

Claim your seat!

The Humanities Council's fine new pergola is completed but the fundraising continues, according to Steve Hopta, the man in charge.

Hopta, a member of the Council board of directors and head of the special fundraising effort, notes that the campaign has gone well. "People have been very supportive, and we have raised about three-fourths of our \$150,000 goal," he said. "But the last dollars are as important as the first." As a special inducement, Hopta's committee is offering donors the chance to "claim a seat" at the new facility. A total of 52 chairs have been provided for the pergola and will be used for outdoor lectures, meals and other events. Donors of \$250 or more will be entitled to a brass plate on the back of a chair, engraved with their name or the name of any individual or organization they care to honor.

"It is a fun way to show your support for a good organization," Hopta said. "We anticipate frequent use of the pergola, and visitors will be

able to see that you put your money where your interests are."

Hopta noted that chairs will be named only for gifts made after the beginning of 2009. "The idea is to entice those of us who have already given to ante up a little more, while encouraging new gifts as well. And of course we are now in a new tax year, and all contributions are deductible."

The project expanded an existing patio at the rear of the Humanities Council's historic headquarters property. An overhead pergola, built in the style of the adjoining house, was added to provide shade and a structure for lights and speakers. Drainage problems were corrected as part of the project, and improvements

made to lighting and security.

You may send contributions to the West Virginia Humanities Council, 1310 Kanawha Boulevard, E., Charleston, WV 25301, or contact Development Director Michelle Walker at (304)346-8500 or walker@wvhumanities.org.

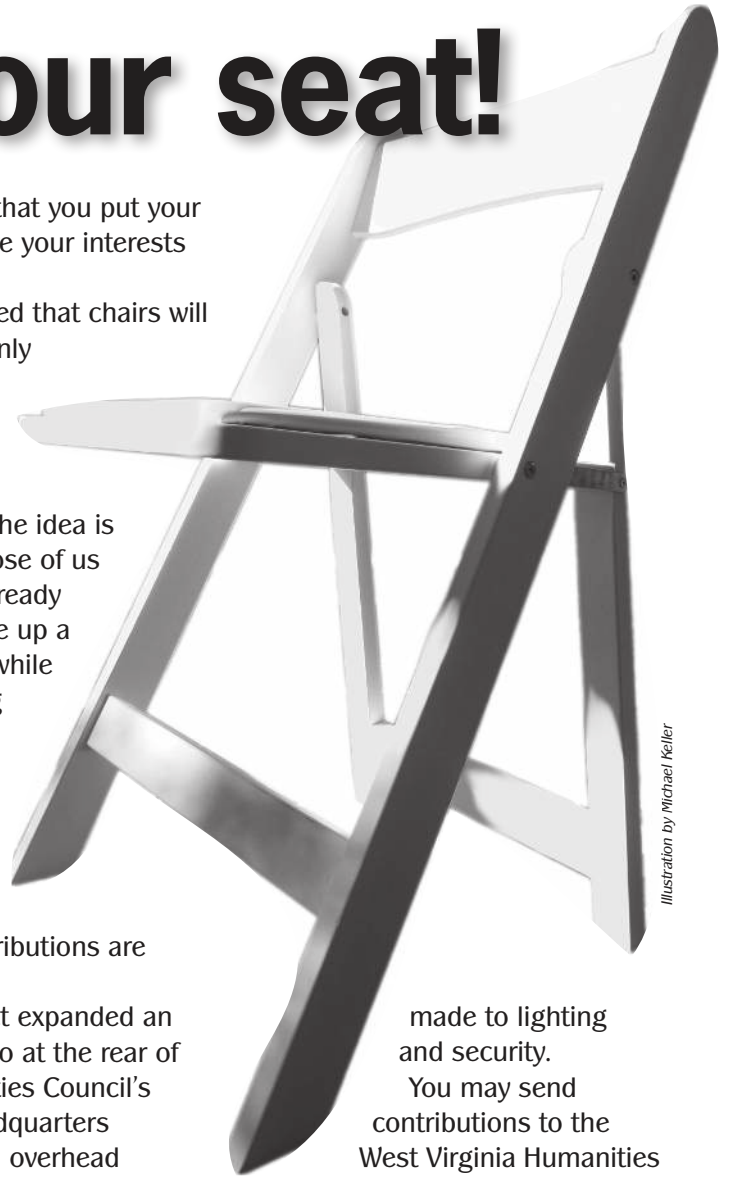


Illustration by Michael Keller

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2008 - 2009

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2008



On the road again. Encouraged by last summer's sell-out, the Humanities Council will offer another bus trip to the Contemporary American Theater Festival in Shepherdstown.

The July excursion will be hosted by Ken Sullivan and Michelle Walker.

The 2009 trip will be an all-new adventure, Walker

emphasized. "The plays are new every year, of course, and at CATF that means cutting-edge new! We'll keep the most popular elements of last year's trip, including lodging at Bavarian Inn and a sundown supper at Senator Davis's historic mansion, but we will be changing the meals and the stops along the way."

Mark July 16-17 on your calendar, and contact Michelle Walker at (304)346-8500 or walker@wvhumanities.org for further information.

Grant Categories & Guidelines

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

Minigrants have a budget of \$1,500 or less and support small projects, single events, or planning/consultation.
Due: *April 1, June 1, Aug. 1, Oct. 1, Dec. 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 nonprofit presses and recognized 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 support summer seminars for secondary-school teachers. Maximum award: \$25,000.
Due: Sept. 1

*Approaching Deadline!

In 2009, the Humanities Council encourages grant proposals commemorating the Sesquicentennial of John Brown. Proposals may address Brown's battles before the Harpers Ferry Raid, the raid itself, or his trial and execution.

Full guidelines and forms for Humanities Council grants are available by calling (304)346-8500, from saunders@wvhumanities.org, or at our web site www.wvhumanities.org.

Help Wanted

Progress continues on e-WV, the online version of the *West Virginia Encyclopedia*. The Humanities Council board of directors approved the hiring of a software contractor – Information Research Corporation of Fairmont – at the fall board meeting. That's the essential first step in bringing our big reference resource to life.

As IRC goes to work on the web site and underlying databases and content management system, our thoughts turn to long-run operations. The e-WV servers and associated computer hardware will be left to an outside partner, while we do the editorial work here. We'll need a couple of good people, we know that, and are just now thinking through the job descriptions.

Our expectation is to hire two editors for our online encyclopedia, one leaning to the content side and one to the technical side.

The content person will be our general editor and team leader, probably a humanities professional with a master's degree or better. I can imagine a sharp young historian (or folklorist or just the right journalist) in this position as easily as a seasoned veteran. This person must have a thorough knowledge of our state and a passion for getting the West Virginia story and getting it right, to high standards of accuracy and presentation.

While our general editor will have to be thoroughly comfortable with the requirements of online publishing, we will count on our other hire for most of the heavy lifting on the tech side. The technical (or media) editor initially will concentrate on the incorporation of audio-visual material to enliven the huge amounts of textual information imported from the print version of the *West Virginia Encyclopedia*. After that, his or her job will be the daily care and grooming of e-WV. We are not looking for a programmer or deep-tech person in this position, but our media editor will have to be a top webmaster and savvy enough to manage outside experts as required.

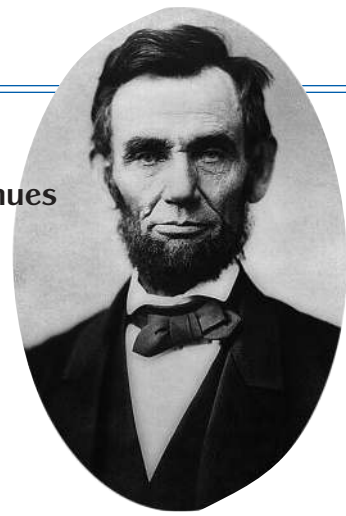
And no, this is not a job ad, despite my headline. We haven't decided just when to bring on e-WV staff, and as you can see we are still working out the requirements. Call it thinking aloud. As always, we welcome your thoughts and advice, either on the nature of the project or on the sort of people best suited to make a success of it.

But if you do happen to know of any likely prospects, by all means put them in touch.

Ken Sullivan



Board Nominations. The West Virginia Humanities Council is governed by a board of directors whose members are drawn from throughout the Mountain State and represent a broad range of perspectives. The Council is now accepting nominations to the board. We look for experience at educational institutions, in business and nonprofit management, and in the professions. If you or someone you know is interested and qualified, please send nominations to wvhuman@wvhumanities.org. Our picture shows board members Al Walker and Ken Bailey at a recent meeting.



Lincoln Bicentennial Continues

Throughout 2009 a variety of events will commemorate the bicentennial of the birth of our country's 16th president. Abraham Lincoln was born February 12, 1809.

Lincoln signed the legislation creating the new state of West Virginia in 1863, and West Virginians are expected to take a particular interest in commemorative events. The Humanities Council McCreight Lecture, featuring presidential scholar Richard Norton Smith, launched the state's observance of the Lincoln Bicentennial last October. Two upcoming lectures will continue our Lincoln programming.

Matthew Pinsker, who occupies the Brian Pohanka Chair for Civil War History at Dickinson College, will lecture on "Abraham Lincoln and the House-Divided Era." The program will take place at West Virginia Independence Hall in Wheeling at 1:30 p.m. on February 15.

And on May 19 at 7:00 p.m. Bertram Wyatt-Brown, visiting scholar at Johns Hopkins University, will offer "Lincoln's Assassination Revisited" in the courtroom of the old Hampshire County Courthouse in Romney. Both lectures, presented through the Distinguished Lectureship Program of the Organization of American Historians, are free to the public.

Briefs

African-American Experience.

Cicero Fain, assistant professor of history at Marshall University and a member of the Humanities Council board of directors, will present a free lecture titled "The African-American Experience in Antebellum Cabell County" during Black History month. The lecture will take place at 2:00 p.m. on Sunday, February 22, at the Marie Redd Senior Life Enrichment Center in Huntington.

Talking About It. Kanawha County Public Library will present "Let's Talk



About It," a reading and discussion series sponsored by the American Library Association and led by Anne

McConnell of West Virginia State University. Professor McConnell will lead discussions exploring the theme of love and forgiveness through classic and contemporary literature on Mondays at 5:30 p.m. at the Humanities Council's MacFarland-Hubbard House, March 23 - July 27. Contact Susan Maguire at (304) 343-4646, ext. 256.

Upcoming Appraisal. Every five years, the West Virginia Humanities Council undergoes an organizational self-assessment at the direction of the National Endowment for the Humanities. We spend months preparing reports and scheduling activities that best illustrate the Council's good work for NEH-appointed site visitors. If past experience is any indication, we expect good results and even a little praise for a job well done, when the process culminates this fall.

History Day 2009 is set for March 5 at the Capitol Complex in Charleston. Now in its 13th year, the event is designated by the state Archives and History Commission as a special

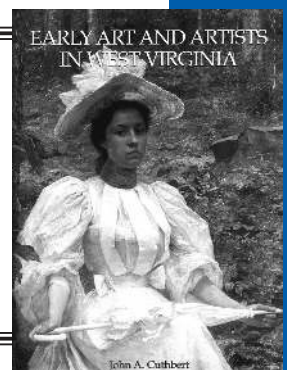


Photo by Michael Keller

day to recognize Mountain State history. Sixty exhibitors, costumed historical characters, and local historians honored as "History Heroes" gather to provide information to citizens and legislators. In the picture at left, two young historians stop to examine the Humanities Council booth at History Day 2008. The Council is a sponsor of the annual event.

Picturing West Virginia

The Humanities Council will supply an important West Virginia art history resource to schools taking part in "Picturing America," an art history initiative of the National Endowment for the Humanities. Copies of John Cuthbert's *Early Art and Artists in West Virginia*, published by West Virginia University Press in 2000, will be distributed at no cost to over 100 schools in early 2009. The book will supplement NEH "Picturing America" materials that include prints of significant American artwork.



*Beadwork pattern
from the Cherokee
tradition.*

Another Teacher Opportunity

The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum is offering an educational opportunity for secondary-school teachers and community college faculty. Beginning in 2009, up to 15 educators from grades 7 through 12 and community college faculty will be designated as Museum Teacher Fellows.

Participants will attend a five-day, all-expense paid summer institute at the museum in Washington. Community college faculty and middle and high school history, social studies, foreign-language, English and journalism teachers, as well as librarians and media specialists, are encouraged to apply.

Write the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, 100 Raoul Wallenberg Place, SW, Washington, 20024, call (202)488-0466, or visit www.ushmm.org.

Teacher Institutes

Each summer, West Virginia teachers are invited to attend a teacher institute funded by the West Virginia Humanities Council and hosted by a state college or university. The two-week seminars provide intensive study in a particular humanities subject and the opportunity to earn graduate and continuing education credit.

In June 2009, West Virginia University will host "A Crossroads of Native Culture and History: Examining the Native Heritage of West Virginia and the Region." Teachers taking part in this institute can expect to expand their knowledge through reading, films, lectures, and travel.

Participants will visit the prehistoric rock shelter in Meadowcroft, Pennsylvania, Grave Creek Mound in Moundsville, Pricketts Fort at Fairmont, the Hall of American Indians at Carnegie Museum in Pittsburgh, Fort Necessity, and Woodland Zoo in Farmington, Pennsylvania. The institute will bring teachers closer to the cultural past and present of this region and equip them to do the same for their students.

During the summer of 2009, the Humanities Council will also sponsor "Teaching the Holocaust and Comparative Genocides." Teachers will attend a seven-day institute on the history and philosophy associated with the Holocaust and other acts of genocide. Participants will do assigned readings, review non-print media, and engage with scholars in lectures and discussions. They will visit the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington.

The Humanities Council invites West Virginia colleges and institutions to plan teacher institutes for 2010. The next grant application deadline is September 1 with a maximum award of \$25,000. For more information contact grants administrator Amy Saunders at saunders@wvhumanities.org or (304)346-8500. Guidelines and applications are also available at www.wvhumanities.org.

West Virginia Humanities Council
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