When You’re “It”

Preserving and Sharing The Family Archives

Leslie Wagner, Associate Archivist, University of Texas at Arlington Libraries
How did you get into this spot?

Do you realize the responsibility?

What should or can you do about it?
The Good News

- You don’t have to do it all.
- You don’t have to do it for everyone.
- You don’t have to do it all at once.
The Bad News

The longer you wait, the more…

- Details you forget.
- Items get lost or misplaced.
- Materials deteriorate without proper care.
- Chances for permanent loss to fire, flood, etc.
Get Your Project Organized

- Create a dedicated space to work on the project: A table, a small desk, even a TV tray!

- Equipment:
  - Computer
  - Scanner
  - Printer

- Supplies:
  - Archival boxes, folders, Mylar sleeves
  - Photo albums, photo paper, printer ink
  - CDs/DVDs
Organizing Your Archives

- Maintain original groupings of original materials.
- Preserve and organize the originals.
- Identify the originals
  - Who, when, and where?
- Use the same organizational hierarchy for both physical and digital materials.
Start Small - Simple Goals

- Start with a small project: one person, one event, one location.
- Digitize only the most important images and documents.
- Identify who, when, and where (and for documents, what).
- Print photos and documents and put them in an album or albums to be shared.
- Save the digital versions to CD/DVD, also to be shared.
Digitize, Save, Print, Share

- Use the touch-it-once principle.
- Before storing the original, make your digital copy.
- Save your digital image on your computer, on a backup hard drive.
- With the end product(s) in mind, tidy up the digital image for printing and print the number you need.
- Store the original, put the new image prints in an album (or frame, etc.), add important info, and share!
Editing?

YES!
Plan for Permanence

- Store the originals using archival standards and materials.
- Save to CDs/DVDs for sharing
- Print copies of images and documents to have and to share
- Share special images via social networks: Facebook, Google Plus, etc.
Expect Obsolescence

- Plan to move recordings and images from a soon-to-be obsolete media format to the newer one.
GET YOUR FAMILY PICS & DOCS

- DOWN FROM THE ATTIC
- IN FROM THE GARAGE
- UP FROM THE BASEMENT

Why? Because you can never be sure about tomorrow.