

Dear Friends,

At WRHS, the health and safety of our staff, volunteers and guests is our number one priority, and it is in this spirit that we share this message. As I'm sure you know, the World Health Organization declared the coronavirus (COVID-19) a global pandemic. This week, the Governor announced confirmed COVID-19 cases in our area and declared a state of emergency in Ohio.

Western Reserve Historical Society (WRHS) is taking every precaution necessary to protect our staff, volunteers, and guests. Effective March 14, 2020, the Western Reserve Historical Society (WRHS) is closing all public venues through April 5, 2020. This change affects public operations at the Cleveland History Center, our main campus and headquarters in University Circle, and Hale Farm & Village, our living history museum in Bath. **Both sites will be closed to the public from March 14 through April 5, 2020.** WRHS administrative functions will continue without interruption for the next two weeks. WRHS expects to resume regular public hours of operation on April 6, 2020*.

*This date may be subject to change.

Decisions like these are not made lightly, and after many thoughtful conversations, WRHS decided that suspending its public access is the most responsible action we can take under the circumstances for our employees, guests, and the community.

Governor Mike DeWine announced in a press conference that he will be issuing an executive order banning large events, and repeatedly asked owners and event organizers to be responsible, and cancel or postpone large events. Officials from the Ohio Department of Health are stating that proactive measures taken today will save lives tomorrow. The facts, as presented by Governor DeWine and health officials, made our decision an easy one.

Please note that WRHS is cancelling its annual Maple Sugar Festival and Pancake Breakfast, a spring tradition at Hale Farm & Village, our living history museum located in Bath, Ohio. The event was scheduled March 14, 15, 21, and 22.

Additionally, WRHS is cancelling or postponing the following events and programs scheduled at the Cleveland History Center in University Circle:

- WRHS Genealogical Committee Workshop "Opening the Door to Family History," 3/14 – Cancelled
- Italian Language Lessons – Postponed; new date TBD
- Home School Field Trip Day 3/18 – Postponed to June 2020, date TBD
- Battle for the Ballot Talk & Tour 3/21 – Postponed; new date TBD
- African American Archives Auxiliary (AAAA) Women's History Panel Discussion 3/28 – TBD
- History On Tap: A CLE Speakeasy 4/4 – Postponed to June 19, 2020

Please visit our website regularly at www.wrhs.org for an updated list of programs and events, including any new cancellations. Follow us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram for additional updates.

While the museums are closed, the public is invited to continue engaging with us online @clestartshere and @halefarm. Guests will find access to our regions stories and your history through our social media platforms. Tune in to @clestartshere on Facebook March 20th for live stream access to Cleveland Cyclewerks new product unveiling.

WRHS will continue to follow all guidelines recommended by the CDC and state and local health agencies, and comply with federal and state mandates. We are communicating with all of our stakeholders. We are collaborating with area museums and cultural institutions and other attractions to update communications and readiness plans. If there is a change in plans, we will keep you appropriately informed.

For the most up-to-date information about the virus, we recommend visiting the CDC website or the World Health Organization website. Please visit the WRHS website at www.wrhs.org for the latest news on our response to COVID-19, including information about upcoming programs and events.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kelly Falcone-Hall". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kelly Falcone-Hall
President & CEO
Western Reserve Historical Society