



West Virginia Folklife Program to hold Public Interest Meeting in Charleston

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**Contact: Emily Hilliard 304.346.8500
hilliard@wvhumanities.org**

Charleston—On March 3rd, state folklorist Emily Hilliard will kick off the West Virginia Folklife Program’s statewide folklife survey with a public interest meeting entitled “What is folklore?” at Taylor Books, 226 Capitol St., in Charleston. The 6:00 pm event is free and open to the public.

Over the course of the next year, Hilliard will conduct a statewide fieldwork survey to assess and document current folklife activity in West Virginia. “Folklife traditions are community-based creative expressions,” Hilliard said. “Those can include traditional music and dance, foodways, material culture, faith-based expressions, occupational lore, and more.” At the meeting, Hilliard will give a brief presentation on folklore and then take feedback from the public on local traditions, traditional artists, and tradition bearers in their community.

Hilliard stresses the importance of community involvement in this folklife survey. “This work is about honoring and supporting the creative contributions of West Virginians. We welcome public input on those traditions and tradition bearers valued by local people.” In the coming months, Hilliard will be holding similar public interest meetings in communities across the state.

The West Virginia Folklife Program is a project of the West Virginia Humanities Council and is supported in part by the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) Folk & Traditional Arts Program. West Virginia Folklife is dedicated to the documentation, preservation, presentation, and support of West Virginia’s vibrant cultural heritage and living traditions.

Emily Hilliard may be reached at hilliard@wvhumanities.org or (304) 346-8500.

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The West Virginia Humanities Council is a nonprofit corporation governed by a board of directors whose members are drawn from all parts of West Virginia. It is the state affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities, supported by the NEH, the State of West Virginia, and by contributions from the private sector. The purposes of the West Virginia Humanities Council are educational, and its mission is to support a vigorous program in the humanities statewide in West Virginia.