TRUMAN LIBRARY INSTITUTE MEMBER MAGAZINE

PROFILE

Read our exclusive profile of *The New Yorker's* Calvin Trillin

EVENTS

Honor the legacy of Harry S. Truman at Wild About Harry!

FRIENDS

Our Annual Honor Roll salutes donors and friends



COVER: President Truman addresses the NAACP at the Lincoln Memorial on June 28, 1947. Truman was the first president to address the nation's leading civil rights organization.

Whistle Stop



"Whether discrimination is based on race, or creed, or color, or land of origin, it is utterly contrary to American ideals of democracy."

Henry bluccase

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Donor Profile

JE Dunn Construction is the Title Sponsor of the Truman Library's new exhibit. Learn why the Dunns support Truman's library and legacy.

MESSAGE FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Harry Truman famously said, "The only thing new in the world is the history you do not know." Current events are causing many to reflect on Truman's presidency, character and world-shaping decisions. Truman's relevance to today's world is remarkable. From discussions on health care to civil rights, Korea to Russia, the Middle East to nuclear proliferation, the topics that fill daily headlines and discussions in the hallways of Washington are rooted in Truman's presidency. Truman's life and presidency provide useful context for today's world affairs, as well as inspirational lessons for the leaders of today... and tomorrow.

There is no better place to access these lessons than at the Harry S Truman Library & Museum in Independence. Here visitors learn how Truman responded to some of the greatest tests in our nation's history by building the institutions and alliances to foster peace and freedom in the world. He forged international alliances through the United Nations and NATO, declared in his Truman Doctrine speech that the U.S. would support free people from internal and external threats, created the Marshall Plan to rebuild Western Europe, recognized the state of Israel, and intervened in West Berlin and South Korea to preserve democracy. Truman's policies led to the longest period of peace and prosperity the world has ever enjoyed.

At home, he oversaw the creation of the national security state, reorganized government agencies, proposed a national healthcare program, increased the minimum wage, established the Council of Economic Advisors and set the stage for modern presidents to address civil rights.

President Truman's precedent-setting foreign policy decisions and domestic priorities have influenced presidents, policymakers and military leaders ever since. In a 1965 birthday phone call, President Johnson told Truman, "Everything we are doing today are steps in the direction you set, a journey down a trail you blazed." President Nixon echoed that sentiment, proclaiming that "Our hopes today for a generation of peace rest in large measure on the firm foundations that he laid."

President Clinton once stated that "The need for building on Harry Truman's legacy has never been greater." Those working on behalf of President Truman's legacy strongly agree – sharing Truman's life and legacy with an ever-growing audience is more important now than ever. Our "Annual Donor Issue" celebrates both your commitment to this mission and the impact your generous support makes. Because of your generosity, nearly 43,000 students and educators, 88,863 museum visitors and 9,722 public program attendees had the opportunity to be inspired, enriched and empowered by Truman's life and legacy. Thank you.

Alex Burden

Executive Director | Truman Library Institute



President Clinton once stated that "The need for building on Harry Truman's legacy has never been greater." Those working on behalf of President Truman's legacy strongly agree.



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Truman Library Institute

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Picturing History

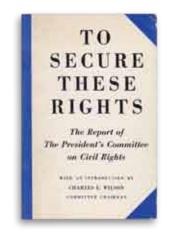


On December 5, 1946, President Truman issued Executive Order 9808, establishing the first presidential committee on civil rights.

The 15-person Committee on Civil Rights included the CEO of General Electric, the first African-American woman to receive a doctorate in economics, the co-founder of the ACLU, religious leaders, scholars and activists. The committee spent nearly a year examining the past, present and future of civil rights in America. On October 29, 1947, they presented their landmark report, *To Secure These Rights*, to Truman (pictured). Based on the committee's findings, Truman urged Congress to pass civil rights legislation. When legislators failed to act, Truman issued Executive Orders 9980 and 9981, integrating the Federal workforce and U.S. Armed Forces.

A LANDMARK REPORT

Truman's copy of *To Secure*These Rights sits on a credenza in his office at the Truman Library. The report includes chapters on the promise of freedom and equality, the status of civil rights, the government's responsibility, and recommendations.



NEWS BRIEFS



Mary Shaw Branton (1920-2016)

We were saddened to learn that Mary Shaw "Shawsie" Branton passed away last June. Shawsie and Margaret Truman Daniel were lifelong friends. The pair produced plays in the Truman home as children, served as honor attendants in each other's weddings and explored Washington, D.C., together during Truman's presidency. A passionate supporter of President Truman's legacy, Shawsie served on the Institute's Board of Directors for 16 years. In 2009, Shawsie and her daughter Page Reed chaired Wild About Harry. Shawsie also worked on behalf of numerous other causes, including Children's TLC and Children's Mercy Hospital. Shawsie's motto - "If there is a need, fill it. It's not what you have, it's what you do." - reminds us all to try to emulate her tireless advocacy. Rest in peace, Shawsie.



Ken Hechler (1914-2016)

The last surviving member of Truman's inner circle passed away late last year. Ken Hechler was Special Assistant to President Truman from 1949 to 1953. Prior to joining the Truman Administration, Hechler served as an Army combat historian during WWII, earning a Bronze star and five battle stars. After working for Truman, Hechler was a best-selling author, professor, Congressman and Secretary of State for West Virginia, and champion of civil rights and the environment. In his memoir, Hechler reflected that "President Truman had a way of making every person working at the White House feel he or she was part of a magnificent effort aimed toward achieving peace in the world and justice at home." For more on Hechler's work with Truman, read his oral history at TrumanLibrary.org.



New Board Chair

The Truman Library Institute is proud to announce the election of Clyde Wendel as chairman of the board of directors. "President Truman's legacy has never been more relevant and important to the nation and the world than it is today," Wendel said. "I am privileged to have the opportunity to support the Truman Library and Museum in my role as chair of the Truman Library Institute." Wendel has served on the Institute's board of directors for a combined eight years. A successful leader in the financial services field with more than 44 years of experience, Wendel most recently served as vice chairman of UMB Bank. Wendel also serves on the boards of the Greater Kansas City Community Foundation and the Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art.

TRU LETTERS

"The White House Decision Center has proven to be the best application for strategic business training I have found. You... exceeded our expectations."

THE R. LEWIS CO., LANSING, MICH. S. LEWIS CO.

Thank you for making Lakeview Middle School's day at the Truman one we will never forget. I learned so much while having a great time.

Before this field trip I never really enjoyed talking about the government and learning about the different roles, but after my White House Decision Center experience, I realized that there is so much more to the government than what I thought there to be. I loved being Secretary of State and learning how my ideas and input were actually needed for the president to make a decision.

Laurel B.

Lakeview Middle School

Thank you for orchestrating such a successful professional development session for us in The White House Decision Center. What a wonderful benefit for our corporate membership!

In the weeks since our November 7, 2016, White House Decision Center event, we have built on our experience to strategically plan our growth, our decisions and our vision. We often refer to our day in your center and the lessons we learned. The event has become a milestone to 'before & after' in the strategic direction of our Oil & Gas business. It is referenced many times each week here at Black & Veatch.

As we direct our Oil & Gas business growth in new technologies and into new regions and markets, I believe this cultural event helped combine our tactical excellence with a new strategic intent. The White House Decision Center has proven to be the best application for strategic business training I have found. You and your staff have not only met but exceeded our expectations.

Please extend my thanks to your staff and your facility for such an outstanding outcome. Job Well Done.

John W. George, VP Black & Veatch Director of Oil & Gas-Americas

Several months ago, I called on behalf of my dad, Herbert A. Bohn. He had lost his challenge coin commemorating the 70th anniversary of the end of World War II and was very upset he couldn't find it. You were gracious enough to send a replacement as well as a cradle to display the coin. My dad's eyes sparkled when I showed him the new coin. At the age of 91, he passed away on May 31. It was fitting that as a WWII vet, he was buried on June 6. The last thing I did was slip that coin into the vest pocket of his suit. I cannot thank you enough for your kindness.

Dennis Bohn

Thank you for setting up a special tour this morning — it was fantastic! Words cannot express the excitement I had walking the halls Mr. Truman himself roamed. I came away even more impressed by the staff and the passion you all have for Truman and history. Mr. Truman would be proud.

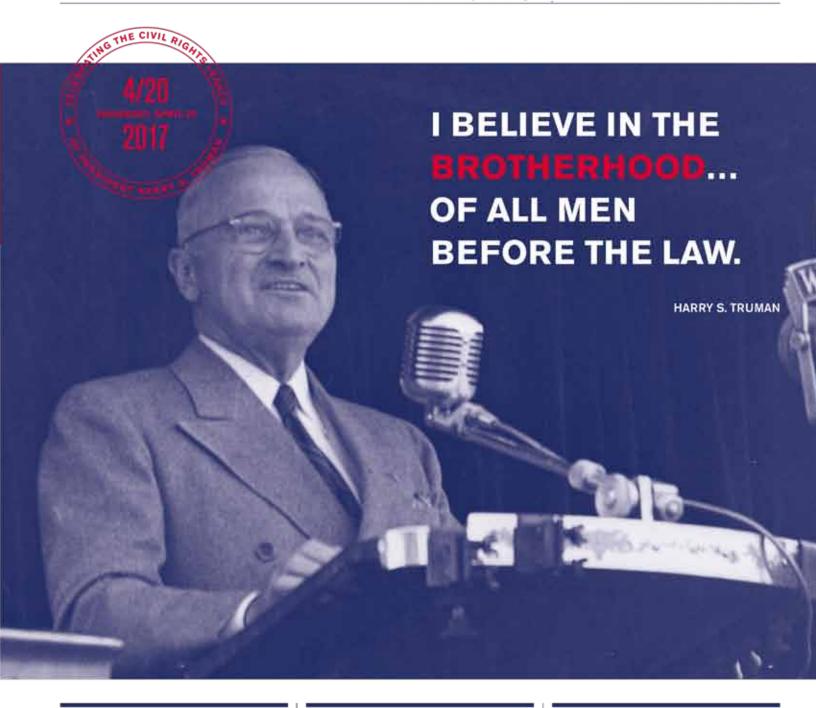
Gary Bertoncin

Thank you for the exhilarating and unique experience I enjoyed last Thursday at the Truman Library and Museum. Since I was 4, I had aspirations to be president after my preschool voted me "most likely to be president." Unfortunately, since then that desire has been growing dim inside of me. I didn't realize how much The White House Decision Center trip with my middle school would mean to me — to have the opportunity to have a realistic view of the presidency and to discover what it takes to fill that role.

All of the activities you prepared for us were extremely interesting and fun. The discussion and decisions made were exhilarating and mentally stimulating. I think it is wonderful that President Truman had the foresight and kindness to [want his presidential library to be a classroom for democracy] so that I could benefit from his experiences and decisions. This was most definitely my favorite field trip of all time.

Sam A., 8th Grader

Lakeview Middle School
Active member of Democracy
(and hopefully future President
of the United States)





18th Annual Fundraising Dinner Benefiting the Legacy and Library of Harry S. Truman

FEATURING

Calvin Trillin: Keynote Speaker Rep. John Lewis: Honored Guest

Rep. James E. Clyburn: Honored Guest

Leo Morton: Honorary Chair

Mary & Alan Atterbury: Event Chairs

TICKETS ON SALE NOW

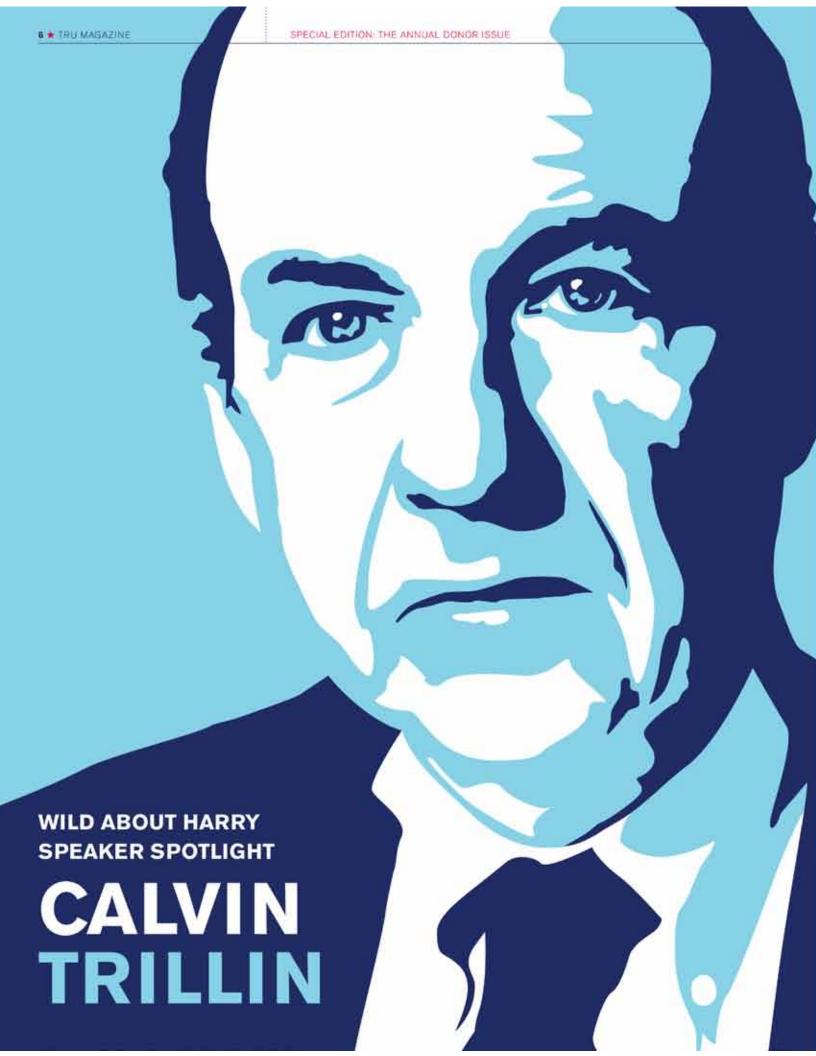
Sponsorship packages offering VIP access start at just \$1,000

RESERVE YOUR SEATS TODAY

TrumanLibraryInstitute.org/Wild

FOR MORE INFORMATION

To learn more, please contact Kim Rausch, director of development, at 816.268.8237 or kim.rausch@nara.gov.



"I actually interviewed Harry Truman when I was in college trying out for the paper... I have a lot of time for Harry Truman. He is the Kansas City president and I am from Kansas City."

CALVIN TRILLIN

Since 1963 when Calvin Trillin first started writing for *The New Yorker*, his pen has consistently delivered crisp commentary and sparkling humor. A central focus for over five decades has always been race and race relations. On April 20, Trillin will discuss these topics, among others, at the Truman Library Institute's *Wild About Harry* annual fundraising dinner.

During a recent rereading of his decades-old reporting on race relations, Calvin Trillin — known for his fierce, yet accessible commentary and humor — said he came to a "not so humorous" realization. "A lot of the articles," he reflected, "could have been written today."

On April 20, Trillin will be the keynote speaker at *Wild About Harry*, the Truman Library Institute's 18th annual fundraising dinner, where he'll share more of his observations about historic figures, minor — yet compelling — contributors and nation-shaping events that became headline news over the past 50 years.

Trillin — a Kansas City native and 1953 Southwest High School graduate — became a staff writer for *The New Yorker* in 1963, covering the civil rights movement. For over 50 years, Trillin has polished his reputation through food-focused essays, as a Thurber Prize-winning humorist and as a poet of satire-laced political verse. Yet some of his most compelling writing has always been, and continues to be, focused on race and race relations.

As Trillin observes in his most recent collection of articles on race and racism from the 1960s to the present, Jackson, 1964:

And Other Dispatches from Fifty Years of Reporting on Race in America, the inequities and resulting heartbreak of the 1960s were never completely resolved. While names have changed, and stories are now scattered throughout the country instead of being focused

primarily in the South, racial tensions — and the stories they spin — remain eerily familiar.

A New York Times review of the collection by Dorothy Butler Gilliam succinctly captures the essential truth of Trillin's collected work, "When essays about race in America, written over a space of five decades, are as relevant today as the earliest one was a half-century ago, we gain new insight into how much real progress this country has — or has not — made."

The book's title essay, *Jackson 1964*, recounts Trillin's coverage of the Mississippi Summer Project, a voter registration drive. Though voter registration was a racially infused issue then, headlines on voter suppression tactics, police shootings and race-based acts of terrorism are as frequent today as they were when Trillin first covered the stories in the 1960s.

Although the people Trillin covered often spoke in anger, and the events he became part of simmered with tension, Trillin consistently sought balance and impartiality in his reporting. He wrote as honestly about men and women who didn't make history as he did about the legendary civil rights leaders we remember today. I found what I really liked was reporting not on celebrities or politicians, but regular people involved in dramatic situations, Trillin said.

One article in the book recounts an airplane conversation between Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and a young white man sitting across the aisle. "I'd like to be loved by everyone," King told him, "but we can't always wait for love." Trillin's remembrance of that simple statement overheard on an airplane reflects his recognition that quiet sentiments are sometimes as searing as those proclaimed from balconies.

Perhaps that has always been Trillin's defining quality. He takes the simple, extracts the meaning, and respectfully shares its significance with readers.

NEW TEMPORARY EXHIBITION

SAVING THE WHITE HOUSE*

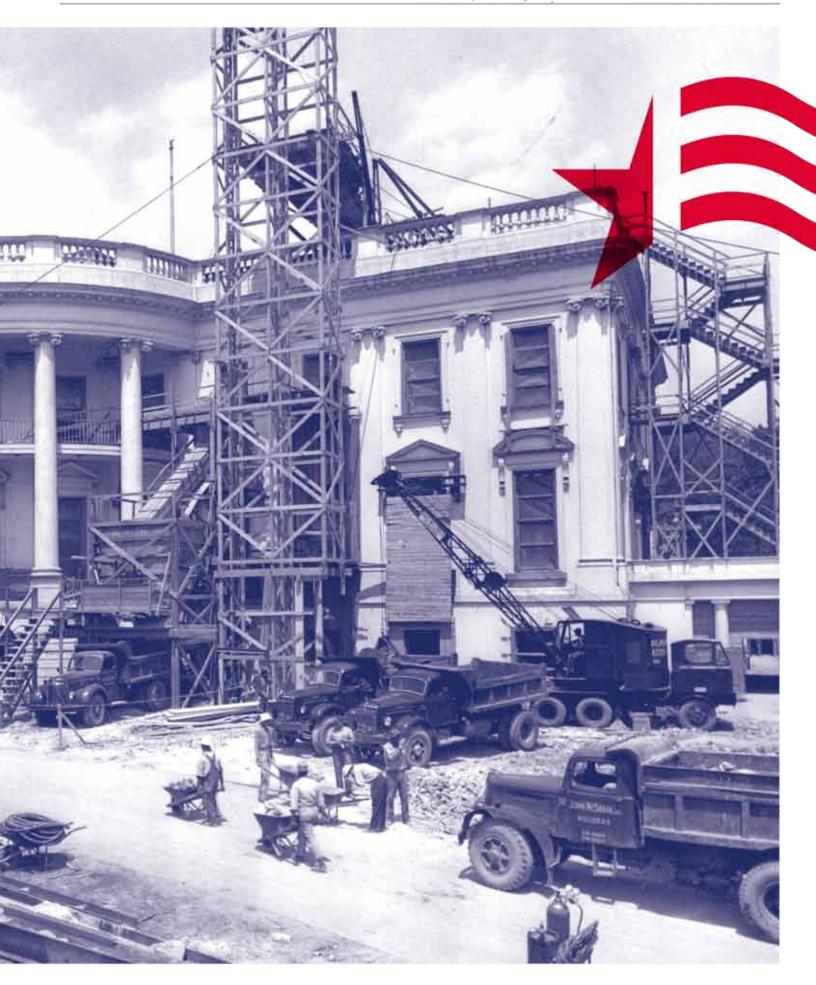
Peel back the curtains on Truman's White House renovation. From now until December 31, the Truman Library hosts a special exhibition that takes visitors inside Truman's extreme home makeover.

We spoke with Robert Klara — who literally wrote the book on Truman's renovation of the White House — about the most historically significant and politically complex home improvement job in U.S. history

TRU: What were the Trumans' initial impressions of the White House?

RK: Bess and Margaret Truman inspected the White House just before moving in. On the main floor, they walked through splendorous public rooms with marble mantles, polished walnut paneling and plush carpets. Upstairs, on the residential floor, the house was a shambles. The Roosevelts had performed no upkeep on the mansion during the 12 years of FDR's presidency. "The White House upstairs is a mess," Margaret wrote in her diary. "I was so depressed when I saw it." What













"A lover of history and architecture, Truman knew that the White House was an irreplaceable part of the country's heritage."

ROBERT KLARA

the Trumans didn't suspect at the time was that dirt and grime were the least of the mansion's troubles.

TRU: What ultimately convinced Truman to renovate the White House?

RK: Popping and creaking sounds, sagging and swaying walls, and paintings that dropped off the walls disturbed the family from the day they moved in. At first, Truman joked that the house was haunted. But in time the disquieting events grew more serious. Chandeliers swayed and threatened to drop onto the heads of guests in the Blue and East Rooms, and a leg of Margaret's piano punched through the rotted floor into the dining room below. But only when structural engineers made clear to Truman what shape the house was in — essentially it had no foundation and was sinking into the sandy

ground — did he understand that only a complete reconstruction would save the mansion.

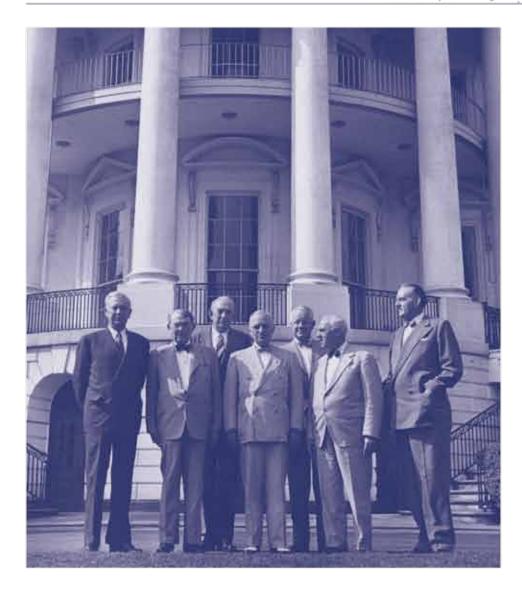
TRU: Truman insisted that the external walls of the White House be preserved. Why was that so important to him?

RK: A lover of history and architecture,
Truman knew that the White House was an
irreplaceable part of the country's heritage.
For this reason, he insisted that the outer
walls of the mansion be preserved, despite
the engineering difficulty of doing so, and
despite the fact that dismantling them or
even building an entirely new structure
(which was, incredibly, favored by some in
Congress) would have been cheaper. "I'll do
anything in my power to keep them from
tearing down the White House," Truman
vowed. His preservation-minded views

were ahead of their time. Though he had no formal training, Truman proudly declared himself an "architectural nut." This fact is much of why the White House is still standing today.

TRU: How involved was Truman in the renovation?

RK: The architects, engineers and workmen might have answered "too involved." Ever since his days in Congress, Truman had taken a hands-on, fastidious approach to every task placed in his hands. The White House renovation was no exception. Not only did Truman handpick two members of the special commission in charge of the renovation, he exerted his influence behind the scenes through White House Architect Lorenzo Winslow. But Truman's involvement ran far



deeper than the administrative level. Truman liked to leave the Oval Office to conduct surprise inspections of the renovation work. He'd ask questions of the laborers, and on at least one occasion climbed up the interior scaffolding on his own.

TRU: Can you give us a sense of the scope of the project?

RK: Numbers tell the tale better than anything. The interior included 25 bedrooms, 16 bathrooms, 69 closets, 412 doors, 29 fireplaces and three elevators. The new interior structure required 910 tons of steel, 500,000 linear feet of electrical wiring, and 1,465 gallons of paint. It took two years, three months and 14 days to complete the renovation, which cost \$5.7 million (a little more than \$58 million today).

TRU: What lasting lessons can we glean from Truman's renovation of the White House?

RK: The White House renovation validates the old maxim that a job worth doing is worth doing well. Truman and his architect Winslow planned for a renovation that paid heed to the smallest aesthetic detail. Yet at the same time. it is also true that utter travesties took place during the renovation. The decision to consign tons of the historic material to the dump resulted from late-breaking pressures of time and cost. But the weeks and dollars saved by cutting corners pale to insignificance today. The loss in terms of heritage is enormous. Had the government men been willing to reach a little deeper into the coffers and delay their gratification, the country would have a more authentic, cogent and historically complete White House than it does today.

"This lecture series will delight members with stories of life inside the nation's most famous residence."

ALEX BURDEN

Lecture Series: LIFE INSIDE THE WHITE HOUSE

March 9, Kate Andersen Brower Peak behind the curtains of the Executive Mansion with stories from her New York Times best-sellers The Residence and First Women.

April 6, Robert Klara

Learn about Truman's renovation of the White House from the critically acclaimed author of The Hidden White House.

May 18, Paul Brandus

White House press corps member and author of Under This Roof shares stories of sex and scandal, war and peace, and triumph and tragedy from inside the White House.

July 12, Clifton Truman Daniel

President Truman's eldest grandson reveals what life in the White House is like for presidential families.

September 14, Pete Souza

The Chief White House Photographer for Presidents Obama and Reagan shares unique stories about photographing the presidents.

Subscribe to Truman eNews for complete details on public programs, members-only events, exhibition openings and more. Visit TrumanLibraryInstitute.org



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TrumanLibraryInstitute.org

Donor Profile



"There are certain presidents that rise to the occasion, and Harry S. Truman certainly did."

BILL DUNN SR.

Bill Dunn Sr. — a veteran of WWII — has been fortunate enough to raise a family and build a successful construction company. He and his family have given back to the community in countless ways. "None of which," Bill says, "would have been possible without Harry S. Truman."

Harry S. Truman took the oath of office in 1945, while thousands of U.S. soldiers were engaged in battles across Western Europe and the Pacific as a part of WWII. That same year, William Henry (Bill) Dunn Sr. prepared to join the fight. Bill reported for duty on the Battleship Wisconsin, and he and his fellow servicemen prepared to deploy to the Pacific. After receiving massive casualty estimates for a proposed land invasion of Japan, President Truman authorized the use of atomic bombs in the war against Japan. Thousands of veterans credit Truman's decision with saving their lives. Bill is one of them, "If Harry Truman hadn't ordered the dropping of the bombs, I don't think I would have lasted."

At 93, Bill Dunn Sr. is the honorary chairman emeritus of Kansas City's JE Dunn Construction Group Inc., a company founded by his father. Bill's son Robert (Bob) works as the senior vice president of community affairs at JE Dunn. He also sits on the board of directors for the Truman Library Institute. JE Dunn serves as Title Sponsor of the Library's temporary exhibition, Saving the White House: Truman's Extreme Makeover.

The exhibition is not the Dunns' first project connected to Truman or the U.S. government. JE Dunn began building military employee housing and manufacturing plants during WWII, a time when many contractors were overcharging the military. The Truman Committee, headed by then-Senator Harry S. Truman, was sent to find and correct problems

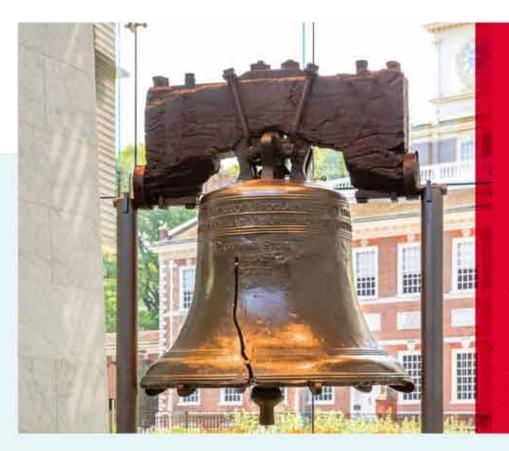
in production. John Ernest (Ernie) Dunn, the founder of JE Dunn, did not believe his company should make a profit from the U.S. government during war time. On their first project proposal for the Quartermaster Depot in Kansas City, the company underbid its competitors by \$250,000. Ernie discovered toward the end of this well-managed project that his company would earn a \$178,000 profit. So instead, he had the Army Corps of Engineers issue a negative change order, which allowed him to give the entire profit back for the war effort. Bill recalls working on the depot construction at Independence and Hardesty Avenues. "We had 120 days to finish a project that would normally take a year," he says. "We finished three days ahead of time."

The Dunns praise Truman for his work in civil rights and note that the issue is of specific importance to their family, "Truman really opened the door for African Americans to play a bigger role in our country," Bob says. "My grandfather and dad were both committed to helping minorities long before the enactment of civil rights laws. Not only providing jobs, but also donating to causes that benefited the black community."

The Dunn Family Foundation was established in 1981. Today, under Bill and Bob's direction, the foundation works to meet community needs. At JE Dunn Construction, they don't just talk about diversity, they live it — hosting a job training program for minority contractors and funding initiatives to help them advance in construction. Bob says, "We realize that tomorrow's workforce must be much more diverse."

When asked why it's important to support the library and honor Truman's legacy, Bob says, "There's a lot to learn from how leaders like Harry Truman dealt with very difficult challenges in our history."

Bill adds, "There are certain presidents that rise to the occasion, and Harry S. Truman certainly did."



FIRST ALERT

Truman Travelers are heading to Philadelphia in Fall 2017

For more information contact Kim Rausch at 816.268.8237 or kim.rausch@nara.gov.

THE BUCK STOPS HERE SOCIETY

Truman Travelers

Thirty-two members of The Buck Stops Here Society traveled to Washington, D.C., last fall as part of the Truman Library Institute's fifth annual Truman Travelers trip.

The five-day, four-night VIP experience began at the CIA Museum, located at CIA Headquarters in McLean, VA. The museum's Deputy Director, Samuel Cooper, obtained special clearance for the Truman group to access the museum, which is closed to the general public, and treated them to a covert museum tour that included exhibits and artifacts that tell the story of the highly-classified agency President Truman created 70 years ago.

A private tour of the White House was the highlight of the trip for many. Society members enjoyed their time with White House Curator Bill Allman (who shared insights and historical knowledge about our nation's most famous residence), as well as a chance meeting with President Obama's Chief of Staff, It was TRU-ly an unforgettable afternoon!

Additional stops included private tours of the U.S. Capitol Building, Arlington National Cemetery, Woodrow Wilson's home and Lincoln's Summer Cottage.

Truman Travelers also enjoyed a behind-thescenes tour, private reception and dinner at both George Washington's Mount Vernon and the National Archives. The Archivist of the United States, David Ferriero, graciously hosted the group on its final night in town and surprised everyone with a private vault tour, including a glimpse at Truman's Executive Orders 9980 and 9981.

Unique Truman Travel experiences like this one are a benefit offered exclusively to members of The Buck Stops Here Society. To inquire about Society membership or upcoming travel plans, please contact Kim Rausch at 816.268.8237 or kim.rausch@nara.gov.

MEMBERS, DONORS AND FRIENDS

We salute all who make our mission possible. Thank you for your support as we work on behalf of a great president and a treasured institution.

Gifts received between October 1, 2015 and September 30, 2016

THE BUCK STOPS HERE SOCIETY ★ (Premier Membership Society)

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YEAR IN REVIEW

Our Vision: People are inspired, enriched and empowered through the many resources of the Harry S. Truman Library and Museum.

Our Mission: To bring the life and legacy of Harry S. Truman to bear on current and future generations through understanding of history, the presidency, domestic and foreign policy, and citizenship.

2016 HIGHLIGHTS *



BEST-EVER REVENUE

generated from our three primary fundraising channels



HIGHEST VISITATION

for the museum in the past 8 years



LARGEST ATTENDANCE

at our total list of public programs



HIGHEST PARTICIPATION

of students/adults in The WHDC & in all education programs

NEW DONORS

283 Donors - Gave \$56,648

TRUMAN LEGACY SOCIETY

6 New Members - \$1,077,00 in new planned gifts

MEMBERS

261 New Members - Up 9.9%

VISITORS

88,863 Total Visitors - Up 13%

FACEBOOK FANS

Up 159%

WEBSITE

Visitors - Up 18% Sessions - Up 21%

PROGRAM ATTENDANCE

9,722 Attendees - Up 12.5%

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"This Library will belong to the people of the United States... The papers of the Presidents are among the most valuable sources of material for history. They ought to be preserved, and they ought to be used."

HARRY S. TRUMAN





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honors every planned gift donor with membership in the Truman Legacy Society.

The Truman Legacy Society recognizes, honors and involves 43 generous individuals who have bequeathed or pledged approximately \$10 million to benefit President Truman's library and legacy. In addition to helping the Truman Library Institute fulfill its mission, Legacy Society members become closely connected to the Truman Library in meaningful ways — benefits include invitations to special events, private tours, travel opportunities and more. For additional information about the Truman Legacy Society and various planned giving options, please contact Kim Rausch 816.268.8237.

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"This was a wakeup call — this election for the press, among others."

JANE MAYER









TRU EVENT

Bennett Forum

Presidential Politics and the Future of America's Democracy

The Howard and Virginia Bennett Forum on the Presidency provides rare opportunities to learn about critical current issues with some of America's most powerful thought and political leaders.

On November 12, Friends of the Truman Library Institute got an insider's look at "Presidential Politics and the Future of America's Democracy."

Douglas Brinkley, noted presidential historian; Jane Mayer, staff writer for *The New Yorker* and author of *Dark Money*; and David Von Drehle, TIME editor-at-large, engaged in a lively discussion about the 2016 presidential election and what to expect from a Trump presidency.

Offered free to Truman Library Institute members, the 10th annual Bennett Forum attracted 889 attendees.

A WORD FROM HARRY

February 2, 1948

Special Message to the Congress on Civil Rights

This Nation was founded by men and women who sought these shores that they might enjoy greater freedom and greater opportunity than they had known before. The founders... proclaimed to the world the American belief that all men are created equal, and that governments are instituted to secure the inalienable rights with which all men are endowed. In the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States, they eloquently expressed the aspirations of all mankind for equality and freedom....

We shall not... finally achieve the ideals for which this Nation was founded so long as any American suffers discrimination as a result of his race, or religion, or color, or the land of origin of his forefathers.

Unfortunately, there still are examples — flagrant examples — of discrimination which are utterly contrary to our ideals.... We cannot be satisfied until all our people have equal opportunities for jobs, for homes, for education, for health, and for political expression, and until all our people have equal protection under the law.... The Federal Government has a clear duty to see that Constitutional guarantees of individual liberties and of equal protection under the laws are not denied or abridged anywhere in our Union....

We know that our democracy is not perfect. But we do know that it offers freer, happier life to our people than any totalitarian nation has ever offered.

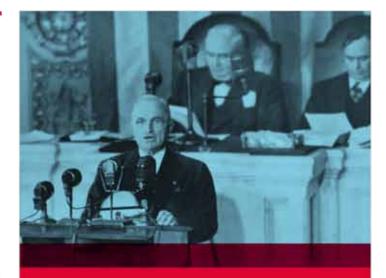
If we wish to inspire the peoples of the world whose freedom is in jeopardy, if we wish to restore hope to those who have already lost their civil liberties, if we wish to fulfill the promise that is ours, we must correct the remaining imperfections in our practice of democracy.

We know the way. We need only the will.

Truman's civil rights vision inspired others. At the 2015 Bennett Forum, Bill Moyers credited Truman with motivating Johnson to address civil rights. "It's our unfinished business," Moyers remembered Johnson saying at the beginning of his presidency. Although it was Johnson's hand that signed the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Moyers asserted, "Truman's hand steadied his."

Johnson visited Truman in Missouri 14 times between 1957 and 1968, including six visits to the Truman Library.





TRUism # 43

"No citizen of this great country ought to be discriminated against because of his race, religion, or national origin. That is the essence of the American ideal."

HARRY S. TRUMAN



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