

SHAKER MUSEUM | MOUNT LEBANON

PO Box 630
New Lebanon, NY
12125 518-794-9100
Contact: Anna Win, ext. 223, programs@shakerml.org
(May 7, 2019)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Shaker Museum Annual Benefit Gala to Honor Local Community Builders Brenda Adams, Ralph Gardner, Jr., and Sarah Steadman

(NEW LEBANON, NY) May 7, 2019 – At its 2019 Annual Benefit Gala, Shaker Museum | Mount Lebanon will honor three local individuals who are building community.

Brenda Adams, Ralph Gardner, Jr., and Sarah Steadman are each working to improve the lives of their fellow citizens in Columbia County. The benefit, which will be held on the grounds of the historic Mount Lebanon site in New Lebanon, NY on the evening of August 17 is the organization's largest fundraising event of the year. A Gala Committee, which is composed of Bobby Beard, Paul Cassidy, Rae Gilson, Chad Lindberg and Margaret Sullivan of Taconic Engineering, Kathy Weiser, and Suzanne Werner, is united in encouraging others to attend what promises to be a magical evening. Invitations will be mailed in June, but interested supporters can make a donation now in order to join the Benefit Committee and ensure their seating at the event.



The 2019 Annual Benefit Gala will be held at the Great Stone Barn

Upon making the Board's announcement, Board Chair Paul Cassidy stated, "Shaker Museum | Mount Lebanon embraces core Shaker values: community, inclusion, conviction, equality, and integrity. At this year's annual benefit gala, we've chosen to celebrate community and honor three people in Columbia County who are building community and giving back to their fellow human beings: Brenda Adams for her leadership of Columbia County Habitat for Humanity in making safe, affordable housing

available; Ralph Gardner, Jr. for his thoughtful weekly pieces on WAMC that celebrate the many facets of our regional community; and Sarah Steadman, who has quietly brought together poets, writers, artists, and musicians on Mount Lebanon in the spirit of community, art, and social good."

After a twenty-year career in marketing and sales in New York City, Brenda Adams moved to Canaan, New York with her young family. She volunteered for Mount Lebanon | Shaker Village, delivered Meals on Wheels, and chaired the Canaan Planning Board. Additionally, Adams served as the president of Tannery Pond Concerts and as vice-president of both the Columbia Land Conservancy and New Lebanon Library Boards. Currently, she serves as the Executive Director of Columbia County Habitat for Humanity and Town Board Member of the Town of Canaan.

Ralph Gardner, Jr. is a writer whose work has appeared in the *New York Times*, *New York Magazine*, and the *New Yorker*, among other publications. Gardner also wrote 1,300 articles over seven years for the *Wall Street Journal's* daily Urban Gardner Column. Outside of writing, he has also been working as a commentator for WAMC, Northeast Public Radio. He divides his time between New York City and his home in Ghent, New York, where his family has lived since 1948.

Sarah Steadman grew up in New Lebanon, where she is currently directing the Mount Lebanon Residency, a community of artists, researchers, and farmers dedicated to supporting the arts in New Lebanon. Steadman is a co-owner and manager of Abode Farm CSA and a co-founder of Project Sprout. Devoted to combining her passion for nature, social justice, and the arts, she has worked in the arts for *The Brooklyn Rail* and Home School. Steadman practices poetry; in her works, she has examined personal and collective painful histories, with feminism and queer narratives in the forefront.

Shaker Museum | Mount Lebanon stewards the historic site in New Lebanon, New York, which is open year-round for hiking and self-guided tours, and offers tours, exhibitions, and public programs seasonally. The museum also has a campus in Old Chatham, New York, open year-round by appointment, where the administrative offices, collections, library, and archives are housed. The museum's collection of Shaker items is the most comprehensive collection of its kind in the world. Please visit shakerml.org for more information, to explore the collection online, and to find out about programming in 2019.