

# MOUNTAINS

## Local novelists to help lead conference



**Word from the Smokies**  
Frances Figart  
Guest columnist

Annette Saunooke Clapsaddle and Richard Powers live on opposite sides of Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Soon, the two-award winning novelists will converge in the mountains to help create the first-ever conference for writers held within the national park boundary.

The inaugural Tremont Writers Conference is the coordinated effort of two educational park partners, Great Smoky Mountains Institute at Tremont and Great Smoky Mountains Association. Set on the lush, secluded Tremont campus, the event will immerse a small group of selected writers in an intensive retreat of brainstorming and fine-tuning their work while learning about nature and writing in small groups from Oct. 25-29.

Clapsaddle lives in Cherokee and became the first enrolled citizen of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians to publish a novel with the release of "Even As We Breathe," which was a finalist for the Weatherford Award and one of NPR's Best Books of 2020.

"Much of my writing is directly influenced by the natural spaces of my home," she said. "Tremont will offer the opportunity to share that influence with participants while also learning from them and the other instructors."

One of three author workshop leaders at the conference, Clapsaddle will work

closely with Frank X. Walker, the first African American Kentucky poet laureate, and nonfiction writer Janet McCue, who co-authored "Back of Beyond: A Horace Kephart Biography" with naturalist George Ellison, winning the 2019 Thomas Wolfe Memorial Literary Award.

Far from Cherokee on the other side of the park, Powers lives near Tremont in Townsend, Tennessee. A MacArthur Fellow and Pulitzer Prize-winner in fiction, he will lead sessions for the entire group, including a craft talk on the final night of the conference that will be held at Maryville College and open to the public.

"I've taught and worked with writers in many places around the world, but I've never taken part in a writers conference within earshot of a rushing mountain stream and just beneath a spectacular waterfall," he said. "I will enjoy the chance to talk about fiction in the middle of a biodiverse forest in one of America's greatest national parks."

Powers has written 13 imaginative and emotionally charged novels that explore the effects of modern science and technology on society and the environment. His two most recent works — "The Overstory" and "Bewilderment" — are both partially set in the Great Smoky Mountains. "In recent years, my fiction has focused on how the stories of individual human beings are never separate from the stories of the more-than-human world that makes those human lives possible," said Powers. "It will be a joy to explore that idea in the middle of a rich, recovering forest that is also full of human history."

Clapsaddle's work, too, addresses themes of society, environment, and

human history. She is currently working on a contemporary-set novel with a female Cherokee protagonist.

"This narrative seeks to mine the cultural values of our origin stories and overlay them on a modern political context," she said. "It is largely an examination of matrilineal roles — past, present, and future — within a culture and how this concept has influenced and will continue to influence land and lifeways."

Clapsaddle, who holds degrees from Yale University and the College of William and Mary, taught high school in Swain County for more than a dozen years. "I taught my students that writing is primarily about evoking physical sensation in the reader," she said. "In the past several years, I have continued to do this with adult learners as well. When we strip away the misconceptions that writing is only academic or formal and, instead, reinforce that writing is simply about conveying the human experience — something we all have to offer — all voices have the opportunity to emerge."

Powers taught creative writing to undergraduate and graduate students at the University of Illinois and later taught students of all levels at California's Stanford University. "I never learned more about writing than I learned by trying to teach it," he said. "Trying to be the most useful pair of outside eyes and ears for a student's story has more than once helped me realize what it is that I was looking for in my own fiction."

Clapsaddle's experiences are similar. "Working with other writers always informs my own revision process," she said. "It helps me to recognize in my own work what I can only first see in that of

others. And, as always, writing is about empathy-building."

At the conference in October, Clapsaddle will lead small-group fiction workshops each morning while McCue works with the nonfiction cohort and Walker with the selected poets. Each afternoon, writers will join experienced Tremont naturalists for guided explorations that spark curiosity and wonder through hands-on experience with the region's cultural and natural history. Evenings will conclude with hearty dinners, fellowship with peers, and readings by writing faculty. Meals and lodging are provided.

"I am thrilled to combine so many of my loves in one place: being in nature, teaching the craft of writing, and surrounding myself with other energetic writers," said Clapsaddle. "Interactions at the writers conference will, no doubt, help me to stay in place and connect with the natural rhythms essential to my own work."

Acceptance to the Tremont Writers Conference is based on manuscript evaluation, with chosen writers of fiction, nonfiction, and poetry notified by July 14. Limited financial aid is available. Additional information may be found and applications to participate in the event may be submitted online now through April 30 at [writers.gsmit.org](http://writers.gsmit.org).

Frances Figart (*rhymes with Tiger*) is the editor of Smokies Life and the Creative Services Director for the 29,000-member Great Smoky Mountains Association, an educational nonprofit partner of Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Reach her at [frances@gsmas-soc.org](mailto:frances@gsmas-soc.org).



**Bhramari Brewhouse, one of South Slope's newest breweries, is named after the Hindu goddess of bees.** ANGELA WILHELM/ASHEVILLE CITIZEN TIMES

## Bhramari Brewing plans pause

Tiana Kennell  
Asheville Citizen Times  
USA TODAY NETWORK

ASHEVILLE - The doors have closed at a South Slope craft brewery, and it's unknown if and when they will reopen.

On Feb. 7, Bhramari Brewing Co. announced via social media that its Asheville and Charlotte taprooms have closed, in what may be a "temporary shutdown."

A post on the brewery's Asheville taproom social media accounts states: "To our valued customers, team members, and the Asheville community: Circumstances beyond our control forced what we hope is a temporary shutdown. We deeply regret the impact this has had on our staff and our community."

"We have been working around the clock to find solutions and hope to announce plans in the coming weeks to restore jobs lost due to this very unfortunate situation."

"We are grateful for your understanding and continued support."

The decision comes after the busi-

ness laid off employees and closed its taproom kitchen and Shere Khan ghost kitchen last month at its Asheville location, at 101 S. Lexington Ave.

The Charlotte taproom was closed in January, which was to be for only one month, chef/owner Josh Dillard told the Citizen Times on Jan. 17.

However, on Feb. 7, a post on the Charlotte brewery's social media states the business is "Temporarily Closed."

The previously stated reason by Bhramari on social media was that the brewery was "taking the month of January, typically the slowest month in the service industry, to plan, and remodel."

For more about Bhramari Brewing, visit [bhramaribrewing.com](http://bhramaribrewing.com) and [facebook.com/bhramaribrewingco/](http://facebook.com/bhramaribrewingco/).

Tiana Kennell is the food and dining reporter for the Asheville Citizen Times, part of the USA Today Network. Email her at [tkennell@citizen-times.com](mailto:tkennell@citizen-times.com) or follow her on Twitter/Instagram @PrincessOfPage. Please help support this type of journalism with a subscription to the Citizen Times.

## Medicaid

Continued from Page 1A

Lambeth acknowledged that partitioning these health care proposals in separate bills contrasts with the more comprehensive bill the Senate passed last year. But some House Republicans only support some of the provisions, he said.

North Carolina is one of a dozen states that hasn't accepted Medicaid coverage for healthy adults who make too much money to receive conventional Medicaid coverage but not enough to access highly-subsidized private insurance.

The federal government pays 90% of the costs to cover expansion enroll-

ees. The state also could get an extra \$1.5 billion over two years through a financial sweetener in a COVID-19 federal relief package.

The House bill also would direct the state to participate in a program that would result in higher reimbursements for hospital systems when they treat Medicaid patients. And it lays out efforts to help Medicaid recipients access workforce development initiatives as they seek to return to employment or establish new careers.

Berger pointed out that the House measure contains a provision that would void the act if it became law should no state budget law get enacted this calendar year. He suggested such a condition could further complicate negotiations with the House on a package of health care changes.

**USA TODAY NETWORK**

Dining Deals USA

4GRKP9A

BONUS CODE

- 1) Register and enter codes at: [www.diningdealsusa.com](http://www.diningdealsusa.com)
- 2) Enter today's code before Monday, February 13, 2023 at 11:59 p.m.
- 3) Redeem today's bonus code for coupon redemptions that interest you. Coupons cover restaurants, travel, family fun, automotive, shopping and more!

\* Discounts vary by merchant, location and offer; subject to availability. Offers may change without notice. Total savings vary based on the number of discounts and coupons redeemed and value of offers.

TODAY'S BONUS CODE

# Citizen Times

PART OF THE USA TODAY NETWORK

### Customer service

To view important information online related to your subscription, visit [aboutyoursubscription.citizen-times.com](http://aboutyoursubscription.citizen-times.com). You can also manage your subscription at [account.citizen-times.com](http://account.citizen-times.com). Contact the Citizen Times for questions or to report issues via email at [citizentimes@gannett.com](mailto:citizentimes@gannett.com) or 1-800-672-2472.

### Operating hours are:

- Monday-Friday: 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
- Saturday: 7:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. with limited support for Digital
- Sunday: 7:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

### Full access print and digital subscriptions

Subscribe and save today by visiting [citizen-times.com/subscribe](http://citizen-times.com/subscribe).

### Contact us

Customer Service	1-800-672-2472
News Director	Karen Chávez   828-236-8980
Advertising	828-252-5611
Obituaries	<a href="http://citizen-times.com/obituaries">citizen-times.com/obituaries</a>
Classifieds	<a href="http://classifieds.citizen-times.com">classifieds.citizen-times.com</a>

### Corrections and clarifications

Our goal is to promptly correct errors. Email us at [accuracy@asheville.gannett.com](mailto:accuracy@asheville.gannett.com) to report a mistake or call 828-232-5829. Describe the error, where you saw it, the date, page number, or the URL.

### Postal information

The Citizen Times, USPS# 236-000, ISSN# 0336-0000, is published 6 days per week excluding Saturday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving (observed), Christmas Day (observed) and New Year's Day (observed) by Gannett Media Corp., 14 O. Henry Ave., Asheville, NC 28802. Periodicals postage paid at Asheville, NC and additional mailing offices. **Postmaster:** Please send address changes to Customer Service, PO Box 5830, Augusta, GA 30916.