

NEWS

APPALACHIAN CENTER
BEREA COLLEGE

LETTER

Gordon B. McKinney • Thomas Parrish, Co-Editors

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Winter 1996

Looking Forward

March 29-31: 19th annual Appalachian Studies Conference, Unicoi State Park, Ga. You can get details from Curtis W. Wood, Department of History, Western Carolina University, Cullowhee, N.C. 28723; phone 704/227-7243.

March 31-April 6: Basketry, blacksmithing, clay ("using plaster to create pottery"), Danish embroidery, quilting ("wild goose chase"), woodturning—take your pick from these and other crafts offerings at the John C. Campbell Folk School, Route 1, Box 14A, Brasstown, N.C. 28902-9603; phone 800/FOLK SCH. Sessions during succeeding weeks will take up everything from Nantucket Lightship basketry to papermaking to playing the soprano recorder.

April 16-17: Spring Assembly, Coalition for Appalachian Ministry; Parchment Valley, Ripley, W.Va. The theme is "Unleashing the Power of the Laity." Details from the coalition at P.O. Box 10208, Knoxville, Tenn. 37939-0208; phone Judy Barker at 423/584-6133.

April 18-20: "Intersections in Vernacular Music," a conference celebrating the 10th anniversary of the Center for Popular Music at Middle Tennessee State University. Papers will explore "convergences" of folk and popular cultures, regional and other traditions, community and mass-mediated "musics" (i.e., kinds of music), etc.; the eminent Bill C. Malone will keynote the whole affair. For more information write to Paul F. Wells, Director, Center for Popular Music, Box 41, MTSU, Murfreesboro, Tenn. 37132.

April 21-26: Spring Dulcimer Week, sponsored by the Augusta Heritage Center of Davis & Elkins College, 100 Campus Drive, Elkins, W.Va. 26241; phone 304/637-1209.

May 7: Fifth annual Kinship Dinner, Cincinnati. An important occasion on which a community leader will receive the Urban Appalachian Council Kinship Award, emblematic of a life marked by such values as "loyalty, generosity, social equality, responsibility and modesty." Previous winners were Stuart Faber, Ernie Mynatt, Rt. Rev. William Black and Louise Spiegel. The phone number of the sponsoring council is 513/251-0202.

May 17-19: Spring fair, Kentucky Guild of Artists and Craftsmen, Indian Fort Theater, Berea, Ky.; phone 606/986-3192.

May 24-26: Ole Time Fiddlers and Bluegrass Festival, Fiddler's Grove Campground, Union Grove, N.C.; band and individual competition, workshops, guest performers. Contact Harper A. Van Hoy, P.O. Box 11, Union Grove, N.C. 28689; phone 704/539-4417.

June 2-8: Fifth annual Blue Ridge Old-Time Music Week;
to page 2

ARC: They Cut Off Their Project, But...

Last summer the Appalachian Regional Commission, which is not as well off as it used to be (though, miraculously, it's still breathing), reluctantly ceased its financial support of the North Georgia Community Action's School Outreach Program. This project, which began in 1990 with a \$63,000 grant from the ARC, set out to identify young children whose family life put them at risk of failing in school. The underlying idea was that if outreach workers could help the parents support their children's education, these children might beat the educational odds against them.

Some of the efforts were directly related to education, such as showing parents the importance of reading to children. Others concerned some of the practical aspects of family life, such as buying shampoo for a family lacking in the sanitation area. Since its beginning the program has reached more than 400 families in its six-county area of northwest Georgia.

Attendance improved and grades went up, and further funds came from the ARC. The best news, perhaps, is that
to page 3

RON ELLER: Election-year politics...see page 3



LOOKING from page 1

Mars Hill College. Fiddle, banjo, dulcimer, guitar, ballad singing and story telling—and not just for experts. The program is “beginner friendly,” with entry level classes for you even if you’ve never touched an instrument. Contact the Center for Continuing Education, Mars Hill College, Mars Hill, N.C. 28754; phone 800/582-3047 or 704/689-1166.

June 4-6: Second Old-Time Music and Radio Conference, Andy Griffith Playhouse, Mt. Airy, N.C., sponsored by the Old-Time Music Group, Inc., P.O. Box 3014, Elkins, W.Va. 26241. The keynoter will be Alan Jabbour, director of the American Folklife Center of the Library of Congress. If you want to stick around for a couple of days more, you can attend the 24th annual Mt. Airy Fiddlers Convention at Veterans’ Park in Mt. Airy.

June 9-15: 19th annual Appalachian Family Folk Week, Hindman Settlement School, Forks of Troublesome Creek, Hindman, Ky. 41822. It’s a full-time immersion in music, dance and other aspects of mountain culture. For more information by phone, call 606/785-5475.

June 9-29: New Opportunity School for Women, Berea College. This free three-week chance to explore educational and career possibilities (for women 30-55) is taking applications for the summer session; *the deadline for applications is April 19*. Contact Jane Stephenson, New Opportunity School for Women, College P.O. Box 2276, Berea, Ky. 40404; phone 606/986-9341, ext. 6676.

June 10-28: Berea College Appalachian Center summer seminar: “Appalachian Politics and the Election of 1996.” (See separate story.)

June 23-29: 20th annual Appalachian Celebration, Morehead State University, Morehead, Ky.; featuring professional-development opportunities for teachers and a June 29 craft show with some 100 exhibitors. To find out more, phone 606/783-2077.

July 7-12: Cajun/Creole Week at Augusta; crafts as well as music; Augusta Heritage Center, Davis & Elkins Col-

lege, 100 Campus Drive, Elkins, W.Va. 26241-3996; phone 304/637-1209. In the following four weeks, blues and swing, Irish music, Bluegrass and dance and old-time music will be featured.

July 7-13: Celtic Week at Warren Wilson College; the staff will explore Irish, Scottish and other Celtic traditions in the realms of fiddle, harp, guitar, tinwhistle and other instruments. More information from the Swannanoa Gathering, Warren Wilson College, P.O. Box 9000, Asheville, N.C. 28815-9000.

July 12-14: Uncle Dave Macon Days, Cannonsburgh Pioneer Village, Murfreesboro, Tenn. Named after the first person to be featured on the Grand Ole Opry as an individual performer, this jamboree is the home of three national championships—old-time banjo, old-time buckdancing and old-time clogging. There’s lots more, too. Get in touch with Wendy S. Bryant, P.O. Box 2995, Murfreesboro, Tenn. 37133-1995; phone 615/896-3799.

July 14-20: Right on the heels of Celtic Week at Warren Wilson comes a pair of programs, Dulcimer Week and Dance Week; other musical weeks follow.

August 9-11: Augusta Festival at Elkins City Park; concerts, a juried craft fair, activities for children, dancing, food, storytelling and just about anything else imaginable; see contact information above.

August 24: Union Grove Music Fest, a one-day affair at Union Grove, N.C.; see May 24-26 listing for contact.

September 1: Deadline for papers for the 1997 annual conference of the Sonneck Society for American Music, which will be held in Seattle. Though papers and performances will involve all aspects of North American/Caribbean music, the sponsors invite prospective participants to give thought to the conference’s host area, the Pacific Northwest. If you intend to submit a proposal, the society encourages you to do it as early as possible. All materials (written or cassette) should go to Rae Linda Brown, University of California—Irvine, School of the Arts—Music, Irvine, Calif. 92717.

Letter

TO THE EDITORS:

Just a word to say I thought your article “Where the Jobs Are” [Fall 1995] was exactly on target. I wonder what role Berea College sees for itself in tackling that vital problem in addition to “just being a college.”

MARY CORSI KELLEY
Ann Arbor, Mich.

Among the points made in the article referred to was that in some parts of Kentucky (and, by extension, other Appalachian states) numerous jobs are going unfilled, while in the mountain areas many people are jobless.

The reader asks an important question. Berea has always been committed to having an impact beyond its primary objective of offering a traditional education. Current outreach programs provide training for community groups and individuals who are seeking wider choices and the chance for economic and personal growth.—EDITORS

All the Way With the Blue and Gray

Maybe it doesn’t have anything special to do with Appalachia, but we have to tell you that the University of Oklahoma has put together a summer course that’s a pure Civil War buff’s dream. The focus is on the campaigns in Northern Virginia, Maryland and Pennsylvania, and every day from June 17 to June 29 those who take the course, which is called (provocatively or puzzlingly) “The Legacy of Classical Liberty in America,” will visit a major battlefield of the war, from Manassas to Appomattox, including, to be sure, Chancellorsville and Gettysburg.

Most interestingly, there are no prerequisites for the course. Further, say the sponsors, “no prior knowledge of American history is needed.” No knowledge at all? Well, that’s what they say, anyway. As long as you’re eager to learn and willing to walk, it seems, you’re in, even if you

to page 3



POLITICS, MOUNTAIN STYLE: Novelist/historian Wilma Dykeman and political activist Mike Mullins will help analyze the Appalachian paradox.

Election-Year Special

For well over a century, Appalachian public figures from Tennessee's Andrew Johnson to West Virginia's Robert Byrd have played a leading part in American national political life. At the local level, however, the light hasn't always shown quite as bright. Through the years, town,

county and state politics in the mountains has produced a great many colorful stories but few concrete accomplishments; officeholders have tended to devote much of their attention to their own interests and concerns and often to betray the public trust.

"This seeming paradox between the failure of local politics and the success of national leaders," says Gordon McKinney, director of the Berea College Appalachian Center, "suggests that there is much more to Appalachian politics than is immediately apparent."

ALL THE WAY *from page 2*

don't know your Lee from your Longstreet.

The course is led by J. Rufus Fears, OU professor of classics, who has led many trips to historical sites in the United States and Europe. The cost is \$920 for undergraduates, \$980 for those on the graduate level. If you want to follow up on the idea, call 800/522-0772, ext. 5101.

To explore the question, the Appalachian Center is offering an election-year special titled "Appalachian Politics and the Election of 1996." This summer course, which will be held at Berea June 10-28, will be the 24th installment of a series that began in 1973, focusing on Appalachian history and culture with the primary aim of helping teachers create courses in Appalachian studies. Through the years these now-famous courses have played an important part in the growth of Appalachian cultural self-awareness, as the teachers have taken what they've learned back to their home schools and passed it on. In something of a switch, the 1995 course concentrated on a single area, the varied ethnic heritage of the mountains.

ARC: THEY CUT *from page 1*

the program proved so effective that when the ARC's funding disappeared, the project didn't disappear along with it. The state and local school boards in four of the counties have picked up the tab.

Actually, the action cutting off the Georgia project is something of a paradoxical move for the ARC, which recently announced a new strategic plan that emphasizes education, health care and entrepreneurship instead of the traditional roads, sewer projects and other infrastructure components. "These are times," says Michael R. Wenger, the states' representative to the commission, "when human resources projects, which tend to cost less, give you more bang for your buck."

Since one of the new goals is to ensure that all students arrive at school ready to learn, maybe the ARC ought to lend a fresh ear to the Georgia project, which seems to have produced a pretty loud bang for its bucks.

1830s to 1990s

Keynoted by Wilma Dykeman, this year's course will cover the development of partisan politics in Appalachia from the 1830s to the 1990s. Other lecturers will include David Hsiung of Juniata College, John A. Williams of Appalachian State University, Ronald Eller of the University of Kentucky and Mike Mullins of the Hindman Settlement School. Participants will look at local, regional, state and national issues and personalities, with the help of visiting officeholders and scholars.

Total cost, including room and board and tuition, is \$550. If you wish, you can apply for academic credit (three hours) from the University of Kentucky College of Educa-

to page 4

ELECTION-YEAR from page 3

tion. Deadline for application is May 10. For more information, write to the Appalachian Center, Berea College, C.P.O. Box 2336, Berea, Ky. 40404; phone 606/986-9341, ext. 5140.

EYE on Publications

Daughters of Canaan, by Margaret Ripley Wolfe (University Press of Kentucky). From *Gone With the Wind* to *Designing Women*, says Margaret Wolfe, images of Southern females in fiction and film have tended to obscure the diversity of women from below the Mason-Dixon Line. *Daughters of Canaan*, which is subtitled "A Saga of Southern Women," sets out not only to deal with familiar myths and stereotypes but to provide what might be called a chronological catalogue of Southern women's history. The passing reference to the TV comedy *Designing Women* should not mislead any prospective reader. This is a serious book, seriously intended, and is in no way a popularization of its material.

Strangely, the book has been described by one advance reader as "a veritable romp through the southern past," though this reader also points out that it benefits from the author's "prodigious research." Well, the research is there in abundance, but if you think of a romp as a fast-paced narrative, comic in flavor (as Webster does), then you'll be disappointed if that's what you're looking for. What you will find instead is a kind of encyclopedia of its subject. The advance reader who spoke of the book as "comprehensive" was far nearer the mark than his colleague with her talk of romping. Indeed, one problem with the book may be that in covering so much ground, it gives the reader little chance to

get very well acquainted with any of its subjects. But that's only a quibble; the author is, of course, entitled to have her own purposes and to take her own approach.

Wolfe has her own views on such currently much-discussed matters as patriarchy and feminism itself—views with which, one supposes, one may agree or disagree. But, unlike many other writers on such subjects, she does not tend to opt for the easy answer or the doctrinaire solution.

Spring Garden, by Fred Chappell (Louisiana State University Press). This collection presents poems from six of Fred Chappell's previous books together with some 30 new works. The title is no casual affair, we are told. Inspired by a long poem of Ronsard, Chappell made his selection as if he were gathering greens for a garden salad; as usual, he has not simply assembled his verses but has designed the book as a whole.

At the beginning he tells us: "The day has come for us to winnow through/ The pages of my crossgrain poetry books./ Searching for any line at all that looks/ Suitable for a volume old and new." And in the Epilogue: "All in all, it's been a day's fair work./ Selecting each poetic salad green..."

A teacher for many years at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, Chappell has received many honors for his poetry.



In *Appalachian Heritage*...

Highlights of the Winter 1996 issue of *Appalachian Heritage* include a full-dress symposium on Deborah McCauley's much-discussed *Appalachian Mountain Religion: A History*, with contributions from Richard Drake, Bill J. Leonard, J. Stephen Rhodes and Larry D. Shinn.

You can obtain the magazine (\$6.00 a copy, \$18.00 for a year's subscription) from *Appalachian Heritage*, Hutchins Library, Berea, Kentucky 40404.

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