




Blue Ridge National Heritage Area PRIORITY INITIATIVE WORKSHEET

Initiative Title:	Carl Sandburg Home National Historic Site - Poet/Writer-In-Residence Program
Project Narrative:	<p>Carl Sandburg, nationally renowned poet, biographer, lecturer, newspaper columnist, folksinger, author of American fairytales, and winner of two Pulitzer Prizes, provided broad and enduring 20th century insight into the circumstances, worth and spirit of the American people.</p>  <p>A Midwesterner most of his life, Sandburg and his family moved to a farm located in the historic village of Flat Rock, North Carolina in 1945. The farm, known as Connemara, offered the peace and solitude required for Mr. Sandburg's writing.</p> <p>Sandburg, having already achieved literary fame before relocating to North Carolina, continued to write and lecture and published more than one-third of his works during his 22 years at Connemara. Today the Carl Sandburg Home is a National Historic Site and park, managed by the National Park Service, preserves the Sandburg legacy for future generations.</p> <p>The park was recently designated <u>one of the nation's literary landmarks by the National Endowment for the Arts</u> and is part of the Endowment's <i>Reading in America</i> initiative to revitalize the role of literature in American popular culture and bring the transformative power of literature into the lives of its citizens.</p> <p>The Carl Sandburg Home National Historic Site proposes the establishment of a poet/writer in residence program at the park. This initiative will support and perpetuate the craft of writing in contemporary society and provide educational opportunities for community schools and colleges. It also promotes the sharing of the written and spoken word and creates a connection between a contemporary poet/writer, the park, and the greater community.</p>

A poet/writer in residence would serve as a mentor to writers in the communities of Western North Carolina, reviewing manuscripts and providing criticism and advice about publishing. The aim of this program is to provide an important access point for both budding new writers into the world of writing and publishing. The poet/writer in residence would also provide encouragement, support, and a critical eye to beginning writers who are looking to express their literary voice. More established writers who desire a professional appraisal of their work would also benefit. In addition, on-site poetry and book readings already held at the park continue to be a draw for locals and tourists.

The program, cited in the park's General Management Plan (4-year public planning process completed in 2003), requires the establishment of local and regional partnerships between the park and the arts, culture, and educational community, including public and private schools, community colleges, and four-year universities. Other plans include the park providing on-site housing for the Poet/Writer in Residence for certain months of the year. In addition, park officials are working with Western Carolina University English Department staff to establish a partnership to direct this initiative.

This effort is also fully supported by the park's primary partner, the Friends of Carl Sandburg at Connemara, a volunteer support group for The Carl Sandburg Home National Historic Site. The Friends is an independent, non-profit organization that supports projects and events not fully funded by the National Park Service. One of these events, the annual *Sandburg Celebration of Books and Authors* event held each year brings together more than local, regional and national authors.

A strategic plan is required to identify key elements required to ensure success of the program, identify key partners, establish an operating budget, and outline a funding strategy. Some of the known costs to sustain this project include:

1. Poet/Writer in Residence Salary
2. On-site accommodation
3. Computer
4. Internet and telephone
5. Resource Materials
6. Expenses related to public readings or workshops

Goals:

- Create a connection between a contemporary poet/writer, the park, and the greater community
- Foster an appreciation for the legacy of Carl Sandburg.
- Support and perpetuate the craft of writing in contemporary society.
- Provide educational opportunities for community schools and colleges.
- Provide an opportunity for the community to host, enjoy and learn from first class writers.

Person/Organization Responsible:	Cost to Implement:	Estimated Time to Complete:
Carl Sandburg Home NHS	\$15,000	2- Years

Action Items:	Resources Required:	Who's Responsible:
Develop a strategy to gather partners for planning, identify key elements required to ensure success of the program, establish an operating budget, and outline a funding strategy	\$10,000	Connie Backlund Park Superintendent
Fundraising Effort	\$5,000	

Performance Measures:	Still under development.

Status:	Developmental; conversations with potential partners are taking place and a primary partner to develop the program is being sought.