

NEH Application Cover Sheet

Challenge Grants

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Field of Expertise: Museum Studies/Historic Preservation

INSTITUTION

Yakima Valley Museum & Historical Association
Yakima, WA UNITED STATES

APPLICATION INFORMATION

Title: *Ensuring A Future For Yakima Valley's Heritage*

Grant Period: From 12/2010 to 11/2014

Field of Project: History - American

Description of Project: The Yakima Valley Museum is embarking on a \$2,000,000 fund development drive to add \$80,000 to its annual revenue stream for the support of its humanities staff and the exhibits and programs these staff members produce. The Yakima Valley Museum is a regional AAM-accredited museum with important collections and a commitment to serving a diverse population in a relatively rural location. It is the only professional organization in the region with an emphasis on collection and interpretation. It is privately supported and has enjoyed significant philanthropy for both its capital needs and its operations. The current initiative is to ensure the public has access to, and opportunities to learn from, its collections and programs in the humanities by continuing to be able to tell the stories of the Yakima Valley and its diverse peoples.

BUDGET

Fiscal Year # 1	\$50,000.00	Total from NEH	\$500,000.00
Fiscal Year # 2	\$200,000.00	Non-Federal	\$1,500,000.00
Fiscal Year # 3	\$200,000.00	Total	\$2,000,000.00
Fiscal Year # 4	\$50,000.00	Matching Ratio: 3.00 to 1	

GRANT ADMINISTRATOR

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**YAKIMA VALLEY MUSEUM
NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES CHALLENGE GRANT PROGRAM
ENSURING A FUTURE FOR YAKIMA’S HERITAGE**

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ABSTRACT
ENSURING A FUTURE FOR YAKIMA'S HERITAGE

The Yakima Valley Museum, founded in 1951, has grown from a one-room operation into a 65,000 ft² AAM accredited regional history and cultural institution, which also owns a nearby historic house with an innovative educational program. The Museum is responsible for an 85,000-piece artifact collection that includes superb Plateau Cultural items, furniture, textiles, horse-drawn and motorized vehicles, decorative arts, works of art, period clothing, regional business and agricultural items, and natural history specimens. There is also a research library with over 40,000 entries in the database for books, ephemera, photographs, business and family papers, and newspapers. Since 1995 the museum has successfully operated a 2,500 ft² children's interactive learning center and in 1996 installed a 1,500 ft² 1930s working soda fountain/luncheonette facility—both located on the lower level of the main museum building.

The Museum offers permanent and special exhibitions, has a fully developed educational services program, partners with a variety of other community agencies for both programs and mutual support, and is an active participant in current community redevelopment plans. It is open daily all year round.

The Museum has been a 501(c)(3) organization since 1954 and does not receive any governmental support for its operations (with the exception of Institute of Museum & Library Services GOS grants, when those were available). Likewise, its capital needs have also been met primarily by private philanthropy—the first portion of the current building was built in 1956-1957, following a \$150,000 community fund drive; a significant addition was made possible by a \$750,000 community drive in 1974-1975; some remodeling was accomplished in 1989 after a third community drive totaling \$1,600,000 (of which \$350,000 came through an NEH Challenge Grant); and, finally, in 2000-2002, museum leaders raised \$5,300,000 to totally replace the building's infrastructure, add a new entrance lobby, and otherwise renovate the structure to meet the needs of a “new museum for a new century.” This last campaign figure included a \$450,000 second NEH Challenge Grant and \$400,000 from a competitive State of Washington program; the remainder, however, was all private donations.

Over the years, the Museum has been the fortunate recipient of a number of bequests that have allowed the establishment of what is now a \$2,500,000 Board-established Endowment Fund. Income from this Fund, annual fund development requests, special events, memberships, admissions, museum shop sales, and meeting room rentals together make possible the retention of a small professional staff, building overhead, and program expenses.

Annual revenues for core operations have continued to grow, but this revenue growth is not meeting the rate of fixed expense growth. In fact, the Museum operates at a significant loss each year if one-time fortuitously timed bequests and special gifts are not included. Therefore, the Board of Trustees has authorized application for a NEH Challenge Grant to encourage local individual donors, foundations, and businesses to increase the Museum Endowment Fund by \$2,000,000, in the first phase of a longer-term goal to ultimately increase the total endowment principal for general operations to \$10,000,000. A concurrent effort is underway to create a county-wide parks & museum district, which will have junior taxing capability and provide a revenue stream not subject to annual political negotiations for a limited pool of quality of life providers. Finally, even though the museum faces financial challenges, it has reserves on hand, is considered a rock of stability in this community's arts and cultural fabric, and its professional staff and Board of Trustees are well-regarded.

**CHALLENGE GRANT BUDGET
YAKIMA VALLEY MUSEUM
ENSURING THE FUTURE OF THE YAKIMA VALLEY'S HERITAGE & CULTURE**

Previous Challenge Grants

1987	\$350,000
2002	\$450,000

Total NEH Funds Requested (May 2010)	\$ 500,000
Year 1	\$ 50,000
Year 2	\$ 200,000
Year 3	\$ 200,000
Year 4	\$ 50,000

Total Non-Federal Matching Contributions	\$1,500,000
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Total Grant Funds (NEH plus match)	\$2,000,000*
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Planned Expenditures:

Endowed	
Principal	\$2,000,000
Rate of Return	4%
Projected Annual Expendable Income	\$ 80,000
Uses of endowment income	
Staff Salaries for Exhibits & Programs	\$60,000
Exhibit & Program Expenses	\$20,000

*Budget Note:

This is the total to be raised through this application. However, as explained in the narrative, the museum will receive a \$1,000,000 bequest distribution in June 2010 as well as \$250,000 from a terminating trust in December 2013. These funds are not eligible to match a NEH Challenge offer but will further strengthen the museum's financial stability.

INSTITUTIONAL FACT SUMMARY

Mission

The Yakima Valley Museum promotes an understanding of Central Washington history as it affects the lives of contemporary citizens. Through the collection, preservation, and exhibition of historic artifacts and stories, as well as related public programming, the museum provides residents and visitors with historical perspectives that may influence decisions about the future of the Valley.

(Adopted by the Board of Trustees, September 14, 1993, reaffirmed August 2004 and October 2009)

History

The museum was founded in 1951 as a local history organization. It was run by volunteers and non-professionals until 1992 when the Board of Trustees realized the place could be more than a “vault of interesting relics.” Between 1992 and 2000, a fully professional staff was assembled, interpretive exhibitions were installed, professional collection care practices were expanded, audience size grew by 35%, an operating 1930s ice cream soda fountain was installed, and an interactive children’s museum component opened. Following the completion of a \$5,300,000 building renewal in 2002 and the receipt of AAM accreditation in 2005, the museum is now considered one of the major regional cultural institutions.

Physical Facilities

At 2105 Tieton Drive — A 65,000 ft² building built and renovated by and for the Museum in four stages between 1956 and 2002. This location houses the museum collection, permanent and special exhibition galleries, the Children’s Underground (a hands-on education center), the Museum Soda Fountain, and all administrative and support functions. The building is not eligible for the National Register For Historic Places. At 2109 W. Yakima Avenue—Horace M. Gilbert Homeplace, which was acquired by gift in 1982, the house is restored to the period 1898-1918 and is the site of educational programs. It is listed on the National Register For Historic Places.

Collections

Over 125,000 objects, including historic photographs and books, textiles, horse-drawn and motorized vehicles, geological specimens, local business and industry equipment, household furnishings, and Native American beadwork, baskets, and tools. Less than 2% does **not** directly or indirectly support humanities activities.

Humanities-Based Activities

Permanent & Special Exhibitions, including core exhibitions on regional history and such special exhibitions as *Dark Times, Bright Visions* (the post-contact culture of the Central Plateau Native Americans); *Conestoga Wagon: Myth & Reality*; *Collecting: An Instinct For Order*; *Cowboys on The Silver Screen*; *Rodin Comes To Yakima*; *In Memory Of: Expressions of Mourning in Victorian America*, *The Ultimate Fruit Box Label* (with accompanying major book distributed nationally), and *Women’s Votes/Women’s Voices: Women Achieve Suffrage in Washington State*. Lectures and workshops for adults, tours and workshops for school-age children, folk music concerts, a storytelling festival, living history performances, and cooperative programs with the Yakima Symphony Orchestra and the local performing arts center, are offered. Research in the library and archives collections supports individual research projects, newspaper, television, and radio stories, and community initiatives. All are promoted through a quarterly newsletter, three websites, an e-newsletter, and regular media support.

Visitation

More than 34,000 people visited the museum or took part in special programs in 2009. This figure has grown by an average of 5% annually.

Funding

The museum is privately supported and does not receive annual operating support from any level of government. Most programs are free, but general museum admission is \$5 for adults, \$3 for students & seniors, children under 6 are free, and the maximum charge for a family of any size or configuration is \$12.

Administration/Staffing

Policy is set by a Board of Trustees, which has 19 members who range in age from 31 to 65 and who are drawn from the legal, agricultural, and business professions. The museum has four full-time (all having full or part-time responsibility for humanities activities) and five part-time employees (of which 2 are engaged in humanities activities).

ENSURING A FUTURE FOR YAKIMA'S HERITAGE

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES CHALLENGE GRANT APPLICATION

CHALLENGE GRANT REQUEST

The Yakima Valley Museum, the only comprehensive history museum in South Central Washington State, requests a \$500,000 Challenge Grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities in the first \$2,000,000 phase of a larger long-term goal to increase its general operating endowment principal from \$2,500,000 to \$10,000,000 by 2017. A \$1,000,000 bequest, to be distributed in the June 2010, is the first major gift toward the goal, but it is ineligible as a match to this Challenge Grant if offered, as it was not so designated.

Increasing the museum's core financial resources to ensure stability for the humanities focus of the institution is crucial. Beginning in 1992 with the retention of the museum's first professional director, the Yakima Valley Museum has significantly evolved to reach its present status. The Board of Trustees, staff, and volunteers have taken what was once a repository for "old stuff" and created a an active educational and community-based organization that not only cares for and exhibits its own collections, but also supports and partners with other area organizations to help them achieve allied goals. This process included the retention of additional professional staff members, new exhibits and programs, the construction of a children's interactive center component, the addition of an operating 1930s ice cream soda fountain, and a comprehensive upgrade of the museum's physical plant in 2000-2002. Following the successful completion of these efforts, the museum applied for, and received, AAM accreditation in 2005, and has become regionally recognized for its quality and service to community. A Challenge Grant offer and the requisite match will be a permanent endowment to underwrite staff salaries and expenses that directly result in exhibitions, public programs, and youth education.

SIGNIFICANCE AND INTELLECTUAL QUALITY OF CURRENT HUMANITIES ACTIVITIES

The Yakima Valley Museum engages in a variety of humanities-based programs. These consist of permanent and special exhibitions, lectures, educational programs for adults and children, and research—all of which are anchored by the collections. The Yakima Valley Museum has been a collecting institution since its founding in 1951 and is the single largest repository of three-dimensional objects, books, personal and business papers, maps, and photographs in central Washington State. Items include the following:

- 1) Native American Plateau cultural material including prehistoric stone weapons and tools, pre- and post-contact coiled basketry and amazing beadwork, jewelry, saddles, projectile points, games, and clothing. The Museum works closely with the Yakama Nation Cultural Center in the documentation and exhibition of this material. One indication of the quality is that a significant number of pieces have been loaned for special exhibitions at the Washington State University Art Gallery, the Portland (Oregon) Museum of Art, and the National Museum of Western Heritage and Cowboy Hall of Fame in Oklahoma City. Also note the Vanlandingham Letter of Support.
- 2) A natural history collection of 175 taxidermy specimens; 1,000 rocks, minerals, and fossils; a 4,000 piece herbarium of plant material collected locally; and a 550-piece collection of Ellensburg blue agate. The taxidermy specimens have been acquired and retained because they are documented and illustrate aspects of environmental change over the past 150 years as the land was transformed through man-made irrigation projects. This collection also contains rare unique petrified hardwood tree trunks (from 7 to 20 feet long) excavated atop a nearby ridge (scholars from the University of Washington and New Mexico State University have agreed the quality of the wood is extremely high and the existence of such petrified trees, preserved as a standing mixed-hardwood forest encased in basalt, is very rare).
- 3) Although not individually unique, the museum owns a plethora of items that were used in the Yakima Valley and as such can be used to illustrate aspects of the area's history and culture. These items include 49 carriages, wagons, and automobiles; nearly 7,000 articles of period clothing (a collection

recognized by the *Save America's Treasures* initiative); 150 quilts and coverlets (some of which were the subject of extensive social history research by Associate Professor Lou Cabeen at the University of Washington); and approximately 2,500 pieces of household furnishings and decorative arts from local residences. As with most regional history museums, the collection runs from the commonplace to the unique. On one hand, there are items bought locally from the Sears catalog of the day, and on the other, there are pieces such as the high-quality Ames Dining Room set (a massive carved 13-piece ensemble from ca.1893), a Civil War era hand-embroidered flag quilt, and a spectacular collection of 1930s-1950s outdoor neon advertising art. And there are artifacts that relate to the stories of local irrigation, fruit growing, sheep and cattle ranching, fruit packing, fruit shipping, lumber, and railroads.

4) The museum library and archives contains over 11,000 historic photographs of the region (the bulk of which are available to the public on a special website yakimamemory.org); maps of the Valley; recorded oral histories, film, and video (now all transferred to digital format); bound copies of the *Yakima Herald-Republic* from 1890 to 1952; 3,500 linear feet of personal and local business papers, pamphlets, scrapbooks and other ephemera; 95 linear feet of newspaper clipping files; 125 linear feet of Yakima Valley Transportation Company records (the last operating interurban line in the country); 7,350 individual apple and other fruit labels used by local growers in marketing; an unusually rich collection of 1890s pop-up Valentines; work orders and photos of regional advertising art (including neon) from the 1920s-1960s; and 1,200 books, 12,000 photographs and slides, newspaper clippings, taped speeches, and other ephemera related to the careers of Yakima native and Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas and local political figures.

5) Over the past decade, there has also been aggressive collecting of the material used in the Valley and unique to various cultures who have settled in the Valley. In addition to the Native American, the museum has collected objects related to unique aspects of life as it was experienced in the Valley by the Japanese, the Latinos, the Dust Bowl-era migrants, the French-Canadians, and the Basque. In this context it should be noted that the Yakima Valley's Hispanic settled population has grown from less than five percent 25 years ago to now nearly fifty percent of all Valley residents today, and some school districts

report that over 70% of their students in grades K-4 are native Spanish-language speakers. The impetus for establishing this collection is one result of the NEH-funded national initiative *Separate Identities, Shared Values*. The museum sponsored *Community Conversations*, a series of dinners hosted by a rotating roster of individuals, each from one of the ethnic groups represented in the Yakima Valley (i.e. Hispanic, Asian, Black, Euro-American, and Native American), discussions took place on how issues of diversity can be bridged and used to create a better community as a whole. The museum was able to forge strong relationships with key individuals not previously connected to its exhibits and programs, and realized its collections were weak in items that could be used to interpret anything other than the Northern European ancestry of the bulk of early post-contact settlement.

Overall, the importance of these collections resides not only in their existence and preservation but also in how they can be used to interpret regional history and culture. The Native American Plateau cultural collection, for example, is used to illustrate how this traditional culture evolved and persisted after the major Euro-American settlement of the late 19th century. The natural history material documents how native flora and fauna have been impacted by the extensive use of massive federally-financed irrigation systems and ever-evolving agricultural techniques. The collection of items representing the rich handcraft traditions of the State of Michoacan, the ancestral home of the majority of local Mexican immigrants, has been very effective in helping educate the local Anglo population that valuable new artistic and cultural traditions are enriching our Valley—this has been a great counterpoint to prevalent attitudes (now fortunately dissipating) that the Mexicans were bringing only increased crime and poverty.

Management and humanities-based exhibition and programmatic use of collections material has been guided by the professional expertise of the existing staff, a CAP assessment, collection specialists from throughout the country, and interpretive specialists from the University of Minnesota, Minnesota Historical Society, Washington State Historical Society, the South Dakota School of Mines (related to our paleontological specimens), the South Carolina State Museum, the Northwest Museum of Arts & Culture, the University of Washington, the Museum of Western Heritage, and the Evolving Earth Foundation

(related to the petrified trees now exhibited in the museum). There have also been ongoing interactions with internal and external stakeholders, such as school teachers, donors, the Yakama Nation, ethnic & cultural organizations, individuals with special interests, and virtually anyone wishing to offer valid criticisms and suggestions.

The Yakima Valley Museum presently offers an a minimum of three interpretive special exhibitions annually, adult programs, school programs, a model technology/internet component that has expanded access to collections, partnerships with other local arts & cultural organizations, and a venue for early learning activities organized by others. Examples of such activities are as follows:

- 1) Examples of Special Exhibitions: *In Memory Of: Expressions of Mourning in Victorian America*—The Museum collections include an 1885 horse-drawn hearse in excellent condition. With this as the centerpiece, the museum staff mounted an exhibition on late 19th century etiquette and customs related to a death in the family. The exhibition was developed using original research about the death, funeral, and burial of local Anglo pioneer George Taylor, who met his end falling from a cliff in the Yakima Valley. Using documentary descriptions of the funeral and contemporary accounts of how such a death was handled, visitors were “walked through” exhibit sections that discussed, successively, the alterations to home, the clothing worn by family and funeral participants, the public ceremony, the burial, and the long-term memorializing that was accomplished through such things as hair jewelry. Artifacts came from six museums—the Museum of Funeral Customs in Illinois, the Northwest Museum of Art and Culture, Washington State Historical Society, Seattle’s Museum of History and Industry, and the Whatcom Museum of History and Art—as well as this museum’s own collections. Interpretation was offered in four layers—“second-person” labels put the visitor in the historical event (“...your dear family friend George Taylor has died and his funeral takes place today in the parlor of the family home in Selah...”), archival newspaper articles (enlarged copies) traced George Taylor’s funeral and burial rites, “standard” interpretive labels discussed the objects and ideas in the

exhibit, and a “cell phone audio tour” offered visitors a dramatic five-character reading of the past event to further supplement the written labels. The gallery design re-created the environment of a Victorian home in mourning and a cemetery ready for a burial; the scent of fresh funeral flowers was present in the gallery during the life of the exhibit. This exhibit won the Washington Museum Association Award for Exhibit Excellence in 2007, and related programs included a lecture by Humanities Washington Inquiring Mind speaker and historian Theresa Trebon.

On an entirely different subject, the museum, in the fall of 2009, mounted a retrospective of regional artist Richard Elliott (1945-2008), who with his wife had earlier made the decision that his entire collection of both his work and that of other regional artists as well as his entire estate would be left to the Yakima Valley Museum to establish a center for regional art and cultural expression, with the Museum having the full right to shape the collection as it wishes. A sampling of other recent special exhibitions include: 1) *Tabletop Taste*, which explored how food, utensils, and dining etiquette have changed from the rigid, formal sit-down dinners of the late 19th century to today’s fast food. 2) *Fiesta: Faces Of Mexico*, which exhibited 60 Mexican festival masks with historical interpretation in both English and Spanish, gave substance to the museum’s desire to be more inclusive of the area’s burgeoning Hispanic presence. 3) *Collecting: An Instinct For Order*, an exhibition of the private collections of 20 local collectors, was curated by the University of Minnesota’s Curator of Decorative Arts and Popular Culture and successfully involved numerous Valley residents in the exhibition process. 4) *Dark Times, Bright Visions* grew out of the NAGPRA process, involved Yakama tribal representatives, and set the stage for the awarding of a 1999 NEH Consultation Grant to determine how to proceed with a major new exhibition based on the museum’s superb collection of Plateau Indian beadwork (to be FINALLY installed in the Fall of 2010). 5) *Cowboys on the Silver Screen* was made possible by a major artifact loan from, and a special relationship with the curator of, the National Museum of Western Heritage and Cowboy Hall of Fame in Oklahoma City; this exhibit used authentic movie

posters from the 1920s-1980s and cowboy movie artifacts to discuss the role of rodeo stars (several from the Yakima Valley) in the development of the Western movie genre. 6) *Women's Votes, Women's Voices*—2010 marks the 100th anniversary of women achieving the right to vote in Washington State. The Washington Women's History Consortium spearheaded the development of a major traveling exhibition, which opened at the Yakima Valley Museum in February 2010. In anticipation of the exhibition, the Museum worked with the Southeast Yakima Community Center (an African-American community group), the Yakima Valley Regional Library, Allied Arts of Yakima, the Yakima County Government, various Latino organizations, Yakima Valley Community College, and Heritage University to develop a series of programs focusing not just on the struggle for enfranchisement but also continuing struggles for equality between the sexes in the workplace, community, and politics—among others. The program series is considered a model by the locations to which the exhibition will travel next; and finally, 7) *Yakima Valley's Japanese-American Community*—With the receipt of an important collection of photographs and objects from the Hirahara Family in June 2009, the Museum staff, volunteers, and interns have been working on the research and development of an exhibition to open September 2010. The Hirahara Family, who relocated to California, after World War II, was part of the nearly 2,000 Issei and Nissei Families who made their home in the Yakima Valley between roughly 1890 and June 6, 1942 (when Executive Order 9066 required all Japanese west of the Columbia River in Washington State to be interned). Only less than 200 returned to the Yakima Valley after the war. The exhibition will tell the story of this community and be based upon extensive research now underway in published materials, unpublished material, interviews with Japanese families who have roots in the Valley, and individuals who supported the Japanese through the years of discrimination prior to, and immediately after, World War II.

- 2) Examples of Adult Programs: *Drawing Room Diversions*—A joint program with the Yakima Symphony Orchestra, this continuing annual 3-program series began in 2000 and features music accompanied by historical context in a “dinner theater” format. Each evening offers a themed

program, such as 1950s pop music, classical singers and musicians that came to Yakima on tour in the 1910s, the roots of local Mexican mariachi bands, the music of presidential campaigns, World War I songs, and music and campaign activities related to women achieving the vote in Washington State in 1910. A local historian or scholar presents the local and/or national context for the musical selections and often discusses how the music reflected social, cultural, and literary highlights of the same period. Sometimes a *Diversions* program complements a special exhibition. For example, from May to August 2009 the Museum hosted *The Human Touch: Selections from the RBC Wealth Management Art Collection*. This was a departure from our usual historical exhibitions, but the Yakima Valley Museum was the only area location with the proper security and other infrastructure to host this exhibition, which travels rarely and was available because of the special relationship between the museum and RBC Wealth Management. (It should be noted that the very valuable collection featured the work of such well-known contemporary artists as Roy Lichtenstein and Chuck Close, and validated the Yakima Valley Museum's claim as the premier cultural and visual arts institution in the region). On May 7, 2009, *Diversions* offered a program that paired poetry, literature, and music with the contemporary artworks to interpret the human characteristics depicted in the exhibited artworks—loneliness, family bonds, ethnic roots, virtues, vices, etc. Local professors of literature and art history were part of the team that put this program together.

- 3) The new *Gilbert House Programs*—In 1982 the Museum accepted the donation of the 1898 H.M. Gilbert home and, over the next twenty years, accomplished nearly \$500,000 in structural repairs and interior restoration to the period 1898-1917. Operated by the Friends of the Gilbert House as a historic house museum, the structure slowly saw its attendance dwindle at the same time the loyal volunteer base equally dwindled. By 2007, the house was open only for a consistently popular Christmas program and a summer day-long event. Consequently, the Museum began to seek alternatives that would make the house more valuable as an educational resource, and in December 2008 the Museum leased the house to a family of five (with experience in historic

preservation), who are both caretakers and living history docents; their home is a laboratory on domestic life in the early 20th century for area students and families. Working with the museum's education coordinator, they have developed interactive computer-based programs allowing students to use modern technology and role-playing to learn about aspects of past domestic life; they have instituted Saturday programs that re-create common household holiday observances for Valentine's Day, Easter, Fourth of July, Harvest, and Christmas; and they are testing software programs to be used in the classroom. The house is once more alive and performing a valuable educational function.

- 4) The *Children's Underground*—In 1995, using the principles of constructive play, the Museum opened a hands-on interactive center in its main building. An authentic child-size 1885 Yakima City streetscape, schoolroom, computer stations, reading “treehouse,” dress-up area, drawers of hands-on activities, weather station, and aquarium of local river life combine to create one of the most popular areas in the museum. The education coordinator works with teachers and parents to develop and update learning activities in the center in accordance with the skills outlined in the State of Washington Assessment For Student Learning. The space is also used as a classroom for students from the adjacent middle school. All educational activities employ contemporary theories of child development and learning. Aspects of the region's natural and cultural history are taught through constructive play, and many of the activities invite multiple family members to share the tasks leading toward discovery. The interactive computer component allows for a more contemporary approach, familiar to most school-age visitors, to local history. The Washington State Apple Education Foundation provided funds for extensive teacher training and classroom outreach materials—materials that are now available through, and regularly downloaded from, the museum's website at yakimavalleymuseum.org. Furthermore, the EPIC Headstart Program, the Washington State Migrant Council, and the Yakima Valley Farm Workers Clinic regularly access the above-listed education programs both for their content and as a tool to assist migrant workers' children in making the transition from Spanish to English language skills. Two early

learning programs come to the museum bi-weekly for storytelling and family evening programs in the *Children's Underground*—one of these uses traditional folk tales to lead into discussions about other cultures, to encourage literacy, and to talk about values.

- 5) *Lectures & Storytelling*—There is a regular annual series of speakers made available through Humanities Washington's *Inquiring Mind* roster of speakers, who are vetted by Humanities Washington and base their presentations on university-level research. Topics have included the significance of Mexican festival masks (given by Dr. Errol Jones of Boise State University), the art of apple labels, native plants and birds, local women in history, and the worldwide environmental effects of the Yakima Valley's agricultural growth. An annual storytelling festival serves over 1,500 students in a one-week period, with stories and interactive presentations on topics from local railroad history to how the area's abundant sunshine plays a role in shaping the Valley's unique identity.
- 6) *The Big Read*—One of the many examples of cooperative community programs is the partnership with the Yakima Regional Library, Yakima Valley Community College, Allied Arts of Yakima Valley, and others in the national Big Read program, sponsored by the National Endowment For The Arts. The first Big Read, in 2007, was *The Grapes of Wrath*, a story with particular relevance to the Yakima Valley, which was the destination and eventually permanent new home of many Dust Bowl era migrants. Over 50 related community events were coordinated by the museum and included lectures, discussion groups, films, and a weekly program on Spanish language station KDNA. The program continued in 2008 with the book *To Kill A Mockingbird*, and in 2009 with *The Maltese Falcon*.
- 7) *Yakima Memory*—Yakima Memory makes available, online, the museum's rich collection of historic images, in keeping with the museum's mission to preserve and disseminate information. Too often, accessibility to archival collections is both inconvenient and labor-intensive for both the museum staff and the visitor. Yakima Memory allows anyone at anytime to view more than 11,000 photographic images from the museum's collections and other regional collections to

which we have access. Low-resolution images can be browsed online, and, by completing a formal online order and licensing agreement, high resolution images and publication rights can be secured. Although Yakima Memory first went online with just photos, video and sound tapes have been transferred to digital format, and many of these are now online as well. All other collections have (or are being) digitally photographed, and ultimately both visitors to the museum as well as web visitors will be able to see images of every object in the collections. The Yakima Memory service has been very successful, and its popularity has resulted in increased donations of historic images and other ephemera to the museum's collections, causing the Yakima Memory database to consistently grow in size. These resources—especially family photos, scrapbooks, and journals—are proving invaluable to the growth and development of our exhibits and programs that feature the stories of diverse Yakima Valley families and individuals.

- 8) *Community Urban Core Revitalization*— A major focus of the Museum leadership is the re-imagining and redevelopment of Yakima's urban core, which lost its major retail base in the 1999-2001 period. The Museum not only financially (if quite modestly) supports this endeavor but also believes that its own long-term stability rests (substantially, if only partially) in ensuring arts and culture have a voice in the political and economic forces that shape community development. To that end, the Museum has joined with the Yakima Symphony Orchestra, the community college's Larson Art Gallery, the Allied Arts Council of Yakima Valley, and several community cultural advocates to form LIGHT, which seeks to make the Yakima Valley, over time, the premier Pacific Northwest destination to experience light-based public art and to learn how the region's sunny climate has, and continues to, influence culture and heritage. This concept was developed after 18 months of discussion and with the assistance of Louise Stevens (a partner in the consulting firm of Arts Market), the Yakima Valley Community Foundation, and the State of Washington. Although perhaps sounding somewhat esoteric, LIGHT has very pragmatic goals that call for specific building and commercial signage lighting as well as community-defining public art. And while the argument could be made that this is an arts, not a

humanities, project, the reality is that the Museum's involvement is critical to ensuring that the "products" are firmly rooted in the unique culture and history of the Yakima Valley.

The quantifiable results of all these efforts—which the first NEH Challenge Grant in 1989 put into motion—have all been highly positive. There has been a 35% increase in public participation over the past five years, the annual fund drive has grown from \$0 in 1992 to over \$125,000 in 2009, six IMLS GOS or Museums For America Grants have been received in the past 14 years, over \$2,000,000 in special project (not capital) support has been raised locally from private donors since 1995, and in 1999-2002 \$5,300,000 was secured for a complete renovation and expansion of the main museum structure. A \$1,000,000 bequest, which will be received in June 2010, should also be credited not only for its size but also because it was the only unrestricted one of eight identical bequests made by the same donor—a donor who thereby indicated her trust in the management and ethics of the museum Board of Trustees and staff.

Less quantifiable, but no less significant, results can also be seen in the growth of the institution as a community center. Over the past five years, the museum has become the preferred place for such community events as a kick-off event marketing a new book based upon the experiences of local Latino immigrants into the Yakima Valley, evening family programs on literacy, breakfast meetings between community leaders and officials from Yakima's Sister City of Morelia, Michoacan, Mexico; funerals and memorial services for leaders from various ethnic communities; celebrations of community leaders' accomplishments (such as parties for the retiring Yakima Symphony Music Director and a retiring State Senator), and a traveling exhibit of artworks secured by the Seattle Mexican Consulate. There is no question some of these events are definitely not traditional "humanities/history museum" activities; but, without them, the museum would be struggling to bring in new audiences to a building that is located in an affluent Anglo neighborhood well away from the urban center and other community activities.

Furthermore, the increasingly close ties among the Allied Arts of Yakima, the Yakima Symphony, the Community College's Larson Gallery, and individuals with a passion for arts/cultural (Anglo, Latino, African-American, and Filipino interests are all represented) is leading toward the potential establishment of a storefront center in the city's urban core. Although many issues still remain to be resolved, it is increasingly looking as if two of the program-based groups will move their headquarters into the new space and the collection-based groups (of which the Yakima Valley Museum is included) will take responsibility for a portion of the annual exhibition schedule. Once considered an internally-focused club for history buffs, the Yakima Valley Museum is now seen as the catalyst for arts and cultural outreach into the community.

WHY THIS MUSEUM IS IMPORTANT

The Yakima Valley Museum is the principal comprehensive history museum serving the area that is bordered by the Interstate 90 corridor on the north, the Cascade Mountains on the west, the Columbia River on the south, and the Hanford Nuclear Reservation on the east. It is also the only history museum in the region with a full-time professional staff, and the only such museum accredited by the American Association of Museums. It is also the only museum with the infrastructure to professionally care for and exhibit valuable cultural materials—one cannot ignore the reality that The Yakima Valley Museum is **the** repository for the community's memory as evidenced by artifacts, documents, oral history tapes, photographs, and film. There is no other place in the region with such a primary collecting responsibility, and the loss of the museum would deprive the residents of access to these important materials on which humanities programming is based.

Some geographic, demographic, and cultural characteristics make the above concern about access perhaps more important than it might seem to someone not familiar with the region. The Yakima Valley encompasses 4,275 square miles (including the Reservation of the 14 Confederated Bands and Tribes of the Yakama Nation). The population of the entire Valley is 240,000, of which 49% is Hispanic, 1% is

Black, 4% is Native American, 1% is Asian, and 44% is Euro-American. The Hispanic population has grown by 77% over the last decade and Yakima County is now the most diverse of the 10 most populous counties in the State of Washington. The City of Yakima is second in population only to the City of Spokane in all of eastern Washington State. It should also be noted that the Yakima Valley has historically been something of its own world—transportation across the Cascade Mountains to the major West Coast population centers only became relatively easy with the completion of I-82 in the early 1970s and, even now, both the reality and the perception of winter storms on the mountain passes as well as the political stereotyping of a “liberal” Western Washington and a “conservative” Eastern Washington deters connections between Eastern and Western Washington. This makes the museum services all the more important to area residents.

Furthermore, the Yakima Valley has a wide disparity in the educational and economic status of its population. At the upper end, some of the state’s wealthiest citizens live in the Yakima Valley; and, although small in overall numbers, these people have traditionally shown generous support for a large number of private social service and arts agencies which have flourished locally despite receiving little or no public tax support. The Yakima Valley Museum, in fact, is one of the best examples of such largess, as it is relatively large and sophisticated among general regional history museums that have not been built, nor are substantially operated, with public funding.

At the other end of the spectrum, Yakima County leads the state in percentage of population receiving food stamps; 49% of the population receives some form of public assistance (41% from the State Department of Social & Health Services alone); 60% of all students qualify for the federal free or reduced cost school lunch program; and 35% of births are to illiterate mothers. Of all urban areas in the state, Yakima has the highest percentage of families with incomes below the federal poverty level and the lowest percentage of families with incomes above \$75,000.

Finally, as the primary historical association in the region, the Yakima Valley Museum provides mentoring and support to smaller historical agencies operated by volunteers in the nearby Yakima Valley towns of Sunnyside, Mabton, Toppenish, Prosser, Union Gap, and Granger. This has allowed the museum the opportunity to benefit these secondary audiences as well.

STRATEGIC PLAN/FUTURE GOALS

Much progress has been made in the last twenty years on transitioning the museum from an inwardly focused agency on the margins of community life into a place that not only accomplishes traditional museum functions in the preservation and exhibition of heritage but also serves as a place where ethnic identity is verified, community celebrations are held, and other local agencies look for advice on non-profit issues, group relationship strategies, and whenever quality is desired in their exhibits and heritage programs.

However, this has been accomplished largely upon the dedication and tireless work of key professional staff members, key trustees, and key volunteers who have not only committed to quality work on internal functions but also committed to raising the museum's public profile and partnerships. Once considered a rather "arrogant attic on Tieton Drive", the Museum now is regularly called upon to lead arts and cultural initiatives. The new Yakima Arts Commission (formally established by the Yakima City Council in December 2009) has adopted policies and procedures drafted by the museum staff. The Yakima Morelia Sister City Association regularly uses the museum to host dignitaries visiting from Mexico. Ready By Five (an early learning program serving the city's most economically challenged neighborhood) brings families to the museum no less than one evening a month. Circle of Success (a program of the Diocese of Yakima's Catholic Charities) hosts storytelling mornings bi-weekly at the museum. Even the well-established Allied Arts of Yakima Valley has requested assistance from the Museum in its current strategic planning. A county-wide effort to develop a comprehensive map of hiking and biking trails is being facilitated by the museum's associate director. Discussions on downtown urban land use involve

museum staff. And the museum has an important voice in future directions for the Yakima Valley Community Foundation (which has \$45 million in assets).

It is easy to say that all these “outside the typical museum sphere” activities drain staff and volunteer resources. However, in Yakima (and probably elsewhere) if one wants to engage new audiences, simply expecting individuals to participate in museum programs (even though the planning committees are diverse), one must also respond to the needs and priorities of other groups and organizations. Thus, such outreach or partnership efforts will continue to be a hallmark of the Yakima Valley Museum.

Nevertheless, the Museum also realizes its core obligations to the proper care and interpretation of its collections. Accordingly, in March 2010, the Board of Trustees completed a new strategic direction for the next three years—a direction that takes into account the reality of a fixed overhead that grows with increasing costs for basic maintenance and upkeep, an under-compensated staff, increasing competition for charitable dollars coupled with the impending loss of long-time major donor families, and a hard-won highly respected public stature we do not wish to jeopardize. The plan is as follows:

Exhibitions

Since many of the museum’s best permanent collections have not been on view consistently since the 2000-2002 building renovation, staff energies are being directed toward rebuilding all permanent/ongoing exhibitions that showcase our extensive collections and best tell the story of our Valley’s diverse peoples. The completion of each component will be an occasion for an “exhibit opening”. For example, the Plateau Collection (opening Fall 2010) will focus on the continued resilience and losses of the local Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation after the Yakima Reservation was established in 1855; the above-mentioned exhibition of Japanese Americans will be part of a larger story about the challenges and contributions of the various waves of immigration into the Valley from the mid-1850s to the present day; the museum’s great collection of architectural details, police & fire items, and business

artifacts will help tell the story of what it takes to build and sustain a community; and the natural history collection will be used to illustrate how humans and the natural environment have interacted over time.

These new exhibit components will all share, to varying degrees as appropriate, some basic core tenets or attitudes. These are as follows:

- 1) The Yakima Valley is a unique and special place which has produced "stars;" generated product breakthroughs and invention, and developed an identity which sets it apart from its neighbors.
- 2) The Yakima Valley is "new land" created by plate tectonics and has seen considerable changes in its climate, flora, and fauna. Its natural environment continues to affect its economy, even as that environment continues to be manipulated through commercial irrigation systems and changing agricultural technologies and products.
- 3) The resilient peoples of the Yakama Nation have a cultural history that includes change and adaptation and continues to flourish and develop; pioneers are people who move, at risk, to a new strange place, in hopes of a better life; and the Yakima Valley today is the product of many years of pioneers who continue to arrive.
- 4) Communities are places where some people apply specialized skills to provide for the needs of everyone, where ethnic traditions can influence and flavor neighborhoods, and where the needs are people are met—to varying degrees—from the cradle to the grave.
- 5) Commerce, communication, and transportation create a web that unifies the communities in our valley and connects us to the rest of the country and the world.
- 6) This museum is a collecting institution, and has, over the years, amassed a substantial number of private collections which are related to the Yakima Valley only because the collector lived (or died) here. These collections range from high-end late 1800s East Coast city carriages to tiny ships made from seashells. Since there is no other area institution with either the interest or the facilities to care for these items, the Museum feels an obligation to use them to provide local place-bound residents the opportunity to see and learn from these authentic items.

The museum staff and local stakeholders (such as Tosh Umemoto, a local Japanese farmer interned during World War II; Jane Schwab, local Filipino and scholar on diversity; Ester Huey, an African-American community activist, and Juven Garcia; President of the Yakima-Morelia Sister City Association and local Hispanic leader have been assisted in their thought process by the following key scholars and specialists (among others), some of whom were funded by NEH and NEA:

Name	Speciality	Affiliation
Kenneth Wheeling	Western Wheeled Vehicless	Carriage Association of America
Gail Nomura	Asian-American	University of Washington
Kodi Jeffery-Clay	Educator	Centennial Museum, University of Texas
Tom Edwards	History/Irrigation	Whitman College
James Sheperd	Economic History	Whitman College
Sue Armitage	Women’s History	Washington State University
Jack Nisbet	Natural History	Professional Journalist
Erasmio Gamboa	Hispanic Culture	University of Washington
Carlos Schwantes	Western History/Transportation	University of Idaho
Mary Schlick	Native American	Yakama Nation Scholar
Jose Alamillo	Mexican Immigration	Washington State University
Merle Kunz	General History	Central Washington University
Steve Lundblad	Natural History	Central Washington University
Erika Doss	Popular Culture	University of Colorado
James Martin	Anthropology	South Dakota School of Mines
Pam Fabela	Yakama Culture	Yakama Nation Curator
Melissa Carrillo	Internet Educator	Smithsonian Institution
Stephanie Lile	Educator, WSHS	Washington State Historical Society
Steve Grafe	Native American	Museum of the Southwest
Bruce Vanlandingham	Native American, Folk Art	National Advisor to Museums

Programs

There shall be increased efforts in organizing, implementing, and marketing specific programs—the Drawing Room Diversions series, existing partnerships with local early learning programs, school programs, lectures, and the Children’s Underground interactive center—clearly intended to keep the museum active as an educational resource. This also includes continued outreach to other groups to assist in their programs, making our building and collections more accessible, and ensuring that the museum maintains its existing outward focus in all ways.

Collections

Much work has been accomplished already in computerized cataloguing (including digital images) as well as proper storage of the artifacts. Yet public accessibility to specific items is not readily available; thus kiosks will be added in a special area of the galleries and collection records (except material that might be sensitive in nature or carry a donor restriction) made available on computer monitors. This access problem is compounded in the research library as large collections of material, although safely stored, are simply not adequately inventoried (much less catalogued). Fortunately, the museum has now committed to the services of a trained archivist, and the current plan calls for this collection to meet the same access/management standards as that already achieved for the three-dimensional collections.

Fund Development

By necessity, this must be the primary focus of the Board of Trustees and the Director, assisted by a support staff. The traditional mix of revenue sources—current endowment returns, membership dues, annual fund drive, earned income from property rental (the museum owns the land under a local Taco Bell franchise), events, and admissions—although steadily growing—are not keeping pace with the costs of building overhead, staffing and such benefits as health insurance, and program activities. The Board has actively studied this issue for some time and responded by increasing special events (including a bi-annual auction and the sponsorship of an officially sanctioned Barbeque Championship Competition in cooperation with lead sponsor Treetop Juices—each of which return a net annual average profit of \$70,000), being more aggressive in the annual fund effort, and investigating public sector support. The past 18 months have proved that special events, while important, are labor-intensive and Yakima has a plethora of agencies doing more and more events that all draw on the identical relatively narrow group of individuals and businesses. The Annual Fund has its limits as well, especially given both the narrow base and the reality that the long-time donors to local arts and culture are leaving this world without descendents to carry on their philanthropy locally. This community has very little history in supporting

arts and culture with public funds, and the current economic climate is resulting in considerable government downsizing by school districts, parks & recreation, and safety programs throughout the state. The museum is working with others to create a junior taxing district for parks and the museum, but it will require a public vote that may or may not be successful in the current anti-tax climate.

Therefore, the only truly viable method of raising the core operating revenue is to increase the museum's own investment portfolio. Without this infusion of resulting new revenue, the museum will be forced to return to the days of merely opening its doors to the public and safely storing its collection—all exhibition, educational, and program activities will cease by December 2013 (this is longest period the Board of Trustees will agree to continue using reserves to balance the budget). The strategy for this is outlined in more detail under the following section on meeting the potential Challenge Grant offer.

KEY PERSONNEL

Although the current national economic situation may seem a deterrent to beginning such a campaign, the Yakima Valley Museum Board of Trustees is committed to move ahead not only because there is a critical need to do so, but also because of its unique current professional staff team. There are four principal museum staff members—the director, the curator of exhibits, the curator of collections, and the associate director (who, among other duties, handles public relations and technology needs). The Challenge Grant funds will support each of this four salaries in proportion to their direct humanities activities. All have solid credentials and each has an unusual mix of skills.

The director, hired in April 1992, had previously served 10 years as director of an AAM accredited county history museum in upstate New York, and five years as director of an urban history center in Minneapolis. He has been the chair of the New York State Council on the Arts Museum Aid Panel, is currently a trustee and chair-elect of Humanities Washington, and is a graduate of the AFA/Getty Museum Management Institute in Berkeley. He is exceptionally well-integrated into a variety of community and regional organizations, handles all the traditional chief executive duties, and does all the

bookkeeping, employment law compliance issues, and special event coordination. However, he realizes that, for new leadership with new skills and new energy, he should consider retirement within the next five years. His contacts and community trust are at their best level now.

The exhibit/program curator has a BA in Anthropology, a BFA and an MA in Art History, and an MBS in Museum Science from the University of Colorado, Boulder. He has extensive exhibition experience with the University of Colorado Museum, taught graduate-level classes in exhibition development and museology at the University of Colorado, is a past trustee of the Washington Museum Association, and was an adjunct professor in the museum studies program at Central Washington University from 1997 to 2008. He has strong academic, research, and writing skills which allow him to draft quality exhibition scripts, but is also the museum's principal graphic designer, exhibit designer, and exhibit fabricator. He is unusually good as an overall problem solver and the entire arts community draws on his skills regularly.

The collections curator has a BA in anthropology and professional curatorial experience at the Columbia Gorge Discovery Center and with the National Park Service. He is a current trustee of the Washington Museum Association and the president of the Yakima Folklife Association. He is fully skilled in collection management issues but also has the technical ability to handle the museum's theatre-quality sound and stage lighting systems for programs. His knowledge of Plateau Culture is exemplary, as is his deep knowledge of the collection strengths and weaknesses.

The associate director is the former director of the Sheehan Gallery at Whitman College and holds a MLS in museum education from the University of Oklahoma. His master's thesis was on interactive museum education. He is also skilled at marketing and other ways of presenting the museum "face" to the community, designs and maintains the museum's website (as well as those of other local arts agencies), writes the e-newsletter, is fluent in Spanish, and is responsible for the museum's technology infrastructure. In recent years he has taken the lead in marketing, working with consortium of recreation interest in developing an integrated map of regional trail systems, and increasing his role in event

coordination. He is, after the Director, the most widely known of the museum staff in the broader Yakima Valley community.

In 2008 the museum expanded its professional staff by hiring a part-time educator, who holds a master's degree in anthropology with a museum studies emphasis from Central Washington University; and a part-time archivist, who holds a library degree from Washington State University.

Although it may seem as if this staff is small and each person pulled in many directions, the team has worked well together, is very committed, and has accomplished much—in fact, even the major 1999-2000 building remodel was accomplished with the director and exhibits curator sharing the general contractor duties throughout all the construction period. Nevertheless, the Board of Trustees is well aware that such a team may not be duplicated at the salary levels currently offered (the director's compensation is less than \$50,000 annually; the exhibits curator is at \$40,000, and the others average \$35,000 with no retirement for any staff member), and only the collections curator is less than 50 years old.

Finally, the Board of Trustees itself is unusually committed, with most making an annual financial commitment of a minimum of \$1,000 and displaying a willingness to help on all events. Furthermore, the group is very cohesive and spends more time than most volunteer board members in problem-solving and working through issues. The ongoing financial challenges are very draining, and yet this group of people has very little attrition due to burn-out and, when it was finally determined that a major endowment drive was imperative, the vote to move forward was unanimous.

FUND DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The professional fund development firm of Shaw, Snow, & Associates, based in Eugene, Oregon, is providing advice and counsel. This firm was the campaign fund development counsel used on the successful 1999-2002 campaign, and the firm has worked with other local and regional not-for-profits. Their track record is very successful, and the principals in the firm have an unusual commitment to this

organization—the Yakima Valley Museum is one of the very few of their past clients considered worthy of their continuing annual personal financial support.

Since the Yakima Valley Museum does not receive ongoing financial support from the public sector, the museum staff and volunteers are very adept at individual, foundation, and corporate fund raising. Goals for the annual fund drive are consistently met, and each of the four major capital campaigns have exceeded its goal; in the most recent capital endeavor, for example, \$5,300,000 was raised against a goal of \$3,900,000. In addition, sustained annual giving increased by 40% over pre-campaign levels due to the publicity and resulting expansion of the donor base. We have also seen similar results each time new programs are offered. For example, recognizing that the traditional donor base was aging, the museum embarked several years ago on a quest to attract the community's younger "hip" crowd. The children's interactive center already had a base of young families, and the local United Way (recognizing the same need) started a "Young Leaders" organization in which the museum became closely involved through a group of young museum trustees. Community fund-raising events are a significant part of Yakima's social scene, and those getting the most "buzz" are now those held at the Museum—in the words of a patron "...the best parties in town are those at the museum." Consequently, the museum's core support base is now comprised of people of all ages and backgrounds—this is significantly different than it was in the early 1990s when most people thought of the museum as a closed club of older men and women.

The Museum is very well aware that an endowment campaign is not the same as a capital drive, a special event program, or an annual fund. Therefore, the structure will be different, and, with the impetus (hopefully) of an NEH Challenge Offer, the Museum will first access its own pool of the 125 local donors who have both the capability to make six-figure gifts and have shown unusual generosity to the Museum in the past. This group will be asked for not only a personal ongoing annual support gift of not less than \$2,500 but also for a substantial gift to the endowment either as a pledge to be paid over 3-5 years or as a planned gift through their estate. All of these contacts will be completed by December 31, 2010 as these are all individuals with whom the museum director or a museum trustee has a close personal relationship.

The endowment portion of this effort has a goal of \$1,000,000; based on an average gift of \$10,000. Requests received recently have all been at least at the \$10,000 level. Of course, having the ammunition that a Challenge Grant application has been submitted will be used as an incentive to give generously. These will all be personal one-on-one contacts.

Unfortunately, there are very few foundations with guidelines that allow giving for any purpose in the Yakima Valley, and even fewer that might support an endowment request. These that might be approachable include the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (\$500,000 was given previously in 2001 and although the Foundation has rearranged its priorities since that time, the Museum does have a relationship with key Foundation decision-makers) and the Lorene M. Petrie Trust which is part of the Yakima Valley Community Foundation. This portion of the campaign has a \$500,000 goal and a deadline for submitted applications of June 30, 2011.

When the campaign reaches the \$1,000,000 threshold in gifts and pledges, there will be a public phase to access smaller gifts. This phase will have a \$500,000 goal and target the donors who supported the last capital campaign with gifts under \$10,000. There are 392 of these donors, and each will also be contacted personally if at all possible.

Finally, the museum has identified 14 individuals who have had considerable financial success outside of the Yakima Valley but have retained local roots and have relationships with a museum advocate. These include a noted chef, the owner of a regional chain of spas, the founders of the Scudder Family of Funds, a well-known actor, and the family of a Supreme Court jurist. All can and will be personally contacted.

The entire effort will be guided by a steering committee comprised of four members of the Board of Trustees and the Museum Director; with the advice and counsel, as needed, from the fund development firm of Shaw, Snow, & Associates. Overall, it will be a focused and personal effort that relies nearly 100% on personal relationships.

SUMMARY

Long term financial stability is essential for individuals, businesses, and not-for-profit organizations. The Yakima Valley Museum has strong collections, has earned a solid community and regional reputation, is AAM-accredited, has a committed staff and volunteer base, has no debt, and is positioned to join the ranks of the best of the mid-sized regional museums in the country. Over a nearly 60-year period a combination of volunteers and paid staff has grown an organization from a 200 ft² basement room sparsely filled with “interesting relics” into a large multi-faceted regionally-based organization with valuable collections and a debt-free physical plant with a replacement cost estimated at 20-25 million dollars.

But it cannot continue to grow and realize its full potential until it moves away from the cycle of depending upon good fortune through bequests and/or drawing down its unrestricted reserves to balance its budget. In the best of all possible worlds, the Yakima Valley Museum would receive some public funding, steadily increases its earned and donated revenue, and be the beneficiary of relationship building that results in sizable bequests. In the real world of the Yakima Valley, public funding remains elusive, competition for local charitable dollars is growing even from tax-supported public schools that now must rely on their own recently created foundations, and the traditional core base of large local philanthropy is aging.

Nevertheless, the Yakima Valley Museum knows it has a responsibility to care for the objects entrusted to its care, and a mission to offer exhibits, programs, outreach and all the activities that make the museum a vital part of the educational and cultural fabric of the community. An NEH Challenge Grant offer will, in the broad sense, do what it is intended to do—encourage giving by the community and provide a firm foundation for future exhibits and other humanities activities.