

NEWS

LETTER



APPALACHIAN CENTER
BEREA COLLEGE

Loyal Jones • Thomas Parrish, Co-Editors

Vol. 11 No. 2

Spring 1982

Looking Forward

Coming up this summer is something (or several somethings) for just about everybody. As evidence, we offer the following list of events, which is as thorough as we can make it. (If *your* event doesn't appear, maybe it's because you didn't let us know about it.)

June 6-12: Fifth Annual Appalachian Family Folk Week, Hindman Settlement School, "designed for individuals and families who want to share a week of traditional Appalachian music, dance, crafts, storytelling and instrument building." Headliners include Jean Ritchie, Cratis Williams, John McCutcheon, the McLains. The school is at Forks of Troublesome Creek, Hindman, Ky. 41822.

June 11-13: Appalachian Writers Conference, East Tennessee State University, "directed toward production, publication and the establishment of a regional network of support" for Appalachian writing. Address: Box 19180A, ETSU, Johnson City, Tenn. 3714-0002.

June 14-25: Highland Summer Conference, Radford University. Workshops in Appalachian studies and the writing of fiction and poetry. On hand will be Loyal Jones; the much-traveled Mr. Appalachia, Cratis Williams; Max Apple; and Jeff Daniel Marion. Address: Box 5917, Radford University Station, Radford, Va. 24142.

June 14-July 2: Appalachian Literature and Music, Berea College (*see separate story*).

June 20-26: Appalachian Celebration, Morehead State University—"a combination of workshops, courses, exhibits, concerts, dances, lectures and discussions that pay homage to the total Appalachian experience," designed for a variety of interests and for persons of all ages. Address: Appalachian Development Center, MSU, Morehead, Ky. 40351.

June 25: Conference on Private Efforts in Appalachia, Berea College (*see separate story*).

July 4-17 and July 18-31: Summer crafts programs, John C. Campbell Folk School. Blacksmithing, pottery,
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Al Smith to Keynote Private Efforts Meeting

Al Smith, newspaper publisher and latest federal cochairman of the Appalachian Regional Commission, will address the dinner meeting of the third annual Conference on Private Efforts in Appalachia, to be held June 25 under the joint sponsorship of the Appalachian Fund and Berea College. This year's meeting will be devoted to examination of three currently pressing questions: how to screen and make the most effective use of volunteers; how to raise and manage funds; what are the gaps in services and the resulting unmet needs.

The conference was initiated in 1980 in recognition of the fact that even with the great growth of federal and other governmental programs in the preceding two decades, private institutions still had an important part to play in Appalachian life. Two years later, with federal and state programs being cut back or closed down entirely, that role has become increasingly—and obviously—vital.

Featured speakers in previous years were Dr. Harvey Sloane, then president of the Kentucky Rural Housing and Development Foundation and present mayor of Louisville, and Dr. Grady Stumbo, secretary of the Kentucky Department of Human Resources.

In addition to Smith's talk, this year's program will include discussions by Joy Hembree, a member of the Kentucky Governor's Volunteer Advisory Council, and by James B. Reynolds, Cincinnati, and Calvin H. Stoney, Chicago, who will deal with investments and fundraising.

You may make reservations through the Appalachian Center, College Box 2336, Berea, Ky. 40404.

Conference keynoter Al Smith



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weaving, woodcarving et al. The address of the school is Brasstown, N.C. 28902.

July 11-17: Appalachian Visual Arts Week, Hindman Settlement School—a workshop designed for persons seriously interested in painting (oil, acrylic and water-color) and drawing, led by various artists. Address: Forks of Troublesome Creek, Hindman, Ky. 41822.

July 11-August 15: Augusta Heritage Arts Workshop, Elkins, W.Va. A bit of everything, from papermaking to radio production to clogging; classes may be taken in small doses, or you can go for the whole five weeks. The goings-on conclude with the three-day Augusta Festival, August 13-15. Address: Davis & Elkins College, Elkins, W.Va. 26241.

July 18-31: Orff in the Woods, John C. Campbell Folk School. Two weeks devoted to experience with the techniques of Carl Orff, the German composer (*Carmena Burana*) and innovative music educator. The teachers are Isabel and James Carley. Address: Brasstown, N.C. 28902.

July 21-24: The Southern Highland Handicraft Guild's 35th annual fair, Asheville Civic Center. This event hardly needs description, but we'll tell you that the mailing address is P.O. Box 9545, Asheville, N.C. 28815.

August 1-7: Fifth Annual Appalachian Writers Workshop, Hindman Settlement School. Open to "anyone interested in writing," the workshop will offer you the chance to work under such long-reigning Appalachian luminaries as James Still and Harriette Arnow and such younger comers as Jim Wayne Miller and Gurney Norman. The address remains Forks of Troublesome Creek, Hindman, Ky. 41822.

August 15-21: A Week at a Danish Folk School, Uldum, Denmark. The bilingual course will focus on the "educational philosophy and spiritual substance" of the Danish folk school. Inquiries to Folk School Association, Box 207, Valley Springs, S.Dak. 57068.

Also: During the run of the Knoxville World's Fair (May 1 to October 31), a continuing Folklife Festival will take place, featuring crafts, dances, films, fiddle contests and just about everything else you can think of. More specific information is available from P.O. Box 1982, Knoxville, Tenn. 37901.

Wilma Dykeman, Jean Ritchie on Lit and Music

In a change of pace from the practice of the past several summers, the Berea College Appalachian Center, in cooperation with the University Kentucky College of Education, is offering a three-week course in Appalachian literature and music. The idea is to explore these arts with two of the region's outstanding practitioners, novelist Wilma Dykeman and composer and

performer Jean Ritchie. They will be supplemented by Alan DeYoung, an educational sociologist in the Department of Social and Philosophical Studies, College of Education at the University of Kentucky.

Dates of the course are June 14 - July 20.

The course is designed primarily for teachers who would like to introduce courses or units in Appalachian music or literature into their schools, though others may attend if space is available; three hours of graduate or undergraduate credit may be earned through the UK Department of Extension Education and College of Education. The cost, including room and board, tuition and some books, is \$150. The address of the Appalachian Center is College Box 2336, Berea, Ky. 40404.

Marguerite Bidstrup, 1892-1982

Marguerite Butler Bidstrup, one of the remarkable group of women who came to Appalachia in the early years of this century to work in a variety of educational and social programs, died recently. A native of Cincinnati, fresh from Vassar, she went to the Pine Mountain Settlement School, where she taught for eight years. While there she met the English musicologist Cecil Sharp and became interested in his work with folksongs and dances; in consequence, she was the first person to teach English country dancing in the region. She went with Olive Dame Campbell to Denmark to study folk schools and, with Mrs. Campbell, founded the John C. Campbell Folk School at Brasstown, N.C. She helped found the Southern Highland Handicraft Guild, of which she was president for seven years, and she directed the related programs of songs and dancing at the guild fairs. Her late husband, Georg Bidstrup, was director of the Campbell Folk School, and together the couple taught folk dances at festivals and workshops throughout the region.

Letters

To the Editor:

Enclosed is \$2.00 for the NEWSLETTER. Your "Eye on Publications" continues to be helpful and appreciated.

I had not intended to write my reaction to your note on Whisnant's book [*Modernizing the Mountaineer*], but your response in the Winter issue to Steve Fisher's letter changed my mind. . . Two points: If you intended to reflect Whisnant's concern with exploitation and those who suffer from it, you would have done as well to call him "Christian" as "Marxoid." Second, you note that this is 1982, not 1952. If you are suggesting that we are much more enlightened, tolerant or forgiving now, I recommend that you reexamine the rhetoric and policies of the current administration in Washington.

RICHARD JACKSON
Banner Elk, N.C.

*(We're grateful for the check from this reader, and we
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"Life, Work & Rebellion" Takes Weatherford Award

David Alan Corbin, author of *Life, Work and Rebellion in the Coal Fields: The Southern West Virginia Miners, 1880-1922*, is the winner of the twelfth annual W.D. Weatherford Award for outstanding writing about Appalachia. The presentation was made at the annual luncheon, held in Berea on May 18.

The prize-winner's book is a volume in the series *The Working Class in American History*, published by the University of Illinois Press, and it emphasizes the development of "class consciousness"—and the reasons for this development—by the men who came to southern West Virginia to dig coal.

The Weatherford Award is jointly sponsored by Berea College's Appalachian Center and Hutchins Library and is given each year to the writer of the published work that best illuminates the problems, personalities and unique qualities of the Appalachian South. The prize is donated by Alfred H. Perrin of Berea in memory of the late W.D. Weatherford, Sr., a pioneer and leading figure for many years in Appalachian development, youth work and race relations. Dr. Weatherford was the subject of the biography *Prophet of Plenty*, by Wilma Dykeman.

In his book, Corbin focuses on the miners' creation of a culture that could enable them to resist the social and economic forces with which they had to contend. The period covered by the book was marked by two bloody and protracted strikes, the formation of competing unions, and the largest armed conflict in American labor history—a week-long battle between 20,000 miners and 5,000 law officers and mine guards. But, as the CENTER NEWSLETTER remarked in its previous note on the book (Winter 1982), this "isn't just another oppression-and-violence story. . . what the author does is to build from the individual miner up rather than from the union down. . ."

Corbin, a native of West Virginia, has taught at the University of Maryland. Under a two-year grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, he is currently at work on a sequel to *Life, Work and Rebellion*, bringing the story up to date.

FROM TOP: Weatherford winner David Corbin (second from r.) with judges Tom Parrish (l.) and Shirley Williams and donor Alfred Perrin. In middle photo, Corbin chats with Berea College president Willis D. Weatherford, Jr. Bottom, the winner addresses luncheon guests.



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encourage you to join him.

We weren't claiming to endorse Modernizing the Mountaineer; we were attempting to describe it and at the same time to suggest what we saw as serious limitations. As for 1982 vs. 1952, we must say that, whatever one may think of some latter-day puffs of Potomac rhetoric, 1952 must be remembered as one of those years when the Cincinnati National League baseball team was calling itself the Redlegs, presumably to distinguish itself from the Moscow Reds of the Soviet League; as Sherlock Holmes says, from a drop of water

one may infer a Niagara, and that seems to us a most characteristic 1952 drop. We'll stand by our memories. If you doubt us, take a look at some old newspapers or newsmagazines.—ED.)

Intern Wanted

The Blue Ridge Institute of Ferrum College is looking for an intern in folklore studies for 1982-83. The aim of
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the project, says the institute, is "to give the folklife student a wide variety of on-the-job experiences" in the operations of the institute, from research to the outdoor farm museum. The position is open to graduate and undergraduate students in folklore or related fields. The college fully expects the grant to receive final approval from the National Endowment for the Arts, but you might check this out just to make sure. Write to the Personnel Office, Ferrum College, Ferrum, Va. 24088.

EYE on Publications

The Winter People, by John Ehle (Harper & Row). The author here returns to the western North Carolina of his earlier novels and produces a tale mingling love and fierce adventure. He of course knows whereof he speaks; the book's jacket informs us that he is a native of "Ashville."

The Cherokee Perspective, edited by Laurence French and Jim Hornbuckle (Appalachian Consortium Press). A sort of overall guide to the Cherokee people, written by Cherokees themselves, the book is the result of efforts begun in 1973 by Cherokee students at the Qualla Boundary to improve "the educational prospects among Native Americans attending non-Indian colleges and universities." As they looked into their cultural heritage, the participants realized that most of the writing about it had been done by non-Indians, well-meaning, perhaps, but inevitably limited; *The Cherokee Perspective* attempts to redress this balance. History, education, arts, individual profiles—all are included.

Coal: The Rock That Burns, by Walter Harter (Elsevier/Nelson Books). A book for young readers that tells what coal is, where it is found, how it is recovered, and what is done with it. It is high time, the author believes, for everyone to become closer acquainted with the inflammable rock that makes up 5 billion tons of the earth's crust.

The Last Unmined Vein, by Lee Howard (Anemone Press, Howard University, Washington, D.C.). "the

shooting stopped/and David was taken to Daddy Doc's/who assured us/it was only due to his belt buckle/that he was still alive/And we all went home/with stories/and more excitement/than three revivals could generally raise"—these lines come from one of the dramatic monologues in which the poet presents key moments in the lives of mountain people. There's lots more, and it's straight and uncensored.

Suttree, by Cormac McCarthy (Random House). Knoxville, 1950s—not the World's Fair city but the town as seen by a fisherman who lives in a dilapidated houseboat on the river, consorting with people who live precarious and often violent lives. The story is spun by an author who likes to use the whole range of language.

Roaming the Mountains, with John Parris (Citizen-Times Publishing Co., Asheville, N.C.). A brand-new reprint of collected columns by a writer who would roam the Carolina mountains in search of people and stories. The book originally appeared in 1955.

The Politics of Soft Coal, by James P. Johnson (University of Illinois Press). A study of the relationship of the federal government and the bituminous coal industry from World War I through the New Deal. The author, who teaches history at Brooklyn College, develops a "structural approach which focuses on the interplay of regional rivalries among operators, the alliance between midwestern operator groups and the United Mine Workers, and the highly competitive nature of the industry." Government involvement is traced from Wilson's U.S. Fuel Administration to Roosevelt's NRA.

Kentucky; photography by James Archambeault, text by Thomas D. Clark (Graphic Arts Center Publishing Co., Portland, Ore.). The book is only partly about the Appalachian portion of the state, to be sure, but it's so beautiful, who cares? Archambeault's photos are dazzlingly reproduced. If coffee tables had disappeared from our civilization, a book like this would bring them back.

(NOTE: The Appalachian Center does not sell books. However, if you encounter any difficulty in obtaining a title, you may order it from the Appalachian Book and Record Shop, 104 Center St., Berea, Ky. 40403.)

Published by
Appalachian Center/Berea College
C.P.O. Box 2336
Berea, Ky. 40404

Nonprofit Organization
U.S. Postage Paid
Berea, Ky. 40404
Permit No. 19