

OHIO Chautauqua



March 30, 2017
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

- About the 2017 Ohio Chautauqua Scholar-Performers

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2017 Ohio Chautauqua: *The Natural World* *Step back in time, come face to face with history*



This summer, Ohio Chautauqua will travel to four communities that are rich in Ohio history:

1. **June 6-10: Village of Burton**
2. **June 13-17: Village of Clifton**
3. **June 20-24: Warren**
4. **June 27-July 1: Village of Milan**

ABOUT THE 2017 OHIO CHAUTAUQUA SCHOLAR-PERFORMERS

Gene Worthington portrays the indomitable Teddy Roosevelt. Worthington is no stranger to the stage. He has performed in community and professional theatre for more than thirty years. His is a passionate historian and has brought to life labor leader John L. Lewis, baseball legend Babe Ruth as well as frontiersman Simon Kenton of the American frontier. Another aspect of Gene's varied career includes the presentations of Readers Theater performances. He has acted and directed in a number of these including versions of the iconic Frankenstein, It's a Wonderful Life and War of the Worlds. He also assist in directing various community and K-12 grade student theatre performances.



Susan Marie Frontczak (*Marie Curie and Mary Shelley*) Susan Marie Frontczak (*Marie Curie and Mary Shelley*) has brought literature and history to life for over two decades. She developed her first living history presentation, Marie Curie, in an attempt to reconcile her technical and scientific past (14 years working as an engineer, supported by a B.S. in engineering and a masters in Software Engineering) with her love of sharing the humanities through storytelling. She

performs in theatres, corporations, schools, libraries, and festivals internationally. When bringing history to life, Susan Marie lives up to her motto, "Give me a place to stand, and I will take you somewhere else." |

www.storystsmith.org

Dianne Moran (*Dian Fossey*) is an award-winning folklorist who has worked with audiences for 35 years as a living history performer, Chautauqua scholar, and naturalist, including 25 years at the St. Louis zoo. She lives deep in an Ozark forest where she says she is free to enjoy wild things and the spirits of the pioneers who linger on there. Dianne's programs receive funding from the Missouri Arts Council, she is on the rosters of St. Louis and Kansas City Young Audiences, and she tours the country with her living history programs as a Chautauqua scholar.



Dan Cutler (*Cornstalk*) is a Vietnam veteran and retired firefighter. Throughout his life he has been a historian with an active interest in the Ohio Country of the 18th century. His fascination with the dramas and adventures of that time and place led him to participate in living history programs and reenactments. For the past 28 years, Dan has been involved in various living history experiments. He continues to work with the West Virginia Humanities Council's "History Alive!" program, in which he presents Chief Cornstalk at venues including museums, schools, libraries, community centers, and fairs and festivals.

Visit ohiohumanities.org to learn more.

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Ohio Humanities is the state-based partner of the National Endowment for the Humanities. Through grants and public humanities programs we help Ohioans interpret the past, imagine the future, and define individual values. We're committed to creating vibrant communities throughout our state.

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NOTE: High-resolution logos and photos are available for media usage. Contact Ohio Humanities Outreach Coordinator Michael Straughter at mstraughter@OhioHumanities.org or call 614-461-7802.



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- What is Ohio Chautauqua?

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Ohio Chautauqua 2017: The Natural World

Background: What is Ohio Chautauqua?

Ohio Chautauqua is a five-day event that combines living history performances, music, education, and audience participation into a one-of-a-kind cultural event the entire community will enjoy. The program is based on the 19th-century populist tradition of traveling speakers, teachers, musicians, and performers who brought entertainment and culture to small towns and rural areas across the United States.

Chautauqua History

After their debut in 1874 as a summer class for Sunday school teachers, Chautauqua assemblies quickly expanded and spread throughout rural America until the mid-1920s. Chautauqua assemblies brought entertainment and culture for the whole community, with speakers, teachers, musicians, entertainers, preachers and specialists of the day. US President Theodore Roosevelt called Chautauqua "the most American thing in America."

By 1915, at the height of the Chautauqua Movement, nearly 12,000 communities had hosted a Chautauqua. During the Great Depression of the 1930s, the movement died out. Most historians cite the rise of car culture, radio, and movies as the causes.

A handful of independent Chautauquas survived and are thriving again while others are being resurrected. Leading the way, several state humanities councils have organized Chautauquas over the last two decades. Ohio Humanities established Ohio Chautauqua in 1999; the tour now travels to four towns in Ohio each summer.

Ohio Chautauqua: Bringing Communities Together since 1999

Ohio Humanities promotes the humanities through public programs, grants, and community projects to help individuals and communities explore, share, and be inspired by the human experience. Ohio Chautauqua, a program of Ohio Humanities, is a memorable event that will enrich, delight, and entertain every generation. Daytime activities feature stimulating adult programs and hands-on workshops for youth hosted by local community organizations.

Each evening, family and friends gather under a tent erected on the public square as live music fills the air. Then, a talented performer appears on stage, bringing a historic figure to life through personal stories and historic detail. This enriching and delightfully entertaining experience is perfect for every generation. With its warm, nostalgic vibe, this truly unique experience is sure to open minds and start conversations.

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