



# NEWSLETTER OF THE VIRGINIA CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION

P. O. Box 4314, Richmond, VA 23220

November 2014 - Volume 24, No. 2

## BYLAWS CHANGE UP FOR A VOTE

The VCA Board discussed how to compile and distribute the VCA Directory earlier in the year.

The proposal to move the deadline for annual membership dues from the current date of November 15 to September 1, starting in 2015, has been reconsidered. The revised date for dues deadline is the first meeting of the year.

The section items on membership dues currently reads:

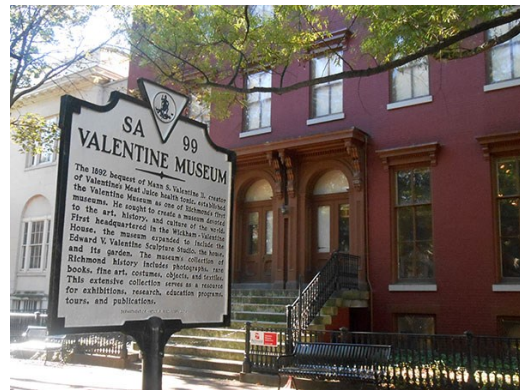
### Bylaws Section D. Annual Dues.

2. The assessed dues shall be payable by November 15 of each fiscal year. A five-dollar late fee may be assessed after that date for renewing members.
5. New or returning members who join the VCA between June 1 and September 1 will be given membership that will expire November 1 of the following year.

The members will vote on whether to approve a change to the bylaws so that the section will read:

2. The assessed dues shall be payable by the first meeting of each fiscal year. A late fee may be assessed after that date for renewing members.
5. New or returning members who join the VCA between April 1 and July 1 will be given membership that will expire September 1 of the following year.

## VCA Members' Meeting Thursday, November 20<sup>th</sup> 5:30 p.m.



## The Valentine

1015 East Clay Street  
Richmond, Virginia, 23219



### *"A New Valentine"*

*Dave Voelkel, Nancy Beck,  
Marla Curtis, Rusty Bernabo*

See Information on Page 3

Directions: [www.richmondhistorycenter.com](http://www.richmondhistorycenter.com)

Please bring an appetizer to share.

Beverages will be provided.





# VCA SPOTLIGHT

By Haley Beck

When VCA has its November members' meeting at The Valentine this year, the work of local artist Nancy Beck, among others, will dazzle you! The Valentine has been collecting and preserving Richmond history for over 100 years. "This is Richmond Virginia" is one of the museum's newest galleries, featuring a map of the city that stretches across the entire floor. This is the work of Nancy Beck!

The Valentine commissioned Nancy to turn an 1856 map by Ellyson into a painting to cover the floor of the gallery. The project took 18 days, with each day averaging about 9 hours of work. Fellow VCA member Keri Ragland provided assistance.

Nancy began the process by collaborating with Riggs-Ward, the exhibit designers, and David Voelkel, the Elise H. Wright Curator of General Collections. After submitting a scale mock-up of her design and choosing the colors for the paints, the team waited for the space to be ready. Then, due to time constraints, Nancy and Keri had only two weeks to complete the map!

"I had a vision of the completed work and we had to change that somewhat so we could finish on time. Of course, the details took much longer than I had anticipated," Nancy said.

During the entire project, cameras recorded the work, and the images were made into a time lapse video, which can be seen on the Valentine's Facebook page.

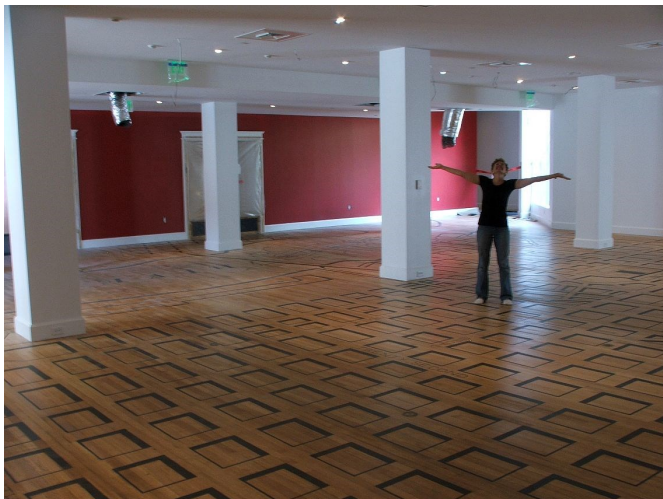
After working through the weekend and even coming in on Labor Day, the map was finally completed. The final project spanned 2,750 square feet.

"One of the most rewarding parts of the project was the positive feedback that we received from everyone that saw the map as it started to take form and spread across the space. People looked surprised, excited and pleased about seeing things they recognized in Richmond," said Nancy.

The Valentine re-opened to the public on October 25 after an \$8.6 million renovation that began in November 2013. The renovation is part of a \$23 million capital improvement plan that includes systems upgrades, a terrace and an endowment plan. The Sara D. November Education Center at The Valentine officially opens November 7.

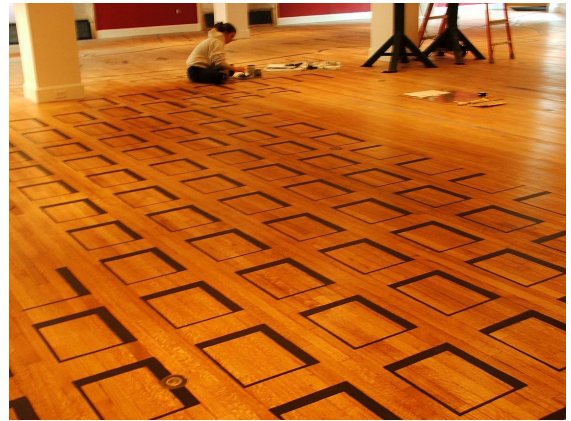
In addition to being a member of the VCA, Nancy is a member of the Society of Gilders, the Historical Society of Early American Decoration, the Institute of Classical Architecture & Art. She studied Fashion Illustration at Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond, Virginia and holds a Bachelor's degree in Fine Arts.

She was previously employed by fellow VCA member Stuart Austin, where she learned about reverse glass gilding and painting, as well as faux finishes and restoration of painted surfaces. Today, as a freelance artist, Nancy creates eglomise pieces for museums and institutions as well as private clients. Her knowledge and skill of this unique craft keeps her work in demand.



In the future, Nancy will continue to lend her talents to the Valentine Museum by reproducing a painted floor cloth based on a fragment from the 1830's.

Nancy celebrates the completion of the project!



# VCA Members' Meeting

## Thursday, November 20, 2014

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**“A Special Valentine”**  
*The Valentine*  
*Richmond, Virginia*

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*Photo credit: The Valentine  
New Community Gallery*

Join the VCA in touring the recently renovated galleries of The Valentine. VCA members David Voelkel, Nancy Beck, Marla Curtis, and Rusty Bernabo will discuss the work they've done. There will be time to enjoy exhibits.

The Valentine has a new vision to serve as a forum for community ideas and discussions, the center of the city's history and an engine that will help drive Richmond's future and its growth.

We will meet at 5:30pm inside the Valentine. Limited parking is available on 10th Street behind the Valentine. Street parking may be available and meters are free after 6pm. The Valentine will validate self-parking at the MCV/VCU lot at Leigh & 12th Street. Please plan extra time for downtown traffic conditions. We will socialize 5:30-6pm before the meeting. Please bring an appetizer to share. VCA will provide beverages.

**Let's Grow VCA**

**JOIN NOW**

**See last page for Membership Form**

## 2014 Calendar

### **Nov 6**

Washington, D.C.

*Washington Conservation Guild: SmartGlass Technology in Exhibitions*

[washingtonconservationguild.org](http://washingtonconservationguild.org)

### **Nov 6**

Richmond, VA

*Lecture by Ian Prosser, floral designer, 10am*

VMFA Leslie Cheek Theater

### **Nov 7**

Richmond, VA

*Lecture by Laura Dowling, floral designer, 10am*

VMFA Leslie Cheek Theater

### **Nov 17-19**

Somerset, NJ

*2014 Conservation Science Annual*

[www.eas.org](http://www.eas.org)

### **Nov 19-21**

Boston/Cambridge, MA

*96th Annual New England Museum Assn Conference*

*“Picture of Health: Museums, Wellness, and Healthy Communities”*

[www.nemanet.org](http://www.nemanet.org)

### **Dec 1**

Washington, D.C., 2-3:30pm

*“Conservation Education: Celebrating the 40th Anniversary of the Winterthur-University of Delaware Program in Art Conservation (WUDPAC)”*

Topics in Preservation Series Lecture

Webcast available, see webpage

Library of Congress Madison Bldg.

### **Nov 13**

Richmond, VA

*Paul Mellon Lecture*

*Degas/Cassat: The Art of Collaboration, 6:30pm*

Kimberly Jones

VMFA

### **Jan 15, 2015**

Richmond, VA

*Virginia Museum Advocacy Day*



# **VCA BOARD**

Meeting Minutes  
October 21, 2014

## **Attendees:**

**Nancy Beck  
Kate Ridgeway  
Bill Ivey  
Dotty Robinson  
Patricia Selinger  
Rick Vogt  
Will Hoffman  
Mary Scott Andrews  
Beth Fulton**

The VCA held its October Board meeting on the 21st at Patricia Selinger's home. Rick brought the meeting to order and turned it over to Nancy Beck to give the Treasurer's Report.

## **Treasurer's Report:**

Sixty-three members have joined or re-joined, and the income so far this year is \$1605. Nancy also received a letter from the Post Office about giving them an email address for notification of renewal. Nancy will look into getting a new P.O. Box at the station on Floyd Ave., as the Saunders Station location is closing.

## **Program Committee:**

Mary Andrews took the floor next and started Discussion about the holiday party. The tentative date is December 6, and some discussion was made over possible locations. Mary will make some inquiries and hopefully book a location.

Mary also discussed the next members' meeting, which will be on Nov. 20 at the Valentine museum. The next meeting after that will be on January 15 at Maymont. On March 26th, Katherine Ridgeway will give a presentation at the Virginia Department of Historic Resources. Our field trip this year will be to the Chrysler Museum, on April 16. The last meeting of the year will be May 21st, location yet to be determined.

## **Outreach Committee:**

Next, Rick steered the conversation to the Careers in Conservation forum. Patricia began the discussion, saying that she just needs another 2 or 3 people to commit to speaking at the April 22 presentation. Will chimed in, saying that he's been in contact with Christopher Newport University, and they are very interested in having the same program at their school. Dates and venues are still being discussed.

## **Disaster Response Committee:**

Katherine Ridgeway spoke next about Disaster Response. She attended the MEST meeting where they discussed a big conference that will be held on July 28, 2015 at Hanover Tavern. The Board feels it would be a good thing to promote MEST in the newsletter, with any relevant updates and information.

## **Publications Committee:**

Patricia and Dotty talked about the newsletter and mentioned how well it's working out having Haley Beck and the other interns help put it together and write articles on our programs. An idea was brought up to have someone from VAM write an article to include in the newsletter.

## **By-Laws Changes:**

The next discussion was about the change to the by-laws. The board came to a consensus to change the deadline for renewal to the first members meeting in September.

## **Membership Committee:**

Bill Ivey will be sending out another e-mail reminding past members about renewing before November 15th in order to be in this year's Directory. He will also compile a list of non-renewing members for the Board. There was also discussion about seeking out someone to help integrate all of our membership notifications, newsletter and web site.

## **Other Business:**

This year the VAM conference is going to be in Richmond and the Board feels that the VCA should be involved in some way. Plans to make a presentation at the March Conference were discussed.

**Do you have images of yourself or your fellow conservators at work?**

**Please help us build our  
CONSERVATORS AT WORK  
IMAGE FILE!**

**Send to Patricia Selinger [peselinger@vcu.edu](mailto:peselinger@vcu.edu)**

# MEMBERS MEETING

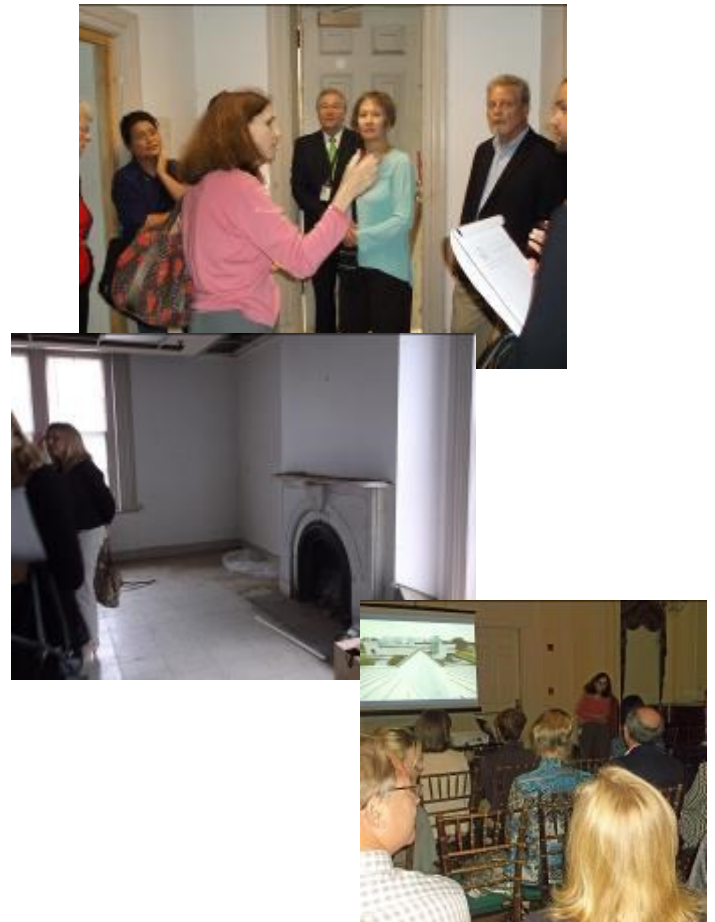
SEPTEMBER 18, 2014

“THIS OLD HOUSE”



The first VCA meeting of the year was held at the VMFA and included a sneak peek tour of the Robinson house, a building on the museum grounds which is often overlooked by visitors but which will soon gain new life as the Richmond Regional Tourism Center. Members were allowed to explore all three stories of the mansion as well as take in the view from the soaring belvedere. It was clear from the current state of the house that the next eleven months in which the project is planned to be completed will be challenging ones, but these renovations will bring new life and purpose to a building already full of so much history. After the tour and some business announcements by the leadership board, the group was treated to a full account of the house's past by Beth O'Leary, "curator emeritus" of the VMFA. She has spent many months researching the history of the building and grounds, and successfully petitioned to have it added to the National Register of Historic Places last year. The Robinson house began as a small one-story cottage, most likely a caretaker's residence, at the large property owned by Anthony and Rebecca Robinson in the mid-1800s, then located in the suburbs of Richmond. The family later added a second story and grander façade and moved there full time. The plantation was known as "The Grove" for its large grove of oak trees which stood for many years around the entrance to the property. After the Civil War and the death of both his parents, Channing Robinson inherited the house, but soon married and sold it. The land was next used as the newly established Robert E. Lee Camp No. 1 for Confederate Veterans, catering to the needs of both Union and Confederate former soldiers, many of whom were disabled, homeless, poor, and alone. The house became a refuge for them and the site of many scenes of reconciliation between former enemies. Eventually, nine more houses were built to house residents, as well as the chapel, a mess hall, and a hospital. At its peak occupancy in 1919, there were 300 "old boys" residing on the grounds. The third story and belvedere were added around this time, and the building was renamed Fleming Hall after the architect. The house was also used as a museum for Civil War artifacts, and the

property became a shrine to the heroism of the veterans, who were viewed as "living monuments to the lost cause." After all of the "old boys" passed away, the home was handed over to the Commonwealth of Virginia and continued to be used as a museum until 1949. It was then renovated to house the offices and labs of the Virginia Institute of Scientific Research, where it is suspected that secretive Cold War experimentation took place. In 1963, its function again changed as it became the studio annex, used for special exhibitions, storage, and classes run by the VMFA. It was converted to office space in the '90s, then became storage, and a 2001 renovation removed the exterior lead paint and replaced the windows. There is still much work to be done, with concerns of lead and asbestos throughout the building, but the plan to renovate and reopen this historic site to the public will bring much needed life back to its rooms. Removal of the drop ceilings and lighting of the '60s and return to the original wood floors that Remain under the linoleum will restore some of 19<sup>th</sup> century feel to the house. Visitors will be able to enter through the original front or back of the house, with a glass addition on the rear welcoming visitors coming from the parking garage. Other updates will include handicap access, an elevator, and new bathroom facilities. The main parlors will house the tourist information center and a history exhibition about the site, encouraging visitors to stay and learn more, and hopefully visit the VMFA next door. The upper floors of the Robinson house will be updated and used for offices, and the belvedere will continue to soar above this historically important piece of architecture, hopefully with the final touch of a replacement weathervane, reminiscent of those that flew there in the past.



# Business Meeting Minutes

September 18, 2014

at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts - Pauley Center

Rick Vogt brought the meeting to order, after the members had a chance to go through and tour the Robinson House in its pre-restoration phase. He welcomed back everyone with hopes that we all had great summers.

Nancy Beck gave the Treasurer's report, stating that our starting balance was \$2,042.62. We've already had 49 members rejoin, as people took advantage of the offer to rejoin before September at last year's rate. This year's dues have increased to \$30. Our income to date has been \$1,225 and our expenses have been \$87.79. We still have \$8,000 in CD's and they are continuing to earn a small amount of interest.

Bill Ivey gave the membership report. He asked members to stir up interest and to bring a friend to the next meeting. Also, please let him know if you are not receiving VCA e-mails, so that they can correct the issue.

Patricia Selinger reviewed the proposed changes to the By-laws, which were published in the newsletter. The VCA Board proposed changing the deadline for renewing members to September 1 for issues related to budgeting, planning, and publishing the directory. The current dues deadline of November 15 is one-third the way through the fiscal year and near the holiday season. The Board believes getting the Directory out by October 1st will promote membership. There will be a more full discussion and vote at the next meeting. Please communicate your thoughts to any Board member. The entire Board can be reached at [info@virginiaconservationassociation.org](mailto:info@virginiaconservationassociation.org).

Patricia went on to talk about the success of the Careers in Art and Historic Conservation that was held at VCU last year. It was so well received that VCU wants to host it again on April 22. If you'd like to volunteer to speak, please contact Patricia at [peselinger@vcu.edu](mailto:peselinger@vcu.edu)

Mary Scott-Andrews presented the programs calendar for this year. The next Members' Meeting will be November 20th at the Valentine, which is celebrating their re-opening in October. She has at least five speakers lined up to talk about the collections. The Christmas party will be on December 6, and there are some ideas about it but nothing set. The members meeting on January 15 will be at Maymont and will be a presentation about the Modular Cleaning Program. Conservators who went through the course and have found it helpful will share their own stories. They are still looking for speakers. The March 26th meeting will be at the Department of Historic Resources with a talk given by member Katherine Ridgeway. There will also be a field trip this year on April 16 to the Chrysler Museum, hosted by Mark Lewis, to highlight their recent renovations. The last program of the year will be on May 21, and Mary is hoping to get two conservators from the

National Archives. They have a presentation on saving and preserving Jewish Iraqi documents from Baghdad. All of this information can also be found on the website. And unfortunately for us, Kathy Gillis is leaving at the end of October, so we will need to find another programs co-chair.

Lauren Fly spoke about her work on the Education Committee organizing the respirator fit testing workshop with AIC. Since she had been investigating having a healthcare worker on site, she learned that participants will need their own doctor's clearance. There may be other issues of liability. She is working to pair the workshop with information on the new MSDS data recently published, as well as including information about different kinds of gloves for different purposes. The respiratory fit testing requires about 20 minutes per participant so there will be down time and she wants to organize a multi-part day while people wait for a fitting. Lauren is also exploring an in-painting workshop with Jim Bernstein, and a box making/re-housing workshop. Please e-mail her if you have any ideas. She delivered the sad news that we will need to find another education chair as Lauren is also leaving and moving to New York this fall.

Will Hoffman spoke about outreach, and said to please keep the VCA in mind whenever you are working on a project that would be good to share or that would involve the VCA. Keeping the public informed and engaged is important to the VCA but also the conservation community in general. He will be talking with other colleges about hosting a Careers in Conservation session.

Rick adjourned the members' meeting. Mary then introduced the evening's speaker, Beth O'Leary, an independent art historian who has worked at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts and has done quite a lot of research on the Robinson House. She gave a delightful talk about the history of the Robinson House and shared some insight into its future as the Richmond Regional Tourism Center.

## **We're On The Web!**

Visit us online at

[www.virginiaconservationassociation.org](http://www.virginiaconservationassociation.org)

**Find a Conservator!**

**Newsletter Archive**

**Like Us on Facebook**

**Virginia-Conservation-Association**



# VCA says Farewell to Kathy Gillis

## IMLS Grants

The Institute of Museum and Library Services has awarded \$150,000 to the VMFA to catalog, digitize and disseminate its collection of works on paper, part of the museum's ART SHARE technology initiative. Works on paper account for nearly 30% of the museum's holdings. Funding will improve the visitor's experience and make works on paper more accessible while preserving the fragile objects.

IMLS also awarded Maymont a \$145,000 grant to preserve the windows of the Maymont Mansion. The project is to mount protective exterior filtering glass on all of the mansion's windows. This a priority conservation project that will help protect the Mansion's large original collection.

Additional IMLS grants went to George Mason University, Sweet Briar College, and the Association of Children's Museums. Library grants went to George Mason University, the University of Virginia, and to the state library for library administrative services.

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### Belter Sofas featured in Magazine Antiques, September/October 2014 issue.

A Tale of Two Sofas: The rare duo by John Henry Belter, now restored and on display at the VMFA, were well suited to their long and glamorous role in Washington's social scene.

By Elizabeth O'Leary and Kathy Z. Gillis

These sofas were the subject of a presentation by Kathy Gillis to the VCA in March, 2013.



Kathy Z. Gillis left Richmond in October to join the staff at The Asian Art Museum Conservation Center in San Francisco. The Center has expanded into a new custom-built laboratory space that includes a fumigation/isolation room, and analytical capacity with XRF and UV light microscopy.

Kathy has generously contributed her time and expertise to VCA over the years and we wish her all the best in San Francisco.

Keep in touch: [kzgekathy@gmail.com](mailto:kzgekathy@gmail.com)



Kathy with Heather Logue Emerson



Carol Givens, Kathy Gillis, Christi Barranger, and Susie (Kathy's sister) share a hug



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## 2014-2015 VCA MEETINGS

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**December 6, 2014**

Holiday Party  
Location: TBD

**January 15, 2015**

*Modular Cleaning Course Debriefing*  
Location: Maymont Garden Hall  
Fred Wallace, Marla Curtis,  
Carol Givens, Carey Howlett  
and Scott Nolley

**March 26, 2015**

*Tangier Island Skeleton Conservation*  
and  
*Mount Vernon Weathervane Conservation*  
Kate Ridgway  
Location: VDHR

**April 16, 2015**

Field Trip  
Chrysler Museum, Norfolk

**May 21, 2015**

*Iraqi Jewish Archives*  
*Conservation Project*  
Katherine Kelly from National Archives  
Location: TBD



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## 2014-2015 VCA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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### OFFICERS

**President:** Rick Vogt  
**Vice President:** Marla Curtis  
**Secretary:** Beth Fulton  
**Treasurer:** Nancy Beck

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### COMMITTEE CHAIRS

**Bylaws:** Mark Lewis  
**Disaster Response:** Katherine Ridgeway  
**Education:** Lauren Fly  
**Membership:** Bill Ivey  
**Outreach:** Will Hoffman  
**Programs:** Mary Scott Andrews  
Co-chair, VACANT  
**Publications:** Patricia Selinger  
Co-chair, Dotty Robinson  
**Web Management:** Valinda Carroll

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**VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED  
TO PLAN THE HOLIDAY PARTY!**

Contact Marla Curtis  
[curtisfineart@gmail.com](mailto:curtisfineart@gmail.com)





# The Virginia Conservation Association

## 2014-15 Membership Application & Dues Payment

Name (as you would like it to appear in the Directory):

\_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Title/Institutional Affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_

Work Telephone: (    ) \_\_\_\_\_ Home Telephone: (    ) \_\_\_\_\_

Fax: (    ) \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Website URL: \_\_\_\_\_

Conservator

Administrator

Curator

Conservation Technician

Collection Manager/Registrar

Appraiser

Postgraduate (Intern/Fellow)

Framer/Preparator

Collector

Student

Librarian

Supporter

Other (Specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Areas of Conservation Expertise:

Archaeological Objects

Furniture

Sculpture

Architecture

Objects

Textiles

Books & Paper

Paintings

Other (Specify below)

Ethnographic Objects

Photographic Materials

\_\_\_\_\_

Are you willing to be a Disaster Response Volunteer in the event of an emergency? \_\_\_\_\_

**Practicing Conservators / Consultant Conservators Only:**

Would you like your contact information included in our website VCA Services Directory? \_\_\_\_\_

The Virginia Conservation Association is open to all interested individuals. To become a member, complete this form and return it with your dues payment of \$30.00 (Regular) or \$15.00 (Student; enclose copy of valid I.D.) Application and dues payment must be received by November 15, 2014 for inclusion in the 2014-15 VCA Directory.

NOTE: If you are renewing after November 15<sup>th</sup>, please apply a \$5.00 late fee to you payment.

Mail your completed application and check made payable to the Virginia Conservation Association to the following address:

Treasurer  
The Virginia Conservation Association  
P.O. Box 4314  
Richmond, VA 23220