



PRESS RELEASE

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Humanities Council Announces History Alive! Characters for 2019

Charleston, WV — The popular *History Alive* program of the West Virginia Humanities Council welcomes groundbreaking cartoonist Charles Schulz to its roster of historical figures available for presentations. Schulz is portrayed by James Froemel of Madsville and is now available to be booked for presentations across the state.

Charles Schulz (1922-2000) was a cartoonist best known as the creator of the *Peanuts* comic strip that featured Charlie Brown, Snoopy, Linus, and all the rest of the gang. A veteran of World War II, Schulz's first *Peanuts* strip was published in 1950 in seven newspapers. At the time of his death in 2000 it was appearing in 2,600 papers around the world. Schulz recognized that comics were not just a medium for children. His ability to connect with people through a four-panel strip using dry humor, sarcasm, wit, and melancholy resulted in an ongoing daily narrative that lasted nearly 50 years. The popularity of his characters worldwide put them in demand for television specials, merchandise, movies, books, theatrical productions, and commercials, with NASA spacecraft named in their honor.

The *History Alive* program brings historical figures to life through first-person portrayals by presenters who have conducted scholarly research on their character. The programs provide entertaining and educational experiences by allowing audiences to learn of the contributions of historically significant people from different periods throughout history.

Presentations are available for \$150 to interested nonprofit and for-profit organizations throughout West Virginia. In 2018 over 150 *History Alive* programs were presented at schools, libraries, museums, historical societies, civic groups, festivals, associations, parks, businesses and other venues.

History Alive characters now available for bookings are:

- **Gabriel Arthur**, 17th century frontiersman, portrayed by Doug Wood of Hurricane,
- **Nellie Bly**, 19th century reporter, portrayed by JoAnn Peterson of Kingwood,
- **Benjamin Franklin**, founding father, portrayed by Leon Alexander of Charleston,
- **Stonewall Jackson**, Civil War general, portrayed by Doug Riley of Tunnelton,
- **Ostenaco**, Cherokee leader, portrayed by Doug Wood of Hurricane,
- **Minnie Pearl**, country comedienne, portrayed by Denise Giardina of Charleston,
- **Eleanor Roosevelt**, first lady and activist, portrayed by Patty Cooper of Vienna,
- **Theodore Roosevelt**, 26th president, portrayed by Gene Worthington of Fayetteville,
- **Sacagawea**, Lewis & Clark Expedition Native American guide and translator, portrayed by Mary Dailey of Meadow Bridge,
- **Charles Schulz**, ground-breaking cartoonist and creator of the *Peanuts* comic strip, portrayed by James Froemel of Maidsville,
- **Harriet Tubman**, Underground Railroad leader, portrayed by Ilene Evans of Thomas,
- **Mark Twain**, American literary icon, portrayed by Doug Riley of Tunnelton

Information on all the *History Alive* characters and how to schedule a presentation can be found at www.wvhumanities.org or by contacting Humanities Council Program Officer Mark Payne at 304-346-8500 or payne@wvhumanities.org.
