

# VIRGINIA CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION



March 2022 | Volume 31 | Issue 4

The Virginia Conservation Association (VCA) promotes the care and preservation of cultural materials. The VCA offers education and training for those involved in conservation and provides a forum for discussion of pertinent issues and new developments in the field.

The VCA is open to anyone with an interest in the care and preservation of art and historic artifacts.

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

## Next Virtual Member's Meeting

Thursday, March 17<sup>th</sup>  
6:30 pm

Submission Deadline for  
the May Newsletter

April 20, 2022

## Letter from the President

I'd like to thank everyone who participated in the meetings and conversations about the future of the VCA, and encourage everyone to please continue your contributions to this important discussion by voting in the upcoming poll, which is open to all VCA members. Kate Ridgway has explored various options for the future of the VCA, and after discussing these options with membership and the Board and integrating our feedback, she has outlined three options for the future of the VCA. Please see the details of these options in this newsletter. The poll will be sent to membership later this week.



*Paige Schmidt, VCA President*

Regardless of the outcome of this poll, the Board of the VCA is committed to fulfilling the SHARP grant with VAM. I had the pleasure of meeting with VAM's Interim Director, Bob Beatty, last month, and we are both in alignment in our determination to use this opportunity to create compelling content for museum professionals. If you are interested in contributing content, please reach out to me or anyone on the Board.

Lastly, I appreciate everyone's continued patience as we navigate all of the changes ahead. Please feel free to reach out to me with any questions or concerns, and I hope to see you at our next member meeting!

Paige

# VCA Meeting Summary January 20<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup>, 2022

The January member's meetings were focused on discussion of the future and sustainability of the VCA. It had been discussed in years past that the VCA has difficulty maintaining sufficient interest and board nominees, and this has only been exacerbated by the pandemic and virtual meetings. The January meetings allowed for open discussion for the future for the VCA, led by former VCA President Kate Ridgway. Kate also provided a few possible options for ways VCA could change as discussion points. The general conclusion was that VCA is not sustainable as it is now, but members still wish to have the networking and social aspects that VCA provides. Suggestions included reducing VCA board numbers, reducing the number of meetings, and/or potentially joining a larger organization, like the Virginia Association of Museums or the Southeast Regional Conservation Association. Based on these discussions, Kate Ridgway has drafted some VCA reorganization options in more detail below.

## Options for the Future of the Virginia Conservation Association

[No matter which option is chosen, the VCA Board is committed to supporting the SHARP grant that was awarded to the Virginia Association of Museums.]

### **Option 1 – Dissolution**

While the dissolution of the Virginia Conservation Association may feel like failure to some, in reality the VCA was an amazing and vibrant community in a different age and is now no longer thriving. Organizations, like any living thing, have a life span and VCA's time has come. This will allow a future group of conservators to create a group that works for them in modern times, whatever that group may look like.

Practicalities: Before the next election for the Board, the VCA will be formally dissolved. Working with a CPA the monies of the organization will be given to a conservation group that can use them. This will be determined by the current board in accordance with the ideals on which VCA was based. Options include but are not limited to SERCA, WAG, AIC for a scholarship for Virginia based conservators, etc. As a part of this process, VCA will send the names and contact information for other regional groups that VCA members may be interested in joining and post that on the Facebook page as a part of a final post.

### **Option 2 – Dissolution and Reformation as Affinity Group with the Virginia Association of Museums**

The Virginia Conservation Association can no longer function without help and combining forces with the Virginia Association of Museums can provide that help with everyday administration that can be a burden for the volunteer Board members. VCA would create its own conservation programming at the yearly VAM conference, a conservator would serve on the Board of VAM, and a committee of conservators would create programming for VAM members.

Practicalities: VCA would have to dissolve as an organization and reform itself as an affinity group within VAM. VCA finances would be consolidated with VAM's with the understanding that they would be a separate line item for use for conservation endeavors decided upon by the VCA Committee. One VCA member would be voted to the VAM's board and VAM would provide administrative support to VCA.

The details of this merger would not be known until late 2022 at the earliest. VAM is undergoing their own reorganization at the moment, hiring a new director and deputy director. Much of this option will be unclear until conversations with new VAM staff can proceed, which will not be earlier than June. If VCA and VAM cannot come to an agreement, VCA will dissolve as in Option 1.

### **Option 3 – Reduction of Board and Programming**

Before the election of a new VCA Board the positions of Vice President, Outreach, Education, Web Manager, and Refreshments would be abolished. The position of Programming would be reduced to one person. The remaining positions of President, Publications, Membership, Secretary, and Treasurer would remain. There would be a newsletter, one meeting a year with a speaker, and one social gathering a year. There would also be an option for a field trip if the Board has time and funding to organize one.

Practicalities: This would reduce both the Board and the workload to more manageable levels. It would require a complete re-writing of the by-laws to accommodate these changes.

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## **Upcoming VCA Meeting**

Please join us on **March 17th at 6:30 PM** on Zoom for the March member's meeting and some St. Patrick's Day fun!

For the meeting presentation, Kate Ridgway will be presenting on her recent work at the DHR unearthing time capsules. The time capsules date to 1887 and were buried underneath the statue of Robert E. Lee in Richmond. Join us as Kate discusses the complexities of opening a time capsule on live-stream and future plans for the objects.



Image: AP Photo/Sarah Rankin  
*The Washington Examiner*

### **VCA Member's Meeting**

Date: **Thursday, March 17<sup>th</sup>**

Time: **6:30 pm**

Look for an email with a  
Zoom link to attend!



After the presentation, we invite everyone to stay on the live stream and enjoy your St. Patrick's Day beverage of choice! Catch up with your VCA members either in the group chat, or create a zoom break-out session for a more personal conversation.

# Sustainability in Conservation

There are a wide range of tools and tips to help cultural heritage professionals make sustainable choices and lower the environmental impact of their work, some of which are highlighted here.



## American Institute for Conservation's Sustainability Committee

[AIC's Sustainability Committee](#) was established to promote sustainability as a core value of AIC membership, to provide resources on sustainable practices for AIC members and affiliated professionals, to engage the AIC community through collaboration and by highlighting

[https://www.conservation-wiki.com/wiki/Sustainable Practices](https://www.conservation-wiki.com/wiki/Sustainable_Practices)

innovative work in the field, and to define research topics to explore aspects of sustainability in the field of conservation. The committee consists of ten voting members and is open to volunteers and community engagement.

The committee regularly updates a sub-page on the AIC Wiki that provides valuable resources for sustainable conservation-related work practices, information about specific materials, and sustainable energy use. The Wiki page also lists sustainability case studies, publications and projects, articles, and links to webinars. More information about the committee can be found here: <https://www.culturalheritage.org/membership/committees/sustainability> and the resources on the Wiki page can be found here: [https://www.conservation-wiki.com/wiki/Sustainable Practices](https://www.conservation-wiki.com/wiki/Sustainable_Practices).

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## VCA October Board Meeting Minutes

Virtual Board Meeting - February 17, 2022

The board met with VAM leadership to discuss the potential merger of VCA and VAM. Discussion included the timeline for a potential merger, logistics and benefits, and potential drawbacks for both organizations. The meeting also covered the VAM annual conference and the potential role that VCA members may play in programming.

The board concluded that membership should vote on the future of VCA before new board members are elected in May 2022. If the membership decides to disband the organization, current board members may stay on until the process is complete. If the membership decides to join VAM, this may need to wait until the new VAM leadership is established. Additional options for the future of the organization may be considered.



## 2021 – 2022 Board Members

Paige Schmidt president.vaconservation@gmail.com	President
Tina Gessler vp.vaconservation@gmail.com	Vice President
Sutton Hastman secretary.vaconservation@gmail.com	Secretary
Keri Ragland Spangler treasurer.vaconservation@gmail.com	Treasurer
Debbie Linn education.vaconservation@gmail.com	Education Chair
Elizabeth Robson membership@virginiaconservationassociation.org	Membership Chair
Ann Cuss outreach.vaconservation@gmail.com	Outreach Chair
Laurie King programs.vaconservation@gmail.com	Programs Co-Chair
Jennifer Myers programs.vaconservation@gmail.com	Programs Co-Chair
Jackie Peterson-Grace publications.vaconservation@gmail.com	Publications Chair
Lorraine Brevig webmanager.vaconservation@gmail.com	Web Management
Vacant	Refreshments Co-Chair
Vacant	Refreshments Co-Chair

### VCA Student Scholarship

VCA offers two annual scholarships of \$250 each to be used for furthering education in the field. Use of funds may include conference or class fees or other professional-development expenses. Applicants must be VCA student members to apply. Applications are accepted throughout the year and will be evaluated during the April and December Board meetings.

To apply, submit a one-page proposal for use of funds that specifies how the scholarship will assist in the pursuit of a career in conservation or a directly related field. To apply, email our Education Committee Co-Chairs or mail paper applications to the VCA, P.O. Box 7023, Richmond, VA 23221

### Contact Us

#### Virginia Conservation Association

P.O. Box 7032  
Richmond, VA 23221

[www.virginiaconservationassociation.org](http://www.virginiaconservationassociation.org)  
[www.facebook.com/VaConservation/](https://www.facebook.com/VaConservation/)

### Contribute to the Newsletter!

Are you working on an interesting or challenging treatment? Have you made exciting research discoveries, come across valuable resources, or attended an inspiring professional development event? We want to hear from you!

Our all-volunteer publishing team regularly calls for content and any VCA member is welcome to contribute. If you are interested in writing for the newsletter but would like some advice and guidance, please get in touch with our Publications Chair to discuss your ideas.

The deadline for the March Newsletter is **April 20**