



A Program of:



and



2014 Student Anthology

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The Woman and Her Soldier

By Lily Bond

A crowded town square, children laughing and smiling

Click

Lights blinking and vendors calling pedestrians to their booths.

Click

Adults talking and milling about the carnival.

Click

A girl stands in the center of the chaos, a professional camera up to her eye. She lowers the camera and critically examines the picture she just took. She smiles and lifts the camera back up to her eye. The girl takes several more photos of the flurry of activity around her. The girl's friends drag her over to the ferris wheel and she only agrees because she can imagine the images her camera would hold after the ride is over. Her friends seat themselves in a car, but the attendant will not let the girl board because there is no more room. A next car comes and the girl sits. She turns to her right and snaps pictures of a little boy with a red stained mouth giving a gap-toothed smile. The girl faces forward when the car begins to rise into the air and stops. She turns and nearly drops her camera. A young man is seated next to her, he grins and she blushes. Pushing a lock of curly mahogany hair behind her ear, the girly shyly focuses on her

camera. The young man chuckles and the girl's hazel eyes dart upward. The young man has a buzz cut of blonde hair, kind eyes, and he is dressed in an army uniform. The girl looks down and snaps a picture of an escaping balloon. It floats away and the girl smiles. The young man asks her her name and when she answers, he smiles, saying that it is the most beautiful name in the world. The girl blushes and notices how the light seems to be caught in his eyes. The tow talk and all too soon the ride is over. The girl's friends drag her to another booth and the nice soldier disappears into the crowd.

Years later, the girl, now a woman, is back at the annual carnival, but this time she has a booth of her photographs. Black and white stills, fast moving blurs of color, portraits, the woman displays her pictures for all to see. At the front of her booth, she hears laughter. Turning, she sees a group of young men her age. They laugh and point at her favorite picture, a black and white image of the kind soldier just before the crowd swallowed him so many years ago. The woman opens her mouth to scold the men, but they part, calling to their buddy. His hair has grown out, he wears a t-shirt and jeans, but his eyes are still kind. He smiles and the woman's world brightens. He asks her to show him the rest of her art and she complies.

The next year, the woman and the soldier visit the carnival once more, together. At the ferris wheel, the soldier asks the woman for her heart and hand in marriage. In the same seat where they met

years before, the woman answers him, putting her whole heart in her acceptance of his proposal.

Summertime comes and the woman wears a solid white gown with her father at her side. They walk between their friends and family and he kisses his daughter's cheek when they reach the end of their path. He places her hand in the soldier's and tells him not to hurt his baby girl. The woman blushes and the soldier nods solemnly. The couple faces a grandfatherly minister and he speaks to everyone in the audience before turning to the two young people before him. The couple exchange words, words they swear to keep forever. The soldier kisses his wife and the audience clap, showering them in rose petals.

Years pass and the couple remain faithful to each other. The woman blesses the soldier with many children which they love unconditionally. The woman smiles at her soldier as they walk hand in hand down the street, their children laughing at the clowns that entertain the children at the carnival.

The children grow up and leave. The woman still smiles at her soldier and he still professes his love every day. The woman has new subjects for her photography, her grandchildren. The grandchildren beg for the story of how the woman met her soldier and soon each one of them knows it by heart.

Seasons pass and the woman visits a wide field with fake flowers decorating every plot. Behind her she hears laughter and bells coming from the carnival. The woman, now elderly, kneels and

wipes away old leaves from the plaque set in the ground. Her soldier passed away in his sleep and she still holds the folded flag she was given as he was lowered into the welcoming earth. A hand presses down on her shoulder and the woman stands. She takes her soldier's hand and they walk up the path to heaven, together forever more.

The next day, the local paper tells of a woman who lived a full life and about how she left behind six children, fourteen grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren. 'She was loved and is greatly missed.'

The grandchildren tell their children the story of how a girl with a camera met her love on a ferris wheel. They point to the pictures that decorated every family member's wall. The woman and her soldier dressed in their best on that summer day, the woman and her soldier holding their children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren, and the woman and her soldier silver haired and celebrating fifty years. But the one picture that they would always point to is the black and white image of the soldier just before he was swallowed by the crowd.

Ass

By Cassidy Dalton

We all tend to be a little defensive and over dramatic in the third grade. I guess that's why I punched a boy named Cody in the face for calling me "ass" and his excuse was, "well that word's in your name," little did I know almost nine years later, people would still be pointing out the fact that my name has a bad word in it, as if, I didn't already know. My name is Cassidy, but many people call me Kass, Kassy, or my personal favorite, my Spanish name, Quesadilla. I understand that your name says something about you, but see I believe that my name is only an element in my story, the story of life.

The person that you are on the inside is what makes your name. I believe that your message to the world and what your life and story convey is what defines your name, your name doesn't define you. I'm not named after anyone, except a male rapper that was never really popular in the first place, I guess that's why I love Lil Wayne so much. Personally, I don't like my name, but clearly, the decision wasn't up to me.

The literal meaning of my name is "curly haired," which is true in my case. My name is of Irish origin. At the end of the day, my name is what it is and I am who I am; I am Cassidy, I'm too sarcastic, independent, funny, sweet, and I have a lions mane for hair, which we can see today, but trust me, it gets a lot worse, but if I want to straighten my hair, by golly, I will because that's who I am. I don't let

people bring me down and I don't change for anyone. I am the defining character in my story and I intend to make it an extraordinary one.

My Favorite Memory

By Kaitlyn Davis

On top of a small mountain, whose name I will never know, spring is a relative term. To some it could be the warming of the weather. Or it could mean the birth of baby deer. Or it could mean that planting time was coming up. But to me it means walks with my newly divorced mother. My mother loves spring, she says that it breathes new life into the earth.

My mother nor the walk was my favorite part. But neither was the gentle breeze blowing the weeds and wild flowers side to side. Nor was my favorite part the freshly trampled deer beds that housed the heard that called the trailer park, old driving range, and flat grassy mountain top home as much as my mother and I did. And further still my favorite part wasn't the sun creating hues of purple and pink that could never be recreated even by the best of artists, my meager description will never do it justice. My favorite part was something else entirely.

My favorite part was standing on the edge of that flat and looking over the side to see the ground become a steep drop and the weeds that brushed my toddler thighs turn into gray rock. My favorite part was seeing my entire world below me. My favorite part was feeling in control of the people below me, even though I was too young to understand being in control. My favorite part was feeling content

Content is a funny word. Don't you think? To me being content means being happy with who you are and what you have. The reason that my favorite memory was of a time when I was truly content is because the older we get the less content we become. Or at least that's true for me. I am never happy with what I have; I always want bigger, better, more. I am a large consumer that doesn't stop. Call me selfish that's okay because I know it's true. That's another reason I enjoyed that moment so much, I got to escape my fatal flaw. So yes my favorite moment is essentially a time when I was someone had yet to know who they were. But maybe that's why I write so that maybe I could put something worth while back into the world; so that my ever growing consumption seems less in comparison.

The Home Place

By Kate Davis

Perched on a large hill
Surrounded by wilderness
This was the home place

Sweet singing of birds
Cattle grazing on the land below
A garden off to the side
And an ancient shack almost overtaking by foliage

A cold, concrete basement
Wooden panels in the living room
And a kitchen that led to the porch out back

Nestled between nearby mountains
With a gravel road leading to the door
And a large pine right next to the driveway
Where friends and neighbors were welcome to stop
by

This was the home place
Secluded from the hustle and bustle of the town
Yet still alive all the same

The Man at the End

By Joseph Dinwiddie

The last few days of planet Earth have come, and I am the only one left. Soon I and all this land will burn in the ever-growing sun. I hear a knock on the door. My steps echo as they get closer and closer. My heart races. I open the door, and it is the Weaver of Lies. This person looks no different than you or me. Some call him “demon” or “trickster”, but he looks like a man. He is a traveler of time and space. Earth has been empty for years. The sun grew, and as it did, it threatened all that lived. The others were forced to leave. The Weaver has seen it all from beginning to end. The phrase “madman” is always close behind him, and he brings with him a series of catastrophic events. He does not travel alone. There are things in the shadows. There are beasts, sickly creatures in the light, but at night, they thrive. “Well, you finally got the courage to open the door,” he says and laughs. The old, wiry man had the look of a century long past, but yet life was still there. He had old parchment like skin but eyes of fiery youth. “You have a choice to make...to save or not to save!” the weaver says. I stand there dumb struck.

As he goes on I ask myself why does this nut job want me dead. Well at least that’s probably what he wanted or something to that extent. “To damnation with you Weaver! Just finish me now!”

“Now where would the fun in that be?” I tried to hit him. I missed and hit the concrete block wall behind him. A stem of curses comes from me like a dam breaking. The weaver seemed amused by this. “You shouldn’t hit walls like that. They hit back.”

“Why are you here?! Why won’t you let me die in peace?”

“No!” he says low and menacing. “You will do something for me first, then you will live or die as you choose.”

“What is it?” I asked him, as menacing as he had denied me death. The last man on earth set alone in a room. There was a knock at the door. It was him, the weaver of mystery and lies. But this person looks no more different than you or me. But all the same it was him. Some call him demon or trickster but he looks like a man. Why he is the weaver of mystery and lies. It is because in fact he is a traveler of time as well space. Why he haunts me I don’t have a clue but I will find out. But I guess I should tell you why I am the last man on earth. Earth has been empty for years the sun grew and threatened all that lived, so we left. That’s right we just left our home to burn in the sun. But the weaver has seen it all from beginning to end. But the phrase “madman” is always close behind him, as well as a series of catastrophic events. The words “mystical man” is another name for him. But the last few days of plant earth have come. All I have left in the world is now to die in the ever growing sun. But the world wasn’t completely abandoned; there are things in

the shadows. But I have seen them. Then there are the beasts they are sickish in the light but at night they thrive. I guess I should open the door for him. As I walk to the door my steps echo as they get closer and closer my heart was racing.

“Well you finally got the courage to open the door?” he asks. The old and wiry man had the look of a century long past but yet life was still there. Hours passed as they discussed what they were about to do. But for better or worse we were going to do it. It was unthinkable that we were about to change history or die trying. To die is not a fear of mine I will fortify my life if take a turn for the worse. Why though? Why me? What was special about me to do these to stop the end?

“You’re late or does the great Master not know how to tell time!” Rastle said. The Master didn’t answer him but walked by him as Rastle went on for a little more than five minutes.

Then the Master stopped him with the words “they are more ready than ever!” then silence filled the room. They talked for hours but the Master prevailed as he always does.

“Then we are decided for better or worse.” Rastle said. As they left Rastle felt like something was following them but not wanting to warn it that he could tell there was something there he went on. The shadows where growing as they went but even as night falls it was hot now, not even at night it would not cool off. The heat made it miserable going to their.

“If we don’t get there soon we will feed the beasts!” The Master says with impatience.

“I have been here for a moth now, believe me I get the idea!’ Rastle says with a curse under his breath. It made it no better for his temper as it was another three miles to the circular building from where they were.

Untitled

By Rebekah Harrell

The date is June 24, 2014.

I'm sitting underneath a tree whose branches cover two split roads and a small portion of the hillside I am on. They trickle down over me as if they are protecting me like a blanket. The sun shines bright, illuminating the distant mountains, embracing their brilliance. I suppose the clouds get jealous of the sun sometimes. That's why they attempt to cover it up. It's around 11 a.m., and the subtle breeze is enough to keep me cooled off, but also enough to make it a bad hair day. I hear the loud, obnoxious sounds of the crows, and the sweet, innocent chirps of baby birds. I also hear the wind resonate through the trees-- such a peaceful, relaxing sound. The rolling hills are so perfectly plump that they look like giant pillows, and on the ground are scattered branches after recent storms. Filtered by the leaves, the sunlight tattoos the ground in tortoise shell shadow, making me realize that the creator of this masterpiece knew what they were doing. I feel relaxed, and calm. No anger, stress, or grief plagues me. As I sit here gazing upon my surroundings, I begin to notice the fine details of the area that encompasses me: the small things. I see the gnats swarming around my fave, and the ants crawling on the concrete platform I am on. I glance at the tree trunks, and notice the similar holes and gaps, making the trees look as if they were hand-woven by the most practiced basket weaver. There

are different shades of greens and browns in everything I see. I had no idea there were so many. There's also the light blue sky filled with clouds--the puffy kind that are great at hiding the sun when a cool down is needed. I'm at such a state of peace that I feel like nothing can or will ever bother me again. I wanted to stay there forever: not legitimately, but metaphorically. I never wanted to leave the safe haven I was in by sitting there. I felt as though no one could hurt me. Although I was out in the open, I felt the safest and most relaxed I have felt in a long time. Sometimes the best places to confront your stress, anger, and fear are the most open spaces-- places where you can open yourself up to nature rather than to other people.

The Bluegrasser

By Brittany Gray

Never am I more at home
Than listening to the thumps
If a Jack rabbit
Upright, with thick bronze strings
Bellows the rhythm that
All hearts beat with.
A stage filled with birds
In flight and resting
Against the tuned wings of their
Fellow aviated twangs
Carry each other actors
The audience, the stage, the heavens.
Mechanical chimes
From tiny temples
Made from the golden voice
Wrapped in thin sheets
Of animal skins
Add to the unintelligible clanks.
A frog is overlooked
Until the sky turns dark
And the croaks bounce
Off the quartet of cat tails
Stretched over the resonating pond
Echoing a sound that can
Haunt the very soul
Of those lucky enough to feel.
The symphony never stops
When one drops the chorus

Two more takes its place
Mammals, insects, reptiles, avians
Perform as though
They're lulling me to sleep
On a summer night.
So I know I am always at home.

Cree

By Peyton Helton

A long metal object glitters in the rolling grass in my parent's meadow. It is blunt on one side and reminds me of a butter knife I found once in the kitchen. The only difference it has is a curved section going inward about two inches from the tip. The scalpel was sharp, extremely sharp.

My father, draped in his white robes and surgical mask, turned his back just long enough for me to lift it off his metal table and shifted it into my front pocket. He never knew and went to get another one. I have been waiting for just the right occasion for this particular object, and now I have found it.

Belle lies in the grass, reminding me of the most beautiful doll with her long blond hair and her blue eyes sparkling. The sun shines through puffy white clouds, lighting her up like a spotlight. She is an angel.

"Well, what do we do now?" I ask her, smiling such a gleeful smile.

"It hurts, Cree!" she yelps weakly, "It hurts really bad!" She clutches her side and tears sting her eyes, making them shine brighter and look even more angelic. Blood starts seeping through her fingers, turning the vibrant green to a perfect red.

“Calm down, it was just a game, Bellie!” I tell her, my smile never fading. I just couldn’t stop.

“We should tell our parents, I need a Band-Aid,” she says in a little voice. My smile fades and I look at her with fear.

“Don’t, you will be okay,” I manage, my eyes welling up with tears, “I don’t want to lose you.” She gives me a puzzled look, and I add: “Don’t worry about it, I promise”

I help her from the ground and tie a towel around her middle as tightly as possible, and she jumps. I put an arm on her shoulder and that seems to comfort her a little. We walk back to the house and away from our meadow side-by-side, a doctor and her patient.

I wrench my ear away from the wall, eyes wide and the shakes sending chills up my back. A weakening spread across my thighs and down into my feet. My ass hits the bed with a thud. My dorm is an odd one, but damn, I know it doesn’t do that. I know what I just heard, but there’s no way I did. I mean who in their right mind hears blade sharpeners and maniacal laughter coming from the walls. Why would I, I mean I’m not crazy. Damn it, I have no reason to be. I wasn’t born that way, and I have no family who have been.

I find myself clutching the metal baseball bat that I hide under my bed like my life depended on it, the steel cold to my touch. It amazes me sometimes just how easy it is for time to pass me by. Losing one's self in thought can spark creativity, and sometimes you apparently just need a blunt metal object. But that's normal for me to do. Hell, I have done it before. Kids pick up objects randomly all the time for usually bad intentions, or at least I do. I did not really have friends to ask, except Belle of course. Sad to say she died three days after our game; blood poisoning. My parents lost everything, but we managed I guess. More importantly, I was never caught. Still, I miss her, I loved my angelic little patient.

The door to the room flies open, releasing an oil less shriek sent from hell. Then again, that sound might be the harbinger because in walks the devil herself, or my roommate Michele. She has blond hair just like Belle did, and it was silky smooth, believe me I know. She had Belle's eyes too, that brilliant, exhilarating, and just mystifying shade of blue. They were like reflecting pools in which she needed to be drowned. That is definitely where her similarities to Belle end, for Belle wasn't a stuck-up and egotistical bitch. Michele also had her father's money, which she flaunts in front of her friends while taunting the not so fortunate. I have always fallen into that category.

She stops short of her “glorious” bed, silk plush and what she considers fit for only royalty adorning, and spies the bat I am grasping, raised, and my expression of focus on the wall. Her brow furrows in a classic “What are you doing?” gesture which she actually asks me, her voice’s pitch bordering pain in my ears, and not the pleasurable kind either.

“Isn’t it obvious?” I answer, my eyes never leaving the wall, which just stood there looking as normal as ever.

“Listen Cree,” she says with great pleasure, “I know you are a fucking psycho, but you know that wall isn’t going to move anytime soon.”

I am shocked out of my gaze by the flood of memories that brings, and all my hate and fear, all that raw power, turns on her in one look. She shifts her position, looking uncomfortable to most, but I have known her just long enough to figure out just how sadistic she can be. She called me Cree too, as though it is too fucking hard to call me Christine.

A Gift

By Storm Heselschwerdt

He was a gift,
A sweet wriggling thing,
Wet nose and big eyes,
Wagging tail and happy tongue,
The gift that opened me,
Gave me excitement and happiness,
He was a gift,
Bouncing to give me joy,
Little ears flopping,
Paws hitting the ground,
He's the gift that healed me,
Made me whole,
And just for that,
I will always treasure him,
He will always be mine.

The Place I Live

By Brandon Hickey

The place I live it's a normal place
With normal scenery and with normal space.
The place I live has a lot of mountains lots, of trees
and lots of fountains,
the place I live how peaceful it is to me like how it's
quiet and how it's free, but
the critics they are not that small, they have statues
and buildings and how they stand tall,
this place I live it's happy or sad because if you live
it right or wrong it determines your path,
Oh I love this place you see, but it would be better
if I can call it Tennessee.

Native Today

By Preston Hickey

A summer's day as the trees sway
A slow but nice breeze
Wildlife approaches so I noticed
Insects as they fly around
The birds chirp, what a lovely sound
I look around beautiful life.
The mountains are some of the best sights
The curves and edges make up a view
The bees as they gather nectar
Don't mess with them, they won't mess with you.
The gnats are the worst thing here
It kind of stinks when they fly in your ear
As the clouds pass by
I can create a picture
In my mind
What a wonderful day
Besides the bugs in my way
Makes me want to play
All day
Sports is what I'm thinking
Basketball
Tennis
Maybe even a job
I could think of beauty all summer long.

Bridget's Poem

By Amanda Johnson

Nineteen Years
Since I gave birth
Only thirteen
Since I lost my firstborn child

Today should've been her graduation day
Her classmates dressed in their cap and gowns
I look down at the seniors and thought
That should've been my daughter
Lost in the crowd

She was so small in death
Barely six years old
She was so sweet that even God thought
Her beautiful soul didn't belong in this world

I knew He was just
I knew not to question
But still I thought
Of all the years my daughter was missing

Her sister is growing up
Looking more like Bridget day by day
Soon she will walk across that stage too
But in my heart of hearts I knew
My sweet little Bridget should've gone first

Grey Concrete

By Tori Lowrance

Walking on the grey concrete
was like navigating through an obvious maze.
I always knew where I was going,
but small towns have yet to provide a lot of room
for things such as my stumbling feet.
I saw that one tree on Cumberland Avenue
with the split open trunk.
It looked like it was dying to escape.
The sky always told a story
with the clouds full of funny shapes.
The grass always made my skin itch.
It itched until I scratched my arms raw.
My eyes always saw the same red buildings
and the same grey concrete.

Ellie's Baby

By Kat Mahoney

The smoke swirled in a small cloud around Ellie's face as she held the match to the tip of her last Pall Mall. Women walked past her on the sidewalk, cradling their bundled newborns in their arms. Ellie took another long drag off her cigarette and held it in her lungs. She held her hand over her mouth as she choked back a cough, the smoke flowing out her nose in a steady stream. "Hey baby, sounds like a bad cough. You okay?" Her husband, Kevin, asked. She waved him away with a sharp flick of her wrist.

The sun beat down on the couple as they made their way home. Ellie was unusually quiet as they walked on holding hands. Her eyes scanned Kevin's face. He furrowed his eyebrows and the right side of his bottom lip was sunken between his teeth. Ellie felt him tense up each time his eyes fell on her face.

Earlier in the month, a young couple moved into the upstairs bedroom of Ellie and Kevin's house. The woman was three months pregnant, and their voices carried through the walls. Whenever Ellie heard the couple talking about their future, she thought about her own. Ellie would often daydream about being the woman, carrying the baby in her stomach.

Whenever the house was quiet, Ellie would gather a soft blanket and warm it in a low

oven. Then she wrapped another blue blanket around it and held the bundle close to her chest. She walked slowly around her bedroom, rocking it as she walked, stopping only to stare at her reflection in the mirror. Hot tears spilled out of her eyes and the blankets grew cold.

I'm Not Done

By Aliyah Omar

In a world where men try to dominate
If I start to succeed then I'll get hate
This is my world too and I plan to take it back
A girl like me can fix your mistakes and fill the
cracks

You try to hold me back with wage gaps
You think you can control my body when you don't
even have the map
Without girls with voices the world wouldn't be
turning
With only men in control, it has started burning

I'm more than just some object
Your catcalls and whistles don't flatter me
I don't want to be yours, I'd rather be a reject
So, contrary to your belief, you're the last thing I
want to see

Men running around like they've already won
Turning my choices into just a pun
You think that you make the world go round
But I have a voice and will keep making sound
I'm not done.

EF4

By Kate Silvey

That day, the laundry room becomes their fortress
Barricades of freshly folded t-shirts and blue jeans
and the familiar scent of detergent distracting
them from the lonely wail of highway sirens
drifting in from their shattered glass screen door.
She stands, one son tucked under her elbow
the other's head resting on her shoulder
and glances at her husband through stormy eyes
as they step over broken glass into a broken world.
Their backyard has become a battlefield
limp tree branches and mangled telephone wires
littering the cow fields like soldier's corpses.
The sky is bloody, broken, battered, and bruised
and a deep gash cuts through the earth like a fatal
wound.

The date is April 27th, 2011
and raindrops sweetly kiss the Alabama soil
apologizing for what the clouds have brought.
And the family stares out at this and wonders
if home is really where the heart is even if
the heart is broken and the home is no longer
standing.

God is Judge

By Daniella Simpson

“Is your cousin Bart Simpson?” In 6th grade, I was asked this question and many more like it from my Social Studies teacher Mr. Cantwell. I soon found out that he was referring to the masterpiece of a television show *The Simpsons* that I have never once watched. He made it a point each and every day to poke fun at my last name.

My name is Daniella Simpson. People who don't know me very well tend to call me Daniella. If my close friends are talking to me, they call me Dani, Ella, or some of the wall name that no one understands but us.

One day in my Freshman Biology class, Jacob, one of my classmates pointed out that Daniella sounds similar to Cinderella. After that day, he referred to me as Cinderella for quite some time. To me, that was a compliment because, hey, she's a princess.

Throughout my life, I have had both good and bad experiences with my name, but none of them have ever bothered me. I recently found out that Daniella means “God is Judge.” I believe this is part of the reason why the names people call me or what they think about my name doesn't faze me. Only God can judge me.

The Strength Given After

By Dawson Smith

Dealing with Death,
Never been easy,
Work,
Perseverance,
Endurance,
The final fight to put your
Life back in motion.
The struggle to go on is
Almost unbearable,
You must anyway.
Life doesn't add any ease
When trying to mourn.
The empty bed,
The messy adolescent room,
The sanity lost,
The unfinished papers,
The unworn clothes,
Constant memories of his short
Life.
The lessons he learned
The lessons she taught
She brought him into a world
That she didn't know would
Kill him
My heart was broken,
So was hers
She helped me overcome,
Now it's less of a blur.

We never imagined a world
Without him.
His death was our own
Strength ladler.
We didn't think we would
Ever live again
He was brought into a world
That same world
Took him out
We try
We live
Through every crook
Through every bend
His death brought to us
Strength
And to our hearts, a mend.

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The Appalachian Young Writers' Workshop (AYWW) is a seven-day residential writing workshop providing high school students the opportunity to explore the craft of creative writing, learning from the region's foremost writers.

The AYWW is a collaborative program of Lincoln Memorial University and Humanities Tennessee.

For more information visit

www.HumanitiesTennessee.org.