

POETRY CORNER

Autumn is My Religionby Joan Peterson
joanpete5317@gmail.com

All summer we slept under the stars
the orange eye of Mars penetrating
our dreams. We can't forget the heat
the relief of the dark and the long
wooden deck where our bed stretched
into the fresh night air.

Now morning slows to open her window
of sun. We wake to early dawn,
unable to escape the pull of night.
A golden light of autumn folds over us...
we can't get enough of the pungent air
the smell of fir cones and pine.

Apples ripen outside our window like some
Van Gogh canvas and grapes fill the arbor
in abundance. This is the time for dreaming;
longing spreads like a sunflower pulling us
into the past or maybe toward the future...
some new life in another time.

I make tea that tastes like cherries and listen
to the wind chimes tinkle their lazy tune.
It's a do-nothing day, but wait, it's my religion.
This is the way I pray.

*Have a submission for Poetry Corner, either by an Applegate resident
or about the Applegate? Email it to Applegater
poetry editor Paul Tipton at ptipton4u2c@gmail.com.*

Wendell Berry book club forming in the Applegate

BY SCOTT PROSE

A Wendell Berry Book Club is forming in the Applegate.

A famed writer, farmer, and rural resident, Wendell Berry gives his readers, especially those in rural communities, thought-provoking questions and possible wisdom on living well and thoughtfully in a rural community. Our book club will be a weekly opportunity to discuss his essays and, occasionally, his poetry. This is a great chance to get to know some neighbors and have good conversations.

When: Wednesdays, 6:45 pm, starting October 20.

Where: Applegate Library, 18485 North Applegate Road.

If interested, please RSVP and send questions to scottapplegate@gmail.com.

Scott Prose

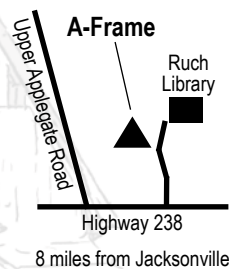
scottapplegate@gmail.com

Visit the A-Frame Bookstore @ Ruch Library

Used books from \$1 to \$3

Tuesdays 12 - 4
Thursdays 1 - 5
Saturdays 12 - 4

Managed by Friends of
Ruch Library. Join us!



The Book Barn

Now open the
first Saturday of
each month

Sale by donation

12 - 4 pm

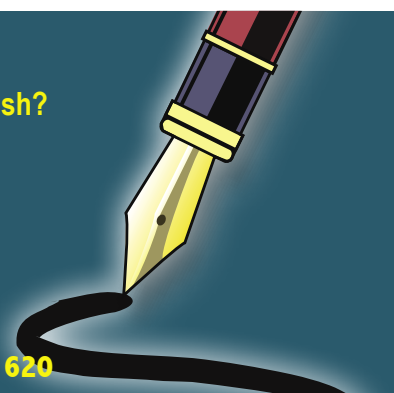
Located next to the
A-Frame Bookstore

Authors!

Need copy-editing? Want to self-publish?

- Book cover design and production
- Self-publishing management
- Manuscript copy editing
- Long-time *Applegater* editor

Holiday Literary Services
holidayliterary@aol.com • 541-708-1620

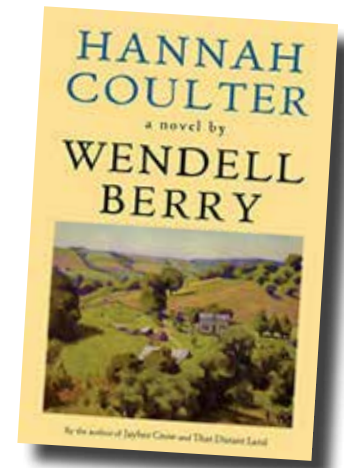


BOOK REVIEW

HANNAH COULTER

Wendell Berry
Shoemaker & Hoard
Berkeley, California, 2004

BY CHRISTIN LORE WEBER



My copy of *Hannah Coulter* is marked up by pencil and pen from the first to last page. I've managed to clutter the margins with thoughts and memories of my own that match what Wendell Berry conjured about a Kentucky woman's life. The story of this woman is so understated and beautiful, heartfelt, and wise with life consciously lived that it almost made me cry from the universality of her experience and its applicability to the challenges of our own time and place. Every time I've read the book—four times over the last 15 years—my reaction has been the same: Hannah Coulter is real. She is a friend, a mentor, a wise person who could be living right down Sterling Creek Road from me.

Here is a book planted in the large expanse of ground we call the Twentieth Century, and its roots go deep. In the life of this woman, we can read the culture of place and the character of people who claim any place as their own. In it we can appreciate the land and people whose love and work and simple abiding join them to that land so powerfully that the union creates a home.

One way of experiencing this book is through the many patterns of place and character that Wendell Berry sets before us as we read. In his skillful way of unfolding Hannah's life in what often seems more a memoir than a novel, the author challenges our belief. It seems "she" is writing her life in her own hand. But it is Wendell Berry who has, by his writer's art, remembered her losses and her loves, her hopes, her failures, her determination and surrender—and written it in her voice. She becomes the voice of Kentucky culture, of the land which has always been a Wendell Berry theme, and of the force and inevitability of change which has the power to break our hearts.

Every story is a pattern woven out of chaos. Hannah reveals to us that our lives have a pattern that all who share it recognize and count on for pretty much

everything. The pattern shows us the place and value of both the massive and minute. When Hannah's patterns are disturbed or torn apart, a sense of plunging into chaos ensues. During World War II her young husband Virgil is killed. She then questions who she is without him and how her life and the lives of others in her small town of Port William might change into a pattern she won't recognize. "It is hard for me to think or speak of the time that came then. I remember it as dark. I can't remember the sun shining, though I'm sure it must have shone part of the time. I would think sometimes with a black sickness of fear and hopelessness and guilt...How can you be happy, how can you live, when all the things that make you happy grieve you nearly to death?" (page 49).

Hannah teaches us that any pattern can break, cause grief, and be reformed into another pattern that can change the meaning of a person, a town, and the land itself. Hannah writes, "Love held us. Kindness held us. We were suffering what we were living by. I began to know my story then. Like everybody's, it was going to be the story of living in the absence of the dead. What was going to be the thread that holds it all together? Grief, I thought for a while. And grief is there sure enough, just about all the way through... But grief is not a force and has no power to hold you. You only bear it. Love is what carries you, for it is always there, even in the dark, or most in the dark, but shining out at times like gold stitches in a piece of embroidery" (page 51).

Christin Lore Weber
storyweaver1@gmail.com

Voices of the Applegate

Looking forward to 2022

Voices of the Applegate was put on hold because of the COVID-19 virus in March 2020. In each issue of the *Applegater* this past year we have been hoping to announce the revival of our choir, but even now we must say that we won't be able to begin again this fall.

Despite our announcement that we were ready to start rehearsals in September, we haven't had enough members commit to our schedule this year. Some folks have moved out of town because of the fires last summer, some have made other commitments, and many are still wary of the virus, especially because of the new variant already in our community.

But we have not given up! Our director, Shayne Flock, is still enthusiastic about leading us again when we are ready, and we have an accompanist who is willing to fill in when needed. It is necessary that we have a full enough membership in the choir to be able to pay our director and the accompanist, plus pay the fees for venues for our performances.

If you would like to join our choir to begin singing with us in January, please call Joan Peterson at 541-846-6988, or email her at joanpete5317@gmail.com. We would love to put you on our list as a possible member for 2022.

Have a safe and healthy fall with good wishes from the Voices of the Applegate.
Joan Peterson • 541-846-6988 • joanpete5317@gmail.com

Stay connected

Between issues, be sure to check the *Applegater* online on:

