The 2015 Bread Loaf Writers’ Conference kicked off yesterday, bringing writers in every phase of their careers together.

“I’m very excited,” said Sonja Srinivasan from Ann Arbor, Michigan. “It’s great that people of all backgrounds and experiences gather here. And it’s so beautiful—it’s heaven!”

“I learn more here in ten days than I do all year,” said third-time attendee Ellen Devlin. “The conversations you have, the connections you make—they’re just all very incredible. It’s my goal to be a lifer.”

Thanks to the recent top-to-bottom renovation of the Inn, this nonagenarian conference looks fresher than ever.

Workshop Locations

Please note that these locations are only for today, Thursday, August 13. Vans to Schoolhouse, Earthworm, and Homer Noble Farm will leave from the front of the Inn at 1:15 p.m.

Jane Alison - Barn 5
Charles Baxter - Schoolhouse Living Room
Christopher Castellani - Barn 2
Vikram Chandra - Treman Living Room
Lan Samantha Chang - Earthworm Living Room
Robert Cohen - Barn 1
Ted Conover - Inn West Seminar
Stacey D’Erasmo - Tamarack Living Room
Peter Ho Davies - Library Upstairs (Front end of building)
Linda Gregerson - Barn Observatory
Terrance Hayes - Barn (Main)
Edward Hirsch - Blue Parlor Living Room
Ann Hood - Barn A
Sally Keith - Library Main Floor
Randall Kenan - Homer Noble Farm Living Room
Helen Schulman - Fritz Living Room
Tom Sleigh - Barn 4
Helena María Viramontes - Barn 3
Ellen Bryant Voigt - Barn 6
Afaa Michael Weaver - Library Upstairs (Back end of building)
Greetings from Your Head Waiters

Howdy, everyone, and welcome to Bread Loaf! We have a tremendous new crop of waiters, each of whom is totally ready to serve you. You’ll see us at mealtimes, making announcements and just generally looking sharp, dynamic and awesome. We love to hear from you, but remember: we handle your food!

—Keith Leonard & Kathryn Savage

About lunch
• Lunch will be served buffet style, so to avoid long lines, we urge you to follow the schedule noted here, based on your workshop schedule:
  • On days when your workshop does not meet, please go to the dining hall starting at noon.
  • On days when your workshop does meet, please go to the dining hall between 12:30 and 1:00 p.m.

Today, when all workshops meet at 1:30 p.m., we ask poets and nonfiction writers to show up at 11:30 a.m., and fiction writers, please hold back until noon.

• Lunch service continues until 1:30 p.m. each day (with the exception of today, when it ends at 1:00 p.m.). If a line forms at the dining hall door—which has been known to happen—please note that you can scoot in through the dining hall door to start at the salad bar, if you like.

Reminders
• Please remember that your devoted waitstaff are also writers, whom you’ll see in workshop, at lectures, and giving readings later in the conference.
• Meal times are prompt and leaving the dining hall on time helps waiters get to lectures and readings on time. Just ask for a to-go cup! Keep all dishes and silver in the dining room.
• Coffee is available in the morning by 6:30 a.m. After breakfast ends, coffee and water are available in the barn throughout the day.
• If you have an allergy or food concern, please be proactive and discuss any questions or concerns with your waiter or the head waiters.
• Please do not bring alcohol into the dining hall.

CORRECTION

Yesterday we misprinted the Conference’s address. All mail should be sent to:

Your Name
Bread Loaf Writers’ Conference
4229 Route 125
Ripton, VT 05766

We apologize for any inconvenience.
Blue Parlor Organizational Meeting

“Organizational” seems so drab, I know. But I promise, there is nothing drab about the Blue Parlor! The quaint little (newly remodeled!) room where you registered yesterday is the venue for Bread Loaf’s very own literary salon, a space where we gather to read our work, support each other, and nibble on a few snacks that will be provided by yours truly. Whether you write fiction, poetry, nonfiction, blog posts, tweets, emails or text messages, this reading series is for you. Yes, you! All for you. For all of you.

Tonight at 7:30 p.m., immediately after dinner, we’ll gather in the Blue Parlor (to the left of the Back Office, in the back of the Inn) to brainstorm possible themes for readings and to go over the “organizational” logistics of the BP Reading Series. Things like, when and where do I sign-up? Do I have to wear a tie? For how long can I read? The meeting will be done in time for us to head over to the 8:15 p.m. reading. We’ll cover all that needs to be covered and I’ll answer any questions you might have—it’s an efficient ship over in the Blue Parlor!

Tomorrow, please be sure to come to the first Blue Parlor reading at 5:30 p.m. The sign-up sheet for that first reading will go up after tonight’s meeting. Sign-up sheets for subsequent readings will be available Friday the 14th, Sunday the 16th, and Monday the 17th at 8:00 a.m. sharp, on the Blue Parlor bulletin board (right beside the back office). For those of you who are unsure about reading, do it! I promise, you’ll be glad you did. We’ll root each other on, embrace each other, love each other. So join us, help us make the magic happen at the 2015 Blue Parlor Reading Series, because, really, we can’t do it without you.

Questions, concerns, high fives? Contact Blue Parlor Coordinator Michelle Peñaloza.

From the Front Desk

Please keep these guidelines in mind for convenience and safety:

• There is no smoking allowed inside any building on campus or on any porch.
• We suggest you start a room list by each hall phone so building mates can find you if you get a call.
• Please park all cars in the Barn parking lot. The exception to this rule covers those staying at Tamarack, Gilmore, Fritz, Frothingham, Earthworm, and Brandybrook, and also cars parked for less than 10 minutes for the purposes of loading and unloading.
• If you have a serious medical emergency, call 911, then notify the front desk. Notify the front desk for minor medical issues. If you have a medical emergency between 8:30 a.m. and 10:00 p.m., call extension 2700. After 10:00 p.m., call both extensions 2713 and 2710.
Slideshow Highlights History

Middlebury College professor David Haward Bain will offer his annual slideshow and talk on the history of the Bread Loaf Writers’ Conference tonight at 9:30 p.m. in the Little Theatre. Bain, the author of *Whose Woods These Are: A History of the Bread Loaf Writers’ Conference*, traces the lively history of the conference from its founding to present.

Bain’s talk will feature anecdotes about some of the notable names in American letters, and the slideshow features candid photos of writers at work and at play, including Robert Frost, Ralph Ellison, Truman Capote, Sinclair Lewis, Truman Capote, Ralph Ellison, Truman Capote, Carson McCullers, Anne Sexton, John Gardner, Eudora Welty, John Irving, Toni Morrison, Wallace Stegner, Richard Wright, Archibald Macleish, and Richard Wilbur, as well as some current faculty members. This beloved tradition provides participants with a context for the work ahead of them and a rich sense of the Bread Loaf heritage.

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A Welcome Letter from the Bread Loaf Social Staff

Hello, Bread Loaf! We’re the Social Staff. We’d love to meet you, so please don’t be shy! We’re easy to spot because we’re usually the ones hauling around and pouring the beer! You’ll also see us manning the door during the Barn Social Hour and the Barn Pub each night where beer and wine are available for $4 each, as well as free soft drinks (not to mention the wonderful conversation from Randy and the Social Staff). We’ll also host three campus-wide receptions (with an open bar) and two dances.

Like you, we’re all writers and will be participating in workshops. Most of us have been here before, so if you’ve got any questions about anything on this mountain—“Where is the Dragon’s Den?” or “Can I check out a book from the library?”—please let us know and we’ll do our best to lend a hand. We’re so glad you’re here, and we look forward to your company.

- Jamel Brinkley, Jessamine Chan, Carolina Ebeid, Jamey Hatley, Steven Kleinman, Margaret Ross, Sam Ross, Keith Wilson, Phillip Williams
Do you believe vegetarian tigers exist?

*Afaa Michael Weaver answers:*

Veggie tigers do exist. There are three of them in the back of Sam’s deli and neighborhood cheese shop in West Philly. They have lost so much protein from meat that they can no longer hold a decent conversation. One of them actually ate a plant that belonged to the lady who runs the laundromat at the corner of 45th & Baltimore, or is that 50th & Larchwood? Anyway, there is a protein deficient tiger who gets into these awful arguments with the lady at the laundromat. What a mess that is. Every time it happens she says, “You know, there’s more than one way to skin a cat.”

Seating Chart for Today’s Lunch

Please sit with your workshop group today at lunch. Poets and nonfiction writers should arrive at 11:30 a.m., and fiction writers should arrive at noon. Lunch service will continue until 1:00 p.m. today.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chandra</th>
<th>Keith</th>
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<tr>
<td>Hirsch</td>
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<td>Alison</td>
<td>Weaver</td>
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<td>Schulman</td>
<td>Cohen</td>
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*front door*
SHARE THE EXPERIENCE ON TWITTER...
#BUTNOTURINGREADINGS

The conference encourages you to unplug while you’re here, but the final edition of The Crumb lists the Twitter usernames of conference participants so you can follow them when you get home. Twitter users who would like to be included in that list should email blcrumb@gmail.com with their full name. For those who can’t live without Twitter, we encourage you to use the hashtag #blwc15; previous attendees sometimes follow along from afar.

CAMPUS WIRELESS

You’ll find wireless internet access at many locations on campus. The name of the network is midd-standard, and the case-sensitive password is Middlebury-wireless.

EXPLORE SCENIC MIDDLEBURY

Starting tomorrow van trips to Middlebury leave from the Inn at 1:30 p.m. and return from Middlebury at 3:45 p.m. to arrive at Bread Loaf at 4:00 p.m. There is no trip planned today. Sign up at the front desk if you’d like to ride into town, as trips do not take place if no one signs up. Please be mindful to be on time—the driver will not wait for stragglers or lollygaggers.

Extra, Extra! Write All About It

The Crumb relies on submissions of news, editorials, overheard comments, and reviews of the waiters from all conference participants. “Let’s face it—The Crumb is in a sad state,” says conference director Michael Collier, “so I encourage Bread Loafers to take on the role of citizen journalist and revive the fine tradition of good storytelling.”

If you’d like to submit a news or editorial item, place your copy in the Crumb envelope outside the Back Office or e-mail blcrumb@gmail.com. Please indicate which day you’d like your announcement printed. Announcements must be received before 3 p.m. to be printed in the following day’s edition.

Community items are limited to a headline, plus thirty words. We will print items on a first-come, first-served basis as our limited space permits. Submit by e-mail only. Community items include activities like quidditch tournaments or informal meetings.

The editor delights in reading missed connections in his spare time, but the newspaper will not run advertisements or personals.

The Crumb’s office is located in the Back Office. Feel free to drop by. Archived issues are available on the conference web site.

Bidding Goodbye to Christa

We are saddened to report the passing of Bread Loaf Bookstore Coordinator, Christa O. Aleshire, on June 2, 2015, at University of Vermont Medical Center in Burlington. Michael Collier remembers Christa fondly as a calm and caring person who made visits to the bookstore a joy for all. Christa, Michael recalls, had a “wonderful, slightly dry sense of humor” that put others at ease. Noreen Cargill remembers that “Bread Loafers loved Christa’s enthusiasm for the program and support of the readers that she showed in displays of their books that would rotate depending on the special events scheduled for a particular day. It was terrific to have her on board knowing that she always took care of all of the details.” Christa enjoyed quilting, cooking, the ocean, jazz music, and reading. “I just love being surrounded by books,” said Christa in an interview with The Crumb last year.
HUMANS OF BREAD LOAF

“I’ve been working at the Writers’ Conference for 24 years now. The most common question I get is whether I’ve seen a moose. I have—lots of times. You’d have to be lucky to see a bear, though. And I’ve never seen a mountain lion.

I just published a book about Johnny Unitas. Do you know him? He’s considered the Babe Ruth of the NFL.”

- Edward Brown

WHERE AT BREAD LOAF IS Michelle Peñaloza?

Channel your inner Nancy Drew, engage in armchair travel, or be inspired to explore Bread Loaf’s beautiful campus.

Follow Michelle as she visits sites famous and obscure. Read The Crumb tomorrow for today’s answer.

TODAY’S TRIVIA QUESTION

Which faculty member did Bill Clinton check out while holding her child?

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

BIBLIOPHILES’ ALMANAC

“Half Light”

High: 75° Low: 63°

KEITH WILSON’S GUIDE TO SLEEPING*

“If, between trying to experience everything, you find yourself with a moment to catch your breath and contemplate, catch a nap instead. Wordsworth surely took some naps among those daffodils.”

*Keith, while an expert at sleeping, is not a medical professional. His advice is entirely unscientific.