Frost Farm Picnic

The mid-conference picnic is the centerpiece of the day off. Located at Frost Farm, about 1.5 miles from the Bread Loaf Inn, the event will be followed by a talk on Robert Frost by John Elder, co-editor of the Norton Anthology of Nature Writing. Afterward, participants can tour Frost’s summer cabin.

The picnic begins today at 12:30 p.m. While many participants take a leisurely walk down to Frost Farm, those who need a ride in a Bread Loaf van may meet in front of the Inn at 12:15 p.m. For those unable to hike the hill from the picnic area to the Frost cabin, a car will be available for a ride to the top (please let the Back Office know before the picnic if you will want a ride up). The picnic area will include portable restroom facilities.

Please note: If the weather prevents us from holding this event, we’ll post new information on the front door of the Dining Hall today by 11:00 a.m.

To reach the Frost Farm, turn right from the Inn porch and walk .7 miles down Route 125. Turn right at the sign for Frost Road; the farm is roughly .8 miles up the road.

VIDA Stirs Conversation

Fiction fellow Jennine Capó Crucet will spotlight VIDA, an organization for women in the literary arts, in a talk today at 10:30 a.m. in Barn Classroom A. Crucet, Director of Membership for VIDA, will discuss the origins and mission of VIDA, as well as the organization’s goals for the next year. Crucet will facilitate a discussion of how VIDA can connect with members and potential members, both women and men, during this session. Crucet anticipates “a lively conversation about how the organization can best serve the literary community” as it transitions to a membership organization, and will outline some of the opportunities VIDA has to offer writers.

Faculty, Fellows Needed

Faculty and fellows are encouraged to sign up to serve lunch on Wednesday, August 22. Few conference traditions elicit the enthusiasm and dread of the special day when the wait staff takes a breather.

A sign-up sheet is located in the Back Office. Please sign up by 12:00 p.m. on Tuesday. Server training will begin at 12:15 p.m. on August 22. You’ll need to wear shoes that cover your toes.

If you are unable to attend the picnic at Frost Farm today, please sign up for an on-campus meal. The sign-up sheet will be posted near the Back Office until 10:30 a.m.
The Blue Parlor is Your Parlor

A message from Harriet Clark, Blue Parlor Coordinator:

...So come on over. Today at 5:30 p.m., the theme is Strange and Stranger, but do not be afraid. The only strange thing here is the talent of our readers: Martin Shapiro, Kyra Robinov, Meghan Dunn, Christopher DeWan, Flower Conroy, Catherine Wargo Roberts, Qiana Towns, Robin McCarthy, Grant Bergland, and Jane Seitel. Come root them on, comfort the unsettled, enjoy a cookie.

Tomorrow there is—sigh—no Blue Parlor reading but our next round of sign-up sheets will be posted at 8:00 a.m. Readings you should sign up for include Wednesday’s open reading, Thursday’s 1:30 p.m. reading on Place, and Friday’s double-header—From the Dark Tower in the morning and our grand finale, One Minute in Heaven, at 5:30 p.m. in the Little Theatre. Slots become available for all of these readings Tuesday at 8:00 a.m. so tuck yourself in early tonight and wake up raring to go. I will see you there.

Writer’s Cramp Race

By the time many of you recover from last night’s dance, the Writer’s Cramp will be decided. The annual race, which commences at 8:00 a.m. next to the Annex, pits Bread Loafer’s against each other, themselves, and an inviting 2.7 mile course. Runners of all skill levels should meet by the front porch of the Annex by 7:45 a.m. A map is provided on page 5 of this issue.

Community Items

FINALLY, YOGA!

Join Ashley Shires for a one-hour, all levels vinyasa flow Monday, August 20, from 3:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. in the upstairs of the Library (back end of the building). Stretch, strengthen, and post-dance detox. Six mats are available. You can also bring your own or go natural and practice without. Shires is a certified Ashtanga yoga instructor with ten years of teaching experience. Come ready to relax, breathe, flow, and center.

BLUE PARLOR PHOTOS

Grant Bergland has uploaded (and will continue to upload) his photos from every Blue Parlor Reading to Facebook.

facebook.com/grant.bergland

If you don’t have Facebook email him at gb2365@columbia.edu and he can:

1) Send you a link to an album where you can download pictures yourself, and/or
2) Send you the pictures as attachments
Dance Recap

Bread Loafers congregated in the Barn until midnight, reveling in the sounds of the first dance of the 2012 conference. DJ Christopher Ross kept incredible tunes coming, social staff kept the liquid encouragement flowing, and Bread Loafers displayed moves that could be described as both “classic rump-shaking” and “awkwardly funky.”

Many Bread Loafers were so engrossed in the spectacle that they did not want the evening to end. Numerous dancers entreated the DJ to continue past the scheduled hour, often promising wild favors they could not hope to follow through with.

“The music was so good,” said social staffer Corey van LANDINGHAM, “I bet there will be six Bread Loaf babies next year.” Other participants expressed how happy they were that there will be another dance Friday, August 24, since they waited too long at last night’s dance to get on the dance floor.

Panel on Film Today

Faculty members Helen Schulman and Brad Watson, with guest Ted Perry, will delve into films *The Passenger* and *The Station Agent* in today’s panel, “A Film Scene I Wish I Had Written.”

“I’m not a screenwriter, I’m just a regular filmgoer,” Watson said of his role on the panel. “I’m going to take a look at a scene sequence and talk about what I think is well-written and well-performed, and remind viewers how the scene connects to what came before it so you have an accumulation of meaning.”

The discussion, which features clips from the films, will take place at 9:15 a.m. in Barn Classroom 1.

New Work: Excerpts from the Worksheets

I couldn’t take my eyes off the barrel of the lens, the fast trigger of her finger against the black skeleton of camera. I wondered what it would look like cracked open to its upside down mirrors and shiny levers, how many screws there were, how many lantern-lit cranes might come unfurling out of that cage. I wondered what she and I would look like if the darkened chambers of our bodies were unlocked. What streams of light might escape us and reveal about the things we collect and hide, and there is a difference between aperture and wound.

— Natalie Diaz, from “Cranes, Mafiosos, and a Polaroid camera”

TIME CHANGE FOR ELDER WALK

If you plan to attend the trail walk with John Elder on Tuesday, August 21, please note that you should meet in front of the Bread Loaf Inn at 11:10 a.m. to take the van to the beginning of the trail. If you prefer to walk, please leave by 11:00 a.m. so that you can be at the trail head by 11:20 a.m.

CHECK YOUR MAILBOX

You know, there may be something in there waiting for you.
A History of Bread Loaf’s From the Dark Tower Reading

The title of this reading comes from the poem by Countée Cullen, in which he addresses the way discussions of ethnicity are often kept in the dark. He rallies for elevating such communication to a tower, whereby all can hear and benefit. In this spirit, ten years ago, writers of color at Bread Loaf began to hold readings in their rooms and over the last many years the reading has grown, with the Blue Parlor acting as host. The sign-up sheet will be posted Tuesday morning at 8:00 a.m. and all writers of color here at Bread Loaf are invited to sign up. This reading has been among the most popular at the conference and we invite everyone on the mountain to attend the reading on Friday, August 24 at 10:10 a.m. in the Blue Parlor, carrying on this longstanding Bread Loaf tradition.

From the Dark Tower

We shall not always plant while others reap  
The golden increment of bursting fruit,  
Not always countenance, abject and mute,  
That lesser men should hold their brothers cheap;  
Not everlastingly while others sleep  
Shall we beguile their limbs with mellow flute,  
Not always bend to some more subtle brute;  
We were not made to eternally weep.  
The night whose sable breast relieves the stark,  
White stars is no less lovely being dark,  
And there are buds that cannot bloom at all  
In light, but crumple, piteous, and fall;  
So in the dark we hide the heart that bleeds,  
And wait, and tend our agonizing seeds.

—Countée Cullen

TODAY’S TRIVIA QUESTION

Which faculty member once crashed in an airplane in the Central American jungle and has caught three mice at Bread Loaf in the last three days?

(The answer will be published in tomorrow’s edition)

YESTERDAY’S TRIVIA ANSWER

Claire Vaye Watkins learned to parallel park at The Chicken Ranch, a brothel outside of Las Vegas.
Scandal: Substance Found in Moustakis’s Work

The Bread Loaf Olympics suffered another serious threat to their credibility yesterday when, J. A. Hall Substance Testing Services, the independent testing agency of the Bread Loaf Olympics, revealed that fellow Melinda Moustakis had tested positive for Prose-Enhancing Devices (PEDs). Moustakis, who was a vocal critic of Bread Loaf Olympic Chairman Michael Collier earlier in the games but more recently became a Collier ally, was revealed to have used a number of lyrical and poetic devices within her sentences. “A close look at Ms. Moustakis’s sample suggests that it has real substance. We found evidence that she has used synthetic synecdoche and there were traces of extended metaphor in her work,” said a statement from the testing service.

Moustakis denied the allegations, stating that she passed through airport security on her way to Bread Loaf and could not have smuggled these devices onto the mountain after a thorough screening. Administrative manager Noreen Cargill confirmed that such devices are not provided by the conference, calling into doubt how Moustakis would have acquired them.

The scandal cast a pall over these games, overshadowing a second straight medal by poet Flower Conroy. Collier refused to speak to reporters from The Crumb about the scandal, though sources close to him described his reaction as “kind of blasé.”

Adam Renn Olen contributed additional reporting to this article.