

---

## 2018 Silver Light Award Ken Weissman

AMIA's Silver Light Award recognizes outstanding career achievement in moving image archiving. It recognizes substantial contributions to the field over an extended period, leadership in the field, preservation and restoration projects, innovations that advance the cause of preservation in archives and archival projects.

### **KEN WEISSMAN**

Ken's first experience with motion pictures came while he was in the Air Force where he was a Continuous Photo-Processing Specialist. During his time in the military he shot and developed film of satellite launched and developed film shot by spy satellites.

After four years in the Air Force and now in full command of motion picture film grading, printing, and processing skills, he confidently went back to his native Ohio. He applied for a position as a technician at the Library's newly opened film lab at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton and after an excruciatingly long delay he was hired and began his Library of Congress career in 1981. By 1990 he was named lab supervisor.

In Ken's work he values film preservation as both a workflow and cultural imperative. That perspective was the one he brought to the lab, where he was the person ultimately responsible for the nexus between the Library, the Safety Office, the Architect of the Capitol, and the Town of Culpeper. He was integral in designing the lab at the National Audiovisual Conservation Center in Culpeper and integral in moving the Library of Congress nitrate film collection to the Packard Campus.



Ken directed the Library's restoration of such films as *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington* (Frank Capra, 1939), *The Maltese Falcon* (John Huston, 1941), *Where are My Children?* (Lois Weber, 1916), *The Blue Eagle* (John Ford, 1926), *Big Fella* (J. Elder Wills, 1937), and, most recently, a restoration of Paul Robeson's *The Emperor Jones* (Dudley Murphy, 1933) under a grant from the US National Film Preservation Foundation.

For all his accomplishments—his crucial role in designing the Packard Campus film lab, his tireless efforts in managing the transition from analog to digital preservation—it's Ken's attitude of service that makes him such a deserving recipient of the Silver Light Award.

Always willing to share his knowledge, throughout his professional life Ken mentored literally hundreds of young archivists. At his “Coffee With Ken” he shared his perspective on preservation in general and challenged the students to think about a variety of career paths in an ever-changing job market.

Ken has provided his time and his expertise in film storage and collections moves to aid the Albanian Cinema Project's initiative to relocate the Albanian Film Archive collections and has spearheaded the Project's second feature film restoration. He is one of the founding members of AMIA, has served on its Board and as a Committee chair.