Application for Stanford Prize for Innovation in Research Libraries (SPIRL)
Submitted by: Bella Karr Gerlich, Professor and Dean of Libraries at the University of Alaska Fairbanks
Date: January 14, 2013

Narrative description: Explanation of the library’s innovation

The Problem:
Recorded memories in the form of oral histories are often the most vivid and useful tool for researchers seeking a thorough understanding of a topic, event or idea. It is ironic that problems exist with the dissemination of oral history recordings given that the purpose of oral history is to give voice to those who are usually unheard, and that the oral historian specifically records someone telling their story so that others can hear it. The University of Alaska Fairbanks Oral History Program at the Elmer E. Rasmuson Library has over 11,000 recordings which include the world’s largest collection of Alaska Native recordings. For the past 25 years, program staff and faculty have worked diligently to digitize these oral history recordings, making them available online to patrons around the world.

Curating oral history collections presents unique challenges. Audio quality, digital transcripts and links to related material held in other Library collections all must be gathered and presented in the most useful way to users. As oral history has moved into the digital realm these challenges—such as lack of funding resulting in reduced staff and expertise—have grown in scope and complexity. Understanding, and being able to use, digital tools is a new concept for many oral historians and collection managers because most of those in our field, have little to no training in digital issues, digital technology and computer programming. This combined with the fact that standardized best practices for oral history digitization, preservation and access have been slow to materialize, has hindered the development of a digital management system. This has resulted in some perpetual and institutionalized problems:

- The material collected is managed (or not managed at all) in a myriad of ways, and because there is not a standard computer program for this work oral historians and collections managers have had to cobble together their system using available local resources.

- A chronic lack of funding for oral history projects, the traditional focus on collecting (often excluding dissemination), and the failure by oral historians or oral history groups to include preservation, project continuation and dissemination in their original proposals hinders the dissemination of the stories collected.

- Many oral history programs are small and lack the expert staff or funds to develop databases to manage their data, or to create websites which tie together the audio or audiovisual interviews, photographs, transcripts and metadata to disseminate their findings.

- If staff expertise and funds exist to manage and disseminate findings, there is often a “re-creation of the wheel” as each new oral history project begins with no formalized system in place.

- Because most oral history projects are funded on a project-by-project basis, the media in which older projects are stored becomes outdated or obsolete and is no longer accessible, when old equipment and programs are not maintained. Recorded stories remain on cassette tapes, reel to reel tapes or on hard drives collecting dust and not being heard.
In our current technological age, recorded stories collected should not remain hidden due to the inability of an oral historian or collection manager to understand the digital tools available to them to tie the interviews, transcripts and metadata together.

Recognizing these challenges, UAF Ramuson Library faculty and staff developed and implemented a better way to preserve, give access to and disseminate oral history collections so that those stories, and accompanying photographs and supporting documentation, so important to our nation’s cultural heritage.

**UAF Elmer E. Rasmuson Library Innovative Solution:**
The UAF Oral History Program has developed a solution to these challenges. It involves the development of a template system in Drupal 7. The Drupal Content Management System was the content manager of choice as its core principles of collaboration, community support, development standards, and open source installation are in keeping with our project goals and values. One key element of the project is to ultimately share this tool with the world.

The templates we have developed target the specific needs of an oral history project or any project that involves the dissemination of audio/video, photographs and related material plus the metadata associated with the items. The oral history collection at UAF, as detailed later, has benefited from this tool that takes all the data, e.g., audio, audiovisual interviews, photographs, archival material and cataloging metadata, manages it and makes it accessible via a website.

The benefit to all groups is that once staff has learned how to use the templates, they can put their talents and efforts into doing what they do best—collecting oral history or curating the library’s oral history collection—instead of spending their valuable time trying to develop the digital foundation that makes their research and material accessible to others. Best of all, valuable one-of-a-kind materials can now be safely preserved and made more accessible at a much lower cost, without the need for highly skilled expertise staff and in less time than previously required.

Most importantly, the software provides the best technological solution to giving life to the stories in the collection which in turn educates the public and other researchers. They help foster cultural awareness and understanding, empower the speakers and audience, makes oral history archives more accessible to researchers and the general public, and provides newly available research materials to researchers, academics and community groups and finally, the narrators of these stories can serve as excellent role models for today’s youth. Having these stories available enriches everyone in every society.

**Published mission statement of nominated institution**
The University of Alaska inspires learning, and advances and disseminates knowledge through teaching, research, and public service, emphasizing the North and its diverse peoples. [University of Alaska Board of Regents, 2000]

The University of Alaska Fairbanks Elmer E. Rasmuson and BioSciences Libraries advance the University's mission through education and the creation, acquisition, management, preservation, and dissemination of information resources. [Elmer E. Rasmuson and BioSciences Library Council, 2012]
History of development and implementation of the program in brief

The UAF Oral History Program was established in 1981 to collect, preserve, and provide access to audio and video recordings that offer insight into Alaska’s history and the people who have contributed to its heritage. The collection consists of more than 11,000 recordings, most of which were donated by the organizations and individual interviewers who collected them over the years.

The Rasmuson Library has recognized, understood and supported finding a cost-effective solution for digitizing, collecting and disseminating recordings and other materials. Oral history and Information technology staff at the Library have developed a new methodology for displaying interview footage and transcripts that would comply with current technology and design standards. This template-driving oral history display bundles transcripts and audio/visual files, maps and archival materials into a polished navigable media player in Drupal, a free, open-source content management software.

In 1988 Project Jukebox was developed at UAF. It was one of the first oral history programs in the United States to provide digital access to oral history recordings. In those early years before the Internet, Project Jukebox programs were developed on standalone computers that loaded up individual CDs to play the audio (much like a traditional record-playing jukebox). As new technology developed Project Jukebox changed its delivery methods and went from stand-alone Hypercard programs through many technologies to our current Drupal Content Management System (CMS) format. Over the years we searched but were unable to find any pre-packaged software that met our specific needs thus the need to develop in house a software solution. We wanted a useful, non-propietry software that would quickly give access to both sound and transcripts, and allow for the incorporation of photographs and maps.

Though very committed to digital dissemination over the last two and a half decades, only a fraction of the interviews are available online via the Project Jukebox website. We have digitized approximately eleven terabytes of oral history interviews, but they are not being mainstreamed due to the lack of funding and an efficient, cost-effective solution. There was also no true data management model, and until recently, no capacity to develop a digital preservation plan or disaster recovery plan that fit our particular needs. Our solution was to build upon the Drupal Content Management System (CMS).

In order to complete this task, a comparison of resources available was conducted to ascertain what would work best for Project Jukebox, something we continue to do as our project progresses. Our development framework allows us to adhere to the standards and protocols of the Rasmuson Library’s IT department, current web development trends, and current browser technology. Drupal sites will make for easy migration in the future as web technologies further advance and style trends change. It provides the flexibility to easily be adapted to address the shortcomings of the above listed software and it can serve as infrastructure for digital preservation and ingest data from other digital repositories, creating an interoperability solution.

In using the templates, users simply cut and paste and/or browse to attach elements they wish to associate with their media file. These can include time-coded transcripts, photos, and interviewee/narrator profiles. Assets are “tagged” with metadata terms (taxonomy) to cross reference all assets by person, project, community/location, subject terms, and funding partners. Upon submission, interview data is saved to the secure, version-controlled, account-driven Drupal platform CMS, in which users can access and edit their submissions. All submissions are moderated by selected staff given the appropriate permissions within the software.
This form, and its associated scripts and templates, will allow future projects to be created and put online in less time. It will allow a person with no web design or programming experience to copy and paste their data into a simple form, and create very sophisticated and interactive web pages, without needing to understand the code running behind the scenes. And it will make projects less expensive and give oral history collection managers, oral historians, humanities researchers and librarians more time to do what they do best — concentrate on interviews and collection management. Testing criteria was built into the development phase by converting a variety of interviews from our past projects.

Utilizing the new form-based interface for the conversion will make developing sites easier and faster. We currently have five new projects created in the template format and have funding requests out to help us transfer our old projects into the system so they can be accessible in a newer user friendly manner.

**Intended clientele, including a brief description of the methods of assessing effects on clientele**

Anyone interested in Alaska history (teachers, general public, researchers, academics, students). Our new sites went live in September and on Tuesday, October 16, 2012 we instituted Google Analytics to monitor use of the site on a daily basis. The following statistics show how [www.jukebox.uaf.edu](http://www.jukebox.uaf.edu) has been accessed during this time period to January 13, 2013:

- A total of 2,948 people have visited the site
- 4,278 visits have been made to the site
- 66.85% were new visitors
- 33.15% were returning visitors
- 3, 904 visits were from the United States
- 79 visits were from Canada
- 63 visits were from the United Kingdom
- 53 visits were from an unknown origin
- 26 visits were from Australia
- 25 visits were from France
- 21 visits were from Japan
- 20 visits were from Germany
- 18 visits were from India
- 18 visits were from Turkey

We have only gathered statistics for a short time and although we cannot tell who specifically used the site and why, we are reaching a global audience interested in Alaska history.

In future we hope to be able to provide other oral history collection groups or libraries with oral history collection with the software so that they will also be able to use it to display their own projects. A few more minor additions need to be added to the templates and funding is currently being sought to accomplish this. Once the final version is complete, we hope to share it with other users.
Principal players (staff, consultants) with brief biographical statements

**Bella Karr Gerlich**, Professor and Dean of Libraries at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. She has overseen digitization and dissemination projects at several academic libraries and is an authority on providing library services to off-site patrons. Bella is the nominating party for this application.

**Leslie McCartney**, Assistant Professor, is the Curator of Oral History at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. She has several years’ experience managing and coordinating oral history research projects internationally. She holds a Master of Arts in Cultural Anthropology.

**Jeannine Haney**, former Research Technician, Alaska and Polar Regions Collections and Archives, Elmer E. Rasmuson Library. Jeannine had been designing and building websites and web-based projects since 1996, the last six of which were for UAF. She was also the co-chair of the Digital Preservation committee at the Rasmuson Library, setting the preservation standard for all of the library’s digital holdings.

**Ilana Kingsley** is the Associate Professor and Web Librarian at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. Her background is in web development and information architecture. She holds a Master’s degree in Library Science and is currently enrolled in Masters of Education program in Online Design and Innovation.

**Karen Brewster**, Research Associate in the Alaska and Polar Regions of the Rasmuson Library. Karen has a master’s degree in Oral History/Folklore and has been doing oral history work in Alaska since 1989. For the past fourteen years she has developed most of the Project Jukebox research projects. She has moved Project Jukebox through many phases of technical advancement and has presented these developments to national and international audiences.

**Marla Statscewich**, Research Technician in the Alaska and Polar Regions of the Rasmuson Library. Marla has a degree in Anthropology and has worked for Project Jukebox for eight years, Marla has technical expertise, having created many of the individual Project Jukebox websites during her tenure and working with a variety of development tools.

Functional specifications and requirements, if appropriate

For librarians, oral historians or collection managers to use the templates, all the files they wish to use in producing a webpage need to be digital, organized in folders on their computer and accessible. With a few hours training, and using the training manual that we are creating, they can learn what fields need to be completed in order to create a project, image galleries and interview pages with rolling transcripts. They will also create themes based on interview content so viewing users can find more interviews with the same related theme.

In order to access [www.jukebox.uaf.edu](http://www.jukebox.uaf.edu) the end viewer user needs access to the Internet with good bandwidth in order to view good streaming of the audio projects and more particularly in the case of view recordings that were audiovisual in nature.

URLs photos, videos, other media if appropriate to understanding the innovation

[www.jukebox.uaf.edu](http://www.jukebox.uaf.edu) is the main webpage. From there all 44 Project Jukebox projects can be accessed. There are five Project Jukeboxes in the new Drupal 7 format: “Alaska Mental Health Trust History Project Jukebox,” “Exit Glacier, Kenai Fjords National Park Project Jukebox,” “Gates of the Arctic National Park Project Jukebox,” “Homer communities of Memory Project Jukebox” and “Judges of Alaska Project Jukebox.”
In all of these projects, the splash page gives a short history of the project or area, describes themes covered with links from the themes to actual interviews that discuss those themes, and shows related material. Navigation to pages containing interviews both in video and audio only, (depending on the recording medium used in the project), photographs, archival material and further resource material is made very easy for the user.

When listening to an interview, the text scrolls under the screen but the user can also jump ahead to specific places in the interview either by clicking on chapter headings on the left or to actual points in the transcript on the right.

Press coverage, if appropriate
The following (or a condensed version) has appeared in the Alaska Historical Society Newsletter, Northwest Archivist Newsletter, UAF library website and Project Jukebox website as well as used as promotion information in emails to various university departments or funders.

Project Jukebox is evolving again!

Project Jukebox is the digital branch of the Oral History Program and provides access to audio and video recordings, transcripts, maps, historic photographs and films from across Alaska and it is evolving again to meet the challenges of delivering digital oral histories online in a new and innovative fashion!

In 1988 Project Jukebox was one of the first oral history programs in the United States to provide digital access to oral history recordings. In those early years, before the Internet, Project Jukebox programs were developed on stand-alone computers that loaded individual CDs to play the audio, hence the name ‘Project Jukebox’. Over the years, Project Jukebox has changed its delivery methods as new technology has become available. We went from stand-alone Hypercard programs, to web-based HTML programs, to using Testimony Software and then to using Drupal 6. As technology ever moves forward at an almost impossible pace to keep up with, these delivery methods have become cumbersome and a new delivery method was sought. The Elmer E. Rasmuson Library at the University of Alaska Fairbanks has supported the development and creation of a new solution and is pleased to now unveil our Drupal Content Management System (CMS) format created in Drupal 7. Highlights of our new delivery format include:

- Interactive, easy to use and user friendly
- There are now multiple ways to access the recordings in Project Jukebox - browse by project, people, interviews or slideshows
- Listen to the recording in full, jump ahead or back to a particular section or jump to a particular spot in the transcript to immediately focus on a section
- Text for the audio appears under the play bar or you have access to the entire transcript
- Our latest format allows us to attach more metadata, or information about the actual recording – this can be found under the Digital Assets Information box
- Slideshows associated with an interview can be viewed simultaneously
- Every interview lists associated themes
- Funding partners are associated with every project

Please visit us at www.jukebox.uaf.edu to view our latest projects in our new format which include:

- Alaska Mental Health Trust History Project Jukebox
- Judges of Alaska Project Jukebox
- Exit Glacier, Kenai Fjords National Park
- Gates of the Arctic National Park Project Jukebox
- Homer Communities of Memory Project Jukebox

All of our older projects can still be accessed via [www.jukebox.uaf.edu](http://www.jukebox.uaf.edu) and we are hoping to secure funding in the near future to convert all this older projects into our newest presentation format.

We welcome feedback on our new site. Please email Leslie McCartney, Curator of Oral History at UAF with your comments or suggestion on how to improve our new oral history delivery format at lmccartney@alaska.edu.

**User documentation if appropriate**
The best way to understand what is being described here is to visit [www.jukebox.uaf.edu](http://www.jukebox.uaf.edu), select one of the projects that show in the changing banner at the top to access a project, or go to All Projects and select one of the top five (not the Senator Ted Stevens Project Jukebox). From there, the user will enter a project and have access to the recordings, photographs and related material.

**Nominator’s statement – Why is the nominee particularly worthy of this recognition?**
Best practices for preserving information and artifacts change frequently, and the world of digitizing materials to preserve and increase access has sped up the evolution. In the past one hundred years, an archivist might have had to use two or even three new technological tools to best preserve and share the materials in her/his care. In the past 10 years, such changes are occurring yearly. And still our patrons clamber for access—from here and across the globe—and those entrusting their materials to our care ask for better preservation. We have all worked hard to employ our knowledge and experience to make the best choices, but our work is insulated by our workload and the bewildering changes in technology. The UAF Oral History department has always been innovative, developing an integrated presentation of materials from all the archival collections at the UAF libraries in 1988 to the current DRUPAL project. The fact that the effort is being designed to be used by library staff with no special technology training, and by any organization that wishes to use it, makes it an excellent tool and a true gift to the world of historians, libraries and students.

**Listing of publications or references, if any, by the nominee that supports this nomination**
At Carnegie Mellon University, utilized project management skills to create and implement innovative programs, speak to preservation and collection management issues, digitize collections and data input.
Letters of support and/or testimonials may be submitted by readers/users, other research libraries, and others

Letters/emails/testimonials of support are listed below with reference to which Project Jukebox in the new templates they are referring to:

1. Marcy Okada, National Park Service re: Gates of the Arctic National Park Project Jukebox
2. Mike Schwaiger, Public Defender’s office, Anchorage, on the Bar Historians Committee of Alaska Bar Association re: Judges of Alaska Project Jukebox
3. Holly Cusack-McVeigh, Project Evaluator re: Homer Communities of Memory
4. William Schneider, Project Evaluator re: Homer Communities of Memory
5. Radio show telephone call re: Homer Communities of Memory
6. Marilyn May, Clerk of the Appellate Courts of Alaska Court System re: Judges of Alaska Project Jukebox

Gates of the Arctic National Park Project Jukebox:
The following email was received from Marcy Okada of the National Parks Service, a funder of the project and we addressed their minor concerns in the completed project:

Marcy_Okada@nps.gov

9/4/12

to Karen, Christopher_Ho., Ilana, me, Marla

Hi Karen,
I was navigating through the GAAR Jukebox website and noticed a few things. In the slideshows by village box, when I click on GAAR Park Service employees and People of the Brooks Range, no slideshows appear. I wasn’t sure if they haven’t been added yet, or if there aren’t any pictures. Also, when you click on a particular picture to enlarge it, the pictures appear a little fuzzy. Additionally, for each of the interviews, in the box labeled sections (blue box), I was wondering if it would be possible for there to be a link between a specific section (e.g. Joe talks about old timers near Hughes) and being able to jump/listen to that part of the interview?

I like that the transcript is broken down into different sections allowing the listener to follow along, both visually and audibly. I also like the pink themes box, which allows the listener to select interviews that cover specific topics. Overall, I think the website looks good and I like the fact that the interviews are alphabetically ordered by the person's last name.

Hope this helps.
Thanks,
Marcy

Subsistence and Ethnography Program
Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve
Hi Karen,

The website that you have designed is really beautiful. I’m really impressed with how it looks and operates! The topic index is great, and the simultaneous video and text is great. It is going to be a great resource! Thank you, and I see why you are eager to show it off!

... please let me know if there is anything you would like for me to say in my brief closing remarks about the judge's jukebox or other oral history projects.

Best,

Mike

Homer Communities of Memory:

HOMER COMMUNITIES OF MEMORY PROJECT JUKEBOX
FINAL EVALUATION REPORT
Holly Cusack-McVeigh, Project Evaluator
DECEMBER 1, 2012

Goals and Objectives:

Following an established tradition this newest Project Jukebox, Homer Communities of Memory, makes available local oral histories, video footage of the storytellers and historic photographic images to a broad audience through web-based technology. The goal of this multi-year project was to preserve and make these oral recordings accessible and “to increase the publicity and exposure” of the Project Jukebox materials that arose from the Alaska Humanities Forum events in the mid-1990s. The completion of the Homer Communities of Memory Project Jukebox makes these community collections
easily accessible to Homer community members. The project achieved the goal of increasing accessibility through local media coverage and on-going partnerships with local community organizations including KBBI local radio and the Pratt Museum. This publicity and exposure has generated a renewed interest in oral history and a shared sense of place.

**Humanities Content:**

From the start of this statewide initiative in 1996, the humanities have helped to shape and inform this project. In keeping with a central focus on “preserving, celebrating and sharing Alaska’s rich history,” The Homer Communities of Memory Project Jukebox fosters community connectedness and a shared sense of place in the Kachemak Bay region. As Bob Moore stated to his audience, Homer prides itself on being a unique community and “one of the things that ties our community together is the variety.” Permanent preservation and increased access through broad dissemination of these oral history recordings will increase this shared sense of identity and encourage future community gatherings of a similar kind.

**Actions and Outcomes:**

Actions that led to a successful outcome included comprehensive organization and digitization of all the materials produced in the spring of 1996 by staff at the University of Alaska Fairbanks Oral History Program. Project activities included the selection of materials (including consultation with storytellers or next of kin and Pratt Museum staff) for on-line access, identification of supporting materials (links to relevant archival and educational websites) and, finally, the establishment of the on-line interactive computer based program that has been well-promoted through local media (KBBI Radio) and the local papers (Homer News and the Homer Tribune).

**Replication:**

The Oral History Program at the University of Alaska Fairbanks has created a unique product that permanently archives (analog to digital) these oral histories, ensuring that they will not be lost to time through human error, natural disaster or agents of deterioration. Project Jukebox is a replicable model that can be adopted by other universities, museums or research institutions who also wish to preserve their shared heritage in a meaningful, lasting way.

**Audience Response:**

As both the project evaluator and a Homer community member (now part-time), I am very pleased with the project staff’s efforts to promote the existence of this on-line resource through the local media. Community members have expressed excitement over this newly available on-line resource. KBBI and the local newspapers (Homer Tribune and Homer News) are interested in covering this story and furthering the promotion of this latest Project Jukebox. Just this past year Homer community members approached the local museum with the idea of hosting similar storytelling events like the one conducted in 1996 at Land’s End Resort. The release of this new on-line collection will solidify this growing interest. This is particularly relevant for the community of Homer as many of the “old timers” (participants in this
Project Jukebox) have recently passed away. Diana Tillion, known as an Alaskan pioneer, passed away in 2010. Don Ronda was a beloved community member who died just two months ago.

**Potential Weaknesses or Challenges of the Project:**

The Project Jukebox site could be improved through the incorporation of maps that include local places mentioned in the narratives. This kind of map would strengthen the connection between the content of oral histories and the sense of place characterized in these tellings. This visual reference would particularly enhance the outside audience’s (listeners unfamiliar with the Homer area) understanding. It would also benefit first time users to see an icon or the word “play” so that they know where to click. First time users may not realize that you have to scroll across the visual screen to call up the menu bar. Website users are instructed “After clicking play, click on a section to navigate the audio or video clip,” but this first step may not be intuitive for all users.

**Strengths of the Project:**

The strengths of this project are numerous and lasting. Like the Project Jukebox projects before it, the Homer Communities of Memory project is a legacy for all Alaskans. I strongly support the Project Jukebox program efforts. Like Dr. Schneider, I have utilized the Project Jukebox projects many times in my university courses (including an upper division course recently developed for the University of Alaska Anchorage entitled *Oral Traditions of Alaska and the Yukon Territory*). I will also utilize this Homer Project Jukebox to prepare my anthropology and museum studies students for an upcoming field school in Alaska (2013).

The Homer project is not only a community treasure, but will also serve as an effective and irreplaceable teaching tool in the local community schools and, perhaps in future, community exhibitions. This collection of permanently archived oral recordings captured a time of change in this small, sea-side fishing community. Local veterinarian, Ralph Broshes, concludes his narrative by stating that “over the years the community has grown and the practice has grown.” Old timers in Homer include many distinct cultural and social groups (Homesteading families etc.), but reflections of change remain a common element of storytelling in Homer. What Homer community members pride themselves on is remaining unique in spite of these changes. Dave Seaman, back in 1996, joked with his audience when he said “as boat builder, I think the economics are maybe more stable but I don't have to go to sea.” Almost 20 years later Dave can be found making the same jokes at local spots like the Salty Dawg Saloon. The economic situation has gone up and down, but local characters like Dave are still living and working in Homer. This Homer character is still making jokes, still telling his tales and building beautiful boats. The stories captured in 1996 will be shared and revisited for many generations to come. Inevitably they will be joined by new stories that build and strengthen this community collection.
Project Evaluation: Homer Communities of Memory
William Schneider, Evaluator

Goals and Objectives
My review of the Homer Communities of Memory Project left me with the impression that the Oral History Program has met and exceeded expectations. Given limited funding and late release of funding to do the work they were able to work with folks in Homer to select sections of the original footage to use, contact narrators for permission, assemble the program using the latest technological approaches pioneered by Jukebox staff, and finally provide follow up with the Pratt Museum and with the local radio station for coverage and publicity.

This particular community’s contributions are part of a larger effort to preserve the recordings that were made at the time of the community gatherings and to make them accessible to the public. To date the program has completed for Nome, Fairbanks, Unalaska, Bethel, Juneau, and now Homer. I will comment on the value of this effort in the next paragraph.

Humanities Content
The Communities of Memory Project was a statewide effort that asked communities to organize sessions where folks could share their recollections of the community, the things they liked about the place, and stories that they thought reflected a sense of the place. It is interesting to note that the community organizers in most places chose particular themes as the focus of the sessions. In the case of Homer there were three themes: “Tales of the Sea”, “One hundred Years of Endurance” (homesteading), and “Community Ties”. Even more important than the individual themes are the contributions of the speakers who shared their stories. They present a sense of what it was like to live in their home town. The videos reflect the interaction of narrators and audience, reaffirming a sense of common heritage as the speakers recount their personal experiences with what are often familiar events, activities, and places. The Communities of Memory Project created a special setting, an event, for this process of building and reaffirming dimensions of community.

Action and Outcomes
In the case of the Homer project, there were Brown Bag Luncheon sessions to tell stories as well as the formal sessions. The Pratt Museum has archived the larger corpus of recordings from these sessions. Homer is one of the communities featured in the book on the project, Communities of Memory, edited by Phyllis Morrow. The local radio station plans to publicize the jukebox project.

Replication
It would be of value to replicate the event, but it would be even more valuable for community members to add to the site by providing photos and for the Pratt Museum to add more recordings from the sessions; what is produced on the site is just an example of the rich sources that could be added with sufficient funding.

Strengths and Weakness
I am very biased in favor of Jukebox having worked with it for many years. I was not involved with this particular project, but I know it was done on a “shoe string” budget yet it has provided a rich resource, a clean interface, an easily navigated menu in the new Jukebox format, and links to associated sites and resources. This is important because the idea behind Jukebox is to provide a door into ever richer rooms of resources that help one understand the background and context of the featured speakers.
One of the things that I wish would happen with this and other Jukebox programs is for local groups featured in the programs to build on the resource, add images, links to other supporting material, and even add interviews. I know that some of this is expensive, but some things can be done with minimal expense. One thing that the program does do is to add obituary notes when appropriate.

A few minor comments: I think Marcee Gray is featured in an article by Phyllis Morrow in the Communities of Memory book mentioned above. On the prompt to push “play” it may not be obvious to old timers that this is the right facing V in the middle of the video box. On my computer the audio level was low even after I turned up the dial to high. This may be my personal condition, but worth checking.

In summary, well done!

Homer Communities of Memory Project Jukebox Testimonial:
In December we had a telephone call from the radio station in Homer as our “Homer Communities of Memory” had gone live. They expressed excitement for the website and were thrilled that voices of members of the community who have now passed on were being preserved and now accessible in this format. They wanted to know the history of the project and congratulated us on our great work in making their communities stories accessible in this new template format.

Judges of Alaska Project Jukebox:
Marilyn May, Clerk of the Appellate Courts of Alaska Court System

From: Karen Brewster [mailto:karen.brewster@alaska.edu]
Sent: Monday, October 01, 2012 9:59 AM
To: Barbara Hood; Marilyn May; Deborah O'Regan
Subject: Judges Jukebox is live

Hi All,
You will be getting official postcards announcing the new Judges of Alaska Project Jukebox, but wanted to let you know today that the site is now live and you can check it out at www.jukebox.uaf.edu/judges.

The site doesn't work properly in Internet Explorer, so I hope you have access to Chrome, Firefox, or Safari if on a Mac. Different browsers read and interpret code in different ways, so this is a constant challenge in web development, having to put in a lot of code in the backend. Something we're constantly working on and hope to improve on the site in the future.

I'm eager for you to see the results of everyone's hard work. I hope you like it.
Karen Brewster
Research Associate, UAF Oral History Program
P.O. Box 756808
Fairbanks, AK 99775
(907) 474-6672
fax (907) 474-6365
Wow! It is awesome! I did install Chrome and it worked great. I accidentally tried it in Explorer and the video navigation didn’t work right but it was slick as could be in Chrome!

Can’t wait to poke around more but had to get back to you to say Congratulations!

Marilyn