

MH Humanities

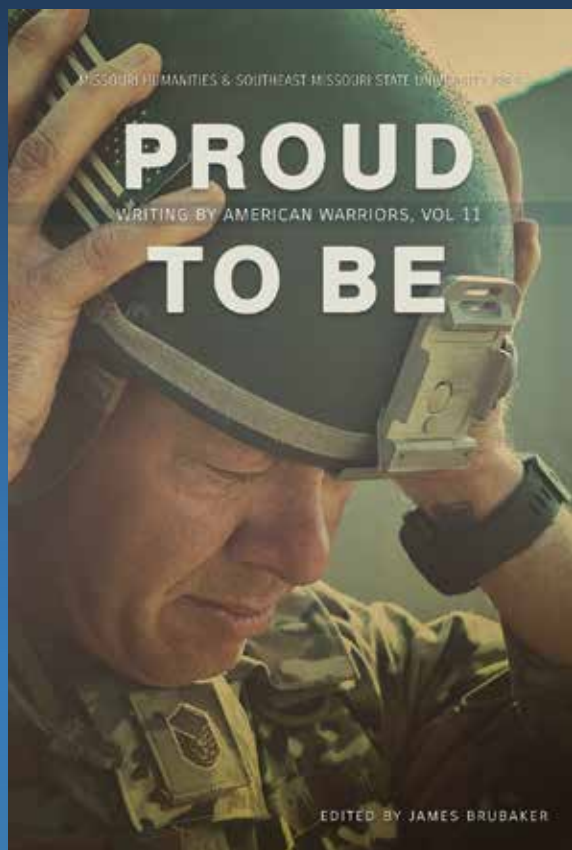
FALL/WINTER 2022



INSIDE:

**2022 Signature Series:
Eat, THINK, & Be Merry**
Contributors' Perspectives

**MH Supports Local and
National Book Festivals
Veteran Workshops and Annual
Release of *Proud to Be***



Volume
11

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Proud to Be: Writing by American Warriors

Proud to Be: Writing by American Warriors is a creative writing anthology of poetry, fiction, essays, interviews, and photography submissions by and about veterans from across the nation. It is an annual series first released in November 2012.

The anthology preserves and shares military service perspectives of our soldiers, veterans, and their families, spanning generations. Each submission is both a product of self-expression and a historical documentation of our nation's wartime experiences.

Proud to Be: Writing by American Warriors is published by Southeast Missouri State University Press in cooperation with Missouri Humanities. Submissions are reviewed by a panel of judges for inclusion in the anthology, with a \$250 prize in each of the five categories listed above.

To learn more about this program, how to submit your work to Volume 12, and to purchase *Proud to Be* online, visit mohumanities.org/proud-to-be-anthology-series.

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MH MISSION STATEMENT

To enrich lives and strengthen communities by connecting Missourians with the people, places, and ideas that shape our society.

The Missouri Humanities Council (MH) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that was created in 1971 under authorizing legislation from the US Congress.

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Creativity Comes

IN NEWLY PACKAGED 2022 SIGNATURE SERIES:

Eat Think *&* BE MERRY



LISA CARRICO & CAITLIN YAGER
PROGRAM DIRECTORS, MISSOURI HUMANITIES

In the words of one of our state's icons, Walt Disney, "We keep moving forward, opening new doors and doing new things, because we're curious and curiosity keeps leading us down new paths." As many of you know, Missouri Humanities took a new and curious approach to how we package and promote our traditional programs: a yearlong themed program series called Eat, THINK, & Be Merry: Missouri's Foodways and Edible History.



Left to right: Panelists Jennie Boosey, Dr. Lyle Foster, and Daniel Ernce discuss food and community at our April Think-N-Drink in Springfield, “A New Recipe.”

Through webinars, presentations, podcasts, film, symposia, and more, we have shared content to creatively examine the dynamic relationship between food and the humanities, and more specifically, the role of food heritage, history, practices, and connection right here in Missouri.

It is without a doubt that the relationship between humans and food is truly unique. As we have heard throughout the year from our guest presenters, “everyone eats,” but even more so, food has the power to evoke strong memories and stories as well as the power to unite. Coming together and sharing a meal is the most communal and universal way to connect and celebrate. As beautifully stated by our Executive Director, Ashley Beard-Fosnow,

“From grandma’s roll recipe printed in an old church cookbook to global cuisines featured at post-pandemic community potlucks, food connects us. Stories about and around food help us understand ourselves, our ancestors, and our neighbors.”

In this inaugural series, we invited audiences to join us “around the table” as we have considered the role food plays in shaping our society—how it connects us to each other, to our own

pasts and identities, to our Midwest roots, and to the world around us.

Since January, programming has centered around a “food-related” theme presented through a humanities lens to explore Missouri’s foodways and culinary traditions and celebrate the breadth and depth of Missouri’s cultural heritage, natural environment, history, and the relationship between food and the human experience.

While food can symbolize connection, celebration, and unity, food is not always created equal. This series has also allowed us to host conversations that bring light to such topics as food insecurity, resilient farming practices, sustaining food systems, the removal of African American

“Food is our common ground, a universal experience.”

—JAMES BEARD, AMERICAN CHEF, COOKBOOK AUTHOR, EDUCATOR, AND TELEVISION PERSONALITY



Clockwise from upper left: “Eating the Ozarks” participant smelling sassafras; Dr. Katherine Gilbert, Director of the Humanities and Ethics Center at Drury University, moderating the April Symposium; our cinematographer filming with William “Bill” Coe of Green Acres Urban Farm and Research Project for *Won't You Feed My Neighbor?*



Americans can gain a deeper understanding of who we are, making us more capable of fostering a more perfect union for a complex and diverse citizenry.

Our 2022 Signature Series has not only allowed us to be curious and explore a different and innovative way to expand our audience and create new partnerships, but it has been an opportunity to showcase how food impacts our regional identity, communities, neighbors, economy, and everyday lives.

We want to thank everyone who joined us “around the table” this year for a stellar first Signature Series. To view program content, including the film, recorded programs, resources, and podcast episodes, visit mohumanities.org/food.

narratives in BBQ, the challenges of being a woman in brewing, and the impact of slavery and Black farmer representation in the state of Missouri.

It is in these conversations—in discussing the past, present, and future of often-polarizing topics—that we were able to really look at the story of America and its perpetual struggle to meet its founding ideals. By exploring what we eat, all

Facilitator Rachel West guiding participants during the “Eating the Ozarks: Hiking, Humanities, & Foraging” Tour.



OVERVIEW OF OUR 2022 SIGNATURE SERIES PROGRAMMING

Our public program offerings during this inaugural Signature Series have expanded both our partnerships and our audience reach by addressing dynamic and interdisciplinary topics through a myriad of formats.



In February, we explored agriculture in Missouri—its economic importance and legacy, and community efforts to adopt new practices to create more resilient farming and food systems.



In March, we came together to “Think 'n' Drink” as we discussed the past, present, and future of the German beer and wine industry in our state.



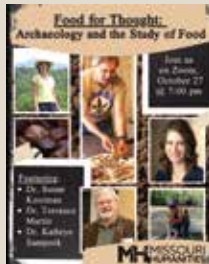
In April, we hosted a “Think 'n' Drink” discussing how local restaurants and business owners can help foster a relationship between food and their communities.



Also in April, we held a Symposium that addressed food utopias in America, agriculture and economic growth, and how regional identities are embedded in the practices of creating sustenance for the community.



In May, we laced up our hiking boots and went on a foraging field trip led by Rachael West of “Eating the Ozarks” to learn about wild edibles and their place in Missouri’s foodways and natural heritage.



In October, we held an intriguing conversation with archaeologists about what we can learn about the past by examining food through archaeology.

Ganohalidasdi. Hohigisik. Gatlisodi. HUNT. FISH. GATHER.



Chef Nephi Craig (Apache/Navajo) held a traditional cooking demonstration and discussion on November 3, 2022 at Washington University in St. Louis.

Check out our Eat, THINK, & Be Merry podcast for our conversation with Chef Nephi.

Available at mohumanities.org/podcasts or wherever you get your podcasts!





As part of our 2022 Signature Series, we released a debut short film, *Won't You Feed My Neighbor?*

Here in the Show Me State, both urban and rural Missourians struggle with food insecurity, finding themselves in so-called “food deserts,” or areas of low income with low access to fresh food resources such as a full-service grocery store.

Won't You Feed My Neighbor? highlights several organizations and individuals throughout the state dedicated to improving food access and providing resources in their communities, regions, and beyond. Their creative strategies, commitment to educating others, and passion for helping their neighbors reinforce hope for a more secure, sustainable food system here in Missouri.

The film premiered in July and is now available on the Missouri Humanities YouTube channel. The film—along with additional resources, including a downloadable version of our “Viewing and Discussion Guide” with engaging talking points to spark thoughtful conversations with your friends, your coworkers, your students, family, and community—is available on our website at mohumanities.org/wont-you-feed-my-neighbor.



To round out the year, we released our *Eat, THINK, & Be Merry* podcast.

Each episode features “food

thinkers” and other special guests with exciting, inspiring, and down-right delicious stories that consider the role food plays in shaping our society.

- EPISODE 1: Billy Polansky & Eddie Linzie, “Henry Kirklín Black Farmer Scholarship”
- EPISODE 2: Bri Burrows and Abbey Spencer, “Women in Brewing”
- EPISODE 3: Think-N-Drink: “Food and Community” Panel Discussion with Dr. Lyle Foster, Jennie Boosey, and Chef Daniel Ernce
- EPISODE 4: Suzanne Corbett, “Cookbooks as Cultural Heritage”
- EPISODE 5: Adrian Miller, “The Soul Food Scholar”
- EPISODE 6: “*Won't You Feed My Neighbor?*” Panel Discussion
- EPISODE 7: Bo Brown, “Foraging the Missouri Ozarks”
- EPISODE 8: Chef Nephi Craig (Apache/Navajo), “Hunt. Fish. Gather.”

The *Eat, THINK, & Be Merry* podcast is available on all podcast apps. Don't forget to listen, rate, & subscribe!

The purpose of *MO Humanities* is to provide a forum for publication, discussion, narrative expression, and dialogue regarding the human experience of Missourians. This year, we opened the pages of the magazine to authors, scholars, students, poets, and residents to submit offerings geared toward a public humanities audience. A panel of judges selected the pieces that best fit the theme. We are delighted to add these new voices and perspectives to this issue.



Missouri

MISSOURI POET LAUREATE STATE POEM

Read at the Capitol at Missouri's
200th Bicentennial Celebration

MARYFRANCES WAGNER

Little Blue Trace, still as glass all winter,
breaks its silence to eel around its curves.
Sunlight spangles the surface like a flash
of minnows. Mayapples open their umbrellas
and shade trillium. The hunt is on for morels
hidden under elms. A bluebird skims below a heron
flapping to its rookery. The chorus frogs creee
and trill. I stretch my arms to the cave state,
start of the Pony Express, rolling hills
and river bluffs, prairie and plateau, earth
solid beneath my feet. Summer brings
the thump of June bugs on lights, honeybees,
and the hornworm emerges as a sphinx moth.
By July we wipe sweat from our necks and bite
into sweet corn and catfish, the plumpest Big Boys,
and juicy Red Havens. Pawpaws and persimmons
slip from their trees in thuds until katydids
cease their churning, and chill scatters us
like the red and yellow leaves backlit
in the last October light. Frost returns to scrim
our windows and silence the Little Blue Trace
again. We watch snow erase former
impressions. By morning, the reverse braille
of bird tracks will leave us runic messages.



Wagner reading
at the Capitol at
Missouri's 200th
Bicentennial
Celebration.

Maryfrances Wagner's newest books are *The Silence of Red Glass*, *The Immigrants' New Camera*, and *Solving for X*. Her newly reissued book *Red Silk* won the Thorpe Menn Book Award. She co-edits *I-70 Review*, serves on The Writers Place board, was 2020 Missouri Individual Artist of the Year, and is Missouri Poet Laureate 2021–2023. Her poems have appeared in *New Letters*, *Midwest Quarterly*, *American Journal of Poetry*, *Poetry East*, *Voices in Italian Americana*, *Main Street Rag*, *Rattle*, and *Unsettling America: An Anthology of Contemporary Multicultural Poetry*.



Sicilian Legacy

WITH PASTA



ROBERT STEWART



Most disturbing for a child is the suspicion that the language he hears and tries to grasp, even at its tail of understanding, is, in fact, counterfeit. For us, all pasta was spaghetti. I'll tell you what we never ate: *Pasta con zucchini fritti* (with fried zucchini), *pasta con le sarde* (and sardines), *pasta alla Paolina* (Paolina style). On New Year's Eve, we never ate *zampone* and lentils. These are not words we used. All are common Sicilian dishes, and we were entirely Sicilian on my mother's side (Giacopelli), yet our venue in St. Louis's working class, I suspect, kept things simple and often imprecise. Sauce was *sugu*, tomato sauce, never vinegar, citrus, cream. Only once do I remember anything as exotic as lasagna noodles in the house. I had arrived home late after basketball practice at my Catholic high school in Kirkwood, after the lasagna had been entirely consumed. I merely heard about it, as if it were a dish coveted by the gods, a layering of the earth itself, a palatable loam of grain, meat, sauce, cheese. How was one to take this?

It is true that in my grandfather's village in Sicily, Cinisi, lasagna noodles are the traditional Christmas dish. For us, though, Christmas centered around the hollow, square-cut noodle called *tubê tini*, "that little spaghetti," we would say. It also is true that Christmas for my extended family—and family friends—occurred at my house, and true, too, that my grandmother spent the day hopping up onto her wooden stool to stir the two great pots of *sugu*, simmering on the stove with *salsiccia*, Italian sausage, and meatballs, and although it is true that no one talked softly or hardly shut up, it remains for me a holiday of silence.

On the noisiest day of the year, I achieved my own personal peace, a peace positive and invincible, which carries me, now, through all holidays. It was the gift I most remember receiving on that feast day, and I believe it arrived in a bundle of language I knew by then I would never understand. To study Italian, as I have in adulthood, is to realize even more the quality of the irretrievable. *Basta. Per oggi basta.* Close. Mere echoes of what I remembered, imprecisely. "History has made the Sicilian dialect almost a language apart," says Mary Taylor Simeti, an

American living in Sicily and author of *On Persephone's Island*, “so great is the legacy of the Greeks, the Arabs, the French, and the Spanish.”

What is it like to pass through these worlds outside language? In Brazil, a few years ago, on a magazine assignment, I had to learn to communicate with barely enough Portuguese to converse at dinner, much less to interview scientists and government agents. Yet there is something of an advantage in carrying oneself, sincerely, to the door of such people. You bring yourself to them, and it breaks down barriers. They begin to present their world to you—in English or through a translator—in a context you, an outsider, could not have presumed to know. In a restaurant once, in Brazil, strangers began to pass my notebook around the table, as each wrote in it some proper spelling, some detail of regional lore, a comment how the pavê being served is almost like tiramisu.

Within such a story, I hear my own regret. Lack of knowledge rarely stands as an advantage. The example here, though, is to trust others, to assume a faith that effort and work, against limits, will create insights. What choice do we have? The pomp and sustenance of tradition forms—that is, reforms—slowly in an immigrant family, sometimes, when it has been disconnected and forced to reassemble. The source itself, the town of Gibellina *vecchia* (old Gibellina), where my grandmother was born, was destroyed in the earthquake that devastated the valley of the Belice River in western Sicily in 1968. Prior to that, the valley cradled mainly subsistence farmers, most of whom looked to immigration as their hope. The post-earthquake world leaves its valuable minutiae on which to build.

This is the context we are after. My single most vivid memory of family dinner is on Christmas when I was thirteen or fourteen, as my uncle Joe, *Giuseppe*, was finishing a mountain of *tubê tini* and *sugu* with grated cheese; in the center of his plate sat a single noodle no more than half an inch square, which he could not eat. It seems convenient that this image of abundance and limit should fall forever, in my mind, to the namesake of Sicily's most beloved male saint and advocate, among other things, of lost causes. The poor, the orphaned, the needy—traditionally, most Sicilians—honor him on his feast day in March with tables covered with *cucciddatu* (Sicilian fig cookies), fish, breads, all else imaginable, and a main course of pasta Milanese (tomato sauce with fish).

It was in that lone noodle that Christmas, however, we found our joy, laughing hysterically that Joe could not eat it. The Buddha would accept it, but it was not Buddha we invited in. The *tubê tini* releases its power in this context, in which the least conspicuous object, the mystics remind us, finds its numinous presence in the details of our lives. Mary Taylor Simeti quotes from an unfinished novel by Elio Vittorini, at the point in which the father talks to his son of such a meal: “Try to be that way always, child,” he says. “And when you eat cheese with your bread, remember that its taste comes from all this that you are seeing and smelling now, and that it is made of all this space and this sun as well as of milk.”

Robert Stewart served as editor-in-chief of *New Letters* magazine for 18 years and won a National Magazine Award in 2008. His recent books include *Working Class* (poems, Stephen F. Austin State University) and *The Narrow Gate: Writing, Art & Values* (essays, Serving House Books).

I Want to Remember

VIRGINIA BRACKETT

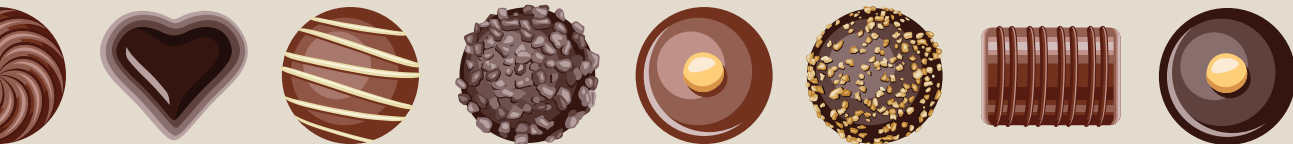
My father, Captain Edmund C. Roberts, Jr., was killed by sniper fire in Korea when I was eight months old. My mother, Helen, eventually remarried. I grew up in a happy family, and I didn't become curious about my father for several decades. When I determined to try to know him better through his letters and my own research, I wondered: How might I relate to someone whose primary experience—that of military service—I didn't share?

However, as I examined the artifacts my mother had saved, I found a small notebook filled with his handwriting. He had used it to combat the effects of internment in a German prison camp after capture at the Battle of the Bulge. I was encouraged when I noted some pages focused on food, something with which I could identify.

My mother told me that the prisoners fantasized constantly about favorite dishes, not only due to perpetual hunger, but because food meant home. Thus, just as the prisoners in a makeshift community had, my father and I came together through shared culinary traditions. Fate dictates that our sharing be imaginary, but our mutual belief that food provides much more than physical nourishment proves real.

Helen had taped the notebook to a page in a scrapbook celebrating Ed that included telegrams, newspaper clippings, and military publications. Today, the notebook's lavender cover contrasts sharply with the age-browned page. Helen wrote above it: "Notebook of Ed Roberts in Prison Camp, Hammelberg, Germany, 1945."

When I first discover it, the words on the cover are foreign to me: "Stilabok," in bold capital letters, appeared above the word "Nafn," which I assume means "name," as Ed has handwritten his name, military number, and some additional information there. But when I open the cover, the words I read are anything but foreign. "Liberated 1612 27 March 1945" heads the page. Just below is the title for a table of contents, "Post-War Plans." His



lists helped prepare him for the job that awaited upon his return home, managing a new student union at his alma mater, Knox College, in Galesburg, Illinois. I immediately turn to page six with its heading “Tobacco and Candy Stock,” mentally noting perhaps I inherited my sweet tooth from Ed.

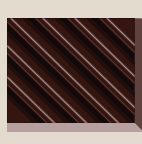
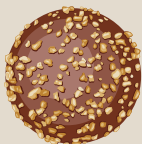
I see many familiar names: Hershey’s, Milky Way, Nestle, Clark, and Butterfinger, brands that regularly grace my table when my grandchildren visit. Other brands with which I’m not so familiar follow: Walnettos, Dr. I.Q., and then the word “Mars.” I lived for a time in Austin, a suburb of Chicago, one of my parents’ favorite cities, and five blocks from a Mars factory. The intoxicating chocolate scent haunted our neighborhood. The list concludes with “Either Fannie Mae, or Martha Washington box candy. Whitman’s,” candies long synonymous with romance that I know well. I am thrilled to think that the Fannie Mae box I’d found among Mom’s possessions once held a chocolaty gift from Ed.

I find a list of addresses for Ed’s fellow prisoners that range wide—from Upper Darby, Pennsylvania to San Jose, California; from Ashland, Massachusetts to Seattle, Washington; from Kansas City, Missouri to Serbia and (then)

Yugoslavia. The men’s fixation on food made sense, as not only were they underfed, but what they did receive was not particularly enticing. (The horse tooth Ed dipped from his broth later made me the star of various grade school show-and-tell sessions.) More significantly, the subject of homemade dishes served to connect and comfort a diverse group of POWs, regardless of geographic roots.

The page titled “Recipes I Want to Remember” details eleven entries, including “Coney Island Sauce: Hamberger (sic), fried loose, add green peppers, onions, chili sauce, relish & fry. Serve hot w/ frankfurters,” “Fruit pancakes: mix pineapple in batter. Any fruit,” and “King Edward Toast: Pullman bread, dip slightly in sherry or port, sprinkle cinnamon & brown sugar, dip one side in French toast batter, fry.”

The detail emanates sweetness, provoking all of my senses: “Baked Alaska: Cover hard ice cream w/ egg white & sugar, put in very hot oven to brown egg white instantly, serve w/butterscotch sauce,” “Candy Pie: Hersheys & MWs in pie crust, melt, meringue on top,” and “Candy Tart: wrap candy bar in dough, bake, serve with ice cream,” a simple dream. I can identify with the longing for home, made real in food, something I experienced as



a child while at camp, later while a university student living many hours from home, and even later when adapting to a new city. As a part of our identity, food connects us to home and to one another, whether miles or decades apart.

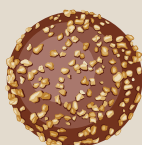
My favorite notebook entry is titled “Chicago Vacation.” My father fantasizes about taking my mother to Chicago and lists three days’ worth of activities. Each includes specific eateries, likely their favorites: Bit of Sweden, Berghoff’s, Ye Olde Cellar, Pipes, Martin’s. My husband and I were able to eat at Berghoff’s before it closed, and I enjoy thinking of my parents having been there so many years before. On a “Things to Do” page, the first entries include “picnic with both families,” and “get a malted at Hawthorne’s.” His homecoming brought images of family and food together and visits to old familiar places, marking both his past and the promise of a fresh future.

People share food for many reasons—commiseration, celebration, family occasions, to mark a life, to mark a death, and simply to remember. What and when we eat continues to shape the development of my community and my traditions. While I was never privileged to share a meal with my father, I can

share his acknowledgment of the power of food. I also share his belief that a communal breaking of bread symbolizes all that is best about family and friends.



Virginia Brackett's book *In the Company of Patriots* (2019, Sunbury Press) recounts her parents' history, her father's military career (including his escape from a prison camp and audience with General Patton), and the effect of his death on her family.



A Sweet Moment in Time



JOANN C. MASSMANN

For some sixty years, my in-laws lived in a two-story, white-framed farmhouse decorated with painted forest-green shutters on the family farm outside New Melle, Missouri. Within the fenced-in yard surrounding the old farmhouse were several practical buildings. First was the washhouse, which included the old wringer washer along with a heat stove to warm the water for doing the wash. Also included was the homemade oak table used solely for butchering, which basically took place in the washhouse. Second was the woodshed, brimming with split wood and kindling to protect it from the elements. And third, within steps from the back door of the old farmhouse, was the smokehouse, which stubbornly resisted the tornado of 2011 from being twisted off its foundation. Found inside was the occasional fresh ham, cured bacon, or homemade pork sausage smoked with hickory wood from an old cook stove.

Inside the farmhouse were tall painted ceilings and walls either painted or wallpapered. Old family photos dangled from the walls and spoke of the history of the century-old house and the aged logs as ceiling joists. Those people, my in-laws, lived simply but richly. Their days consisted of feeding the cows, the chickens, and the hogs after breakfast and working in their expansive vegetable garden until the sun set behind the lush green cornfields. There were always chores to do, and they worked from sunup to sundown. Those two hardworking souls, along with their son, farmed over 100 acres and planted corn and beans on tractors that should have retired years

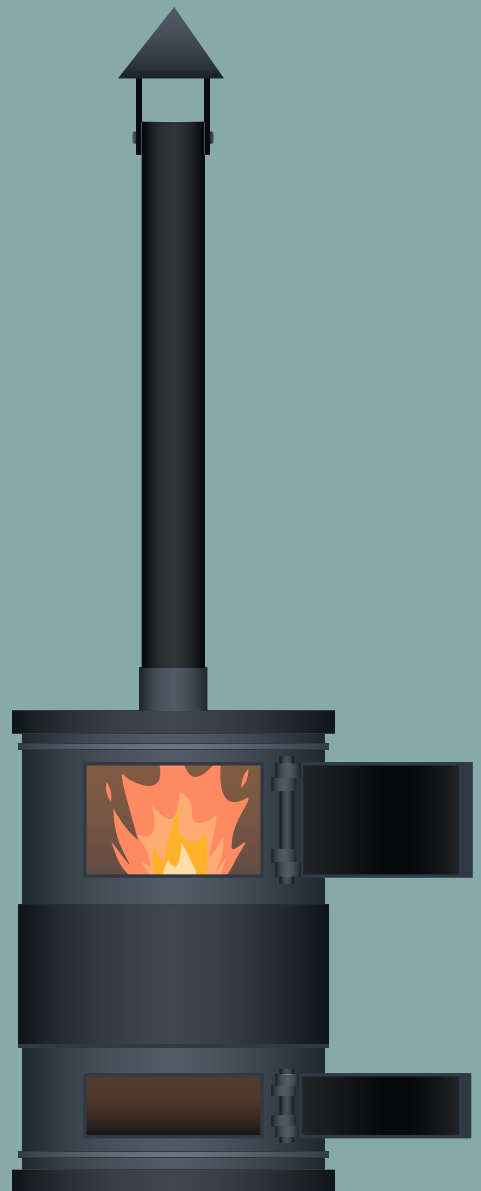
before. And duly noted, they cared for their livestock and faithful dogs as members of their family. Everyone and everything had a job to do.

Meals were an important part of the farmer's day. There was the breakfast of toast, bacon, scrambled eggs, and oatmeal. The same breakfast every day. Midmorning lunch was a cup of coffee and a little lunchmeat sandwich, plus a few cookies because sweets were always readily available. The noon meal was pea or rice soup or butchered roast beef with fresh potatoes and carrots from the garden. An afternoon nap helped them recoup from the bountiful lunch, then they were ready for their next set of chores. Midafternoon lunch was light, with a piece of box cake or a slice of freshly baked apple pie made with lard, and, of course, a cup of coffee: just something to give them a boost as the afternoon lagged on. The evening meal consisted of leftovers from lunch, and before the day ended and bed was a welcome respite from their busy day, there was the late snack of a peeled apple or a juicy holiday orange. My father-in-law especially loved his evening treat of an apple. He lived to be 90.

What those dear old-timers accomplished in a day would exhaust most of us in an hour, but that was their livelihood. Meals were not just a time of nourishing the body, but it was a time of gathering to socialize, to plan, and to calculate the events of the day and to solve any problems that invariably popped up. It was a chance to reminisce how it was done in the "olden days" and to get caught

up on the lives and gossip, if you will, of neighbors and family.

My mother-in-law cooked and baked on a woodburning stove. Having grown up in the city, I thought this way of cooking archaic and out of touch with reality. Little did I know then that it would be the most



delectable eating I would ever experience. Pies made of lard, angel food cakes made from a dozen egg whites, and yellow cakes made from the remaining dozen yokes—nothing was ever wasted!

I remember watching my mother-in-law stoke the fire after starting it with kindling and then adding chunks of wood to keep it alive. She fried foods in an old cast-iron skillet on top of that woodburning stove, and the food never stuck and always had its own special flavor. My mother-in-law also cooked the most tender roasts and baked such tasty pies and cakes in that woodburning oven, which generously absorbed all the goodness from that wood. She was a seasoned cook, and there has never been any to compare.

My mother-in-law also taught piano lessons for many years in that old farmhouse. Music filled the house and even entertained the chickens walking freely outside the fenced yard. She was talented, my mother-in-law, and she loved to play the upright piano in her parlor, a room generally darkened by shades until company arrived so as to keep the flowered rug and the furniture from fading. It was a room opened only for piano students and visiting Sunday company of family, friends, and neighbors. Students, I am sure, benefited from those piano lessons, but they also walked away with a slice of homemade pie. Did they keep coming back for more lessons or more pie? “Nothing like a pie made with lard,” I am sure they would tell you!

Now, these days, the old white-framed farmhouse with its forest-green shutters sits vacant. Long gone are the two dear loved ones who inhabited that house for many precious years. And yet, when walking through the house even now, I hear the joyous laughter of family long gone, the daily chatter at the dinner table, the overwhelming smell of angel cookies, pies, and cakes, and the clatter of dishes getting ready for the next meal. Sweet memories. Sweet moments. It is love that lives on in our hearts, my husband’s and mine, and now in the hearts of our son, his wife, and their children who live on the family farm. One generation after another. It was a hard life then but certainly less complicated and richer than any life lived today. We feel privileged to have experienced such moments and will treasure them forever.

Joann C. Massmann is a recently retired middle school English teacher from Immanuel Lutheran School in Wentzville with a bachelor’s degree in psychology and sociology from Lindenwood University.



What a Cherokee Boomer Eats

GALEN GRITTS (CHEROKEE)



A CHEROKEE BABY BOOMER IN MISSOURI?

“YOU BET YOUR SWEET BIPPY!”

I drew my first breath and cried my first cry in 1952 at Children’s Hospital in St. Louis—I am a baby boomer. My father, born in Oklahoma, spoke Cherokee until he was eight, when he began learning English. I am a registered member of the Cherokee Nation and have lived my entire life in Missouri.

In March of this year, I served as the Invited Elder at the national convention of the American College Personnel Association.

I once wrote book reviews for the *Cherokee Phoenix*, the tribal newspaper started in 1828.

Growing up, TV teemed with Westerns, and many movies of cowboys were making money at the box office.

During summer break from school, we would visit my Cherokee grandparents in northeastern Oklahoma, both who spoke Cherokee as their primary language. I was surprised that my grandfather looked like a cowboy. He wore cowboy boots, Wrangler jeans, mother-of-pearl

button Western-style shirts, a big belt buckle, and a Stetson hat.

I was confused. Why was my Cherokee grandfather dressed (and looking cool) as a cowboy?

In childhood, we ate many casseroles in which my mom hid the vegetables among noodles and tuna or hamburger. We ate navy beans with ham and potatoes. Campbell soup was ubiquitous. Meat loaf enhanced with white bread was a staple treat.

We thought Mrs. Paul’s was a species of fish.

Tang, Hostess Twinkies, and Wonder Bread, we assumed, had been growing on the trees in the Garden of Eden.

There were no fast-food joints. Steak ’n Shake was around, but they cooked to order.

Grocery stores were smaller and the choices more limited. People bought whole chickens at the store, not parts like wings and thighs. Barbeque sauce was either Heinz or Maull (“Don’t just baste your barbeque... Maull it”).

We ate macaroni and cheese occasionally and, less often, spaghetti and meatballs. No one knew what pasta was.

The only pizza we ate was made from a kit from Chef Boyardee. The crust was sticky and near impossible to shape. It was known as pizza pie. It was like a saltine cracker with ketchup on it. We were thrilled to have it.

Bagels were off the radar. At that time, they were pretty much an ethnic food. Jews ate them, but no one else did. They were only found at kosher bakeries.

Avocados did not drift into my consciousness until the late 1970s.

I became a vegetarian my senior year in high school—due mainly to the influence of several pretty neat girls in my class. That stopped when I went to Mizzou and it was impossible to sustain at the university's cafeteria by my dorm. Some of the stuff being scooped with ice cream scoops at each meal (purportedly food) was rumored to have meat in it.

Before food stamps, there were commodity foods. During my late college years in Columbia, several of us once opened the can simply labeled "Meat" and gave it to a pet Labrador for her dinner. She refused to stay in the same room with it.

And yet we were expected to eat that stuff.

Fast-forward to today. My family grows some Native American food in our gardens. Some are provided by the Cherokee Seed Bank for tribal members, such as Candy Roaster squash and long Greasy beans. Others are staples of most Midwestern gardens.

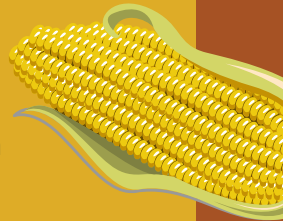
What many folks don't realize is that approximately 60% of the food consumed worldwide originated from the New World. That means it was invented by Native Americans. That's what domestication means—a deliberate manipulation of nature to produce something that is not found in nature. It is an invention, pure and simple. As a general rule, Native people haven't been credited for their ingenuity in cultivars.

Here is something to think about—there would be no bourbon industry without the Native American invention of corn. The popular Tito's Vodka is also distilled from corn, giving it a sweeter taste. Corn does not appear naturally in nature.

Today, my wife and I eat many whole grains, fruits, and vegetables.

Making a conscious effort to eat a more decolonized diet, we include and grow some indigenous foods: sweet potatoes, tomatoes, beans, potatoes (and, no, they are not Irish—they are traced back to the Incas), peppers, avocados, corn (maize), and squash. One of our favorite dishes made from ingredients on this list is Three Sisters salad—a mixture of corn, beans, and squash.

Contrary to popular belief, fry bread, while quite tasty, was not developed until the late 1800s when the United States government displaced the tribes, putting many in internment camps with no access to their



native foods. They were made to subsist on what little was provided by the government—flour, baking powder, lard, and salt.

For animal protein, we try to stay away from a lot of processed or red meat and focus on indigenous choices—trout, salmon, venison, turkey.

We also incorporate healthy foods from other cultures. Favorites are couscous, bok choy, quinoa, lentils, and hummus. The many recent immigrants to Missouri have added talent to our workforce and growth to our economy while bringing healthy and interesting food choices with them.

I can't say we don't enjoy a good hamburger or pork steak on occasion. A full disclaimer requires me to state that occasionally Vienna Fingers and Doritos are found in our house.

Even in today's world of more access, it still takes deliberate effort to eat Native and healthy. We are only able to approximate eating Native. We enjoy the taste, the heritage, and the health benefits of what we can do.

It completes the circle.

Galen Gritts is a registered member of the Cherokee Nation and has written book reviews on Cherokee history and culture for the tribe's newspaper, the *Cherokee Phoenix*. He has a degree in history from the University of Missouri—St. Louis.

Eat the Weeds

BESA SCHWEITZER

My daughter and I were talking about the grocery store shortages, and she commented that she wished she could be a rabbit and just eat the grass. “Well,” I said, “we can all be rabbits with the bounty of edible greens in our spring gardens.” Looking around my garden, I found several edible weeds, including henbit deadnettle, onion grass, violets, and dandelions. In my herb garden, I found parsley, garlic chives, kale, and mint. For some fun color, I included the edible flowers of the dandelion, violet, and redbud. With all the nutrients from these hardy spring greens, I should be able to avoid a trip to the grocery store for a few more days.

Our family has a tradition of including flowers in our Easter meal. The easiest flower to find on Easter is the violet because of the long bloom period. My garden grows plenty of violets, and I harvest them often. The violet's leaves are edible, but the tastiest part, I think, is the flower. Some people candy or make a syrup of violet flowers for attractive desserts. The violets I harvest go straight on a salad or are used as a pretty garnish on any side dish. While harvesting violets can be tedious, I have good luck picking the flowers by running them through my fingers to pull them off the stem.

Redbud flowers can also be eaten directly or made into a candy or syrup the same way you would do with violets. The pink of the redbud and the



purple of the violet really make a dish festive. It is also great to watch the look on a friend's face as you pick a flower and then stick it straight in your mouth. After inspecting the seedpods, which look like flattened beans, you will likely notice the redbud is a member of the bean family. The redbud flower also looks like a bean flower, with a hinged mouth surrounded by five petals: one on top, two on bottom, and two wings.

One more weed to add color to your salad is dandelion. I like to pick the yellow fluff out of the center of the flower and remove the bitter outer green part. Dandelion petals are tasty eaten in salad and can also be baked into dishes like pancakes. I once had dandelion pancakes with fresh maple syrup. Yum! Dandelion leaves are also a healthy green, but look for fresh new leaves because older ones can be very bitter. In a salad, a few yellow dandelion petals look great.

Note, however, that eating weeds is not recommended if there is a chance that chemicals have been applied to the area during regular lawn maintenance or to kill weeds. Additionally, whenever adding new foods to your diet, start small and check with your doctor. Weeds can be an overlooked source of fresh nutritious greens. Check your garden for weeds next time you want a snack.

Besa Schweitzer is the author of *The Wildflower Garden Planner: An Interactive Guidebook to Native Landscaping in Missouri* and owner of Besa Grows Wild, a native landscaping company.



2022 STL VETERANS WRITING WORKSHOP:

Feeding the Soul Through Writing

LISA CARRICO,
PROGRAM DIRECTOR, MISSOURI HUMANITIES

HEATHER SMOOT,
VETERANS WRITING WORKSHOP PARTICIPANT

After several years of hosting virtual Veterans Writing Workshops through Zoom, we were beyond excited to meet in person again. We saw many familiar—and a few new—faces!

Open to veterans, military personnel, and their family members, the 2022 St. Louis Veterans Writing Workshop took place over three Saturdays in May at the High Low literary arts café in Grand Center with support from the Kranzberg Arts Foundation and in partnership with St. Louis Community College.

Our workshop facilitators, Kent Walker, a combat Army veteran with an M.F.A. in writing, and Stacey Walker, a poet and current lecturer at the University of Missouri–St. Louis, St. Louis Community College, and Jefferson College, embraced the idea of creating a workshop that aligned with our 2022 Signature Series: Eat, THINK, & Be Merry. They created a wonderfully engaging three-session generative writing workshop centered around micro-writing and the theme of food and foodways.

Each session hosted a special guest presenter, each bringing their expertise in writing and foodways to the creative table and providing meaningful feedback to the workshop participants.

GUEST PRESENTERS:



ANGELA
MITCHELL



JASON
VASSER-ELONG



KASEY
PERKINS





Heather Smoot is an honorably discharged Air Force veteran who served for three years and had this to say about the workshop:

I have been writing all my life but became reacquainted with writing when I attended a VA Creative Writing class about ten years ago and have been writing ever since. I attend a community writing group and a writing class regularly. The VA sparked my interest anew in my writing and gave me the confidence to begin submitting my writing to different publications. I was published in the *Veterans' Voices* online magazine and won first place at the VA Creative Arts Festival three years ago.

As a regular participant in the Missouri Humanities Veterans Writing Workshop for the last five years, I have enjoyed mingling with like-minded veterans and their families. Listening to the

moderators and guest speakers and sharing in writing exercises with the group is personally gratifying, enhancing my own writing skills. It's rewarding to meet new people and visit with familiar faces at the workshops and to see writers progress over time. We develop a bond in our quest for writing opportunities and love of the written word.

Our last workshop focused on food memories, past and present. We explored our histories and personal stories through food. Reminiscing about past events through food, both military and civilian, was eye-opening and fun. Stories about food memories included writings about military rations or new foods introduced to those serving overseas as well as writing about childhood food memories. Following is a poem about one of my food memories:

Momma's Domain

The warm kitchen was her special domain,
cutting onions, celery and carrots the same
sizes, scents wafting heavy in the air;
out came the pork shoulder to prepare.
Rubbing several spices into the pink meat
surrounded by vegetables, ready for the heat.
As the pork cooked, fat melted down
into the pan, smells playing with sounds.
Memories came of home, love and acceptance,
bringing Momma alive again, even enhanced.

Sharing these experiences has been personally beneficial to me, and I am excited for the next workshop. I enthusiastically celebrate the opportunities the Veterans Writing Workshop has afforded me and excitedly anticipate the next one.

To learn more about our Veterans Writing Workshops, visit mohumanities.org/writing-workshops.

We host the workshops in partnership with libraries, universities, veteran support organizations, community groups, etc. If you would like to partner to host a workshop, email lisa@mohumanities.org.

Missouri Humanities Continues to Honor Veterans Day with Annual Release of



Proud to Be: Writing by American Warriors

LISA CARRICO,
PROGRAM DIRECTOR, MISSOURI HUMANITIES

Now in its 11th volume, Missouri Humanities is pleased to announce this year's winners of the annual anthology series, *Proud to Be: Writing by American Warriors*.

Published in partnership with Southeast Missouri State University Press since Veterans Day 2012, the series has provided hundreds of veterans, military personnel, and their family members from across the nation a platform for self-expression through writing and photography.

Proud to Be (PTB) is a juried contest, and this year's volume features 40 contributors with submissions and winners in four categories: essay, poetry, fiction, and photography. Special thanks to the contributors who so graciously shared their stories, to the four judges who volunteered their time to read submissions, and to Virginia Brackett, an author and educator who helps organize writing workshops for veterans and their families as a member of the Kansas City Veterans Writing Team and who wrote this year's foreword, inviting readers to consider how to read a true war story.

Volume 11 is edited by Dr. James Brubaker, Assistant Professor and Director of Southeast Missouri State University Press, with copyediting support from Dr. Susan Swartwout, Professor Emerita of English, founder, and retired publisher of Southeast Missouri State University Press.

PTB11 is due out on Veterans Day, 11/11!

“Proud to Be proves crucial in promoting awareness of quality veteran writing. And when writers submit to this excellent anthology series, they can feel confident their work will be received with the respect and consideration it deserves from professional staff and highly qualified jurors.”

– VIRGINIA BRACKETT

For more information about the Proud to Be anthology series, the PTB podcast, or to purchase Volumes 1–11, please visit mohumanities.org/programs/veterans.



PROUD TO BE VOLUME 11 WINNERS AND JUDGES ARE AS FOLLOWS:

ESSAY WINNER:

“Tanks” by Charles Jacobson (Illinois)

Judge: **Bronson Lemer** is the author of *The Last Deployment: How a Gay, Hammer-Swinging Twentysomething Survived a Year in Iraq*. His work has appeared in *Guernica*, *Creative Nonfiction*, *The Southeast Review*, & *Twentysomething Essays by Twentysomething Writers*. He is a 2019 McKnight Writing Fellow and lives in St. Paul.

FICTION WINNER:

“Crisis and Response” by Adam Straus (Pennsylvania)

Judge: **Luke Rolfes’** first book, *Flyover Country*, won the Georgetown Review Press Short Story Collection Contest, and his second book, *Impossible Naked Life*, won the Acacia Fiction Prize from Kallisto Gaia Press. His novel *Sleep Lake* is forthcoming from Braddock Avenue Books. He teaches creative writing at Northwest Missouri State University, edits *Laurel Review*, and served as a mentor in the AWP Writer to Writer Program.

POETRY WINNER:

“Tar” by Eric Chandler (Minnesota)

Judge: **Corrie Lynn White’s** debut collection of poems, *Gold Hill Family Audio*, was published by Southeast Missouri State University Press in 2022. Her poetry has appeared in *Oxford American*, *New Ohio Review*, *Best New Poets*, *Mid-American Review*, and *Mississippi Review*, among other places. Originally from Gold Hill, North Carolina, she holds a B.A. from UNC–Chapel Hill and an M.F.A. from UNC–Greensboro. She currently lives in Chattanooga, Tennessee, where she works as a journalist and was named the 2021 Tennessee Arts Commission Fellow in Poetry.

PHOTOGRAPHY WINNER:

“Last Hoorah” by Niko Eden (California)

Judge: **Major (Ret) A. Sean Taylor, MSC, USAR** served 10 years in the Iowa National Guard and went with the 2/34th Red Bull Infantry Division to Afghanistan in 2010 in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. After the deployment, he transferred to the Army Reserve and deployed to Iraq in 2015 as part of Operation Inherent Resolve—assisting the Iraqi Army in their fight against ISIS. In both deployments, he served as the photographer and public affairs officer. He retired, due to injuries, in 2019. He is currently a professor of psychology and sociology at the Des Moines Area Community College in Boone, Iowa and serves as the faculty adviser for the In My Boots Student Group that focuses on reducing veteran suicide through community outreach.

Missouri Humanities Goes to **Washington, DC** and **Washington, MO** to Support Local and National Book Festivals



LISA CARRICO
PROGRAM DIRECTOR, MISSOURI HUMANITIES

Missouri Humanities is excited to report its accomplishments as the new Missouri Affiliate for the Library of Congress Center for the Book.

The Library of Congress and its Affiliate Centers for the Book have a collaborative, symbiotic relationship focusing on promoting books, reading, literacy, and the Library's literary programming nationwide through public programs and initiatives designed to attract a diverse population and serve Affiliates' local audiences. In our first year serving in this role, we have supported this mission by co-hosting the first annual Missouri Book Festival in Washington, Missouri and by participating in the National Book Festival in Washington, DC.

With input from numerous literary and literacy-based organizations, authors, and educators from across the state of Missouri who serve on the Missouri Center for the Book (MOC4TB) Advisory Group, *Growing Up with the River: Nine Generations on the Missouri* by Dan and Connie Burkhardt was chosen to represent the state at the 2022 National Book Festival.

The title is a part of the "Great Reads from Great Places" list for the 2022 National Book Festival of the Library of Congress. The list features books and authors representing the literary heritage of all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and Northern Marianas. For over 20 years, this program has included a highlighted youth title from each affiliate center.

On September 3rd, MH participated in the Festival's Roadmap to Reading program at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center, where each Affiliate Center showcased their book selection(s) and thousands of families came through collecting stamps and stickers to fill their Roadmap to Reading Passport Map.



Within four hours of being there, MH passed out 1,000 activity books created by the Burkhardts with funding awarded by the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) as part of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and NEH Sustaining the Humanities through the American Rescue Plan (SHARP) initiative. The activity books display ready-to-color illustrations created by Bryan Haynes, Missouri artist and illustrator for *Growing Up with the River*, and include information corresponding with the original book.

The Library of Congress National Book Festival was founded in 2001 by Laura Bush and then-Librarian of Congress James H. Billington. The Festival is an annual literary tradition that brings together best-selling authors, poets, and illustrators with thousands of readers for book talks, panel discussions, book signings, and other engaging activities. Over the years, the festival has evolved immensely, becoming the nation’s premier literary event, and this year was no exception. It was the Library’s first in-person festival since the pandemic, and the experience fit the festival theme—literally, that “books bring us together!”

Prior to the National Book Festival, MH presented Dan and Connie Burkhardt with a Great Reads from Great Places certificate on Saturday, August 27th at the first-ever Missouri Book Festival, a regional literary celebration that featured an array of programs and activities to promote literacy and encourage reading throughout the state.

The Missouri Book Festival (MBF) was held in downtown Washington, Missouri. Washington has a long history of literacy programming and is self-proclaimed as the “Best-Read



Top left: National Book Festival participants visiting the Missouri Affiliate booth. Bottom right: Lisa Greening, Project Director, Turn the Page STL; and Lisa Carrico, Program Director, Missouri Humanities, passing out Great Reads materials.

“Missouri Humanities supported the festival in a variety of critical ways. The organization presented a wide range of popular, and also substantive, programs for people of all ages. In addition, MH’s participation helped attract literacy organizations and libraries from around the state, which raised the profile and significance of the event. We couldn’t have asked for a better partner.”

—JOSH STEVENS
PUBLISHER, REEDY PRESS



Photos by Jeanne Miller Wood and Lisa Carrico from the Missouri Book Festival. Top of page, clockwise from upper left: Missouri Humanities Executive Director Ashley Beard-Fosnow presenting Dan and Connie Burkhardt with the 2022 Great Read Award; authors Steve Wiegenstein and Nancy Allen talking about “The Ozarks in Print and Perception: Imagining a Region in Book”; Metro Theater Company performing “In My Granny’s Garden”; author Chris Stuckenschneider reading *Twist of Fate: The Miracle Colt and His Friends*. Bottom left of page: Storytime with author Mon Trice reading *Cannon’s Crash Course*.

Community in America.” Sponsored by Reedy Press and Missouri Humanities as the Missouri Center for the Book, the Festival incorporated traditional author talks—including an Ozark literary discussion, testimonials from two women authors writing about their fathers’ wars, and a writing workshop with the Missouri Poet Laureate—but also included unique events related to books. For instance, there was a soapbox derby, wrestling match, live music performances, cooking demonstrations, an ice cream social with several women senators, a literary theatrical performance, and even a horse featured at a storybook reading.

In the words of Kristy Stoyer, chair of the Missouri Book Festival committee

and Washington resident, “The festival was focused on literacy, but really, like our tagline says, we wanted to bring stories to life. We wanted to focus on literacy but also have immersive elements. In the end, we had an assortment of vendors and 30 engaging programs for attendees of all ages and with varying interests.”

To learn more about the authors, books, sponsors, and programs featured at the 2022 Missouri Book Festival, visit missouribookfestival.com.

A selection of programs, including videos highlighting Great Reads from Great Places, have been archived on the National Book Festival’s website at loc.gov/events/2022-national-book-festival.



While we close the book on this year’s Missouri Center for the Book programming, we very much look forward to what next year brings! We would like to especially thank the MOC4TB Advisory Group for all their time and input in helping plan and coordinate this year’s program lineup. To learn more and meet the advisory group, visit mohumanities.org/center-for-the-book.



Small Town SHOWCASE

2023 FEATURED FIVE COMMUNITIES

CAITLIN YAGER,
PROGRAM DIRECTOR, MISSOURI HUMANITIES

Missouri Humanities is thrilled to announce our Small Town Showcase 2023 “Featured Five” winners! Each of our featured communities will work with Missouri Humanities to produce a podcast and a video about their town, which will be released throughout 2023. Forty-three Missouri communities were nominated, followed by over 47,000 votes submitted to select our winners.

Our Featured Five for 2023 will be:

Norborne

(Carroll County, Population: 637)

Seymour

(Webster County, Population: 2,000)

St. James

(Phelps County, Population: 3,900)

Doniphan

(Ripley County, Population: 2,000)

Carl Junction

(Jasper County, Population: 8,000)

Congratulations to these wonderful Missouri communities, and thank you to everyone who nominated and voted! Stay tuned to Missouri Humanities’ website, social media, and newsletters for updates about 2023’s Featured Five and for notifications about 2024 nominations.

ABOUT SMALL TOWN SHOWCASE:

Missouri Humanities strives to highlight the uniqueness of Missouri’s small towns and to showcase the bigger picture of what Small Town America really is and why it should not be overlooked, overshadowed, or underappreciated.

Small Town Showcase provides an opportunity to connect with more of our smaller/rural communities, form partnerships, and provide communities with a platform to tell their stories.

Each year, communities will be nominated and voted on by Missourians to become our annual “Featured Five” communities.

To listen to the podcasts and watch the videos about our pilot communities, visit mohumanities.org/small-town-showcase.



Capturing Our Living

JUDITH ARNOLD,
URBAN PLANNER, ST. LOUIS ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

INTRO BY CAITLIN YAGER,
PROGRAM DIRECTOR, MISSOURI HUMANITIES

In April 2022, we hosted a unique kind of Cultural Heritage Workshop. Typically, these workshops are hosted in smaller, more rural communities and aim to highlight how heritage and culture can benefit a community, providing methods to increase engagement and better utilize a community's assets. I received a workshop request from the St. Louis Association of Community Organizations (SLACO) in early 2022, and I was admittedly a bit hesitant. After all, we'd worked for several years at this point to tailor these to small towns, not bigger cities like St. Louis, but I was intrigued. Urban areas need cultural heritage too, right? Of course they do!

After meeting with Judith Arnold of SLACO and Sandy Brooks of the St. Louis Arts Chamber of Commerce, I realized their needs were not that much different than one of our smaller communities. Judith and Sandy are leading the charge to interpret and share stories from seven St. Louis neighborhoods along the old Hodiamont streetcar tracks, and they asked for our help in bringing people together to learn about why it's so important to preserve stories of people and places, and encourage them to share their own memories for this project. Their contributions would help tell the bigger story of these neighborhoods and, by extension, the story of St. Louis. The result was an inspiring, poignant, and memorable day, which Judith reflects on the next page.



Past:

Preserving Stories of People and Places Along the Hodiament Tracks

Placemaking is a people-centered approach to urban planning and revitalization of neighborhoods. More than ever before, there is strategic recognition that humanities can, and at its best does, represent a commitment to equitable planning decisions. For example, video interviews at an April 30th workshop of the Missouri Humanities Council recorded stories of residents from seven neighborhoods located just north of the “Delmar Divide” in St. Louis. Residents spoke about living along the Hodiament Tracks, a 3.5-mile abandoned place being transformed into a greenway. Memories of childhood exploits, riding streetcars, and what they saw resonated. Names of businesses and notable individuals were saliently spoken about, although many of these are long gone. Captured was a living history to be remembered as redevelopment takes place.

A video from the event not only becomes a memoir to be publicly shared, but also artwork for a portrait mural wall and a narrative for a storybook. Pages from the storybook will be displayed and installed into a storybook walk along the Hodiament Tracks in 2023. Beyond preserving the history and culture of residents, placemaking promotes engagement in public decision-making by connecting people and tradition to the new greenway space. This project embraces true collaboration as we blend humanities with planning principles and art to the space as a tribute to urbanism. Placemaking in other cities helps to transform communities into successful urban environments.

Judith Arnold is the Urban Planner for the St. Louis Association of Community Organizations and serves as the Director of Community Development in partnership with the St. Louis Arts Chamber of Commerce.

To learn more about the Hodiament Tracks project, contact Judith at arnold.judith@yahoo.com or call 314.305.1661.



JENNY VERGARA



NATASHA BAILEY

Co-hosted by Jenny Vergara, foodie and freelance writer, and Natasha Bailey, a chef, cheesemaker, and home gardener, Hungry For MO celebrates how local cuisine connects us as a community and shapes our region’s identity. Each podcast episode dives deep, taking the listener on a food journey that highlight’s Missouri cuisine—including interviews with the food inventors, historical events, and unique circumstances or family recipes that went into some of our state’s most iconic dishes.

Hungry For MO is made possible by Missouri Humanities and produced and distributed by KCUR.



SEASON 2 IS OUT NOW!

Season 1 and 2 are available wherever you get your podcasts and on our website at mohumanities.org/hungryformo.

The Missouri Speakers' Bureau Program



MARILYN WEBSTER-BROWN
PROGRAM SPECIALIST, MISSOURI HUMANITIES

Missouri Humanities and the State Historical Society of Missouri are pleased to announce a new roster of 50 authors, storytellers, historians, and experts who bring humanities education to life across the state of Missouri via the “Show Me Missouri” Speakers’ Bureau.

MISSOURI
SPEAKERS BUREAU

A graphic element consisting of a horizontal orange line that ends in a curved, upward-pointing shape on the right side.

If your civic organization, museum, historical society, library, or similar institution or group is looking for an expert to give a presentation on a topic related to the history, culture, geography, and/or people of Missouri, we hope you will consider what this program has to offer.

Underwriting is available for rural nonprofit organizations!

Review all of the various topics available and book your speaker at mohumanities.org/speakers-bureau.

George Washington Carver

CHAMPION OF FARM-TO-TABLE SUSTAINABILITY

RAFIA ZAFAR
PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH, AFRICAN AND AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES,
AND AMERICAN CULTURE STUDIES, WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY IN ST. LOUIS

From his earliest years searching for education in his native Missouri, to his unprecedented achievement of a master's of science in botany from Iowa State, to his long academic career at Tuskegee in the heart of the segregated South, the Missouri-born and formerly enslaved George Washington Carver was determined to access the education and training that most White Americans would have then denied him.

“There is probably no subject more important than the study of food.”

—GEORGE WASHINGTON CARVER

Although his position as a highly educated Black man at the end of the 19th century could have led him in a number of directions, including a permanent faculty position at Iowa State, Carver believed that

God and his race led him generally to the South and specifically to Macon County, Alabama. If Linda McMurray hailed Carver as “scientist and symbol” (*George Washington Carver: Scientist and Symbol*) and Mark Hersey celebrated him as an unheralded environmentalist (*My Work Is That of Conservation: An Environmental Biography of George Washington Carver*), there's another lens through which we can view Carver: as an early proponent of what we now call farm-to-table eating.

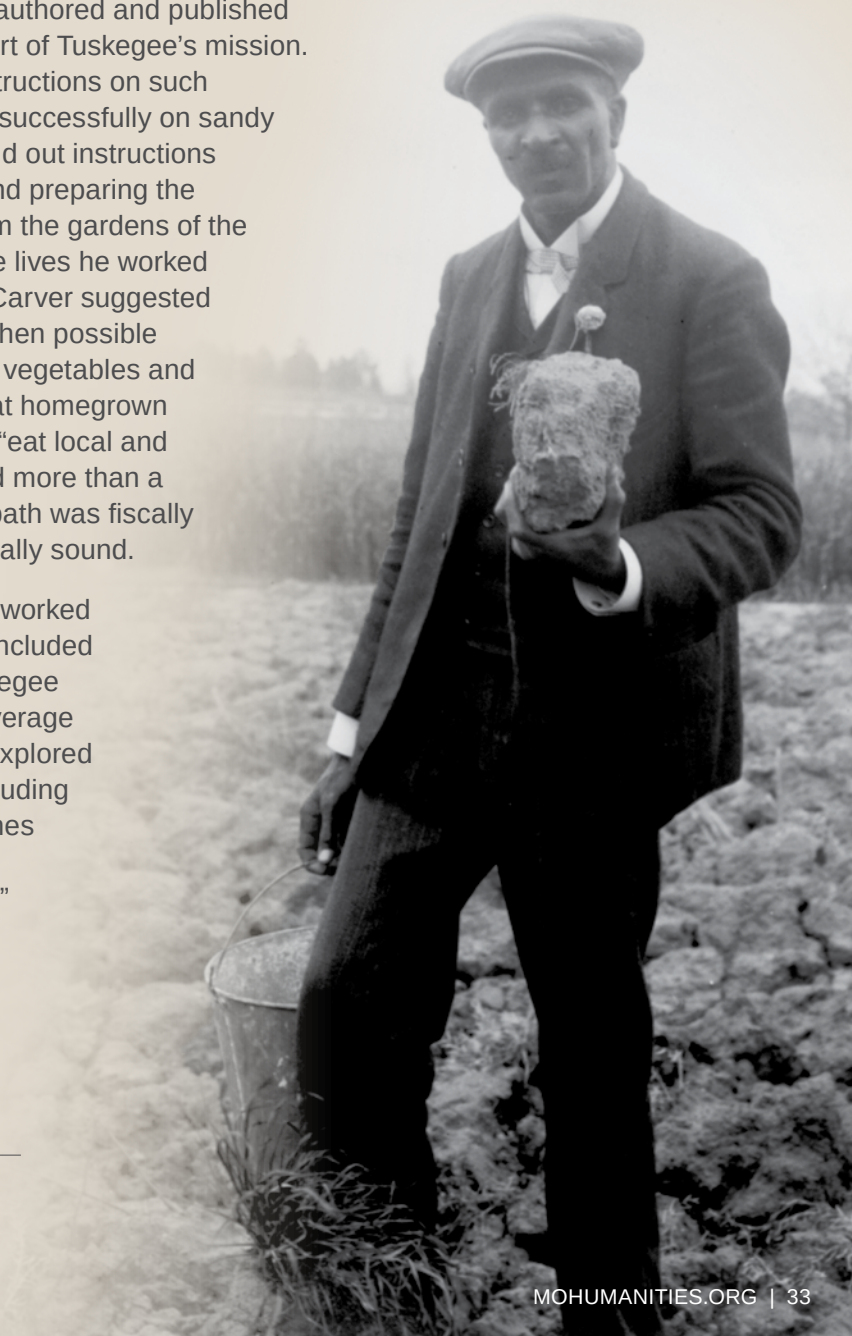
Carver arrived at the Tuskegee Institute in 1896 and spent his entire academic career there. As he declared during the exchange with Tuskegee President Booker T. Washington that led to his hire, “I expect... to go to my people and I have been looking for some time at Tuskegee with favor” (quoted in McMurray); subsequently, Carver's life and career would indeed become inextricably linked with that institution.

Brought on to run the agriculture department as well as to teach, the botanist spent some of his early career setting up a poultry farm, attempting to start an apiary, and then a silkworm colony, yet neither his heart nor his talents lay in academic administration. Carver's fame generally is attributed to his development of new and surprising uses for common produce like peanuts and sweet potatoes. Often overlooked is the impetus for his move to the Deep South: his desire to aid the farmers who labored ceaselessly with little to show for their efforts but debt. Carver's significance cannot simply be accounted for by his numerous ways of creating new uses for agricultural crops, for his insights into sustainable techniques, coupled with his devotion to the African American small farmer, anticipated many of today's practices.

At Tuskegee, agricultural education formed a major component of Carver's duties, whether in the Institute's classrooms or through outreach efforts like state fairs and what was beginning to be known as agricultural extension. Starting in 1898, Carver authored and published numerous bulletins as part of Tuskegee's mission. In addition to offering instructions on such topics as growing cotton successfully on sandy soils, these pamphlets laid out instructions for raising, preserving, and preparing the fruits and vegetables from the gardens of the Black Southerners whose lives he worked so diligently to improve. Carver suggested using organic methods when possible while cultivating fruit and vegetables and to cook, preserve, and eat homegrown produce. If today we say "eat local and organic," Carver asserted more than a century ago that such a path was fiscally prudent and environmentally sound.

Carver, who at one point worked as a hotel cook in Iowa, included many recipes in the Tuskegee bulletins. Aimed at the average farm family, the recipes explored the range of cookery, including condiments and side dishes such as "Tomato Chilli [sic] Sauce, Number One" or "Tomato Cold Relish"

George Washington Carver standing in field, probably at Tuskegee, holding piece of soil. Photo courtesy of Library of Congress.



(*Bulletin No. 36*: “How to Grow the Tomato and 115 Ways to Prepare it for the Table”). Knowing the humble cow (black-eyed) pea to be nutrition-packed, Carver urged his readers to make “creamed peas,” “Alabama baked peas,” or “Hopping John.” Carver asserted that legume of African origin should take its place along the supposedly more refined “White, Soup, Navy or Boston Bean.”

Contemporary farm-to-table adherents and hobby gardeners who put up sauerkraut from backyard plots and cajole their urban chickens into contributing the week’s egg ration can look back to Carver as a hero. Carver scolded, “Ignorance in the kitchen is one of the worst curses that ever affected humanity,” warning about the “bad preparation” of meals and praising “wisely prepared” homegrown fruits and vegetables (*Three Delicious Meals Every Day for the Farmer*).

To counteract nutritional waywardness, a Carver bulletin might offer a week’s worth of menus; one example included sliced tomato and onions, green corn fritters, and homemade sausage. If certain recipes contained pork fat or bacon, many vegetarian dishes—tomato soup, nut sandwiches, and creamed peas—were also found. All were advertised “every day” and “delicious” because the cook’s ingredients could be culled from the farm’s own kitchen garden or, perhaps, locally bartered for. The Tuskegee professor preached that locally grown foods prepared in the farmer’s own kitchen would be healthier and less expensive than store-bought goods.

Such thinking reflected Carver’s belief that self-sufficiency and tasty meals for the struggling agricultural worker were, in their way, as revolutionary and creative as his laboratory experiments that led to peanut-hull-based wallboard. He knew that a Black farmer’s planting cotton on every available scrap of a land increased the chances they would remain in poverty, not decrease it; diversification and crop rotation were the routes to economic and individual health. Although Carver sanctioned the occasional use of commercial fertilizer, he also knew that mulch from swamps and farm compost reinvigorated worn-out soils. Carver’s bulletins showed those of limited means they did not have to depend on commercial products to raise fine crops and eat well.

Rather than purchase canned goods, meat, and dairy from local grocers, Carver instructed, the farmer should practice self-reliance; it was a theme sounded regularly through the three-plus decades Carver published the Tuskegee pamphlets. Carver’s *The Canning and Preserving of Fruits and Vegetables in the Home* began by noting that “fully two-thirds of our fruit and tons of vegetables go to waste” and tempted his readers with “delicious” peach or strawberry leather, simple and electricity-free methods of preserving food. Such directions enabled the farmer to preserve foods for consumption throughout the year. Bulletins even offered how-tos for pantry staples such as flour and substitutes for “cocoanut.”

To some, the Tuskegee doctrine of Black self-sufficiency countermanded the call to modernization by Carver peers like W. E. B. Du Bois, who urged higher education and professionalization as the key to gaining civil rights and self-respect. Yet if the Black small farmer or renter achieved independence from store-bought items, economic self-sufficiency would lead both to pride of performance

and a healthier life. Thomas Campbell, a former student of Carver's and the Food and Drug Administration's first Black extension agent, wrote about the innovative educational methods of his mentor. "[I]n those earl[iest] years it was Dr. Carver's custom, in addition to his regular work, to put a few tools and demonstration exhibits in a buggy and set out... to visit rural areas near Tuskegee... [H]e would give practical demonstrations, both varied and seasonal" (*The Movable School Goes to the Negro Farmer*). In 1906, the successor to Carver's buggy rolled out as the Jesup Wagon, meant to serve as a pop-up agricultural classroom.

Carver's vision encompassed a classroom on wheels that would include advice on healthful eating as well as agricultural methods. Before there were food trucks, Carver's farming classroom on wheels brought foodways into the community.

Carver, with his graduate training in botany, regularly sent his students into the field to identify plant life. He did not limit his guidance to domesticated fruits and vegetables alone, pointing his followers to the free bounty growing all around them. In his *43 Ways to Save the Wild Plum Crop*, Carver lamented the produce free for the foraging that went wasted annually: "I feel safe in saying that in Macon County [AL] alone there are many hundreds of bushels of plums that go to waste every year," pointing out "no fruit makes more delicious jams, jellies, preserves, marmalades, etc." Appealing recipes tempted the curious, whether for mock olives, catsup, or "Plum Lozenges (Very Fine)." A gifted and trained artist, Carver would occasionally suggest ways to plate, as in an injunction to "decorate [this dish] artistically with nut kernels." The scientist knew that eating also takes place with the eyes.

Carver's rich career—scientist, educator, artist, cookbook writer—helped force the acknowledgment of Black intellect and capability. His life debunked the prevalent myth of White superiority, even if we do not think of him as a civil rights activist on picket lines and voter registration actions. Publicly reticent when it came to calling out interracial strife, Carver consistently promoted racial harmony through his Christian affiliations, via his willingness to take on speaking engagements with White schools and institutions, and through his work with White businessmen and politicians. His bulletins were read by countless Southern farmers, regardless of their background.

George Washington Carver, known to generations of Americans as the peanut man, continues to reward those who research his career. Whether as Linda McMurray's scientist or Mark Hersey's naturalist, Carver achieved international fame. We must not forget another facet of Carver's career, that of early adherent of farm-to-table dining and sustainable agriculture. His advocacy for the small Black farmer and counsel to eschew commodity foods and dine hyper-locally resonate to this day. Will Allen of *Growing Power* fame may be better known today as the African American who brought fruits and vegetables to the working poor, and Michael Pollan comes to mind as the advocate of organic food and sustainability, but long before these individuals began their activism, Carver was talking up and validating the worth and delectability of the homegrown.

In addition to Missouri Humanities, the author would also like to thank the University of Georgia Press and *The Common Reader*, who published previous versions of this essay.

**Announcing Our
2023 Signature Series**



CAITLIN YAGER AND LISA CARRICO,
PROGRAM DIRECTORS, MISSOURI HUMANITIES

**Our 2023 Signature Series Roots & Routes:
The Movement and Settlement of Missourians**
will consider the movement of people, both
voluntary and involuntary, and its influence on the
cultural heritage, natural environment, and modern
makeup of Missouri.

Like other states in our nation, Missouri's culture, history, and demographics have been influenced both by people descended from different places across the world as well as Indigenous peoples with ancestral ties to this land. Our state has also been undeniably influenced and morphed by how various peoples made these movements and by advances in transportation, whether on the river, the railroads, or the highways.

Through both in-person public programming and digital content, we aim to explore what has influenced the movement of people into, out of, and within our state and take a glance at how both chosen and forced migrations and changes in transportation throughout our state's history have shaped Missouri and continue to weave a tapestry of diverse cultures that ultimately define and redefine this place.

As our nation approaches our semiquincentennial in 2026, the National Endowment for the Humanities has been emphasizing the theme #OutofMany, calling upon the United States' motto *e pluribus unum*, or "out of many, one." While this motto has taken many meanings in our country's almost 250 years, we can certainly claim one of those meanings as the unity of many different peoples, of different backgrounds, and from different places.

We've often heard that we are a nation of immigrants. Knowing who came from where, when they came, and what happened to them once they got here is central to understanding not just the history of the U.S., but also the history of Missouri. The immigrant experience has impacted the direction and growth of the state, and the various movements of people have influenced politics, population, demographics, and industrial growth. But we'd be remiss to focus solely on the experiences of immigrants. While much of our population is descended from immigrants, we also acknowledge that a large number are descended from those who were brought here by force. In addition, we must consider the stories and voices of those who were here before us, who were removed from their land, and still have cultural and ancestral ties to it.

Roots & Routes will examine these intricate layers of history and their impact on the past and present Missouri, which presents both a unique opportunity and a challenge to incorporate many stories from different perspectives as we explore this complex theme. We hope you'll join us on this journey. Stay connected throughout our 2023 signature series by visiting mohumanities.org/movement, following us on social media @mohumanities, and subscribing to Missouri Humanities on YouTube and wherever you get your podcasts.

Do you have a story that fits our Signature Series, or would you like to explore partnership opportunities for 2023? Contact Caitlin Yager at caitlin@mohumanities.org or Lisa Carrico at lisa@mohumanities.org.

Food for Thought: Food, Archaeology, & Being Human

ERIN WHITSON
ARCHAEOLOGIST, MISSOURI HUMANITIES

Human beings spend the majority of our first few years on this planet learning the rules of both the physical world and our social one. While the rules for the physical world (e.g., gravity, heat, light, darkness, etc.) are generally stable, those governing social rules are anything but. If we're being generous, we might say they're chaotic. At worst, our social world can be seen as a mess! It's an interconnected web of identities, cultures (from both near and far), values, norms, ideas of acceptable (and unacceptable) behaviors, relationships, and preconceived notions based on the things we've observed as well as bits of information handed down to us by people in the past. "It's complicated" is more than an adequate way of describing how people exist with other human beings! While sociologists, psychologists, and cultural anthropologists have the extremely complex job of studying people and cultures in the present, archaeologists have taken on the challenge of studying these aspects of people in the past.

But how?! (Some of you may be asking.)

Since we don't always have the people themselves (though sometimes we do) to ask questions of, we usually have to turn to clues. Sometimes we find written documents that help—but people don't write about the deeper meanings of the things they do, the whys and wherefores. Some people in the past didn't or couldn't write about the things going on around them—and sometimes those who did weren't always honest with what they were writing. We often have to get creative and look for clues that give us insights into that chaotic social world.

Food can be an important avenue for exploring aspects of humanity and the social world because everyone needs it to survive. While each person, each group of people, and each culture go about eating in ways unique to them, the fragments of the foodstuffs they leave behind often reveal a lot about the time, environment, identity, and relationships of those involved in the process of locating, preparing, eating, and storing food. Beyond just the diet and nutritional information that remnants of food can provide to us—which in itself can be a fruitful (*wink, wink*)

Food can be an important avenue for exploring aspects of humanity and the social world because everyone needs it to survive.

approach to looking at people in the past—food gets at the deepest aspects of what it can mean to be human. We can explore in boundless directions with food. From class differences, rituals tied to food, ease of access, and/or trade connections, to traditional recipes and new adoptions of some aspects of food (and refusal to eat certain things), the realm of food is far from boring.

Some archaeologists approach the study of food through the realm of bones. Zooarchaeologists study animal bones and shell fragments to learn more about the relationships people had with both wild and domesticated animals in the past. Bioarchaeologists—people who study the remnants of human bodies—can also use human bones to figure out important information about the things they were eating and where they may have been doing the eating.

Other archaeologists, called ethnopaleobotanists or archaeobotanists, study plant remains, like burnt corn, pollens that get trapped accidentally in layers of soil, or cooked plant residues found inside cooking vessels to learn more about how humans and plants interacted at given points. Many ethnopaleobotanists also approach their work through an environmental/climatic lens—which can tell us interesting things about how people in the past have adapted to changing conditions.



We've known for years that human beings are extremophiles—organisms able to adapt to extreme conditions—but food helps clarify some of the ways how we've managed to make it work.

Another way archaeologists approach food is through the remnants of tools and vessels left behind. In the deep(er) past, people in various contexts around the world often used chert or flint to create tools meant to help with hunting or fishing for food. There are often examples of food preparation sites, such as grinding or nutting stones that were used to make flour or collect edible resources. Likewise, pottery and ceramics can also offer a beautiful entry point into the social world and



the ways people approached food consumption. We might ask, for instance, whether we see more bowls than plates used at a particular site. The answer to this question might suggest valuable information about class—soups and stews tend to be lighter in meat/protein, which can be more expensive.



We can sometimes spot patterns where people were trying to prove something by buying certain foods and ceramics. In Victorian America, for instance, tea drinking was something that required certain objects to be present for the drinker to be considered as practicing the ritual of tea drinking “the right way.” If you could afford the nicer, newer dishes—especially if they matched one another—you were someone

with enough disposable income to show off. Nice dishware and the things you ate or drank from, in this period in American history, often represented a quieter way of showing you were “someone” without actually coming out and saying it—an impulse we often still see today in other ways (e.g., having the newest or swankiest iPhones, vehicles, vacation destinations, or homes).

Food can also be a vehicle for personal connections to other places and times—it can generate stories and skills that may have been forgotten otherwise. Part of my grandmother’s family, for instance, immigrated from Alsace before the turn of the 19th century. A few members of my family take the time to continue to make a reportedly Alsatian type of pastry during the Christmas season. They do this because it’s tradition and because it helps those of us who never met my great-great-grandmother to learn about the world she came from. It helps us to remember our own origin story (at least on this side of the ocean). Performing the ritual of baking and eating the pastry creates a space for remembering the family members who shared that knowledge and the lives they led—both good and bad.

Food can also be a vehicle for personal connections to other places and times.

Why does it matter, though?! (Some of you may be thinking.)

The importance of studying people and their social worlds goes beyond just the pieces we find in the dirt. The worlds people in the past created are the ones we inherit in the present. It’s earth-shatteringly important to study small things, like food, to learn how people made it work (or didn’t) in the past and how that shapes the ways people live today. Food can paint pictures that speak to how we’re alike and different from one another. Beyond all that—at its heart—food allows us to connect with one another; remembering that while the recipes, flavors, and approaches to food may differ by place and time, all of us—all people that have ever been or ever will be—share commonalities that go beyond skin color, religion, nationality, political affiliation, or language. We’re all human, we all eat, and we all hunger for a better world for the ones we love.

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MISSOURI HUMANITIES' 7TH ANNUAL MOMENTUM GALA

Celebrating African American Foodways and the Humanities in Missouri

CLAIRE BRUNTRAGER
DEVELOPMENT MANAGER, MISSOURI HUMANITIES

Friends and supporters of Missouri Humanities gathered to celebrate African American foodways and the humanities in Missouri at the Seventh Annual MOMentum Gala on September 10, 2022 at Third Degree Glass Factory in St. Louis. The night was a great success, hosting a record number of guests and bringing together the state's cultural community members.

The 2022 keynote speaker was “Soul Food Scholar,” writer, attorney, and certified barbecue judge Adrian Miller. Along with gala guests, he explored the fascinating history and impact of soul food and barbecue, spotlighting the lives of the many Black men and women who played vital roles in the evolution of American cuisine and the American story. His presentation vividly illustrated how Black food heritage is inseparable from the story of America and the perpetual struggle to meet its founding ideals. Mr. Miller is the author of *Soul Food*, *Black Smoke*, and *The President's Kitchen Cabinet*. He was recently featured in the Netflix series *High on the Hog*.

The night's program additionally featured a reading by poet and essayist Jason Vasser-Elong. He performed several original works written for this event, including “Oyster Mansion,” “From the Heart,” “Remembering Freedom: June 19th, 1865,” and “A Letter to My Brother Watermelon and My Sister Okra.” Mr. Vasser-Elong's published works include his 2018 collection of poetry, *Shrimp*.

During the reception, guests enjoyed a tasting menu by St. Louis native and James Beard Award Semi-Finalist Chef Ben Welch. Chef Ben designed the menu uniquely for this year's MOMentum event with dishes that included beef rib pastrami with Alabama white sauce and crispy onion, chilled corn soup, “jellied” chicken and andouille meatballs, smoked “catfish” deviled eggs, eastern oysters with preserved lemon mignonette, and sweet potato slab pie. The event reception also included a glass-blowing demonstration by Third Degree Glass Factory artists and the annual silent auction.

Missouri Humanities chose to center this year's MOMentum Gala on the legacy and future of African American foodways. The term “foodways” refers to the intersection of food in culture, traditions, and history. The evolution of food and African American foodways is the story of America and its perpetual struggle to meet its founding ideals. By exploring what we eat, all Americans can gain a deeper understanding of who we



are, making us more capable of fostering a more perfect union for a complex and diverse citizenry. This event examining foodways revealed to our Missouri audience a telling of the American story that is truer and more complex than often taught. We are proud to have presented this event recognizing the contributions of African Americans to American history and foodways.

The 2022 MOmentum Gala was developed as part of the National Endowment for the Humanities' Special Initiative, *A More Perfect Union*.

IT WAS GENEROUSLY SUPPORTED BY OUR EVENT SPONSORS.

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The night would not have been possible without the hard work and support of our volunteers, Board of Directors, and wonderful staff.

To learn more about the 2022 MOmentum Gala or view photos from the event, visit mohumanities.org/gala-2022.

To listen to our recorded interview with this year's keynote speaker, Adrian Miller, check out our *Eat, THINK, & Be Merry* podcast, "Episode 5: Adrian Miller, 'The Soul Food Scholar,'" available on our website, Apple podcasts, Spotify, Stitcher, or wherever you get your podcasts.

EXPAND YOUR *Horizons*

ASHLEY BEARD-FOSNOW
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
MISSOURI HUMANITIES

Our 2022 annual theme, *Eat, THINK, & Be Merry*, helped Missourians explore culinary traditions. Together we celebrated our states' history, the world around us, and the role food plays in shaping our lives. It was a wonderful and unique opportunity to expand our tastes and challenge our thinking.

While that theme has come to an end, Missouri Humanities invites you to continue to expand your tastes and broaden your perspectives through cultural heritage tourism. Missouri Humanities, the Missouri Division of Tourism, and the Missouri Arts Council came together to launch a new initiative titled *Horizons*. The goal is to drive in-state and out-of-state visitors to experience Missouri's incredible culture, art, and the humanities. We aspire to utilize the rich history and vibrant heritage celebrated at local events and festivals to serve as a catalyst to foster a sense of place, promote community development, and spur economic revitalization.

My job as Executive Director is to help the humanities become a larger part of public life in communities across Missouri. Through *Horizons*, we hope to ensconce quality humanities and cultural experiences as standard elements at well-loved Missouri festivals and annual events for generations to come. We want people of all ages and interests to better recognize how people, the arts, and different traditions have helped shape our state. *Horizons* is designed to do that by encouraging people to expand their cultural palates and experience something new.

In a September 2022 press release about the program, Michael Donovan, Executive Director of the Missouri Arts Council, said, "Our goal is to generate more interest in Missouri as a hub for cultural activities and for our residents and visitors to have an increased appreciation for the arts. The events featured in *Horizons* are a source of local pride for the areas in which they're held, and our organizations want all Missourians, and visitors, to feel that sense of community."

Missouri Humanities, Missouri Division of Tourism, and Missouri Arts Council are working to fortify the cultural infrastructure by requiring that participating communities join capacity-building efforts and cross-promote the other eight activities to their local audiences. In addition to strengthening the host community, each event will feature scholars who celebrate Missouri's cultural traditions through song, artistic expression, history demonstrations, and other interpretative means to enrich the lives of local residents and visitors alike.

Broaden your *Horizons*.

The nine events planned for the 2022–2023 programming are:

CARL JUNCTION BLUEGRASS FESTIVAL

September 23–24 in Carl Junction

PONY EXPRESS MUSEUM FAMILY FESTIVAL

February 20 in St. Joseph

DOGTOWN IRISH FESTIVAL AND PARADE

March 17 in St. Louis

DOGWOOD AZALEA FESTIVAL

April 13–16 in Charleston

GUADALUPE CENTER CINCO DE MAYO

May 5–6 in Kansas City

TWAIN ON MAIN

May 27 in Hannibal

FOR THE PEOPLE POW WOW

May 27–28 in Jefferson City

SCOTT JOPLIN FESTIVAL

May 31–June 3 in Sedalia

OLD TIME MUSIC OZARK HERITAGE FESTIVAL

June 2–3 in West Plains

Find more details about *Horizons* and program events at mohumanities.org/horizons.



Broadening the Understanding of Plants in Our Daily Lives

NEZKA PFEIFER

MUSEUM CURATOR, STEPHEN AND PETER SACHS MUSEUM, MISSOURI BOTANICAL GARDEN

The Missouri Botanical Garden has been renowned for its scientific botanical research and horticultural displays since its opening in 1859. The Garden opened a museum then too, which offered botanical and ethnobotanical displays to the public so they could learn about botany and how humans use plants. However, after a century of different uses (and short closures), in April 2018, the Garden reopened the newly renamed Sachs Museum to the public. In 2019 and 2020, I curated a few multidisciplinary exhibitions on the plants that make paper, the cultural impact of the potato, and the art and horticulture of water lilies (and a pandemic closure of 17 months that migrated some content online).

The special exhibition planned at the Sachs Museum for 2021 was *Grafting The Grape: American Grapevine Rootstock in Missouri and the World*, which celebrated the Missouri bicentennial year. The exhibition focused on the history and innovation of how Missouri botanists and viticulturists saved the global wine industry by instituting the grafting of grapevines onto rootstocks of grape species that were native in Missouri to avoid infestations of an American insect—grape phylloxera—that devastated the European vineyards of the *Vitis vinifera* grapevine, which had no natural defenses against the insect. Missouri's own winemaking history is also tied to this story, as the wide variety



of native grapes found in Missouri by the German settlers were the vines they used to make wine, knowing that the *Vitis vinifera* would not grow successfully in the humid and hot summers they found in Missouri. This interdisciplinary exhibition also featured the work of a St. Louis-based botanist who is leading current research on the impact of grafted rootstocks on final wine berries—a National Science Foundation–funded project called Vitis Underground—with three contemporary artists who are renowned for combining science and art in their work. These artists created unique pieces especially for the exhibition exploring the intersections of botany, viticulture, history, and art.

Receiving the Missouri Humanities Mini Grant to organize and implement a free six-part online talk series focused on several key subjects enabled me to broaden the appeal and message of how one set of plants found here in Missouri is used and adapted by a wide variety of people; these presentations also offered American Sign Language interpretation and live captions. The talks focused on an overview of the Missouri wine industry, the precontact ancient use of grapes by Indigenous peoples, the workings of a real-life family Missouri vineyard, the use of grapes in contemporary Choctaw foodways, a dialogue with the botanist and contemporary artist on the intersection of science and art, and a dialogue with two of the contemporary artists who explored climate change in their multiple works for the exhibition. This support from Missouri Humanities has given the Sachs Museum an opportunity to have a broader reach and wider appeal to regional and national audiences and create a model for accessibility for online programs for the Missouri Botanical Garden as a whole. We look forward to building on these efforts with each future project!



[YouTube playlist featuring videos from the museum's exhibition.](#)

FAR LEFT: Featured archives from Dr. George Engelmann (the Missouri Botanical Garden's first botanical advisor) and his work with grape phylloxera. LEFT: *Roundabout (Circuition)*, an installation by artist Dornith Doherty. BELOW: A sculpture inspired by a grafted grapevine trellis by artists Lei Han and Lorraine Walsh, titled *The In-Between*.



Culture, Community, Cuisine

CECELIA ROBINSON
PROFESSOR EMERITUS, WILLIAM JEWELL COLLEGE

MEGAN MONTGOMERY
ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS TEACHER, LIBERTY NORTH HIGH SCHOOL

According to one of my students at Liberty North High School, “Food has a funny way of bringing people together.” That’s what she had realized by the end of first semester after weeks of time spent reading, writing, and talking about food in Advanced English Language Arts 11. The driving question for our work was, “How can food diversify our shared community and culture?” Students researched and wrote their way through personal narrative, argumentative, and expository pieces, as well as pieces that synthesized two or more genres. They read mentor texts ranging from George Ella Lyon’s “Kitchen Table,” to excerpts of Adrian

Miller’s *Black Smoke: African Americans and the United States of Barbecue*. The final piece that would go in their Food+Community Portfolio was one that asked them to choose a culture and a cuisine and analyze how one had influenced the other. Some students chose to focus on the African American influence on barbecue.

African American culture and cuisine have been and continue to be integral parts of the Juneteenth American experience. In Liberty, Missouri, Juneteenth has involved a community celebration for 22 years.

Juneteenth began as a freedom celebration in Texas when enslaved African Americans learned of their emancipation on June 19, 1865, two years after Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation. Missouri African Americans were emancipated on January 11, 1865. Two hundred years ago, Liberty’s demographics included Southern farmers

“Food has a funny way of bringing people together.”

RIGHT: Otis Bird. Photo courtesy of Colleen Myers.
LEFT: Dr. Cecelia Robinson, flanked by 1st and 2nd Place Prize Winners of the 1st Annual Liberty Juneteenth Barbecue Contest. Photo Courtesy of Willie Lyles.



and their enslaved African Americans from Kentucky, Tennessee, Virginia, and North Carolina. These pioneers brought their cultures, values, and traditions to an antebellum city, leaving footprints in the annals of history.

The year 2022 marks the first celebration of Juneteenth as a national holiday and the first annual Liberty Juneteenth barbecue competition with the Kansas City BBQ Society, in which 14 teams from across the Northland and Kansas City area competed. The first place prize award was named in honor of Henry Perry, the only African American pitmaster in the American Royal BBQ Hall of Fame, who brought BBQ to Kansas City. Four other prizes were named in honor of Clay County African American pioneers: Merrit Withers, antebellum BBQ pitmaster who was enslaved on the Abijah Wither's Farm in Liberty; Kitty Alexander; Otis Bird; and Annie Moore, all renowned cooks in Clay County.

In addition to the barbecue, this year's two-day celebration featured a parade in the Garrison Historic District, the dedication of a sankofa bird sculpture at Garrison School Cultural Center, and the dedication of a legacy memorial honoring 756 African Americans, including the four aforementioned Clay County pioneers as well as those buried in the segregated eastern section of Fairview and New Hope cemeteries, mostly in unmarked graves. Other activities included live entertainment, a blues concert, and a student who shared her writing about the African American influence on barbecue, highlighting Henry Perry's profound influence on Kansas City-style barbecue.

This celebration was made possible thanks to a grant provided by the Missouri Department of Tourism, numerous corporate sponsors, and Missouri Humanities, who provided grant funding to the Clay County African American Legacy, Inc. to research the narratives and purchase story panels highlighting numerous pioneers listed on the legacy memorial.

In the future, I hope young community members, like my students, can come to learn more about and participate in the Juneteenth festivities in their local communities in order to increase awareness of diverse cultural experiences and improve human relations. With the annual barbecue contest, it will surely call them to "Eat, THINK, & Be Merry."

Around Our Community

EVENTS CALENDAR

Creating Community by Connecting with Others

How do we connect our communities? By sharing our past, our traditions, our cultures, and our histories. It is true that we are all different, but knowing what makes us unique and what makes us similar helps us understand what makes us human.

Missouri Humanities is making connections easier. Whether it's an upcoming speaker, a cultural

event, or a heritage outing, Missouri Humanities has the means and know-how to help you. Our Community Calendar is available for you and your community, for our partners, and for humanities advocates.

Missouri is a very diverse state with lots of activities in the urban areas, but not everything happens in the big cities. There are many events happening all around our state. These events bring people from all walks of life together, strengthening the bonds between us. It is true that many Missourians are dedicated to their own communities, but community calendars can help bridge gaps, provide for shared discussions, and broaden their sense of all that is going on in the diversity of even a small town.

Connecting others and learning about their cultural celebrations and traditions is an important part, but not the only way, to develop intercultural understanding. That includes establishing a strong community identity, particularly for smaller towns. Smaller towns can use community events to connect their residents and keep old traditions alive while making new traditions as well. It can also help attract new visitors by showing off what makes the town so unique, which can simultaneously help build a strong sense of pride for the community. Traditions also give us our identity; they tell the story of where we came from and connect us to previous generations.

The sharing of cultures, heritages, and legacies are integral parts of Missouri Humanities. That is why a statewide calendar works.

Earlier in 2022, Missouri Humanities started the ***Around Our Community*** calendar. It has been an overwhelming success and continues to excel beyond expectation. Missouri Humanities made it easy for those who want to promote humanities-oriented events and activities. An organization or individual simply accesses the "Add Your Community Event" form on the Missouri Humanities website and submits it for consideration. The Events calendar is available on the MH Website (mohumanities.org/add-community-event) and is also promoted twice per month through Missouri Humanities e-blasts. In addition, it is marketed on other sources, like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. The calendar is a tool for the public to advertise and promote community events and activities for free.

GRANTS AWARDED *Nov 1, 2021 through Aug 1, 2022*

GRANT DESCRIPTION	ORGANIZATION	COUNTY
Improving Digital Humanities Pedagogy in St. Louis	Lindenwood University	St. Charles
Website Refresh and Design—Bringing the Museum to the Public	Missouri Sports Hall of Fame	Greene
Black History Summer Academy	Drury University, Dean of the School of Education	Greene
Magician in Residence: The Art and Science of Magic	Kaleidoscope Discovery Center	Phelps
Spotlight On... Festival of New Works	Prism Theatre Company	St. Louis
Civics for Servant Leadership, an Initiative of the Educated Citizen Project	The Educated Citizen Project	Greene
Regarding (RE:) Art and Humanities Lecture Series	Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis	St. Louis City
Interview with Heroes—Our Military Veterans	Veterans Museum of St. Charles County	St. Charles
2022–2023 Whitaker Jazz Speaks Performance Series	Jazz St. Louis	St. Louis City
ACTION: A New Play About Percy Green	The Action Art Collaborative	St. Louis
Back to School with Books	A Red Circle	St. Louis
Blind Boone Ragtime Concerts and Symposium	John William Boone Heritage Foundation	Boone
Books in Bloom Charleston	City of Charleston	Lewis
City of Hermann Caboose Museum Conductor Statue	City of Hermann	Gasconade
Community Accelerator	Lincoln University	Cole
Der Besen, Das Brot, der Zucker, das Salz	Marais des Cygnes Society	Bates
Fifteenth Annual Best Practices in History Education Conference	Missouri Council for History Education	St. Louis
Pages of History	Forest Grove Cemetery Project, Inc.	Jackson
Historic Missouri: Curating and Providing Public Access to Missouri's Unique Places	University of Central Missouri—Department of History, Anthropology, Africana Studies, and Social Studies	Johnson
National History Day in Missouri	The State Historical Society of Missouri	St. Louis
Revitalizing the Hall of Fame Through New Exhibits	Missouri Sports Hall of Fame	Greene
Save Our History	Bollinger County Library	Bollinger
The Nisei Project	Park University	Platte

The Wonders of Washington County, MO	Washington County Commission	Washington
Tomahawk Trail Augmented Reality Experience	Greater St. Louis Area Council Boy Scouts	St. Louis
Trail of Tears Geo-referenced, Interactive, Multilayered, Online Map of the Northern Route in Missouri	Trail of Tears Association, Missouri Chapter	Cape Girardeau
Printing of Special Edition Magazine	Adair County Historical Society	Adair
The Rose Tattoo Public Education Project	Tennessee Williams Festival	St. Louis City
17 th Annual Ancestors Gourd Dance and Pow Wow	Red Star Intertribal Gourd Dance Society	Cass
ArtOberfest at Rockhurst University	Rockhurst University	Jackson
Virtual Tour of the Phelps County Museum	Phelps County Historical Society	Phelps
An Evening with Nick Cave	Westminster College	Callaway
Picturing Springfield: Discovering Springfield Neighborhoods	Drury University	Greene
International Education Month 2022	Missouri State University—Springfield	Greene
Promotional and Educational Opportunity in Support of Ulysses S. Grant	City of Pacific	Franklin
Historic Buildings in Downtown Webb City brochure for self-guided or formal walking/driving tour	Webb City Historical Society	Jasper
Veterans Honor Garden/ Time Capsule Project	Houn' Dawg Alumni & Outreach Center/Youth Empowerment Project	Lawrence
Reading Missouri Women's History in the Prison Classroom	Washington University	St. Louis City
Route 66: The Untold Story of Women on the Mother Road/Screening and Discussion Programs	Missouri Route 66 Association	Greene
Vidwest Digital Storytelling Workshop	Vidwest	Boone
Missouri Hwy 36 Heritage Alliance—Quilt Trail	Missouri Highway 36 Heritage Alliance	Buchanan
History Alive!	Nodaway County Historical Society	Nodaway
Missouri Historical Interpretive Tour	Sikeston Cultural Development Corporation	Scott
Faulkner and Jesmyn Ward Conference	Center for Faulkner Studies, Southeast Missouri State University	Cape Girardeau
Missouri Main Street Connection's Premier Revitalization Conference	Missouri Main Street Connection	Taney
The Best of Presser Summer Camp	Presser Hall Restoration Society	Audrain
Teaching Teachers for National History Day	Missouri Council for History Education	St. Louis

The Hodiament Tracks: An Oral History Project	St. Louis Association of Community Organizations (SLACO)	St. Louis
Maya: The Exhibition	Union Station Kansas City	Jackson
Equitable Access to the Humanities in KC	Turn the Page KC	Jackson
Global Ties KC Youth Diplomats Institute	Global Ties KC	Jackson
The Why of MY City	Saint Louis Story Stitchers Artists Collective	St. Louis City
Old Mines 300 th Anniversary Picture Book	Old Mines Area Historical Society	Washington
Poems of Childhood Exhibit—Field House Museum	Eugene Field House Foundation	St. Louis City
The 54 th Children’s Literature Festival	University of Central Missouri—Elementary and Early Childhood Education	Boone
Reference Guide to St. Louis’ Earliest Ethnic Communities	Missouri Historical Society	St. Louis City
Neosho Historic Mural Audio Description Project	Neosho Arts Council	Newton
Missouri Conference on History	Missouri Conference on History	Boone
Sharing the Whole Story: Teaching the Black American Experience	U.S. Central and Southern Province	St. Louis
Pioneer Kids Day Camp	Cass County Historical Society, Inc.	Cass
Readings and Conversations with Prize-Winning Writers at <i>The Missouri Review</i>	Curators of the University of Missouri—Columbia, Sponsored Programs Administration	Boone
Drag Queen Story Time and Weekly Words	The Arts Asylum	Jackson
West Plains Senior Center Oral History Magazine	Senior Age Area Agency on Aging	Greene
Celebrating Diverse Cultures and Stories with the Hand-in-Hand	Mattie Rhodes Center	Jackson
The RIPPLE Interpretive Exhibit and Community Conversations	Kansas City Repertory Theatre	Jackson
M. Charles Rhinehart: An Artist’s Journey	Kellerman Foundation for Historic Preservation	Cape Girardeau
Courage Earned Us Freedom, Confidence, The Future: 20 th Annual Mary Meachum Freedom Crossing	LinkStl’s Hyde Park	St. Louis
More Than Just Music: St. Louis History and Civic Engagement	National Blues Museum	St. Louis City
39 th International Churchill Conference	National Churchill Museum	Callaway
Saxon Lutheran Memorial Fall Festival	Saxon Lutheran Memorial, Inc.	Perry
Reconstruction and Industrialization Exhibit Installation	Webster Groves Historical Society	St. Louis
Celebrating Chillicothe’s Slice History	Home of Sliced Bread Corp	Livingston

Thank You!

BETTY COLEMAN
BOARD MEMBER, MISSOURI HUMANITIES

Laura Dierberg Ayers and Blake Sherer rolled off the Missouri Humanities Board in November. Their commitment and service to the humanities has been a guiding light for the citizens of Missouri. Why were they so willing to give time, expertise, and donations to MH? The simple answer is passion. Each person has a special passion that drives them to volunteer.



Laura Dierberg Ayers has held many positions on the MH board. These include Member of the Executive Committee, Bylaws

Chair, Governance Chair, and Grants Co-Chair. She is also a leader with her church, very involved with Girl Scouts, and Board Chair of the Women's Foundation of Greater St. Louis.

Most importantly, she is the Chairman of the Tappmeyer Homestead Foundation. This is where her story begins. She is a direct descendant of Frederick Wm. and Mary Tappmeyer, who built the home between 1880. Both sides of her family settled in the St. Louis area in the mid-1800s, with their farms being recognized with designations at the state and local levels. Her family heritage is rooted deeply in St. Louis.

Why Laura volunteers can be simply stated: She wants to make a difference! Having been born into a

OUTGOING BOARD MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

family with a strong work ethic, she has worked and volunteered her entire life. It was natural that she started by selling roadside tomatoes during the summer and later helped by working the family grain farm at harvest. Her love of learning led her to work in libraries in high school, college undergrad, and law school.

Laura was blessed with many excellent role models that created a strong impact on her view of the world and life. The influence of teachers combined with her family heritage caused her love of volunteering to run deep. Her great-grandfather was President of the school board, which was evidence of the family's commitment to education. Laura's grandmother and mother constantly volunteered in the community. It is in her DNA.

Both Laura and her husband, Brock, have continued this heritage. Their marriage started while he was stationed in Hawaii. Together, they have built a strong family unit with four daughters, one son-in-law, and an exceptional granddaughter. While Laura was busy with family and law, her husband was devoted to serving our country. He was eventually assigned to the Situation Room in the White House as an Intelligence Officer. These military travels have led Laura to a greater understanding of people and cultures that are different from her own.

Her goal is to make Tappmeyer House a community center where everything tells a story. The various events at the Tappmeyer House can "hook" the public in understanding and enjoying history and each other.

This showcases her love of the humanities—open hearts, open minds, open to learning. Her passion is history and community using the past and present to move forward in the future.

“A real impact can be seen when an organization is extremely concerned about the people.” Laura would like to see that Missouri Humanities continues to be an open and responsive visionary to the needs of our state.



Blake Sherer has held a variety of positions on the Missouri Humanities Board. He has served as Co-Chair of the Grants Committee, a member of the Governance and Membership Committees, and Chair of the Program Committee.

Blake was raised in Alabama. He, his parents, and brother moved frequently when he was young. Through a debate scholarship to the University of Alabama, he received his B.A. before earning his law degree from the University of Missouri–Kansas City. After graduation, he moved to Washington, DC and worked for a nonprofit. He met his wife, Carrie, while she was working for Senator Kit Bond. Carrie, an eighth-generation Missourian, wanted to come home. Their adorable three-year-old daughter, Elizabeth, is a ninth-generation Missourian. The move ignited his calling to stand up for victims, hold everyone accountable, and keep the community safe. To keep a community safe, you must learn the culture and the heritage of the area. This started his passion to know Missouri and its people, to understand the past and the diverse population, and to help make it a safe and decent place in the future. As a Platte County prosecuting attorney for over eight years, any case with a child as a victim gets to him. He seeks the truth and underplays ideas to get to the real truth.

Blake sees the humanities as a tapestry of values both universal and timeless from generation to generation, society to society, woven together. Everyone has a story to tell with their dreams and goals. These stories overlap together, forming a strength of heritage. Stories that were never given the spotlight need to be explored and told. The strength of the Missouri Humanities Board is its diversity. The members' different experiences, cultures, and stories form an exciting tapestry. Blake hopes the board will continue to focus on alternative history. Missouri has a rich heritage in environmental, technological, and industrial fields. Ninety years ago, the technology for sliced bread came from Missouri! Our food, wine, and alcohol businesses are unique and laced with history. He is very proud of the work the Missouri Humanities Board and staff have done.

Blake's reason for volunteering stems from his love of family. The Sherer family priorities and values have built him. He learned from his parents the importance of civic duty and responsibility. Blake's grandfather is one of his inspirations. His grandfather enlisted in the Navy in 1949. He is a proud Korean and Vietnam veteran. Blake's favorite item to wear is his grandfather's flight jacket. Blake will never disappoint the people he is fighting for, making the world a more decent place now and for future generations. This is his passion.

It is with sadness that we will be saying farewell to these extraordinary people. Their dedication has been an inspiration to all members of the Missouri Humanities team. They will be missed, but their legacies will be continued.



Marilyn Webster-Brown

REVEREND NICHOLAS W. INMAN
BOARD MEMBER, MISSOURI HUMANITIES

At the end of November, longtime Missouri Humanities employee Marilyn Webster-Brown will be retiring after her 14 years of service.

Webster-Brown began her career in the humanities in August of 2008 after seeing an employment ad in the local newspaper. “I had just finished working with Saint Louis University with their African American Disparities in Healthcare master’s program. I had worked for them for two years,” she recalled. She would be hired as the literacy program facilitator.

Following the conclusion of her time with the literacy program, Webster-Brown would begin to work with the Speakers’ Bureau program. “Although I really enjoyed the literacy program, I have really enjoyed the Speakers’ Bureau program as well,” she explained. “I have learned so much history working with the humanities and have enjoyed working with so many different people and partnering agencies across the state. I have met a lot of great and interesting people as I have worked with the Speakers’ Bureau program.”

This retirement will not be the first for Webster-Brown, as she originally retired in 2000 from a career with AT&T after 30 years of employment to take care of her late mother. “I have lost some dear friends over the years, and it brings to reality that we should enjoy life to its fullest,” she said when discussing her upcoming retirement. “I will miss being a part of the organization and the coworkers that I have worked with. However, I do plan to still be an advocate for Missouri Humanities. I have always felt that one of our greatest challenges

was that many throughout the state do not fully understand our mission and purpose and we have such great programs for everyone.”

Webster-Brown emphasizes that she has had great support throughout her career with the Humanities. “I have appreciated the support of my significant other, Michael, and my family and good friends,” she stated. “I am looking forward to spending more time with them and volunteering with the Alzheimer’s Association and the Oasis Program, where I will be working with seniors.” Webster-Brown has long enjoyed volunteering and helping throughout her community and looks forward to the opportunity to have some additional time to enjoy these passions along the way.

As she leaves her position for new chapters in life, she looks back with a grateful heart for the work that has been done across the state. “One of the greatest rewards in my humanities career was working with the literacy program. It was greatly needed and really helped the underserved across our state,” she reflected. “It has been fulfilling to participate in this kind of work throughout my career with the Missouri Humanities organization, and I have appreciated this opportunity.”

The board and staff of the Missouri Humanities remain grateful for her many years of hard work and dedicated service to the organization and programming, and we wish her well as she enjoys her retirement years.

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Missouri Humanities depends on the support of individuals, foundations, and our corporate partners to connect Missourians to the people, places, and ideas that shape society.

Through Missouri Humanities' six core programs and yearly Signature Series, we reach over 150,000 Missourians each year, offering hundreds of educational opportunities for little or no charge. Your gift will move our work forward and help us reach even more Missourians in the coming year.

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- *Killers of the Flower Moon: The Osage Murders and the Birth of the FBI*, by David Grann
- *Soul Food: The Surprising Story of an American Cuisine, One Plate at a Time*, by Adrian Miller
- *The Life of Mark Twain*, a three-volume biography by Gary Scharnhorst



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With your support as a contributing member, Missouri Humanities will continue to engage the people of the Show Me State in the power of lifelong learning.

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