



KENTUCKY  
HUMANITIES

Presents

**Our American Story:**  
***Kentucky's Voices***

Moving Together

With support from





# Moving Together

## *A Community Conversation Guide*

From rocking on the front porch while swapping stories or kicking up our heels at a barn dance, to cheering on our kids' ball teams and coming together for a festival downtown, every community and family have ways of movement that show who we are and the communities we belong to. This guide is designed to spark conversation about how your community is ***Moving Together***, and to create space for people to share the traditions, activities, and gatherings that connect them to one another, remind them of the past, and inspire hopes for the future.

Kentucky Humanities presents *Our American Story: Kentucky's Voices*, a statewide series of community programs and discussions that invite communities across the Commonwealth to share

their unique traditions and experiences with one another and with the nation. Together, these stories help tell a broader story of what it means to be a Kentuckian, reflecting on the past 250 years and looking toward the future.

*Our American Story: Kentucky's Voices* is part of the national initiative *By the People: Conversations Beyond 250*, a series of community-driven programs created by humanities councils in collaboration with local partners. The initiative was developed by the Federation of State Humanities Councils and the Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage. *Our American Story: Kentucky's Voices* is also supported with funding from the America250KY Commission and the Kentucky Historical Society.

# Kentucky Humanities Presentations

## *Moving Together*

The following Kentucky Humanities programs connect especially well to the *Moving Together* theme and can serve as conversation starters for your event. More information about each presentation along with presenter contact information can be found [here](#).

### Kentucky Chautauqua®



**Roscoe Tarleton Goose**  
*Kentucky Derby Winner*



**Jean Ritchie**  
*Damsel with a Dulcimer*



**Adolph Rupp**  
*The Coach*



**Mary Settles**  
*The Last Shaker at Pleasant Hill*

### Speakers Bureau



**Jim Claypool**  
*The Kentucky Derby: A Celebration of Kentucky and Its Heritage*



**Kevin Lane Dearing**  
*Kentucky Theatre and the Great Touring Stars*



**Dr. Ron Pen**  
*Echoes of the Hills: Kentucky's Traditional Music*



**Eddie Price**  
*The Cane Ridge Revival: The Great Revival that Transformed Kentucky*



**Cynthia Resor**  
*Fancywork: Needlework, Quilting, and Crafts in the 1800s/ Mourning in Kentucky in the 1800s*



# Let's Talk

## *Tips for Meaningful Humanities Discussions*

Community conversations can be inspiring, meaningful, and sometimes a little challenging. It takes a little care to help people feel comfortable sharing. As a discussion leader, your role isn't to have all the answers but to create space, guide the flow, and invite conversation. The tips below are meant as support, not rules. Use what works best for your community.

- Keep the conversation casual to encourage shared exploration, not debate.
- Whenever possible, create more intimate, welcoming spaces for conversation. Avoid large conference rooms or theatres when possible. Consider theatre-in-the-round style seating or around a smaller tables to make it easier for people to share with each other.
- Introduce the program using the Introduction in this guide.
- Start the conversation with a story or anecdote that people can relate to. You might consider identifying one or two people who will be at the event ahead of time. Talk to them about sharing a story about this theme. This will allow you to start off the conversation by calling on them for that story to get conversation started or to redirect back to storytelling when conversation starts to lag.
- Ask open-ended, layered questions. The discussion questions on the following pages are just a guide. Move from surface level questions like, "What do you think/notice?" to questions like, "How does this connect to your own experience?" As the conversation continues, consider questions that are forward-looking like, "What does this suggest about our future as a community?"
- Listen more than you talk. Try paraphrasing an answer, thanking people for their input, encouraging curiosity, and inviting others to respond.
- Balance the voices in the conversation and keep things moving. Invite people who haven't spoken yet, and remember that listening is also a form of participation.
- Be ok with some tension. It's okay if not everyone agrees all the time. Differences of perspective are part of community. When tension arises, you can help by emphasizing shared experiences or values.
- Allow participants time to reflect and process as you near the end of the discussion. Consider a question like, "What do you want Kentucky and/or the nation to know about your community?" or, "What is one word or phrase you're taking away from this conversation?"
- Be sure to thank participants for sharing and encourage them to participate in your documentation process (written, video, audio, etc).



# Let's Talk

## *Discussion Questions*

These questions are grouped by topic and are meant to spark storytelling and reflection. You do not need to ask them all. We have bolded a couple key questions to help, but you are free to choose what feels most meaningful for your group or even add your own questions.

### **Sports and Recreation**

- What role do sports or recreational activities play in your family or community?
- Are there particular sports or games that feel especially common or meaningful here?
- How does your community experience team rivalries, if they exist?
- **Is there a team from your town or county that people feel especially proud of? What does that success mean for the community?**
- How do youth sports shape community life? Do games or practices serve as gathering places for people?
- Can you share a story where sports or games played an important role?
- Backyard games and recreational traditions take many forms across Kentucky, from horseshoes and washer tossing to marbles or neighborhood contests. What recreational traditions are part of your family or neighborhood life?

### **Dance and Embodied Traditions**

- Does dance play a role in your community or family?
- Does dance serve a particular purpose in your community, such as courtship, celebration, spiritual connection, or cultural expression? Or is it mostly about enjoyment? How do those purposes overlap?
- Are dances or movement-based gatherings still an important part of community life here?
- If dance or similar traditions have become less common, do you feel that change has left a gap in community connection?
- **Have you noticed the influence of internet trends or social media on dance and movement traditions? How do you feel about those changes?**
- Beyond dance, what other embodied traditions matter to you? These might include faith practices, group fitness, meditation, yoga, running events, or shared physical labor.
- Are there embodied traditions connected to major life moments, such as birth, healing, harvest, or mourning, that feel important in your community?



## Gatherings and Celebrations

- What kinds of gatherings bring your community together? These might include fairs, festivals, porch sitting, neighborhood sales, faith events, or informal meetups.
- What makes these gatherings special or meaningful to you?
- Are these kinds of gatherings still a big part of your life? Do you think they were different for earlier or younger generations?
- Smaller, informal activities, like harvesting together, canning, meal trains, or checking in on neighbors, don't always feel like "events," but often carry deep meaning. How do these moments shape your sense of community?
- **Personal milestones are often marked in community as well. How does your family or community celebrate moments like births, coming-of-age rituals, marriages, or memorials? Can you share a time when community support mattered to you?**

## Looking Forward

- As your community has change whether through migration, economic shifts, or changes in industry and agriculture, how have the ways people gather changed as well?
- How do you imagine community gatherings evolving in the coming years?
- **What kinds of gatherings or traditions would you like to see continue or grow in the future?**

# Our American Story: Kentucky's Voices

## Introduction

Kentucky Humanities presents *Our American Story: Kentucky's Voices*, a statewide series of community conversations that invite people to share the traditions, experiences, and stories that shape their communities.

Communities connect through movement – from dance and sports to festivals and everyday gatherings. These traditions carry memories of family, faith, and shared experience while helping to guide the future of the community.

Today we are talking about how our community is *Moving Together*. We're here to listen, reflect, and learn from one another – and to hear what makes your community's movement traditions meaningful.

For use with a Kentucky Chautauqua® or Speakers Bureau presentation:

We'll begin by hearing from [Presenter's Name] about [brief description of the presentation]. After, we'll invite you to share your own experiences and reflections as part of our community conversation.

This program is part of the national initiative *By the People: Conversations Beyond 250*, a series of community-driven programs created by humanities councils in collaboration with local partners. The initiative was developed by the Federation of State Humanities Councils and the Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage. *Our American Story: Kentucky's Voices* is also supported with funding from the America250KY Commission and the Kentucky Historical Society.

**Once you have completed your program, please use the QR code or click [here](#) to complete your Final Report. This form will allow you to upload pictures, A/V, and other relevant program documentation.**



# Sponsors



## KENTUCKY HUMANITIES

Kentucky Humanities is an independent, nonprofit affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities in Washington, D.C. Kentucky Humanities is supported by the National Endowment and by private contributions. Kentucky Humanities is not a state agency, but is a proud partner with Kentucky's cultural, heritage, arts, and tourism agencies. Since its founding in 1972, Kentucky Humanities has invested more than \$20 million in public programs for Kentuckians. Learn more at [kyhumanities.org](http://kyhumanities.org).

### The Federation of State Humanities Councils

Founded in 1977, the Federation of State Humanities Councils (Federation) is the membership organization of the 56 state and jurisdictional humanities councils. The Federation supports, connects, and amplifies the work and voices of its members, demonstrating councils' value for communities and their collective impact on civic health and cultural vibrancy. Learn more about the Federation and its member councils at [statehumanities.org](http://statehumanities.org).

### The Smithsonian's Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage

The Smithsonian's Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage promotes greater understanding and sustainability of cultural heritage across the United States and around the world through research, education, and community engagement. The center is a research and educational unit of the Smithsonian that produces the Smithsonian Folklife Festival, Smithsonian Folkways Recordings, the Cultural Vitality Program, the online Folklife Magazine, exhibitions, symposia, publications, and educational materials. It also maintains the Ralph Rinzler Folklife Archives and Collections. Learn more at [festival.si.edu](http://festival.si.edu).

### The Kentucky Historical Society

The Kentucky Historical Society (KHS) was formed in 1836 by a group of prominent Kentuckians intent on preserving the history of the Commonwealth. KHS is a membership organization with members from Kentucky and around the world. KHS is part of the Kentucky Tourism, Arts and Heritage Cabinet; has full American Alliance of Museums accreditation; and is a Smithsonian affiliate. Learn more at [history.ky.gov](http://history.ky.gov).

