

**Board of Trustees Quarterly Meeting**  
**Saturday, May 16, 2026, 10 AM – 12 PM**  
**Virginia Museum of Natural History**  
**Upstairs Conference Room A - 273**

**AGENDA**

Welcome and Call to Order

Dr. Melany Clark

Approval of Minutes (Action)

Dr. Clark

- [February 6, 2026](#)

Chair's Report

Dr. Clark

- 2026 - 2027 General Assembly budget under consideration
- Staff Spotlight - Mr. Tim King  
Building Operations Manager
- Deep Dive – Mr. Zach Ryder  
Social Media Strategies

Consent Agenda (Action)

- [Treasurer's Report](#)
- [2026 – 2027 Budget](#)
- [Facilities Report](#)
- [Waynesboro Advocacy Report](#)

Mr. Will Clements

Mr. Jonathan Martin

Dr. Tom Benzing

Dr. Benzing

Nominating Committee

Dr. Clark

- 2026-2027 Slate of Officers (Action)

Research and Collections Report

Dr. Carole Nash

- [Third Quarter Report](#)
- Appointments (Action)

Education and Public Programs Report

- [Education by the Numbers](#)

Mr. Nathan Sanford

Executive Director's Report

- Museum Updates, [Upcoming Events](#)
- [Budget Update](#)
- [Advancement Report](#)

Dr. Joe Keiper

Mr. Jonathan Martin

Mr. Ryan Barber

Announcements and Other Matters

- [Resolutions for Board Service](#) (Action)
- Open Discussion

Dr. Clark

Adjournment

Dr. Clark

**Next Board of Trustees Meeting  
August 15, 2026, 10 AM - 12 PM  
Virginia Museum of Natural History  
21 Starling Ave.  
Martinsville, VA 24112**

No public comment will be heard at this meeting.

Board of Trustees Quarterly Meeting  
Friday, February 6, 2026, 3:30 PM  
Virginia Museum of Natural History  
All-Virtual Meeting



## MINUTES

The Virginia Museum of Natural History Board of Trustees held their quarterly meeting at 3:30 PM in an all-virtual format on Friday, February 6, 2026.

### TRUSTEES PRESENT:

Dr. Melany Clark (Chair)	Dr. Tom Benzing
Dr. Art Evans	Ms. Lauren Hall
Mr. Dick Bratcher	Dr. Carole Nash
Ms. Sarah Bowman	Dr. David Furth
Ms. Cathy Hincker	Mr. Will Clements
Mr. Nathan Sanford	Ms. Lisa Carter
Ms. Katherine McGuire	Dr. Mindy Vandevelder

### TRUSTEES ABSENT:

Ms. Emma Ito

### STAFF PRESENT:

Mr. Ryan Barber	Ms. Christy Deatherage
Dr. Joe Keiper	Mr. Zach Ryder
Ms. Lila Dougherty	Mr. Jonathan Martin
Mr. Ben Williams	

### OTHERS PRESENT:

Ms. Ambria Wood (Office of Attorney General)  
Ms. Elizabeth Carter Bailey (Foundation Liaison)

## WELCOME

Dr. Melany Clark opened the meeting at 3:29 with a welcome to all in attendance. A roll call vote was taken to establish quorum. A quorum was found to be present.

Dr. Art Evans made a motion which was seconded by Dr. Tom Benzing to approve the August 22, 2025 and the November 15, 2025 minutes. The motion was approved unanimously by voice vote.

## CHAIR'S REPORT

Dr. Clark introduced and welcomed the newly appointed trustees, Mr. Richard Bratcher and Ms. Katherine McGuire to the board.

Dr. Clark read the slate of officers for upcoming year (26-27) and noted the vacant secretary position. Dr. Clark will be recruiting for this position in the coming weeks.

Dr. Melany Clark - Chair  
Ms. Lauren Hall - Vice Chair  
Vacant - Secretary  
Mr. Will Clements - Treasurer

The museum's new Exhibits Manager, Ms. Lila Dougherty introduced herself to the board with a brief history of her education and experience.

Ms. Christy Deatherage, Education Manager, provided the Deep Dive topic, "Is it real?" which was recently presented by VMNH educators at the Virginia Association of Science Teachers conference. The talk consisted of the benefits of using "real" science specimens for hands-on engagement and deeper learning in the classroom.

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

Dr. Clark removed the Adoption of Bylaws item from the Consent Agenda. Dr. Joe Keiper corrected the Quarterly Budget Report ending balance (ending 12.31.25) as shown on the Operational Report to \$4,676,000.00.

Dr. Carole Nash made a motion to approve items 1-4 of the consent agenda with the added amendment to correct the budget ending balance to \$4,676,000.00. Mr. Dick Bratcher seconded the motion. With no further discussion the motion passed unanimously.

### **Bylaws Adoption**

Ms. Ambria Wood explained the clarifications to the museum's bylaws regarding quorum. Clarification was added to provide further explanation and examples of the "then serving" language. Mr. Nathan Sanford made a motion to approve the clarification as presented and Ms. Sarah Bowman seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

### **STRATEGIC PLAN**

Dr. Benzing made a motion with Ms. Lauren Hall seconding a motion to approve the 2025-2030 Strategic Plan. The motion passed unanimously.

### **RESEARCH AND COLLECTIONS**

Mr. Ben Williams reported that Dr. Jackson Roberts has been hired for the herpetologist position. He will be moving his family to the Martinsville area and beginning work at the museum in June. Among a variety of interests Dr. Roberts is excited to study venomous snakes in the region. Dr. Art Evans expressed his thanks to staff for the work done to successfully recruit Dr. Roberts. He also reminded everyone that he will be transitioning off the Board of Trustees in June. With his departure from the Board, Dr. Carole Nash has agreed to chair the Research and Collections Committee for the coming year. Dr. Evans plans to continue to be involved at the museum as a Research Associate.

## **EDUCATION**

Mr. Nathan Sanford thanked the education team for their dedicated work to deliver programs to students in the region. He also praised the team for their VaST conference presentation which has yielded some additional contacts and opportunities to further reach students.

## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT**

Dr. Keiper reported that the Virginia House of Delegates member representing Waynesboro and the Virginia senator representing the Waynesboro area have both submitted budget amendments to fund the Waynesboro project. Dr. Benzing reported he most recently attended Conservation Lobby Day at the General Assembly in support of the Waynesboro project. All Board members are encouraged to note budget amendments in each of the legislative bodies on February 22<sup>nd</sup>. This day known as “Budget Sunday” and is the earliest indicator of the amended budget. To further support the ongoing effort, Dr. Keiper and Mr. Martin will distribute a one-page support flyer to General Assembly members on February 17<sup>th</sup>.

Dr. Keiper shared that he is pleased that the museum is now fully staffed and has a full Board of Trustees.

Dr. Keiper reported that the endowment funds are just below six (6) million dollars with interest revenue continuing to grow with current strategies approved by the Foundation Board. Using the interest income to develop and implement a Young Explorers Center is still a primary priority. As plans are developed, beginning the final quarter of FY 2026, members of the Education Committee will be asked to act as independent reviewers of the choices made for the Center.

### Advancement Report

Dr. Keiper was pleased to report that effective 1.31.26 the museum has seen a 24% increase in giving. The Board of Trustees can help by sharing the Young Explorer mission and the opportunity to contribute through planned gifts or naming opportunities with associates and potential corporate sponsors.

Mr. Barber continued by sharing that museum revenue has increased by 12% and visitation by statewide visitors continues to grow. 70% of visitors are from a zip code not in Martinsville or Henry County.

### Upcoming Events

- 2/17 Science Lecture Series in Waynesboro 7 PM. These lectures are live streamed and archived.
- 2/19 Clash of Giants VA250 Members and Friends Event. VMNH-Martinsville
- 2/7 Science Saturday – Bug Day. VMNH-Martinsville
- 3/21 Starlington – Gala Event. VMNH-Martinsville

### 2026-2027 First Reading Budget

Mr. Martin corrected the operating funds total as distributed to the Board to \$4,831,000. The museum expects to receive funding for a 3% increase to salaries and level funding for the remainder of line items. We expect a modest expansion of revenue from admissions, visitation and education program usage. Adoption of the budget occurs at the Board meeting in May.

## CLOSED SESSION

Ms. Lauren Hall offered the following motion:

*I move that the Board of Trustees of the Virginia Museum of Natural History enter closed session for consultation with legal counsel pertaining to actual or probable litigation pursuant to the Virginia Freedom of Information Act §2.2-3711 (A) (7) and consultation with legal counsel pursuant to the Virginia Freedom of Information Act Code § 2.2-3711(A)(8).*

The motion was seconded by Dr. Art Evans.

A roll call vote was taken leading to the approval of the motion. Results of the vote are in the table below.

Board of Trustee Name	Vote to Enter Closed Session
Dr. Tom Benzing	YES
Ms. Sarah Bowman	YES
Mr. Richard Bratcher	YES
Ms. Lisa Carter	YES
Dr. Melany Clark	YES
Mr. Will Clements	YES
Dr. Art Evans	YES
Dr. David Furth	YES
Ms. Lauren Hall	YES
Ms. Cathy Hincker	YES
Ms. Emma Ito	ABSENT
Ms. Katherine McGuire	YES
Dr. Carole Nash	YES
Mr. Nathan Sanford	YES
Dr. Mindy VanDevelder	YES

## **CERTIFICATION OF CLOSED SESSION**

Closed session was certified by the following statement, read by Ms. Hall after which a roll call vote was taken.

*Whereas the Board of Trustees of the Virginia Museum of Natural History convened in closed meeting on this date pursuant to an affirmative recorded vote and in accordance with the provisions of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act; and*

*Whereas Virginia code §2.2-3712 requires a certification by this Board that such closed meeting was conducted in conformity with Virginia law;*

*NOW, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees of the Virginia Museum of Natural History hereby certifies that, to the best of each member's knowledge: (1) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements under Virginia law and (2) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion by which the closed meeting was convened were heard, discussed, or considered in the closed meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Virginia Museum of Natural History.*

Board of Trustee Name	Vote to Certify Closed Session
Dr. Tom Benzing	YES
Ms. Sarah Bowman	YES
Mr. Richard Bratcher	YES
Ms. Lisa Carter	YES
Dr. Melany Clark	YES
Mr. Will Clements	YES
Dr. Art Evans	YES
Dr. David Furth	YES
Ms. Lauren Hall	YES
Ms. Cathy Hincker	YES
Ms. Emma Ito	ABSENT
Ms. Katherine McGuire	YES
Dr. Carole Nash	YES
Mr. Nathan Sanford	YES
Dr. Mindy VanDevelder	YES

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS AND OPEN DISCUSSION**

Dr. Clark reiterated upcoming events and encouraged all board members to participate as they are able. She also reminded board members to follow the museum on social media for updates.

Dr. Benzing thanked Dr. Evans for his service to the Board and a decade long commitment as chair of the Research and Collections Committee.

Ms. Lisa Carter made a motion to adjourn the meeting with a second by Lauren Hall. The motion carried unanimously.

## **NEXT MEETING**

Saturday, May 16, 2026, 10 AM Virginia Museum of Natural History

## **Third Quarter FY26 Financials**

<b>Brief Budget Summary .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Balance Sheet Q3 FY26 .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>FY26 Third Quarter Budget Notes.....</b>	<b>3-4</b>
<b>Capital Projects FY26.....</b>	<b>5-7</b>
<b>Budget Amendment Request FY26.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Draft Budget FY27 .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Draft Budget Notes .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>VMNH Staff FY27 .....</b>	<b>11</b>

### **Third Quarter FY26 Summary**

The third quarter of FY26 saw steady and consistent growth. A new administration took office, and as is typical, the primary focus has been on the legislative session. Key issues included the data center tax, school benchmarking, and the sunset of federal programs. While the legislative session was successful in advancing several initiatives, it unfortunately concluded without a finalized budget. Budget conferees are scheduled to return to Richmond on April 23 to begin finalizing the budget. Fiscal staff will continue to monitor the situation closely and report any developments.

Following the holiday season, the museum’s operations quickly returned to normal. Attendance and revenues experienced their expected seasonal rebound. Notably, even with our increase in admission rates, revenues have continued to remain steady. Admissions revenue experienced an additional boost due to a successful Bug Day themed Science Saturday.

Third-quarter expenses are in line with forecasts. However, costs remain elevated and are expected to continue rising due to ongoing inflationary pressures. The fiscal office is beginning to see higher pricing reflected in annual contracts. Typically, contracts start their renewal phase in the middle to late fourth quarter for the upcoming fiscal year, but vendors have already begun signaling increases due to sustained high gas prices.

As we move into the fourth quarter, we expect revenues to continue outpacing expectations. We also anticipate the approval of a new budget. If a budget is not approved, operations will continue under the FY26 base budget until one is finalized.

### **Base Budget FY25 and FY26 House Bill 1600, Senate Bill 800 (2024)**

Virginia Museum of Natural History - Museum and Cultural Services (14500)

General Fund	\$3,578,220
Estimated Revenues	\$ 556,011

**VIRGINIA MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY  
MONTHLY STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENSES  
FOR THE PERIOD ENDING MARCH 31, 2025**

NOTE	BUDGET	YTD	YTD%
	=====	=====	=====
<b>SUPPORT &amp; REVENUES</b>			
<b>Support:</b>			
	Commonwealth	3,578,220	100%
	Add: Appropriation	204,414	100%
	Central Accounts Distribution	0	0%
	<b>Total Support</b>	<b>\$3,782,634</b>	<b>100%</b>
	=====	=====	=====
<b>Revenues:</b>			
1	Admission to Museum	77,661	84%
	VMNH Publications	468	23%
2	Receipts from City & County	37,890	100%
	Honorariums/Misc. Inc.	129	13%
	Restricted Gifts Foundation/Grants:Research&Education/Memberships	210,334	78%
	Rental of Museum Rooms	4,267	71%
	Exhibit Rentals	0	0%
3	Souvenirs- Misc. Sales	46,068	63%
4	Classes, Workshops, Kit Rentals, Education Projects	33,023	66%
	Federal Funds Budgeted/Rec'd	0	0%
	<b>Total FY2026 Budgeted Revenues</b>	<b>409,840</b>	<b>77%</b>
	Special Funds Carryover FY25*	354,599	100%
	Federal Funds Carryover FY25*	6,561	100%
	<b>Total Revenues and Carryover from FY2025</b>	<b>771,000</b>	<b>86%</b>
	=====	=====	=====
	<b>TOTAL OPERATING FUNDS/APPROP</b>	<b>4,553,634</b>	<b>97%</b>
	=====	=====	=====
<b>EXPENSES:</b>			
	Salaries	1,673,893	76%
	Payroll Benefits	749,630	78%
5	Contractual Services	360,859	107%
	Supplies	53,212	67%
	Equipment	12,347	25%
6	Equipment Maintenance	15,317	41%
	Travel	22,563	38%
	Staff Training	3,276	23%
	Repairs/Construction	48,120	46%
7	Subscriptions	2,733	273%
	Books	0	0%
	Utilities	247,788	84%
	Telephone	13,601	91%
	Mailing	1,870	37%
8	Insurance	0	0%
9	Vehicle Maint./Fuel	4,418	25%
	Organ. Memberships	14,449	72%
	Printing	918	18%
	Other:	0	0%
	Awards/Unem.Comp./Ind Cost	0	0%
	Exhibit & Equipment Rentals	23,323	58%
	Building Rentals	515	52%
	Agency Service Charges	161,908	88%
	<b>TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES</b>	<b>3,410,741</b>	<b>76%</b>
	=====	=====	=====
<b>PERCENT SPENT OF YTD INCOME RECEIVED</b>			
10	<b>TOTAL INCOME BALANCE</b>	<b>1,142,893</b>	
	=====	=====	=====

\*\*\* Central accounts distribution includes payroll and health care adjustments.

\*\* Memberships Income has been combined with Restricted Gifts Income.

\* Numbers are subject to change due to end of year fiscal adjustments.

## **Revenues:**

### **1.) Admissions**

The Board of Trustees made the strategic decision to increase the museum admission rate starting July 1, 2026. Based on current revenues, VMNH has not seen a falloff in attendance due to pricing pressure. The positive revenue trend continued into the third quarter, with combined general-day and festival-day revenues running approximately 38% ahead of the prior year's third-quarter results.

### **2.) Receipts of City and County**

Christy Deatherage secured 100% of the education grant funding for FY26 from the City of Martinsville and Henry County. This highlights our constant efforts to maintain strategic working relationships in our immediate community.

### **3.) Store Sales**

Amid higher admission pricing there was a chance reduced discretionary spending may impact on store sales, Visitor Services & Events Manager Robbie Hendrix-Wirt worked to reinvent the store through the second and third quarters of FY26, aligning product offerings with demand. These actions have had a measurable effect, with store performance now exceeding prior-year third quarter results by 2%

### **4.) Educational Programs**

Educational programming provides an opportunity to highlight the seasonality of museum revenues. We expect increased activity to support achieving our forecasted annual revenue targets with spring and summer programming underway.

## **Expenses:**

### **5.) Contractual Services**

The fiscal office expects continued increases in contractual services, driven by current inflationary pressures. To help stabilize costs, staff are actively pursuing professional development and training opportunities to bring select services in-house where feasible.

### **6.) Equipment Maintenance**

Equipment maintenance is typically deferred until the end of the fiscal year. In periods where we may have a small budget surplus in operations, we prioritize addressing deferred maintenance on equipment at that time.

### **7.) Subscriptions**

Subscription fees originally budgeted for FY25 were deferred into FY26 due to a Governor-issued directive prohibiting prepayments. As a result, payments for services that would typically have been made in FY25 were intentionally held and processed in the current fiscal year.

### **8.) Insurance premiums**

Insurance premiums are strategically paid at the end of the fiscal year. When funds are available, payments are made in the current fiscal year; if year-end balances are tight, payments are deferred to the following fiscal year.

### **9.) Vehicle Maintenance and Fuel**

As is typical, increased educational programming, class visits and festival outreach activities in the spring and early summer are expected to drive higher fuel usage and vehicle maintenance costs. Although fuel prices are negotiated at the state level for all fleet vehicles, VMNH as well as all state agencies, has experienced a significant increase in the price per gallon.

### **10.) Total Income Balance**

This total may appear as a larger budget surplus; however, once salaries, benefits, wages, and carryover obligations are factored in, VMNH is left with a very tight budget position heading into the close of FY26.

## **Third Quarter FY26 Capital Projects Summary**

### **Capital Projects – Maintenance Reserve Funded**

#### **Douglas Renovation Project**

##### **Update:**

Asbestos abatement work will go out for bid once working drawings are approved. Next steps for the project include boiler inspection, flush and diagnostic evaluation. If the boilers are in good working order the HVAC phase of the project will be bid out. VMNH's goal is to lift environmental standards to VMNH collections quality as quickly as possible.

##### **General:**

The Museum has received approval from the Department of General Services (DGS) to proceed with an Architectural and Engineering (A/E) term contract, consolidating several smaller projects, including HVAC installation, into a single, efficiently managed initiative. After reviewing and scoring three proposals, the Purchasing Department awarded the contract to Raymond, P.C., which has executed the agreement and will begin work in accordance with project timelines and state procurement standards.

This bundled approach is designed to save time and achieve economies of scale, reducing costs. The project will efficiently address weatherization, plumbing, electrical, structural, and HVAC systems. Total costs will be covered by the Maintenance Reserve.

#### **Waynesboro Trailer Renovation Project**

##### **Update:**

The VMNH-Waynesboro trailer was delivered ahead of schedule. Fiscal, Outreach, Exhibits, and Advancement staff mobilized quickly to prepare the trailer for Waynesboro's annual Riverfest.

##### **General:**

The VMNH Waynesboro Exhibit Trailer, located in the City of Waynesboro adjacent to the municipal lot, completed scheduled renovations. Fiscal staff engaged three contractors through the formal bidding process to assess the condition of the museum's outreach trailer. SPEVCO was awarded the contract, removed the trailer from the site for a full evaluation, and determined that complete renovation was not feasible due to its condition. Project expenses will be funded through the Maintenance Reserve.

## **Capital Projects – Pool Funded**

### **VMNH-Waynesboro – New Facility Construction**

#### **Budget and Legislative**

The Senate and House Conferees have been called back to Richmond April 23 to discuss amendments to the current budget. Fiscal Staff will report more once the full budget has been approved.

#### **Background:**

Governor Youngkin did not move the VMNH-Waynesboro Branch Campus project into the Capital Construction Pool. VMNH staff and stakeholders followed the next steps outlined by the City's consultant, McGuire Woods. Staff worked with Senate and House Finance Committee members, as well as legislators, to amend the budget and place the project into the Capital Construction Pool.

The project continues to have strong legislative support from Senator Chris Head and Delegate Ellen H. McLaughlin.

#### **Cost Estimate**

VMNH staff, under the direction of Scott Watchner from JMU, completed the cost estimation study. A comparison of the Independent Cost Estimate with the A/E's estimate yielded the following results:

- **Independent Cost Estimate: \$20,809,373**
- **Glave & Holmes (A/E Estimate): \$19,223,085**
- **Difference: \$1,586,288 (8.25%)**

Because the difference is below DEB's 10% reconciliation threshold, no reconciliation is required. However, as a best practice, both firms will review each other's figures to identify and explain significant discrepancies. This process will be completed in the coming weeks.

- **Cost to the Agency: \$26,739**

#### **Value Engineering Study**

VMNH staff collaborated with Grace Hagan of Axias (Alexandria, Virginia) to complete the Value Engineering (VE) study. The process included a kickoff meeting, four full days of virtual workshops, and an exit meeting to summarize findings. The study reviewed 19

options, of which six cost-saving measures were adopted. All six measures reduce costs while fully supporting the Museum's mission requirements.

- **Cost to the Agency: \$64,720**

### **Project Scope and Timing**

Glave & Holmes submitted the Preliminary Design documents to the Department of Engineering and Buildings (DEB). DEB returned the documents with comments, which were reviewed in a joint meeting attended by VMNH staff, Glave & Holmes, DEB, and Scott Watchner (JMU).

The Preliminary Design has been approved, and the project is now ready to advance to the Working Drawings Phase once funding becomes available.

### **The next steps include:**

- **Legislative Approval to move into the Capital Construction Pool**
- **Allocation of funds to complete Working Drawings**
- **Final project approval from Mike Coppa, enabling the project to advance to working drawings.**

With the continued support of the Board of Trustees and the VMNH Foundation, Dr. Keiper and museum staff have worked diligently with contract partners, including Glave & Holmes and JMU, to ensure all submissions are timely and accurate. The goal is to position the project for inclusion in the FY27-FY28 capital budget.

### **Additional Projects FY26 (as of 4.17.2026)**

- **Window Decal Installation: Quoted**
- **Next Exhibit Banner: Quoted**
- **Library Compactors: Removed and Stored**
- **Track lighting for future Special Exhibit Hall: Contracted**
- **Flooring for future Special Exhibit: Contracted**
- **Library Hallway Renovation: Contracted**
- **Young Explorer Center: Development**
- **Petra Lair: Development**

**Fiscal Year 26: Virginia Museum of Natural History**

**SUCCESSFUL - FY26 Budget Amendment Request:**

The Virginia Museum of Natural History (VMNH) requests a budget amendment to address salary alignment challenges and strengthen staff retention. This funding will enable VMNH to establish competitive base salaries for educators and provide modest incentive increases to support workforce stability. These efforts are essential for attracting and retaining skilled professionals, maintaining compliance with regulatory requirements, and ensuring the Museum can fulfill its mission of education, community engagement, and scientific research. This strategic investment will help VMNH remain competitive in today’s job market while safeguarding its long-term operational capacity.

Total Request \$70,702

Program	Fund	Subobject	Definition	FY 2026 Dollars Increase Req
Museum and Cultural Services (14500)	01000	1111	Employer Retirement Contributions – VRS Defined Benefits program	\$8,317.00
Museum and Cultural Services (14500)	01000	1112	Federal Old-Age Insurance for Salaried State Employees (Salaried Social Security and Medicare)	\$3,680.00
Museum and Cultural Services (14500)	01000	1114	Group Life Insurance	\$699.00
Museum and Cultural Services (14500)	01000	1116	Retiree Health (Medical/Hospitalization) Insurance Credit Premium	\$666.00
Museum and Cultural Services (14500)	01000	1117	VSDP and Long-term Disability Insurance	\$295.00
Museum and Cultural Services (14500)	01000	1123	Salaries, Classified	\$57,045.00
			Total	\$70,702.00

**VIRGINIA MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY  
MONTHLY STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENSES  
DRAFT BUDGET FY27**

<b>NOTE</b>	<b>BUDGET</b>
<b>SUPPORT &amp; REVENUES</b>	
<b>Support:</b>	
1	Commonwealth <b>\$3,782,634</b>
	Add: Appropriation <b>\$89,772</b>
	<b>Total General Fund Support \$3,872,406</b>
<b>Revenues:</b>	
2	Admission to Museum <b>\$103,500</b>
	VMNH Publications <b>\$1,000</b>
	Receipts from City & County <b>\$37,890</b>
	Honorariums/Misc. Inc. <b>\$1,000</b>
3	Restricted Gifts Foundation/Grants:Research&Education/Memberships <b>\$280,000</b>
	Rental of Museum Rooms <b>\$6,000</b>
	Exhibit Rentals <b>\$500</b>
4	Souvenirs- Misc. Sales <b>\$78,800</b>
	Classes, Workshops, Kit Rentals, Education Projects <b>\$55,000</b>
	Federal Funds Budgeted/Recv'd <b>\$0</b>
	<b>Total FY2027 Budgeted Revenues \$563,690</b>
	Special Funds Carryover FY26* <b>\$350,000</b>
	Federal Funds Carryover FY26* <b>\$6,561</b>
	<b>Total Revenues and Carryover from FY2026 \$920,251</b>
	<b>TOTAL OPERATING FUNDS/APPROP \$4,792,657</b>
<b>EXPENSES:</b>	
5	Salaries <b>\$2,331,799</b>
	Payroll Benefits <b>\$976,907</b>
6	Contractual Services <b>\$400,000</b>
	Supplies <b>\$80,000</b>
	Equipment <b>\$50,000</b>
	Equipment Maintenance <b>\$38,000</b>
	Travel <b>\$40,000</b>
7	Staff Training <b>\$14,000</b>
	Repairs/Construction <b>\$105,000</b>
	Subscriptions <b>\$1,000</b>
8	Utilities <b>\$284,000</b>
	Telephone <b>\$17,000</b>
	Mailing <b>\$5,000</b>
	Insurance <b>\$23,500</b>
	Vehicle Maint./Fuel <b>\$18,000</b>
	Organ. Memberships <b>\$20,000</b>
	Printing <b>\$5,000</b>
	Other: <b>\$5,000</b>
	Awards/Unem.Comp./Ind Cost <b>\$1,000</b>
	Exhibit & Equipment Rentals <b>\$40,000</b>
	Building Rentals <b>\$1,000</b>
	Agency Service Charges <b>\$185,000</b>
	<b>TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES \$4,641,206</b>
	<b>PERCENT SPENT OF YTD INCOME RECEIVED</b>
	<b>TOTAL INCOME BALANCE \$151,451</b>

\*\*\* Central accounts distribution includes payroll and health care adjustments.

\*\* Memberships Income has been combined with Restricted Gifts Income.

\* Numbers are subject to change due to end of year fiscal adjustments.

## **Revenues**

### **1.) Commonwealth Appropriation**

As anticipated, VMNH received level funding in Governor Youngkin's budget this fall. The legislature will now produce an amended budget, with Senate and House conferees scheduled to reconvene in Richmond on April 23 to discuss proposed revisions. Fiscal staff will provide an update once the final budget is approved.

### **2.) Admission Revenue**

Revenue is running well above prior year's third-quarter results; therefore, staff believe that a 12% increase to the forecast is warranted going into FY27.

### **3.) Foundation**

We anticipate that new Foundation-funded projects will come online in FY27, resulting in an increase to the forecast. In addition, with the continuation of funding for Cultural Heritage Monitoring Lab activities, we anticipate an increase in transfers in FY27 and FY28.

### **4.) Store Sales**

VMNH Museum Store sales have exceeded last year's figures so far this fiscal year. Looking ahead to FY27, staff expect continued growth, with sales forecasted to increase by 8% over FY26.

## **Expenses**

### **5.) Salaries and Benefits**

General compensation is expected to increase in both FY27 and FY28. Governor Youngkin's budget includes a 2% wage increase for agency staff, along with a bonus. The House has proposed a 2% increase, while the Senate has proposed a 3% increase. These figures remain subject to change as the legislature develops an amended budget. Staff will continue to monitor the process and provide updates.

### **6.) Contractual Services**

As new projects come online and economic headwinds persist, contracted expenses are expected to increase. Fiscal staff have projected an approximate 20% rise, primarily driven by ongoing inflationary pressures. Fuel costs have been a significant factor in contract negotiations throughout FY26, and this trend is expected to continue into FY27.

### **7.) Staff Training**

Increased Foundation support for staff training allows for the movement of funds to other areas of the operations.

### **8.) Utilities**

Building and Grounds staff continue targeted initiatives that are expected to improve utility efficiency and reduce operating costs over time.

Staffing FY27

<b>Metric</b>	<b>FY27</b>
Total Employees	54
Full-Time	34
Part-Time	20

<b>Funding</b>	<b>FY27</b>
General Fund Positions	36
Special Revenue Positions	18

<b><u>Department Break Down</u></b>	<b>FY27</b>
Executive Office	2
Advancement	4
Fiscal	5
Education	3
Education Outreach	3
Box Office	8
Collections	4
Archaeology	8
Entomology	3
Paleontology	3
Mammalogy	1
B&G	9
Herpetology	1



## **AGENDA**

### **Facilities Committee**

**Saturday, May 16, 2026 - 8:30 AM**

**Virginia Museum of Natural History**

**Entirely Electronic Meeting**

- |   |                     |
|---|---------------------|
| 1. Welcome  | Dr. Tom Benzing     |
| 2. Approval of Minutes                                  | Dr. Benzing         |
| a. <a href="#">August 9, 2025</a>                       |                     |
| b. <a href="#">November 15, 2025</a>                    |                     |
| 3. Ongoing Projects                                     | Dr. Joe Keiper,     |
| a. Douglas Avenue                                       | Mr. Jonathan Martin |
| b. Library and hallway renovation                       | Mr. Ryan Barber     |
| c. VMNH – Waynesboro Mobile<br>Science Outreach Trailer |                     |
| 4. Future Considerations                                |                     |
| a. Facilities Strategic Plan                            |                     |
| 5. Open Discussion                                      |                     |
| 6. Adjournment  | Dr. Benzing         |

**Facilities Committee of the Board of Trustees**  
**Saturday, August 9, 2025**  
**Virginia Museum of Natural History**  
**Executive Conference Room 236 with remote participation option**



Present In-person: Dr. Tom Benzing (Chair)  
Dr. David Furth  
Ms. Lauren Hall  
Dr. Joe Keiper (ex officio)

Mr. Ryan Barber (Staff)  
Mr. Jonathan Martin (Staff)  
Ms. Lauren Coleman (AG Representative)

Present Remotely: Ms. Lisa Carter

**WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER**

Dr. Benzing called the meeting to order at 8:30 AM. It was determined there was a quorum present.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Dr. Benzing asked the committee to review the 5.18.24, 8.10.24, 11.16.24, 2.1.25, and 5.17.25 minutes as presented. Hearing no corrections, Dr. Benzing declared the minutes from the 5.18.24, 8.10.24, 11.16.24, 2.1.25 and 5.17.25 meetings approved.

**ONGOING PROJECTS**

Dr. Benzing urged the committee to carefully review the plan to make sure all expectations are met by the architect.

Mr. Martin reported the asbestos abatement study results for the Douglas Avenue project were better than expected. Abatement work will be paid for by maintenance reserve fund.

The contract for improvements to the Starling Avenue HVAC system is currently out.

Museum staff are hopeful that the former library shelving will be purchased soon.

After seeking contracts with several Virginia providers, a Pennsylvania company (Aardvark), specializing in Mobile Science units, has been contacted to repair the Mobile Science Center.

**FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS**

Dr. Keiper reported that a full staff meeting was held to consider options for the future expansion of the Starling Avenue facility. The goal was to think from the inside out. Answering the question, what are our needs based on what we've already got.

Ms. Carter asked about the status of the adjoining YMCA property. Mr. Keiper replied that fundraising is going slower than originally thought. The timeline for that project will likely be delayed.

**OPEN DISCUSSION**

The committee expressed appreciation and anticipation of the new pavilion use.

**ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business to discuss, Dr. Benzing adjourned the meeting at 8:52 AM.

**VMNH Board of Trustees  
Facilities Committee  
Saturday, November 15, 2025  
Executive Director's Conference Room with remote option**

Trustees Present: Dr. Tom Benzing (Chair)

Trustees Present Remotely: Dr. David Furth (distance)

Trustees Not Present: Ms. Lisa Carter  
Ms. Lauren Hall

Staff Present: Dr. Joe Keiper (Executive Director)  
Mr. Jonathan Martin  
Mr. Ryan Barber  
Ms. Jennifer Whitlow

Others Present: Ms. Ambria Wood (OAG Representative)

**WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER**

Dr. Tom Benzing welcomed the committee and those online at 8:30 AM. No quorum was present.

**MINUTES**

Due to the lack of a quorum, no votes could be taken on August minutes. These minutes will be approved at the next Facilities Committee meeting.

**ONGOING PROJECTS**

Dr. Keiper started the meeting with a report of ongoing projects at the Starling Ave. facility. He highlighted two projects that will utilize Maintenance Reserve funds. The first is a project in the planning phase to include the replacement of aging floor covering and hallway wallpaper in the area outside the future Young Explorers Center. The second project is ongoing work to improve the efficiency of the building's HVAC system by replacing a critical lever which controls air handling. During the Esco project approximately five years ago, some (not all) of the levers were replaced. This initiative will replace all of them.

Mr. Jonathan Martin gave an update about the schematic design work currently occurring for the Douglas Ave. project. A total cost estimate of \$743,000.00 was recently received. This includes a \$427,000.00 estimate for finishes. Staff feel this cost is not in line with our needs and will be thoroughly reviewing the finishes estimate room by room with the architect. Asbestos abatement is

not included in this most recent estimate and will be handled as a separate Maintenance Reserve project.

Mr. Ryan Barber gave a status update about renovations of the Young Explorers Center space. A contractor has been secured to dismantle library shelving December 8-12. The shelving will be stored until renovations are complete, after which time the freestanding shelves will be reinstalled at Douglas Ave. The next steps include painting walls, hallway work, and design of the Young Explorers Center. Mr. Barber noted more information will be presented during the full board meeting later today.

The Waynesboro trailer is currently in North Carolina at a trailer repair facility. The repair company, Spevco, evaluated the trailer and reported that the chassis is rusted. They have also evaluated the electrical system, new wrap, and several other necessary items to make the mobile unit safe and desirable for visitors. We have received a preliminary estimate and are awaiting an itemized cost list. The scope of work includes getting the trailer back to Waynesboro and set-up. Even with renovations, it is likely that the trailer is no longer mobile and once set up in Waynesboro will be stationary. Dr. Benzing suggested that staff consider a rebrand moving away from the “mobile” museum concept.

#### **FUTURE CONSIDERATION**

Dr. Keiper reported the new exhibits manager starts on Monday.

Lastly, he reported that the pavilion is being utilized by our educators, and the space has potential for future exhibits. Dr. Benzing noted the new Exhibits Manager may need to sit Ex Officio on the Education Committee.

#### **OPEN DISCUSSION**

Dr. Benzing encouraged new members to find their place on a committee. With several vacant Board seats, someone with facility experience may be desirable to contribute to the Facilities Committee.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:50 AM.

**Virginia Museum of Natural History  
Waynesboro Advocacy Committee Meeting  
Tuesday, February 3, 2026, 1 PM  
All-virtual**



**MINUTES**

**Present:**

Dr. Tom Benzing, Chair	Dr. Carole Nash
Dr. Maggie Van Huss	Mr. Rick Kane
Mr. Dick Bratcher	Mr. Greg Hitchin
Ms. Ann Peltier	Ms. Faye Cooper
Mr. Urbie Nash	Ms. Jennifer Whitlow
Mr. Len Poulin	Mr. Zach Ryder
Mr. Ryan Barber	Mr. Jonathan Martin
Dr. Joe Keiper	

**Not Present:**

Dr. Steven Powers	Ms. Stephanie Duffy
Mr. Bill Alexander	

**WELCOME**

Dr. Tom Benzing opened the meeting with a welcome to all attending the all-virtual meeting at 1:00 PM. A quorum was declared present for the committee to conduct business.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes from January 5, 2026, were presented and approved with no corrections. Greg Hitchin made a motion to accept the minutes which was second by Maggie Van Huss. Motion carried by voice vote.

**INTRODUCTION OF NEW COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

Dr. Benzing welcomed Richard (Dick) Bratcher to the committee. Mr. Bratcher gave a brief overview of his connection with Waynesboro and interest in the VMNH Waynesboro campus project.

**COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS**

- Advocacy - The advocacy work continues through in-person efforts and community support letters. Dr. Benzing will be traveling to Richmond tomorrow to speak to capital outlay committee members. The committee was reminded that we will know if our budget request made it through committee on Sunday February 22<sup>nd</sup>.
- Trailer – Mr. Martin reported that the trailer contract has been signed and exhibits are being developed in-house for use after the trailer is operational.
- Events – Dr. Benzing encouraged attendance at the latest lecture series event planned for Tuesday, February 17<sup>th</sup>. This lecture will feature two accomplished Natural Heritage specialists

who will speak about the flora of Virginia. As always, this event is free and open to the public and can be livestreamed on Facebook and YouTube.

- Science Social - To engage a wider audience to the Waynesboro project, Dr. Nash suggested borrowing an idea from the Elizabeth River Conservation group. This would involve a monthly informal meeting ideally at a brewery or pub to speak about science topics relevant to Waynesboro. Faye Cooper volunteered to contact the Elizabeth River group for more information.
- Riverfest – The annual celebration in Waynesboro is planned for May 2, 2026. Representatives from the museum will be in attendance. Ideally the mobile museum structure will be used for the first time, during this event.

### **OPEN DISCUSSION**

Dr. Benzing concluded the importance of garnering support from the community as both the General Assembly's House and Senate Finance subcommittees work through competing priorities. He reiterated February 22<sup>nd</sup> as the day preliminary decisions are made public.

The priorities of the newly appointed Secretary of Education are unclear, but the hope is that he will be supportive of the initiative.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

With no further comment or discussion, Dr. Benzing adjourned the meeting at 1:30 PM.

The next meeting of the Waynesboro Advocacy Committee

March 2, 2026, 1:00 PM

Waynesboro Office of Economic Development

**Virginia Museum of Natural History  
Waynesboro Advocacy Committee Meeting  
Tuesday, March 3, 2026, 1 PM  
Waynesboro Office of Economic Development**



**MINUTES**

<b>Present In-person:</b>	Dr. Tom Benzing Mr. Rick Kane Mr. Len Poulin	Ms. Faye Cooper Mr. Dick Bratcher Mr. Greg Hitchen
<b>Present Remote:</b>	Dr. Carole Nash	Mr. Urbie Nash
<b>Absent:</b>	Dr. Maggie Van Huss Ms. Stephanie Duffy Mr. Bill Alexander	Dr. Steven Powers Ms. Ann Peltier
<b>Others Present:</b>	Ms. Lila Dougherty Mr. Jonathan Martin	Dr. Joe Keiper (ex officio)
<b>Others Present Remote:</b>	Ms. Jennifer Whitlow Mr. Ryan Barber	Mr. Zach Ryder

**WELCOME**

Dr. Tom Benzing called the meeting to order at 1:02 PM with a welcome to all attending the meeting in person and online. It was determined that a quorum was present to conduct business.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes from the February 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting was approved with no corrections.

**INTRODUCTIONS**

Dr. Steven Powers was unable to attend today's meeting and will therefore introduce himself at the next meeting.

## COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

- Advocacy – The committee discussed the lack of wide-spread General Assembly support to push the Waynesboro project to the next phase. The contracted lobbyist firm continues to advocate for the project as the biennial budget is negotiated through the General Assembly. The committee expressed appreciation for the community letter writing campaign. Mr. Poulin commented on the misinformation in the local media. He suggested the museum develop a clearer statement regarding funding efforts noting the current Virginia priorities of expanded Medicaid coverage and K-12 re-benchmarking. Dr. Keiper will compose a statement to be circulated through the committee that better communicates the museum’s position and future funding needs. It was suggested the press release be coordinated with the end of this General Assembly session, around mid-March. It was noted that the museum’s opportunity to impact school enrichment in Waynesboro and Augusta County should perhaps be noted in the publicity materials.

From the committee discussion, several suggestions emerged.

- Submit a request for the full funding amount again in August.
  - Solicit the support of the new Secretary of Education by informing him of the project timeline and needs.
  - Seek to have the project included in the next bond referendum.
  - Build additional enthusiasm and advocacy through hosting a benefit event.
  - Strategically time events and other outreach materials to garner continued community support.
  - Find an influential benefactor to support the project.
  - Conduct exit interviews with the two delegates that proposed supportive amendments to find out why the project funding didn’t proceed out of committee.
- Waynesboro Library – The display was recently refreshed, with additional material planned to enhance the exhibit. This summer the statewide theme is “Unearth a Story”, which provides an opportunity to showcase the museum’s contribution to the study of paleontology.
    - The addition of a QR code to the display which leads to a dedicated webpage for project information and contributions was suggested.
  - Trailer – Renovation timing and is going as planned. There are no changes to report.
  - Events – The lecture series has been successful with growing attendance and support from the community. Speakers are covered for the remainder of the spring with several possibilities for the fall season. Dr. Nash suggested renowned editor and geologist Chuck Bailey as a possible speaker in the fall.
  - Science Social – Ms. Cooper received information from the Elizabeth River Project Coordinator about the logistics of the Science Social held twice a year. The format of the event consists of four speakers who present for 10 or 15 minutes on various topics and then allow for Q&A time at a local brewery. It was suggested to host this type of event in Harrisonburg and/or Charlottesville due to a larger population of interested parties thereby increasing the scope and geographic location of supporters. There was a general discussion of the ideal location and

timing for a dinner or social event with the primary goal of fund raising. Dr. Keiper mentioned Dr. Boaz's research into Jefferson's mastodon and the connection to Charlottesville. This research was suggested as a topic for an event to be held at a Charlottesville winery with the goal of widening the footprint of support for the Waynesboro project.

- Riverfest – Several VMNH staff members will travel to Waynesboro to provide educational materials for the festival.
- Museum Rodeo – The VA 250 mobile museum will be in Waynesboro. Waynesboro will also celebrate the completion of several city murals that weekend.

## **OPEN DISCUSSION**

- The film *Hidden Rivers* will be shown at the Wayne Theatre on May 1<sup>st</sup>. Perhaps this will be the first in a series of nature documentaries.
- This summer, an independent film maker from Martinsville will present a biography film in Waynesboro and Charlottesville. More information will be shared as it becomes available.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Having no further business Dr. Benzing adjourned the meeting at 2:00 PM.

## **NEXT MEETING**

Tuesday, April 7, 2026

1:00 PM

Waynesboro Office of Economic Development

**Virginia Museum of Natural History  
Waynesboro Advocacy Committee Meeting  
Tuesday, April 7, 2026, 1 PM  
Waynesboro Office of Economic Development**



## **MINUTES**

<b>Present In-Person:</b>	Dr. Tom Benzing (Chair) Mr. Len Poulin Ms. Ann Peltier	Mr. Dick Bratcher Mr. Urbie Nash Mr. Greg Hitchin
<b>Present Remote:</b>	Dr. Steve Powers Dr. Carole Nash	Dr. Maggie Van Huss
<b>Others Present:</b>	Dr. Joe Keiper	Mr. Jonathan Martin
<b>Others Present Remote:</b>	Mr. Ryan Barber Mr. Zach Ryder	Ms. Jennifer Whitlow
<b>Absent:</b>	Ms. Stephanie Duffy Ms. Faye Cooper	Mr. Rick Kane Mr. Bill Alexander

## **WELCOME**

Dr. Tom Benzing called the meeting to order with a welcome to those attending online and remotely at 1:00 PM. It was determined that a quorum was present to conduct business.

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A motion to approve the minutes from March 3, 2026, was received from Dr. Nash with Mr. Poulin seconding. The motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

## **INTRODUCTIONS**

Dr. Steve Powers was introduced and welcomed to the group as the foundation liaison.

## **COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS**

- Advocacy –
  - Mr. Martin spoke about the uncertainty of the final state budget. The General Assembly target date for adoption is April 23, 2026. The committee engaged in general discussion about the importance of keeping the project in the minds of legislators now and into the fall. Mr. Martin will resubmit the funding request in August. Mr. Poulin emphasized the need for the committee and community to engage the new Secretary of Education and regional legislators to support the ongoing effort.

- The committee agreed to explore ways in which the project could be included in a future bond referendum.
- Press Release –
  - The museum will submit a press release following the state budget finalization on or near April 23<sup>rd</sup>.
- Library Displays –
  - The Waynesboro Library display has been refreshed.
  - A QR code will be added for additional engagement.
- Trailer –
  - The trailer restoration project is on track with delivery scheduled for April 17<sup>th</sup> and exhibit installation on April 22<sup>nd</sup>.
  - A short presentation detailing the trailer restoration progress and exhibit plan was given by Mr. Martin and Dr. Keiper.
  - A generator will be used to power the trailer for the Riverfest event. In the future, hardwiring to a power source should be considered to fully run the trailers monitors and HVAC system.
- Events -
  - Lecture Series – The final science talk for this season is “Forest Forensics” by Chris Bolgiano on Tuesday, April 21st. The lecture series continues to grow in popularity. The fall 2026 season of speakers is almost full.
  - Riverfest – May 2 - All plans, vendors, and exhibitors coming together for a great event.
  - The Waynesboro Street Arts Fair – May 16 -The VA 250 trailer and the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts trailer will be onsite for this event.

## **OPEN DISCUSSION**

- Dr. Keiper connected with Wintergreen Resort and floated the idea of a Natural History of Chocolate event to be held there. This event could be a good avenue to engage additional support from the broader regional audience. This would be a networking and publicity effort not necessarily a fundraising effort for the Waynesboro project.
- Dr. Keiper noted he was approached by the Director of the Wayne Theatre to support an event in March of 2027 called Dinosaur Dimensions. This is a children’s show using animatronics, puppets, and live actors. The theatre made a request of \$5,000 - \$8,000 from the museum to bring the show to town. After a brief discussion it was determined that the committee needs more information about the educational value of the show and possible grant funding before making a commitment. Dr. Benzing recommended the request be tabled while more information is gathered.
- Mr. Nash confirmed that there will be upcoming film screenings and potential documentary series scheduled at the Wayne Theatre.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business, Dr. Benzing adjourned the meeting at 2:06 PM.

**VIRGINIA MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY**  
**Board of Trustees Research and Collections Committee**

Saturday, May 16, 2026

9 a.m.

**A G E N D A**

- Call to order
- Roll call: Dr. Carole Nash, Dr. Art Evans, Dr. Tom Benzing, Dr. Melany Clark, Dr. David Furth
- Approval of minutes from the Nov. 15, 2025 meeting of the Research and Collections Committee
- Approval of acquisitions from September 2025-March 2026
- Recommendation to full board regarding changes to live animals policy
- Consideration of Dr. Paul Sattler and Dr. Kevin Bezy as Research Associates
- Discussion of historic kitchen facility owned by Carter Bank and Trust (Dr. Hayden Bassett)
- Other business
- Adjourn

***The mission of the Virginia Museum of Natural History:***

*To interpret Virginia's natural heritage within a global context in ways that are relevant to all citizens of the Commonwealth.*



**VIRGINIA MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
MINUTES OF THE RESEARCH AND COLLECTIONS COMMITTEE  
Nov. 15, 2025, 9 A.M.  
Virginia Museum of Natural History, Room 237 Conference Room A**

Present at the meeting were Dr. Art Evans, Dr. Carole Nash, Dr. Melany Clark, Dr. Tom Benzing, Dr. Hayden Bassett, Dr. Kal Ivanov, Dr. Collin Van Buren, Marshall Boyd, Jonathan Martin, Dr. Joe Keiper, Ambria Wood, Sarah Bowman, and Ben Williams. Dr. David Furth was absent and a quorum was provided.

Committee Chair Dr. Art Evans called the meeting to order. The committee unanimously approved the meetings from the August 9 meeting. The committee circulated the acquisitions sign-off sheet and approved it unanimously.

Dr. Joe Keiper introduced Ambria Wood, the museum's new representative from the Virginia Attorney General's Office, and Sarah Bowman, the museum's newest trustee.

Dr. Art Evans said that the committee was initially going to recommend to the full board that it approve the changes to the museum's live animals policy, but that it had been decided to table that recommendation until the following board meeting in February. Dr. Melany Clark said it was likely that the February board meeting would be a virtual meeting. Dr. Carole Nash asked how often the museum has to update its live animal certifications. Jonathan Martin said that the museum has a live animal permit that must be updated annually, and Dr. Collin Van Buren clarified that it's a permit rather than a certification since the museum's animals are ambassadors and not research subjects.

Dr. Art Evans extended the committee's congratulations to Dr. Maddy Bassett for receiving her Ph.D.

Dr. Kal Ivanov said that the previous Wednesday, the herpetology curator search committee completed its first round of virtual interviews with the second round taking place on Monday. Three candidates will be chosen from the nine total interviews for in-person interviews.

Marshall Boyd and Jonathan Martin provided an update on the museum's Douglas Avenue facility. Boyd said that the museum's library is in the process of being stabilized. Martin said that the museum received its first cost estimate for the total project. He's

looking through the estimate line-by-line and noticed that the costs for certain things (such as finishings) were high, so he's going to go room-by-room with the architect to get the cost down to a more reasonable level. Martin added that asbestos remediation will be taking place concurrently with renovations. Dr. Joe Keiper added that a decision was made the day prior to go with a larger HVAC unit for the new facility rather than two smaller HVAC units, which would have been both more expensive and less efficient. Dr. Tom Benzing said it was too early to schedule another joint meeting between the Facilities Committee and the Research and Collections Committee, but another meeting would likely be scheduled prior to the February 7 board meeting.

Dr. Carole Nash said that she sits on the science advisory committee for the Wintergreen Nature Foundation and the foundation's new executive director is planning to develop a field station north of Waynesboro. Nash said she was tasked with coming to the Research and Collections committee and asking if anyone had ideas for the field station. The committee agreed that it was an exciting prospect once a site has been chosen.

Dr. Art Evans said that given how much the museum's endowment has grown, he thinks the museum should consider purchasing a dedicated field vehicle for the research staff. Dr. Melany Clark asked if any staff are wanting for vehicles, and Dr. Kal Ivanov explained that the state motor pool vehicles are readily available but not suitable for field work. The one field vehicle — a Subaru Outback — is rapidly nearing the end of its life. Clark said that Frank Mariels, the late donor who substantially grew the VMNH endowment with his generous gift, was a frugal man, and the museum had also been frugal. However, she said, she thinks that it's possible to strike a balance between being frugal with the endowment and spending enough of it to make a substantial difference for the museum.

Dr. Art Evans said that he will be rotating off of the Board of Trustees in June 2026. As a result, he is going to begin stepping back from some of his board responsibilities. The February meeting will be the last Research and Collections Committee meeting that he chairs, he said. He added that he feels comfortable leaving the board as the museum is in an excellent position and the future looks bright.

Dr. Tom Benzing congratulated Marshall Boyd for being featured in an article produced by the Virginia Retirement System that focused on a state employee early in their career. He also thanked both Boyd and Dr. Joe Keiper for attending the most recent Waynesboro Science Talk.

Dr. Art Evans adjourned the meeting.

**VIRGINIA MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY  
RESEARCH AND COLLECTIONS ACTIVITIES**

**Report to the Board of Trustees  
January-March 2026**

**Kaloyan Ivanov, Ph.D.  
Associate Curator of Invertebrate Zoology**

**Dr. Jackson Means  
Associate Curator of Myriapodology**

- Drs. Ivanov and Means, L. Hightower, and colleagues published a paper at *European Journal of Taxonomy*.
- Drs. Ivanov and Means, and colleagues published a paper at *Invertebrate Systematics*.
- Drs. Means and Milne published a paper at *Banisteria*.
- Drs. Ivanov and Means, and colleagues have manuscripts accepted at *Zoologia* and *Spixiana*.
- Dr. Means and colleagues have a paper accepted at *Banisteria*.
- Drs. Ivanov and Means, and colleagues have a manuscript in review at *Austral Ecology*.
- Drs. Means, Ivanov, Hennen, and L. Hightower presented research findings at the 2026 Center for Systematic Entomology annual conference in Gainesville, FL.
- Dr. Ivanov participated in the West Virginia Entomological Society winter meeting in Charleston, WV.
- Drs. Ivanov and Means, and L. Hightower organized and hosted VMNH's Science Saturday: Bug Day, which attracted over 400 children and adults.
- Drs. Ivanov and Means, and L. Hightower, participated in VMNH's Starlington special event.
- Drs. Means and Jantzen received funding from the Virginia Outdoors Foundation's Forest CORE Fund, which will allow the non-profit Virginia Institute for Invertebrates to purchase land in Giles Co., Virginia to use for monitoring invertebrate diversity, abundance, and health.

**Research & Collections**

Drs. Ivanov and Means, L. Hightower, Drs. R. S. Bouzan, A. D. Brescovit, and J. P. P. Pena-Barbosa (Instituto Butantan, Brazil), Dr. L. F. M. Iniesta (Universidade Federal de Pernambuco, Brazil), Dr. J. Bueno-Villegas (Universidad Autónoma del Estado de Hidalgo, Mexico), Dr. C. Rojas-Buffet (Universidad de la República, Uruguay), and Dr. P. Sierwald (Field Museum of Natural History) published a paper at *European Journal of Taxonomy*. The work is the first worldwide catalog of the millipede family Chelodesmidae and includes detailed data on all 771 valid species along with synonymies, bibliography, and distributional information.

[Bouzan, R. S., J. C. Means, L. F. M. Iniesta, K. Ivanov, L. Hightower, J. P. P. Pena-Barbosa, A. D. Brescovit, J. Bueno-Villegas, C. Rojas-Buffet, and P. Sierwald. A

worldwide catalog of the millipede family Chelodesmidae Cook in Cook & Collins, 1895 (Diplopoda: Polydesmida). *European Journal of Taxonomy*. 1046: 1-271.]

Drs. Ivanov, Means, Bouzan, Iniesta and Brescovit published a paper at *Invertebrate Systematics*. The taxonomic revision of the Brazilian endemic millipede tribe Cornalatini (Polydesmida: Chelodesmidae) includes the description of two new genera and three new species along with the first molecular analysis of the family Chelodesmidae. In addition, the paper provides an identification key to all known Cornalatini genera and species.

[Bouzan, R. S., J. C. Means, K. Ivanov, L. F. M. Iniesta., and A. D. Brescovit. The false dragon millipede tribe Cornalatini Verhoeff, 1941: taxonomic revision and phylogenetic analysis (Polydesmida: Chelodesmidae). *Invertebrate Systematics* 40: 1-65.]

Drs. Means and M. Milne (U Indianapolis) published a paper at *Banisteria*. The work is the first catalog of the spiders of Virginia and offers a complete list, including bibliographic history and references, of the 713 species of spiders found in the Commonwealth and includes 147 species previously unrecorded from the state. [Milne, M. A., J. C. Means, and R. L. Hoffman. 2026. Catalog of Virginia spiders. *Banisteria* 60: 1–130.]

Drs. Ivanov, Means, Bouzan, Brescovit, and Iniesta, and Caroline T. Paranhos and Ricardo Cezar Ramos Nicolau (Instituto Butantan) have a manuscript accepted at *Zoologia*. The study reports the first record of the paradoxosomatid *Helicorthomorpha holstii* (Pocock, 1895) in Brazil, expanding the known distribution of this East Asian millipede to South America.

Drs. Ivanov, Means, Bouzan, Brescovit, and Iniesta have a manuscript accepted at *Spixiana*. The work reports the first case of an adult female with fully developed gonopods (specialized male copulatory structures) in the millipede family Chelodesmidae. This rare morphological condition expands our understanding of intersexuality in millipedes and raises questions regarding developmental pathways and genetic regulation of sexual traits in the order Polydesmida.

Dr. Means, Dr. E. Day, T. A. Dellinger, A. D. Thompson, and A. G. Swenson (Virginia Tech) have a manuscript accepted at *Banisteria*. The paper summarizes 25 years of survey efforts of native and introduced woodboring insects at Virginia Ports of Entry (VPN) and Emergency Action Notification (EAN) sites and will help inform efforts to reduce the importation of potentially harmful insects into the state for years to come.

Drs. Ivanov, Means, Bouzan, Iniesta, Brescovit, Dr. R. A. Castro-Souza (Universidade Federal de Mato Grosso, Brazil), and Ph.D. student M. D. Faustino-Magalhães (Instituto Butantan) have a manuscript in review at *Austral Ecology*. The paper explores the sampling biases associated with the known distribution of the millipede order Spirostreptida in Brazil's Atlantic Forest biome.

Drs. Ivanov and Means, Dr. J. Pérez-Schultheiss (Museo Nacional de Historia Natural, Chile), and A. Parra-Gómez (Universidad Austral de Chile) are revising the South American millipede genus *Monenchodesmus* (Polydesmida: Dalodesmidae). The work includes the description of a new genus and species from Chile.

Dr. Ivanov, Dr. C. Bartlett and student L. Hook (U Delaware), Dr. J. Leavengood (USDA- APHIS), and Dr. B. R. Garcete-Barrett (Museo Nacional de Historia Natural, Paraguay) are working on a revision of the South American planthopper genus *Protachilus* (Hemiptera: Fulgoridae). The work includes the description of the previously unknown male of *Protachilus rex* Fennah, 1944 and the description of a new species from Ecuador and Peru.

Drs. Means (presenter), Hennen (Virginia DCR), Ivanov, and L. Hightower presented research findings at the 2026 Center for Systematic Entomology annual conference (Gainesville, FL) regarding the recently launched "Millipedes of Virginia" project. (January 17)

Dr. Ivanov participated in the West Virginia Entomological Society winter meeting in Charleston, WV. (January 9)

Drs. Ivanov and Means secured research permits from the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (incl. Division of Natural Heritage) for the 2026 season.

Dr. Means conducted fieldwork at various sites in Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, and Virginia in support of ongoing research projects.

Dr. Ivanov visited and worked on sorting and identifying ant specimens at the West Virginia Department of Agriculture insect collection in Charleston, WV.

Dr. Means processed (removed and sorted specimens for identification) 11 litter samples from recent collecting trip to Vietnam.

Dr. Means identified and curated 17 specimens for VMNH's molecular collection with another 2,000+ specimens put aside for various taxonomic experts.

Liberty Hightower prepared 1,288 ants and 175 non-ants from recent field work in Paraguay and Vietnam; and digitized 4,176 ant specimens (550 records) which were added to VMNH's invertebrate collection.

VMNH Collections Manager H. Cartmell, with help from Dr. Ivanov, completed work on curating and digitizing the museum's Mollusca (mollusks) holdings. The collection includes 48,455 specimens representing 199 species, of which 22,302 Bivalvia (clams, mussels, and allies; 80 species) and 26,153 Gastropoda (snails and allies; 119 species).

Dr. Ivanov satisfied a loan request regarding VMNH's invertebrate holdings: 58 lots of alcohol-preserved Holistophallidae millipedes Dr. W. A. Shear (VMNH Senior Fellow).

Dr. Ivanov oversaw the acquisition of 192 pinned/pointed identified Coleoptera donated to VMNH by Dr. C. Harden (WVDA; RIM2026-01); 9 frozen arthropods from pet trade for outreach and education donated to VMNH by T. Gearheart (RIM2026-02); 629 identified Asellidae (freshwater isopods), including paratypes of *Caecidotia malardi* Lewis & Lewis, 2025, and 281 of identified Oniscidea (terrestrial isopods) in ethanol donated to VMNH by Dr. J. J. Lewis (Lewis & Associates; RIM2026-05).

## **Education & Outreach**

Drs. Ivanov and Means, and L. Hightower organized and hosted VMNH's Science Saturday: Bug Day. The 4-hour event, which offered a variety of displays and activities including specimens recently collected by museum scientists, live arthropods, and bug-themed children activities and crafts, was attended by 444 children and adults from Virginia and North Carolina. The social media campaign associated with the event was highly successful and reached over 175,000 people from North America, South America, Southeast Asia, and Europe. (February 7)

Drs. Ivanov and Means, and L. Hightower participated in VMNH's Starlington special event which was attended by nearly 150 museum patrons. (March 21)

Dr. Ivanov provided training in insect collecting, identification, and natural history to members of the Blue Ridge Foothills and Lakes Chapter of the Virginia Master Naturalists. (February 28)

Liberty Hightower participated in the Patrick Henry Elementary Career Fair and interacted with over 50 students and teachers. (February 27)

Drs. Ivanov and Means, and L. Hightower gave tours of the museum's laboratories and collections to members of the general public, the Blue Ridge Foothills and Lakes Chapter of the Virginia Master Naturalists, and students and faculty from Averett University. (February 28, March 17, 30, and 31)

This quarter, volunteer Lauren Apel continued work in the Department of Recent Invertebrates by processing litter samples from Texas and Vietnam in support of various research projects.

## **Exhibits**

Dr. Ivanov prepared a display focused on Virginia's beetle diversity for VMNH's Mobile Science Outreach unit in Waynesboro, VA.

## **Professional Service**

Drs. Means and B. Jantzen (Virginia Institute of Invertebrates, VII; Virginia Tech) were awarded \$700,131.00 from the Virginia Outdoors Foundation's Forest CORE Fund (Mountain Valley Pipeline Region) in association with VII and the 500-Year Forest Foundation. The CORE Fund provides money for the purchase of property for conservation and protection from development in perpetuity, which aligns with the goals of both aforementioned organizations. With this grant, VII will purchase a 222 acre property in Giles Co., Virginia to use for monitoring invertebrate diversity, abundance, and health, as well as research for staff at VMNH, VT, and other collaborators.

Drs. Ivanov and Means participated in a board meeting of the Virginia Institute for Invertebrates. The meeting was devoted to discussing details regarding the recently funded Virginia Outdoors Foundation's Forest CORE proposal. (March 16)

Dr. Means, VMNH Executive Director Dr. Joe Keiper and Administrator of Science Ben Williams met with the executive director and other staff at The Nature Foundation at Wintergreen, a non-profit operating within the Wintergreen Resort in Nelson Co., VA to discuss potential avenues for research, outreach, and other forms of collaboration. (April 1).

Dr. Means served as an editor for a manuscript submitted to *Banisteria*. (completed February 26)

Dr. Ivanov served as an editor for a manuscript submitted to *Historia Naturalis Bulgarica*. (completed March 4)

Dr. Ivanov copy edited four articles for *Banisteria* (Volumes 60 and 61). (completed January 14 and February 26)

Dr. Ivanov reviewed manuscripts for *Historia Naturalis Bulgarica* and *Diversity*. (completed January 28 and March 27)

**Hayden Bassett, Ph.D.**  
**Assistant Curator of Archaeology**

## **Introduction**

The VMNH Archaeology Department is currently staffed by 8 personnel as of April 2026. This includes the Department Curator, the VMNH Archaeologist, the four core staff of the Cultural Heritage Monitoring Lab and two Archaeology Lab technicians. Over the past three months, Dr. Hayden Bassett focused the department's efforts on publications, collections management, and assistance to cultural heritage organizations impacted by natural disaster.

## **Research and Collections**

The VMNH Archaeology Department continued collections organization efforts with the goal of enabling research in Virginia Archaeology. The lab coordinated volunteers to organize and label artifact assemblage bags from several sites in Virginia with high research potential. This effort ensures that the VMNH is maximizing research potential with the Commonwealth's collections.

From March and April, the Archaeology Department continued work on the Smith River Survey, a grant-funded project that seeks to document all in-water cultural resources in a 25-mile section of the Smith River in Henry County, VA. The team completed its desktop review, 50% of report writing, and will resume its fieldwork this month.

As a producer and curatorial repository of digital collections, the VMNH Archaeology Department has expanded its digital collections holdings by nearly 2,000 "objects" this quarter and anticipates further growth in digital collections with each new quarter. At the request of its research stakeholders, the new objects include expanded cultural heritage site locations for Hawaii. The Archaeology Department's CHML is using these data to assess impacts to cultural heritage from the recent floods in Hawaii at the request of state and local governments. These digital objects in the VMNH's digital collections have already been requested/accessed by multiple outside organizations.

A part of Dr. Bassett's research efforts this quarter were dedicated to continuing the leading role played by the VMNH's Cultural Heritage Monitoring Lab (CHML) in response to the destruction of museums, archaeological sites, and other cultural heritage sites in Ukraine and Sudan. Since February 2022, the VMNH-CHML team has been monitoring over 28,000 cultural heritage sites in Ukraine, identified potential damage to 4,383 sites, and confirmed damage to 740. The VMNH team is also monitoring Sudan's museums, religious sites, and archaeological sites in the areas impacted by the ongoing civil war. As previously mentioned, the CHML at VMNH also responded to the recent Hawaii floods by assessing natural disaster impacts to cultural heritage for emergency responders.

## **Publications**

Dr. Bassett and his team submitted a manuscript title "Riverine Settlement and Aquatic Resource Use in Late Woodland Virginia" for publication. It is currently in peer review.

Additionally, VMNH's CHML team published two open access reports this quarter through the Smithsonian Institution. As of April 2026, the total readership of the VMNH's Archaeology Departments publications from the past 30 months is 64,847 reads and 9,302 downloads.

*Published Reports this Quarter (VMNH Archaeology authors in bold):*

**Fitzgerald, K.**, Hanson, K., **Bassett, H.**, **Gunter-Bassett, M.**, **Welsh, W.**, **Maher, A.**, Averyt, K., Kane, K. E., Muller, C. E., and Daniels, B. I. (2026). "[Damage to the Palace of Sultan Ali Dinar Museum in Al Fashir, Sudan.](#)" Virginia Museum of Natural History, Cultural Heritage Monitoring Lab; University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, Penn Cultural Heritage Center; and Smithsonian Institution, Museum Conservation Institute—Smithsonian Cultural Rescue Initiative. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.25573/data.30625025>.

Hanson, **K.**, **Fitzgerald, K.**, Meharry, J. E., Yefimova, V., Cil, D., Tuttle, E., Bakhshi, R., Rozhko, V., Makar, R., Zadorozhna, M., Oleksii, A., Frolova, Y., **Bassett, H.**, **Welsh, W.**, **Maher, A.**, Averyt, K., Kane, K. E., Aronson, J., Muller, C. E., **Gunter-Bassett, M.**, and Daniels, B. I. (2026). "[Rapid Site Report: Damage and Looting to the Sergei Prokofiev Museum in Sontsivka, Ukraine.](#)" Ukrainian Heritage Monitoring Lab; Virginia Museum of Natural History, Cultural Heritage Monitoring Lab; University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, Penn Cultural Heritage Center; University of Maryland, Center for International Development and Conflict Management; and Smithsonian Institution, Museum Conservation Institute—Smithsonian Cultural Rescue Initiative. DOI: [10.25573/data.30246196](https://doi.org/10.25573/data.30246196)

## Education and Outreach

*Museum Exhibits / Services / Outreach:*

This quarter, the VMNH Archaeology Department visited Salem Museum & Historical Society to see the archaeological exhibit on the Graham-White Site, a Late Woodland and contact period village in Roanoke County, VA. In late 2025, the VMNH Archaeology Department provided lab space, collections, and exhibit preparation support for this exhibit.

In late February, Dr. Hayden Bassett and Dr. Madeleine Gunter-Bassett gave a lecture in Salem, VA on research they recently submitted for peer-review. The lecture, titled "Riverine Settlement and Aquatic Resource Use in Late Woodland Virginia," was sponsored by the Archaeological Society of Virginia's Headwaters Chapter and attended by 90 people.

*Professional Service:*

Dr. Bassett continued his appointments as a Research Associate at the Smithsonian Institution, a Fellow of The Explorers Club, a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society, and an Adjunct Lecturer in William & Mary's Department of Anthropology. He continued his duties as Vice President of the Board of Trustees for Falmouth Heritage Renewal, an international historic preservation non-profit.

This quarter, Dr. Hayden Bassett and VMNH staff archaeologist Dr. Madeleine Gunter Bassett continued to fulfill their duties in the Archaeological Society of Virginia (ASV)

and Council for Virginia Archaeologists (CoVA). This included participating in the annual ASV and CoVA meeting in Staunton, VA. In their roles on committees in these organizations, VMNH Archaeology staff provide direction, technical review, grant approvals, among other tasks for state-wide archaeological research for the foreseeable future.

**Adam Pritchard, Ph.D.**  
**Assistant Curator of Paleontology**

- Dr. Pritchard submitted a new scientific article and has a second in press.
- Dr. Pritchard worked with intern Joshua Safley (January-May) on the 3D modeling of the Virginian reptile *Tanytrachelos*. The project is funded by the Luck Companies Foundation and will produce an exhibit (coordinated with Lila Dougherty) and scientific publications (to be submitted as presentation for Society of Vertebrate Paleontology 2026 meeting).
- Dr. Pritchard coordinated a return visit to the Solite Quarry (currently owned by Luck Stone corporation) with technician Lucy Treado and Dr. Paul Olsen (Columbia University) to re-examine the site and gauge the possibility of return fieldtrips.

### **Research & Collections**

Dr. Pritchard has two papers in press and in revision in Q1 2025.

- A description and analysis of a toothless bipedal reptile from Triassic New Mexico in the *Journal of Vertebrate Paleontology*, led by Dr. Alan Turner of Stony Brook University.
- An analysis of VMNH reptile skull bones from Fraser sites in the United Kingdom that represent a new taxon of small carnivorous reptile in revision for *Earth & Environmental Science Transactions*, led by Dr. Sterling Nesbitt of Virginia Tech.

Dr. Pritchard co-authored a poster presentation at the Tri-Sectional Geological Society of America meeting in Memphis, TN, led by University of Lynchburg intern Nicholas Brewton. The presentation focused on Mr. Brewton's project developing a repeatable framework for 3D scanning fossils, creating computer models, and animating those models.

In ongoing projects, Dr. Pritchard worked on figures for an article on Triassic drepanosaurs of Utah and developed the first three-dimensional reconstruction of *Tanytrachelos* in collaboration with intern Joshua Safley. He and Mr. Safley coordinated with former VMNH intern Gina Workman on describing unique tail bones from *Tanytrachelos* for a separate publication.

Dr. Pritchard developed the collections in several targeted ways:

- Dr. Pritchard took in a collection of large dinosaur track casts from the Cretaceous Period of Virginia, taken by Dr. Robert Weems (USGS, retired) and Jon Bachman (amateur paleontologist). Representing some of the only records of dinosaurs from the Cretaceous of Virginia, these include footprints from very large carnivores, armored dinosaurs, and long-necked sauropods.
- Dr. Pritchard brought in fossil donations from the Jurassic and Triassic of northern Virginia sites by Dr. Paul Olsen (Columbia University), including a large armored fish and a reptile trackway.

Dr. Pritchard worked with several scientific workers and private citizens seeking to use VMNH collections in their work:

- Loan of two large sperm whale skulls from Virginia to Dr. Alton Dooley of Western Science Center (Hemet, CA), coordinated with three staffers from WSC and transported by truck cross-country.
- Loan of Early Jurassic fish and plants from Virginia to Dr. Ben Kligman of UT Austin for a descriptive study.
- CT scanning of a half-dozen *Tanytrachelos* skeletons for the Luck Companies internship project with paleontologists at Virginia Tech.
- Assessment of palynological (pollen fossil) samples for independent research studying Maryland paleobotany from after the Cretaceous extinction.

## **Education & Outreach**

Dr. Pritchard presented a lecture to a natural history collections course at Virginia Tech on the benefits of small museums and ways to advance collections utility for different audiences.

Dr. Pritchard coordinated with technician Lucy Treado and exhibits manager Lila Dougherty on the setup and display of Smithsonian-loaned ground sloth fossils for the Virginia 250 celebrations. He manned a station presenting the fossils to the VA 250 Reception event on 2/19/2026.

Dr. Pritchard served eight requests for specimen identifications and one request for information about the mastodon fossil record.

Dr. Pritchard hosted collections tours for over 10 students and a professor for a natural history collections course from Averett University.

## **Grants & Funding**

Dr. Pritchard worked with Lucy Treado and Dr. Brooke Haiar on using the remaining funds of the National Science Foundation grant to develop lab capacity for the fossils collected and to continue the 3D modeling and reconstruction components of internship projects and resultant research products in perpetuity.

## **Professional Service**

Dr. Pritchard reviewed an article for the *Journal of Vertebrate Paleontology*.

Dr. Pritchard provided beta-testing and feedback for new features in the Morphobank software ([www.morphobank.org](http://www.morphobank.org)) package for managing phylogenetic datasets and testing evolutionary relationship hypotheses.

Dr. Pritchard reviewed content for and participated in a dissertation committee meeting for a Ph.D. student in the Geosciences department at Virginia Tech.

**Collin VanBuren, Ph.D.**  
**Visiting Scholar**

- Dr. VanBuren and colleagues resubmitted one paper that is now in review and received comments back on another paper that is under revision
- Dr. VanBuren gave multiple presentations, including at state conferences and the King's Grant Retirement Community
- Dr. VanBuren joined the Advisory Board of the Amphibian Survival Alliance as a Strategic Youth Advisor

**Research & Collections**

Dr. VanBuren resubmitted one paper and is revising another:

- van Rees, VanBuren, et al. *In revision*. Eight recommendations to enhance biodiversity outcomes of nature-based solutions at multiple scales. *Journal of Environmental Management*
- Stevenson et al. *In review*. Changes in plant community composition and diversity in a high-elevation rangeland: implications for pollinators. *Rangeland Ecology & Management*

Dr. VanBuren worked with M. Boyd and H. Cartmell to onboard five new volunteers to assist with collection curation and management tasks

Dr. VanBuren, M. Boyd, and Dr. H. Bassett have been documenting beaver foraging on invasive autumn olive and preparing a natural history note documenting the interactions.

Dr. VanBuren and M. Boyd have surveyed multiple new sites for potential fieldwork this summer, including beaver activity at Fairy Stone State Park to help strengthen connections with their staff

Dr. VanBuren submitted two abstracts to BeaverCON, a conference later this year. One is for a panel discussion with the Southeast Beaver Alliance and other is for a youth inclusion workshop.

**Education & Outreach**

Dr. VanBuren gave a presentation at the King's Grant Retirement Community for their Science Café series

Dr. VanBuren participated in the Starlington Event

Dr. VanBuren presented a poster with co-author Dr. Emily Fairfax titled "Expanding the framework for understanding beaver contributions to socio-ecological systems" at the Virginia Chapter of the Wildlife Society meeting in Lexington, VA

- His two students also presented posters the same week at the Southeastern Chapter of the Geological Society of America meeting

Dr. VanBuren, with M. Boyd and L. Dougherty, has been working on developing an infographic to educate the public about bird window strikes, including mitigation

techniques and information about donating deceased individuals to the museum to become specimens

### **Professional Service**

Dr. VanBuren continues to participate in the “nutria task force” monthly calls with state and federal wildlife managers, and in his role as Strategy Planning and Implementation Chair of the Southeast Beaver Alliance

Dr. VanBuren officially joined the Advisory Board of the Amphibian Survival Alliance as a Strategic Youth Advisor

Dr. VanBuren is also in discussions with national leadership of The Wildlife Society to support their efforts to engage with youth as part of their contributions to international conservation and restoration goals (e.g. 30 by 30)

**Vertebrate Zoology**  
**Marshall Boyd, Research Technician**

**Research & Collections**

*Field work*

M. Boyd, C. VanBuren, and H. Bassett have begun documenting beaver activity across areas surrounding about a 1 hour radius of Martinsville including site visits, trail camera documentation and dendrochronology specimen acquisition. Anticipation of intern involvement for continued data collection and hopeful publication of this activity will continue throughout 2026.

*Professional Presentations/Conferences*

M. Boyd and C. VanBuren traveled to Virginia Military Institute (VMI) for the annual Virginia Chapter of The Wildlife Society meeting where VanBuren presented a poster. Boyd accepted the position within the Executive Committee of Social Media Coordinator.

*Ongoing research*

M. Boyd began correspondence for documenting Timber Rattlesnake populations at Fairy Stone State Park with 2026 fieldwork delayed due to weather conditions. Fieldwork anticipated to begin again with more ideal conditions for snakes to be active.

*Professional Development*

M. Boyd along with all search committee members completed the process of in person interviews for the vacancy of Assistant Curator of Herpetology. The selected candidate is anticipated to be onsite in June 2026.

*Collections Growth, Management and Use*

M. Boyd along with H. Cartmell, C. VanBuren, and L. Hightower initiated a group of Virginia Master Naturalist volunteers to identify and sort the Rosenberg Owl Pellet collection. Coordination of volunteer schedules, photography of the VMNH reference collection and utilization of the Mammalogy Lab and Microscopy Lab have all been portions of this ongoing project.

M. Boyd and J. Harris have coordinated with Margaret Harden for the digitization of the

VMNH nest and egg collection. M. Harden is documenting all the information of the ledger catalog that is associated with that collection into a digital spreadsheet. This ongoing project, when finished, will contribute towards the recuration of the collection and hopeful research project collaboration(s) in the future.

M. Boyd collaborated with Jason Gibson of Averett University to identify the frog specimens of the VMNH herpetology backlog collection helping to further those collections towards cataloging and curation for future insertion to the VMNH research collections.

M. Boyd partnered with Dr. Noel Boaz for a specimen loan of multiple large carnivore species leg bones to conduct a comparative CT scan with collaborators in California. Specimens have been returned safely to the VMNH with data on the scans anticipated to be sent soon.

M. Boyd continues to collect DOR specimens and those donated by other institutions for the growth of vertebrate zoology research collections along with the education/outreach collections.

## **Education & Outreach**

### *VMNH-based Activities*

M. Boyd and the rest of the VMNH staff hosted the Science Saturday Bug Day showcasing VMNH specimens from across all museum collections featuring Virginia Master Naturalists and Philpott Lake.

M. Boyd and the rest of the VMNH staff hosted the Starlington event where Boyd partnered with Virginia Master Naturalist Christine Stewart to showcase natural history items such as sea turtles, birds, and whale specimens that all contributed to fashion accessories and/or status symbols of the time.

M. Boyd supervised and worked alongside a VMNH intern hosted by Zach Ryder to learn about zoology collections where the intern had the opportunity to work on herpetology backlog specimens.

M. Boyd hosted a cohort of students from Averette University for a behind the scenes tour. The Natural History Collections Course students learned about specimen preparations, collections management and what it means to be a collections technician. Boyd partnered with curators and staff from all departments of the VMNH to have students get the full experience of each collection and what it is like to work within a natural history museum.

M. Boyd attended the annual meeting of the Virginia Master Naturalists Southwest Piedmont Chapter.

### *Non-VMNH based Activities*

M. Boyd and C. VanBuren partnered with the rangers of Fairy Stone State Park to begin fieldwork plans of documenting beaver as well as Timber Rattlesnake activity within the park. Fieldwork associated with both animals is anticipated to begin with more ideal weather conditions as the snowstorm in this quarter postponing plans.

M. Boyd and C. VanBuren traveled to Kings Grant for a presentation on beaver research conducted by VanBuren with emphasis on the plans of local research anticipated to begin in the region. About 20 residents of the community were in attendance.

M. Boyd and Virginia Master Naturalist Christine Stewart traveled to Kings Grant for an Education Station on "Leaving the Leaves" presentation where residents learned about the benefits of best practices of spring cleaning in their respective gardens. About 10 residents of the community were in attendance.

M. Boyd, C. VanBuren, and L. Hightower attended the Virginia Chapter of The Wildlife Society meeting held at the Virginia Military Institute (VMI).

M. Boyd partnered with Bee City Martinsville and Hives for Heros for the annual Books and Bunnies event held at the Sports Complex where visitors learned about the benefits of pollinator gardens, leaving the leaves, and what it means for Martinsville to be a Bee City.

### **Media**

M. Boyd continues to be the Social Media Chair for the Virginia Herpetological Society (VHS) where educational material, announcements for programming and community outreach occur.

M. Boyd has accepted the role as Social Media Coordinator for the Virginia Chapter of The Wildlife Society including the Facebook and Website where educational material, announcements for programming and community outreach occur.

### **Professional Service**

M. Boyd continues to be the Vice President and Social Media Chair for the Virginia Herpetological Society.

M. Boyd has accepted the role of Social Media Coordinator for the Virginia Chapter of The Wildlife Society

M. Boyd continues to serve on the executive committee for the Friends of Fairy Stone State Park nonprofit organization.

M. Boyd continues to be a member of the local young professionals (“Yo-Pros”) group by attending events. The group is working to connect younger professionals of the Martinsville/Henry County area in a social but also collaborative way.

## **Research and Collections**

### **Jill K. Harris, Registrar**

Eight (8) collections acquisitions were recorded for 1,123 individual specimens and 3 boxes of specimens. These specimens were added to the invertebrate zoology, vertebrate zoology, and paleontology collections.

Four (4) outgoing loans were recorded from the invertebrate zoology, vertebrate zoology, and paleontology collections. The loans were made to: University of Delaware, Western Science Center, Cedars-Sinai Cancer Oncobiobank Shared Resource, and University of Texas Jackson School Museum of Earth History.

Ms. Harris (database administrator) reports that, within the collections management system *Re:discovery Proficio*, VMNH staff added/modified/updated 32,841 catalog records, according to database statistics.

### **Haley Cartmell, Collections Manager**

Curators and staff modified/updated 25,378 existing records and added 117 new records to the VMNH collections databases (Proficio and EGEMS) during the months of January, February, and March 2026.

**SEPTEMBER-DECEMBER 2025**  
**VMNH ACQUISITIONS FOR APPROVAL BY BOARD OF TRUSTEES RESEARCH AND COLLECTIONS COMMITTEE**

RIM* #	Collector/Donor	Date at VMNH	VMNH Dept.	QTY	Description	Method	To Be Accessioned (Y/N)
RIM 34-2025	VA Dept of Wildlife Resources (Leah Card)	10/18/2025	MAMMALOLOGY	1	American Porcupine ( <i>Erethizon dorsatum</i> )	Transfer	Y
RIM 35-2025	Dr. Steven M. Roble	11/10/2025	RECENT INVERTEBRATES	1035	pinned beetles (Coleoptera), most unidentified	Transfer	Y
RIM 36-2025	Dr. Arthur V. Evans	5/16/2025	RECENT INVERTEBRATES	57	pinned insects, with data	Gift	Y
RIM 37-2025	Dr. Arthur V. Evans	5/16/2025	RECENT INVERTEBRATES	347	pinned insects, no data	Gift	N
RIM 38-2025	Canadian Museum of Nature (Dr. Robert S. Anderson)	9/30/2025	RECENT INVERTEBRATES	3	pinned weevil (Coleoptera: Curculionidae) PARATYPES; <i>Eurhoptus cariniventris</i> , <i>E. limbricatus</i> , <i>E. occidentalis</i>	Gift	Y
RIM 39-2025	Dr. Arthur V. Evans	11/13/2025	RECENT INVERTEBRATES	1029	pinned insects, with data	Gift	Y
RIM 40-2025	USDA-APHIS (John M. Leavengood, Jr. PhD)	11/19/2025	RECENT INVERTEBRATES	398	pinned insects (124 Coleoptera, 274 Hemiptera)	Gift	Y
RIM 41-2025	John D. Kleopfer	4/29/2025	HERPETOLOGY	1	Mole Kingsnake ( <i>Lampropeltis rhombomaculata</i> )	Gift	Y
RIM 42-2025	Arianna Kuhn	3/4/2025	HERPETOLOGY	1	Bluetongue Skink ( <i>Tiliqua scincoides</i> )	Gift	Y
RIM 43-2025	Marshall Boyd	11/24/2025	HERPETOLOGY	4	Wormsnake ( <i>Carphophis amoenus</i> ), Five-lined Skink ( <i>Plestiodon fasciatus</i> ), Dekay's Brownsnake ( <i>Storeia dekayi</i> ), Mole Kingsnake ( <i>Lampropeltis calligaster rhombomaculata</i> )	Salvaged	Y
RIM 44-2025	Marshall Boyd	11/24/2025	MAMMALOLOGY	3	Flying Squirrel ( <i>Glaucomys volans</i> ), American Beaver ( <i>Castor canadensis</i> ), Raccoon skull ( <i>Procyon lotor</i> )	Salvaged	Y
RIM 45-2025	Marshall Boyd	11/24/2025	ORNITHOLOGY	2	Barred Owl ( <i>Strix varia</i> ), Sharp-shinned Hawk ( <i>Accipter striatus</i> )	Salvaged	Y

**JANUARY-MARCH 2026**

**VMNH ACQUISITIONS FOR APPROVAL BY BOARD OF TRUSTEES RESEARCH AND COLLECTIONS COMMITTEE**

<b>RIM* #</b>	<b>Collector/Donor</b>	<b>Date at VMNH</b>	<b>VMNH Dept.</b>	<b>QTY</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Method</b>	<b>To Be Accessioned (Y/N)</b>
RIM 01-2026	Curt W. Harden	12/26/2025	RECENT INVERTEBRATES	192	dry, pinned beetles	Gift	Y
RIM 02-2026	Todd Gearheart	12/28/2025	RECENT INVERTEBRATES	9	frozen (deceased) invertebrates from pet trade: 7 tarantulas, 1 scorpion, and 1 centipede	Gift	N
RIM 03-2026	Elizabeth Moore	Pre 2017	HERPETOLOGY	3 boxes	turtle shells, no data	Found In Collection	N
RIM 04-2026	Robert Weems	2/19/2026	PALEONTOLOGY	7	footprints: dinosaur: theropod, sauropod, thyreophoran	Gift	Y
RIM 05-2026	Dr. Julian J. Lewis	3/13/2026	RECENT INVERTEBRATES	164 lots (910 Individ.)	75 lots (629 specimens) of identified Asellidae, including 4 male paratypes of <i>Caecidotea malarki</i> , 89 lots (281 specimens) of identified Oniscidea all lots in 95% ethanol	Gift	Y
RIM 06-2026	Marshall Boyd	3/25/2026	HERPETOLOGY	1	Eastern Rat Snake ( <i>Pantherophis alleghaniensis</i> )	Salvaged	Y
RIM 07-2026	Liberty Hightower	3/3/2026	ORNITHOLOGY	1	Eastern Screech Owl, red phase ( <i>Megascops asio</i> )	Salvaged	Y
RIM 08-2026	Todd Gearheart	12/28/2025	HERPETOLOGY	3	frozen (deceased) vertebrate lizards from pet trade: 2 <i>Uromastyx ocellata</i> (male and female) and 1 <i>Trioceros hoenelii</i>	Gift	N

Note: this info will not print on final version, it is for informational purposes only, to help reviewers.

The only edits made to this document since the August 2023 BOT approved version are:

- the leaf cutter ant colony paragraph was removed, since we no longer have the ant colony, and
- all animal care sheets were removed. These care sheets are not policy, so they will become a procedural document, rather than a policy document. This is due to how frequently these care sheets change and every time they do, they would need BOT approval.

These changes have been approved by the VMNH Collections Committee and Executive Director.

## **Virginia Museum of Natural History**

### **Policies for Live Animals**

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## **I. Preface**

The Virginia Museum of Natural History (VMNH) uses live invertebrates, fish, amphibians, and reptiles in exhibits, education, and public programs as part of its mission to interpret Virginia's natural heritage within a global context in ways that are relevant to all citizens of the Commonwealth. These living collections serve an important role by helping to instill a sense of understanding and respect for creatures that are often misunderstood for a variety of reasons. The VMNH will not keep live mammals or birds without undergoing the American Zoological Association's accreditation process.

## **II. Institutional Commitment and Animal Care**

The VMNH is committed to providing the financial, physical, and human resources necessary to safely and humanely care for the animals entrusted to its care. The Manager of the Department of Education and Public Programs (DEPP) and the Exhibits Manager, in consultation with other relevant staff and outside animal-care experts, are responsible for recommending to the VMNH Executive Director all the resources needed to effectively care for the VMNH's live animals that are housed at the museum. Research and Collections Division staff are responsible for effective care of all live animals housed in their research laboratories and office spaces.

The VMNH staff research the best practices of care and maintenance for each type of animal, and then apply these practices to the fullest extent possible. Under no circumstances will the VMNH take on responsibilities for numbers or types of animals that are beyond its ability to care for humanely, nor will it engage in any activity that threatens the welfare of animals, staff, or visitors. All staff assigned to assist in the maintenance of VMNH animals receive detailed training in the care and handling procedures for each species. The live animal collection at the VMNH is under the care of a licensed veterinarian, as required by permits issued by state and federal regulatory agencies. Yearly wellness checks will be conducted, and veterinary medical staff are contacted if emergency care is needed.

The live animal collection is funded in a variety of ways, such as through grants and individual donations. Funds acquired for the live animal collection may be secured through the Virginia Museum of Natural History Foundation, a 501(c) 3 non-profit organization that exists to support the mission and programs of the VMNH.

## **III. Acquisition**

Acquisition of live animals is in full compliance with all applicable laws and regulations of local, state, federal, and international authorities. Animal ambassadors that are used in education and public programs are generally acquired through proposed donations that are considered on a case-by-case basis.

Acquisition of live animals requires VMNH staff to consider multiple criteria, including: the animal's health, habitat needs, veterinary care requirements, cost of care, legal concerns, and available

staff resources. These criteria are detailed in the Live Animal Acquisition (LAA)-Consideration Form (Appendix I).

When an opportunity to acquire an animal arises an LAA-Consideration Form is completed by the Manager of DEPP, Exhibits Manager, or a Research Curator who ultimately will be responsible for the animal's care. After completion of the LAA-Consideration Form, that staff member will consult with other staff, as needed, and make a recommendation of whether or not to acquire the animal.

If recommended that the VMNH should acquire the animal, the VMNH Executive Director is asked to review and sign the LAA-Consideration form. If the Executive Director approves the acquisition, the staff member ultimately responsible for the animal's care, will, if applicable, ask the potential donor to complete a Gift-In-Kind form (Appendix II). Copies of all of these forms are provided to the VMNH Registrar.

Upon arrival at the VMNH, all live animals are placed in an appropriate enclosure and quarantined for an appropriate length of time, as determined after consultation with a licensed veterinarian and reviewing pertinent live-animal care procedures.

#### **IV. Access and Use of Collections**

The VMNH living collections are not available for loan. Animals used in exhibits are housed on display. Animals used in public programs are either housed in the Suzanne M. Lacy Education Center, or they are housed in research laboratories and office spaces that are not accessible to the public.

#### **V. Removal and Disposal of Deceased Animals**

Live animals are not accessioned (or deaccessioned) by the VMNH. Deceased animals are removed from their enclosure and frozen as soon as possible after death. They are then considered by a Research Curator or the Manager of DEPP for acquisition as VMNH specimens, subject to the review process outlined in the VMNH Collections Policies. VMNH staff will properly dispose of remains not under consideration for acquisition.

#### **VI. Administration and Employee Responsibilities**

The live animals housed in exhibits and the Suzanne M. Lacy Education Center are under the day-to-day care of the DEPP. Animals housed in research laboratories and office spaces are under the daily care of the Research and Collections division staff. All staff follow a chain-of-care in the case of unplanned absences. Outside of DEPP, the Exhibits Manager, and the Biology Research Technician are equipped to care for the collections on display in the absence of DEPP staff. Animals housed in research laboratories and office spaces are cared for by curators, staff scientists, and research technicians. All staff responsible for animal care are trained in proper methods for care, feeding and

watering, habitat maintenance, and emergency procedures. Staff are also trained on species-specific information to share with the general public during programming.

In the event staff determines that resources are no longer available to appropriately care for a live animal, the VMNH will make every attempt to rehome it with a suitable organization.

## **VII. Permits, Inventory, and Annual Assessment of Resources**

The state of Virginia requires a permit, issued by the Department of Wildlife Resources, to exhibit wild animals. This permit requires the signature of a certified veterinarian, as well as annual wellness checks. Permit applications are submitted annually, with updated inventories of all live animals housed at the VMNH. As part of this process, the VMNH will annually assesses the financial, physical, and human resources necessary to care for each live animal, using the Live Animal Annual Assessment Form (Appendix III).

It is the responsibility of the Manager of DEPP to maintain current state permits and update inventories as needed. The Manager of DEPP is responsible for providing a copy of all state permits to the VMNH Registrar.

## **VIII. Transparency and Accountability**

The VMNH manages its collection of live animals in the public trust. The VMNH Policies for Live Animals, and all other documents related to live animals housed at the VMNH (e.g., Guidelines for Care and Maintenance, Appendix IV) are available for public review.

The Virginia Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), located in § 2.2-3700 et seq. of the Code of Virginia, guarantees citizens of the Commonwealth and representatives of the media access to public records held by public bodies, public officials, and public employees. Citizens have the right to request and/or receive copies of public records, and to request that any charges for the requested records be estimated in advance. The VMNH is legally obligated to comply with all FOIA requests, if the request is for existing documents and the records are identified with “reasonable specificity.”



**LIVE ANIMAL ACQUISITION - CONSIDERATION FORM**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Source (Seller or Person/Institution Making Offer to Donate) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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

Phone Number(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Has the animal(s) been seen in person by VMNH Staff?	Yes	No	
Has the animal(s) been formally offered to the VMNH?		Yes	No
Or, is this a pre-offer review?	Yes	No	

**TYPE OF ANIMAL(S):**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Invertebrate
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Arthropod (insects, arachnids, crustaceans, myriapods)
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Mollusk (chitons, snails, bivalves, squids, octopuses)
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Annelid (earthworms, leeches)
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Cnidarians (hydras, jellyfishes, sea anemones, corals)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Amphibian
- \_\_\_\_\_ Reptile
- \_\_\_\_\_ Fish (circle one):      freshwater                      saltwater

**PRICE, QUANTITY, AND PHYSICAL CONDITION:** (Be as accurate as possible.)

Sales price (if applicable) and quantity of each type of animal being offered, include size of the animal:

**HABITAT:**

Are there any supplies being donated or sold with the animal?      YES                      NO  
If yes, please describe and provide sales price, if applicable:

Is there any equipment being donated or sold with the animal?      YES                      NO  
If yes please describe and provide sales price, if applicable:



**HEALTH:**

Does the animal show signs of illness? \_\_\_\_\_ YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO SOME: \_\_\_\_\_  
When was the last time it was seen by a vet? \_\_\_\_\_  
How old is the animal? \_\_\_\_\_

Are quarantine facilities available? \_\_\_\_\_ YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO

**LEGALITIES:**

Does the source (owner) have all necessary permits and any other paperwork (e.g. sales documentation) for each animal? \_\_\_\_\_ YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO SOME: \_\_\_\_\_  
If not, how was it acquired? \_\_\_\_\_  
When was the animal acquired? \_\_\_\_\_  
Are there any legal restrictions to consider (i.e., endangered, threatened)? (list all concerns):

**FUTURE NEEDS:**

**SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT:**

1. Are there any supplies that will need to be purchased? \_\_\_\_\_ YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO  
If yes, please describe and include estimated cost:
2. Is there any equipment that will need to be purchased? \_\_\_\_\_ YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO  
If yes please describe and include estimated cost:

**CARE:** What food will the animal need?

**VET SERVICES:** Describe anticipated veterinary care needs:

**STAFF RESOURCES:** Estimate how much time for care is needed weekly?

What is the projected annual cost of food and supply needs?

Supplies/Equipment:

Food:

Vet Services:

**Total Annual Cost Projected:**



**APPENDIX II. Gift-In-Kind Form**



**GIFT-IN-KIND FORM**

Date(s) Item(s) Donated: \_\_\_\_\_

Item(s) Received From (Donor's Name): \_\_\_\_\_

Donor's Address:

Donor's Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Donor's Tax Identification Number: \_\_\_\_\_ (Only if value claimed for tax deduction purposes.)

Item(s) for (VMNH Recipient): \_\_\_\_\_ Department: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Printed name and Title)

Quantity and Type/Description of Item(s) [e.g., supplies, equipment, specimens(s)]:  
Note that "specimen(s)" includes donated live animal(s) and the progeny of said specimen(s).

Total Value\* of Donated Item(s): \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Means of Valuing (e.g., fair market value): \_\_\_\_\_

*\* In accordance with the Tax Reform Act of 1984, it is the responsibility of the Donor to obtain any appraisals necessary for donated property claimed as charitable deductions.*

By signing this document, the Donor indicates they have the right to transfer said item(s), such item(s) being free and clear of all encumbrances. The Donor transfers the item(s) noted on this document, which shall constitute an irrevocable and unconditional gift of same by the Donor to The Virginia Museum of Natural History, including all rights, title, and interest in and to the above item(s) absolutely and forever.

Signature of Donor: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of VMNH Recipient: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature and Printed Name/Title

*Original form should be given to the museum registrar for the museum's permanent files.*

**APPENDIX III. Live Animal Annual Assessment Form (Front of Form)**



**LIVE ANIMAL ANNUAL ASSESSMENT FORM**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**TYPE OF ANIMAL(S):**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Invertebrate
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Arthropod (insects, arachnids, crustaceans, myriapods)
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Mollusk (chitons, snails, bivalves, squids, octopuses)
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Annelid (earthworms, leeches)
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Cnidarians (hydras, jellyfishes, sea anemones, corals)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Amphibian
- \_\_\_\_\_ Reptile
- \_\_\_\_\_ Fish (circle one):      freshwater                      saltwater

**QUANTITY AND PHYSICAL CONDITION:** (Be as accurate as possible.)

Quantity and size of the animal(s): \_\_\_\_\_

**HEALTH:**

Does the animal show signs of illness? \_\_\_\_\_ YES    \_\_\_\_\_ NO    SOME: \_\_\_\_\_

When was the last time it was seen by a vet? \_\_\_\_\_

How old is the animal? \_\_\_\_\_

How long has the animal been at VMNH: \_\_\_\_\_

Other comments/considerations: \_\_\_\_\_

**NEEDS WITHIN THE NEXT YEAR:**

**SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT:**

1. Are there any supplies that will need to be purchased? \_\_\_\_\_ YES    \_\_\_\_\_ NO  
If yes, please describe and include estimated cost: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Is there any equipment that will need to be purchased? \_\_\_\_\_ YES    \_\_\_\_\_ NO  
If yes, please describe and include estimated cost: \_\_\_\_\_



## **APPENDIX IV. Guidelines for Care and Maintenance**

Guidelines for Use of Live Amphibians and Reptiles in Field and Laboratory Research, Second Edition. 2004. Revised by the Herpetological Animal Care and Use Committee (HACC) of the American Society of Ichthyologists and Herpetologists.  
[https://static1.squarespace.com/static/618bf11a71fcd5398996eda/t/618fbed9a68bdd5cbcc95f78/1636810457669/guidelines\\_herps\\_research\\_2004.pdf](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/618bf11a71fcd5398996eda/t/618fbed9a68bdd5cbcc95f78/1636810457669/guidelines_herps_research_2004.pdf)

Guidelines for Use of Fishes in Research. 2013. UFR (Use of Fishes in Research) Committee, American Fisheries Society, Bethesda, Maryland.  
<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/618bf11a71fcd5398996eda/t/618fbed1f40e6c713dfa71ee/1636810449675/asf-guidelines-use-of-fishes-in-research-2013.pdf>

Guidelines for Care of Invertebrates, as provided on 2 January 2023 by staff of the Cincinnati Zoo and Botanical Garden (see following pages).

## VMNH Board of Trustees Education and Public Programs Committee

May 16, 2026, 9:00AM, VMNH

### Agenda

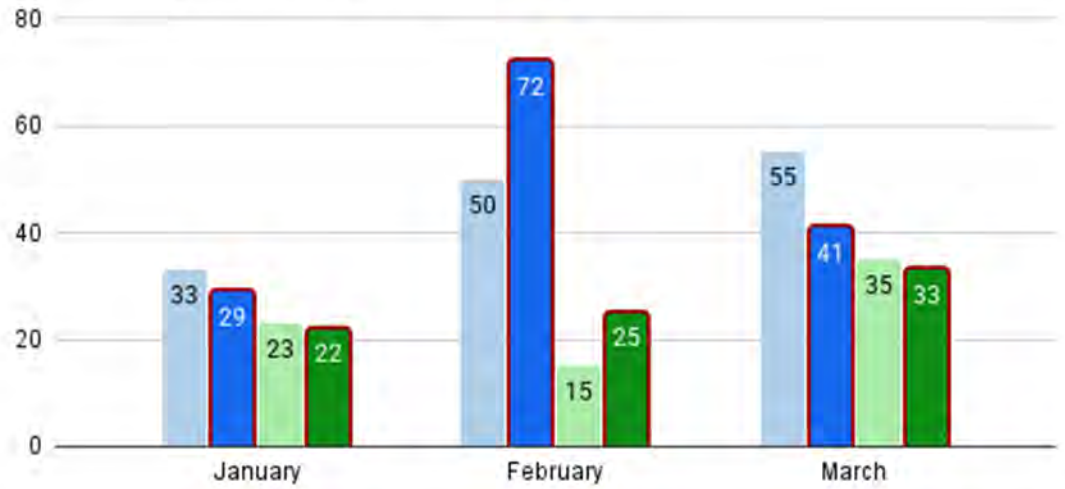
- Welcome and Introductions-
  - Lila Dougherty, Exhibits Project Manager
- Education Updates-
  - Quarterly Numbers Served - (second page graphs)
    - At-the Museum highlights – educational activities at the Bug Event (Feb 7), Astronomy themed sleepover with over 60 students from Community Lab School/Charlottesville, Fossil themed sleepover with over 60 scouts from Raleigh, NC, “Pick Your Poison” educational activity for Starlington event in March, winter weather impacted several of our scheduled schools from visiting
    - Outreach highlights – Waynesboro based Educator, Rosemary Wagoner, worked with Charlottesville schools and homeschool co-ops for programming, continuation of scholarship programs
- Department Updates:
  - Annabelle Sechrist serving as museum representative for the Martinsville City Tree Board. (Tree City)
  - DEPP staff are collaborating with master naturalist chapter to revitalize the front plaza garden area with native plants, with other VMNH sites planned for future work.
  - Submitted FY27 budget requests to Martinsville City (\$10,815) and Henry County (\$35,000).
  - Scheduling programming with libraries state-wide for the 2026 Summer Reading Program “Unearth a Story”. Over 45 Fossil programs have been scheduled with 17 different library systems.
  - Visited two children’s museums, along with several other VMNH staff, to talk with their staff to garner ideas/inspiration for the future Young Explorers Center.
- Exhibit Updates with Ms. Dougherty

**Numbers Served Data on Page 2**

## Education and Public Programs

### Third Quarter Program Delivery Comparison by Month

- 2025 Outreach Programs N=138
- 2026 Outreach Programs N=142
- 2025 At the Museum Programs N=73
- 2026 At the Museum Programs N=80

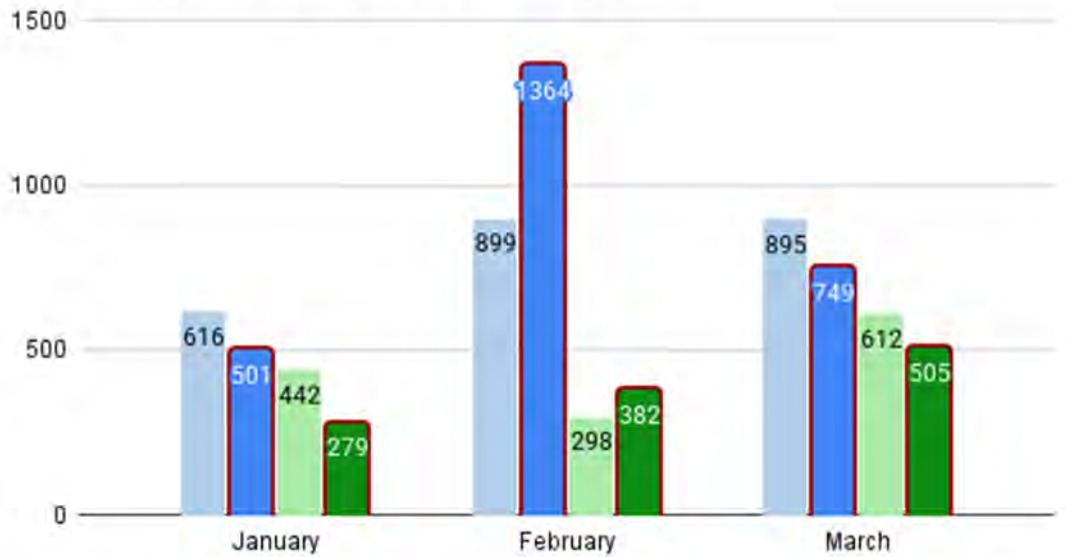


Total Programs 2025 N=211 Total Programs 2026 N=222

## Education and Public Programs

### Third Quarter Individuals Served Comparison by Month

- 2025 Outreach Served N=2410
- 2026 Outreach Served N=2614
- 2025 At the Museum Served N=1352
- 2026 At the Museum Served N=1166



Total Served 2025 N=3762 Total Served 2026 N=3780

## Advancement Report

*FY26 through the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter*

### EARNED REVENUE

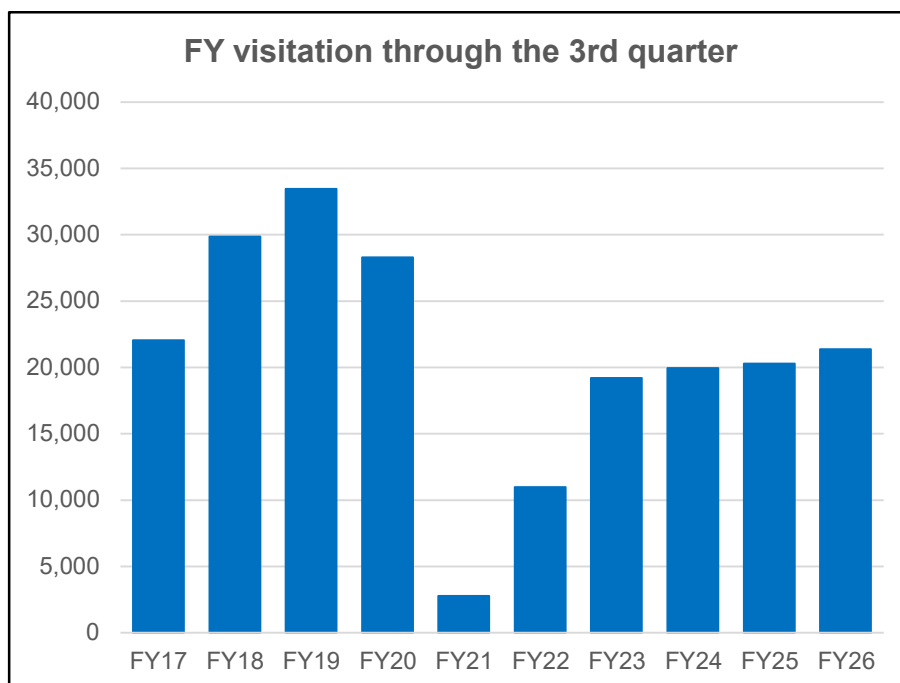
	<i>FY25</i>	<b>FY26</b>
VMNH Foundation	\$370,526	\$5,058,705
VMNH	\$117,238	\$137,499
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$487,764</b>	<b>\$5,196,204</b>

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2. Earned revenue details  
Endowment, Memberships, Partnerships
3. Recent events (3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of FY26)  
Upcoming events (4<sup>th</sup> quarter of FY26)
4. Exhibits  
Marketing  
Museums for All
5. Demographics

### VISITATION

Visitation: 21,364      Admissions: \$78,845      Museum Store: \$53,145



## EARNED REVENUE DETAILS

<u>Museum earned revenue</u>	<u>FY25</u>	<u>FY26</u>
Admissions	\$62,822	\$78,845
Museum Store	\$52,632	\$53,145
Museum Rental	\$1,575	\$4,965
Publications	\$209	\$544
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$117,238</b>	<b>\$137,499</b>

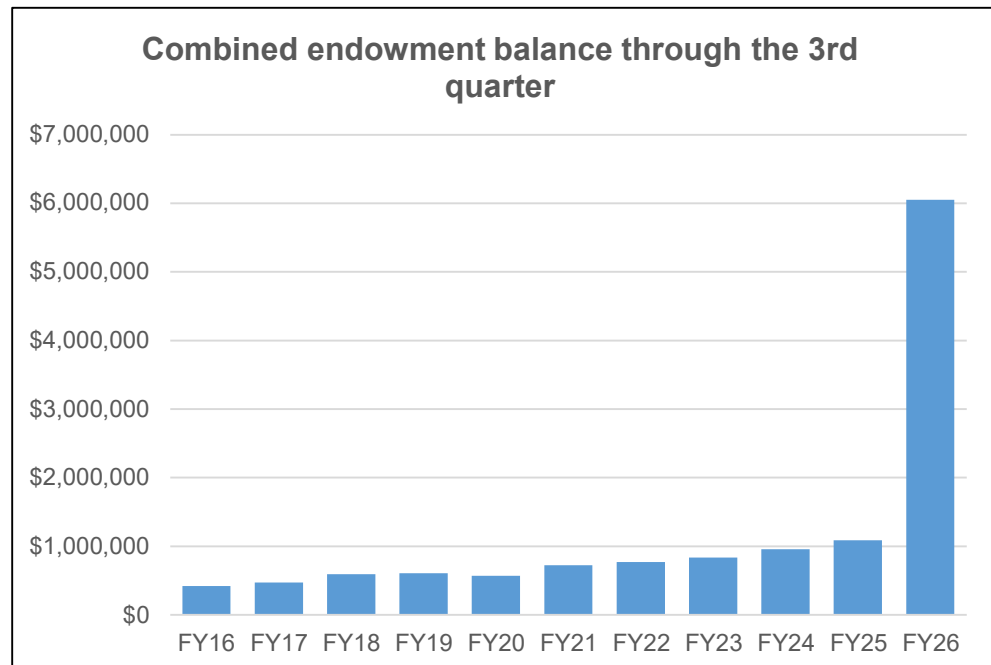
<u>VMNH Foundation revenue</u>	<u>FY25</u>	<u>FY26</u>
Memberships/Corp.		
Partnerships	\$23,386	\$14,009
Annual Fund	\$70,659	\$88,763
Research restricted gifts	\$88,442	\$82,708
Education restricted gifts	\$1,600	\$2,550
Exhibits restricted gifts	\$3,500	\$0
*Other restricted gifts	<u>\$182,939</u>	<u>\$4,870,675</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$370,526</b>	<b>\$5,058,705</b>

\*There were \$22,839 in endowment gifts through the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of FY25 and \$4,809,385 in endowment gifts through the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of FY26, all included in the "Other restricted gifts" total.

## ENDOWMENT, MEMBERSHIPS, PARTNERSHIPS

**Endowment** (balance ending 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter)

FY14	\$38,800
FY15	\$182,220
FY16	\$421,096
FY17	\$470,098
FY18	\$593,732
FY19	\$606,475
FY20	\$566,410
FY21	\$722,012
FY22	\$769,984
FY23	\$834,689
FY24	\$955,860
FY25	\$1,087,270
FY26	\$6,051,611



March 31, 2026 balances:

General Endowment Fund balance:	\$5,598,978
Pete Henika Memorial Fund balance:	\$203,869
Richard Hoffman Fund balance:	\$224,603
Pete Boisseau Research Fund balance:	\$24,161
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$6,051,611</b>

*VMNH Mission: to interpret Virginia's natural heritage within a global context in ways that are relevant to all citizens of the Commonwealth.*

## Memberships

<u>FY21</u>	<u>FY22</u>	<u>FY23</u>	<u>FY24</u>	<u>FY25</u>	<u>FY26</u>
255	449	432	616	615	463

Corporate Partnerships: 43

### **RECENT EVENTS (3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of FY26)**

January 5 – Waynesboro Advocacy Committee meeting, 1 p.m.

January 20 – Wayne Theatre Science Talk: Dr. Tom Benzing

January 21 – VMNH Foundation Executive/Finance Committee, noon to 1 p.m.

February 2 – Waynesboro Advocacy Committee meeting, 1 p.m.

February 6 – BOT meeting (virtual), 3:30 to 5 p.m.

February 7 – Science Saturday: Bug Day at VMNH

February 17 – Wayne Theatre Science Talk: J. Christopher Ludwig and Gary P. Fleming

February 19 – VA 250 event (invitation event to members and donors) - *Clash of Giants: Jefferson vs Buffon and the Battle for America's Natural Legacy*

*Sponsored by:*

**Virginia Tourism Corporation**

February 20 – VMNH Foundation Board meeting

February 20-21 – Sleepover event: Community Lab School, Charlottesville

March 2 – Waynesboro Advocacy Committee meeting, 1 p.m.

March 17 – Wayne Theatre Science Talk: Dr. T'ai H. Roulston

March 21 – *Starlington*, 6:30 to 9:30 p.m.

*Sponsored by:*

**Mark and Rebecca Crabtree**

### **UPCOMING EVENTS (4<sup>th</sup> quarter of FY26)**

April 1 – VMNH Foundation Nominating Committee meeting, noon to 1 p.m.

April 7 – Waynesboro Advocacy Committee meeting, 1 p.m.

April 15 – VMNH Foundation Executive/Finance Committee meeting, noon to 1 p.m.

April 21 – Wayne Theatre Science Talk: Chris Bolgiano

April 24-25 – Reptile Festival

*Sponsored by:*

**Community Foundation Serving Western Virginia  
Boxley**

**Carter Bank**

**Bassett Furniture Industries**

**Brightspeed**

**Renewal by Andersen of Roanoke**

**Hooker Furnishings**

**Virginia Tourism Corporation**

**Community Foundation Serving Western Virginia**

**The Helen S. & Charles G. Patterson Jr. Charitable Foundation Trust**

May 2 – Waynesboro Riverfest, 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

May 4 – Waynesboro Advocacy Committee meeting, 1 p.m.

May 7 – Teacher Appreciation Event

May 15 – VMNH Foundation Board meeting (Distance Learning Classroom)

May 16 – VMNH BOT meeting

June 1 – Waynesboro Advocacy Committee meeting, 1 p.m.

June-August 2026 – VMNH Summer Camps

*Sponsored by:*

**Kiwanis**

**Southwestern Piedmont Chapter – Virginia Master Naturalists**

### EXHIBITS

Now open – *Stories from Skeletons* in the Hall of Ancient Life

Now open to July 26, 2026 – *The Age of Dinosaurs* exhibit

*Sponsored by:*

**Patterson Trust**

**Bassett**

**MHC Tourism**

**Community Foundation Serving Western Virginia**

January through December 2026 – VA 250 exhibit at VMNH

*Sponsored by:*

**Virginia Tourism Corporation**

**O. Randolph and Martha Rollins**

### MARKETING

Virginia Living Magazine

[10 Prim and Proper Ways to Celebrate Bridgerton in Virginia](#)

WHSV-TV (ABC Affiliate - Harrisonburg)

[Waynesboro campus of Virginia Museum of Natural History seeking funding](#)

### MUSEUMS FOR ALL

**MFA as a % of total  
visitation**

	<b>FY22</b>	<b>FY23</b>	<b>FY24</b>	<b>FY25</b>	<b>FY26</b>
1 <sup>st</sup> quarter	4.0%	16.5%	16.2%	21.4%	14.0%
2 <sup>nd</sup> quarter	2.5%	28.6%	20.3%	19.7%	19.1%
3 <sup>rd</sup> quarter	6.0%	9.5%	6.8%	8.1%	1.9%
4 <sup>th</sup> quarter	8.2%	15.8%	17.4%	14.1%	

**DEMOGRAPHICS**

**Where our visitors came from**

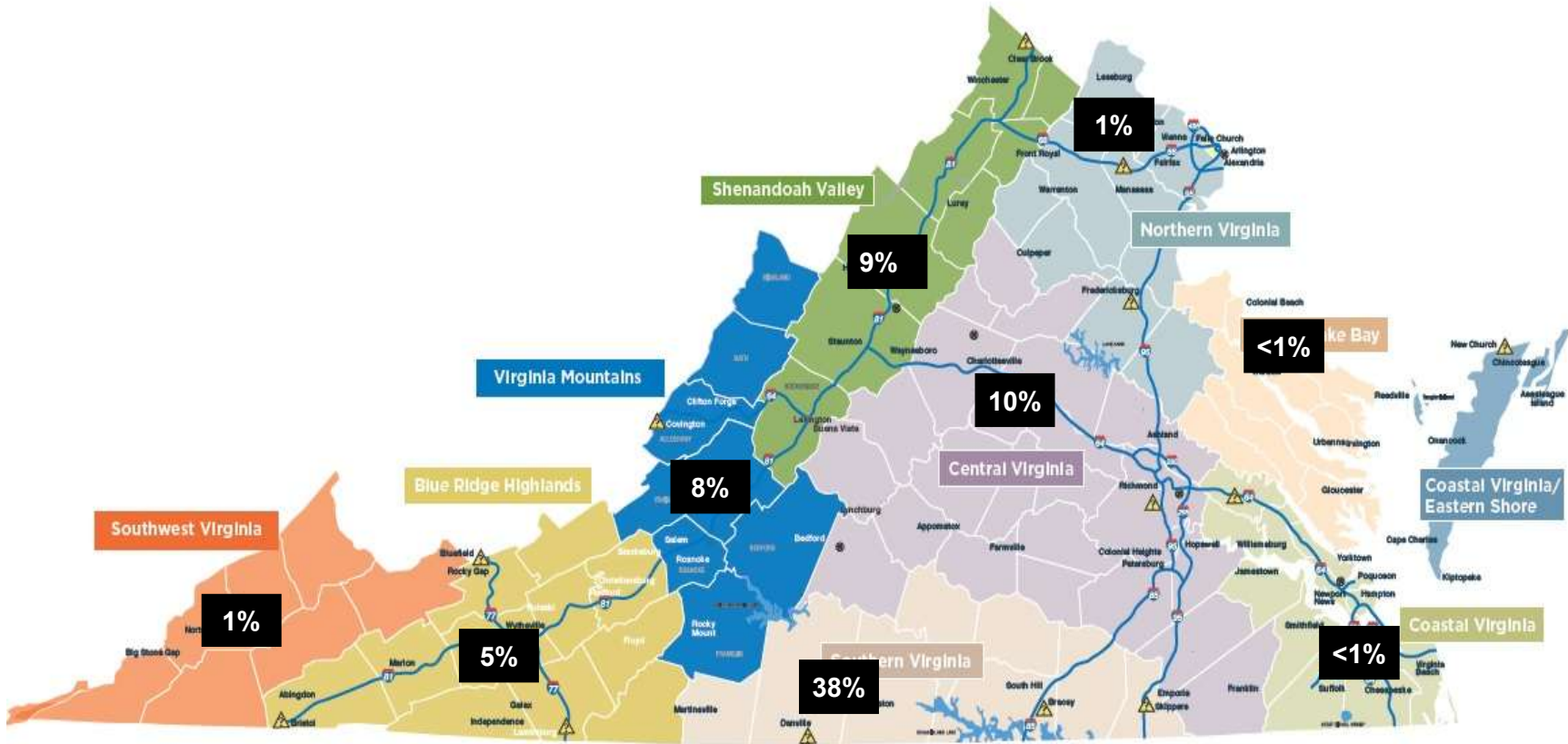
Virginia	73% (see map for breakdown among the 10 Virginia Tourism Regions)
Martinsville/Henry County	30%
Danville/Pittsylvania County	8%
Other Virginia	35%
North Carolina	21%
States other than VA & NC	6%

*\*The 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter saw visitors from 24 states:*

*CT, FL, GA, IL, KS, KY, MA, MD, ME, MI, MO, NC, NH, NJ, NY, OH, PA, SC, TN, TX, UT, VA, VT, WV*

**Who our visitors are**

Adults (ages 19-59):	43%
Seniors (ages 60+):	8%
Children (ages 3-18):	35%
Children under 3:	3%
VMNH Members:	11%
Adults (ages 19-59):	4%
Seniors (ages 60+):	<1%
Children (ages 3-18):	5%
Children under 3:	1%





## *Resolution of Appreciation for Lisa Carter*

*WHEREAS, Ms. Lisa Carter served on the Board of Trustees of the Virginia Museum of Natural History from 2016 - 2026;*

*WHEREAS, Ms. Carter served as Chair of the Board of Trustees from 2022 - 2024, and Vice Chair from 2024 - 2026;*

*WHEREAS, Ms. Carter provided expertise that inspired the initiation of the museum's Diversity Internship program, helped the museum with its green energy program, and assisted with the development of interpretive materials for the South River Preserve;*

*WHEREAS, Ms. Carter expertly provided strategy and advise to the staff and board regarding government relations within the Commonwealth;*

*WHEREAS, Ms. Carter contributed to strategic planning for the museum, ensuring an ambitious agenda ahead;*

*THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of the Virginia Museum of Natural History hereby express its appreciation and admiration for Ms. Lisa Carter's leadership and dedication to the museum's Board, and look forward to her continued connection to the mission of the museum;*

*Done this 16<sup>th</sup> day of May 2026 in Martinsville, Virginia, by a unanimous vote of the Board of Trustees of the Virginia Museum of Natural History.*

---

Dr. Joe Keiper, Executive Director

---

Dr. Melany Clark, Board Chair



## *Resolution of Appreciation for Art Evans*

*WHEREAS, Dr. Arthur Evans served on the Board of Trustees of the Virginia Museum of Natural History from 2016 - 2026;*

*WHEREAS, Dr. Evans served as Chair of the Board's Research & Collections Committee from 2019 - 2026;*

*WHEREAS, Dr. Evans contributed significantly to the entomology collections, and tirelessly promoted the value of scientific collections;*

*WHEREAS, Dr. Evans worked closely with Research and Collections staff to set an ambitious agenda ahead to grow the museum's collections in both size and breadth, ensuring VMNH remains the premier collections-based science institution in the Commonwealth;*

*WHEREAS, Dr. Evans contributed to strategic planning for the museum, including the need for enhanced collections storage capacity;*

*THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of the Virginia Museum of Natural History hereby express its appreciation and admiration for Dr. Evans' leadership and dedication to the museum's Board, and look forward to his continued connection to the mission of the museum;*

*Done this 16<sup>th</sup> day of May 2026 in Martinsville, Virginia, by a unanimous vote of the Board of Trustees of the Virginia Museum of Natural History.*

---

Dr. Joe Keiper, Executive Director

---

Dr. Melany Clark, Board Chair