
**Building a Creative Economy in Southwest Virginia:
Arts, Culture and Sustainable Development
May 19 & 20, 2008
Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center, Abingdon, VA**

Join us as we take an in-depth look at:

- Community Development and the Creative Economy
- Heartwood: Southwest Virginia's Artisan Gateway
- The Emerging Green Sector: Organic Foods and Ecological Forest Products
- Vitalizing Our Local Economies

John M. Rohman, Keynote Speaker

John Rohman is chief Executive officer of WBRC Architects/Engineers, chair of the Maine Arts Commission, co-chair of The Creative Economy Council and board member of the National Council for the Traditional Arts will share his experiences in creative community building by bringing together the art and business communities in Maine.

Invited Guest

**The Honorable Timothy M. Kaine
Governor, Commonwealth of Virginia**

**Patrick Gottschalk
Secretary of Commerce and Trade
Commonwealth of Virginia**

**The Honorable William Wampler
Senate of Virginia**

CONFERENCE BREAKOUT SESSIONS

(as always, subject to change)

An Alternative Business Model: Building demand and supply for green and healthy products

The demand for organic foods has doubled every four to five years for the past two decades, and consumer interest in green building, healthy living, and other aspects of sustainability is growing every year. But in rural areas and small towns, it's often difficult to find sufficient demand or supply for green products and services. In this session, Pam Curry, Executive Director of the Center for Economic Options will discuss their research and first-hand experience with the green business sector in West Virginia, while Robin Robbins and Nick Safay will share their experience in building demand and supply for organic foods and sustainable forest products.

Bringing the World to The Crooked Road

Joe Blevins, Virginia Department of Housing & Community Development and Brandi Hart, The Crooked Road will share how The Crooked Road is using the internet to enhance heritage tourism and economic development efforts in Southwest Virginia.

Creating Synergy Through Marketing Partnerships

An exploration of the benefits and cost-effectiveness of partnered marketing efforts. Speakers include Kitty Barker Virginia Tourism Corporation, Kamala Bauers, Hotel Floyd, John McEnhill, Jacksonville Center for the Arts and Brenda Marrah, Carroll County Office of Resource Development.

Creativity to Profitability – Experiences in the Creative Economy

This session will highlight the experiences of panel participants (Ellen Shankin, Shankin Pottery and 16 Hands, West Wind Farm, Vineyard and Winery and Robyn Raines, Appalachian Arts Center) in seeking profitability for their creative endeavors. Panelists will share individual and organizational experiences with a focus on the challenges and opportunities to successful participation in the regions' creative economy. Jon Lohman, Virginia Foundation for the Humanities will serve as moderator.

Creating Vibrant Farmers Markets – Recreating civic space and community commerce

The number of farmers markets in the US has grown from 1750 in 1994 to nearly 4400 last year, with annual sales topping \$1 billion. Successful markets can be found in small towns and major cities. The best of these not only create economic opportunities for farmers and other vendors, but often become a "downtown anchor" and a major focus for community gatherings as well as commerce. In this session, panelists (Garrett Jackson, Town of Abingdon Tom Peterson, Appalachian Sustainable Development) will discuss Abingdon's highly successful, diverse farmers market, and the partnership between the town, farmers and ASD.

Get There From Here (or Anywhere) - Round the Mountain Regional Artisan Trail Network

Designed as a series of interconnected community loops, learn about the development of the Regional Artisan Trail Network in Round the Mountain's 8,625 square mile service area. Discover the past, present and future of the trail network with presentations by "Round the Mountain staff, Diana Blackburn, Executive Director, Debby Loggans, Projects Coordinator, Pat Sharkey, Trail Coordinator and Marcella Taylor, Town of Wytheville, Department of Museums. Moderator: Kitty Barker, Virginia Tourism Corporation

Harmonizing Downtowns – Using heritage tourism music and craft venues to help revitalize your downtown

Downtowns are the "string of pearls" along the Crooked Road which reflect the communities identities and their economic restructuring efforts. As downtowns move from an uncompetitive goods and services

location to becoming cultural centers and leisure time destinations they must reinvent both their physical and marketing image. Join panelist Chuck Riedhammer, City of Galax, Craig Wilson, K.W. Poore and Associates and Aaron Arnett, Arnett Muldrow and Associates as they explore transformational downtown revitalization efforts in Floyd, Galax and Pound.

Moderator: Todd Christensen, Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development

Sculpting Rural Economies – Economic impacts of the creative economy

Keynote Speaker John M. Rohman, and Becky Anderson, Becky Anderson Consulting will share specific examples of success stories in creative community building and participate in an interactive discussion on creative community building in Southwest Virginia. Moderator: Scott Tate, Virginia Cooperative Extension

Sustainable Development Enterprises: Building the Infrastructure, Markets and Distribution to Make it Work

Kathlyn Terry, Business Operations Manager for ASD, and Lisa Long, Farm-2-school Coordinator for Jubilee Project in Sneedville, TN will discuss their experiences in developing the community infrastructure needed for medium scale enterprises in farm, food and wood products. The challenges and opportunities will be discussed in aggregating supply among many small producers, in building value adding infrastructure and in linking all of this together with solid markets, ranging from supermarkets and colleges, to specialty stores, schools and building contractors.

The Music of Coal – A discussion regarding the use of indigenous music as a product and economic development tool

When it comes to exports of regional resources in Appalachia there has probably been nearly as much money made on one product that few people think about when they look at the economy of the region. Appalachian music in all its variations from old-time, bluegrass and gospel, to the birth of country music and the modern music industry, has always been very profitable for a few people. While a few well-known musicians have made a journeyman's living, much like the other extractive industries that have hauled away the region's natural resources, company executives and record company stockholders reap the real benefits. Learn how Lonesome Records and Publishing is working to change that extractive trend and keep profit at home where it belongs and put some of that money in the pockets of the musicians who make that music. Session presenters: Paul Kuczko, Lonesome Pine Office on Youth, Ron Short, Co-producer *Music of Coal: Mining Songs From the Appalachian Coalfield*, Allan Maggard, Maggard Studios and Jim McGuinness, Music Journalist/Columnist.

The Next Generation: Young Entrepreneurs and Green Businesses

From organic farming to biodiesel made from waste vegetable oil, young people are increasingly leading the way in the rapidly emerging sector known as Green Business. A number of analysts predict this part of the economy to grow dramatically in coming years, as rising fuel prices and climate change concerns stimulate enterprises that reduce our "ecological footprint". This session will feature a small panel of young entrepreneurs from around the region sharing their experiences and challenges in green business.