

NEWS

APPALACHIAN CENTER
BEREA COLLEGE



LETTER

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Looking Forward

March 26-28: 27th annual Appalachian Studies Conference, Cherokee High School, Cherokee, N.C., co-hosted by the Eastern Band of the Cherokee and Mars Hill College. This year's conference carries forward the theme introduced last year: "Building a Healthy Region," with the focus now on "From Historical Trauma to Hope and Healing"—from "the Trail of Tears through the cutting of the forests; the building of TVA lakes; and the taking of land for parks, forests and tourism." For full details, contact Mary Kay Thomas at Marshall University: 304/696-2904; mthomas@marshall.edu. Web site is www.appalachianstudies.org.

April 7-8: Berea College Appalachian Fund Affiliates Conference; Alumni Building, Berea College. Representatives of all the varied organizations helped by the fund will report on their activities, and members of the public are especially invited to attend. For details: 859/985-3023.

April 17-18: Eighth annual Bear on the Square Mountain Festival, Folkways Center of the Georgia Mountains, Dahlonega, Ga. Concerts, jam sessions, traditional crafts, activities for children, with appearances by a gaggle of bands—Chris and Sally Jones, James Leva, Georgia Pot Lickers, Gold Rush and other regional groups. For full information, call the Dahlonega/Lumpkin County Chamber of Commerce, 706/864-3711 or 800/231-5543; www.dahlonega.org.

April 18-23: Spring Dulcimer Week, Augusta Heritage Center, Davis & Elkins College. Guy George, Patty Looman and Timothy Seaman will offer instruction in the hammered dulcimer; Heidi Cerrigione, Aubrey Atwater, Tull Glazener and Jon Kay will teach mountain dulcimer. (Instruments will be available for loan or rental.) You can also receive tutelage on the autoharp from John Cerrigione and Drew Smith. Every afternoon, participants can enjoy performances by guest artists and resident instructors, and on April 22 there'll be a big evening show. For full information, write the Augusta Heritage Center, 100 Campus Drive, Elkins, W.Va. 26241, or phone 304/637-1209; www.augustaheritage.com.

April 29–May 2: 17th annual MerleFest, Wilkes Community College, Wilkesboro, N.C. A jamboree in which everybody seems to be at least a superstar; the list of performers includes Vince Gill, Rosanne Cash, Earl Scruggs with Family and Friends, Patty Loveless and a clutch of other notables. For details, phone 800/343-7857; Website: www.merlefest.org.

April 29–May 2: 14th annual Boxcar Pinion Memorial Bluegrass Festival, Raccoon Mountain Campground (just off I-24), Chattanooga, Tenn. Among the performers on hand will be David Parmley and Continental Divide, the James King Band, IIIrd Tyme Out, J. D. Crowe and the New South, Ronnie Bowman, Rarely Heard, David Davis and Warrior River Boys and the host band, the Dismembered Tennesseans. You can get full details from Cindy Pinion at 706/820-2228.

May 7-9: 35th annual Appalachian Festival, Coney Island, Cincinnati, sponsored by the Appalachian Community Development Association. There's a small admission fee, \$7 (\$3 for seniors, \$1 for kids). Along with music, dancing, storytelling and crafts, you'll find a "living history" section. The ACDA's mailing address is P.O. Box 996, Cincinnati, Ohio 45201; phone 513/251-3378. Web address: www.appalachianfestival.org.

May 14-16: Spring fair, Kentucky Guild of Artists and Craftsmen. After more than three decades at Indian Fort Theater near Berea, the fair is now moving to town, to Memorial Park on West Jefferson St. Some 120 guild members will display their work, which will of course be available for purchase. A highlight this year will be the international pavilion, featuring four artists from Japan. You can get more information from the guild office: 859/986-3192. (If you'd like to take a crack at winning a "Year of Jewelry," click on the guild's Website: www.kyguild.org.)

May 27-29: Fifth annual Bill Monroe Memorial Day Weekend Bluegrass Festival, Bill Monroe Home Town Memorial Park, Rosine, Ky. The producer, Bill Monroe's son James, promises an array of outstanding groups, including Bob and Sheila Everhart, who host their own show in Iowa July 1-3. While you're in Rosine, you can visit Bill Monroe's birthplace and also his monument, an imposing shaft that you might expect to see on the Mall in Washington. For more information: www.billmonroe.com; 615/868-3333.

May 28-30: Old-Time Fiddlers and Bluegrass Festival, Fiddler's Grove Campground, Union Grove, N.C. Held every year during Memorial Day weekend, the festival is the oldest event of the kind in North America; it will celebrate its 80th birthday this spring. There'll be the usual competition, involving more than 50 bands, and in the grand finale, artists will vie for the title "Fiddler of the Festival." More than that, past winners of the title will be on hand. If you show up a day early, you'll find jam sessions already in full swing. For full information: 704/539-4417; www.fiddlersgrove.com; fiddlersgrove@yadtel.net.

June 4-5: Appalshop's Seedtime on the Cumberland Festival

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tival of Mountain Arts, Whitesburg, Ky., celebrating the 35th anniversary of the founding of Appalshop. Appearing will be performing artists from a variety of cultures. The festival opens with a concert on Friday evening, to be followed by a full day of activities on Saturday. Find out more from Appalshop, 306 Madison St., Whitesburg, Ky. 41858; phone, 606/633-0108.

June 6-12: Appalachian Family Folk Week at the Hindman Settlement School. As always, this year's session will be a total immersion in traditional music, dance and other aspects of Appalachian culture, and you can come by yourself or bring the whole family. Jean Ritchie, Lee Sexton, Ron Pen, Ray Slone, Rich Kirby, Don Pedi, Bruce Greene, Tommy Bledsoe and Angelyn DeBord will be among those providing entertainment; the chairmaker Terry Ratliff will return, and you can also watch basket maker Darvin Messer at work; also, the kids won't want to miss Randy Wilson, the "pied piper of children."

For full details, write the school at P.O. Box 844, Hindman, Ky. 41822, or call 606/785-5475; e-mail: jss@tgtel.com.

June 6-12: Blue Ridge Old-Time Music Week, Mars Hill College, Mars Hill, N.C. In "an atmosphere of friendship and encouragement," you can spend a week in banjo, dulcimer or other sessions, guided by such mentors as Bruce Molsky, banjo; Rhonda Gouge, beginning guitar; Riley Baugus (fresh from the soundtrack of *Cold Mountain*), intermediate guitar; Josh Goforth, advanced guitar; Raffaello Steffanini, advanced fiddle; and Sheila Kay Adams, "song-catching and story-weaving." More information from www.mhc.edu/oldtimemusic or at 828/689-1646.

June 6-26: Summer session, New Opportunity School for Women. Successful applicants (up to 14 per session) to this popular program for low-income women 30-55 spend three weeks learning about jobs and how to get them, and also about themselves and what they can do. The school offers career counseling throughout the year and also puts on a number of workshops that are open to anybody; the school has now produced 414 graduates.

There's no tuition fee, and room and meals are provided as well. You may apply if you're a high school graduate or have a GED certificate or are actively working on a GED. *The deadline for applications is April 14.* For full information, contact Amy Harmon, executive director of the school, at 204 Chestnut Street, Berea, Ky. 40403, or phone 859/985-7200.

June 20-25: Fifth annual Mountain Dulcimer Week, Western Carolina University, Cullowhee, N.C. This must be a pretty good show: a couple of years ago one participant said, "I would walk the 500 miles to attend." However they get there, those who come to learn have access to more than 25 course instructors, who deal with pretty much everything having to do with dulcimers—that takes care of mornings; the afternoons are devoted to workshops. Contact the university at 828/227-7397; e-mail: hensley@wcu.edu; Web page: cess.wcu.edu/dulcimer.

July 4-31: Swannanoa Gathering, a series of week-long workshops held on the campus of Warren Wilson College, outside Asheville, N.C. The gathering actually begins with Cherokee Heritage Weekend (June 18-20), and the series progresses through dulcimers, swing, Celtic music and other delights, ending with guitars. "The worst part about

the gathering," one student complained, "is that there are only 24 hours in the day and three of them are wasted sleeping"; www.swangathering.org.

July 9-11: 27th annual Uncle Dave Macon Days Old-Time Music and Dance Festival, Cannonsburgh Pioneer Village, Murfreesboro, Tenn. Picked by tourism specialists as one of the best 100 events in North America (just two per state), while maintaining its status as one of the top 20 July events in the Southeast, this family-oriented jamboree—named for the first person to be featured on the Grand Ole Opry as an individual performer—is expected to draw more than 45,000 people and offers \$5,400 in prizes; it's the home of three national championships—old-time banjo, old-time buckdancing and old-time clogging. There'll also be a blues harmonica competition honoring DeFord Bailey, the first African-American to appear on the Grand Ole Opry. If you want overall details, get in touch with Wendy S. Bryant, P.O. Box 5016, Murfreesboro, Tenn. 37133; phone, 615/893-6565 or 800/716-7560. www.uncledavemacondays.com

July 11-August 15: Music, crafts, dance and folklore, spread out over five theme weeks—guitar and Cajun/Creole; blues and swing; Irish, Cape Breton and more; family, Bluegrass and teen; Dance, old-time and vocal; Augusta Heritage Center, Davis & Elkins College. The summer will be capped by the three-day Augusta Festival (August 13-15). For full details, consult the contact information for April 18-23.

July 15-18: 18th annual Scopes Trial Play and Festival, Dayton, Tenn. This reenactment of the famous 1925 "monkey trial" confrontation between William Jennings Bryan and Clarence Darrow, which is sponsored by the local chamber of commerce and Bryan College, will be accompanied by various other kinds of entertainment. Details from the sponsors at 423/775-0361.

July 15-18: Summer edition of the 57th annual fairs, Southern Highland Craft Guild, Asheville Civic Center, Asheville, N.C. (The fall edition will come out October 21-24.) You can find out more from Lindsay Hearn at 828/298-7928; www.southernhighlandguild.org.

July 25-30: 27th annual Appalachian Writers' Workshop, Hindman Settlement School. The list of mentors for this summer's renewal of the yearly jamboree features the customary mixture of rising stars and veteran luminaries, including Lee Smith and Sheila Kay Smith (short story), Silas House and Sharyn McCrumb (novel), Frank X. Walker and Richard Hague (poetry), Hal Crowther (nonfiction), Linda Scott DeRosier (memoirs) and Paul Brett Johnson and George Ella Lyon (children's fiction). To find out more, check the contact information for Hindman, June 6-12.

"Doing Good Things"

The late Herbert Faber of Cincinnati had a neat way with words. Many years ago, after he and a colleague developed an industrial product that would in some uses replace mica, Faber christened the invention Formica—for mica. The success of the new company soon demonstrated that Faber had a touch with money, too.

In 1950, having prospered through the years, Faber

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SHOWING THE FLAG: Two graduates of last summer's Hindman tutorial program for "children with learning differences/dyslexia" stand in front of the project's flag—whose "stripes" are hand prints of the children who attended. This year's program, the 23rd, runs from June 14 to July 23. Scholarship assistance is available. (See Hindman contact information in Looking Forward, June 6-12.)



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decided to establish a philanthropic foundation devoted to helping Appalachian people, many of whom, as migrants to Cincinnati, had worked for the Formica Company and won the respect of its president. The Appalachian Fund, as the new foundation was called, evolved into an organization that, as Faber's son Stuart put it, would "find people who were doing good things and help them do those things better." Recipients of fund support became "affiliates" of the organization.

Though Faber died in 1956, the fund continued on its path until 1987, when the trustees dissolved it and transferred \$5 million to Berea College to establish the Berea College Appalachian Fund. Under both dispensations, the executive head of the fund was Judy Stammer, who became director in 1961 and remained in the post until her death in November 2002. In January 2004 Jeanne Hibberd, a specialist in community development, was named director. She recently announced the fund's 2004 grant awards, which go to affiliates ranging from the Buckhorn Children's Center to the School Sisters of St. Francis to the Mud Creek Health Corp. The grants totaled \$423,700.

Spills and Such

The long trail of events that began with the great October 2000 slurry spill in Martin County, Ky., took a surprising turn a few weeks ago. Though the mining company's parent, Massey Energy, has spent some \$40 million trying to clean up the mess and has accepted \$3.5 million in penalties and damages imposed by the state of Kentucky, the federal government responded to the disaster with a tap of its fan—\$55,000 in fines. Even that amount, however, proved too much for an administrative law judge with the Mine Safety and Health Administration; he cut the fines by 90 percent, to just \$5,500. He was not convinced, he noted, that the company displayed "wanton or reckless disregard for risks to life and property."

But that decision, though it shocked many, was not the surprise. What startled observers was the response by the Mine Safety and Health Administration, which announced

that it was appealing the decision. "The administration," declared Dave Lauriski, director of the agency, believes it important to "assess meaningful civil monetary penalties for mine safety violations."

Meanwhile, the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement continued to express its support for mountaintop removal mining. The Clean Water Act and the Surface Mining Act, said Jeffrey Jarrett, the director, were not intended to prohibit mountaintop mining, even if some judges have ruled otherwise.

One West Virginian declared his intention to keep fighting. "When these mountains go," he said, "our culture, our heritage and our identity are gone."

Silent Blueticks?

"I get great pleasure out of hearing dogs out at night," says Eddie Lundergan, a coon hunter who lives up in Rowan County, Ky.

Nothing surprising about that, of course. Many an Appalachian writer has waxed lyrical about his delight in the music of blueticks and redbones tirelessly pursuing their quarry during the dark hours. But the county magistrates, feeling some heat from people who like quiet nights, are considering a measure that will require dog owners to silence their pets or pay fines.

To some, that seems like heresy. Can the magistrates be serious? After all, one of the bragging points about a hunting dog is the volume of his bark. "I like to think I'm a law-abiding citizen," says Lundergan, "and I will be until they make a law that says my dogs can't bark. If one of my dogs is barking treed down on the creek, and someone finds that offensive, I've got a problem with that."

Some of the tension seems to come from the clash between established rural ways and the burgeoning of subdivisions, with local politicians in the middle. If the ordinance is adopted, the county attorney promises to use common sense in enforcing it. Hunting dogs will bark, he says; that's to be expected. But incessant, nuisance barkers will cost their owners up to \$100 per offense.

It's an experiment that will certainly bear watching. ■

EYE on Publications

The Myles Horton Reader, edited by Dale Jacobs (University of Tennessee Press). Myles Horton (1905-1990), cofounder of the Highlander Folk School in the 1930s, could truly have been called the happy warrior. Once in conversation he recalled how, back in those days, a friend in New York introduced him to Earl Browder, the head of the U.S. Communist Party. After sizing up Horton, Browder declared, insightfully, that this young man could never become a Communist. Horton was indignant. He had no desire to join the Communist Party, but he didn't want anybody telling him he couldn't if he chose to do it.

Visiting theoreticians would find the same idiosyncratic independence at Highlander (which later became the Highlander Research and Education Center). Wanting to see how Horton and his colleagues applied abstractions to social problems, they would learn it didn't work that way. Doing a program at Highlander involved, as Horton once summed it up, "the Highlander ideas of participation and democracy; the Highlander ideas of giving power to the people; the Highlander ideas of making people their own experts; and the Highlander idea ideas of basing it on their own interests."

Probably the most important thing Highlander did for people, Horton said, was to "have them participate in an actual democratic experience." If you didn't value a person's experiences, he believed, you couldn't value the person: "Sometimes academicians don't know that, but poor people do."

Through the decades Highlander moved in two major social currents—the labor union movement and the civil rights movement. Perhaps the most famous graduate of its workshops was Birmingham's Rosa Parks.

(Dale Jacobs, the editor of this book, teaches English and composition at the University of Windsor, Ontario.)

Until He Is Dead, by James Thomas Rusher (Parkway Publishers, Boone, N.C.). This book, by a longtime North Carolina district attorney, has an unusual focus, indeed: the administration of the death penalty in western North Carolina during the last two centuries. "Death litigation is

profound," says the author, and "judges at both the trial level and the appellate level have professed difficulty in dealing with the issue." One judge "noticeably gasped and had difficulty forming words" when he "falteringly" sentenced one prisoner to death. Another judge's voice "rose to a high falsetto" when he read the jury verdict recommending death for the prisoner.

Not surprisingly, *Until He Is Dead* is the first book to make this kind of use of data from the courts of these North Carolina counties; it's a work involving thorough research. To tell his story, Rusher chose four cases of historic significance from counties he served as DA. The stories, he says, allow him to make a point: the justice system "looks better from a distance than up close."

CD Note

The Appalachian Center has just produced Volume 2 of a set of the music of the great old-time fiddler and banjo player John Morgan Salyer. This new item is a CD version of the 1993 Salyer two-cassette release; the 54 songs come from 1941-42 home recordings. They were not included on Appalachian Center AC003. You may order from the Appalachian Center, C.P.O. Box 2166, Berea, KY 40404; \$15 plus \$2 p/h.

In *Appalachian Heritage* ...

From Editor George Brosi: The featured author for the spring issue is Silas House of Lily, Ky., the author of the novels *Clay's Quilt* and *A Parchment of Leaves*. The issue will feature an excerpt from House's new novel, *Coal Tattoo*, forthcoming from Algonquin. Count on the usual fiction, poetry, memoir and reviews for this issue as well, including a review by Grace Edwards of Radford University of a memoir by Cratis Williams, often considered the "father" of Appalachian studies, who served as Edwards's mentor and thesis adviser at Appalachian State.

Appalachian Heritage is available (\$6 a copy, \$18 for one year, \$34 for two years, \$50 for three years) from the Appalachian Center, C.P.O. Box 2166, Berea, Ky. 40404.

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