

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Building Connections
in the Marshallese
Community

CONNECT

FROM THE DIRECTOR

Jama Best, Executive Director

As an anthropology major in college, I learned to appreciate the power of the human spirit and all that can be achieved by working together.

As the anthropologist, Margaret Mead once said “Never underestimate the power of a small group of committed people to change the world. In fact, it is the only thing that ever has.”

On April 1, 2018, I began my new role as executive director of the Arkansas Humanities Council. During my 16 years of working for the Council, what has always motivated me were connections to communities and people, and their passion and commitment to make a difference. Connections to the past, our present, and to local communities are vital to knowing who we are, where we come from, and to creating a future where we want to live. It’s up to us to make a difference and bring about positive change for future generations.

Throughout the years, grant funds have empowered communities who have and are making a difference each and every day — the teacher in a small rural community whose third-grade student learns to read for the first time, the historian conducting oral histories with elders who have not only experienced history but made it, documenting African American cemeteries, and museum professionals designing exhibits pertaining to Arkansas history, culture, music, and more. We have been glad to play a small role in helping people across Arkansas make a difference in their local communities.

The Arkansas Humanities Council is rebranding and wants to connect to communities in new and exciting ways. We have begun to reach out to communities all across the state through community forums. We want to learn more about your communities and your projects and to hear your ideas. We also hope to gain insight as to what you would like to see us offer in the way of programming, new initiatives and/or grants. We invite you to help us shape the future of the Council as we move forward together.

We welcome your ideas and thoughts as we look to the future. We hope you will enjoy our new magazine *Connect* as we feature community projects, upcoming events, new initiatives, projects board and staff are working on, and so much more. We invite you to connect with us through volunteering, serving on the board of directors, or through a monetary donation which will further the work of communities all across the state and beyond.

Let’s connect and make a difference together!



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Want to receive a copy of *Connect* in your inbox? Just send us an email at info@arkansashumanitiescouncil.org



ON THE COVER: Marshallle boat builders pose with the finished craft at the Marshallle Jemenei (Constitution) Day on May 25, 2018.

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Wa kuk wa jimor

*By Allyn Lord, Director, Shiloh Museum of Ozark History,
Springdale, AR*

Canoe of One Community

Having known Liton Beasa, a 62-year-old Marshallese resident of Springdale (Washington County), for about ten months now, I think of him as a man of two demeanors. If he's not looking intently at you or a project that needs analysis, he has the wide smile of a man who finds joy and laughter in much of his world. And so it was that on the grounds of the Shiloh Museum of Ozark History, I saw Liton break through that serious expression into an eruption of smiles and approving head-nods as he surveyed the scene before him.

He was surrounded by a mountain of sawdust and shavings produced by the carving of a *kōrkōr*, a two-person, traditional Marshallese outrigger canoe emerging from a huge sycamore tree felled in Boone County months earlier. There under the tent with him, a bevy of young Marshallese men worked eagerly, trying their hands at the boat-building skills just taught to them by the master carver himself.

In the Marshall Islands, a chain of volcanic islands and coral atolls in the central Pacific Ocean between Hawaii and the Philippines, Liton Beasa, before age ten, learned to build outriggers from his great-grandfather, grandfather, and father, as was the custom. He began building traditional outriggers by himself at age 26, and before leaving the Islands, Liton had individually built more than fifty outriggers.

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Master carver Liton

*Beasa (left) uses an adze-like woodcarving tool to shape a sycamore tree into the top part of the *kōrkōr* while several of his students do likewise.*

In 2013 he moved to Springdale, a city with the world's largest population of Marshallese (estimated 12,000-15,000) outside the Islands. In some respects Liton lost his identity as a master craftsman. In landlocked Arkansas, what's the value of an outrigger? As one of the three most important elements of Marshallese life, the canoe was essential in the Islands but didn't translate to Springdale the way family and home did.

But all these issues came together in fall 2017

the museum grounds might be a good place to bring the outrigger idea to fruition.

We at the museum not only welcomed the idea, but also realized that it addressed elements of the museum's strategic plan and was a way to deepen our connection with the Marshallese community.

The plan involved multiple components.

- We needed a tree. Traditional Marshallese kōrkōr are carved from the breadfruit tree which



The boat-building tent on the Shiloh Museum of Ozark History grounds, displaying the project banner, Wa kuk wa jimor ("Canoe of One Community").

thanks to a man with a vision. Having worked in the Springdale schools for several years, Springdale Resource Officer Gomez Zackious — part Hawaiian and part Marshallese — had begun to see that many Marshallese youth had never known and had not been taught the importance of Marshallese traditions and culture. He worried that young Marshallese might never know their heritage.

But Gomez had an idea. He knew Liton, the master carver, and wondered if building an outrigger here in Springdale might help Marshallese and non-Marshallese youth alike better understand the culture. He brought that idea to Melisa Laelan, founder and executive director of the Arkansas Coalition of Marshallese (ACOM) in Springdale, and the two hatched a plan. Melisa also serves as a member of the Shiloh Museum board of trustees and she thought that

grows in the south Pacific, but not in Arkansas. We worked with the Arkansas Forestry Commission, using Liton's expertise, to determine that a sycamore tree is the most similar Arkansas-grown tree.

- Liton estimated that, to produce the approximately nine-foot kōrkōr, we'd need a sycamore 20 to 25 feet tall and fairly straight-growing.
- We had a lucky break, as the parents of one of our team members — Central Junior High School EAST teacher Bill Mills — owned property in Boone County with numerous sycamore trees that they generously offered in-kind to the project.
- The team made a tree-search excursion to the site in September of 2017, chose a tree, and made a second trip to cut the tree in February of 2018. A second teacher from Lakeside Junior High School, Jamie Stallings, brought his EAST students on both expeditions to film the process as part of a documentary the students completed.

- We needed the long leaves of the palm-tree-like Pandanus tree to produce the fiber that creates the woven material for the kōrkōr's sail. Luckily an ACOM group was traveling to the Marshall Islands during the first few weeks of the project, allowing enough time to process and weave the Pandanus fibers into a sail.
- We needed to develop an educational program around the canoe-building based on curriculum needs of area students.
- The museum's education manager and education specialists, Judy Costello, Kim Hosey, and Aaron Loehndorf, with the assistance of our Marshallese team, delved deep into Marshallese history, culture, and canoes, as well as into Arkansas curriculum standards, in order to determine the program goals and expectations.
- We strictly adhered to the belief that the program stories should originate from and be told by the Marshallese people. Therefore, every element on the educational program was overseen and checked by our Marshallese team members.
- We prepared materials for the educational programming: boat-carving station signage (in both English and Spanish, another large proportion of the local population), craft materials to make stick charts, and videos to explain to students and visitors who the Marshallese are, where they come from, and what challenges they face (e.g., climate change flooding the islands and atolls and threatening the fresh-water supply, the effects of scores of nuclear tests the U.S. government undertook on the islands between 1946 and 1958).
- The team also provided us with real Marshallese objects to help tell the stories.
 - Liton hand-built a model of a kōrkōr, so that, in the early weeks of the project, the students could identify what was being built.
 - Team members brought us from the islands a stick chart — a traditional coconut-fiber and shell “map” showing wave patterns and currents to help sailors navigate around the islands.
 - Our sail weavers, who needed to pound the Pandanus leaves to crush the fibers together, used — much to our non-Native surprise — a non-explosive, cast-iron mortar bomb found on the Islands to do the pounding.
- We needed assurance that area students would actually be able to attend the educational programs. For this we engaged with the Springdale Public Schools Assistant Superintendent for Teaching & Learning (PK-7), Dr. Kathy Morledge, who assured us that our project fit into student curricula.
- We then had to get the word out to the District and other area schools. We first presented the program to Springdale principals at their monthly meeting; by the time museum staff returned to their offices, emails requesting school visits had already been received! We also emailed principals in our



The felled sycamore tree from Boone County was selected for its height, near-straightness, and similarity to the Marshall Islands' breadfruit tree.



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mission area outside of Springdale.

- We wanted to get feedback on the project, so we developed evaluation tools for use by students, teachers, and the visiting public.
- We needed to keep Liton, his assistants, and the weavers hydrated and fed during the four-week project. ACOM members and members of one of the Marshallese churches each day provided home-cooked meals for lunch, while the Museum provided drinks and snacks.

These were some of the many challenges we encountered in preparing for the project. But those challenges were far outweighed by the benefits, positive feedback, excellent publicity, and wave of respect for the Marshallese people, their skills, and their ingenuity that crested as a result of the kōrkōr project. Team members were excited at the interest and curiosity both the students and the visiting public expressed, as well as how much information was exchanged about a people whose culture and traditions had previously either been unknown or misunderstood.

The opening ceremony for the project included: a flag presentation by the only Marshallese Girl Scout troop in the country; blessings and prayers by ministers from two Marshallese churches; a welcome and greetings by the Springdale mayor, ACOM, and the Shiloh Museum; a keynote address by the Marshall Islands Consul General; a presentation by master carver Liton Beasa; and songs by the adult choir at one of the Marshallese churches.

The closing ceremony on the project's last day featured an outdoor luncheon provided by the Marshallese community. The next day the completed kōrkōr with its woven sail was presented for the first time at the Springdale downtown square, the site of a major craft show and an intervening stop on the Razorback Regional Greenway's Fayetteville-to-Bentonville popular bike ride. Two weeks later the kōrkōr made its ceremonial debut at Jemenei (Constitution) Day, a national Marshallese holiday recognizing the Islands' independence and celebrating Marshallese culture and traditions.

Over the course of the four-week project, more than 2,000 students and other visitors had a

chance to see the boat building, interact with Marshallese craftspeople, and learn about Marshallese traditions and culture. More than two dozen members of the Marshallese community took part in the boat building or weaving. Evaluations showed that students especially learned about the necessity for transportation in the Islands, why different types of boats are used, and the skills involved in boat building.

Teachers were unanimously happy with the program, including curriculum tie-ins, "learning about a different culture in an authentic environment," and the "great information about the experiments the USA did on the Northern Islands."

As for the Shiloh Museum, our engagement with the Marshallese community was the biggest take-away. We now see many more Marshallese visitors to the museum, which we credit to the project helping to give "ownership" to the community. We appreciate that Liton now receives the respect of a tradition-bearer in his Springdale community, that young Marshallese men and women have learned more about their cultural traditions and skills, and that elementary-school students now understand much more about Marshallese history, traditions, and culture. Since the project ended, we still get questions about the kōrkōr and when it can be seen again.

For more information on the educational aspects of the project, contact Shiloh Museum education manager Judy Costello at jcostello@springdalear.gov or 479-750-8165. Contact the Arkansas Coalition of Marshallese through Facebook: @ArkansasCoalitionofMarshallese.



A minigrant from the Arkansas Humanities Council helped the museum provide honoraria to master carver Liton Beasa and to several of his assistants and our sail weavers. Funding allowed the museum and ACOM to pay for many other elements of the projects, while giving Liton and those who put in the most number of project hours some monetary compensation for the sharing of their skills and knowledge. We thank AHC for their support of our program.

*Emilie Ned pounds
Pandanus leaf fibers
with a non-explosive,
cast-iron mortar bomb
found on the Marshall
Islands.*



Black Women's Activism in Rural Arkansas

Cherisse Jones-Branch, Ph.D.
Arkansas State University

For the past few years I have been working on a book titled *Better Living By Their Own Bootstraps: Black Women's Activism in Rural Arkansas, 1913-1965*. My explorations while crafting this monograph have taken me in some very interesting directions and has also resulted in multiple presentations and journal publications. I had never before heard of home demonstration agents or the agricultural extension service, both of which are prominently featured in this book, until I published my first monograph on interracial activism in South Carolina. One of the women I chronicled, Sara Z. Daniels, had been a home demonstration agent who had lost her jobs with the South Carolina Cooperative Extension Service due to her civil rights activism.

I did not learn enough about the important work she performed as an agent until the book was nearly completed. However, I did wonder about black home demonstration agents in Arkansas and increasingly about women's activism in rural environments. What occurred to me was that most of the scholarship on black women spoke to their experiences in urban northern and southern spaces. Most often highlighted where enslaved women or in the twentieth century, those who had migrated to the north and west. I rarely encountered a study that probed the lives of black women who remained in the rural south. I knew there were many untold stories and so I began asking questions. How did they craft lives on terrain that was fraught with racial and sexual discrimination? How did they unearth silences surrounding black women's sexual exploitation? How did they perceive and sustain family structures? How did rural black women cultivate a sense of community between World War I and the modern Civil Rights movement?

My entree into this research began as a paper on black home demonstration agents for a 2011 conference on race and ethnicity in Arkansas. However, it was not until I began attending Agricultural History Society and Rural Women Studies Association meetings that I learned about scholars who had long been producing works on rural

women in other parts of the country and the world. My interactions with them was both encouraging and enlightening. The depth and breadth of their scholarship led me to rethink and refine my own study on rural black women in Arkansas. I began examining the silences surrounding black Arkansas women's lives by mining agricultural cooperative extension services records. Women who had been faceless and nameless with stories that had never really fully registered on scholars' radars, started to emerge from the background. Women like Mary L. Ray, a Tuskegee Institute graduate who in 1918 became Arkansas's first African American home demonstration agent (Figure 1). Or Lula Toler, an agent in Jefferson County who assisted destitute blacks during the 1927 Mississippi River flood and then established the first convalescent home for African Americans in Pine Bluff, Arkansas. Or, Phillips County farmer Annie Zachary Pike, the owner of a 1200 acre farm who in 1965, ran for the Arkansas state senate as a Republican.

When I attended my first Rural Women's Studies Association biennial meeting in 2015, a colleague's sage advice to not "equate rurality with ignorance" resonated loudly with me. This brief but profound statement informed my research and analysis as I sought to better understand the ways that rural black women employed native intelligence to comprehend their circumstances. Black women did not act alone as home demonstration agents or members of home demonstration clubs. The extent of their activism demanded inter-organizational and at times, interracial cooperation. Poor and rural black Arkansas women were members of and leaders in segregated home demonstration clubs, yet at times they cooperated with white women to meet community and family needs because they understood that they often possessed access to critical political and economic resources. Middle class black women, including home demonstration agents, Jeanes Industrial Supervising Teachers, who labored in Arkansas between 1907 and 1950, and members of the Arkansas Association of Colored Women deployed their limited politi-

cal agency to press white local and state politicians to address such community needs as increased access to quality health care, food insecurity, and industrial schools for black girls and boys.

Black self-advocacy, to be clear, was an incredibly dangerous pursuit in the Jim Crow South. Home demonstration agents and black community leaders were always mindful of the importance of cultivating and maintaining positive relationships with local whites. Black women's rural activism occurred within a temporal and spatial context where racial and sexual violence were very real and omnipresent threats. This demanded that they operate stealthily at times and always required them to carefully monitor the spaces in which they labored.

Black women's activism was a crucial part of the self-advocacy and efficacy necessary to improve conditions in Arkansas's rural communities. Although this occurred under difficult and often dangerous circumstances, black women of all stripes understood well that because of their gender they were best situated and empowered to navigate deeply entrenched racial and class boundaries in order to extract their homes, families, and communities from the difficult circumstances in which they lived. Highlighting this history in Arkansas has revealed beyond all doubt that black women strategically, individually, and organizationally galvanized limited resources to address rural community concerns. It further productively complicates historical narratives that have for too long focused almost exclusively on agricultural production and reveals instead the robust complexity of rural life in Arkansas in ways that have rarely been considered.



Phillips County farmer Annie Zachary Pike, the owner of a 1200-acre farm who in 1965, ran for the Arkansas state senate as a Republican.

Photo courtesy of the Butler Center for Arkansas Studies, Central Arkansas Library Sstem.

Beer and the Humanities

*Vaughn Scribner, Ph.D., University of Central Arkansas
and Arkansas Humanities Council Generation Y Committee Member*



Vaughn Scribner, Dr. Stuart Towns, AHC Vice Chair, and Rose Schweikhart, Owner, Superior Bathhouse Brewery, tour the brewery.

For the past ten years, colonial American taverns have been on my mind. Wherever I go, whatever I read, whoever I talk to, I'm always (subconsciously) making connections with these mercurial-but-important early American spaces. This is for good reason, because, for the past ten years, I have been writing a book on how colonial American taverns reveal colonists' visions for British North American society. The book is published by the New York University Press (*Inn Civility: Urban Taverns and Early American Civil Society*). Which brings us to the Beer and Humanities Lectures sponsored by the Arkansas Humanities Council (AHC).

It all started with the Arkansas Humanities Council Generation Y Committee, an initiative that the AHC began in 2018 which brings a group of "millennials" into the AHC. When Jama Best asked our committee about ideas for different outreach initiatives that the AHC might sponsor, of course the first thing that came to my mind was—you guessed it—taverns. I piped up and

recommended that we sponsor events which highlight Arkansas' growing micro-brewing scene, and we were off to the races!

In October 2018, the AHC organized an excellent event at Diamond Bear Brewery's Arkansas Ale House (North Little Rock). Here, I got the opportunity to talk about how important taverns and drinking were for colonists and, eventually, the American Revolution. We discussed everything from rum punch (a highly-intoxicating beverage which our forefathers often chugged while planning important political moves) to riots (which often broke out in taverns and led to the American Revolution). I really enjoyed chatting in a more informal setting about America's rowdy, drunken origins, and the crowd couldn't have been more engaging.

By November 2018, we shifted our attention to the Superior Bathhouse Brewery in Hot Springs. Besides taverns and drinking, I have also published work on colonists' obsession with


drinking and bathing in mineral spring water. So, Superior Brewery — the only brewery in America which makes beer with thermal spring water — was the perfect confluence of my research interests. Once again, we had an invigorating crowd, and explored how colonists' odd relationship with water ultimately led to places like Hot Springs, not to mention a brewery in a bathhouse!

Ultimately, I so enjoyed the opportunity to meet so many great Arkansans. As a Kansas native, I am loving Arkansas more every day, and initiatives like this only bolster these feelings. The AHC is a vital part of life and culture in Arkansas, and I couldn't be happier to be a part of this imperative group of citizens. So, I suppose I'll end this piece by "raising my glass" to the AHC, and I look forward to more great functions in the future!

NATURE'S ELIXIR
How Beer and Mineral Spring Water Made America "Healthy"

A Beer & Humanities Series Lecture by UCA Professor and Arkansas Humanities Council Generation Y. Committee Member, Dr. Vaughn Scribner

Mineral spring water and alcohol share a long, complicated, and intertwined past. Eighteenth-century Americans often equated beer and mineral spring water with health and vitality. This talk will use the setting of Hot Springs' Superior Bathhouse Brewery--the nation's first brewery to use thermal spring water as its main ingredient--to reflect upon Americans' long obsession with beer, water, and shifting ideas of "health" and "nature." Whether "taking the waters" or guzzling a pint, Americans still flock to taverns and spas in their quest for sociability and improvement.




Thursday, Nov. 29, 6:00 P.M.
Superior Bathhouse Brewery
329 Central Ave, Hot Springs, AR

Free and Open to the public. Arrive on time for free appetizers!

ARKANSAS
HUMANITIES
COUNCIL
MAKING CONNECTIONS

SUPERIOR
BREWERY





Tavern Interior by John S.C. Schaak 1762

Rebuilding a City, One Positive Program at a Time

Rachel M. Miller, Ph.D., Executive Director
Arts and Science Center for Southeast Arkansas

In 2015, the Arts & Science Center for Southeast Arkansas launched *Heritage Detectives: Discovering Southeast Arkansas's Hidden Heritage*, an interdisciplinary project involving 7th & 8th graders from four Southeast Arkansas towns. Supported by an Arkansas Arts Council grant, the project placed a historian and artist in Pine Bluff, Dumas, McGehee, and Lake Village classrooms to work with students on uncovering and depicting the diverse cultural influences of Southeast Arkansas through pictorial histories. Frequently overlooked, the southeast region was a crossroad to a significant amount of Arkansas history. Throughout the research process, a remark repeatedly heard from the 7th and 8th students was "I didn't know that" about my town. The students channeled their surprise and new-found curiosity through the vividly crafted pictorial

histories. The project's outcome provided the spark for ASC's latest community-engagement program, The Crossroad Festival.

The Crossroad Festival is the Arts & Science Center's annual event that explores Jefferson County and Southeast Arkansas's cultural heritage through the interpretive lens of story, music, foodways, and film. The festival's name stems from our mission to serve as a cultural crossroad by engaging, educating, and entertaining through the arts and sciences. Each year, we plan to highlight different cultural groups specifically featured in the *Heritage Detectives* project that have made a lasting impact on the history, culture, and traditions of Southeast Arkansas. A focus on the African American communities of the area and their history and heritage reoccurs each year. ASC introduced the festival in 2018 with a





concentration on the region's French influences, Quapaw Indian history, and African American cultural heritage. Inspired by the Arkansas State Archives 5th Annual Foodways Symposium, we included the story of Chinese immigrants to the area for the 2019 festival.

The primary goal of The Crossroad Festival is to illuminate how these distinctive cultural groups intersect throughout Jefferson County and Southeast Arkansas's history by examining their influences on the region's archeological record, arts, traditional craft, and physical development. We aim to engage residents in a dialogue on how the cultural cross-pollination has contributed to the community's multi-faceted diversity. By involving scholars who provide not only a historical perspective, but a contemporary one too, the interaction promotes awareness among attendees that their community's cultural heritage isn't static. Instead, it's constantly evolving through time with each new generation. Festival programming utilizes primary sources historic film footage, oral histories, photographs, demonstrations of traditional arts and crafts, music composed by artists from the region — to engage and educate the audience in a manner that's entertaining and accessible for people of all ages.

The multi-day event is not a festival in the contemporary sense. There are no merchandise vendors, multiple stages or outdoor kid play

zones. We perceive the project as more of a cultural celebration performed in participatory "acts" over two (or three in 2019) days. Each event is designed to engage the audience in the activity. For example, in 2018, audience members were included in the Quapaw dance demos and interacted with tribal members through tastings of food products produced by the Quapaw Tribe's farm-to-fork agricultural program. The living history group "Voices from the Past" interpreted the lives of prominent African American artists, musicians, and business people from Jefferson County by utilizing the device of a press conference, distributing questions to audience members in advance to encourage interaction.

Partnering with local community organizations, artists, and historians is a crucial component of organizing each festival's programming scope. A primary community partner for the past two festivals is Jimmy Cunningham Jr., local historian and advocate and the founder of the Delta Rhythm & Bayous Alliance. Pine Bluff and the area along Highway 65 through Lake Village has a rich arts and music history. Jimmy's books on the music and civil rights history of Pine Bluff and the Delta Lowlands provide a wealth spring of knowledge and inspiration. He has worked closely with the Arts & Science Center on thematic approaches to programming, recruitment of artists and musicians, and promotion of festival events.

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The festival opens with a night of music, designed and narrated by Jimmy Cunningham, exploring a specific theme that carries over into the other events. For 2018, the opening night featured four bands of different genres highlighting the contributions of nationally and internationally known musicians from or having connections to Jefferson County/Southeast Arkansas. Opening night for this year's festival focused on the powerful folklore and music emanating from African American culture with Greater Jefferson County ties. In one scene, actors performed Brer Rabbit tales, originally collected by folklorist Dr. Richard Dorson from Pine Bluff for his 1958 book, later reinterpreted by Dr. Julius Lester, who spent his childhood summers at his grandmother's home in Pine Bluff. The folklore theme continued through the rest of the 2019 festival events with Heritage Studies scholar, Dr. Elista Istre's program on cultural similarities between the French Creole stories of Bouki (fox) and Lapin (rabbit) and the Brer Rabbit tales collected by Dorson. Dr. Istre teamed up with Food & Material Cultural scholar, Kevin Kim, to discuss the cultural assimilation through food traditions in Delta Chinese and South Louisiana communities.

The Crossroad Festival draws a diverse, intergenerational audience from our community. ASC's visitor base primarily consists of families from the area. Therefore, the festival is designed to engage adults, as well as children, and all events are free. Additionally, ASC education staff create curriculum, aligned with Arkansas Curriculum Frameworks for Social Studies and Arkansas History, based on the festival's events to be distributed to area educators, which results in a larger student-based audience being served by the event. In collaboration with the Arkansas River Educational Co-op, teachers who attend the festival can earn professional development hours. Dr. Lenore Shoults, 2018 participating Heritage Studies scholar, described the festival "as five out of five in terms of scholarship, providing a foundation for heritage tourism and teacher professional development, and, making the case that these are living cultures with adaptations through the centuries that have enriched the cultures and retained relevance."

Although programming is based in scholarship, content is presented in a manner that is entertaining. The Crossroad Festival also bolsters Pine Bluff's burgeoning cultural heritage tourism by providing

a signature event that evolves each year. Currently, Pine Bluff is void of any organized, cohesive cultural events that explore its multi-faceted history and heritage which distinguishes the community and county from the rest of the state. Recent local economic development initiatives target the revitalization of the downtown area. However, in order to experience and sustain such endeavors, a community's existing cultural resources need to be acknowledged and supported. The Crossroad Festival's primary goals are to celebrate Jefferson County's cultural heritage and open a community dialogue on how the preservation and interpretation of the area's history and heritage improves the quality of life for its residents.

The Pine Bluff Advertising and Promotion Commission recently underwent a rebranding. The new slogan is "Explore Pine Bluff" with an emphasis on the city's rich cultural heritage in music and the arts and the innovation that cultivated such an environment. Since the inaugural Crossroad Festival, the A&P Commission has developed Pine Bluff and Delta Lowlands music heritage videos, a bus tour, and exhibition. A subsequent Crossroad Festival project at the Arts & Science Center is the Scenes Along the Delta Rhythm & Bayous Highway exhibition. A collection of photographs by regional amateur and professional photographers documenting, as we say, that "je ne sais quoi" of the landscape, people, and transportation of the Delta Lowlands.

Dr. Elista Istre has participated in the past two festivals. Her observation succinctly sums up the need The Crossroad Festival meets for the community: "The opportunity for children and adults from this area to experience quality programming in a state-of-the-art facility at no cost to them provides an incredible opportunity to expand horizons, make connections, and experience the cultural, scientific and natural world in a broader context." Furthermore, the festival provides a platform for the continuation of positive public programs that cultivate community pride and counteract statewide negative perceptions of the City of Pine Bluff and Southeast Arkansas.





Hi kids! I made this wordsearch just for you!
Hope you like it!

Hugh Manatee's Corner

Search for the words listed below and circle them when you find them.
Good luck!

- History
- Language
- Culture
- Archeology
- Literature
- Ethics

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board spotlight

Welcome New Board Members and Summer Intern



Melissa Zabecki joined the Board of the Arkansas Humanities Council in April 2019. She is the Education Outreach Coordinator for the Arkansas Archeological Survey and spends her days coming up with creative ways to teach the public about the wonders of Arkansas history as told by the artifacts and other information discovered by archeologists over the years. She was born in New Jersey but left after high school, earning her BA in Anthropology from Mount Holyoke College in Massachusetts, and her MA and PhD in Anthropology from the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville. She has done archeology in many capacities and various places, including CRM archeologist, researcher, project archeologist, and lab director in Arkansas, Kentucky, and Egypt. She spent six years as a park interpreter at Parkin Archeological State Park and it was there that she learned the art of informal science education, which has allowed her to transition into the position she holds today. She looks forward to serving the Council.



Laura McClellan spent the last ten years of her professional life at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, where she's served in different capacities. As the Assistant Director of the Center for Arkansas History and Culture, she acts as the head of operations to ensure the Center keeps on mission. The Center collects, keeps safe and makes available different types of Arkansas history to connect people to each other and their shared experiences. She's thrilled to being a board member on the Arkansas Humanities Council and looks forward to be a part of supporting programs and projects in the state.

Laura was born and raised in Alaska, but after living in Arkansas since 1993, she's proud to consider herself an Arkansan. She holds a degree in Psychology from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock and enjoys gardening, music and spending time with friends and family. She shares her home with her son, Will, and several furry family members.

summer intern



Lindsey Daniels was born in El Paso, Texas into a military family. She has lived all over the United States, but currently resides in Clarksville, Tennessee. A junior at Fisk University, Lindsey is majoring in psychology and Spanish. Upon graduation she plans to attend graduate school to further her education in psychology to become a clinical psychologist in the United States Air Force.

This summer, Lindsey is working as a Spanish translator for the Arkansas Humanities Council's website and magazine Connect. Lindsey stated that "I have always had a passion for helping people, as well as, a passion to learn Spanish from a very young age. I am excited to be a part of the great work they're doing here to help the communities and the people of Arkansas."

Major Grant Awards September 2018

Arkansas Historical Association Annual Conference 2019

Organization: Arkansas Historical Association
Project Director: Donna Ludlow
Award: \$3939

The Arkansas Historical Association Annual Conference 2019 commemorates two pivotal moments in Arkansas history—the establishment of Arkansas Territory in 1819 and the Elaine Race Massacre of 1919.

Tools for Teaching and Learning Difficult History: A Curriculum Model and Teacher Training Seminar on Racial Violence in Arkansas

Organization: CALS Butler Center for Arkansas Studies
Project Director: Glenn Whaley
Award: \$3975

To mark the centennial of the Elaine Race Massacre, primary source lesson plan development, peer-to-peer dialogue, and a training seminar for teaching history of racial violence in Arkansas. (Stage 1) January at the Butler Center: Advance team (4 experts, 8-12 teachers) identified key documents on Elaine and on lynchings from 1860 to 1940, create lessons for ADE frameworks in grades 6-8 and 9-12, and adapt existing models of structured, peer-to-peer dialogue for use with lessons. (Stage 2) February in pilot schools: Teachers test document sets and dialogue model in classrooms with experts and/or community partners and return for one-day professional development (PD) event to evaluate and revise plans. (Stage 3) June at the Butler Center: Experts lead one-day PD event for Arkansas teachers including demonstration of dialogue model by advance teachers and student facilitators from pilot schools.

14th Annual Books in Bloom Literary Festival

Organization: Carroll and Madison Public Library System
Project Director: Jean Elderwind
Award: \$6731

Books in Bloom Literary Festival, held at the historic Crescent Hotel and Gardens in Eureka Springs offered presentations by authors, Diana Gabaldon, Chris Bohjalian, Jeff Shaara, and Jacqueline Mitchard. Also, ten regionally known guest authors shared their work.

Territorial Bicentennial Court and Market Days

Organization: Arkansas State Archives
Project Director: Lauren Jarvis
Award: \$6855

To celebrate the Arkansas Territory bicentennial, Davidsonville Historic State Park and Northeast Arkansas Regional Archives partnered to bring an exciting day of living history to school children and the general public. This free event portrayed life in Davidsonville when court was in session – an event that in 1819 would have brought many people into town and created an impromptu market. Various stations with living history reenactors were set up to demonstrate historic crafts, trades, and cultural dynamics. Many of these stations were interactive, allowing attendees the chance to try



candle making, spinning, and quill writing. Attendees explored the original town site and early 19th century pioneer settlements.

Crossroad Festival: Exploring Jefferson County & Southeast Arkansas's Cultural Heritage Through Story, Music and Food

Organization: Arts & Science Center for Southeast Arkansas

Project Director: Rachel Miller

Award: \$7467

The 2019 Crossroad Festival was a two-day event exploring Jefferson County and Southeast Arkansas' African American, French, and Chinese immigrant cultural heritage through the interpretive lens of folklore, music, and foodways.

Behind the Big House

Organization: Preserve Arkansas

Project Director: Rachel Patton

Award: \$8087

Behind the Big House moves beyond the "Big Houses" to explore slave dwellings and interpret the experiences of enslaved people who inhabited them. The event held at Historic Arkansas Museum featured a workshop for fifth grade students from eStem Charter School in Little Rock including three activity stations on the museum grounds. Students sampled food prepared by Chef Joseph Brajcki and Felicia Richardson.



Arts & Letters Radio Broadcast/Podcast

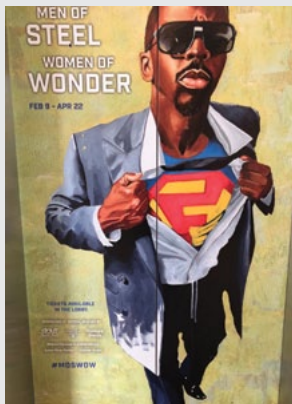
Organization: University of Arkansas Foundation

Project Director: Brad Minnick

Award: \$10,000

Arts & Letters will create 10 episodes that celebrate the humanities. It will highlight the writing, research, publishing, and scholarship of the arts (music, theatre, creative writing) and letters (humanities, social sciences, and education) featuring Arkansas scholars. It represents the best intellectual aspects of our community and state, combining multiple diverse voices & original regional music to showcase the importance of the humanities.

Men of Steel, Women of Wonder



Organization: Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art

Project Director: Juli Goss

Award: \$10,000

Superman and Wonder Woman are two of the most beloved icons in American pop culture. Created in times of economic adversity and world war, these characters quickly emerged as beacons of American morality, representing the ideals of truth, justice, and the American Way. Men of Steel, Women of Wonder examines art world responses to Superman and Wonder Woman ranging from their Depression-era origins to today's contemporary artist interpretations. The exhibition features more than 70 works by a wide range of artists in a variety of media.

Mini Grant Awards 2019

The Future of the Past: Historical Interpretation in an Ever-Changing Modern World

Organization: Arkansas Living History Association

Project Director: Josh Williams

Award: \$816

The Arkansas Living History Association (ALHA) brought Jim Lauderdale, Museum Supervisor at Fort Nisqually Living History Museum in Tacoma, Washington and board member of the International Association of Living History Farms and Agricultural Museums, to speak at the 2019 ALHA conference which took place in Little Rock.

Opening Up the Archive: Telling Stories Drawn from the Farm Security Administration Collection

Organization: University of Arkansas at Fayetteville

Project Director: Lori Birrell

Award: \$1029

The exhibition featured the Farm Security Administration Collection 1935-1943. On view were items from the Department's materials related to the FSA, such as the J. Laurence Charlton Photograph Collection, and Works Progress Administration (WPA) Historical Records Survey.

Riders on the Orphan Train Program

Organization: Berryville Public Library

Project Director: Julie Hall

Award: \$1563

Presented by the Berryville Public Library in cooperation with the Carroll County Historical Society and the Carroll County Extension Homemaker Clubs, the Riders on the Orphan Train program combined live music, storytelling, video, oral history and informal discussion to bring awareness about the largest child migration in U.S. history. Between 1854 and 1929, over 250,000 orphans and unwanted children were sent out of New York on trains to be given away at train stations. Several hundred came to Arkansas; some children were adopted in Berryville.

Preservation Conversations 2019

Organization: Quapaw Quarter Association

Project Director: Patricia Blick

Award: \$1913

The Quapaw Quarter Association's Preservation Conversations 2019 offers lectures monthly on history and historic preservation in greater Little Rock.

"Delta 60" Documentary Project

Organization: Arkansas Arts Center Foundation

Project Director: Devin Hancock

Award: \$2000

"Delta 60" is an hour-long documentary that focuses on nine diverse Arkansas artists as they create works that address place, identity, representation and the history of the South. Through the artists voices, Delta 60 tells of the power of art to encourage deeper understanding of the human condition by unlocking secrets of the past and exploring people and places that are essential to our cultural fabric, yet often overlooked.



Arkansas People's History Project

Organization: Arkansas Community Institute

Project Director: Acadia Roher

Award: \$2000

The Arkansas People's History Project focuses on documenting the early history and impact of the Women's Project, a multiracial women's organization started in 1981 in Arkansas to address hate group activity and violence against women. Bringing deep experience in participatory storytelling and decision-making processes, former Women's Project staff and members will be engaged in a process combining archival research, oral history, and story circles to document and share their history in a medium that can be readily accessible to community advocates and the public.

Raising Education Achievement and Competence in the Humanities (R.E.A.C.H.) Grants

Are we there yet? A look at America's Diversity and Civil Rights

Organization: Jonesboro High School

Project Director: Jon Newman

Award: \$1263

To enrich existing African American History curriculum at Jonesboro High School, US/World/African American History students participated in an essay contest during January/February (2019). Students participated in literacy/comprehension skills using document-based questions from primary sources. Forty-two essays were selected and students listened to a lecture by humanities scholar, Professor of African American Studies at Arkansas State University, Dr. Cherisse Jones-Branch. The students also toured the National Civil Rights Museum in Memphis, Tennessee. Students received a book from the series, *The March*.

Handwriting Without Tears Conference

Organization: Dwight Elementary School, Russellville School District

Project Director: Celia Wortham

Award: \$1966

Organization: Dwight Elementary School, Russellville School District

Project Director: Vanessa Huddleston

Award: \$1966

Educators attended the Handwriting Without Tears Conference in Tulsa, OK on June 14-15, 2019. The subject matter covered at this conference will enable teachers to help students learn and grow in handwriting and fine motor skills. Some students are entering kindergarten unable to hold a pencil or use scissors properly. Students are unable to perform fine motor tasks. Their fingers do not have the strength they need to do this. Students are growing up swiping a finger across an iPad screen rather than grasping a crayon. Students today have Velcro shoes and squeezable pouches of food. According to the Director of the Center for Child Health, Dr. Dimitri Christakis "simulating conventional toys through apps doesn't help kids with the crucial life skills that come from physically engaging in a three-dimensional world" (Miller & Miller, 2017).

continued on page 20

R.E.A.C.H. Grants 2019 continued

Building Empathy Through Literature

Organization: Lincoln Middle School

Project Director: Tyler McBride

Award: \$2000

Students at Lincoln Middle School were invited to join a book club to read Dusti Bowling's *Insignificant Events in the Life of a Cactus*, a novel about a girl who was born with no arms and a boy with Tourette's Syndrome. The book club met once a week over the course of four weeks in March 2019. Students were given an empathy questionnaire to see how their attitudes changed before and after reading the book. Following this, the author of the novel visited the school, to give group presentations and teach two writing workshops with approximately thirty students each. Afterwards, copies of both of the book were available for students to check out from the school library and classroom libraries.

MAJOR AND MINI GRANT FACTOIDS

**157,345 Arkansans Attended Council
Sponsored Programs and
Grant-funded Projects**

Grant Awards Total: \$271,530



Cost Share Totaling \$1,740,178

Arkansas State Parks Field Trip Grant

Arkansas State Parks and the Arkansas Humanities Council are pleased to offer the Arkansas State Park Field Trip Grant.

In authority of Act 292 of the 2011 Regular Session, Arkansas State Parks may use a portion of specialty license plate sales to offer students

kindergarten through twelfth grade an opportunity to visit one or more of Arkansas's 52 state parks.

Grants of up to \$1,000 are available to cover costs associated with bus use and substitute teachers. Whether an Arkansas public, private, charter, or home school, all are welcome to apply.

Arkansas State Parks Field Trip Grant November 2017 - February 2019

Grants awarded totaling: \$37,005



SCHOOLS

Acorn Elementary School	Howard Perrin Elementary School
Butterfield Trail Middle School	Huntsville Intermediate School
Charleston Middle School	Kimmons Junior High School
College Hill Academy of Design	Lamar Middle School
Cook Elementary	Lead Hill Elementary School
Cotter High School	Lonoke Middle School
Crestwood Elementary School	M.D. Williams Intermediate School
Cutter Morning Star High School	Malvern Middle School
Don Tyson School of Innovation	Marshall Elementary School
Dover High School	McNair Middle School
Dwight Elementary	Meadow Park Elementary School
Eastside Elementary School	Monitor Elementary School
Elkins Elementary School	Ode Maddox Elementary School
Elmer H. Cook Elementary School	Otter Creek Elementary School
Flippin Middle School	Owl Creek Middle School
Fort Smith Montessori School	Ozark Junior High School
Gardner STEM Magnet School	Ozark High School
Gene George Elementary School	Perryville High School
Greenbrier Westside Elementary School	Ramsey Junior High School
Harrisburg Middle School	Rockefeller Elementary School
Hellstern Middle School	Root Elementary
Hartford High School	Russell D. Jones Elementary
Hill Farm Elementary School	Sylvan Hills High School
Holt Middle School	Union Elementary School
Hope Academy of Public Service	Valley Springs High School
Hot Springs Intermediate School	Washington Academy Charter School

CITIES

Bryant	Little Rock
Charleston	Lonoke
Cotter	Malvern
Dover	Marshall
Elkins	Mena
Fayetteville	North Little Rock
Flippin	Ozark
Greenbrier	Pocahontas
Ft. Smith	Perryville
Harrisburg	Rogers
Hartford	Russellville
Hope	Sherwood
Hot Springs	Springdale
Huntsville	Texarkana
Lamar	Valley Springs
Lead Hill	Van Buren

Answers to Hugh's word search from page 14

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R V W B N D D L B T T U I D Q A K B X T
T M X P N H B E K X B X Y B B R Q K B R
O E J H P Y P J K S C J O J Q C V T Q O
I C T K Z Z V W O L Z I Q E R H F Q E L
U Z X H D V A K M G E G N B H E G J H Z
A S B P I B D P H U L H T A P O N D O Q
R F E W J C E C B W H Y F Y O L C G V Y
L H C C E V S V A R F B X T H O J B K L
E W H U D W I B S X N O I U T G Z R I I
A S T L Q Y B Y R W E C S U S Y O O L T
Y R D Z H V P E B I F E O Q U Q B J O E
X A F P Q B D D H Z F X R Y S N M Z J R
T G I P K K S P U P K P T R P B O D F A
Q Z C A G U L X C U L T U R E X X N X T
O I Z E F N O O C C A D G M S Y H L M U
L P U F R D B D D H Z F X R Y S N M Z J R
C S Q Q T W K E L F C O Y Z A G H R M E
L A N G U A G E C V E E A R B T E A J G
M Z I L D I W Q P R A H F E G K T X K Z
W H I S T O R Y F I C O O R X W A W S C
    
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Access to the Humanities: What Is Digital Accessibility?

Melanie Thornton

Coordinator of Access and Equity Outreach

University of Arkansas — Partners for Inclusive Communities

Organizations that promote public engagements with humanities content strive to increase their reach to various audiences. Sometimes, though, because of how materials are provided and facilities and programs are designed, people with disabilities may experience barriers in accessing that content. In this column, *Access to the Humanities*, we'll explore different topics in each issue of the Arkansas Humanities Council *Connect Magazine*, to assist readers in ensuring their content is accessible to everyone.

Digital accessibility involves the creation of websites, mobile applications and electronic documents that can be easily navigated and understood by a wide range of users.

Some of the common barriers to accessible digital design include:

- Videos without captions
- Images with no alt text
- Elements that require a mouse to operate
- PDF files that are purely images
- Poor contrast

Digital accessibility impacts a variety of



users—people with low vision who need screen magnification, people who are blind who use screen reader software, people who are deaf or hard of hearing who benefit from captioning, people who access a computer with alternative inputs such as using the keyboard alone, a braille output device or a voice recognition software.

If you create websites, videos, documents or PowerPoint presentations, you are a digital designer. As digital designers, we can make choices to design digital resources in ways that remove barriers.

Return to this column to continue to learn more about digital and other kinds of access.

Learn more at exploreaccess.org.