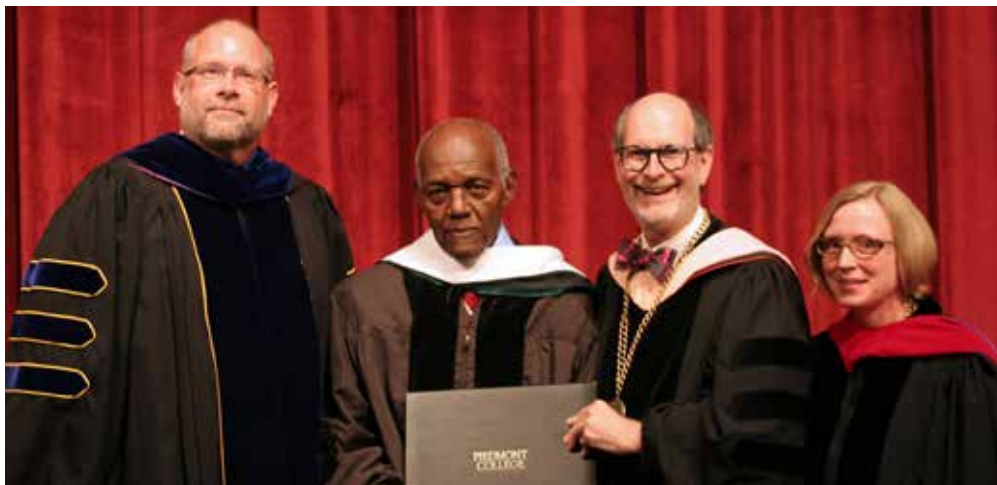


A View From the Mountain

a newsletter from the Lillian E. Smith Center



Lonnie King Receives Honorary Degree



Civil rights pioneer Lonnie C. King Jr. of Atlanta was presented with an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree from Piedmont College during a ceremony June 12 at the College

in Demorest. Pictured above from left are Piedmont Vice President for Academic Affairs Dr. Perry Rettig; Dr. Lonnie C. King Jr.; Piedmont President Dr. James F. Mellichamp; and Piedmont Chaplain, the Rev. Dr. Ashley Cleere. The presentation was made during the annual meeting of the Southeast Conference United Church of Christ held at the college.

The honorary doctorate was just one of the honors King collected, as the Piedmont Board of Trustees also presented him with a proclamation highlighting his long career on the front lines of U.S. and international civil rights campaigns.

King, who knew Lillian Smith and Paula Snelling and recalled visiting them at their home on Old Screamer Mountain, was born in Arlington, Georgia, and grew up in Atlanta. He graduated from Morehouse College in 1969. While a student there, he was part of the founding of the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), one of the most important civil rights activist organizations. He also earned a master's degree in public administration from the University of Baltimore.

On March 9, 1960, King and the Committee on Appeal for Human Rights, a coalition of students from the historically African American colleges of Atlanta, published their manifesto for change, "An Appeal for Human Rights." The Appeal is now celebrated as a core document of the Civil Rights Movement; it called for complete racial desegregation by peaceful and non-violent means, aligned with the ideals of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

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Craig Amason, editor
 Director of Lillian E. Smith Center and
 College Archivist

Poet Alice Friman Visits Piedmont



Alice Friman, Craig Amason, Lisa Hodgins

Award-winning poet Alice Friman was the guest of the Lillian E. Smith Center and the Department of English of Piedmont College for a reading on the Demorest campus on Oct. 15, 2015.

Friman's fifth full-length collection of poetry, *Vinculum*, won the 2012 Georgia Author of the Year Award in Poetry. Her latest collection of poems, *The View from Saturn*, was published in 2014 by LSU Press.

As Professor Emerita of English and Creative Writing at the University of Indianapolis,

Friman now lives in Milledgeville, Georgia, where she is Poet-in-Residence at Georgia College. Her podcast series, "Ask Alice," is sponsored by the Georgia College MFA program and is available on YouTube.

Friman is a recipient of a 2012 Pushcart Prize and is included in *The Best American Poetry 2009*, published by Simon & Schuster. Her other books include *Inverted Fire* and *The Book of the Rotten Daughter*, both from BkMk Press at the University of Missouri-Kansas City; and *Zoo* from University of Arkansas Press, which won the Sheila Margaret Motton Prize from The New England Poetry Club and the Ezra Pound Poetry Award from Truman State University. She has also published four chapbooks.

Other awards include prizes from The Poetry Society of America, The New England Poetry Club, the 2001 James Boatwright III Prize for Poetry from Shenandoah at Washington & Lee University, and the Ekphrasis Prize for Poetry 2012 from *Ekphrasis* poetry journal.



NACCC WORKSHOP & PORTABLE WORKSHOP

Craig Amason (LES Center Director) and Rev. Dr. Ashley Cleere (Piedmont College Chaplain and Director of Church Relations) served as facilitators for a workshop titled "What kind of extremist are you?" presented by the Washington Gladden Society and Piedmont College at the annual meeting of the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches held in Salt Lake City, June 20-23, 2015.

Using historic and contemporary photos and videos, along with quotes from Lillian Smith's book, *Our Faces, Our Words*, the workshop offered participants the opportunity to explore sensitivities and struggles surrounding race relations and ways to initiate social change in their own spheres of influence. A portable version of this workshop is now available on the LES Center website in the form of a downloadable PowerPoint presentation at <http://www.piedmont.edu/lillian-programs>.

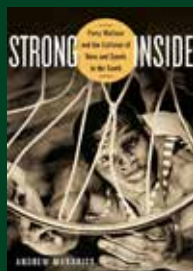
The portable workshop is an excellent tool for churches, schools, and other organizations to encourage discussion about the vital role we all play in effecting social change.

LES Books Awards & Decatur Book Festival

This year Piedmont College became the latest co-sponsor of the annual Lillian Smith Book Awards. The Southern Regional Council established the awards shortly after Smith's death in 1966. The awards honor writers whose books demonstrate outstanding creative achievements, worthy of recognition because of their literary merit, moral vision, and honest representation of the South, its people, problems, and promises.

The awards ceremony is held each year at the DeKalb County Public Library as part of the Decatur Book Festival in downtown Decatur, Georgia. The awards are also sponsored by the Southern Regional Council, UGA Libraries, and the Georgia Center for the Book.

The 2015 winners of the awards are Lee W. Formwalt for *Looking Back, Moving Forward: Southwest Georgia Freedom Struggle, 1814-2014* and Andrew Maranis for *Strong Inside: Perry Wallace and the Collision of Race and Sports in the South*.





Directed by Thom Fogarty, more than 40 cast and crew members from the Piedmont College Theatre Department helped bring 'Lillian Smith's Strange Fruit' back to life after 70 years.

Lillian Smith's *Strange Fruit* Back on Stage

"This amazing cast and community have embraced the world as Lillian Smith saw it, and it is alive again. I will savor this forever."

Seventy years after its Broadway premiere, *Lillian Smith's Strange Fruit* returned to the stage as the fall theatre production at Piedmont College, October 1-4, 2015. Based on Smith's bold debut novel, the play follows an interracial relationship in a small 1920s Georgia town and speaks to the effects of hate and separation on the lives of people and their communities.

Piedmont's Department of Theatre and Lillian E. Smith Center collaborated with New York director Thom Fogarty to restore the play to Smith's original vision. The 1945 Broadway production had a rather tumultuous history, which Smith described as a "bitter and terrible fiasco." She was disenchanted after facing daily demands for rewrites that she felt compromised the integrity of the play. However, with the blessing of the literary executors and using notes left behind by Lillian Smith about the play, Fogarty has been working for six years to re-adapt the script for the stage, using his time as an artist resident at the Center to complete the task.

Theatre Department Chair Bill Gabelhausen said that when Fogarty approached the college about mounting the play, President

James F. Mellichamp enthusiastically supported the idea. "The recent donation of the Lillian E. Smith Center to Piedmont College provided the perfect partnership to give the play its rebirth," Gabelhausen said. "It is beyond exciting for our students and faculty to become an important part of this play's history and revival. It is rare to be given an opportunity such as this," he said.

"I have never felt this full, this sated, after an opening," Fogarty said about opening night of the play. "This amazing cast and community have embraced the world as Lillian Smith saw it, and it is alive again. I will savor this forever."

Visit piedmont.edu/fa for more photos and upcoming events.



Residency Wrap-up

Piedmont College hosted 30 artists for residencies at the LES Center this year, an increase of eight from last year. There were 16 new artists and 14 returning LES Center Fellows. The residency review committee worked on developing new guidelines for the program, which are now available to view and download from the website. Online applications for residencies are now accepted through the website too. Once again, we greatly appreciate the invaluable assistance of John Siegel and John Templeton as our residency managers, and we are thankful to Bill Watts and Pearl Fortson for their dedicated service in making sure our guests are always comfortable.



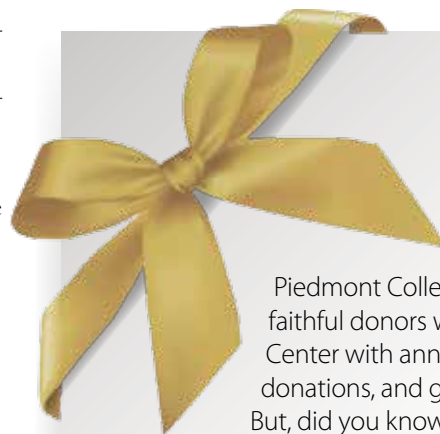
"Sensations" exhibit by Wanrudee Buranakorn

We are happy to announce yet another public exhibition by one of our distinguished LES Center Fellows.

"This exhibition, 'Sensations,' is a collaborative project with an Atlanta artist, Rose M. Barron, who was my guest for two weekends during my residency at the LES Center. We spent time making photographs together during her visits and thus solidifying our collaboration there at the LES Center. 'Sensations' exhibition includes 38 finished pieces that we created at three art residencies.

Ten of the images were photographed

during the LES Center residency. The image we chose for the invitation postcard was taken at the Peeler Cottage." -Wanrudee Buranakorn



Planned Giving

Piedmont College is grateful to the faithful donors who support the LES Center with annual gifts, recurring donations, and gifts for specific projects.

But, did you know that you can leave a legacy to the LES Center through your estate plans? Planned gifts are a perfect way to provide fellowships for artists in residence at the

Center or scholarship funds for students enrolled in the Lillian E. Smith Scholars Program at Piedmont College.

For example, bequests afford a way for you to express your specific philanthropic wishes. A bequest can include a specific dollar amount, a percentage of estate, or a specific asset. Another example is a charitable gift annuity, which allows you to make a gift to the LES Center while providing for your current financial needs. Rates of return vary depending on your age. A charitable gift annuity also provides charitable tax deductions.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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Bunkhouses Complete!

Piedmont College finished construction of the two bunkhouses at the LES Center in mid-August, and student groups are now enjoying the new facilities. These buildings are located slightly higher up the ridge from two other existing residential structures: Esther and Peeler Cottages. The houses are equipped with heat pumps, which will allow them to be used virtually year-round. They also feature wide porches facing the surrounding mountain vistas.

We are truly grateful to all our generous donors who helped make this important addition to the LES Center possible:

Eloise Bailey Thompson, Communities of Coastal Georgia Foundation, Ann Suich, Barbara and Hank Roper, John Siegel and John Templeton, Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta, Lake Rabun Foundation Fund, North Georgia Community Foundation, Waterfall Country Club (Lake Burton), Harry Norman Realtors (Clayton, GA), South State Bank (Clayton, Ga.), Carol and Steve Raeber, Brenda Bynum performance proceeds, Georgia Humanities Council.



Featured Camper

The following is an excerpt from an essay titled “Summertime” written by former Laurel Falls camper Kennon Henderson Patton in 2006 when she was 87 years old.

For five summers between the ages of 9 and 14, summertime meant two glorious months spent at Laurel Falls Camp near Clayton GA. The camp was on the top of a small mountain. Fertile valleys surrounded the mountain which provided breath-taking views of the Smokies.

I had been to one-week Girl Scout and Four-H Camps. They were fun; however, they could not offer what a two-month camp offered. Even as a child, I could tell “Miss Lil’s Camp,” as we sometimes called it, was indeed superior.

Each cabin, and there were eight of them, had two carefully picked college counselors. Posture was emphasized in a fun way. The counselors watched our posture all week – at the dinner table, walking on the board walk, at skits in the gym and at Saturday night council ring. It was, at the camp fire, that the green

felt ribbons and camels were awarded. Campers, whose posture was neither outstanding nor poor, received neither. Those who consciously had good posture received ribbons, which they proudly wore on the right shirt sleeve all week. Those who got camels had them pinned to the back of their shirt. There were very few camels given out after the first week except for Paula, co-director of the camp, who received a camel each week and chuckled good-naturedly. Miss Lil, the director, usually received a green felt ribbon. They both deserved what they were awarded and we clapped heartily for both. The sounds of joyous singing of the familiar Laurel Falls songs filled the air . . .

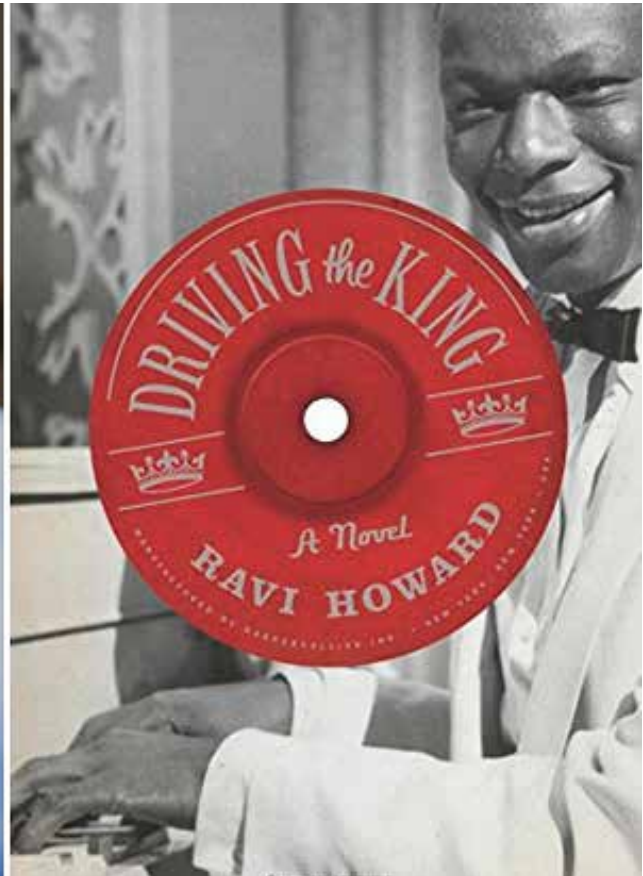


Kennon Henderson Patton (far right) as camp counselor from the Natinhala cabin.

There was an esprit de corps which existed among all the campers and the staff. For years, I continued to write to several of my cabin mates. I suppose the year I served as a junior counselor was my proudest year. I continue to be grateful to the memory of Miss Lil and Paula for establishing such a wonderful camp for girls.

(Essay and photographs courtesy of Mrs. Patton’s daughters, Jean Patton Preston and Susan Patton Hamersky)

Kennon Henderson Patton as a camper.



Ravi Howard's Book, *Driving the King: A Novel*

"Ravi Howard tells a thoroughly convincing story about the singing star Nat King Cole's best friend.... [A] warmly enveloping book.... Appealing." – Janet Maslin, *New York Times*

Do you remember the music of Nat King Cole? If so, you may be

interested in a new book from Harper written by Ravi Howard, a member of the LES Center Advisory Board. *Driving the King: A Novel* explores race and class in 1950s America, witnessed through the experiences of Nat King Cole and his driver, Nat Weary. An indelible portrait of prejudice and promise, friendship and loyalty, this latest book by Ravi Howard is a daring look at race and class in pre-Civil Rights America, played out in the lives of two remarkable men.

"Ravi Howard tells a thoroughly convincing story about the singing star Nat King Cole's best friend....

[A] warmly enveloping book.... Appealing." – Janet Maslin, *New York Times*

Ravi Howard received the Ernest J. Gaines Award for Literary Excellence in 2008 for the novel *Like Trees, Walking*, a fictionalized account of a true story, the 1981 lynching of a black teenager in Mobile, Alabama. Howard was a finalist for both the Hemingway Foundation/PEN Award and the Hurston-Wright Legacy Award for Debut Fiction in 2008. He was also instrumental in establishing the Lillian E. Smith Writer-in-Service Award at the LES Center.

LES Scholars Program

Piedmont College recently created a new academic program called the Lillian E. Smith (LES) Scholars Program. This program encourages students to fully explore the values and convictions that shaped the life and work of this great humanitarian. By developing skills of critical and creative thinking, enhanced by real-life experiences far beyond the classroom, LES Scholars emerge from this program with a heightened sense of empathy, innovation, and personal responsibility – qualities useful for a number of occupations in non-profits and human services.

Students who wish to enter the program must have a minimum 3.0 GPA and must have a 3.5 GPA to graduate as an LES Scholar. They must also write an essay about

a prevailing social justice issue facing the world today. They will be expected to complete a minor in Social Justice, and they must pass the Lillian E. Smith Studies course. One of their three Compass Points (an experiential learning requirement for all Piedmont students) must be in Social Ethics. Finally, they will be required to compile a portfolio of ten pre-approved activities outside regular coursework, which may include attending lectures or conferences, volunteer work, internships, etc.

A steering committee composed of two faculty members and the director of the LES Center will be responsible for recruiting students for the program, reviewing and approving applications, evaluating and reviewing the presentation of student portfolios,

and recommending these Fellows for “Scholar” designation.

LES Scholars will be recognized for their achievements at Commencement. They will also be presented with a framed certificate, and their names will be listed on a plaque at the LES Center. Piedmont College is seeking donations for scholarships for the LES Scholars. We are grateful for annual donations that will support these exceptional students as well as major and planned gifts that can endow the scholarships in perpetuity. Please contact Craig Amason, director of the LES Center, at LESCenter@piedmont.edu if you are interested in supporting our students.



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Visit us on 



Piedmont College began this summer the process of installing new signs at the LES Center that are in keeping with the institution's signs on the main campus and that reflect the Center's management by the college.

P.O. Box 10 | Demorest, GA 30535 | 706-894-4204

piedmont.edu/lillian-smith-center