



From the Executive Director

# Our Golden Year

The West Virginia Humanities Council was created on June 25, 1974, to sustain West Virginia’s network of cultural organizations and educational institutions, and ensure direct public access to the best humanities programs everywhere in the Mountain State.

This year the Council turns 50 years old, and we’ve been committed to that work every day of it. Over the past half-century, the Council has awarded millions of dollars in grants to humanities projects big and small, and delivered thousands of award-winning original programs to audiences throughout West Virginia. We’ve collaborated with organizations of every size to ensure that no matter where in West Virginia you go, our state’s remarkable cultural heritage and the living traditions of our people are preserved, supported, and celebrated.

We’re glad for the chance to have done that work. Historically, though, we’ve preferred to stay out of the spotlight. We do our best work through the work of other people, after all, and our grantees and program partners deserve the public attention.

But 50 years is a milestone, and one that shouldn’t pass without a little fanfare. So, in

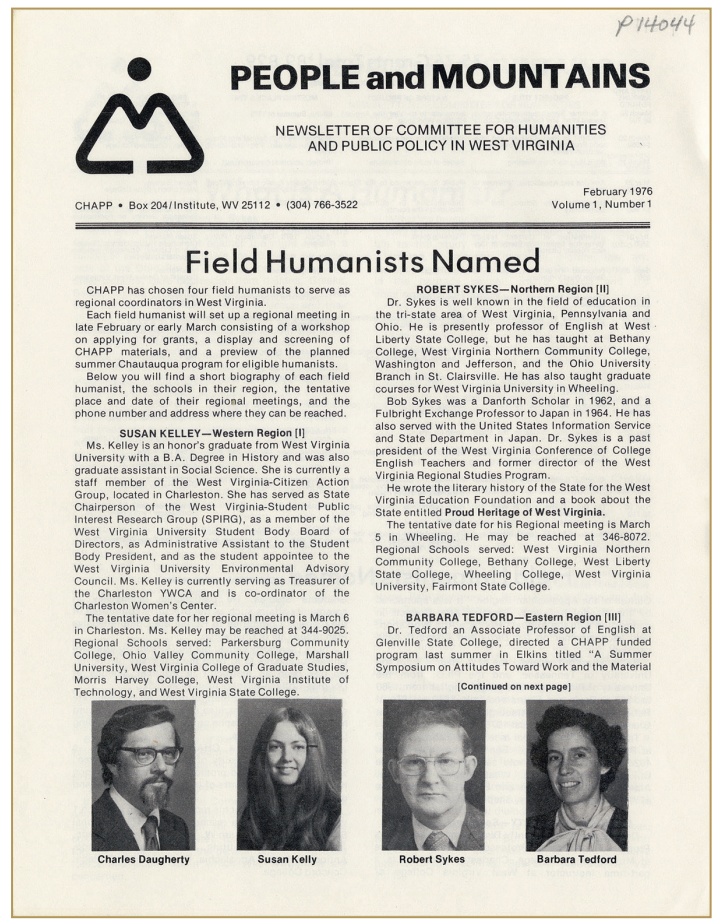
2024, we’re going to take a little time to tell our own story.

If you’re familiar with *People & Mountains*, you’ll notice a couple of changes to this issue. Featured above, our special 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary logo, with the phrase “Bridging Tradition & Tomorrow,” will accompany all of the Council’s work this year, honoring our first 50 years while looking ahead to new initiatives and projects. This issue also boasts a full color design, and some eye-catching changes to the way we convey our statewide impact in our year-in-review insert.

There’s more to come. Throughout 2024, across social media and on our main web page, we’ll be sharing films, pictures, stories, and other items from our Council’s history. This is the result of a long process of digitizing and archiving the Council’s extensive in-house media collection, much of which has not been publicly available since its original delivery date. Unsurprisingly, we found our vaults contained some real treasures.

We’re eager to share—with our friends, supporters, and new and wider audiences—50 years’ worth of our work. For now: Thank you all for being part of the Council’s tradition. And thank you, too, for being part of our tomorrow.

—Eric Waggoner



The first issue of *People and Mountains*, February 1976.

## 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: Feb. 1, Sept. 1

**Minigrants** have a budget of \$2,000 or less and support small projects, single events, or planning/consultation.  
Due: Feb. 1, April 1, June 1, Oct. 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, audio, 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](http://www.wvhumanities.org), email [riebe@wvhumanities.org](mailto:riebe@wvhumanities.org) or call 304-346-8500.*

## Grants

In 2023, the Council awarded 51 grants and 10 fellowships to support humanities programming statewide at such varied venues as the Yew Mountain Center in Hillsboro, Wayne High School, Canaan Valley State Park, the Kump Education Center in Elkins, Ashby's Fort Museum, and Blennerhassett Museum, as well as lectures by authors John Stauffer, Ann Pancake, Neema Avashia, and Sonali Chakravarti. Council grants supported an

*Indigenous Appalachia* exhibit at WVU Libraries, as well as an October 2023 forum featuring Native leaders discussing their nations' connection to place.

The forum focused on

complexities in public discussions and portrayals of Indigenous cultures and histories. The exhibit will be on display at the WVU Tech Campus Library in Beckley until July 2024, and then at the Appalachian State University Library from July 2024 to June 2025. For more about the forum, exhibit, lesson plans, discussion guides, and other material, visit [nas.wvu.edu](http://nas.wvu.edu) or [lib.wvu.edu/exhibits/indigenous-appalachia](http://lib.wvu.edu/exhibits/indigenous-appalachia).



Kenneth Enoch

*Audience at the This Land Was Already Loved forum at WVU. Courtesy of the WVU Native American Studies Program.*



Alex Wilson

*Opening of the West Virginia Judicial Learning Center exhibit. Courtesy of the Supreme Court of Appeals of West Virginia.*

Another Council grant helped fund the *West Virginia Judicial Learning Center*, a new interactive learning exhibit about the state Supreme Court of Appeals. Visitors will learn important concepts about our court system through animated visuals, original footage of court officials, and game-based experiences. The grant was part of the Council's recent initiative emphasizing civics education for young people and adults. The display is located in the east wing of the state capitol in Charleston.



# Programs

The Council concluded the second year of our West Virginia National Cemeteries Project by developing a curriculum guide (available on our website). Our annual McCreight Lecture in the Humanities featured author, journalist, and tech humanist Cory Doctorow. The Council also added three new characters to the *History Alive!* roster: frontiersman Thomas Ingles, workers' rights advocate and the first woman presidential cabinet member Frances Perkins, and Minnie



Michael Keller

*Born of Rebellion* debut at West Virginia Wesleyan College.

Reed, a “composite” of several 20<sup>th</sup>-century West Virginia folk singers. The Council’s revamped *Born of Rebellion: West Virginia Statehood and the Civil War* traveling exhibit debuted at West Virginia Wesleyan in October and has since traveled to Morgantown and Wheeling. It will be on display at the Clarksburg-Harrison County Public Library until mid-February. Visit [wvhumanities.org/programs/traveling-exhibits/bor/](http://wvhumanities.org/programs/traveling-exhibits/bor/) for upcoming tour dates in Huntington, Beckley, Pocahontas County, Charleston, Shepherdstown, and elsewhere.

In 2024, our **Little Lectures** series returns to the historic MacFarland-Hubbard House in Charleston on March 24, April 28, May 19, and June 23. On April 28, military historian Dr. Peter Mansoor addresses parallels between current conflicts in the world and his personal experiences with the American counterinsurgency in Iraq.

On May 19, journalist and author Andrea Pitzer, who grew up in Parkersburg, discusses her book *One Long Night: A Global History of Concentration Camps*. Other speakers will be announced soon.



Jennifer Burns

Our May 19 speaker,  
Andrea Pitzer.

## Program Committee Election

*Please help choose citizen members for the Humanities Council Program Committee. Your vote gives the public a voice in our grants and program decisions. **Vote for no more than four:***

Amanda Phillips Chapman, Gilmer County, is an Associate Professor in the Department of Language and Literature at Glenville State University. She is a Program Committee incumbent and eligible for re-election.

Susan Feller, Hampshire County, is an artist focusing on traditional handcrafts such as rug hooking, embroidery, quilting, and collage.

Tehseen Irfan, Logan County, is a Professor in English at Southern West Virginia Community and Technical College at the Logan Campus.

Francene Kirk, Monongalia County, is retired from Fairmont State University, where she was the Abelina Suarez Professor of Communication and Theatre.

Rachael Meads, Jefferson County, teaches Appalachian culture, music, and ethnomusicology at Shepherd University. She is a Program Committee incumbent and eligible for re-election.

Elizabeth Satterfield, Preston County, is the Curator and Director of Education at Arthurdale Heritage.

Alexandra Schneider, Brooke County, is the Director of Brooke County Public Libraries.

*Return your ballot by mail to the West Virginia Humanities Council or access online at [wvhumanities.org](http://wvhumanities.org) by March 5.*

**We have a lot planned for our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Stay tuned to our website and social media—much more is on the way!**

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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 & History; and foundations, corporations, and individuals throughout the Mountain State and beyond.

## West Virginia Folklife Program Apprenticeship Showcases

The Council celebrated our 2022-2023 West Virginia Folklife Apprenticeship Program with showcases for the public to learn about folk and traditional arts in their communities: **food and craft traditions** at the Phil Gainer Community Center, Elkins; **music** at the Frank and Jane Gabor West Virginia Folklife Center, Fairmont State University; and **Appalachian storytelling** at the Robinson Grand Performing Arts Center, Clarksburg.



*Food and crafts with (left-right) Xavier Oglesby and his niece Brooklynn Oglesby, fiber artists Barbara Weaner and Enrica McMillon, and mushroom foragers Sharon Briggs and Anthony Murray.*



*Storytelling with (left-right) Bil Lepp and James Froemel.*

*Old-time fiddling with (left-right) Gerry Milnes and Annick Odom.*



*Clawhammer banjo with (left-right) Dakota Karper and Joe Herrmann.*



*Fiddle repair with (left-right) Chris Haddox and Mary Linscheid.*

Photos by Michael Keller

These events will soon be available online. The West Virginia Folklife Apprenticeship Program is supported by funding from the National Endowment for the Arts and the West Virginia Humanities Council. Learn more at [wvfolklife.org/folklife-apprenticeship-program](http://wvfolklife.org/folklife-apprenticeship-program).