

Community Assistantship Program

**Digitization and Preservation of
Milan's Film History**

Digitization and preservation of Milan's Film History

Prepared in partnership with
City of Milan

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Michele Olson
Video Preservation Project

I am clear about my expectations for work with the Center for Small Towns organization. It is my job to aid in preserving films throughout various years for the town of Milan, Minnesota. While this is mainly an independent endeavor, I am willing to ask for and accept help when needed. For example, Kevin, who is more experienced with the photoshop program, helped by assisting me in designing slides that will appear at the beginning and end of each DVD that is created. Also, if for whatever reason I am temporarily out of films to work with I will try and help out however I can in the office. My role for this office is for the most part a silent one, because my work entails the use of headphones and working on the computer to edit and manipulate the video footage.

While my interaction with those in the agency is limited due to my job description, I am impressed with how smoothly things seem to run. Everyone is willing to help out one another. It is refreshing to work for an organization with people who are willing to work together and help out in whatever way they can rather than constantly undermining fellow employees to come out ahead. I tend to have a lot of questions and the people I work with are always willing to answer them for me. The thing that has surprised me most about myself is the fact that I was able to pick up on the InterVideo WinDVD Creator 2 program as quickly as I did. I was a little worried about how complicated the conversion from VHS to DVD was going to be and it turned out to be quite simple. I think the fact that the program is basically user-friendly has helped in making the conversion process easier.

The most difficult part of my job is trying to determine where the breaks in the movies should be placed, as well as learning to save what I have created more frequently due to the fact that the program periodically closes due to an error. I have begun saving my work more frequently eliminating the hassle of having to redo work. The most satisfying parts of my job are that I get to watch the past and present of Milan and learn a sense of their community through the videos I am editing. Also, the Norwegian heritage is deeply embedded within their society and as a person of German and Norwegian lineage, I was able to learn about some traditions that I was previously unaware of and view other families carrying out customs that my family has carried on.

I think my most valued contribution to the position is that I like being efficient and organized and therefore will get this project done in a timely manner. My contribution throughout the production of these DVDs will become a way to connect an array of generations together as well as provide an informative viewing pleasure. However, none of this would have been possible without Billy Thompson providing the video footage for me to work with and preserve by converting into DVD.