



From the Executive Director

Welcome Back

As I write, I'm looking out from the second floor of Charleston's historic MacFarland-Hubbard House, the headquarters of the West Virginia Humanities Council for more than two decades. I have a great view of our public grounds, the pin oak tree in our front yard, and the Kanawha River just on the other side of the boulevard. Through one of the universe's weird flukes of fate, I grew up only a few miles downriver from where I now sit. As a kid, when I wanted to be by myself, I used to walk down to the riverbank where the Kanawha flowed by my hometown of Malden, and watch the water go past.

Any single window gives only a single view—just one angle on the world. But that single view can change dramatically with the passing of time. Since I arrived at the Council we've endured at least one thunderstorm so powerful it stripped several branches from the old oak tree. But

every year I've watched that tree go bare and come back again, winter to spring. I've watched crowds gather on the lawn to listen to music and enjoy each other's company during our West Virginia Day open house celebrations. I've even seen a few high-school couples stop on our property for a quick photo in their prom night dresses and tuxes. (The house makes a striking backdrop, I have to say.)

In 2020 I watched from here as foot and car traffic thinned out in the earliest days of the pandemic. These days I've been watching the traffic build back up. I'm grateful for that.

And here's something I think about a lot: From 1836 to 1997, this house was an actual home. In these rooms, throughout those years, the families who lived here felt the joys and endured

the losses that all families do. They loved each other, worried over each other, and surely quarreled and made up from time to time. Their spirits, however you choose to define that word, move through these rooms even as we go about our daily work.

Our perspective may be only one among many. But we share a space with the past and with the future that's yet to be decided. That's true of any part of the world, any patch of ground we live or work on. We're here for some modest amount of time, considered on the cosmic scale; and then we move on, and other people arrive to take our places. While we're here, we look for ways to honor the past, to improve what we can in the present, and to preserve what we'll need for the future. The humanities, even in their humblest forms, are equally an act of memory, and an act of faith.



This West Virginia Day—Monday, June 20, 2022—we'll once again be opening the Council's home to the public for an afternoon of music, refreshments, tours, a *History Alive!* presentation of blues legend Bessie Smith by Doris "Lady D" Fields (West Virginia's First Lady of Soul), and, most happily, conversation with each other.

We've come through difficult times lately. Difficult times are part of our shared human experience, of course, and always have been. But here we still are. And gathering together to remember that we're still here, still working, and still keeping a little faith in our ability to shape the future...well, that's part of it, too.

Stop in, if you can. It'll be good to see you again.

—Eric Waggoner

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The West Virginia Humanities Council

is a nonprofit institution governed by its Board of Directors. The next Board meeting is July 22, 2022, and is open to the public.

Megan Tarbett, President
Hurricane

Leslie Baker
Beckley

George "Gib" Brown
Clarksburg

Patrick Cassidy
Wheeling

Bob Conte
Union

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Morgantown

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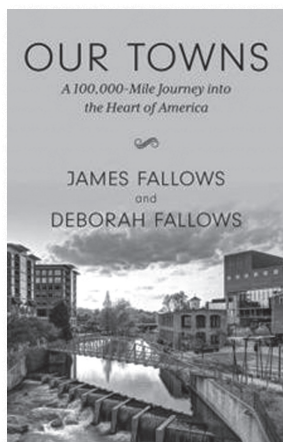
John Unger
Martinsburg

Bryson VanNostrand
Buckhannon

The **Board of Directors** welcomes four new members who were elected at the April 22 Board meeting: Rita Hedrick-Helmick of Glenville, Paul Papadopoulos of Charleston, Karen Rice of Martinsburg, and Jane Sargent of Barboursville. Laurie Erickson, Kelli Johnson, Dan McCarthy, Megan Tarbett and John Unger were elected to second terms. We would like to thank departing Board members Leslie Dillon, Tia McMillan, D. F. Mock and Ray Smock for their dedication and years of service. Officers were elected as follows: Megan Tarbett as President, George "Gib" Brown as Vice President, Margaret Mary Layne as Treasurer, and Kelli Johnson as Secretary.

Save the Dates

The West Virginia Humanities Council's **McCreight Lecture in the Humanities** and **The West Virginia Book Festival** return to Charleston as in-person events this year.



Award-winning journalists and bestselling authors James and Deborah Fallows are the featured speakers at the **McCreight Lecture** at 7:30 p.m. on **Thursday, October 20**. The Fallows are the creative minds behind the HBO documentary *Our Towns*, which is drawn from their 2018 *New York Times* bestselling book *Our Towns: A 100,000-Mile Journey into the Heart of America*. The lecture will be held in Rigglesman Hall at the University of Charleston. The event is free and open to the public.

The **2022 West Virginia Book Festival** will be held **Friday, October 21, and Saturday, October 22**, at the Charleston Coliseum and Convention

Center. The event will feature presentations from bestselling national, local, and regional authors; writing workshops; family activities; a literary marketplace; and an enormous used book sale. All events and programs are free and open to the public.

For more information about these events, please visit www.wvhumanities.org and www.wvbookfestival.org.

West Virginia
**Book
Festival**



Michael Keller

Andy Sweetnich joined the Council in April 2022 as our new Fiscal Officer. A Madison native, Andy earned his B.S. in Accounting from West Virginia State University. He comes to us with more than ten years' experience in general accounting, grants and finance management, and state and federal fiscal policy. Welcome Andy!

People & Mountains is published three times a year by the West Virginia Humanities Council.

The West Virginia Humanities Council, an independent nonpartisan nonprofit, is the state affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

We welcome letters, comments, and financial contributions. Please address correspondence to West Virginia Humanities Council, 1310 Kanawha Blvd E, Charleston WV 25301 or email wvhuman@wvhumanities.org.

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Kyle Warmack, Program Officer

Jennie Williams, State Folklorist

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The Power of Storytelling in Midwifery: An Apprenticeship Showcase

The final showcase of the 2020-2021 West Virginia Folklife Apprenticeship Program, featuring midwife Angy Nixon of Putnam County and apprentice Christine Weirick of Fayette County, was held in person for a small audience on April 19 at the historic MacFarland-Hubbard House in Charleston. The recorded presentation, titled



Christine Weirick and Angy Nixon

"The Power of Storytelling in Midwifery," was hosted by State Folklorist Jennie Williams. This and previous showcases can be viewed online via links found on the Humanities Council website at www.wvhumanities.org.

The Apprenticeship Program, supported in part by the National Endowment for the Arts, offers a stipend to West Virginia master traditional artists or tradition bearers working with qualified apprentices on a year-long in-depth apprenticeship in their cultural expression or traditional art form. The apprenticeships aim to facilitate the transmission of techniques and artistry of the forms, as well as their histories and traditions.

This marks the Council's second year of the biennial Folklife Apprenticeship Program. The window to apply for the 2022-2023 West Virginia Folklife Apprenticeship Program will be open in June. Check www.wvfolklife.org for updates and to access the application. For West Virginia Folklife news and events please follow the WV Folklife Program on [Facebook.com/wvfolklife](https://www.facebook.com/wvfolklife) or on Instagram and Twitter @wvfolklife.

Carnegie Hall in Lewisburg and the Ronceverte Public Library hosted a celebration on April 23 of the new Legends & Lore roadside marker, located on the corner of Walnut and West Main streets in Ronceverte. The marker is dedicated to the salt-rising bread tradition.

The WV Folklife Program at the Humanities Council in partnership with the William G. Pomeroy Foundation brings the national Legends & Lore Roadside Marker Program to the state. The next round of grant applications will be available on August 29. For more information visit www.wvfolklife.org.



The West Virginia Humanities Council announces three new citizen members recently elected to its program committee: Jenny Archer, private development consultant in Hampshire County; Dan Holbrook, former professor of History at Marshall University; and Sudhakar Jamkhandi, professor of English at Bluefield State College. Jody Evans of Hardy County was reelected to a second term. Members will serve a three-year term from June 1, 2022, to June 1, 2025.

Elections are held by public ballot presented in the winter issue of *People & Mountains*. The Program Committee oversees Humanities Council programs and recommends grants for approval by the Board of Directors.

Fellowships Awarded

Humanities Council Fellowships are awarded annually to college faculty and independent scholars for research and writing in the humanities. The \$3,000 grants are unique to the Mountain State. The 2022 Humanities Fellows and their subjects are:

Christina Fattore, *Happily Ever After? Investigating the Political Actions of The Romancelandia Community, 2016-2020*

Sheena Harris, *A Journey to Justice: Olivia America Davidson Washington's Story*

Elizabeth James and Katharine Pearson Woods, *Metzerott, Shoemaker and Her Baltimore Literary Community*

Jay Krehbiel, *Public Support for the Rule of Law: Personal Convictions and Institutional Constraints*

Stefan Schoeberlein, *Translating Tom Kromer's Waiting for Nothing into German*

James F. Siekmeier, *A History of the U.S. "War on Drugs" in the Andes in the Late 20th Century*

Janet Snyder, *Wall-painting and Stone Sculpture in Medieval Normandy*

Sonia Zarco-Real, *Neo-coloniality and Resistance Across the Hispanic Atlantic: Catalanism, Indigenismo, and Hispanismo at the Beginning of the 20th Century*

Grant Categories

The Humanities Council welcomes applications in the following grant categories.

Major Grants support humanities events such as symposiums, conferences, exhibits and lectures. Maximum award: \$20,000 Due: **Sept. 1**, Feb. 1

Minigrants have a budget of \$1,500 or less and support small projects, single events, or planning/consultation. Due: **Oct. 1**, Feb. 1, April 1, June 1

Fellowships of \$3,000 support research and writing projects for humanities faculty and independent scholars. Due: Feb. 1

Media Grants support the production of electronic or film materials, or a newspaper series. Maximum award: \$20,000 Due: **Sept. 1**

Publication Grants are available to recognized nonprofit and academic presses and support only the production phase of a completed manuscript. Maximum award: \$20,000 Due: **Sept. 1**

Teacher Institute Grants are available to colleges and universities and the state Department of Education, and support summer seminars for secondary and elementary teachers. Maximum award: \$20,000 Due: **Sept. 1**

For more information, applications, and guidelines visit www.wvhumanities.org, email riebe@wvhumanities.org, or call 304-346-8500.

Little Lecture Series

We are pleased to report that in-person **Little Lectures** have returned to the historic MacFarland-Hubbard House, with limited seating. This year's series focuses on civics and the democratic



Michael Keller

The March 27 Little Lecture featured WVU's Dr. Erik Herron and Paige Wantlin.

process and is made possible with funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities' "A More Perfect Union" initiative. On June 26 (online July 3), Dr. Rachel Donaldson presents "A Long Struggle for Justice: The West Virginia Mine Wars and the Legal Aftermath." The series concludes July 31 (online August 7), featuring W. Jeff Barnes presenting "Two Sides to a Pancake: The United States of *Mingo*."

If you are interested in attending a lecture in person, please call 304-346-8500 to make a reservation. Admission is \$10 and includes a reception following the 2 p.m. program.

Current and archived Little Lectures can be accessed at www.wvhumanities.org.

Once again, the Humanities Council is supporting Marshall University's efforts to connect veterans throughout West Virginia. The project, ***Testament: Recovering Identity after War***, integrates discussion of humanities texts about war with digital humanities platforms to create a network of testimony of and for veterans, their families, and friends in recovery (from health, mental health, or substance use conditions; war-related trauma; and/or difficulty reintegrating into civilian life). Following an eight-week preparatory program to train veteran discussion leaders, a series of public discussion groups will be scheduled throughout the state. For more information contact Robin Riner at conleyr@marshall.edu.



Library of Congress

With the support of a Council grant, award-winning filmmakers Katie and Nelson Dellamaggiore will continue work on the documentary ***The***

Quiet Zone. The film is a portrait of Green Bank, West Virginia, home to the world's most powerful radio telescope. Green Bank has another remarkable claim to fame that seems at odds with its status as a hub for high-tech astronomy: It is the only U.S. town where, by federal decree, cell phones, WiFi, and other wireless technology is banned. *The Quiet Zone* follows this close-knit community with one foot in two worlds—past and present—at a moment of existential crisis. For more information visit the WV International Film Festival website at www.wviff.org.



WV State Archives

Rose Anna McCoy

The West Virginia Humanities Council traveling exhibit **The Hatfields & McCoys: American Blood Feud** is on display in the lobby of the Mountaineer Hotel in downtown Williamson, 31 E 2nd Ave. It is open to the public daily from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. until June 26. There is no charge to see the exhibit. Interested visitors may call the Mountaineer Hotel at 304-235-2222 or email info@mountaineerhotel.com.

Our award-winning exhibits have appeared in venues around the state. They are available at no charge to suitable organizations for display on a case-by-case basis, and often serve as a catalyst for additional programming. Organizations must arrange for transport from the previous display site or from the Humanities Council office in Charleston. See details and guidelines on the Council website at www.wvhumanities.org or email Kyle Warmack at warmack@wvhumanities.org.

For more than 20 years the Humanities Council has sponsored the **Smithsonian Institution's Museum on Main Street** program in West Virginia, which brings topical exhibits to rural towns across the state. For 2021-2022, the Council is proud to present **Crossroads: Change in Rural America**, which focuses on key themes of identity, land, community, persistence, and managing change.

The final stop on the Crossroads exhibit tour of West Virginia is in Welch at the Jack Caffrey Arts and Cultural Center from June 4 to July 6. The Council contributes financial assistance and logistical coordination. As in every place Crossroads visits, this exhibit will represent the town's own unique perspective.

For the most up-to-date information on Crossroads events and programming in Welch, please call 304-436-3113.

West Virginia Day Open House

Come celebrate West Virginia Day with the Humanities Council at its historic MacFarland-Hubbard House headquarters in Charleston. Join us on Monday, June 20, from 2 to 4 p.m. at 1310 Kanawha Blvd. East. West Virginia Folklife Apprenticeship Program musicians Kim Johnson and Cody Jordan will perform throughout the event, and at 3 p.m. *History Alive!* character Doris "Lady D" Fields will portray blues legend Bessie Smith. Light refreshments will also be served.

Our sister houses will also observe West Virginia's birthday on June 20. The Craik-Patton House at 2809 Kanawha Blvd. East will be open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and the Historic Glenwood Foundation at 800 Orchard Street is open from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. *History Alive!* character Doug Riley performs as Mark Twain at 2 p.m. at Glenwood.

We look forward to seeing you!



Michael Keller

James Froemel portrays Walt Disney at the 2019 Open House.

Briefs

With support from a Humanities Council grant, the **Pocahontas County Opera House Foundation** is expanding its **Story Sessions** project into a podcast. The project documents the cultural history and musical traditions handed down in Pocahontas County for generations. The sessions weave together song and story to tell the ongoing tale of mountain music and its influence on Appalachian culture. For more information visit www.pocahontasoperahouse.org.

The Broad Side, the Council's bimonthly publication, celebrated its one-year anniversary in February. It features personal stories, book and podcast recommendations, short dispatches from around the state, and brief items for further exploration. *The Broad Side* aims to embrace a spirit of intellectual adventure, and explore the West Virginia roads—real and imaginary—that often go less traveled. To read previous issues, visit www.wvhumanities.org.

We are proud to report that Council Board Member **Robert Conte** was recognized as a **History Hero** by the WV Department of Arts, Culture and History. Bob served as the historian at The Greenbrier from 1978 to 2021. He was honored at an awards ceremony on February 24 at the Culture Center in Charleston.

Courtesy National Air and Space Museum



One of the best ways to enjoy the humanities is to attend events—and this season, more and more in-person events are returning to the calendar. Below is a sample of the many programs sponsored in part by Humanities Council grants scheduled for the next few months. To view the full calendar of events, visit our website at www.wvhumanities.org/events.

The Shepherd University Foundation welcomes **Barbara Kingsolver** to West Virginia as the University's **Appalachian Heritage Writer-in-Residence** and the featured **One Book, One West Virginia** author.

The renowned novelist will work with Shepherd University this spring and summer, and will be on campus for her residency September 23-30. For more information visit www.shepherd.edu/ahwir.

The **Appalachian Authors' Roundtable**, curated and hosted by WV Poet Laureate Marc Harshman, will feature award-winning authors **Wesley Browne**, **Jayne Moore Waldrop**, and **Larry Thacker**. Each writer will read selections from their recent books, share insights regarding their chosen medium, and reflect upon the current state of the literary world. The authors will also welcome audience Q&A. The Roundtable event will be held at Taylor Books in Charleston on June 19 at 3 p.m. For more information visit www.festivalcharleston.com.

The Flying Hobos, an interactive living history play, dramatizes the life and accomplishments of the first African-American pilots to fly across the United States. In 1932, **James Herman Banning** (above) and co-pilot Thomas C. Allen became the first Black pilots to fly from Los Angeles to Long Island. As a follow-up to the recent Fly with Banning traveling exhibit at the Martinsburg Public Library, the Berkeley County branch of the NAACP is working to present *The Flying Hobos* this fall. For more information visit www.greateststoriesnever told.org.

The **Augusta Heritage Center** in Elkins is programming a series of public events this summer to highlight the history and human context of music, dance, and craft traditions. **Humanities at Augusta** will delve into the social experience and cultural context, past and present, of the folklore, music, dance, and crafts of Appalachia and beyond, centered on the disciplines presented in Augusta's workshops. Events will include afternoon cultural sessions, as well as evening lectures, and special presentations that invite attendees to examine and engage with old traditions in new ways. For more information visit www.augustaartsandculture.org/summer2022.

Donations November 1, 2021 - March 31, 2022

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The West Virginia Humanities Council gratefully acknowledges support from the National Endowment for the Humanities; the West Virginia Department of Arts, Culture and History; and foundations, corporations, and individuals throughout the Mountain State and beyond.

WV National Cemeteries Project

Last fall a contract award from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) enabled the West Virginia Humanities Council to inaugurate the West Virginia National Cemeteries Project

(WVNCP). This program engages students at Grafton High School in conducting original research to write biographies for veterans interred at Taylor County's two—and the state's only—National Cemeteries.

In 2021-2022, forty-two students wrote short narrative biographies for 19 veterans. The goal is to provide much more than a bullet-point list of military facts about each veteran, delving into the deeper context of their unique lives.

To do this, these hard-working students dug through census records and muster rolls on Ancestry.com, scoured through

WV Veterans Memorial, Charleston.

yearbooks, explored the West Virginia State Archives, called county courthouses, and spoke to veterans' family members. The results reflect their diligence. Their work will soon be available for public viewing on the Council website, as well as the VA's Veterans Legacy Program online database.

The biographies give center stage to the courage and tenacity of America's servicemen and women. Take Burl McVicker of Barbour County who served as a tailgunner in the "Cactus Air Force" during the

first months of fighting on Guadalcanal in 1942. His squadron suffered horrendous casualties protecting their fellow Marines from enemy planes and warships. After the war, McVicker spent over three decades with the Army Corps of Engineers, winning environmental awards for his superlative cleanup efforts at the reservoir he managed in Pennsylvania. By contrast, young Jimmie Darrell Bays of Campbells Creek, Kanawha County, was killed at age 18 protecting the Pusan Perimeter in the opening months of the Korean War. McVicker and Bays are just two of the veterans whose lives the WVNCP seeks to honor.

WVNCP's first year has been an extraordinary collaboration. The Grafton High students hail from the classes of Rebecca Bartlett and Richard Zukowski, who teach Library Media and AP Civics and Government courses, respectively. Patricia McClure, a volunteer at the West Virginia State Archives who manages the West Virginia Veterans Memorial project, provided insights and structure from her years of experience working with AP and ROTC classes. WVU's Public History program, facilitated by Dr. Melissa Bingmann, furnished four talented graduate researchers to assist with project preparation and respond to the high schoolers' research conundrums. And the Taylor County Historical and Genealogical Society has been incredibly generous with its resources, even furnishing the use of its historic Grafton headquarters for the final commemorative ceremony held on May 23.

The Humanities Council is proud of what these Grafton High School students have achieved. There are thousands more stories to tell from these hallowed resting places, and we hope to continue carrying this work forward.

For more information visit the Council website at www.wvhumanities.org.



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