



Herbert Hoover Presidential Library-Museum

210 Parkside Drive
P.O. Box 488
West Branch, IA 52358-0488

319-643-5301
Fax 319-643-6045
www.hoover.archives.gov

August 2022 Report to the Hoover Presidential Foundation

By Thomas F. Schwartz

The facility continues to operate week-by-week depending on the Covid levels in Johnson and Cedar Counties as determined by the Center for Disease Control. Both counties were low for most of this quarter and then Johnson County went high and Cedar County moved to medium. The lower of the two is used to set operations for the following week. We have been able to fully operate without mandating face coverings for the public and continue our public programs at medium levels. If both should go high, we would have to end our public programs and require the public, staff, and contractors to wear face coverings. Basing operations on a weekly basis upon Covid levels make it impossible to plan public programs not knowing what the levels might be in the future.

Attendance in the museum is dramatically increasing since fully reopening the end of March. In May we saw 3,270 visitors (a good number were school groups), June 2,438, and so far in July 2,546 with several days yet to go before the end of the month. Revenues are good but offset by the plunge in our long-term assets due to a volatile market.

We had our first author talk of the year hosting Annette Dunlap who discussed her new biography of Lou Henry Hoover. The talk was recorded by C-SPAN and aired on July 30. The upcoming conference, *America's Famine Relief Mission to Soviet Russia: A Centennial Symposium*, will also be recorded by C-SPAN for later broadcast. Having C-SPAN record our programs gives us national visibility. All Third-Thursday speakers are locked in for the remainder of the year.

The backlog for research scans has been eliminated and researchers are back in the research room. The new Covid policy is intended to keep all operations, including the research room open even under high levels. The museum staff is preparing to photograph artifacts by categories (e.g., flour sacks, medals etc.) to be placed on TMS for the public access. This is a long-term project to be done incrementally over the years.

Four vacancies—Education Specialist, Staff Assistant, Registrar, and Public Affairs Specialist—exist with some movement being made on posting the Education Specialist and the Registrar position just closed to potential applicants. With Matt Schaefer's retirement in September, the number of vacancies increases to five. That is more than a third of my total staff. It is an extremely slow process in filling vacancies.

A new director of the Office of Presidential Libraries has been named, Kara S. Blond. She spent fifteen years on staff at the Smithsonian ending her career there as Director of Exhibitions at the National Museum of Natural History. More recently, she served as Executive Director of the Capital Jewish Museum. She holds a BA in English from the University of Pennsylvania and an MA in Education from Stanford University. Kara Blond replaces acting director Terri Garner who retired.