

# Lonesome Pine Regional Library

APRIL-JUNE 2009

LIBRARY UPDATE

VOLUME 2, ISSUE 2

## Celebrating Year Two of The Big Read and My *Antonia*



Mark your calendars for April 1 – May 15 as citizens across four counties and one city enjoy Lonesome Pine Regional Library's second year of The Big Read - an initiative of the National Endowment for the Arts in partnership with the Institute of Museum and Library Services and Arts Midwest.

Roots run deep in the heart of the Southern Appalachian Mountains where a patchwork quilt of small towns and communities dot our mountain landscape. Our communities are an ideal setting for featuring the book, *My Antonia*. Despite the obvious physical difference in the terrain of our mountain region as compared with the flat land of the prairie, the themes of roots driven by close relationship with the land and roots based in a rich cultural heritage resonate strongly for our region just as they reverberate throughout Willa Cather's novel.

With striking similarity to the settings and characters in *My Antonia*, southwest Virginia's population is scattered across close-knit towns and communities. Our communities were first populated in the initial thrust of the westward movement by a number of ethnic groups, chief among those the Scotch-Irish who settled in the mountains because the landscape reminded them of the country sides they left behind. This group survived mainly by subsistence farming on homesteads. Later on, as coal mining came into full swing, an influx of immigrants from Poland, Austria, Italy, and Germany populated the many coal camps that were hastily erected in the hollows of the mountains. The roots of the Appalachian people are in these immigrants who survived conditions of great hardship and poverty while bringing to our area a rich ethnic heritage and love for the land.

Significantly, our Southern Appalachian Mountains have also spawned a rich culture of writers who have made significant contributions to transforming the literature of the United States. Through their land-driven tales derived from mountain roots, these writers, like the character of Jim in the novel, have become emigrants of another sort. They have paid homage to their heritage by giving it special focus through their writings which have been adopted into the fabric of mainstream American literature.

This year's reading selection, *My Antonia*, will explore unique programming themes in Lonesome Pine territory including, celebrations of Virginia Authors; Appalachian and Cultural Storytelling; the Melting Pot of Southwest Virginia; Back to our Roots; Friendships Long Remembered; and Home Sweet Home. To bring these themes alive, the library has once again partnered with a host of exceptional organizations to promote the joy of reading. Just as the fictional characters, Antonia and her friend Jim traveled through our great country, readers are encouraged to travel to Lonesome Pine Regional Library where you can "Start Here ... Go Anywhere" through the pages of a great book.



A complete slate of activities and sponsors can be found at [www.lprlibrary.org](http://www.lprlibrary.org) or [www.neabigread.org](http://www.neabigread.org)

## The Big Read Storytelling Extravaganza with Donald



Nationally acclaimed storyteller, Donald Davis will enthrall all ages, May 14, 10:30 a.m. in the Goodloe Center on the campus of Mountain Empire Community College.

Donald was born in a Southern Appalachian mountain world rich in stories. "I didn't learn stories, I just absorbed them," he says as he recounts tales and more tales learned from a family of traditional storytellers who have lived on the same North Carolina land since 1781.

It was Uncle Frank, a man who "talked in stories," who helped Donald capture the real and daily adventures of life...and it was Uncle Frank who gave him the creative courage to tell about them.

Davis remembers, "I discovered that in a story I could safely dream any dream, hope any hope, go anywhere I pleased, fight any foe, win or lose, live or die." For Donald, storytelling is a way of giving and living life. He invites each listener to come along, to pull deep inside for one's own stories, to personally share and co-create the common experiences that celebrate the creative spirit. For Donald Davis storytelling "**...is not what I do for a living...it is how I do all that I do while I am living.**"

*Start Here—Go Anywhere!*



## Home Sweet Home Pioneer Jamborees—April 25

Settle into the homestead with our “Home Sweet Home” Pioneer Jamborees being held in five regional locations on Saturday, April 25 at 1:00 p.m. Dance pavilions and a special rendition of “Home Sweet Home” will usher in the day’s events in celebration of *My Ántonia*, Chapter VIII of Book II, “The Hired Girls.” These simultaneous jamborees will feature traditional music, arts and crafts, pioneer games, storytelling, food, and many more activities for the whole family. Dress in pioneer costume or come as you are for a fun filled afternoon! For more information, contact your local branch of Lonesome Pine Regional Library.

Locations: Bullitt Park, Big Stone Gap  
A.R. Matthews Memorial Park, St. Paul  
Clintwood Park Picnic Shelter, Clintwood  
Leeman Field Park, Pennington Gap  
Homeplace Mountain Farm and Museum, Gate City



*Enjoy a blast from the past at the pioneer jamboree as we celebrate our very own “Home Sweet Home”*

## The Crooked Road Exhibits and Concerts—April & May

As a Big Read partner, The Crooked Road is pleased to bring several events to two Lonesome Pine libraries. The first is the **Crooked Road Royalty** exhibit being displayed during the month of April at Wise County Public Library (Wise) and during May at Jonnie B. Deel Memorial Library (Clintwood).

**Crooked Road Royalty** highlights the careers of the Hill Billies, the Stoneman Family, the Carter Family, and the Stanley Brothers, four Virginian powerhouse groups that helped build the American country music industry. The exhibit includes rare film footage and photographs of historic Crooked Road musicians.



In conjunction with this exhibit, come enjoy concerts featuring **Dale Jett and “Hello Stranger”** composed of Dale, his wife, Teresa, and long time friend, Oscar Harris. Dale and Oscar have been musical partners for over twenty years. Teresa joined them a few years

back and the three have been playing and recording together ever since. The Carter Family influence is evident as they continue the unbroken circle of music that Dale grew up in, and that their fans demand. The group also adds an eclectic mixture from songwriters they admire and original tunes, resulting in a true Appalachian Americana experience. The concert will be held at the library in Wise, Sunday, April 19, 2:30 pm and at the library in Clintwood, Sunday, May 3, 2:30 pm.

During the month of May, the Wise County Public Library will also display **Musical Styles Along the Crooked Road**. This exhibit presents the rich variety of roots music western Virginians sing and play—fiddle and banjo tunes, bluegrass, ballads of love and death, sentimental mountain songs, blues, and gospel.

“The story of American country music is filled with singers and pickers from the Crooked Road region,” says Andrew Pauly, exhibit researcher. “Even today’s young country music stars know songs that were first recorded by the early South-west Virginia artists.”

The exhibits have been produced by the Blue Ridge Institute & Museum, for the Crooked Road: Virginia’s Heritage Music Trail, with funding from the Virginia Tobacco Indemnification & Community Revitalization Commission. Funding for Dale Jett and “Hello Stranger” concerts is provided by the Virginia Commission of the Arts.



**Lonesome Pine Regional Library & Books-by-Mail**  
124 Library Road, SW  
Wise, Virginia  
276-328-8325

**Serving Wise County & City of Norton:**  
Wise County Public Library, Wise  
C. Bascom Slemper Memorial Library, Big Stone Gap  
Coeburn Community Library, Coeburn  
J. Fred Matthews Memorial Library, St. Paul

**Serving Dickenson County:**  
Jonnie B. Deel Memorial Library, Clintwood  
Haysi Community Library, Haysi

**Serving Lee County:**  
Lee County Public Library, Pennington Gap  
Rose Hill Community Library, Rose Hill

**Serving Scott County**  
Scott County Public Library, Gate City

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