CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE

John S. Benjamin is a native of Alleghany, Virginia. He had a professional career as an actor, director and producer for 25 years prior to joining the Kentucky Arts Council as Director of Arts Education Programs.

Wendell Berry and his wife Tanya farm with horses near the farms of their son and their daughter. His essays, his collections of poems and stories and his novels have established him as one of America’s leading prophetic voices devoted to the advocacy of a loving stewardship of the land.

Judy Cooper was raised in Lexington with roots in Menifee County, Kentucky. She now lives in northern Kentucky where she taught composition and literature at Northern Kentucky University for over twenty years.

T. Paige Dalporto has just released an album of original tunes entitled, Solid Pearl. He is a life-long West Virginian and the author of It’s Still a Wonder Just Being Here: Photographs and Poems.

Sidney Saylor Farr is the author of My Appalachia: A Memoir, just published by the University of Kentucky Press. She served as editor of Appalachian Heritage from 1985 until 1999. A native of rural Bell County, Kentucky, she has lived in Berea for decades.

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Laura Longsong was born and raised in Upshur County, West Virginia, and now lives in Charlottesville, Virginia, and teaches creative writing at Lynchburg College. Her book, Imagine a Door: Poems is forthcoming from Turning Point Books.

Valerie Nieman, after a career as a West Virginia journalist, now teaches writing at North Carolina A & T State University. She is the author of two novels, a short story collection and a poetry collection. Her work has appeared in journals including Poetry and Kenyon Review.

James “Sparky” Rucker is a folksinger/folklorist/historian who presents African-American and Euro-American history and folk-culture. He has toured for over forty years and has produced more than ten recordings and videos. Born and raised in Knoxville, Tennessee, he now resides in Maryville.

Jane Sasser is the author of a forthcoming poetry chapbook, Recollecting the Snow. A native of Indian Trail, North Carolina, she teaches English and creative writing at Oak Ridge High School in Tennessee.

Helen Bradfield Shambaugh is a retired school cafeteria cook who has lived her whole life in rural Morgan and Hampshire counties in West Virginia. She is proud to have come from the era of the washboard to that of the computer and of her seven great-grandchildren. She lives on Spring Gap Mountain.

Hershella Smith is an East Tennessee native who currently lives on seventy acres of recovering cove hardwood forest on a mountainside near Mars Hill, North Carolina. She works as an instructional designer. This is her first published work.
Charles A. Swanson is a native of Virginia who has a strong farming background. He continues to plant gardens, dry apples and milk a cow as he writes poetry, teaches high school English and pastors a small Baptist church.

Githe Bloch Thomsen grew up in Denmark but attended Warren Wilson College for one year in the mid-sixties. Her M. A. thesis at Aarhus University in Denmark focused on Billy Edd Wheeler’s writings, including his songs and his poetry. She is the office manager, the jill-of-all-trades, at her husband’s heart clinic in Copenhagen, Denmark. She and her husband travel extensively, and she makes it a point to visit an art museum in practically every place she travels to.

Eric Trethewey is the author of five books of poetry. His fiction, essays, poetry and reviews have appeared in many magazines including The Atlantic Monthly, The New Republic, The Kenyon Review and The Sewanee Review. He teaches at Hollins University in Roanoke, Virginia.

Billy Edd Wheeler is a native of Boone County, West Virginia, and a graduate of Warren Wilson College and Berea College who attended the Yale School of Drama. He is a singer/songwriter whose many contributions have earned him a place in the Nashville Songwriters Hall of Fame and the West Virginia Music Hall of Fame. He is also the author or co-author of two poetry books, two novels, and several humor collections. As a visual artist, Wheeler’s work has appeared in numerous gallery shows.