

When Old Ways Are New Again

Archivists Aim To Resurrect Outdated Technology To Access Records

BY GRACE WONG

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CHICAGO — When archivists at Northwestern University Library received boxes of personal items from the late actress Karen Black, they expected the usual: correspondence, scripts and fan mail. So when they found a silver Sprint flip phone, they were surprised and excited.

But there was one problem: It didn't come with the cables.

Without the charger and data cables, the former Northwestern student's phone went from being a potential treasure trove documenting her life to just a piece of plastic and metal.

For years, archivists have combed through papers and books to capture life at a specific point in time or a famous person's work. With digital technology advancing rapidly and devices becoming outdated even more quickly, the need to come up with strategies on preserving the nonphysical becomes urgent.

After exhausting other options, library archivists are encouraging the public to empty junk drawers and send in outdated cords through their zombie-themed UndeadTech campaign. Their hope is to raise awareness about the challenges they face in preserving history and reach out to the public to help them resurrect devices such as Black's.

"At this point we haven't gotten a match for the phone that started it all, but I'm still holding out hope," said Nicole Finzer, digital curation librarian at Northwestern.

And Northwestern is not alone. Kathleen Feeney, head of archives processing and digital access at the University of Chicago Library, said: "We're seeing all these new technologies from scholars later in their careers using older new technologies, if that makes sense. We're getting things like many, many floppy disks and hard drives and laptops. It's only a matter of time before we start getting cellphones."

Black, a Park Ridge native who attended Northwestern before starring in "Easy Rider" and "Five Easy Pieces," is just one of many people with Northwestern connections whose personal items have been entrusted to the university for archiving.

Black's husband specifically noted that his late wife had a "remarkable way of speaking," said Kevin Leonard, a Northwestern library archivist. Her flip phone and BlackBerry could provide a look into her mannerisms and personality through text messages, photos and contacts, but without the cords it could be lost to future generations.

"People are keeping important records in this era on platforms that pose challenges," Leonard said. "It's proprietary hardware using proprietary systems and software, and when those things get out of whack and you're missing key components, it becomes increasingly difficult to salvage the records."

The difference between paper and digital information is the shelf life before they are inaccessible. Environmental factors such as mold,



CHRIS WALKER/CHICAGO TRIBUNE/TNS

At Northwestern University in Evanston, Ill., Digital Curation Librarian Nicole Finzer holds in her hand a Toshiba PCS Vision Video Phone, a flip-phone model from the early 2000s that belonged to the late actress Karen Black, a university alumna. A search for a connecting cord for the phone led to the #UndeadTech campaign, an effort to collect old power and data cords to pull information off outdated technology.

water and fire can affect paper assets, but the rapid advancement of technology can make cord-matching impossible.

"I think we have the tendency to be future-looking rather than past-looking," said Laura Alagna, digital curation assistant at Northwestern library. "All these things move so fast and the equipment won't be made anymore when we need it. It will be obsolete and impossible to find. If you wait around rather than trying to build a collection for it now, I think that will be a mistake."

After reaching out to manufacturers in China, Northwestern archivists

still could not locate corresponding cables for Black's Sprint flip phone. They came up empty on eBay.

For another piece of their collection, the team is looking for a power cord for a hard drive that belonged to the late Dale Mortensen, the recipient of the 2010 Nobel Prize in Economics.

"If we don't transfer this data off, there's really a ticking clock on how much time we have," Finzer said. "It's a little more rigorous than treating them as objects and putting the box of papers on a shelf. We can't put this on a shelf and wait 20 years. Then we're really out of luck."

While reception of the program has been largely positive, Finzer said some people are wary about archivists having the ability to "crack a phone."

"We're not picking up a lost phone off the street and hacking it," said Clare Roccaforte, director of library public relations for Northwestern library. "This is something that someone has given to us with the purpose of preserving it forever."

Friday, archivists pulled apart tangled clumps of cords, trying to see whether any fit Black's BlackBerry. After trying three cords, Finzer threw her hands in the air and laughed triumphantly when one black cord slid into the side of the BlackBerry phone.

But once a device is turned on, then archivists have to figure out how to access the information and then how to transfer it to a format where it can be read in the future.

Chris Prom, assistant archivist for the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Library, said he has been given computers without power cords as well. But after finding the right cords for the device, he was faced with the daunting task of figuring out how to process the data and then convert it into a form that is accessible later. Oftentimes, the systems that are needed to read the information on the device no longer exist.

"It's like a big detective project to untangle it all and find out exactly what software you need to read it," Prom said.

States Finding Their Voice On Federal Land Use

BY REBECCA BEITSCHE

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WASHINGTON — It's a battle long fought, but seldom won: States want to gain control of federal land within their borders.

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the U.S. Forest Service, and other federal agencies control vast swaths of the land in some Western states, as much as 80 percent in Nevada. But local residents are often frustrated with federal policies governing preservation, recreation or natural resource development. In particular, many question the federal government's commitment to preventing natural disasters like forest fires.

When states do manage to recapture federal land, it tends to be smaller parcels the federal government cuts loose for a specific purpose, such as building a road or an airport. Occasionally Washington will sell a parcel that is surrounded by private property or serves no public purpose.

In 2015, all 11 Western states considered measures calling for the transfer of federal land to state control. But only a handful of bills passed, and none resulted in a transfer of land.

Those long odds, and a reluctance to spend state money on land management, have spurred some states to try a different approach. Instead of taking on the federal government in a futile fight for ownership, they are arming counties with money and expertise to help them convince federal officials to hew more closely to residents' interests.

Colorado is one of the states at the forefront of this new approach. This year, state lawmakers there approved \$1 million in grants for counties that want to influence federal land use decisions. County leaders can use the money to hire consultants to evaluate data, provide scientific research or attend BLM coordination meetings. The law authorizing the grants also requires state agencies to provide additional expertise and assistance to counties when they ask for it.

Democratic state Rep. KC Becker, a former attorney for the BLM, said many county leaders in Colorado don't realize how much influence they can have with federal officials. She pointed to a "consistency provision" in the Federal Land Policy and Management Act, a 1976 law governing BLM oversight of public land, which requires management that conforms, at least generally, to what local leaders want.

Becker and her Republican co-sponsor, Rep. Bob Rankin, said they wrote the bill to promote cooperation, rather than confrontation, with the federal government.

"Some people just want a takeover, but a lot of those

state laws are more symbolic. I don't want to make a point, I want to make a difference," Becker said.

Rankin said the grants are useful to counties even in cases where local leaders are fundamentally opposed to

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REP. KC BECKER

federal policy. He pointed to oil drilling as an example. "Say they're discussing the impact of a new drilling permit. Maybe the county is for it or maybe they're against it, but they can have a consultant for the process," he said. Rankin said the outside help can be used to better understand the process, provide outside analysis, and help draft county responses to federal proposals.

The first grant awarded under the Colorado program was for just under \$25,000 to Gunnison County, home of the Gunnison sage-grouse.

The county is challenging the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's decision to place the bird on the federal endangered species list, arguing that its own conservation efforts on private land are sufficient.

The wildlife service's designation also has prompted the BLM to make some changes. The agency is proposing amendments to the management plans covering the Gunnison sage-grouse habitat in multiple counties near the Utah-Colorado border.

Jim Cochran, the wildlife conservation coordinator for Gunnison County, said even as the lawsuit proceeds, the county is using the grant money to hire outside experts to track the 11 proposed amendments, which would likely effect grazing and recreation on public land.

Cochran, a wildlife biologist, said soil and range conservation experts are analyzing how land and soil is affected by animal and recreational use and are helping the county draft responses to the BLM proposals using that analysis.

"We're partners in many things. But they're federal, and we're local, and we have different constituents," Cochran said. "We're working with them, but we're very much concerned about protecting our interests."

The BLM said its processes are meant to encourage public involvement.

"The BLM supports state and local efforts to engage with the BLM," the agency said in a statement.

Utah is using multiple methods to get what it wants from federal land managers.

The state has not abandoned its attempt to get federal land into state hands. A 2012 state law called on the

federal government to transfer to the state all public land that is not designated as a national park or wilderness area or owned by Native American tribes — about 30 million acres in total, according to the *Salt Lake Tribune*. State Rep.

federal government on land issues, but other areas that are more sparsely populated never had the money to develop thorough plans. The state office of public land policy could serve as a resource for interested counties, but the onus is now on counties to have a plan in place — and the state will cover half the cost.

Mike Worthen, the natural resource management specialist for Iron County, said not all counties are aware of how involved they can be in the federal planning process or of government regulations requiring consistency. He said it's important for counties to have a plan in place before any federal level changes are proposed.

"Otherwise they falter when they don't have an adequate county resource plan to explain what they want, and then they have nothing to fall back on when the federal government comes back with a proposal," Worthen said.

Okerlund said counties should generally have a vision for the land within their boundaries, but requiring the plans helps them make decisions about how land and natural resources should be used before the federal government does.

"Local governments ought to be involved in the process, but to do that they need a plan that shows how the resources in their jurisdiction are important to them and how to use them," he said.

New Emails Show Breadth Of Hillary Clinton's Network

BY LISA LERER

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A new batch of Hillary Rodham Clinton's emails released Friday presented a glimpse into the breadth of her personal network — a Rolodex of powerful celebrities, CEOs, political advisers and politicians that she's now tapping for her presidential campaign.

A political celebrity long before she became secretary of state in 2009, Clinton and her team balanced requests from a long list of boldface names. Lady Gaga complimented her, former British Prime Minister Tony Blair praised her for doing the "Lord's Work," Myanmar's pro-democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi asked for technology help and former President Jimmy Carter pitched in on negotiations with North Korea.

While Clinton's private email address was unknown to much of official Washington, at least one Hollywood celebrity wrote to her there. Actor Ben Affleck, a longtime Clinton supporter, urged her in April 2012 to review a draft of a report about security problems in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Hours later, Clinton emailed an aide, "I'd like to respond to Ben Affleck." A day later, she reminded an aide that she was still waiting for the aide to draft a reply: "I haven't yet received a draft and would like to respond today."

The response to Affleck was censored in the email released Friday by the State Department, because it was a draft version.

In another December 2011 note, civil rights leader and former presidential candidate Jesse Jackson reached out to Clinton's staff with a request to talk to her before his visit to South Africa, asking how best to "represent her/Admin thinking on any issues/opportunities that might arise." He was quickly added to her call list.

On Friday, hours before the email release, Jackson touted Clinton's candidacy before a meeting of black pastors in Atlanta, saying: "It's healing time. It's hope time. It's Hillary Clinton time."

At least two Senate committees are still investigating Clinton's email arrangement and seeking the release of correspondence from her top aides. The FBI is also investigating the security of Clinton's private email setup.

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She is a Fellow of the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Dr. Willman and her husband, Dave, are the parents of two children and reside in Yankton.

Dr. Willman began seeing patients at the Yankton Medical Clinic, P.C. September 22, 2015.

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