Grand Rapids Art Museum

April, 2010

Volume 2 #4

## VOLUNTEER OF THE MONTH RUTH STUBBS

Congratulations Ruth Stubbs for being the Volunteer of this Month. Ruth became active with the Grand Rapids Art Museum about 15 years ago as a docent. During that time she also served on the Docent Council from 1996 - 2000, the last year of that as president. She was invited to join the Volunteer Council when it began in Sept of 1998 and stayed until 2003, serving as president 2000 - 2001; She was on the council again from 2006 - 2009.



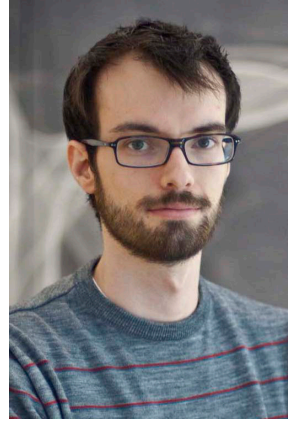
She states: "Being a docent allows me to indulge two of my loves--learning and teaching. I've learned such a lot about art and about looking at art in the training we receive at GRAM. It's great fun to share that excitement with our visitors of all ages, whose responses yield new insights into works of art, even those I've studied many times. Besides that, we have a superb education staff and a world-class building. I am truly proud and blessed to be associated with GRAM."

Ruth was married to Bill Stubbs 16 years ago; between them they have 7 adult children and 18 grandchildren, ranging from 11 to 23 years old. Just keeping track of all those birthdays keeps them on their toes. Those children and grandchildren are scattered from Seattle, WA to Gothenburg, Sweden, with Indiana, New York, and Michigan (thanks goodness!) in-between. Half of those 18 grandchildren have dual passports--Swedish, German, Brazilian.

Bill and Ruth love theater, and they go to Stratford every year, where both of them have seen the entire Shakespeare canon.

Music is another of Ruth's loves. She sang in the Grand

Rapids Symphony Chorus for 30 years, and presently sings in the Westminster Church's Sanctuary Choir.



## STAFF PROFILE GARRETT BROOKS

Down in the basement of the Art Museum, you will find a tall good looking young man, known as Garrett Brooks. Down in the art storage of the museum he is moving works from the permanent collection and preparing works for exhibitions. Garrett

is the Chief Preparator for the Art Museum and he has held that position since the spring of 2007.

So what does a preparator actually do? Garrett says he does everything from exhibition design, installation of the works, lighting, label copy, setting up the new artwork storage and organizing the collection space. He also does framing and many more odd jobs. But his major task is to assist the Curators with exhibition design and the implementation of those designs

He graduated from the Rhode Island School of Design Providence, Rhode Island, in 2005. where he completed a double major in Furniture Design, and in Art History.

What does he enjoy about working at GRAM? Being able to work with the art, getting to see all the artwork the GRAM has - little known artists can also be very interesting. And the best is being here to help with new exhibition installation, I get to have a one on one relationship with the new work, before most people get to see it.

His advice to volunteers? Never lose your enthusiasm for the art, keep educating people about our great collection.

Garrett loves design and art. Whenever I am not here at the GRAM, I am usually designing furniture/objects. I run a small design company and primarily make one off commission furniture pieces ([www.goodwooddesign.com](http://www.goodwooddesign.com)). I also love printmaking, mountain biking, and snow skiing.

## VOLUNTEER HOURS

Total Hours Contributed: 393.25 by 87 volunteers

Breakdown by Department:

Docents:	266.5
Library:	50.75
Administration/ Membership:	15.5
Museum Store:	24
Guest Services:	32.5
Education:	4



## BOARD PROFILE

### MITCH WATT

Mitch Watt has been an avid supporter of GRAM for many years as a member, attending events, serving on the Gala Committee, etc. He was honored when asked to serve on the Board of Trustees a few years ago. He is currently a member of the Executive Finance Committee, Chair of the Development Committee, and Chair of the Director

Search Committee.

Mitch was born and raised in St. Louis, Missouri. During his freshmen year in college, his father was transferred to Grand Rapids and his parents relocated to Ada. Mitch began spending his summer recess time from college in Grand Rapids and secured an internship at a large architectural/engineering firm. That firm was Daverman Associates. He worked for Daverman as an intern architect for 3 summers and following his graduation was offered a job with Daverman. He had grown to love Grand Rapids so he accepted the position and spent the next 23 years with the firm, which eventually changed their name to URS Corporation. Mitch is a licensed architect and is currently serving as the Vice President of Triangle Associates, a large, multi-disciplined Grand Rapids based contractor providing construction management, general contracting and design-build services to a wide range of clients throughout the Midwest.

Mitch received a Bachelors of Environmental Design and Bachelors in Architecture from the University of Kansas where he was a member of Tau Kappa Epsilon Fraternity and a member of the University of Kansas Swim Team.

The main reason he has made Grand Rapids his permanent home is because he met, and married, his wife Stacey 23 years ago. She grew up here, graduating from East Grand Rapids High School. Stacey and Mitch met while they were volunteering on an event for the Grand Rapids Jaycees.

They have three children; oldest son Cody (19) is a freshman at Central Michigan University, middle son Connor (17) and youngest daughter Devin (15) both attend Forest Hills Central High School.

Mitch had this to say about the volunteers at GRAM: We all have passions. I think one trick to a gratifying life is finding that passion and uncovering the most meaningful way to fulfill it. I volunteer as a GRAM Trustee as a way to fulfill my passion for the beauty of art. As volunteers, I am sure that you all share a similar passion for GRAM.

The role you play, as volunteers cannot be overemphasized for GRAM. GRAM is an essential and

valued community resource with an important mission focused on education and preservation. As such, we could not succeed in that mission without the dedication and hard work given by all of our volunteers. These efforts are greatly appreciated by the entire Board of Trustees and the GRAM staff.

Thank you for sharing your passion by volunteering at the GRAM!

## DOCENT NEWS

### EXPLORING THE GUEST EXPERIENCE:

On May 24, GRAM hosts the yearly spring gathering of West Michigan docents. Docents from the Kalamazoo Institute of Arts and the Muskegon Museum of Art will gather here with our docents to share their insights in a day entitled, Exploring the Guest Experience: A Gathering of West Michigan Docents. The Day will consist of:

Refreshments and social time; Get to know the Docents from GRAM, KIA, and MMA;

An Interactive panel discussion examining "The Guest Experience;"

The opportunity to experience *Surveying American Art: Social Studies through the Eyes of Artists*, a new tour launched in partnership with the Michigan Humanities Council's Picturing America program;

Lunch;

A chance to explore the permanent collection with GRAM's new Smart Conversation booklet and view the special exhibition *Dutch Utopia: American Artists in Holland, 1880-1914*

### NEWS FROM THE DOCENT COUNCIL:

The new Council officers for the year 2010 - 2011 were elected at the last Docent meeting. The new Docent Council Officers will be Alan Bedell - President, Paul Chardoul - Vice-President, Nancy Clouse - Secretary, Joy Uddin - Hospitality Officer and Pat Nelson as Past President. We welcome them to their new responsibilities and we thank those who have served us well this past year; Secretary - Julie Connors, Hospitality Officer - Sharon Lantinga and Past President- Shirley de Jonge



Julie Connors



Sharon Lantinga



Shirley de Jonge



Alan Bedell



Paul Chardoul



Nancy Clouse



Joy Uddin