

SUMMER 2016

WEST VIRGINIA ArtWorks

SPECIAL EDITION



ArtWorks WEST VIRGINIA

Special Edition: 2016 Governor's Awards for the Arts

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PHOTOGRAPHY:

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SUMMER 2016



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Earl Ray Tomblin, Governor



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Education and the Arts
Kay H. Goodwin, Cabinet Secretary



West Virginia Division of
Culture and History
Randall Reid-Smith, Commissioner

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WEST VIRGINIA GOVERNOR'S Arts AWARDS



A Message from the Governor

West Virginia is blessed with talented artists who make our state an even more wonderful place. Our rich history has been recorded in the works created by generations of West Virginians, and today our vibrant arts community continues to connect us to our families, friends and the places we call home. From our local potters and painters, to our master craftsmen and designers, West Virginia's arts community is unique and special.

The arts support community development, as creative industries create jobs, attract investments, generate tax revenues and strengthen our local economies. The arts also help the next generation to develop creativity and critical

thinking skills and stimulate learning in other disciplines. Art transcends generational, cultural and geographical boundaries. Even before there were written languages, art was – and remains – the world's universal language.

Every other year, we honor those who go above and beyond to promote the arts in West Virginia. The Governor's Arts Awards celebrate the incredible talents of the artists and community leaders who work to ensure that the arts thrive in our communities and schools. To mark the 50th anniversary of the National Endowment of the Arts, 50 individuals and 50 organizations were recognized at the 2016 Governor's

Arts Awards ceremony for their contributions to the arts in our state.

All of our honorees have influenced the state's culture through their works or through their leadership in promoting and strengthening the arts. As you read more about this year's special honorees, I hope you are inspired by the contributions these individuals and organizations have made in our state and our communities to help ensure the arts thrive for years to come.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Earl Ray Tomblin'.

Governor Earl Ray Tomblin

A Message from the Commissioner



Remember as a child when you made your list for Santa Claus and your parents looked at the pages of crayon printing and said, "You might want to think about which of these things you want the most?" It was very hard to decide what to take off that list!

The same thing happened to us at the West Virginia Division of Culture and History earlier this year when we talked about how to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the National Endowment for the Arts. We decided to expand the biennial Governor's Arts Awards to include recognition of 50 arts organizations and 50 individuals whose contributions to the arts in West Virginia are exceptional. We thought it would be easy to pull the lists together. The more we discussed the idea, the more we found ourselves talking

about what the arts are in our state. There are visual arts, literary arts and musical arts. There are also graphic arts, media arts, culinary arts and artisan arts.

Eventually we finalized the lists. For me, this was an amazing exercise in appreciating West Virginia, her arts and her people. We didn't just put the names on the list, but talked about each one and considered the contributions that person or organization is making to the arts in the Mountain State. It was hard to make some choices, but this was a refreshing reminder that West Virginia is a state in which our heritage, our backgrounds and our natural surroundings offer unparalleled possibilities for imagination, creativity and ingenuity.

As you read this special edition

of *ArtWorks West Virginia*, you will learn more about the individuals and organizations that we selected for the biennial Governor's Arts Awards and for the NEA recognition. It is my hope that you will recognize many, be surprised by a few, and think of some that were not selected. We could not bring everyone to the stage, so as you think of others whose art makes a difference in your life, I hope you will send them a note. Let them know that they are special to you and keep the celebration of the arts alive for the whole year!

Randall Reid-Smith
Commissioner

A Message from the Director

In 1999, I was new to Charleston and working with Anne Saville to establish the Clay Place at Taylor Books, Charleston's first open clay studio. I was settling into my new life when then-director of arts for the West Virginia Division of Culture and History, Lakin Cook, contacted me. She had visited my clay studio above the Old Brick Playhouse in Elkins shortly before my move to the Capital City. Her visit left me feeling validated because someone important had taken time to visit my space and now knew something about my work. I felt supported and appreciated. Little did I know this chance meeting would turn into something larger.

Shortly after my move, Cook called to ask if I would be interested in submitting a proposal to create the first award for a new event, the West Virginia Governor's Arts Awards. I was thrilled to be considered and set to work. In the end, after all proposals were reviewed, I was the lucky person chosen to create the award.

During the inaugural West Virginia Governor's Arts Awards ceremony, I sat with then-Governor Cecil Underwood and First Lady Hovah Underwood. The yet-to-be-famous Jennifer Garner presented the awards, and I was asked to give comments on what the arts and the West Virginia Governor's Arts Awards meant to me – an honor I will never forget.

I hoped that each honoree awarded one of my lidded dwellings would appreciate not only their beauty, but what they symbolized. For me they represented safety, home, place, creativity and possibility. For each honoree, I hoped they would serve to remind them for years to come of how

important their contributions, work, ideas and creativity are to so many.

In that moment, I had no way of knowing that someday I would become the director of arts, playing a role in the ceremony, though in a different capacity. In March, I once again found myself sitting beside the governor and first lady. Together with Governor Earl Ray Tomblin and Commissioner Randall Reid-Smith, I had the pleasure of honoring many of West Virginia's talented artists.

While I did not set out with the specific goal of becoming the state director of arts, when the opportunity arrived, I found myself with the right set of skills at the right time in the right place. While presenting this year's awards I personally knew so many of the recipients and could truly take pleasure in acknowledging each person's contribution to the arts in West Virginia. I realized my years of working as a potter and collaborator with West Virginia artists had shaped the way for me to be where I am today. My participation in this year's West Virginia Governor's Arts Awards ceremony left me feeling as if the circle had been completed.

It is such a privilege to work for Cabinet Secretary Kay Goodwin, the Commissioner and the Arts Section staff in assisting communities across West Virginia in their efforts to keep the arts alive through our competitive grants and professional development opportunities for arts organizations and artists. I hope to continue efforts to promote the truly awesome range of arts in West Virginia for many years to come.



A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Renée Margocee".

Renée Margocee
Director of Arts

WEST VIRGINIA GOVERNOR'S *Arts* AWARDS

GALA RECEPTION

This group from Wheeling includes, from left, 2016 Artist of the Year Robert Villamagna, Wheeling Symphony Executive Director Bruce Wheeler, former Ohio County Schools Superintendent Dianna Vargo, Poet Laureate Marc Harshman and Oglebay Institute President Danielle McCracken.





Above: Randall Reid-Smith, commissioner of the West Virginia Division of Culture and History, welcomes guests to the 2016 Governor's Arts Awards ceremony in March.



Left: Parween Mascari, left, attorney for the West Virginia Chamber of Commerce and a trustee of the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation, shares a laugh with photographer Michelle Waters of Parkersburg.



Above: Guests gather in the Great Hall at the Culture Center before the 2016 Governor's Arts Awards ceremony.



Left: Carol Bailey, director of development for the Huntington Museum of Art, right, shares a moment with J. Deacon Stone, project director for Coalfield Development Corporation, and his wife, Jessica.

Right: The Father of West Virginia Dance, Jerry Rose, right, with his grandson, John Zickefoose.

Far right: Two legends of music in West Virginia: John Lambros, left, and Harold Hayslett, ages 97 and 98, respectively, were honored during the Governor's Award for the Arts ceremony.



Above: From left to right, Greenbrier Valley Theatre's Development Director Micah Labishak, Publicity Director Valerie Pritt and Company Manager Kim Morgan Dean gather in the Great Hall before the awards ceremony.



West Virginia Governor's Awards for the Arts Honors Nearly 100 Since 1999



Since 1999, nearly 100 talented artists, arts organizations and lawmakers across the Mountain State have been honored for their roles in fostering the state's vibrant and growing arts community.

During its inaugural year, seven honorees were recognized for outstanding contributions to West Virginia history and literature, outstanding visual artist, outstanding performing artist, outstanding cultural organization, outstanding renovation to a historic building and lifetime achievement.

The award categories have changed a bit in the past 17 years; a few new ones expanded the recognition given to artists and arts organizations. Six years ago, West Virginia Division of Culture and History Commissioner Randall Reid-Smith added legislative leadership awards to honor the many contributions lawmakers make to support the state's cultural and artistic heritage and growth. Beginning in 2006, the awards became a biennial event.

The list of winners is impressive.

It includes such amazing artists as plein-air painter Lynn Boggess of Fairmont, Marion County; West Virginia Symphony Orchestra's maestro, Grant Cooper of Charleston, Kanawha County; collage and mixed media artist Vernon Howell of Barboursville, Cabell County; 2011 *America's Got Talent* winner and crooner Landau Eugene Murphy Jr. of Logan, Logan County; and acclaimed dancer and choreographer Toneta Akers-Toler of Beckley, Raleigh County.

Honored arts organizations include the internationally recognized Augusta Heritage Center in Elkins, Randolph County; Carnegie Hall in Lewisburg, Greenbrier County; Oglebay Institute in Wheeling, Ohio County; and the Morgan Arts Council in Berkeley Springs in the Eastern Panhandle.

And that's just the beginning. West Virginia is fortunate to have many more who are equally deserving of these prestigious awards, so it will be exciting to see who's added to the list in 2018.



CELEBRATING **50** YEARS

**National
Endowment
for the Arts**

arts.gov

In Celebration of the National Endowment for the Arts' 50th Birthday

On September 29, 1965, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the National Foundation on the Arts and the Humanities Act that created the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities. Since then, the National Endowment for the Arts has helped nurture the arts across the country and made it accessible to all Americans.

Here in West Virginia, the National Endowment for the Arts provides

more than \$600,000 a year to help provide funding for the competitive grants awarded by the West Virginia Division of Culture and History and the Commission on the Arts and for the annual Poetry Out Loud program.

To honor its 50th year, the West Virginia Division of Culture and History presented etched glass medallions to 50 individuals and 50 organizations whose work in their respective fields exemplifies the importance of art in our lives.

EXCELLENCE IN SUPPORT OF THE ARTS



John Auge

From Charleston, Kanawha County, John's creative art and innovative graphic designs are the images by which small businesses, national corporations and nonprofit organizations are identified. He has designed cards for the White House and West Virginia governors, and is the pen behind the Capitol Market's iconic logos.



Judy Belcher

From Charleston, Kanawha County, Judy is an accountant by trade but an artist by design. Her polymer clay creations have been featured in national exhibits and galleries. So excited was she about the art process, she has written books and developed a DVD to teach others more about polymer clay art.



Jude Binder

From Big Bend, Calhoun County, Jude is a multi-talented artist and the creative force behind the lifelong learning center Heartwood in the Hills. She dances, paints, draws, designs costumes, makes masks and does woodcarving. She has been honored for her dedication to the arts, education and social change.



Lynn Boggess

From Fairmont, Marion County, Lynn does all of his painting out of doors to capture the energy of the rivers and forests of the Mountain State. Using trowels instead of brushes, he paints art that can be seen in galleries around the country and has won many awards.



Steve Brightwell

From Beckley, Raleigh County, Steve is a West Virginia native who is never without a camera. His versatile style can be seen in portraits, wedding, nature, events and design photos. Steve is a former photographer for Governor Cecil Underwood and the West Virginia Legislature whose works have been

published in *Blue Ridge Country*, *WV Living* and *GOLDENSEAL*.

What do the arts in West Virginia mean to me?

"Whether you are a consumer of art or a maker of art, the opportunity to express your feelings in response to something you have seen, heard or produced in some way that is meaningful to each individual is the key! The arts reflect the soul, which for most of us is always searching for answers to questions that are usually unasked, unspoken."

Betty King, vice president of education & operations, West Virginia Symphony Orchestra



Roger Bryant

From Logan, Logan County, Roger is the driving force behind the annual Labor Day Aunt Jennie Festival, which honors his grandmother, a traditional music legend. More than that, he is an exceptional musician in his own right. A guitarist and songwriter, he received the Vandalia Award in 2014.



Adam DeGraff

From Lewisburg, Greenbrier County, Adam is a musician and teacher. An accomplished classical musician, his message to the world as he performs and educates is simple: Never let a violin take away your sense of humor!



Jeff Diehl

From Meadow Bridge, Fayette County, Jeff is an award-winning potter and co-owner of Lockbridge Pottery. His work appears in collections around the world and in such prestigious places as the Smithsonian's Renwick Gallery in Washington, D.C.



Norman L. Fagan

From Putnam County, Norman is known for his sense of humor and his appreciation for all things West Virginia. He had a profound impact on the state's traditional arts and culture as the first commissioner for the West Virginia Division of Culture and History. He is credited with founding the Vandalia Gathering.



Jeff Fetty

From Spencer, Roane County, Jeff is an internationally recognized artist-blacksmith and mentor, who has created metal work for the Clinton White House, fashion designer Yves St. Laurent and the Globe Theatre in London.



Charli Fulton

From Charleston, Kanawha County, Charli’s sense of balance and thorough approach to quilting make her award-winning quilts a joy to see. A 2015 Juried Quilt Exhibition award winner, Charli learned to quilt in college and enjoys taking every stitch in her quilts by hand.



Frank George

From Walton, Roane County, Frank is a West Virginia native who is respected as a fiddler and authority on West Virginia traditional music. He learned to play fiddle and banjo on instruments his father made for him. Frank and his wife, Jane, continue to promote traditional cultures of southern Appalachia.



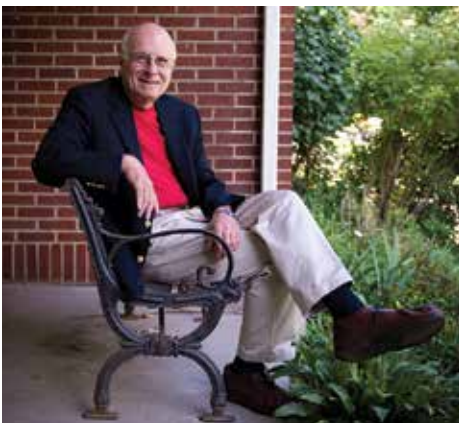
Kay Goodwin

From Charleston, Kanawha County, Kay has a lifelong love for the arts. As a teacher in Jackson County, she was an exuberant high school play director, and her students still recall the fun they had performing with her. Today, she continues to support all things art as cabinet secretary for Education and the Arts.



Buddy Griffin

From Coxs Mills, Gilmer County, Buddy comes from a musical family; he plays guitar, mandolin, fiddle and banjo. He toured the country with some of the biggest names in country and bluegrass music before returning home to establish the first college degree program for bluegrass music at Glenville State College.



Marc Harshman

From Wheeling, Ohio County, Marc is West Virginia’s Poet Laureate. He taught school at Sand Hill School, one of the last remaining three-room schoolhouses, and has written critically acclaimed children’s picture books as well as poetry. He generously supports the Poetry Out Loud program by serving as a judge each year.

What do the arts in West Virginia mean to me?

“To say the arts enrich my life would be a gross understatement. My mother was an art teacher and painter; my father, a band director and church organist. I recall listening to opera on long car rides growing up. Suffice it to say, my cultural upbringing was very different from my peers, but I am so thankful for it. It is through music that I feel most alive and most connected to God. Listening, performing, improvising—in all of these there is an endless avenue for self-expression. The arts are also essential to passing on our own cultural heritage as well as providing a gateway into other past and present cultures. As a music teacher, nothing can be more gratifying than teaching students to love something that you so deeply love.”

Mark Albright, Mountain Ridge Middle School band director



Kate Harward

From Tygart Valley, Barbour County, Kate is a potter whose successful career is based on her enthusiastic exploration of techniques. Her inspiration comes from international travel. For nearly 40 years her functional pottery has been appreciated by customers throughout the country.



Dale Hawkins

From Rock Branch, Upshur County, Dale's upbringing on his family's farm inspired his love of food and cooking. It also gave him the insight to realize that locally grown and sourced foods are the best. One of the early local foods proponents, he helped found the Cast Iron Cook-off and champions Appalachian cuisine.



Harold Hayslett

From South Charleston, Kanawha County, Harold is world-renowned for his hand-crafted violins, cellos and other instruments. While he began his handcrafted art as a hobby, today he is recognized for the exceptional tone and workmanship of his musical instruments. Hayslett instruments are cherished by collectors and musicians.



Ron Hinkle

From Buckhannon, Upshur County, Ron is a dedicated glassblower with a passion that elevates his work to art. He strives to learn new techniques and advance the industry. Ron shares his passion with visitors by opening his studio so they can watch, learn and interact with him as he handcrafts his glass creations.



Joni Hoffman

From Duck, Braxton County, Joni's exquisite handwork graces the West Virginia Sesquicentennial Quilt. Admired for her meticulous and neat quilting stitches, Joni shares her knowledge at quilt workshops. Her quilt frame is a popular stopping place at the annual West Virginia Quilt Guild conference.



Vernon Howell

From Barboursville, Cabell County, Vernon’s award-winning art has appeared in The National Gallery of American Art and the Smithsonian Museum. Working in paintings, relief wood sculptures and experimental mixed media, Vernon’s work is treasured by private collectors as well as museums and corporations.



Stan and Sue Jennings

From Grafton, Taylor County, Stan and Sue Jennings exemplify West Virginia entrepreneurship. After losing their mining jobs, they followed a lifelong dream of handcrafting products from local hardwoods. Today, Allegheny Treenware is prized by home cooks, chefs and galleries across the country.



Danny Jones

From Charleston, Kanawha County, Danny is the four-time mayor of Charleston and an advocate for arts and festivals that offer the capital city and its guests a taste of West Virginia’s eclectic cultural scene. From car shows to Friday night music performances to the annual summer FestivALL, Charleston celebrates art in many ways thanks to his support.



Michael and Carrie Kline

From Elkins, Randolph County, Michael and Carrie Kline are folklorists, historians and musicians who appreciate and document the stories of Appalachia. From North Carolina to New England, the Klins have researched and written about our culture. With their music, they entertain and tell those stories around the world.



John Lambros

From Charleston, Kanawha County, John’s most enduring legacy to the arts is the thousands of students he taught to play the violin over the past 65 years. He served as concertmaster and concertmaster emeritus for the Charleston and West Virginia symphony orchestras. He

helped organize what would become the West Virginia Youth Symphony and conducted the group for nearly three decades.

What do the arts in West Virginia mean to me?

Our state is blessed with so many talented, creative people. We are also fortunate to have top-notch performance centers that attract national talent, like the Clay Center in Charleston and the Chuck Mathena Center in Princeton. I think it’s critical for us to encourage and promote the arts as often as we can, especially throughout our state’s schools. We need to stress the importance of learning not just math and science, but the arts. The Division of Culture and History’s partnership with the Benedum Foundation to provide STEAM Power WV grants to support curriculum and programming is a tremendous way to help schools achieve that goal. I believe if we can start teaching children at a young age how to appreciate the arts, we can start building more well-rounded students, and we get those students out into the community to spread the creative spirit further. Whether it be music, painting or literature, the arts are something that all people can participate in and enjoy.

Senator William P. Cole III

WEST VIRGINIA
Governor's Arts
AWARDS



Susan Landis

From Beckley, Raleigh County, Susan is executive director of the Beckley Area Foundation and is active in philanthropic organizations as well. Her passion for the arts is evident to all who serve with her on the West Virginia Commission on the Arts, which she now chairs. She has served on the boards of the National Assembly of State Arts Association and the Mid-Atlantic Arts Foundation.



Margaret Mary Layne

From Huntington, Cabell County, Margaret Mary served as the executive director of the Huntington Museum of Art, leading the museum to unprecedented achievements. A long-time member of Arts Advocacy of West Virginia, Margaret Mary is a private consultant, who works tirelessly to keep the arts alive in the Mountain State.



Tom and Connie McColley

From Chloe, Calhoun County, Tom and Connie became internationally known basket makers after learning the art from a neighbor. One of their baskets is on exhibit at the Smithsonian Institution. For many years, people traveled from around the world to attend the McColley's Basketry School.



Gerry Milnes

From Elkins, Randolph County, Gerry spent a quarter of a century as coordinator of the Augusta Heritage Center at Davis & Elkins College. Renowned as a folklorist, documentarian and traditional musician, Gerry helped initiate the Mountain Dance Trail, has produced 16 films about West Virginia folk life and is a Vandalia Award winner.



Barbara Nissman

From Lewisburg, Greenbrier County, Barbara continues to play in the grand bravura tradition of Romantic pianism. She has performed with orchestras and given master classes around the world. She enchants her audiences with her talent and brings her students to a new understanding of music with her lectures.



Ren and Pam Parziale

From Leetown, Jefferson County, Ren and Pam are the award-winning potters of Sycamore Pottery. Known for quality workmanship and design, their wheel-thrown pots are shaped by hand and individually decorated and glazed before being fired. They have received the Distinguished Arts Award.



Nina Denton Pasinetti

From Charleston, Kanawha County, Nina Denton Pasinetti is a dancer, teacher and director whose range of talents has entertained West Virginia audiences and given confidence to performers as noteworthy as Jennifer Garner. She has led the Charleston Light Opera Guild for more than 30 years and has been recognized for her dedication to the arts.



Cat Pleska

From Scott Depot, Putnam County, Cat was born on Halloween and credits that fateful birth date with the many adventures of her life. A freelance writer and editor, Cat teaches literature and writing at Marshall University Graduate School and Arizona State University. She is a published author.



Susan Poffenbarger

From Charleston, Kanawha County, Susan is the first woman in West Virginia to receive a federal commission for art. She led the way for many female artists in our state and is a dedicated advocate for the arts through her volunteer work in local schools and community service organizations. Her award-winning art has been featured in many exhibits, and she is a four-time winner of the West Virginia Juried Exhibition.



Randall Reid-Smith

From Barboursville, Cabell County, Randall has been commissioner of the West Virginia Division of Culture and History for 10 years. An internationally recognized opera singer, he came home to West Virginia and was instrumental in the opening of the recently renovated West Virginia State Museum. An advocate for the arts and arts in education, he has introduced several youth-oriented arts programs at the division.

What do the arts in West Virginia mean to me?

“Due to our proximity to Washington, D.C., the Old Opera House had the unique opportunity over the last few years to host two groups of artists sponsored by the U.S. State Department, one from Russia and one from Iraq. What we learned from both of these groups was not only to be thankful for the freedoms we have to express ourselves through the arts, but how special the arts are in West Virginia. You do not need to be in New York, Washington or another metropolitan area to be touched by the magic of the arts; West Virginians keep the arts alive, vibrant and accessible. The arts touch at the basic fabric of our being, providing a vehicle to express our individuality and share with others what makes us who we are. The variety and quality of the visual and performing arts prevalent in West Virginia make this an exciting place to be an artist.”

Steven Brewer, managing/artistic director for the Old Opera House



Jerry Rose

From Beckley, Raleigh County, Jerry is known as the Father of West Virginia Dance. He danced with Patrick Swayze in "Dirty Dancing" and was invited to bring his Beckley Dance Theatre to Russia for performances and lectures. He served on the West Virginia Arts and Humanities Council and continues to teach young students the fine art of dance.



Norm Sartorius

From Parkersburg, Wood County, Norm is a woodworker who carves fine art spoons, preferring to work with dense hardwoods that provide creative character to his work. His work is featured in gallery collections of the Smithsonian American Art Museum, Yale University and the Philadelphia Museum of Art.



Dr. Bernie Schultz

From Morgantown, Monongalia County, Bernie teaches art, art theory and survey of art classes at West Virginia University, where he has served as Chair of the Division of Art and Dean of the College of Creative Arts. He offered strong leadership in the opening of the university's new museum and serves on the West Virginia Commission on the Arts.



Steve Shaluta

From Charleston, Kanawha County, Steve is best known for the photography that promoted West Virginia travel and tourism for the West Virginia Division of Tourism. His award winning work captures the beauty and recreational fun of West Virginia.



Stephen Skinner

From Charles Town, Jefferson County, Stephen is a tireless advocate for the arts and is serving his second term in the House of Delegates. He was president of the Board of Trustees of the Contemporary American Theater Festival at Shepherd University and served on the West Virginia Commission on the Arts.



Sarah Sullivan

From Williamsburg, Virginia, Sarah is an author of children’s books, which she began writing as a hobby when she was a lawyer. Originally from West Virginia, she has written four books and a novel. Today she continues to encourage the literary arts with workshops and programs in schools.



Carter Taylor Seaton

From Huntington, Cabell County, Carter Taylor Seaton exemplifies the spirit of the West Virginia artist. As an award-winning author and figurative sculptor, she has the talent and creativity to find success in both media. She is inspired to express emotion in her pottery and sculptures, and creates works that she calls “narrative sculpture.” Her first novel, *Father’s Troubles*, was named a finalist for the prestigious ForeWord Magazine 2003 Book of the Year. Her latest book, *Hippie Homesteaders*, is a nonfiction look at the 1960s back-to-the-land movement in West Virginia.



Matt Thomas

From Shock, Gilmer County, Matt blends the timeless grains of wood with the permanence of hand-forged steel in his custom-designed furniture and retail pieces. Matt apprenticed with world renowned artist blacksmith Jeff Fetty and, at 16, became one of the youngest craftsmen to be juried into Tamarack.



Bob Thompson

From Charleston, Kanawha County, Bob is an acclaimed jazz pianist, composer, arranger and educator who is a regular featured artist on *Mountain Stage* and the host of the annual *Joy To The World* program. He was elected into the West Virginia Music Hall of Fame in 2015.



Jack Thompson

From Morgantown, Monongalia County, Jack is a strong advocate for and supporter of the arts in West Virginia. He served as executive director of Arts Monongalia and in his corporate and government positions has continued to support and highlight the fine arts and arts activities in the Mountain State.

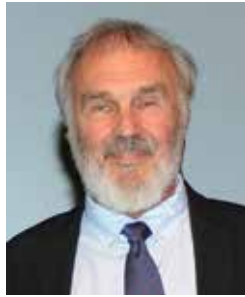
What do the arts in West Virginia mean to me?

“How can we live without art? It enhances our world, makes our children brighter, trumpets the accomplishments of our state’s citizens. I’ve never been more proud of our state than at the recent Governor’s Awards for the Arts. While 100 people and organizations were recognized for their contributions, I couldn’t help think of all those who could also have been part of the evening, recognized for their own talents and contributions. West Virginia is richer for the arts.”

Carter Taylor Seaton



Doctors Joseph and Omayma Touma
From Huntington, Cabell County, the Toumas helped design the permanent Near East Collection Gallery in the Huntington Museum of Art with the goal of encouraging people to appreciate the histories, cultures and traditions of their homeland of Syria. The Toumas donated a collection of Pilgrim cameo glass to the West Virginia State Museum.



Brian Van Nostrand
From Hacker Valley, Webster County, Brian is a self-taught potter and philosopher who trusts his intuition in his work and learns from each error he makes. He began his career making kitchenware and continues making coffee mugs. His work has been featured in galleries throughout the United States.



Dianna Vargo
From Wheeling, Ohio County, Dianna is a teacher and school administrator whose career has been to serve the students of Ohio County. While deputy superintendent of the Ohio County School system, Dianna was instrumental in the completion of the J. B. Chambers Performing Arts Center at Wheeling Park High School.



Billy Edd Wheeler
From Swannahoa, North Carolina, Billy Edd is a Mountaineer whose career includes songwriting, performing, writing and visual art. He is the author-composer of eight plays and musicals, a folk opera, three outdoor dramas, six humor books, two novels and a book of poetry.



Steve Williams
From Huntington, Cabell County, Steve is the mayor of Huntington and has been instrumental in the city's renaissance. Under his leadership, Huntington has received national recognition for its public arts initiatives as well as economic development and recreational growth.

WEST VIRGINIA GOVERNOR'S Arts AWARDS

Mark Albright
Martinsburg, Berkeley County
Arts in Education



Mark Albright, band director at Mountain Ridge Middle School in Gerrardstown, was honored with an Arts in Education award. Photo courtesy of Mark Albright.

Six years ago, Mark Albright stood on the stage at what he thought was a routine middle school band concert. Much to his surprise, he was about to learn that he had been selected the West Virginia Bandmaster of the Year. In the company of his family, friends and students, he was honored for building a strong music program at the Eastern Panhandle's Hedgesville

Middle School.

Today, he is still making a mark on middle school music programs. As the band director at Mountain Ridge Middle School, Berkeley County, this nationally certified music instructor is showing the school community just what new instruments can mean to a band program.

In just two years, the former

assistant band director at Charles Town Middle School has directed young musicians at Mountain Ridge to success. He has been supported in that endeavor by VH1 Save The Music Foundation and the West Virginia Division of Culture and History. With \$37,500 worth of new musical instruments, the band is playing like it is ready for the big time.

**Claude Worthington Benedum
Foundation
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
Arts Patron**

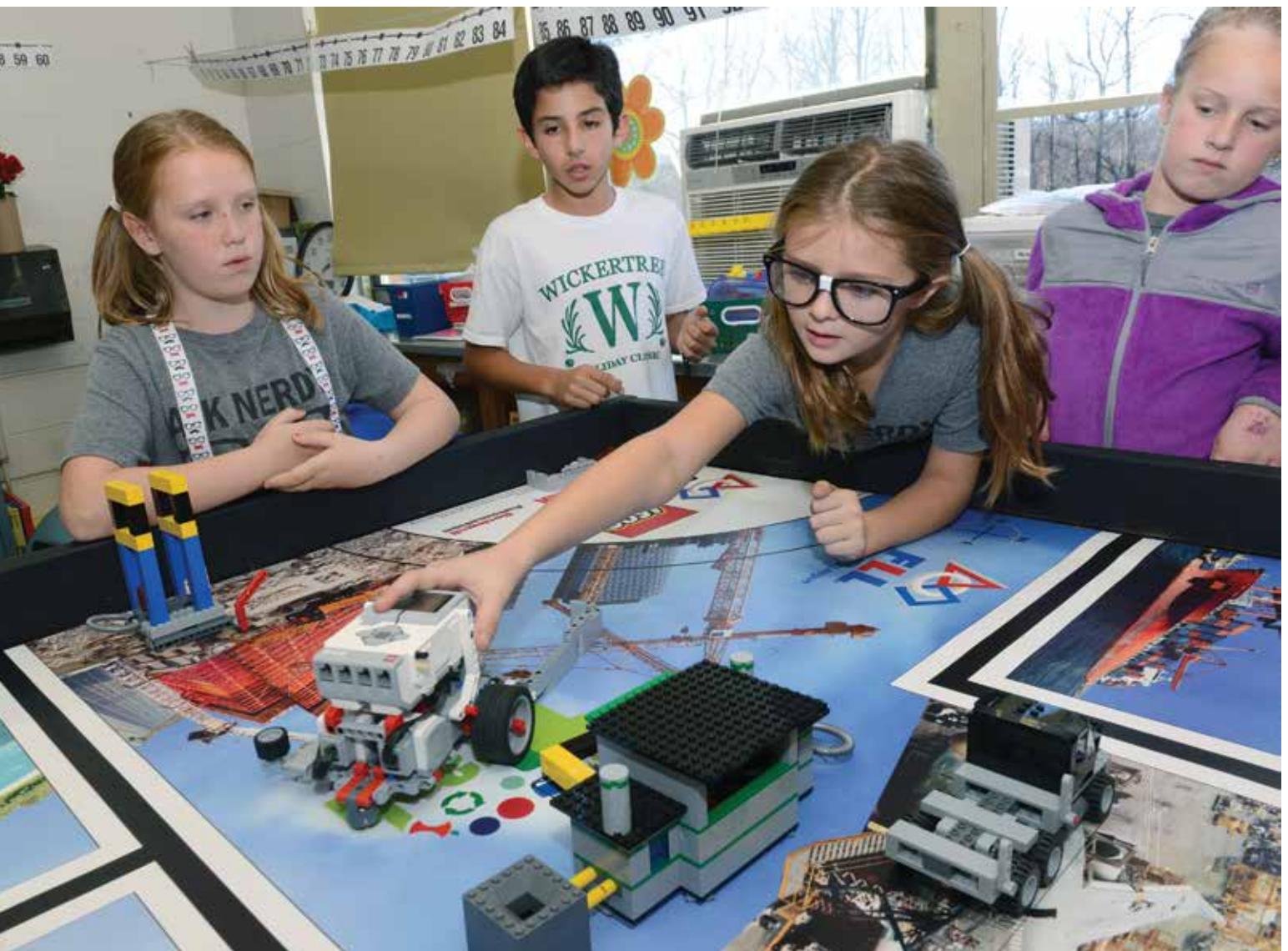
The Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation helps to improve the quality of life in West Virginia and southwestern Pennsylvania with grants that support specific initiatives in education, economic development, health and human services and community development.

Throughout its history, the Benedum Foundation encouraged arts and cultural programmers and organizations to look to the future, consider the possibilities and realize that nothing happens within a vacuum. The foundation presented

grants to many West Virginia organizations to help educators, artists and arts organizations grow their programs and encourage arts activities.

In its educational programs, the foundation emphasizes teacher quality and advanced instructional tools. When it comes to arts education, the foundation looks for programs that integrate the arts into other disciplines and encourage the partnership of community arts groups and higher education with pre-K to 12th-grade education systems. The Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation appreciates the importance of arts in education, for communities and as an economic driver.

The Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation, which provides funding to support STEAM projects like this one at Holz Elementary School in Charleston, received the Arts Patron award. Photo by Steve Brightwell.





Governor Earl Ray Tomblin of Logan, who supports the arts in numerous ways, received a Leadership in the Arts award. Photo by Steve Brightwell.

Governor Earl Ray Tomblin Logan, Logan County Leadership in the Arts

Throughout his career in the West Virginia Legislature and as Governor of West Virginia, Earl Ray Tomblin has been an advocate for the state's vibrant arts communities and cultural heritage. He understands and appreciates the value of preserving, protecting and promoting the traditional arts that tell West Virginia's

story and encouraging contemporary arts that open the door for new ideas and a strong future.

Governor Tomblin supports legislative funding that provides opportunities for the West Virginia Division of Culture and History to award grants for arts in education, cultural facilities, artists' development and community arts programs that help communities all across the state grow.

His personal interest in the arts is diverse. He appreciates the creative folk art and craftsmanship of West

Virginia's arts entrepreneurs as much as he does fine art exhibits and concerts. He enjoys the diversity of the annual Artistree, recognizing the talent in the creative paper ornaments made by a child as much as the intricate wood-carved ornaments of a master woodworker. In his travels and as he welcomes guests to the state, he has showcased the talent of our state's artists with events and presentations that encourage others to realize the arts are the heart of West Virginia.



**Senator William P. Cole III
Princeton, Mercer County
Leadership in the Arts**

Senator William P. Cole III is a fifth generation businessman who understands the important role the arts play in West Virginia's success and future. A strong supporter of the

arts in his district, Cole recognizes that creative thinking and innovative processes that move our state forward are skills that are intrinsic to the arts. He also is keenly aware of the importance of arts education in ensuring that future generations have those skills and that arts instruction instills the discipline, leadership and team skills that our leaders need. He knows the arts are a vital component of our economy's growth as new, existing and expanding businesses demand creative and vibrant communities and workforces.

As an active community leader, Senator Cole has been an advocate for and supporter of the Chuck Mathena Center in Princeton, which provides fine arts programming and educational classes for youth and adults. He supports the Marshall University Artist Series, which is now celebrating 75 years of bringing theater and musical performances and speakers to Huntington. He appreciates the West Virginia Symphony Orchestra with its diverse programming and strong community outreach and education activities.

Arts supporter and advocate, Senator William P. Cole III of Princeton, was honored with a Leadership in the Arts award. Photo courtesy of the West Virginia Office of Reference & Information.





Cabell Midland High School Band Director Timothy R. James was honored with an Arts in Education award. Photo by Stephen Brightwell.

Timothy R. James
Barboursville, Cabell County
Arts in Education

Even before he became the Cabell Midland High School Marching Knights band director in 2011, Tim was encouraging students to perform in the band. He has been teaching in West Virginia high schools and middle schools for more than 30 years and directed bands at Huntington High School, Guyan Valley High School, Monroe High School and Enslow Middle School. He was the assistant director at Cabell Midland before accepting the director position.

The hallmarks of his programs are musical excellence and teamwork. He has said that it is his privilege to work with young adults and see them work together toward excellence on the field and on the stage. Since becoming director, he has led the Marching Knights to championships at the Marshall University Tri-State Band Competition and the West Virginia State Marching Band Invitational, among others. Students from the bands have been selected for the West Virginia All State Band, Cabell County All County Band, Morehead State University and Marshall University honor bands and Marshall University's MU Jazz All Stars.



Susan Landis, chair of the West Virginia Commission on the Arts and executive director of the Beckley Area Foundation, received the Distinguished Service in the Arts award. Photo by Stephen Brightwell.

**Susan Landis
Beckley, Raleigh County
Distinguished Service in the Arts**

Whether she's preparing for grant reviews for the Beckley Area Foundation in Beckley, chairing a West Virginia Commission on the Arts grant panel at the Culture Center in Charleston or at a national arts organization meeting in Washington, D.C., Susan Landis dedicates herself to the arts. And she still has time to attend local theater, visit an art gallery and bake a cake.

Susan's service to the arts community of West Virginia is enthusiastic and generous. She has served as the chair of the West Virginia Commission on the Arts since 1998 in addition to her full-time role as executive director of the Beckley Area Foundation in southern West Virginia. She served on the Board of Directors of the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies. Her understanding of finance, budgeting and strategic planning makes her recommendations for grants, programs and communications valuable to the organizations with which she works.

Old Opera House Charles Town, Berkeley County Leadership in the Arts

There is something to be said for the Old Opera House in Charles Town, Jefferson County. After successfully restoring and reopening the historic opera house in the 1970s, the cultural arts center offers six main stage productions, one summer children's show, a theater camp, classes in acting, dance and voice and an art gallery featuring some of the area's talented artists. It also hosts a one-act playwriting competition that attracts new playwrights from across the country.

If that is not enough, the Old Opera House has so engaged the community that it has three active volunteer groups. The Theatre Guild holds fundraising activities and contributes to beautification projects for the theater. Another group of volunteers operate The Op Shop, a secondhand clothing store that is a source for costumes and revenue for the theater. Its

newest group, the OOHLaLas, assist with production, studio events and fundraising. The Old Opera House is a work in progress, changing to address the needs of the community, encouraging active participation in its programs and activities while engaging all ages in the arts in Charles Town.

The Old Opera House, which has become a beacon for the arts, arts supporters and arts patrons in Charles Town, earned a Leadership in the Arts award. Photos courtesy of the Old Opera House.





Carter Taylor Seaton, an award-winning author and figurative sculptor from Huntington, received the 2016 Lifetime Achievement award. Photo by Lori Wolfe of *The Herald-Dispatch*.

Carter Taylor Seaton Huntington, Cabell County Lifetime Achievement

Born in West Virginia and raised in Huntington, Cabell County, Carter Taylor Seaton exemplifies the spirit of the West Virginia artist. As an award-winning author and figurative sculptor, she has the talent and creativity to find success in both media. Her first novel, *Father's Troubles*, was named a finalist for the prestigious ForeWord Magazine 2003 Book of the Year. Her latest book, *Hippie Homesteaders*, is a nonfiction look at the 1960s back-to-the-land movement in West Virginia.

Inspired to express emotion in

her pottery and sculptures, Carter creates works that she calls "narrative sculpture." She makes Toby mugs, individualized mugs featuring faces. Her commissioned sculpture of Marshall University football player Nate Ruffin, the only surviving member after the school's football team's plane crash in 1970, is on display at Marshall's Erickson Alumni Center.

Carter's parents were painters, and she grew up surrounded by art. Beyond her own work, she supports the arts throughout the state. She has been an exhibitor at the Mountain State Art & Craft Fair in Ripley as well as serving on its board, working with exhibitors and the apprentice program.

Robert Villamagna
Wheeling, Ohio County
Artist of the Year

Robert Villamagna is an artist for whom the adage “one man’s trash is another man’s treasure” was surely written. The acclaimed Wheeling artist is inspired by the often bypassed junk that others overlook at flea markets. Inspired by a find, Villamagna will use it in one of his artistically composed assemblages.

Growing up, Robert loved to draw and even worked as an illustrator in the military. He continued to harbor dreams of being an artist while he worked in Weirton’s steel mills. Returning to college to get a degree, he eventually found his medium in assemblage, collage and other mixed

media. His work has been exhibited at galleries across the United States, including the Carnegie Museum of Art, Andy Warhol Museum, and the Butler Institute of American Art. Three of his pieces are in the West Virginia State Museum’s permanent collection.

Robert’s art may be whimsical and light-hearted or serious and thought provoking. Each piece is always imaginative, giving the found objects in his colorful studio life that other flea market-shoppers could not even have imagined.

He shares his love of art with students at West Liberty State College, where he has been a full-time teacher for more than 15 years and at art workshops in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.



Robert Villamagna, an assemblage, collage and mixed media artist from Wheeling, was named the 2016 Artist of the Year. Photo courtesy of Robert Villamagna.



West Virginia Symphony Orchestra/SCALE program Charleston, Kanawha County Arts in Education

Using the West Virginia Symphony Orchestra's "Song of the Wolf" concert theme, one classroom adopted a wolf through the World Wildlife Federation; another group created its own newspapers complete with staged photographs; younger students explored the alphabet using vocabulary words about the story. To culminate the classroom lessons, the entire school attended a symphony concert at the Creative Arts Center at West Virginia University in Morgantown.

It was all part of the orchestra's innovative program, SCALE (Student Centered Arts Learning Environments), which provides opportunities for elementary and middle school teachers to build or establish Professional Learning Communities using a common theme and a multi-disciplinary approach to teaching in all core education areas and grade levels.

Typically, every classroom throughout a school teaches every subject using a common theme. The goal is to create a seamless and meaningful integration of the arts so that this pilot project becomes a springboard for future arts-integration programs. These classroom lessons culminate in attendance of a specifically themed Young People's Concert conceived and composed by former Maestro Grant Cooper and performed in the fall in Charleston and Morgantown.

The West Virginia Symphony Orchestra's SCALE program, which encourages students like these at Doddridge County Elementary School to integrate the arts into learning, received the Arts in Education award. Photo courtesy of the West Virginia Symphony Orchestra.

EXCELLENCE IN SUPPORT OF THE ARTS



Allied Artists of West Virginia

Headquartered in Charleston, Kanawha County, for more than 85 years, Allied Artists of West Virginia has supported the exhibition of the work of West Virginia painters,

sculptors, printmakers and other creative people to foster interest and support for the arts. Allied has more than 200 members and holds juried exhibits in even-numbered years.



Apollo Civic Theatre, Martinsburg

For more than 100 years, the historic Apollo Theatre in Martinsburg, Berkeley County, has hosted diverse programming and entertainment. Today, the community theater group organization that owns and operates the theater produces live performances, and hosts a children's theater and summer workshops.



Appalachian Children's Chorus

Based in Charleston, Kanawha County, the Appalachian Children's Chorus has provided musical opportunities for children since 1990. Its founding director, Selina Midkiff, started a tradition that has merited numerous awards and performances around the world.



Appalachian South Folklife Center

For 50 years, the Appalachian South Folklife Center in Pipestem, Summers County, has celebrated creativity through music festivals and community service. Started by poet and political activist Donald L. West, its music festivals feature traditional, blues, jazz, rock and world music.



Appalachian String Band Music Festival

For 27 years some of the world's best old-time musicians and dancers have gathered in August at historic Camp Washington Carver at Clifftop, Fayette County, for five days of contests, concerts, workshops, square dances, camping and singing.

What do the arts in West Virginia mean to me?

"The arts are important to West Virginia's rich history – one that has been recorded in the works created by generations of mountaineers. When we appreciate art, we are able to learn more about who we are and connect with our families, friends and the places we call home. These works create the foundation of traditions and stories we will someday share and pass down to our children and our grandchildren."

Governor Earl Ray Tomblin



Art Museum of WVU

The Art Museum of West Virginia University in Morgantown, Monongalia County, opened in August 2015 and provides a stimulating educational and artistic environment for people to experience the transformative power of visual art.



Augusta Heritage Center

Located in Elkins, Randolph County, the Augusta Heritage Center of Davis & Elkins emphasizes traditional performance arts and folklore in intensive summer programs that are attended by thousands. The center also sponsors statewide research and documentation projects.



Blenko Glass

William John Blenko built his first factory in Milton, Cabell County, in 1921. Since then, Blenko Glass has been featured in national magazines, and its stained glass is in the National Cathedral in Washington and the Cathedral of Rheims in France. The iconic Blenko water pitcher is a favorite of collectors around the world.



Carnegie Hall

Music has been heard through Carnegie Hall's stately Georgian Revival structure in Lewisburg, Greenbrier County for nearly a century. Carnegie Hall, Inc., which operates the regional center for the visual and performing arts, has been instrumental in cultivating an appreciation for creativity and excellence in the arts.



Charleston Ballet

Formed in 1956 by Andre Van Damme, the Charleston Ballet, Kanawha County, has been a pioneer among regional ballet companies in the United States, offering a professional atmosphere for West Virginia dancers while creating a greater appreciation for the art of ballet.



Charleston Light Opera Guild

The Charleston Light Opera Guild was founded in 1949 by a group of vocal teachers and talented amateur performers in the Kanawha Valley. The guild has produced more than 200 shows at the Civic Center Little Theatre, Culture Center State Theater, Clay Center Maier Performance Hall and Charleston Light Opera Guild Theatre.



Chuck Mathena Center

Located in Princeton, Mercer County, the Chuck Mathena Center plays host to year-long national touring productions, including off-Broadway theater and musicals, concerts, comedy, dance and more. The center

hosts more than 25,000 visitors each year.



Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Established in 1944 by Michael and Sarah Benedum, the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation has awarded more than \$365 million to support arts programming in West Virginia. The foundation is

the largest philanthropic foundation contributing primarily to West Virginia organizations.



Clay Center for the Arts & Sciences of West Virginia

The Clay Center for the Arts & Sciences of West Virginia in Charleston, Kanawha County, houses performing arts, visual arts and sciences under one roof and is the performance home to the West Virginia Symphony Orchestra.



Contemporary American Theater Festival

Located in Shepherdstown, Jefferson County, the Contemporary American Theater Festival has produced 105 new plays, including 40 world premieres by 77 American playwrights, and commissioned 10 new American plays since being founded almost 25 years ago.

What do the arts in West Virginia mean to me?

“The Benedum Foundation has set a high priority on arts in education. We have always believed that the arts are essential to a comprehensive educational system, but more important than ever, the arts are gaining prominence in the educational landscape as project-based learning is replacing lecturing and memorizing. Learning is accelerated when children are inspired; when they can act on their creative instincts; and when they can make, test and remake their own creations. This is the essence of arts education in its own right, but project-based learning has led to greater integration of the arts into other disciplines. STEM has given way to STEAM (STEM+Art), creating new roles for teaching artists in the classroom. We are seeing sculptors, actors, painters and musicians working side by side with math, English and science teachers. We believe this kind of team teaching is the future of classroom instruction, and the arts are increasingly defining innovation in education.”

Jim Denova, vice president of the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation



Fenton Art Glass Company

Located in Williamstown, Wood County, the Fenton Art Glass Company is the largest manufacturer of handmade colored glass in the United States and is renowned for innovative glass colors as well as hand-painted designs on pressed and blown glassware. The company will celebrate its 111th anniversary this year.



FestivALL

Beginning in 2005, FestivALL has grown from a three-day event to a 10-day comprehensive arts and entertainment festival in Charleston, Kanawha County. Street fairs, interactive art activities, theater and music can be found throughout the city, indoors and out.



Frank and Jane Gabor West Virginia Folk Life Center

Located at Fairmont State University, Marion County, the Frank and Jane Gabor West Virginia Folklife Center is dedicated to the identification, preservation and perpetuation of our region's rich cultural heritage through academic studies, educational programs, festivals, performances and publications.



Greenbrier Valley Theatre

Located in Lewisburg, Greenbrier County, in a state-of-the-art facility, the Greenbrier Valley Theatre produces live theater centered on a core of professional actors and directors with opportunities for members of the community to learn stagecraft. For 50 years the theater has enlightened, enriched and enlivened life in southern West Virginia.



Heritage Craft Center of the Eastern Panhandle

Founded in 1997, in Martinsburg, Berkeley County, the Heritage Craft Center has been providing the Eastern Panhandle with the best in stained glass pottery, woodcarving, rug hooking, weaving and other fine crafts for nearly 20 years.



Heritage Farm Museum & Village

Located in Huntington, Cabell County, the Heritage Farm Museum & Village takes a step back in time to recreate and preserve Appalachian heritage. More than 6,000 students across West Virginia tour the facility each year.



Holl's Chocolate

Founded in 1986, in Vienna, Wood County, Holl's Chocolates was built by three generations of Swiss-trained chocolatiers and still creates the finest quality traditional,

authentic, Swiss chocolates right here in West Virginia.



Homer Laughlin China Company

Located in Newell, Hancock County, the Homer Laughlin China Company has manufactured Fiesta Dinnerware since 1936 and still uses manufacturing and hand-crafted processes established from its introduction. Slight variations combined with clean lines have helped to

preserve Fiesta as the most generationally passed down, collected, and bridal-registered patterns today.



Huntington Museum of Art

For more than 60 years, the Huntington Museum of Art in Cabell County has been bringing the world of art to the people of West Virginia. Its fine art museum boasts an exceptional collection, innovative exhibitions and quality educational programs.



Huntington Symphony Orchestra

Headquartered in Cabell County, the Huntington Symphony Orchestra reaches thousands of people each year with its performances. It offers an average of six classical and three pops performances each season and is committed to

fostering an appreciation for the arts in each generation.

What do the arts in West Virginia mean to me?

“Art is part of my everyday life. I am honored to serve as the chair of the West Virginia Commission on the Arts, a position which affords me ample opportunity to observe the breadth and depth of the influence of the arts in our Mountain State. We are blessed to live in a place with abundant natural beauty, and likewise we benefit from a rich cultural heritage. As an arts patron, an audience member, an advocate, an educator and a proponent of economic development, I celebrate West Virginia art – past, present and future.”

Susan Landis, chair of the West Virginia Commission on the Arts



Marble King

Located in Paden City, Tyler and Wetzel counties, Marble King continues to produce one million marbles a day, 365 days a year. Its marbles are sold worldwide and are used in games, decorative vases and spray paint cans.



Marshall University School of Art and Design

Marshall University's new Visual Arts Center in downtown Huntington, Cabell County, injects vibrant young artists and creative energy into the city's downtown renaissance. This facility houses eight programs from the School of Art & Design.



McArts Fine Arts Organization

Located in Kimball, McDowell County, the McArts Fine Arts Organization was founded in 1979 to promote regional art and history by providing quality performances, outlets and activities in McDowell County.



Morgan Arts Council

For nearly 40 years the Morgan Arts Council, Berkeley Springs, Morgan County, has involved nearly 2,500 artists and produced more than 1,000 programs, including concerts, arts workshops, pageants, craft studio tours, professional art shows, storytelling, theater and video festivals.



Mountain Stage

Headquartered in Charleston, Kanawha County, and now in its 31st season, Mountain Stage with Larry Groce, which is distributed by NPR Music and the Voice of America, is the longest running two-hour live-performance radio show of its kind.



Mountain State Art and Craft Fair

Since 1963, the Mountain State Art and Craft Fair in Ripley, Jackson County, has showcased some of the best entertainment and artisans the region has to offer. During this three-day event, visitors shop and learn about products that are as authentic as the people who make them.



Museum of American Glass in West Virginia

Established in 1994 in Weston, Lewis County, the Museum of American Glass in West Virginia houses thousands of glass pieces, including pressed and blown tableware, bottles, lightening rod balls, telegraph insulators and glass used in automobiles. The museum is dedicated to the region's and nation's glass heritage.



New South Media

Headquartered in Morgantown, Monongalia County, New South Media Inc. spreads the good word about our state's rich cultural heritage through magazines that reach national audiences. Its founder, West Virginia native Nikki Bowman, believes that West Virginians should be invested in their communities and take pride in their heritage.



Old Brick Playhouse

Since 1991, the Old Brick Playhouse in Elkins, Randolph County, has offered award-winning, nationally recognized arts programs. The touring company annually creates an original play focusing on social and cultural issues to present to elementary students across the state.



Old Opera House

The Old Opera House in Charles Town, Jefferson County, has been a cultural arts center for more than a century. This live theater house presents stage productions, summer youth productions, a one-act play festival and ballets in a theater that is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

What do the arts in West Virginia mean to me?

“Marching and concert bands are vital components of any student’s education in West Virginia. Our West Virginia bands provide all participating students the skills necessary to succeed in life, such as discipline, communication, problem-solving, accountability and an outlet to express themselves musically in front of an appreciative audience. The beauty of playing an instrument or dancing with a flag in front of thousands of people gives every band student an accomplishment of success like no other. I am privileged to be a small part of this beautiful educational process.”

Timothy R. James, Cabell Midland High School Marching Knights band director



Parkersburg Art Center

Founded in 1938, the Parkersburg Art Center in Wood County is the state's oldest continually operating arts organization. The center inspires and nurtures artistic expression through exhibits, classes, camps and workshops.



Pocahontas County Opera House

Offering more than a dozen performances a year, the Pocahontas County Opera House in Marlinton, Pocahontas County, is the cultural heart of its community. The local Historic Landmarks Commission and the community transformed the century-old opera house into a beautiful performance space and center for community activities.



Randolph Community Arts Center

The Randolph County Community Arts Center in Elkins, Randolph County, provides arts education, high quality art exhibits, musical performances and community events in the former Saint Brendan's Catholic Church. The building, designed by architect Walter F. Martens and built in 1928, features locally quarried sandstone blocks and retains its original character.



Stifel Fine Arts Center at Oglebay Institute

Housed in the historic Edemar Mansion, the Stifel Fine Arts Center in Wheeling, Ohio County, features galleries, classrooms and performance space. It is a treasure trove for artistic expression and personal fulfillment, and offers classes, workshops and summer camps to people of all ages and abilities.



Tamarack Artisan Foundation

Headquartered in Charleston, Kanawha County, the Tamarack Foundation for the Arts helps West Virginia artists on the path to successful entrepreneurship. The foundation provides education, marketing programming, professional development grants, fellowships and awards, and oversees the Tamarack Artisan Relief Program.



TAMARACK: The Best of West Virginia

Located in Beckley, Raleigh County, TAMARACK: The Best of West Virginia draws half a million visitors annually with its uniquely West Virginian artisan products, Appalachian sounds and distinctive aromas. It features demonstration studios and offers free live performances throughout the year.



Theatre West Virginia

Since 1955, Theatre West Virginia in Beaver, Raleigh County, has presented performing arts programs for residents in and visitors to southern West Virginia. Known best for "Honey in the Rock" to "Hatfields & McCoys," the theater has been on the cutting edge of artistic excellence.



Vandalia Gathering, Charleston, Kanawha County

The Vandalia Gathering in Charleston, Kanawha County, is one of West Virginia's well-known heritage festivals. Begun in 1977, the festival preserves traditional forms of music, dance and folk art and shares the traditions with younger generations.



West Virginia Division of Culture and History

This statewide agency serves residents of the state by identifying, preserving, protecting, promoting and presenting the ideas, arts and artifacts of West Virginia's heritage, building pride in our past accomplishments and confidence in our future.



West Virginia Quilt Guild

Serving the entire state, the West Virginia Quilt Guild preserves and promotes quilting with retreats, exhibits, festivals, classes, lectures and more about West Virginia's rich quilting history.

What do the arts in West Virginia mean to me?

"I grew up in the rustbelt, and the rustbelt, in general, is not supportive to one who wishes to make a career in the arts. From the time I was a preschooler I have had a mark-making tool in my hands. I would spend hours on the living room floor drawing on flattened grocery sacks or the graph paper my grandpap brought me home from the power plant where he worked. Even at that early stage in my life I was telling people I was going to be an artist when I grew up. However, my idea of what an artist was came from Saturday Evening Post covers, Walt Disney, and a Saturday morning TV show called Learn to Draw with Jon Gnagy.

There have been lots of twists and turns in my life since then. However, I have always kept art in my life. When my mom turned eighty I asked her, 'Mom, what did you think was ever going to become of me?' 'Well,' she said, 'I just figured you're were going to become an artist.'"

Robert Villamagna



West Virginia State Folk Festival

Since 1950, the West Virginia State Folk Festival in Glenville, Gilmer County, has focused on old-time music, traditional square dancing and Appalachian arts and crafts. Each year in June, the city of Glenville takes on a marvelous

change reminiscent of the old days when the festival comes to town.



West Virginia Symphony Orchestra

The West Virginia Symphony Orchestra in Charleston, Kanawha County, is one of West Virginia's premier performing arts organizations. Now in its

76th season, the orchestra enriches the region with affordable, high-quality concerts, collaborations with West Virginia arts organizations and a nationally award-winning education program.



West Virginia Youth Symphony

Since 1949, the West Virginia Youth Symphony in Charleston, Kanawha County, has provided opportunities for young West Virginians to perform both here and abroad. The symphony is the largest and oldest youth orchestra in the state and

represents the best and brightest musical talent West Virginia offers.



Wheeling Symphony Orchestra

Now in its 86th season, the Wheeling Symphony Orchestra in Ohio County offers comprehensive programs to entertain and has gained national prominence. It performs at the historic Capitol Theatre and brings classical music to life for elementary

students with innovative and engaging programming.



Youth Museum of Southern West Virginia

The Youth Museum of Southern West Virginia in Beckley, Raleigh County, enables children to learn about such diverse subjects as history, science, the arts and their community through exhibits and programs interwoven in purpose

and philosophy. During its 39-year history, the museum has hosted more than 108 exhibits.

LEGISLATIVE LEADERS



ARTS IN EDUCATION

Honoring dedication to enriching the lives of West Virginia children and ensuring our economic prosperity by promoting arts education that helps build audiences and supports artists of tomorrow.



Delegate Kelli Sobonya
Barboursville, Cabell County

Delegate Kelli Sobonya has a strong commitment to the inclusion of arts in education. She supports the Cabell Midland Fine Arts Academy, with its diverse selection of programming designed to prepare students for postsecondary studies in the arts. She also supports Marshall University's arts programs and was a proponent for the development of the university's new downtown Fine Arts Center. She encourages educational programs and community activities that showcase students in the performing arts, strengthening the appreciation for arts in education and helping to develop future generations of artists and arts patrons.



Senator Craig P. Blair
Martinsburg, Berkeley County

Senator Craig P. Blair is an avid supporter of Berkeley County's arts community, including the Apollo Civic Theatre. He is proud of the efforts Berkeley Springs makes to ensure that the arts have a prominent place in this town, which *USA Today* named one of the 10 best small southern towns in 2015. He supports the lifelong learning programs and the educational activities that provide youth with opportunities to showcase their art. He is an enthusiastic advocate for the VH1 Save The Music Foundation program, which places free musical instruments in qualified middle schools throughout the state. Within his district, students attending Mountain Ridge, Capon Bridge and Warm Springs middle schools have benefitted from this program.

COMMUNITY ARTS

Honoring significant contributions that enrich the West Virginia communities you serve with arts and cultural experiences and for outstanding achievement, leadership and commitment to promote the future of the arts in West Virginia.



Delegate Eric Nelson
Charleston, Kanawha County

Delegate Eric Nelson understands the value of having active arts programming in a community. In his district, he is a member of the board of directors for the Clay Center for the Performing Arts and Sciences and is a strong supporter of the West Virginia Symphony Orchestra. The Clay Center's multi-million dollar renovation will soon provide more interactive programming for students and families who visit the downtown Charleston site. He appreciates the opportunities to showcase the diversity of his district's art community during the annual FestivALL in June and to celebrate our state's traditional arts at the annual Vandalia Gathering during Memorial Day weekend.



Senator Art Kirkendoll
Chapmanville, Logan County

Senator Art Kirkendoll is a Logan County native whose involvement in the traditional and heritage arts has a strong impact in his district. He recognizes the importance of preserving and presenting arts programs that build pride in communities and bring visitors to the area. He supports Museum in the Park with its exhibitions and displays highlighting Southern West Virginia heritage and history. He is an advocate for the area's popular traditional arts programs, including The Aracoma Story, Coalfield Jamboree and the Aunt Jennie Wilson Music Festival.

CULTURAL FACILITIES

Honoring significant contributions in developing West Virginia communities that sustain a vibrant arts culture and for outstanding achievement, leadership and commitment to sustaining and promoting the arts in West Virginia.



Delegate Denise L. Campbell
Elkins, Randolph County

If anyone is all aboard the arts train, it is Delegate Denise L. Campbell, whose district encompasses several historic and cultural train systems in Randolph and Pocahontas counties. The creative energy that goes into the annual Polar Express train excursion from Elkins is just one example of the combination of history, culture and theater that builds community pride. The Old Brick Playhouse is another Elkins organization that encourages arts for all with educational programming and original plays. Delegate Campbell also supports the Pocahontas Opera House and its community based programming and the work done in Historic Beverly to maintain that town's heritage and historic structures.



Senator Greg Boso
Summersville, Nicholas County

Senator Greg Boso could spend many of his weekends enjoying some of the Mountain State's many fairs and festivals. With a district that stretches from Pocahontas and Pendleton counties to Nicholas and Webster, the choices are diverse and year-round. Civil War battle reenactments, wood chopping, musical and culinary events are plentiful. He is familiar with and supports many of them, including the annual Mountain State Forest Festival in Elkins. He has strong pride in the programming and work done by the Randolph County Community Arts Center, where lifelong learning is popular and the community of Historic Beverly, where residents have made preserving and protecting the cultural facilities in that area a priority.

FOLK ARTS

Honoring significant contributions and dedication to preserving our cultural heritage and for outstanding achievement, leadership and commitment to promoting the future of our cultural traditions in West Virginia.



Senator William R. Laird IV
Oak Hill, Fayette County

Fayette County has an exceptional reputation as an outdoor recreation mecca, but Senator William R. Laird IV is doing his part to support its status as home to some fine local artists and crafters. Fayetteville's expanding arts community includes a local gallery in Cathedral Café and exciting outdoor art being developed by the Fayetteville Arts Council. The senator also is an advocate for the Appalachian String Band Music Festival at Clifftop and promotes arts and cultural activities on a television program.



Delegate Ron Walters
Charleston, Kanawha County

The West Virginia State Museum staff can attest to Delegate Ron Walters' pride in West Virginia heritage. Walters generously loaned a 35-star United States flag to the museum. The flag is displayed at the museum's entrance and has an interesting history in his family. The delegate donated two limited edition Blenko Glass statehood celebration pieces to the museum as well. This contribution allowed the museum to add to its Blenko collection.

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT

Honoring significant lifelong contributions that enrich the West Virginia communities you serve with vibrant arts and cultural experiences, and that promote the economic prosperity of our future through outstanding achievement, leadership and commitment to sustaining the arts in West Virginia.



**Delegate Doug Reynolds
Huntington, Wayne County**

The Huntington arts scene is thriving, with the opening of Marshall University's Fine Arts Center and a growing interest in promoting arts activities throughout the city. Delegate Doug Reynolds plays a vital role in making that happen. He is involved with the iconic Marshall Artist Series, which this year celebrates its 75th year, and supported the university's downtown presence. He has been a long-time proponent of the restoration and use of the historic Keith Albee Theater and supports the Huntington Museum of Art.



**Senator Mitch Carmichael
Ripley, Jackson County**

From exhibits of farm tools to aliens and celebrations of arts and crafts to water crafts, Senator Mitch Carmichael has some of the most diverse museums and fairs in West Virginia near at hand. Within his district, the senator can enjoy the state's agricultural heritage at the West Virginia State Farm Museum and its river heritage at the River Museum, both in Point Pleasant. The Mountain State Art & Craft Fair in Ripley and the West Virginia Black Walnut Festival in Spencer highlight the state's natural beauty as well as its creative artists, craftsmen and musicians

THE ARTISTS BEHIND THE AWARDS



The 2016 West Virginia Governor's Arts Awards

Matt Thomas of Shock, Gilmer County, created the 2016 West Virginia Governor's Arts Awards by blending the timeless grain of wood with the permanence of hand-forged steel. At age 16 the NICHE award winner, who also designed awards for the West Virginia Poetry Out Loud competition, became one of the youngest craftsmen to be juried into TAMARACK: The Best of West Virginia. He custom designs furniture and retail pieces in his studio, THOMAS WORK, situated on 13 acres in Shock.



Matt Thomas in his studio.

Arts medallions designed to honor individuals and organizations during the 50th anniversary of the National Endowment for the Arts. John, one of the few expert glass artists still operating in West Virginia, combines hot glass pieces and sandblasting techniques to render his unique pieces. The Cooks own and operate Mestari Designs, which was formerly known as Long Hollow Pens. They changed the name of their company in 2008 to reflect the broader scope of their products, which include writing instruments, inlaid platters, carved bowls and photo etchings. Mestari Designs also creates wooden plaques that are presented to each marching band that performs in the West Virginia Marching Band Invitational, which is sponsored by the West Virginia Division of Culture and History.



A Special Gift

Marble King Incorporated of Paden City, Tyler and Wetzel counties, generously provided gift bags of marbles for each honoree. The white organza bags each contained 10 marbles with special color combinations and finishes. Marble King has been a West Virginia company since opening its doors in 1949. Today its West Virginia-made products are used for games and industrial applications.



Excellence in Support of the Arts Medallions

John DesMeules of Eleanor, Putnam County, and Stan and Vicki Cook of Letart, Mason County, created the Excellence in Support of the

THE PERFORMERS



Barbara Nissman

Pianist Barbara Nissman connects with the music, the composer and her audience in ways that make music relevant and meaningful. Hailed as one of the last pianists in the grand Romantic tradition of Liszt, Rachmaninoff and Rubinstein, Barbara continues the grand bravura tradition of the Romantic pianist. She has performed around the world with some of the finest orchestras and major conductors of our time. A performer, writer, lecturer and guest artist/clinician, Barbara has toured and given master classes throughout the United States, Europe, the Far East, New Zealand and South America. Born and raised in Philadelphia, she now calls West Virginia home and lives on a farm in Greenbrier County. In 2008, she was honored with the West Virginia Governor's Distinguished Service to the Arts Award.

WEST VIRGINIA GOVERNOR'S Arts AWARDS



Kari Safford Blankenship

Kari Safford Blankenship, who was crowned Miss West Virginia in June 1996, won the Bert Parks Talent Award at the 1996 Miss America Pageant for her vocal performance of "God Help the Outcasts" from the musical *Hunchback of Notre Dame*. The native of Point Pleasant, Mason County, and 1997 graduate of Marshall University joined the West Virginia Lottery in 1997 and as its promotional manager oversees promotional and marketing efforts throughout West Virginia by developing special events, retail outreach, advertising and promotional campaigns. A former host for the West Virginia Lottery's Nightly Drawing, Kari has appeared in Lottery commercials and her vocal recordings have been featured on Lottery CDs, radio and television commercials. She and her husband, Mark, have two children, Mark and Elle, and they reside in Charleston.



Ryan Kennedy

This Charleston, Kanawha County, native has been playing guitar most of his life. His debut CD, *Something to Say*, was released last year and is a collection of nine original compositions. A graduate of the Berklee College of Music in Boston, Ryan is a member of the Bob Thompson Unit, Mountain Stage Band and Ryan Kennedy Trio. He comes from a musical family – both his mother and father were band directors. When asked by West Virginia Public Broadcasting what music means to him, Kennedy said, “What it means to me? It means everything.”

The Mountain Stage Band

The Mountain Stage Band is always ready, always on cue, always great. They open the popular West Virginia-produced public radio show *Mountain Stage* with Larry Groce, play between guest performances, fill in for guests’ touring bands and supplement the sounds of solo guest artists. They are, as vocalist Julie Adams once told *The Charleston Gazette*, “a kind of sorbet. We cleanse the palate between artists.” Many of the band members have been with the show since its inception more than 30 years ago. Other members include guitarist and bandleader Ron Sowell, drummer Ammed Solomon, pianist Bob Thompson, guitarist Michael Lipton, guitarist Ryan Kennedy and guitarist Steve Hill.





Adam DeGraff

Adam DeGraff doesn't want to take the violin too seriously. This American violinist, composer, teacher and farmer spent the first part of his career as a professional orchestral musician. Since then, he has experimented with rock violin, song writing, alternative music education and traditional organic farming practices. He performs worldwide as a soloist and with his groups, The Weight, Pianafiddle and The Dueling Fiddlers. He teaches internationally via Skype and lives, farms and teaches in Lewisburg, Greenbrier County – America's Coolest Small Town.

Cabell Midland Jazz Knights

Under the direction of Tim James, the Cabell Midland Jazz Knights consistently receive superior ratings at regional and national festivals and perform throughout the area at community and civic events. It is part of the instrumental music department at Cabell Midland High School in Ona, Cabell County, which is a section of the Cabell Midland Fine Arts Academy, the first in West Virginia. Besides the Jazz Knights, the music department includes a marching band, string orchestra, concert band, concert percussion ensemble, advanced wind ensemble, piano lab classes, guitar classes and honors music theory.



West Virginia Division of Culture and History Arts Section

304.558.0240



Renée Margocee is the Director of Arts for the West Virginia Division of Culture and History and is responsible for administering the division's arts programs, which include arts administration services, as well as state and federal grants for West Virginia's arts organizations, individual artists, schools and communities.
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Robin Jones is the Administrative Secretary for the Arts Section and helps administer, along with the Arts in Education coordinator, its Mini Grant program.
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Barbie Smoot is the Grants Officer and Budget Manager. She maintains the database and financial records for all grant applications and is responsible for compliance with all state and federal rules, regulations and policies. She also oversees the Training and Travel grant program.
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P.J. Dickerscheid is the Individual Artist Coordinator. She provides technical assistance to artists and artists' organizations, and administers the division's Professional Development for Artists and Artists' Organization grant program. She also is the editor of the agency's quarterly publication *ArtWorks West Virginia*.
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