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Smithsonian Traveling Exhibition Highlighting Changing Landscape of Rural America is Coming to Paonia, Colorado

[GREENWOOD VILLAGE, CO] The Blue Sage Center for the Arts in Paonia is the only venue on the Western Slope of Colorado to host "Crossroads: Change in Rural America," a Smithsonian Museum on Main Street (MoMS) exhibit opens June 18, 2024, and will be on view there through July 20, 2024 at Blue Sage Center for the Arts, 228 Grand Ave, in downtown Paonia. The Blue Sage is open Tuesday through Saturday from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The Smithsonian traveling exhibit, "Crossroads," explores the evolving landscape of rural America. From sea to shining sea, most of the United States landscape today remains rural, with only 3.5% of the landmass considered urban. Yet, since 1900, the percentage of Americans living in rural areas dropped from 60% to 17%. The exhibition looks at that remarkable societal change and how rural Americans have responded.

Americans have relied on rural crossroads for generations! These places where people gather to exchange goods, services and culture, and to engage in political and community discussions are undoubtedly an important part of our cultural fabric. Despite the massive economic and demographic impacts brought on by these changes, America's small towns continue to creatively focus on new opportunities for growth and development.

"Crossroads" allows us all to reflect on Paonia's history, present and future, and we are so excited to explore what the future may hold for our community," says Blue Sage Director Ali Lightfoot about the exhibit. "We want to have conversations about what makes our community unique and explore what we have in common with other rural communities around the country. We hope you can make it out to see the Smithsonian Exhibition and attend some of our free public events!" A series of public programs and facilitated conversations will also complement the Smithsonian exhibition, and all are free events with donations welcome. Planned events include:

Friday, June 21st, 5-7pm

Smithsonian Opening Reception: Free food & free music from The Ordinary Two

Friday, June 28th, 5-7pm

Sage Alley Free Music with David Starr

Friday, July 5th, 5-7pm
Sage Alley Free Music with David McClellan

Saturday, July 6th, 7-9pm
Concert Series at Azura Cellars: Hazel Miller & The Collective

Friday, July 12th, 5-7pm
Sage Alley Free Music with George Weber, Lynn Pulford & Randal Utterback

Saturday, July 13th, 4-6pm
Free Film Screening & Community Conversation: The Five States of Colorado

Friday, July 19th, 5-7pm
Sage Alley Free Music with Ellen Stapenhorst

The exhibition is part of the Museum on Main Street, a unique collaboration between the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service (SITES), state humanities councils across the nation, and local host institutions. To learn more about "Crossroads" and other Museum on Main Street exhibitions, visit www.museumonmainstreet.org.

Support for Museum on Main Street has been provided by the U.S. Congress, Colorado Humanities, and the National Endowment for the Humanities.

To find out more about Blue Sage events or the local showing of this exhibit, contact the Blue Sage at 970-527-7243. For information about other tour locations or background on the exhibit, contact Jennifer Macias, History Programs Coordinator, at jennifer@coloradohumanities.org or 303 894 7951 x17.

To learn more about the exhibit, see video on Smithsonian website:

<https://www.sites.si.edu/s/topic/OTO36000000aR1sGAE/crossroads-change-in-rural-america>

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