

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

### Electronic Appalachia?

by John C. Inscoe

Among the themes that struck me as most prevalent at our conference at West Virginia University this past March was the movement of Appalachian studies onto the information superhighway. As one who has approached this new age with some trepidation and even a little skepticism, I may have simply tuned out or avoided such discussions at earlier conferences. But it was hard to do so at Morgantown.

In a session devoted to various approaches to teaching Appalachian history in high school and college classrooms, Gordon McKinney drew from his perspective as director of National History Day to point out that students in Appalachia are already lagging behind those elsewhere in the country in terms of their access to and utilization of electronic media. In linking this lag to the various other forms of isolation that have historically defined and inhibited Appalachian development, he urged that such isolation—this time intellectual and psychological—must not be allowed to again stifle the region's potential or that of its youth. After laying out the types of information and services that could and should be made available to students, teachers, and librarians throughout the region, Gordon noted, in summary, that "a powerful new technology offers the opportunities for the young people in Appalachia to pull alongside their counterparts in more privileged parts of the country—or to once again lag behind."

In another session devoted to the new Appalachian encyclopedia project that ETSU's Center for Appalachian Studies and Services is undertaking, much of the discussion centered on non-print, interactive versions of the encyclopedia that will accompany the printed, bound version. While at the moment the likely venue for such computerized packaging would be CD-ROM, Jean Speer, Rudy Abramson, and other organizers of the project are very much aware that over the five-year course of the encyclopedia's production, the technology will have advanced to levels we can't even anticipate at this point. They sound fully prepared to adapt to whatever new outlets and opportunities present themselves along the way.

Of far more minor consequence, I was hit with how behind the times I've been at a Sunday morning meeting of officers and committees. In circulating a sheet on which

we listed our names and addresses, I was a bit chagrined to realize that I was among the very few in the group not plugged into e-mail, that simplest and most basic feature of the superhighway. (I took some consolation in proudly listing under my name a FAX number, that other communication innovation that didn't require much of a conversion experience on my part!)

Other developments are close upon us. As noted elsewhere in this Appalink, historian Richard Jensen of the University of Illinois in Chicago, a pioneer in the application of computers to the humanities, is on the verge of creating and funding "Appalnet," an internet program designed to connect the people of Appalachia with information about Appalachia. More specifically, to cite Professor Jensen, it will be a means of providing free, convenient access to large quantities of high quality information about the region, functioning as a two-way system, with people enabled and encouraged to make inquiries and requests, to receive informed answers to those questions, to share ideas, and to engage in discussion and debate. As with the multi-media, interactive encyclopedia, the possibilities here are exciting, and to me, rather mind-boggling.

There's some irony in all this. Appalachian studies seems to be among the major growth industries in academia—the output of our conferences in the past few years reflects the extent to which scholarship on the region is more wide-ranging, more diverse, and more sophisticated than ever before. Yet we remain as a region, Richard Jensen points out, information-poor: "Many of the region's colleges, public libraries, high schools, museums and historical societies," he notes, "are small, underequipped and understaffed. The quantity of information available is probably smaller than anywhere else in America except Indian reservations."

While this seems a rather sweeping generalization, with more applicability to some parts of the region than to others, it is apparent that we, as ASA members, more productive and creative than ever in other ways, are not connecting with nearly as many of our fellow Appalachians as we could. Such connections have always been among the stated goals of our organization, but we have all

*Continued on page 5*



## ASA OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES FOR 1995-1996

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Western Carolina University

## NEW BOOKS

Phillip J. Obermiller and William W. Philliber, eds. *Appalachia in an International Context: Cross-National Comparisons of Developing Regions*. Greenwood Publishing Group, Inc., 88 Post Road West, P. O. Box 5007, Westport, CT 06881-5007. Phone: 1-203-226-3571. FAX: 1-203-222-1502. Credit card order 24 hours a day: 1-800-225-5800.

Shauna L. Scott. *Two Sides to Everything: The Cultural Construction of Class Consciousness in Harlan County, Kentucky*. State University of New York Press, c/o CUP Services, P. O. Box 6525, Ithaca, NY 14851. Phone: 607-277-2211. FAX: 1-800-688-2877.

Loyal Jones, with Photographs by Warren Brunner. *Appalachian Values*. The Jesse Stuart Foundation, P. O. Box 391, Ashland, KY 41114. Phone: 606-329-5232 or 5233.

Dexter Collett. *Bibliography of These and Dissertations Pertaining to Appalachian Literature: 1912-1991*. Appalachian Imprints, Berea, KY 40403.

Paul Salstrom. *Appalachia's Path to Dependency: Rethinking a Region's Economic History, 1730-1940*. University Press of Kentucky.

Loyal Jones and Billy Edd Wheeler. *More Laughter in Appalachia: Southern Mountain Humor*. August House.



# **APPALACHIA IN AN INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT CROSS-NATIONAL COMPARISONS OF DEVELOPING REGIONS**

**Edited by Phillip J. Obermiller and William W. Philliber**

This volume uses Appalachia as a case study to provide a coherent cross-national perspective on regional development. It examines the phenomenon of Appalachia in relation to regional settings in Scotland, Canada, Kenya, Italy, Mexico, Spain, Wales and the Philippines. Written by social scientists who have studied the social and economic problems of these regions, this work should assist in alleviating some of the most striking misconceptions about regional development.

**Phillip J. Obermiller** is an associate of the Appalachian Center at the University of Kentucky.

**William W. Philliber** is Professor of Sociology at the State University of New York at New Paltz.

Available from PRAEGER...

Price: \$55.00 • 264 pages • ISBN 0-275-94835-8.

Publication Date: October 1994.

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## **FROM MOUNTAIN TO METROPOLIS APPALACHIAN MIGRANTS IN AMERICAN CITIES**

**Edited by Kathryn M. Borman and Phillip J. Obermiller**

This collection of essays is the fourth in a series of studies of Appalachians in relation to urban America. While earlier works have concentrated on the migration process, jobs, housing, and ethnic group formation in urban settings, this volume addresses the important issues of health, environment, and education in the urban Appalachian context. As such, it is the only resource available for educators and health and human service professionals involved with this social group.

**Kathryn M. Borman** is Associate Dean in the School of Education at the University of Cincinnati.

**Phillip J. Obermiller** is an associate of the Appalachian Center at the University of Kentucky.

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# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## **Journal of Appalachian Studies**

The *Journal of Appalachian Studies* (formerly published as *The Journal of the Appalachian Studies Association*) is published twice a year. One issue will be devoted to a juried selection of conference papers; the other will accept open submissions.

## **Deadline for University Press of Kentucky**

The University Press of Kentucky presents yearly the Appalachian Studies Award for the best book-length manuscript about Appalachia. The work may deal with any aspect of Appalachian life. Manuscripts should be approximately 60,000 to 100,000 words and must be original. No significant portion of the manuscript may have been previously published. The winner receives \$1000 cash prize, and the manuscript is published by the press. The deadline for submissions for the 1996 award is November 15, 1995. Send manuscripts to Attention of Nancy Grayson Holmes, Editor in Chief, University Press of Kentucky, 663 South Limestone St., Lexington, KY 40508-4008. Phone 606-257-8434.

## **Nominate Sophomores**

The Regional Research Institute of West Virginia University will present twelve Undergraduate Research Fellowships in 1995-96 to college students in their junior years. In 1993, the Regional Research Institute was selected the National Science Foundation's first Research Experiences for Undergraduates Site in Regional Science. Among the primary research areas of the Institute are economic and social development, environmental and resource policy, labor markets and poverty, migration and immigration, and methods of regional and spatial analysis. Applications will be accepted until all positions are filled. To nominate a student or for application forms contact: Luc Anselin, Brian Cushing, or Andrew Isserman, ATTN: REU Program, Regional Research Institute, PO Box 6825, Morgantown, WV 26506-6825. Phone: 304-293-2897. FAX: 304-293-6699. E-mail: rri@wvnm.wvnet.edu.

## **Handbook of Appalachia**

Activists, Organizers, Scholars, Students, Teachers and Writers are invited to help plan and produce a document, possibly in multiple volumes, with the working title *A Handbook to Appalachia*. This handbook will be a concise, accessible overview of current scholarship and a directory of resources for parties interested, at all levels, in the Appalachian region. If interested in this project, please contact: Dr. Grace Toney Edwards, Director, Appalachian Regional Studies Center, Box 7014, Radford University, Radford, VA 24142-7014.

## **Investigative Reporting Fund**

The Investigative Reporting Fund is a research and reporting organization. Staff reporters write investigative reports that are sent to area media and TIRF helps fund area writers completing investigative reports. TIRF is a project of Public Interest North Carolina, Inc., a non-profit corporation, which seeks to promote better understanding of and citizen involvement in Western North Carolina issues. Support comes from foundations and private donors. TIRF's office is at 2 Wall Street, Suite 203, Asheville, NC 28801. Mailing address is: P. O. Box 7554, Asheville, NC 28802. Phone: 704-259-9179. FAX: 704-251-1311.

## **CONGRATULATIONS**

Congratulations to the award winners at the annual conference. John C. Henner of the Appalachian College Association at Berea, Kentucky received the University Press of Kentucky award for best book-length manuscript. He received a \$1,000 cash prize, and his book will be published by the UP of Kentucky. J. Scott Plaster, graduate student in English at Appalachian State University, received the award for best student paper.





# CALENDAR OF FALL EVENTS



## Augusta Heritage Center Schedule

July-October

Augusta Heritage Center, Davis & Elkins College, Elkins WV 26241. Phone 304-636-1903: July 9-14—Cajun/Creole Week; July 16-21—Blues Week/ Swing Week; July 23-28—Irish Week; July 30-August 4—Dance Week/ Bluegrass Week; August 6-13—Old Time Week/ Vocal Week; August 11-13—Augusta Festival; October 15-22—October Old-Time Week; October 20-22—Fiddlers' Reunion.

## Old Time Music and Dance Week

July 16-22

Old Time Music and Dance Week, sponsored by Swannanoa Gathering Folk Arts Workshops. Also a Dulcimer Week, same time, same place. Contact: P. O. Box 9000, Warren Wilson College, Asheville, NC 28815.

## 18th Annual Appalachian Writers Workshop

July 30-August 5

The Hindman Settlement School hosts its annual Appalachian Writers Workshop July 30-August 5, with Jim Wayne Miller, George Ella Lyon, James Still, Bobbie Ann Mason and Sharyn McCrumb. For information: Hindman Settlement School, Hindman, KY 41822. Phone: 606-785-5475.

## Appalachian History Course at University of Rio Grande

August 7-11

James M. Gifford, Executive Director of the Jesse Stuart Foundation, will again offer his popular course on Appalachian History and Culture at the University

of Rio Grande (Ohio) during the week of August 7-11. The course is part of an MA program that emphasizes classroom teaching. For more information contact Dr. Greg Miller at 614-245-5353 ext. 364.

## "Old-Fashioned Sorghum Makin'"

October 6-8

John Simon Farm, Pond Creek, Ohio. Call: 614-259-6337.

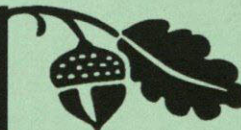
## 4th Ohio Appalachia Conference

October 8-10

"Ohio Appalachia: Similarities and Contrasts," the 4th annual Ohio Appalachia Conference, will be held October 8-10 at Canter's Cave 4-H Camp Lodge, near Jackson, Ohio. The conference is sponsored by the Ohio State University Extension Office, South District. For registration and information contact: Deanna L. Tribe, District Specialist, South District Extension Office, 17 Standpipe Rd., P. O. Box 958, Jackson, Ohio 45640. Phone: 614-286-2177. FAX: 614-286-1578.

## DOWN HOME, DOWNTOWN: URBAN APPALACHIANS TODAY SEPTEMBER 21-23, 1995

The Research Committee of the Urban Appalachian Council of Cincinnati, Ohio is sponsoring a conference on urban Appalachians **September 21-23, 1995** at the Vernon Manor Hotel/Mayerson Academy, Cincinnati. The conference program is organized into three strands: Practice, Community Activism, and Research. For information contact: Susanne Kirk, Xavier University, 3800 Victory Parkway, Cincinnati, OH 45207-6521. Phone: 513-745-3703. FAX: 513-745-1052.



## President's Message continued from page 1

too often bemoaned our ineffectiveness in fulfilling this part of our mission. Perhaps the superhighway will provide one key for doing so. As we use these new technologies—e-mail, the internet, CD-ROM—to increase our interaction with each other as scholars, colleagues, and friends, let's not forget the even more formidable challenge we face: to disseminate, to share, to exchange our

ideas with the many other, as yet untapped, facets of the Appalachian community. Let's hope that what we heard at this year's conference was only the beginning, and that we'll see more presentations at Unicoi next year that will explore how we go about exploiting the vast new opportunities presented by this electronic revolution.



## APPALNET—APPALACHIA ON THE INFORMATION HIGHWAY

Dr. Richard Jensen, professor of history at the University of Illinois-Chicago and executive director of H-Net, has applied to the Department of Commerce for a grant to fund Appalnet—an information program “designed to provide intellectual connections to the people of Appalachia via the Internet.” The grant seeks to create and operate H-APPAL, which will be directed at professors, teachers, librarians, and other history professionals, and APPALNEWS, for a more “popular” audience. Both will be Internet “listserv” programs. In addition, the grant would create gophers and World Wide Web sites. All services would be free to Internet subscribers. The Department of Commerce funds special programs oriented toward the Information Highway, and is currently making its second round of awards. New awards will be announced in October, and if funded Appalnet should be up and running by the first of the year 1996.

## ASA MEDIA TEAM

Members of the ASA have developed a media team to respond to news and images of Appalachia in the media. The group plans to monitor media coverage of the region and develop methods of responding to such coverage where it feels it is needed. It will also seek to develop effective means of communication with the media and with each other. The team is headed by Jerry Williamson and Tal Stanley and includes Kathleen Wilson, Irene Moser, Ceci Conway, Jean Haskell Speer, Barry Whittemore, and Pat Arnow. It invites further participation by interested ASA members. For more information or to express an interest in joining the team, contact Jerry Williamson, *Appalachian Journal*, University Hall, Appalachian State University, Boone, NC 28608; phone 704-262-4072.

### New Books in Appalachian Studies from TENNESSEE



#### Appalachia Inside Out

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**Call for Papers and Presentations for 1996  
Appalachian Studies Conference  
March 29-31, 1996 at Unicoi State Park**

A call is extended for individual papers, multi-paper sessions, roundtable or group discussions, panels, or performance which explore some aspect of the conference theme, Appalachia at the Crossroads: Looking Outward, Looking Inward. Historical and contemporary perspectives in the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences on the theme are encouraged. Presentations related to the theme will be given preference, but other topics will be considered. Proposals should be limited to two pages, to include: (1) a cover sheet (single copy) showing title of presentation, presenter's name, address, and telephone number; a one-paragraph biographical sketch; and a description of audiovisual needs or other special requirements. For panels and multi-paper sessions, please include names, addresses, and biographical information for everyone involved; (2) 12 copies of a one-page abstract of the paper or description of the presentation. Because of the growing number of proposals, individuals may be restricted to one presentation. Individual presentations must not exceed 15 minutes. Proposals for consideration by the Program Committee for the Appalachian Studies Conference should be sub-

mitted no later than **September 30, 1995** to the Program Chair:

Curtis Wood  
Department of History  
Western Carolina University  
Cullowhee, N. C. 28723  
FAX No. (704) 227-7467

**Student Paper Competition**

The Carl A. Ross Appalachian Student Paper Competition is open to students in two categories:

middle and high school  
undergraduate and graduate

Students papers must adhere to the same guidelines and subject matter as other conference papers. The deadline for submission of completed papers in **January 15, 1996**. Mail to Curtis Wood all the address above. The author of the winning paper will receive a \$100 cash award and the opportunity to present the paper as part of a conference session. Costs of attending the conference are the winner's responsibility.



## Appalachian Studies Association Annual Conference

March 17-19, 1995    West Virginia University  
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