

# Focus on the Humanities

April 2008 - Mississippi Humanities Council Newsletter

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## MHC Announces New Board Members



Dr. Luther P. Brown



Dr. Jeanne Gillespie



Melody Golding



Dr. Preston Hughes



Dr. Candice Jackson



Dr. Hilliard Lackey III

Rod Risley, chair of the Mississippi Humanities Council, announces six new members (pictured above left to right): **Dr. Luther Brown**, Cleveland, founding director of the Delta Center for Culture and Learning at Delta State University; **Dr. Jeannie Gillespie**, Hattiesburg, associate dean for academics and assessment at the University of Southern Mississippi; Vicksburg photographer **Melody Golding**, one of four Council positions appointed by the Governor; **Dr. Preston Hughes**, Kosciusko, adjunct professor at Holmes Community College teaching American government, co-founder of The Club, a biracial men's civic club in Kosciusko, and chairman of the Defense and Security Affairs Committee of the American-Turkish Council; **Dr. Candice Love Jackson**, chair of the English Department at Tougaloo College; and **Dr. Hilliard Lackey**, Jackson, assistant professor of history and assistant to the executive vice president for external affairs at Jackson State University.

Two Council members have been elected to second terms, Dr. David Beckley, president of Rust College in Holly Springs, and Rod Risley, executive director of Phi Theta Kappa International Honor Society. Council officers include Risley, chair; Dr. Charles Sallis, Jackson, vice chair; Pamela Pridgen, Hattiesburg, secretary; and Dr. Harold Fisher, Jackson, treasurer. Twenty-two Mississippians serve four-year terms on the Council as volunteers. Five Council members are appointed by the governor and the others elected by the Council. Half of the members are public and half academic, and every effort is made to

maintain balance by race, gender and geographic distribution to assure representation for all Mississippians. Any Mississippi resident may nominate persons to serve on the Council. Calls for nominations are regularly announced in the Council's publications and at Council-supported events.

### ***Ethnic Heritage in Mississippi* Update Coming**



**From the first edition of *Ethnic Heritage*: Joe Martin Erber, left, a long-time employee of the post office, and Meyer Gelman, a retired local clothier, are keepers of the last Orthodox *shul*, Congregation Heath Ream, in Greenwood.**

Throughout its history, Mississippi has seen a small, steady stream of immigrants, and those identities – sometimes submerged, sometimes hidden – have helped shape our state. Amid revived interest in identity, MHC is revising *Ethnic Heritage in Mississippi* to offer stories of heritage overcoming obstacles, immigrants newly arrived, and long-settled groups witnessing a revitalized claim to membership.

“In this book we are trying not only to talk about history, which people came to Mississippi, but also about our current culture: how people are coming to our state, looking for opportunity and building their lives,” said MHC executive director Barbara Carpenter, who edited the first volume of *Ethnic Heritage* and secured the funding for the revised edition.

The new edition will be published by University Press of Mississippi. For more information please visit [www.mshumanities.org](http://www.mshumanities.org)

So which ethnic group is the largest among Mississippi's 2.8 million citizens? The top five ancestries reported in the 2000 U.S. Census for Mississippi: African American (28%); American (14%); Irish (7%); English (6%); German (4.5%).

### **MHC Honors Humanities Contributions**

The Mississippi Humanities Council presented its annual Public Humanities Awards at a ceremony and dinner Feb. 22 at the Hilton Hotel in Jackson, recognizing outstanding contributions by Mississippians to the study and understanding of the humanities. The **Humanities Scholar Award** went to Chris Goertzen, a University of Southern Mississippi ethnomusicologist who served as lead scholar for the Mississippi Humanities Council's touring Smithsonian Institution exhibit, *New Harmonies: Celebrating American Roots Music*. A **Public Humanities Achievement Award** was



**The Hinds Community College Utica Jubilee Singers, under the direction of Dr. Bobby Cooper, opened the banquet with a musical performance.**

presented to Delta State University's Delta Center for Culture and Learning for its multiple partnerships with the Council over the years to bring top-quality humanities programming to Mississippi, including the highly successful Mississippi Music Teacher Workshop last summer which focused on Mississippi-bred music styles. A second **Public Humanities Achievement Award** was given to Mississippi Public Broadcasting for its support of the national opening ceremony in Meridian last March for the Mississippi Humanities Council's *New Harmonies* exhibit and the ongoing "Mississippi Moments" radio segments. Communities in Schools of Greenwood Leflore, Inc. received a **Humanities Educator Award** for its success in hosting multiple Mississippi Humanities Council Family Reading Bonds programs in the Mississippi Delta. **Chair's Awards for Special Achievements in the Humanities** went to Vicksburg photographer Melody Golding and former Mississippi Humanities Council Assistant Director Dennis Mitchell of Mississippi State University. Golding traveled with the Red Cross to the Mississippi Gulf Coast for



**Photographer Melody Golding donated an image from her Katrina collection to the MHC Silent Auction.**

weeks following Hurricane Katrina, interviewing and photographing both victims and volunteers, which eventually became a traveling exhibit that opened first at the National Women's Museum in Washington, D.C. and has since traveled throughout Louisiana and Mississippi. Mitchell has supported the humanities in Mississippi for many years, first as assistant director of the Council and later as a project director, consultant, evaluator and scholar for Council-funded programming. The **Director's Award for Preservation of Mississippi Culture** was given to historian Charles Sullivan of Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College. Sullivan was selected for his intense efforts to preserve artifacts and memorabilia on the Mississippi Gulf Coast following Hurricane Katrina. His efforts saved two photograph collections, in particular, which would have been destroyed if not for his dedication to preserving them. Two **Special Recognition Awards** were presented, one to Houston Drury, who leads the trucking program at Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College, and another to Judy Stein, AmeriCorps director with the Mississippi Commission for Volunteer Service. Drury, along with his students and staff, has transported the last three traveling Smithsonian Institution exhibits throughout the state, at no charge, saving the Council and the host sites thousands of dollars which could then be directed to humanities programming. Stein has served as a liaison between the Council and the Mississippi Commission for Volunteer Service for a new Council program entitled "Meaning of Service." She has helped deliver this reading/discussion program, which reflects on the central questions of civic life, in numerous Mississippi locations, often developing her own innovative materials.

In addition, 31 recipients of the **2007 Humanities Teacher Awards**, which pay tribute to outstanding faculty in traditional humanities fields, were honored.

A new feature of the Mississippi Humanities Council's annual awards ceremony was a *Mississippi Miscellany* Silent Auction. The fund-raiser featured nearly 100 items ranging from autographed books and original artwork to handcrafted jewelry and gift packages.

## Journey Stories: A Request for Proposals

The Mississippi Humanities Council invites applications for a Smithsonian Traveling Exhibit, *Journey Stories*. Developed for rural audiences and small museums, libraries, community centers and other nonprofit organizations with limited access to traveling exhibits, *Journey Stories* addresses migration and immigration as they relate to the American experience. *Journey Stories* is the account of



immigrants coming in search of promise in a new country; the story of individuals and families relocating in search of fortune, their own homestead, or employment; the harrowing journeys of Africans and Native Americans forced to move; and of course, fun and frolic on the open road. These topics are told by way of engaging images, audio and artifacts that illustrate the critical roles travel and movement have played in building our diverse American society. Additional information on this exhibit is available at the Smithsonian Institution website: [www.museumonmainstreet.org](http://www.museumonmainstreet.org). *Journey Stories* will tour Mississippi from May 2009 through February 2010. To view the full text of the Request for Proposals (RFP), please visit [www.mshumanities.org](http://www.mshumanities.org) or contact David Morgan, 601-432-6752, [david@mhc.state.ms.us](mailto:david@mhc.state.ms.us)

## Schools and Libraries May Apply for *Picturing America!*

*Picturing America!* is an initiative of the [National Endowment for the Humanities](http://www.neh.gov) in cooperation with the [American Library Association](http://www.ala.org). The goal of *Picturing America!* is to enhance the teaching, study and understanding of American history and culture by bringing some of America's greatest works of art into school classrooms and public libraries. *Picturing America!* will provide K-12 schools and public libraries with 40 images of American art, an illustrated teachers' resource book and a website containing additional information including lesson plans - all free of charge. Educators and librarians are invited to [apply online](http://www.picturingamerica.org) through April 15.



## Save America's Treasures Solicits Applications

The National Park Service in partnership with the [President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities](#), the [National Endowment for the Arts](#), the [National Endowment for the Humanities](#) and the [Institute of Museum and Library Services](#), is seeking applicants for its [Save America's Treasures 2008](#) grant program. Save America's Treasures makes critical investments in the preservation of our nation's most significant cultural treasures. Grants are awarded for preservation and/or conservation work on nationally significant intellectual and cultural artifacts and nationally significant historic structures and sites. Grant amounts range from \$25,000 to \$700,000 to conserve collections and from \$125,000 to \$700,000 for historic property and sites projects. All the awards must be matched 1:1. Beginning this year, Save America's Treasures will be accepting online applications only through [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov), the federal government grant website. Paper applications will not be accepted. Applicants are asked to register on grants.gov. Once your registration has been submitted, you can download the application package and begin filling out the various PDF forms. Once the registration is confirmed, which can take several weeks, applicants can then submit their final application through Grants.gov. Complete guidelines, applications and information, as well as a database of previous Save America Treasure's awardees, can be found on the [National Park Service Web site](#). Deadline for applications is May 20, 2008. For general information contact [Kimber Craine](#) at the [President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities](#) or call 202/682-5661.

## Upcoming Humanities Events in Mississippi

- April 10, 2008, *A Mississippi Celebration*, Mississippi Museum of Art, Jackson, MS. Three-day symposium celebrating the culture of Mississippi, with particular emphasis on the visual arts. On the first day of the symposium, April 10, the public may attend a free lecture, "The Southern Muse," by Mary Lynn Kotz on the influence of literature on visual artists from the South. Lunch will be for sale.
- April 14, 2008, *Film: "Unoccupied Zone: The Impossible Life of Simone Weil,"* Millsaps College, Jackson, MS. Film series featuring innovative independent filmmakers screening and discussing their films. All films show on Mondays at 7:30 pm in Gertrude C. Ford Academic Complex, room 215 on the Millsaps College campus, with a Q & A session to follow. The April 14, 2008, featured film focuses on Simone Weil, philosopher, trade-unionist, mystic.
- April 16, 2008, *History Is Lunch: Reporting Race and Resistance in Dixie*, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson, MS. Brown bag lunch series.
- April 25-28, 2008, *The Double Decker Storyfest*, Oxford, MS. Eighth annual festival featuring Tom Tingle, a Choctaw storyteller from Texas, who will share American Indian folklore and history. Other storytellers will also perform.
- April 25, 2008, *Politics of Past and Present: A Symposium*, Mississippi University for Women, Columbus, MS. Qualified academics and practitioners come together to discuss the past evolution and current status of key political and public policy areas. Audience members interact with panelists individually and in breakout

sessions with discussions focused on case studies. Issue of focus: evolution of environmentalism and environmental policy.

- April 30, 2008, *History Is Lunch: Must See Mississippi, 50 Favorite Places*, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson, MS. Brown bag lunch series. The April 30 discussion will be led by Mary Rose Carter and Mary Carol Miller.

For more information about Mississippi Humanities Council–sponsored events, please visit the Events Calendar on the Mississippi Humanities Council web site: [www.mshumanities.org](http://www.mshumanities.org).

### Next MHC Grant Deadlines April 15 and May 1, 2008

April 15, 2008, is the next Mississippi Humanities Council regular grant application deadline for proposals over \$2,000. May 1, 2008, is the next minigrant application deadline for proposals up to \$2,000. Application guidelines and forms are available at [www.mshumanities.org](http://www.mshumanities.org).



#### Disclaimer

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