

Does your great idea need to be a museum or can it be a plaque or a historical marker?

Perhaps acquiring a property and caring for a collection, keeping it open to the public on a regular schedule, AND producing programming is more than you are able to take on at the moment.

How about....

- becoming the programming committee for an already-established museum. You get to do all the fun stuff of research, creation and information-sharing without the care and feeding of a legally incorporated organization to worry about.
- focusing your efforts on documenting your community and its cultural traditions through oral histories, photographs and video, journaling and art creation. Give these to a local/regional repository for the public to access.
- organizing public events like history fairs or cultural festivals. You'll focus the public's attention on the importance of art, history, science, or culture and perhaps encourage its support of already-existing institutions and programs.
- becoming vocal advocates for heritage preservation, museum and school collaborations, and funding for your local/regional museums. Now more than ever arts/culture/heritage organizations need cheerleaders who are ready and willing to press the case for support.
- volunteering at already-established museums and heritage organizations. You can do a lot to help these organizations stay strong or get healthy.
- fundraising for already-established museums and heritage organizations or for a collection housed at your local library.

If, after looking at partnerships and cooperative ventures, you believe becoming a museum is the path for you, stop and take a breath. It's time to do some research, to scour the landscape, and to do some soul-searching.

This is not about you. This is about creating long-term value for your community.

It is important to marry your enthusiasm with good practices, a clear mission that focuses the efforts on your museum's purpose and goals, and a strategic plan that will help you keep on track.

(Every year the number of museums grows.)

Not from New York? The same advice still applies: know how many museums and heritage organizations already exist in your universe, who they serve, and what they do.

"The easiest part of starting a museum/historical society is starting it...the hard part is keeping it going after the original people are gone!"

(Bill Sauers, Greece (NY) Historical Society)

Don't be fooled. This is a complex process that leaves some museums or heritage organizations faced with formal dissolution or consolidation every year. Many more lie dormant with buildings and collections in peril. As someone thinking about starting a museum should understand, there are potential long-term organizational risks if you fail to plan thoroughly.

Every great museum adventure starts with a dream. Every successful venture starts with some very clear and definite idea of what you want to accomplish. Keep your constituents in mind at all times. The most successful museums are measured in number of lives they impact, then number of young minds they inspire and not necessarily by the number or quality of things they own. A museum with no visitors is NOT a museum...it's just a warehouse.

(Bart A. Russell, Director of Education and Interpretation, Seneca Park Zoo Society)

ND MAP Grant Program

The next round of grants will be awarded July 2011.

The North Dakota Museum Assessment Program (ND MAP) is part of the Cultural Heritage Grant Program. The Cultural Heritage Grant Program was established in 2003 with funding through the state legislature and is administered by the State Historical Society of North Dakota.

ND MAP grants provide county historical societies an opportunity to do an in-depth review of their organization, develop long-range plans, and complete a project.

In order to apply for an ND MAP grant, the museum must be the official museum in their jurisdiction and must be organized to operate on a permanent basis for educational and historical purposes and care for historical objects and materials. The museum's objects and materials must be available to the public through regular exhibits or programs in the facility that it owns and operates and the museum must have at least one professional staff member or the full time equivalent, whether paid or unpaid, whose responsibilities relate solely to the museum's services and operations. The museum must be open on a regular basis with established hours and schedules.

For more information contact Grants and Contracts Officer Amy Munson at (701) 328-3573 or email at amunson@nd.gov.

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MACC Workshop October, 28

A Midwest Art Conservation Center (MACC) workshop will be held during the 23rd Annual Governor's Conference on North Dakota History in Bismarck, October 28-29, 2011.

MACC Paper Conservator Dianna Clise will teach this one-day workshop. You'll receive hands-on experience in the identification of various types of negatives and prints from MACC's extensive photographic study collection; identification of the agents of deterioration in photographic materials; hands-on identification of types of damages; proper exhibition and storage materials, and a brief discussion on digitizing photographic materials collections. A comprehensive

notebook of technical leaflets will be provided for each participant.

\$195 for MACC members and \$245 for non-members, limited registration, sign-up at: www.preserveart.org/workshops or call 612 870-3120

Too Much or Too Little: The Story of Water in North Dakota

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23rd Annual Governor's Conference on North Dakota History

Remember the date!

October 28 and 29, 2011 at the North Dakota Heritage Center, Bismarck

Remember to nominate the citizens and organizations whose activity in state, regional, and local history serves as role models of excellence for others.

- ★ Excellence in Local History Award, for those whose activity in local and regional history serves as a model for excellence.
- ★ Association for Excellence in Local History Award, for the association/organization whose activity in local and regional history shows excellence.
- ★ Heritage Profile Honor Award, for recognition of individuals making a lasting contribution to understanding state history.
- ★ Person of History Award, posthumously honors those who have made lasting contributions to the growth and well being of the citizens of North Dakota.

Information on Local History Awards and nomination forms is available on the SHSND website www.history.nd.gov. Email Kiri Stone at kstone@nd.gov or call at 701 328-2799 for information on history conference registration.

The Local Network



2011 North Dakota State Competition April 8th, 2011 North Dakota Heritage Center, Bismarck, North Dakota

The State Historical Society has recently assumed responsibility for administering and expanding the National History Day in North Dakota program. The state's history agency is dedicating time, office supplies/equipment, and staff support to revitalize this program of regional competitions and encourage teacher and student awareness of the many opportunities it provides. Leading these efforts is Erik Holland, the State Historical Society's curator of education. Holland has been involved in museum education and lifelong learning for more than 35 years.

"A recent study compared National History Day participants with similar students who did not participate in the program," said Holland. "The results indicate that NHD students outperform their non-NHD peers on standardized tests in all topic areas, including reading, science, and mathematics, as well as social studies. History Day teaches critical thinking, writing and research skills, inspires students to do more than they ever thought they could, and prepares them for college, career, and citizenship. Can you think of a better way to support our youth's future?"

For more information about the National History Day in North Dakota visit the program website, <http://nd.nhd.org>. Those interested in participating in National History Day as students or volunteers should contact Erik Holland by calling (701) 328-2792 or email him at eholland@nd.gov.

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