



ANNUAL CONFERENCE AND MEETING

April 3 - April 5, 2025

Huntington, WV



WEST VIRGINIA
ASSOCIATION
OF MUSEUMS

ABOUT WVAM

The mission of the West Virginia Association of Museums is to serve, educate, advocate for, and enhance communications within the museum community. WVAM carries out this mission by listening to its members, serving their interests, and keeping members informed of current standards and activities on a national scale.

The West Virginia Association of Museums was organized in 1989 and officially established when the Southeastern Museums Conference (SEMC) met in Charleston, West Virginia, in 1990. At that time, the local planning committee decided to create a state association that would benefit the institutions, professionals, volunteers, and others interested in the museums of the Mountain State. They voted to adopt a constitution and bylaws and form the West Virginia Association of Museums (WVAM).

The WVAM Board of Directors is comprised of a president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, immediate past president, and six directors-at-large. The Board meets bimonthly to conduct the affairs of WVAM.



West Virginia Association of Museums

P.O. Box 4589

Morgantown, West Virginia 26504

museumsofww@gmail.com

<https://www.museumsofww.org>



FOLLOW WVAM ON SOCIAL MEDIA FOR EVENTS, UPDATES, AND WORKSHOPS

WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/MUSEUMSOFWV

WWW.INSTAGRAM.COM/MUSEUMSOFWV

BECOME A MEMBER TODAY!

Individual \$25

Individual Senior Citizen (65+) \$20

Institution Level 1 (1-4 people) \$50

Institution Level 2 (5-10 people) \$100

Institution Level 3 (11-20 people) \$200

Student \$15

Universities and National Service Programs \$150

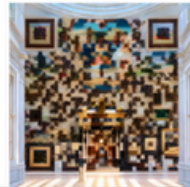
Industry Partner \$100

CONFERENCE SPONSORS

**SMALL BUILDING? SMALL BUDGET? SMALL STAFF? SMALL RESOURCES?
TOGETHER WE CAN DO BIG THINGS!**



The Small Museum Association is an all-volunteer organization serving small museums across the United States. SMA's mission is to develop and maintain a peer network among people who work for small museums, giving them opportunities to learn, share knowledge and support one another, so that they, in turn, can better serve their institutions, communities and profession.



Join us in York PA in 2026

February 16 to 18, 2026

Climate Change

Explore how museums are dealing with the challenges of climate change, from more extreme weather events to changing community needs. Join other small museum professionals and volunteers in discussing the key role small museums can play in educating, engaging, and supporting their communities in the face of changing physical and social climates.

Call for proposals is Open!

CONFERENCE SPONSORS

MUSEUM OF RADIO & TECHNOLOGY

INTERESTED IN ANTIQUE RADIOS? VISIT US!

Interested in Antique Radios? Visit the Museum of Radio and Technology in Huntington, West Virginia near the tri-state corner of West Virginia, Ohio, and Kentucky.

The collection includes: Cathedral radios, console radios, table-top radios, transistor radios, old radios, antique radios, collectable radios, ham equipment, vintage amateur receivers and transmitters, broadcast collectables, military communications equipment, test equipment, vintage computers, vintage hi-fi, and an awesome vinyl record collection. There is also a technical library.



CONFERENCE SPONSORS



CENTRAL CITY MUSEUM

Hear it from the Locals

EXPLORE WV INDUSTRIAL HISTORY!

The Central City Museum, is dedicated to preserving the rich history of the town of Central City, now part of the West Huntington neighborhood.



There are 400+ glassware items made in Central City, a Historic Photo Collection, and artifacts from Central City's industries.



Memorabilia from iconic businesses like Heiner's Bakery and Fesenmeier Brewing Company.



Stories of Central City Exhibit features oral histories from residents and businesses.



610 W. 14th Street
Huntington, WV
304-523-7887

Hours:
Mon-Fri 11 - 5
Sat 10 - 5
Sun 12 - 4

Spend the day in Central City & Support Local Businesses!

Connect with the Central City Museum Online

www.centralcitymuseum.org

Learning History Creates Community

WV CIVIL RIGHTS PIONEER

J.R. CLIFFORD
1848-1933

FRIENDS OF BLACKWATER PRESENTS

SHOOTOUT at the DEPOT

THE TRUE STORY OF A DRAMATIC WEST VIRGINIA GUNFIGHT - AND A SENSATIONAL MURDER TRIAL!

FRIENDS OF BLACKWATER PRESENTS

Moonshine Memories

A MOUNTAINEER FIGHTS FOR HIS HOME!

FRIENDS OF BLACKWATER PRESENTS

EARLY MINING VOICES

Blackwater Falls State Park Lodge
Davis WV
Saturday
Nov 3, 2024
2-4 PM

A PROSPEROUS SAWMILL TOWN

FRIENDS OF BLACKWATER

INSIDE THE SAWMILL

FROM FOREST TO SAWMILL

SHIPPING BY RAIL

A GROWING AND EVOLVING INDUSTRY ON THE RIVERBANKS

CONFERENCE SPONSORS

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SCHEDULE OVERVIEW

All events take place at the DoubleTree by Hilton unless otherwise noted.

\$ indicates additional cost

THURSDAY, APRIL 3RD

	Pre-Conference Tours & Workshops \$	Various Locations
4:00PM - 6:00PM	Registration Open	Mezzanine
5:00PM - 6:00PM	Special Presentation: Black in Appalachia	Pennsylvania Room
7:00PM - 8:30PM	Conference Reception	Marshall University Visual Arts Center

FRIDAY, APRIL 4TH

8:00AM - 4:00PM	Registration open	Mezzanine
9:00AM-10:00AM	Morning Session 1	Pennsylvania/Ohio
10:00AM - 12:00PM	Museum Tours	Meet-Mezzanine
	Lunch Break	
1:00PM - 2:00PM	Afternoon Session 1	Pennsylvania/Ohio
2:15PM - 3:00PM	WVAM Annual Meeting	Pennsylvania Room
3:15PM - 4:15PM	Afternoon Session 2	Pennsylvania/Ohio
4:30PM - 5:30PM	Afternoon Session 3	Pennsylvania/Ohio
6:00PM - 9:00PM	Conference Banquet, Keynote, and Auction	Virginia Room

SATURDAY, APRIL 5TH

8:00AM - 4:00AM	Registration open	Mezzanine
9:00AM - 10:00AM	Morning Session 1	Pennsylvania/Ohio
10:15AM - 11:15AM	Morning Session 2	Pennsylvania/Ohio
11:30AM - 12:30PM	Morning Session 3	Pennsylvania/Ohio
	Lunch Break	
2:00PM - 3:00PM	Afternoon Session 1	Pennsylvania/Ohio
3:15PM - 4:15PM	Afternoon Session 2	Pennsylvania/Ohio

SESSIONS AT-A-GLANCE

FRIDAY, APRIL 4TH

Morning Session 1: 9:00AM - 10:00AM

- Diversifying the American Experiment Through Community-Led Preservation
- A Lens on the Ladies

Museum Tours: 10:00AM - 12:00PM

- Central City Museum
- Huntington Children's Museum
- Museum of Radio & Technology
- Touma Museum of Medicine

Afternoon Session 1: 1:00PM - 2:00PM

- Museum Morale Help Desk
- Poster Session

2:15PM - 3:00PM

- WVAM Annual Meeting

Afternoon Session 2: 3:15PM - 4:15PM

- Inclusive Connections: Accessible Social Media Best Practices for All
- Practical Fundraising Tips for Small Museums

Afternoon Session 2: 4:30PM - 5:30PM

- Empowering Communities Through Partnerships
- Youth Organizations, Programming, and NPOs

SATURDAY, APRIL 5TH

Morning Session 1: 9:00AM - 10:00AM

- AI For the Forces of Good
- Marketing Strategies for Museums

Morning Session 2: 10:15AM - 11:15AM

- Managing Unmanaged Collections
- “On This Day in 1862...”: Using Social Media to Share Historical Narratives

Morning Session 3: 11:30AM - 12:30PM

- Strategies for Training Staff and Volunteers to Give Tours
- History as Hub: Using Museums as Community Spaces

Afternoon Session 1: 2:00PM - 3:00PM

- Web Accessibility is Usability
- Museum Making Connections

Afternoon Session 2: 3:15PM - 4:15PM

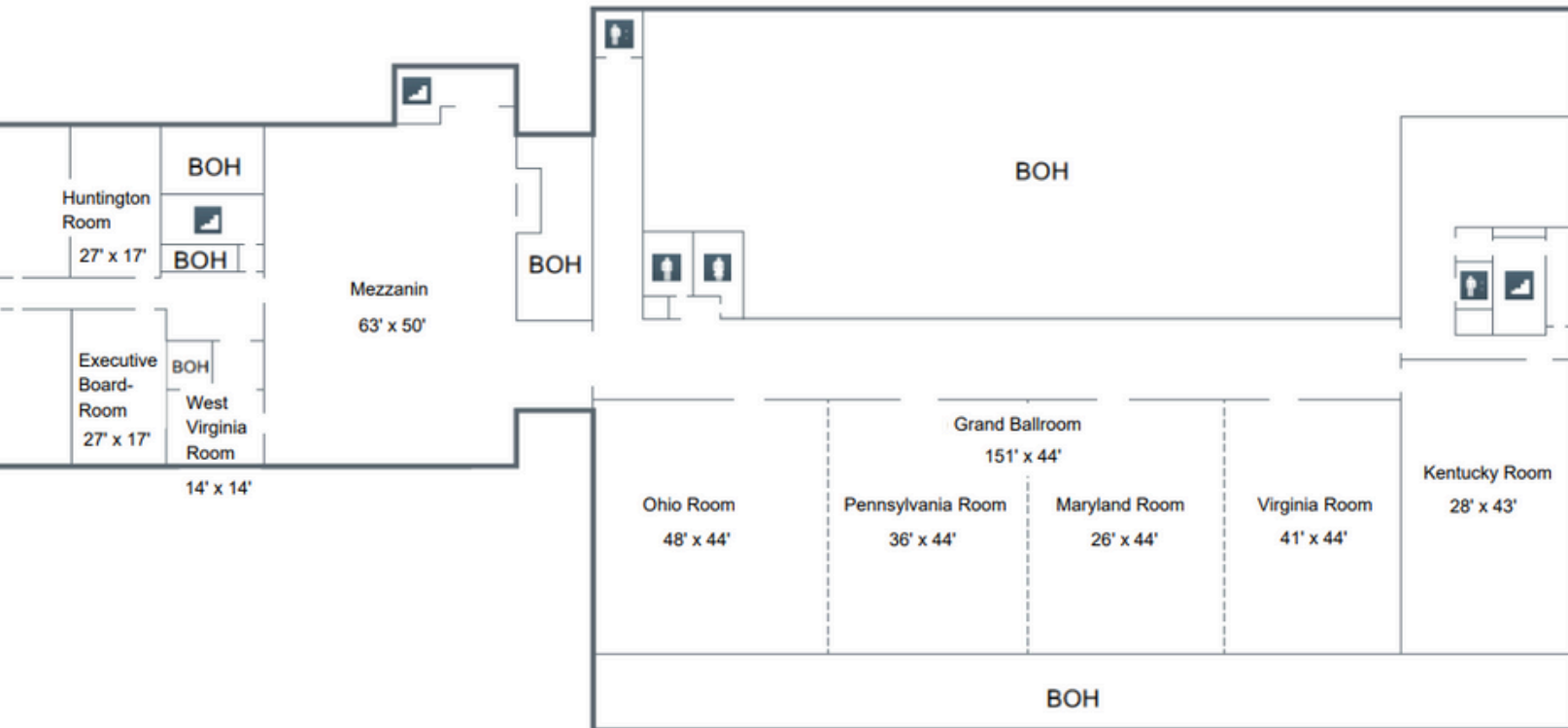
- Reaching Homeschool Audiences
- Early Mining Voices Come to Life

HOTEL MAP

HOTEL FLOOR PLAN / SURROUNDING PLAN

Hilton

Second Floor



2024-2025 WVAM BOARD

OFFICERS:

P: KATHLEEN THOMPSON
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 JOE OBIDZINSKI
 DANIELLE PETRAK
 LLOYD TOMLINSON
 CLAIRE TRYON
 CRYSTAL WIMER

2024-2025 CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

KATHLEEN THOMPSON (CHAIR)
 JAMIE BILLMAN
 NATHAN JONES
 JOE OBIDZINSKI
 FAITH WALKER
 CRYSTAL WIMER

APRIL 3RD WORKSHOPS

DISASTER RESPONSE AND RECOVERY

10:00AM - 12:00PM

FREE

Huntington Museum of Art

This workshop will address both the need for disaster planning and appropriate responses in the event of an emergency, when wet collection materials require immediate action. In the hands-on portion of the workshop, participants will review safe salvage methods for various types of wet materials (primarily paper, books, and photographs). Participants will also receive guidance in basic emergency preparedness, including advice on establishing a disaster plan, setting salvage priorities, and stocking supplies. In addition, they will learn the variables that can determine whether in-house salvage or working with a commercial vendor makes more sense after an emergency.

INTERPRETIVE TOUR REFRESH

11:00AM - 3:00PM

Individual -- Members: \$10 / Non-Members: \$20

Institution -- Members: \$25 / Non-Members: \$50

DoubleTree by Hilton

Do your museum tours need a refresh? Or does your institution need to build interpretive tours from the ground up?

In this hands-on workshop, Katie Thompson will walk you through the steps of building a thematic interpretive tour to fit the needs of your institution. Participants will work on actual tours for their museums, but also learn the building blocks to create future tours as well.

DIY PHASE BOX

1:30PM 3:30PM

Members: \$45 / Non-Members \$60

Touma Medical Museum

A phase box is a good option for books that need quick preservation triage. In this workshop, participants will assemble a simple protective book enclosure using acid-free barrier board and basic tools. The phase box provides good protection from environmental effects until you are ready for a more complex conservation treatment. Materials will be provided, but participants will need to bring their own book.

APRIL 3RD TOURS

BLENKO GLASS CO. SAND TO HAND TOUR

12:00 - 1:30PM, COST: \$30

9 Bill Blenko Dr, Milton, WV 25541

Step into our hot shop to see how Blenko glass is made. Our passionate tour guides are well-versed in the history of Blenko steeped in the process, and do a fantastic job of sharing our handmade glass -- from sand to hand!

HUNTINGTON MUSEUM OF ART

2:30 - 4:00PM, COST: FREE

2033 McCoy Rd, Huntington, WV 25701

Join WVAM for a guided tour of the Huntington Museum of Art!

HUNTINGTON HYSTERIA HUNT

APRIL 03, 2025, 2:30 PM - 4:00 PM

APRIL 05, 2025, 4:30 PM - 6:00 PM

COST: \$20

Team up with fellow conference attendees for this scavenger hunt through Huntington!

Special Guest Presentation

"Stronger Together: The Power of Collaboration"

William Isom II from Black in Appalachia will discuss their community driven work & the partnerships that allow the organization to produce work that highlights the history & contributions of Black families to the development of the Mountain South.

Thursday, April 3

5:00-6:00

DoubleTree by Hilton

**BLACK IN
APPALACHIA**
research, education and support



CONFERENCE RECEPTION

JOIN US TO OPEN THE 2025 CONFERENCE WITH A RECEPTION
AT THE MARSHALL UNIVERSITY VISUAL ARTS CENTER

APRIL 3, 7:00PM - 8:30PM
927 3RD AVE, HUNTINGTON

LIGHT REFRESHMENTS WILL BE SERVED

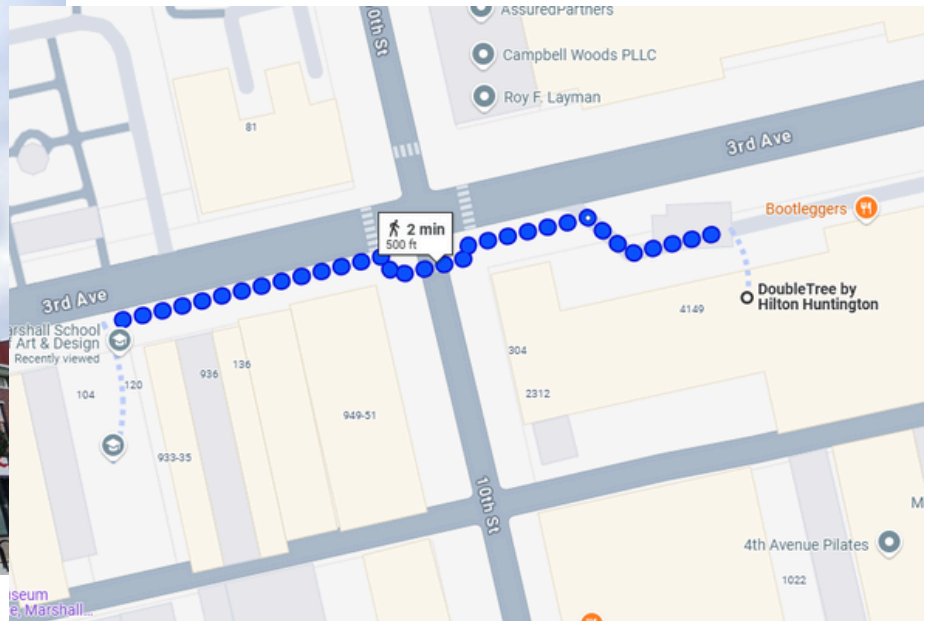
ENJOY VIEWING TWO JURIED EXHIBITS IN THE GALLERIES

CHARLES W. AND NORMA C. CARROLL GALLERY:
14TH ANNUAL NATIONAL JURIED EXHIBITION

An exhibition featuring a large variety of artists, mediums, and conceptual dialogues from artists across the U.S. This year's juror is Rebecca Ness, a contemporary painter based in Brooklyn, NY.

BIRKE ART GALLERY:
39TH ANNUAL STUDENT JURIED EXHIBITION

An exhibition featuring juried works by students in the School of Art & Design. This year, we are honored to welcome Kathryn Gremley, Gallery Director of the Penland School of Craft, as our juror.



CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

MORNING SESSION 1A

9:00AM - 10:00AM
PENNSYLVANIA ROOM

DIVERSIFYING THE AMERICAN EXPERIMENT THROUGH COMMUNITY-LED PRESERVATION

DYANI FEIGE

[CONSERVATION CENTER FOR ART & HISTORIC ARTIFACTS]

This year, CCAHA piloted Our Stuff, Our Stories (OSOS), a community-driven pop-up program that brings preservation services to a more public audience. Designed to launch fully in 2026 as part of the nation's semiquincentennial commemorative programming, we seek to reach communities who have been left out of the promises of the Declaration, as they are often the same people for whom preservation of cultural heritage can feel out of reach. This session will offer an overview of some lessons learned so far as well as tips on community-driven programming so that attendees can create something similar at their organizations if they are so inspired.

MORNING SESSION 1B

9:00AM - 10:00AM
OHIO ROOM

A LENS ON THE LADIES: GENDER AND REPRESENTATION IN 1920S RAVENSWOOD, WV

FAITH WALKER

[THE GREAT BEND MUSEUM]

Clara Weisheit (1885-1965) was a dedicated amateur photographer who documented both the ordinary and extraordinary moments of life in Ravenswood, as well as her travels across the country, between 1918 and 1940. Her images - from quiet scenes on her front porch to sweeping landscapes of the Pacific coast - reflect her adventurous spirit and strong sense of home. More than her personal mementos, her photographs provide a rare, candid window into women's lives in Ravenswood between the World Wars. By comparing Weisheit's work with other contemporary images, this presentation explores evolving gender roles in a rural community a century ago and the role of photography in shaping representation.

FRIDAY

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

FRIDAY

TOURS

10:00AM - 12:00PM
OFF-SITE

On Friday morning attendees will have the option to tour one of four local museums.

Central City Museum (608 14th Street, Huntington)

Tour begins at 10:15AM

Meet by 10:00AM in the Mezzanine to carpool

Huntington Children's Museum (1700 Washington Ave, Huntington)

Tour begins at 10:15AM

Meet by 10:00AM in the Mezzanine to carpool

Museum of Radio & Technology (1640 Florence Ave, Huntington)

Tour begins at 10:15AM

Meet by 10:00AM in the Mezzanine to carpool

Touma Medical Museum (314 9th Street, Huntington)

Museum will be open 9AM-12PM

Attendees can walk on their own, less than a 5 minute walk from the hotel

These tours are included in your conference registration and there is no extra charge to attend. You can choose to drive individually or carpool from the hotel.

Lunch Break

AFTERNOON SESSION 1A

1:00PM - 2:00PM
PENNSYLVANIA ROOM

Stop by the to see participants present research and projects through posters and small displays.

Devin Richards -- Preserving Coal Heritage

Riley Rhares -- The Archaeology of St. George's Chapel: A Glimpse into Pre-Revolutionary Jefferson County



CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

FRIDAY

AFTERNOON SESSION 1B

1:00PM - 2:00PM

OHIO ROOM

MUSEUM MORALE HELP DESK

CRYSTAL WIMER

[WEST VIRGINIA ASSOCIATION OF MUSEUMS]

In this laid-back and interactive session, conference attendees can pop in at any time for a moderated conversation along with the session's attendees. Whether you want to seek advice, brainstorm solutions, or simply vent your frustrations, the "help desk" is here to listen. The goal is to leave the session with a new idea, suggestion, or some takeaway that might help you manage the issue you're facing.

Museums can better position themselves as a critical community asset when they practice effective problem-solving, teambuilding, and morale amongst staff and volunteers. An appreciated and properly supported team will increase the likelihood of successful project planning and execution and better engagement with their communities.

2:00PM - 2:15PM Break

WVAM ANNUAL MEETING

2:15PM - 3:00PM

PENNSYLVANIA ROOM

3:00PM - 3:15PM Break

AFTERNOON SESSION 2A

3:15PM - 4:15PM

PENNSYLVANIA ROOM

INCLUSIVE CONNECTIONS: ACCESSIBLE SOCIAL MEDIA BEST PRACTICES FOR ALL

CECI DADISMAN

[CARDINAL + COMPANY]

In this session, we will delve into the world of accessible social media and explore best practices to ensure that everyone can fully participate and benefit from online engagement. As the digital landscape evolves, it is vital for social media professionals, content creators, and educators to understand the importance of inclusivity and accessibility. Through this session, attendees will be empowered with knowledge and useful takeaways to create an online environment that fosters diversity, equity, and meaningful connections.

The session will comprise a mix of core principles and real-world examples with a generous G&A session. Additionally, resources and handouts will be provided to help participants implement accessible social media practices in their own contexts.

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

AFTERNOON SESSION 2B

3:15PM - 4:15PM

OHIO ROOM

PRACTICAL FUNDRAISING TIPS FOR SMALL MUSEUMS

NORA VENEZKY

[SMALL MUSEUM ASSOCIATION]

Raising funds for a small museum can be challenging, but with the right approach, even limited resources can make a big impact. This session will provide you with practical tips and tricks to simplify fundraising, introduce free or low-cost tools to enhance your efforts, and offer actionable ideas on where to get started. Whether you're new to fundraising or looking to refine your strategy, you'll leave with valuable insights to help secure financial support and sustain your museum's mission.

4:15PM - 4:30PM Break

AFTERNOON SESSION 3A

4:30PM - 5:30PM

PENNSYLVANIA ROOM

EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS: THE VALUE OF UNIVERSITY-MUSEUM COLLABORATIONS

MOLLY C. MERSMANN

[MARSHALL UNIVERSITY]

LAUREN KEMP

[CENTRAL CITY MUSEUM]

ADRIENNE LAYMAN

[RAMSDELL HOUSE MUSEUM]

MACKENZIE NEW-WALKER

[MINE WARS MUSEUM]

This session will examine the myriad ways in which academic institutions can collaborate with museums in their local communities, as well as the challenges that arise. Specifically, Marshall University's History Department has begun working with local museums like Central City and the Ramsdell House to foster student internships, legal partnerships, and more broadly a sense of friendly, mutual collaboration to benefit not only each institution, but the broader community. By working with an academic institution, local museums can find students who are not only interested in their local history, but also eager to obtain hands-on experience in programming, grant writing, exhibits, archival collections, and historical events, which, in turn, helps students build their resumes and networks. These partnerships not only provide spaces for educational opportunities, but also helps preserve history, foster tourism, and strengthen community relationships.



Session sponsored by RenewAll/Central City Museum



CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

AFTERNOON SESSION 3B

4:30PM - 5:30PM

OHIO ROOM

YOUTH ORGANIZATIONS, PROGRAMMING, AND NPOS

ALEX BENNETT

[WORLD SCOUTING MUSEUM]

This session will focus on recruiting local Youth Organizations and the programming needs that can be filled for those organizations at you Non Profit Organizations, Museums, Libraries, or Historical Sites, including examples of Youth Organizations, programming ideas, and general tips on methods of contacts to ensure successful partnerships

CONFERENCE BANQUET

6:00PM - 9:00PM

VIRGINIA ROOM

Dinner, Keynote Address, Auction

- 6:00.....Dinner
- 6:50.....Presentation of Awards
- 7:00.....Keynote Address
- 8:00.....Last Call for Raffle Tickets & Silent Auction
- 8:15.....Raffle and Sype Auction

* Raffle * Silent Auction * Live Auction *

Proceeds go towards WVAM operations, workshops, and conference scholarships.

Banquet Sponsored by



FRIDAY

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

"DRAWING FROM PAST LESSONS TO GUIDE FUTURE STEPS: MUSEUMS, CO-CREATION, AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES"

Nearly ten years have passed since Positioning Your Museum as a Critical Community Asset was first published. In this keynote address, volume co-editor Elizabeth Bollwerk will provide an overview of the goals and rationale for this practical guide, evaluate whether those goals have been met, and reflect on the lessons learned from both the creation of the volume and the continued efforts to advance its work over the past decade. Bollwerk will also highlight case studies from three Virginia museums that continue to apply the book's principles, exploring both the successes and ongoing challenges of co-creative work that aims to build meaningful connections between museums and their local communities.



Elizabeth A. Bollwerk is an anthropological archaeologist and lifelong museophile. As the Project Manager for the Digital Archaeological Archive of Comparative Slavery (DAACS, www.daacs.org), based at Monticello in Charlottesville, Virginia, she leads and oversees research initiatives that deepen our understanding of the enslaved societies that developed in the Colonial and Post-Colonial Atlantic World. With over a decade of experience in museums, her work focuses on using technology to connect people with collections to uncover new narratives about the past. Her research interests include digital archaeological data management and analysis, as well as digital public archaeology. Elizabeth holds a PhD in Anthropology from the University of Virginia and has published articles on Open Authority and Digital Public Archaeology in *Museums and Social Issues* and *Advances in Archaeological Practice*. Outside of her professional life, she enjoys running (often with the family dog, Sadie) and creating things with her husband and son.

FRIDAY

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

SATURDAY

MORNING SESSION 1A

9:00AM - 10:00AM
PENNSYLVANIA ROOM

AI FOR THE FORCES OF GOOD: PRACTICAL TOOLS AND STRATEGIES FOR ARTS ORGS

CECI DADISMAN
[CARDINAL + COMPANY]

Feeling overwhelmed by "AI" jargon and worried it's just for tech giants? Relax, fellow arts admins! We'll ditch the tech-speak and dive into real-world ways AI can amplify your impact without sacrificing artistic integrity. We'll dive into how AI can help you: Streamline content creation by using AI to produce relevant, diverse content for all communications channels from blogs to social media to education materials. Move beyond one-size-fits-all approaches and create personalized communication with tailored messaging that resonates with each target audience. Eliminate bias, org speak, and jargon in your communications to reach new audiences and foster deeper engagement with existing ones.

MORNING SESSION 1B

9:00AM - 10:00AM
OHIO ROOM

MARKETING STRATEGIES FOR MUSEUMS

BETH GAIN
[CLARKSBURG HISTORY MUSEUM]

There are countless strategies that small museums with small staff and shoestring budgets can implement to reach their target audience, define their mission with communications, and build on growth.

10:00AM - 10:15AM Break

MORNING SESSION 2A

10:15AM - 11:15AM
PENNSYLVANIA ROOM

MANAGING UNMANAGED COLLECTIONS

KATHLEEN L. THOMPSON
[WILLIAM A. NEAL MUSEUM OF THE HEALTH SCIENCES]

Many museums face the challenge of collections that are un-cataloged, un-documented, and unorganized. Using the Neal Museum collections as a case study, this session walks through steps to manage a previously unmanaged collection and bring an institution into following best practices.

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

SATURDAY

MORNING SESSION 2B

10:15AM - 11:15AM

OHIO ROOM

#ONTHISDAY IN 1862...": USING SOCIAL MEDIA TO SHARE HISTORICAL NARRATIVES

FAITH WALKER

[THE GREAT BEND MUSEUM]

Social media serials offer museums and historic sites an innovative way to engage audiences by unfolding history in real time. "The Civil War Diary of Henrietta Fitzhugh Barr," a Facebook serial sharing #OnThisDay entries from an 1862-63 Ravenswood diary, has sparked remarkable engagement, attracting hundreds of new followers, increasing audience engagement, and inspiring community dialogue in Jackson County. This presentation explores the benefits of using serialized storytelling to foster public curiosity and connection, from enhancing accessibility to deepening historical empathy. It also addresses challenges, including content sustainability, audience management, and historical interpretation in digital spaces. Attendees will gain practical insights into launching and maintaining a successful social media serial while navigating the complexities of historical storytelling online.

11:15AM - 11:30AM Break

MORNING SESSION 3A

11:30AM - 12:30PM

PENNSYLVANIA ROOM

STRATEGIES FOR TRAINING STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS TO GIVE TOURS

KATHLEEN L. THOMPSON

[WILLIAM A. NEAL MUSEUM OF THE HEALTH SCIENCES]

Maintaining a standard quality to museum tours is crucial to ensuring your visitors get an accurate and enjoyable experience. This session will cover different methods to train staff and volunteers to give tours, ways to ensure a standard quality of tours given to visitors, and ideas for the continuing development of your tour guides.

Session sponsored by the
Museum of Radio & Technology



MUSEUM
of **RADIO** &
TECHNOLOGY
Huntington, West Virginia

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

SATURDAY

MORNING SESSION 3B

11:30AM - 12:30PM

OHIO ROOM

HISTORY AS HUB: USING MUSEUMS AS COMMUNITY SPACES

KENNETH KIDD

[ARTHURDALE HERITAGE]

ELIZABETH SATTERFIELD

[ARTHURDALE HERITAGE]

As valued cultural spaces, museums and historic sites are often ideally poised to be the center of local communities. Whether in an urban or rural setting, our institutions can provide space for people of all backgrounds to come together, connect, and learn. Join staff from the New Deal historic site of Arthurdale to learn about ways museums can engage their community in meaningful ways. Viewing Arthurdale Heritage as an example, this session will explore a variety of ideas to reuse and adapt challenging historic spaces into revenue-generating, community hubs. We will explore and brainstorm inventive ways to breathe life into our museums, creating makerspaces, programming, housing, event venues, exhibit space, and long-term rentals that serve multiple audiences. Kenny and Elizabeth will share tips and tricks from their years of experience, building on the efforts of Arthurdale Heritage since 1985. Come prepared to share and discuss with fellow participants!

Lunch Break

AFTERNOON SESSION 1A

2:00PM - 3:00PM

PENNSYLVANIA ROOM

WEB ACCESSIBILITY IS USABILITY

CECI DADISMAN

[CARDINAL + COMPANY]

Is your website optimized for for all visitors to engage with your content and take the actions you want? It comes down to usability and accessibility. If web accessibility isn't already on your radar, it should be. Many accessibility standards are items everyone can address. This session is designed to empower attendees with fundamental web accessibility and usability principles and corresponding techniques. We'll focus on the principles of accessibility and usability, and also specific changes you can make on your website right away to improve performance.

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

SATURDAY

AFTERNOON SESSION 1B

2:00PM - 3:00PM

OHIO ROOM

MUSEUM MAKING CONNECTIONS

CINDY DEARBORN
[HUNTINGTON MUSEUM OF ART]

The Huntington Museum of Art works to ensure arts access for all West Virginians and all who reside in and visit the region. The Museum strives to be a welcoming place of respite, creativity, and education for the community, including those that visit, volunteer, and work at the institution. "To Enrich the Lives of All the People" has always been our goal at the Huntington Museum of Art (HMA). During this session, participants will be introduced to HMA's Museum Making Connections (MMC) program. MMC provides numerous educational opportunities for community members of all ages and has been recognized with the West Virginia Governor's Award for the Arts and an award from the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment.



Session sponsored by Museum Services Corporation

3:00PM - 3:15PM Break

AFTERNOON SESSION 2A

3:15PM - 4:15PM

PENNSYLVANIA ROOM

REACHING HOMESCHOOL AUDIENCES

JOE OBIDZINSKI
[WEST VIRGINIA UNIVERSITY, JACKSON'S MILL]

The presentation will be an overview/explanation of how WVU Jackson's Mill's Program Team leveraged our successful school-aged/youth programs to reach a relatively underserved audience. The presenter will take attendees through the process of how they identified, advertised, and how they run their programs. Additionally, there will be some brief discussion of the ways that the programming is unique from other programs for youth audiences. This is intended to be an introduction to a longer program offered by WVAM in the near future.

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

SATURDAY

AFTERNOON SESSION 2B

3:15PM - 4:15PM
OHIO ROOM

EARLY MINING VOICES COME TO LIFE

TOM RODD
[FRIENDS OF BLACKWATER]

Our community heritage project discovered a cache of 70 tape recordings made in 1967 of interviews with early West Virginia coal mining families. Many of the interviewed miners were immigrants and began work around 1900 -- in the pick-and-shovel handloading era. WVU History graduate students transcribed and condensed a dozen of the recordings. We put on a public program where community members portrayed the mining families, and where the eminent historian John Stealey spoke. We have video of the program that we are editing into short programs for social media. We also are preparing print publications. In the session we will show video and print excerpts and discuss our processes and purposes.

Session sponsored by Friends of Blackwater



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PRESENTER BIOS

BENNETT, ALEX

WORLD SCOUTING MUSEUM

Alex Bennett serves as the Museum Curator for the World Scouting Museum and the Vice President of WVAM. During his tenure he has moved the World Scouting Museum to Charleston, WV while updating programming and other vital areas of concern for the organization. He is a lifelong resident of West Virginia, a 4 time WV High School State Champion in the Arts, Class of 2025 WV History Hero, and a graduate of WVSU with BA's in History and Political Science.

DADISMAN, CECI

CARDINAL + COMPANY

Ceci Dadisman is an arts marketing professional with 20+ years of experience creating innovative, results-driven campaigns in industries including nonprofits, arts & culture, religious organizations, startups, and government entities. She specializes in multi-channel strategies that combine digital and traditional marketing, automation, and data analytics. A frequent national speaker, Ceci is known for her approachable style and focus on providing practical takeaways. Ceci is a Pittsburgh, PA native, graduate of the West Virginia University College of Creative Arts, and lives in Cleveland, Ohio.

DEARBORN, CINDY

HUNTINGTON MUSEUM OF ART

In 2010 Cindy Dearborn began working for the Huntington Museum of Art as the Museum & Schools Coordinator, where she managed the Volunteer Docent Corps of over 40 tour guides, developing curriculum-based school tours and engaging adult tours. She was promoted to Director of Education in 2018 and now supervises all the museum's educational initiatives. Ms. Dearborn holds a BFA from the New York State College of Ceramics at Alfred University where she focused in ceramics and glass.

FEIGE, DYANI

CONSERVATION CENTER FOR ART & HISTORIC ARTIFACTS

Dyani Feige is the Director of Preservation Services at CCAHA. Before joining the staff of CCAHA in 2010 as Preservation Specialist, Dyani worked in the Brooklyn Museum Libraries & Archives. She has also worked in the New York Public Library's Preservation Division; for the Conference Board; and in the Special Collections & Archives at Kent State University. Dyani received her MS in Library and Information Science with a Certificate in Archives at Pratt Institute and her BM in Music Business from New York University.

GAIN, BETH

CLARKSBURG HISTORY MUSEUM

PRESENTER BIOS

KEMP, LAUREN

CENTRAL CITY MUSEUM

Lauren Kemp is the Executive Director of the Central City Museum and RenewAll, a non-profit that is leading the movement to strengthen the West Huntington Neighborhood and Central City Commercial District through preserving history and promoting arts and cultural tourism. Through this non-profit and Kemp's leadership, the Central City Museum was established in 2020 as a way to preserve and tell the rich history of Central City.

KIDD, KENNETH

ARTHURDALE HERITAGE

Kenny Kidd is the Executive Director of Arthurdale Heritage, coming on board in August 2024. He comes to Arthurdale with 25 years of experience in community development and non-profit management.

LAYMAN, ADRIENNE

THE RAMSDELL HOUSE

A recent graduate of Marshall University, Adrienne Layman, has found a passion for local history. Working closely with Dr. Cicero Fain, Layman is an Outreach Specialist for the National Parks Service Network to Freedom, where she researches and designates local sites to be preserved as Underground Railroad locations. Layman is also the Director of the Ramsdell House & Civil War Museum, where she works with the city of Ceredo, forging a partnership between the city, the Ramsdell House Museum, Marshall University, and the local community.

MERSMANN, MOLLY

MARSHALL UNIVERSITY

Dr. Mersmann received her PhD from Purdue University and is now an assistant professor of American History at Marshall University, specializing in the American Civil War and Reconstruction eras. Having worked at various museums in her past including the Cincinnati Museum Center and the Indianapolis Children's Museum, Dr. Mersmann has been working hard to reinvigorate Marshall's public history program, including creating internships and partnerships with local museum, and developing public history courses that help broaden students' understanding of what history is.

NEW-WALKER, MACKENZIE

MINE WARS MUSEUM

Kenzie New-Walker has worked as Executive Director of the West Virginia Mine Wars Museum since 2018, leading community-driven projects that uplift central Appalachia's people and history. She coordinated the Battle of Blair Mountain Centennial in 2021, directs the Museum's public monument and history project, Courage in the Hollers, and oversees strategic planning and fundraising. Kenzie is the board chair of Coalfield Development and a graduate of Marshall University.

PRESENTER BIOS

OBIDZINSKI, JOE

WVU JACKSON'S MILL

Joseph (Joe) Obidzinski is the Program Coordinator for History at WVU Jackson's Mill, West Virginia's state 4-H camp. In that capacity, he oversees the preservation and interpretation of historic buildings and collections at the site as well as provides history programming for audiences of all ages.

RODD, TOM

FRIENDS OF BLACKWATER

Tom Rodd is a retired attorney and Board Member at Friends of Blackwater, a nonprofit conservation and heritage organization based in Tucker County, West Virginia. He has created and produced a number community educational programs based on dramatic recreations of historic events, using original source documents.

SATTERFIELD, ELIZABETH

ARTHURDALE HERITAGE

Elizabeth Satterfield has served as the Curator and Director of Education at Arthurdale Heritage since January 2022. With a background in both public history and public administration, Elizabeth creates new exhibitions, manages and digitizes the archival collection, expands educational programming, and oversees historic preservation projects.

THOMPSON, KATHLEEN

WILLIAM A. NEAL MUSEUM OF THE HEALTH SCIENCES

Dr. Kathleen Thompson is the Curator of the William A. Neal Museum of the Health Sciences at West Virginia University. Prior to her current position she served as a Preserve WV AmeriCorps member for three years, led tours of Frank Lloyd Wright's Fallingwater, and taught history at several colleges and universities. She earned her PhD in Nineteenth Century/Civil War America from West Virginia University, and also holds a M.A. from WVU and a B.A. from Siena College.

VENESKY, NORA

SMALL MUSEUM ASSOCIATION

Nora Venezky holds a Master of Museum Studies from the University of Toronto and has a deep passion for small museums. She has served as Executive Director for the Spencerport Depot & Canal Museum, Greenbrier Historical Society, and Seneca Museum of Waterways and Industry. Currently, she is the Development Director at Homesteads for Hope, a Rochester, NY nonprofit supporting adults with disabilities. In addition, she serves as the President of the Small Museum Association, advocating for the needs of small museums nationwide.

WALKER, FAITH

GREAT BEND MUSEUM

Faith Walker is the outgoing Director of the Great Bend Museum in Ravenswood, WV. She holds bachelor's degrees in Anthropology and Art History from Miami University (Ohio) and is currently pursuing a master's in Museum Studies at Johns Hopkins University. This June, she will transition from museums to temporarily work with private collections and antique auctions in Ohio.

WIMER, CRYSTAL

WVAM

Crystal Wimer is a current board member and past president of the West Virginia Association of Museums. She earned her BA in history and MA in public history from West Virginia University. She currently works for the West Virginia Geological & Economic Survey in Morgantown. Previously, she held positions as the executive director of the Harrison County West Virginia Historical Society (HCWVHS) and as a Preserve WV AmeriCorps member. She has served on the Southeastern Museums Conference (SEMC) Program Committee and was named a West Virginia History Hero in 2016.

*Thank you
for attending WVAM2025!*

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