

MILK AND HONEY

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The Craddock Center
(Enriching Lives through Service)

January, 2006

NO CHARGE?



Some of the friends of the Center have advised that funds for our programs, programs always in need of funds, could be raised by charging admission to events we offer the public. It is thoughtful and reasonable advice, and you can be sure it has laid a claim on my mind more than once. When persons with large incomes, large homes, and long vacations show up, I say to myself, "They are able to pay, they are accustomed to paying, they probably expect to pay, so why no charge?" In fact, I continue the conversation with myself, "Some of these more prosperous friends may be embarrassed to enter without paying. Why embarrass them? Take their money."

Let me address first the obvious. There is no desire to embarrass anyone, neither those who can pay nor those who cannot. I am also aware that in our culture that which is offered free is by many assumed to be of inferior quality. If it is free it must not be worth charging for. Nothing could be farther from the truth. The lectures, the music, the seminars we offer the community are first rate. And the music, the stories, the books we give to Head Start children are the best available. No worn out, second hand, hand me down gifts which would only say to the children, "You are not worth the best."

Having said that, let me remind you, the vision of the Center is the eventual creation of a community that is one community. We are not naïve: there are haves and have nots, advantaged and disadvantaged, and the differences show in our residences, lifestyles, and, regrettably, also in our churches. But is it not great now and then to gather for music or seminar or lecture where those differences are not honored? No one enters by the "pay" gate and no one enters by the "poor" gate; all enter the "free" gate. And when we sit together, we have a brief but very important experience of the kingdom of God. I hope it is not irreverent to say that this arrangement reminds one of grace. Grace comes to all without distinction.

Of course, some send gifts that pay the bills for all of us, and we are endlessly grateful. But if for a day or for an evening, those who give and those who receive share an event for which there is no charge, perhaps someone with courage and imagination will think of other and more lasting ways to remove distinctions among us. Would you like that?

In the meantime, "Come on in and make yourself at home: there is no charge."



IT IS TIME TO ABANDON



The corrupted English force fed you in school until you actually began to talk that way, and return to the pure speech of Appalachia. That is, if you intend to experience fully the Songs and Stories of Steve Darsey and Fred Craddock at Brasstown Valley Resort, Hiawassee, GA, Saturday evening, January 28, 2006 at 8:00 p.m.

I hope you haven't gotten above your raising and forgotten:

Gooden as in "I'll leave when I'm gooden ready."

Nome as in "Billy, did you eat Annie's lunch?"
"Nome."

Deaden as in "I took his lawn mower, him being deaden all."

Swan as in "I swan to goodness, I never heard worse singing."

Enough of this; do your own homework.

You will need a reservation for the event. I hope there are some seats left. Contact Meridian Herald (WingedfortheHeart@meridianherald.org, 404-525-4722) or the Craddock Center (craddockcenter@tds.net, 706-632-1772).

THE UNITED STATES OF APPALACHIA

Is the title of the latest book by Jeff Biggers, author, lecture, and reporter for National Public Radio. Many of you met Jeff at Appalachian Weekend in 2004 at which he read movingly the prose and poetry of Don West, selections from Jeff's collection, No Lonesome Road.

On Sunday afternoon, February 19, at 3:00 at Cherry Log Christian Church, Jeff will again visit us to read from his new book and to autograph copies. The book will be available for purchase that evening or you may bring your copy for an autograph.

The church will host Jeff and you with refreshments and conversation.



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Dr. Fred B. Craddock, Director
Tammy T. Blair, Office Manager

WE DO NOT NEED TO HEAR

From the thousands of preachers across America who are not coming to the Spring Preaching Workshop, but only from those who are. Reservations are necessary; we can accommodate only 90. There is no charge.

Monday, March 6

9:00-9:30	Continental breakfast
9:30-12:00	“Preaching the Death of Jesus”
12:00-12:30	Deli lunch

Contact Tammy at the Craddock Center, 706-632-1772 or craddockcenter@tds.net, to make a reservation.

HE IS SLOW, SHE SAID

I knew what she meant; she is his teacher and knows that he lags behind his peers in the classroom and on the playground. It was evident to me, a visitor for the day. But it seemed not to be evident to him; he seemed happy to appropriate life at the pace given him. Whether he will gradually move to the pace of others as he matures, of course, I do not know.

I do know that I am also slow. Not the slowness that comes with age, although that, too. But I have always been slow. This is not a commentary on my physical condition; I have had the ability to run and jump with the best of them, but why should I? A slower pace allows me to think, to reflect, to muse, to assimilate and to process. That I am slow is not a commentary on school performance. I found the demands of school rather easy to negotiate, allowing me time to slow-down, time to savor the wisdom and skill of those who came to me in books. Why rush to finish homework in an hour when you could spend an entire evening with Shakespeare, or Milton, or Poe, or Melville, or DuBois, or Plato?

And every day I am more aware how slow I am. Everyone else is multi tasking, taking advantage of the speed and immediate availability of all people and all knowledge. Even the music is fast; my ear is able to catch only a word now and then. Mind you, I am not setting you up for an argument against speed nor in favor of my pace. I am comfortable in the pace given me.

However, a close friend did raise with me the question: Have you ever wondered what you could have achieved if you had quickened your pace a bit? No.

Probably even less.



I WOULD FEEL REALLY BAD



If you missed hearing Darlene Wilson give the Helen Lewis Lecture on Appalachian Women and especially Melungeon Women. Ms. Wilson is a native of Appalachia with family roots in Virginia and educational roots in both Virginia and Kentucky.

She lectures and writes to shatter stereotypes of mountain women. On her visit here she will focus on Melungeons, a relatively unknown but significant and proud group living primarily in southwest Virginia and eastern Tennessee. A suggested reading list in preparation for the lecture is posted on our website (www.craddockcenter.org)

The date: March 3, 2006

The place: The Blue Ridge Mountain Arts Center (old courthouse) in Blue Ridge, GA

The time: Music by Laura Boosinger at 7:00 p.m.;
Lecture by Darlene Wilson at 7:30 p.m.

No charge, no reservations. Seating capacity about 200.

YOU PROBABLY WILL BE PLEASED TO LEARN

That even though it is early yet, as of this writing, we have already received the pledges or the money for 171 Scholarships for the Head Start children served by our Children's Enrichment Program.

There is no limit to the number of Scholarships we are willing to receive. I am amazed at how flexible we are.

Thanks.

WHETHER TO GIVE OR RECEIVE

Household goods and furniture from our storage unit, please contact the Center. We again have good inventory and are in position to help families burned out or in some other emergency, making a new start necessary. And if you have something to contribute to our storage, please call; we have room. But please, clean and immediately usable. We have no one to do repairs.



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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