



# Pacific Currents

Newsletter of the U.S. National Archives and Records Administration

Arizona, California, Hawaii, Nevada, American Samoa & Trust Territory of the Pacific  
Facilities and staff in San Bruno, Laguna Niguel, and Riverside, California

[archives.gov/pacific/](http://archives.gov/pacific/)

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## Big changes ahead!

## NARA “Transformation” means new alignment of RM Program

The National Archives is undergoing a profound reorganization which could alter our relationship with Federal agencies for the better. The plan, announced by U.S. Archivist David Ferriero last fall, seeks to realign NARA’s organizational structure to better support new technology and to enhance customer service. NARA’s customer base consists of Federal agencies, researchers, educators, and the general public - all of whom have high digital expectations.

Internal cultural change is an important part of this, aiming for a workforce that is empowered to succeed, where every employee is a leader, and where processes serve rather than hinder support for NARA’s customers.

Included are big changes in our Records Management Program. A Chief Records Officer will lead and oversee efforts to improve records management government-wide, especially with respect to electronic records.

These efforts include new units to oversee the National Records Management Training Program, assessments and inspections of Federal agencies’ records management programs, and

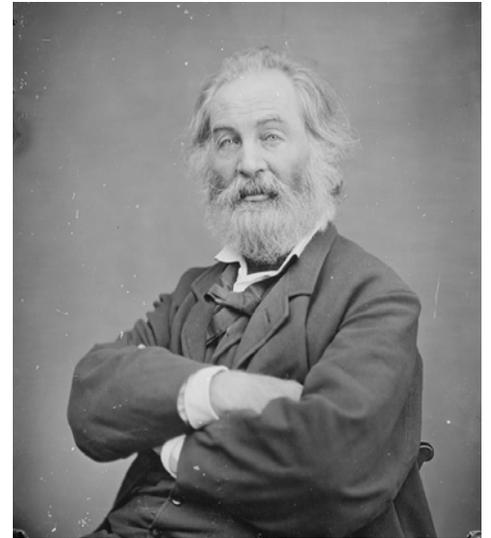
assistance to agencies. These will be added to existing policy and electronic formats units. A notable addition will be a Permanent Records Capture unit, to address the fact that too few of the Federal records that are scheduled as permanent are making their way into the National Archives.

What will these changes mean in the Pacific Region? First of all, the regional offices, as we know them today, will not continue. Programs like Records Management, the Federal Records Centers, and the Regional Archives will report directly to our central office. Records Management staff will be assigned to various specialized units, all managed centrally. By focusing our efforts, we hope to serve our Federal agency customers better. For example, by establishing an inspection unit, NARA will add an important tool for making agencies’ records management programs compliant with applicable laws and regulations.

In describing the restructuring plan, U.S. Archivist David Ferriero said, “I expect the National Archives to be a leader in Open Government, electronic records management, and organizational effectiveness. Putting the customer at the center of all we do, this new structure will enable us to build an open, inclusive work environment that encourages staff learning and creativity, invests in innovation, and engages all staff in continuously improving services.”

Contact us by going to [archives.gov/pacific/](http://archives.gov/pacific/) then scroll down to “Ways to Reach Us”

## America’s Most Influential Poet



## Walt Whitman was a Federal Employee

The National Archives recently announced the identification of nearly 3,000 Walt Whitman documents written during his service as a Federal government employee. The records shed light on the legendary poet’s post-Civil War thinking, as well as his published reflections on the state of the nation in that turbulent time. The significance of this discovery is explored in the National Archives “Inside the Vaults” video short at <http://bit.ly/hVc2DI>.

Whitman lived in Washington, DC, for a decade from 1863-1873. During this time, he established himself as a great poet of the Civil War. To support himself, Whitman secured government work as a clerk, spending much of his time as a scribe or copyist. He worked in the Army Paymaster’s office, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and the

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# Walt Whitman was a Fed

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Attorney General's office.

The Attorney General's office at that time had only a handful of employees, putting Whitman in close proximity both to the Attorney General and the President. He read all the incoming mail, copied outgoing correspondence written by others, drafted some of the outgoing correspondence himself, summarized cases, and indexed vast letter books. Whitman also researched a variety of topics, including the question of whether smallpox had been used as an offensive weapon during the Civil War.

Because of his fame as a writer, a key question is the extent to which Whitman should be credited with the intellectual content of the many letters making up so many of these documents. Comments in the documents suggest that Whitman collaborated regularly with policy makers. That Whitman worked collaboratively is almost never discussed in Whitman studies – but these records show that both in his literary work and in his newly identified government documents, solitary creation is a myth.

A common thread joins Whitman's roles during this time: he served as a scribe, drafting letters home for soldiers, drafting reports and correspondence in governmental offices, drafting poetry of the war in *Drum-Taps*, and redrafting his great work - *Leaves of Grass* - to take that conflict into account.

The discovery of Whitman's government documents was made possible in part by the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC), the grant-making arm of the National Archives and Records Administration.

# “When Records Come Home”

*By Gwen Granados, Director, National Archives at Riverside*

I received a phone call from a staff member of the United States District Court in Arizona a few months ago, letting me know that she was cleaning out one of the file rooms and had found some records that hadn't been transferred. When the records got to Riverside and we opened the boxes, we were overjoyed to see the case file for *Healing v. Jones*, which was originally docketed in the United States District Court in Arizona in 1959.

The case is significant as it documents the evolving relationships between the Hopi and Navajo tribes and the Federal government. The court's decision divided the 1882 Executive Order Hopi Reservation into a Hopi area and a larger Hopi-Navajo “joint-use area.”

This decision strongly influenced the subsequent passage of the Navajo Hopi land settlement act of 1974, which split the joint-use area into Hopi and Navajo sections, mandating relocation of those on the wrong side of the partition line. The case is significant for researchers interested in tribal relations and land in Arizona. And now it is in the National Archives and available to all comers.

Our researchers visit us every day to learn more about what the Federal government thought and did on a particular topic. They believe that information about the work of the Federal government is important.

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"This is just one of many exciting discoveries happening each day in the research rooms of National Archives facilities," according to U.S. Archivist David Ferriero. "Such findings shape the ever changing nature of American history, and I hope researchers continue to share their wonderful finds with us."

Every year we receive a small portion of our archival records directly from agencies. I get a phone call from a clerk, or an historian, or a new manager who found something “old” in the file room and believed that it should be preserved. I am generally excited to receive these calls not only because it means that interesting things will be coming into our holdings, but because someone in the agency was concerned about the preservation of their agency's documentary heritage and they took action.

This year, besides the transfer of *Healing v. Jones*, we have received some significant records directly from the agencies, including Edwards Air Force Base (U.S. Army Aviation Engineering Flight Activity). We are looking forward to more records from several National Forests and the California Condor Program of the Fish and Wildlife Service.



## FRC Digital Capture Program

The Riverside Federal Records Center's Digital Imaging Staff produces digital copies of temporary records to make customer agency operations more efficient. For more information, contact:

**Susie Bielawski**  
(951) 956-2060  
[susie.bielawski@nara.gov](mailto:susie.bielawski@nara.gov)

or

**Michael Wharrie**  
(951) 956-2034,  
[michael.wharrie@nara.gov](mailto:michael.wharrie@nara.gov)

## Records Management Training, August-September, 2011

To register go to [archives.gov/records-mgmt/training/](http://archives.gov/records-mgmt/training/) or email our training registrar at [laguna.workshops@nara.gov](mailto:laguna.workshops@nara.gov)

For more information on our workshops, go to <http://nara.learn.com/recordsmanagement-training>

### Basic Records Operations

August 10, 2011, San Francisco

### Records Scheduling (*Knowledge Area 3*)

August 4-5, 2011, San Diego

### Asset and Risk Management (*Knowledge Area 5*)

August 31–Sept 1, 2011, San Diego

### Creating and Maintaining Agency Business Information

(*Knowledge Area 2*) August 2-3, 2011, San Diego

### Records Schedule Implementation (*Knowledge Area 4*)

August 29-30, 2011, San Diego

### Records Management Program Development

(*Knowledge Area 6*) September 2, 2011, San Diego

## Previewing Records Management Training, FY 2012

### Basic Records Operations

March 7, 2012, Sacramento  
August 15, 2012, San Francisco

### Creating and Maintaining Agency Business Information (*Knowledge Area 2*)

January 24-25, 2012, Las Vegas  
March 27-28, 2012, San Francisco  
July 24-25, 2012, San Diego

### Records Schedule Implementation (*Knowledge Area 4*)

February 6-7, 2012, Las Vegas  
April 23-24, 2012, San Francisco  
August 20-21, 2012, San Diego

### Records Management Program Development

(*Knowledge Area 6*)  
February 10, 2012, Las Vegas  
April 27, 2012, San Francisco  
August 24, 2012, San Diego

### Records Management Overview (*Knowledge Area 1*)

January 23, 2012, Las Vegas  
July 23, 2012, San Diego

### Records Scheduling (*Knowledge Area 3*)

January 26-27, 2012, Las Vegas  
March 29-30, 2012, San Francisco  
July 26-27, 2012, San Diego

### Asset and Risk Management (*Knowledge Area 5*)

February 8-9, 2012, Las Vegas  
April 25-26, 2012, San Francisco  
August 22-23, 2012, San Diego

### Vital Records

June 6, 2012, Sacramento  
August 16, 2012, San Francisco

### Records Emergency Planning and Response

June 7, 2012, Sacramento

## What's New in Records Management Training for Fiscal Year 2012?

Next year we are offering a class – Records Management Overview (*Knowledge Area 1*) – that introduces the concepts and activities basic to managing Federal records, including electronic records. It will be especially useful for those who can only attend training for one day. The class is part of the Knowledge Area Track but is not required for Certification in Records Management Training. We will be offering it in Las Vegas and San Diego as the opener of the knowledge area sequence. Also this year, we will be splitting our disaster preparedness and vital records course into two one-day classes. Vital Records will be offered in San Francisco and Sacramento. Records Emergency Planning and Response will be offered in Sacramento only. See the schedule above for dates.

## Come to Our Open House, at NARA in San Bruno, September 15

1000 Commodore Drive, San Bruno CA 94066, 8:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

- Tour our Archives and Federal Records Center
- Hear presentations on Records Management and Archives topics
- Meet our staff
- Refreshments will be served

8:30-9:00 - Networking and refreshments. 9:00-9:45 - Program. 10:00-Noon - Tours and Breakouts

RSVP and information: [sanbruno.transfer@nara.gov](mailto:sanbruno.transfer@nara.gov)

## ***Pacific Currents***

National Archives and Records  
Administration - Pacific Region  
24000 Avila Road, Suite 3513  
Laguna Niguel, CA 92677-3497