

*Our mission is to deliver educational and cultural programs to children, families, and communities, primarily in Southern Appalachia. We serve by sharing and spreading centuries-old traditions of song and story.*

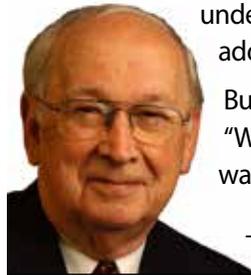
## *A Taste of Milk & Honey*

At the Center, wisely or not, we make promises to our children. By this I do not mean that we say, "We promise, on scout's honor, hand on the Bible, on my mother's grave, cross my heart and hope to die, etc., etc." Such expressions are but poor scaffolding to support a weak promise that cannot stand alone. Many of the children we serve have heard such words: I'm sorry, but I promise to be at your game next time; I promise next year I really will come to your end-of-year school party; I promise never again to forget your birthday. So, when a child in our Children's Enrichment Program asks one of our singers/storytellers, "Will you come back?" the answer is a clear and straight Yes. "I'll bet you are just saying that." Now what? The singers/storytellers show up. In time the child will trust an adult again.

Still, some say it is not wise to make promises to children. Why? Well, there are those who think the rules for promises do not apply when dealing with children. I recall hearing a grocer lie to a child who came to buy candy. When the child left, another customer asked, "Why did you lie to that child?" The grocer replied, "It is not lying if you are talking to a child." Others say it isn't wise because children are literalists: a Yes is Yes, a No is No. They don't realize that many adults build into their promise a lot of "ifs": if it doesn't rain; if I am not too tired; if I don't get a better offer.

Be that as it may, at the Center we make promises to the children. We say Yes and we show up. There is no substitute for showing up.

But a serious question is raised: how can you say Yes and show up when there is a big "if" in your program? The "if" is this: "if" we receive enough gifts, we will show up. An understandable "if" but not a real "if." You see, quite a number of you have addressed the "if" by giving.



But what if? What if? If there is not enough giving, do we say to the children, "We will be back if we get the money?" No; we will not say that. We will find a way to make our Yes a Yes. And how will that be?

- Written by Dr. Craddock June 2010

## *From the Executive Director*

### ***When you least expect it, wonderful things can happen.***

I like to go to work at The Craddock Center for a couple of hours on Sunday mornings before heading to church. It's quiet, the phone doesn't ring, and I get a lot done.

On Sunday morning, March 2nd, I was at The Craddock Center and there is a "knock at the door". And being totally honest, my first response to myself was, "Rats!" I go to the door, and there is a man dressed somewhat disheveled, who says "I want to make a donation."

I invited him in, and we chatted for a while. He says he goes to the casino in Murphy, NC a lot and sees our sign every time and wondered what we did.

I learned this man lives in Canton, GA (about 45 miles south of us) and he is a custodian for the Cherokee County school system.

I shared with him about the work of The Craddock Center and told him about all the children we serve in the area around the casino.

**He pulled out his wallet and handed me \$340.**

# Dr. Seuss's Birthday

## CELEBRATING READ ACROSS AMERICA DAY & DR. SEUSS'S BIRTHDAY

On March 8th, The Craddock Center celebrated Read Across America Day and Dr. Seuss's Birthday. On this day volunteers from The Craddock Center delivered 1,178 brand new Dr. Seuss books to the pre-K and Head Start children we serve.

Read Across America Day is a day to celebrate the joys of reading. It also brings awareness of the importance of reading in education for our children. The founders of this day decided to have it on Dr. Seuss's birthday. Dr. Seuss is one of the greatest authors of children's books. Most kids have grown up reading his many entertaining books. The Craddock Center is making sure our kids can share in the joy of his books like many of us have over the years.

**Thanks to Elder Hogan and Elder Benderpack for packing the books.... And thanks to Anne Williamson, Cathy Cavagnaro, Joe Cantwell, and Carolyn Lakes for delivering the books.**

**Special thanks to the Clipper Petroleum Foundation, North Georgia Community Foundation, and Operation Round-Up for their generosity in supporting this program!**





## Songs & Stories 2025

Songs & Stories returned to the Craddock Center on February 8, 2025!

We were especially excited and honored that John McCutcheon, a world-traveled musician, songwriter, and folksinger, returned as the performer for this event. He thrilled our guests with beautiful folk music and storytelling.

And Natalie Jones, one of our own Arts Specialists, provided lively and humorous storytelling. She shared examples of both her storytelling work with children at our preschools and her personal stories crafted for grown-up audiences.

As always, admission was free, and our guests responded with very generous donations. The money raised will go towards the purchase of new books for the little ones we serve.

Songs & Stories was started by Dr. Fred Craddock over twenty years ago. He wanted something in the winter that people could enjoy. This is an event that brings people together for a fun afternoon.

Songs & Stories returns next year during our 25th anniversary on Saturday, February 7, 2026, at 3:00 pm.



A promotional poster for the 'Songs &amp; Stories' event. The background is a painting of a white wooden house with a blue door and a yellow sun logo on the roof. The text 'The Craddock Center' is written on the roof. The title 'Songs &amp; Stories' is in a large, black, cursive font at the top. Below the house, the text 'FEATURING John McCutcheon' is written in a yellow banner. At the bottom, a blue banner contains the event details: 'THE CRADDOCK CENTER February 8, 2025 @ 3:00 pm 186 Fred Craddock Drive, Cherry Log, GA 30522 Free Admission / Donations Appreciated'. There are also colorful musical notes floating around the house.



FORMAL  
ATTIRE  
& 21+



3RD ANNUAL  
CHARITY  
**GALA**

PROCEEDS ARE DONATED TO  
THE CRADDOCK CENTER

SEPTEMBER 27, 2025  
AT THE  
LEGACY EVENT HALL  
AT ELLIJAY, GA

**\$65**  
PER PERSON

5:30  
PM

HOSTED BY  


TICKETS  
SCAN ME  


# Charity Gala

## September 27, 2025

Make It Yours Alterations & Formalwear is hosting its 3rd Annual Charity Gala on September 27, 2025, to support the work and programs of The Craddock Center. Relive your prom memories with your friends and raise money for an outstanding non-profit. Sponsorship packages are available.

## SPONSORSHIP PACKAGES

**PLATINUM \$500**  
( 06/01/2025 DEADLINE )

- 2 MONTH ADVERTISEMENT ON ETC
- LOGO ON WEBSITES, SPONSORSHIP BANNER, EVENT PROGRAM & TABLE TENTS
- COMPANY RECOGNITION AT EVENT & FACEBOOK

**GOLD \$325**  
( 08/01/2025 DEADLINE )

- LOGO ON WEBSITES, SPONSORSHIP BANNER, EVENT PROGRAM & TABLE TENTS
- COMPANY RECOGNITION AT EVENT & FACEBOOK

**SILVER \$250**  
( 09/01/2025 DEADLINE )

- LOGO ON WEBSITES & EVENT PROGRAM
- COMPANY RECOGNITION AT EVENT & FACEBOOK

SPONSORS GET A DISCOUNTED  
RATE ON EVENT TICKETS/TABLES.



## ITENERARY

**5:30**  
PM MINGLE &  
DRINKS

**6**  
PM INTRODUCTIONS  
& THANK YOU

**6:30**  
PM FOOD, MUSIC  
& DANCING

DOORS CLOSE AT 9:45 PM

# Recruiting Board Members

**Are you looking for a rewarding experience?**

**A new opportunity to give back to your community?**

**Do you have a passion for children and literacy?**

**The Craddock Center is looking for motivated individuals to serve on its Board of Directors.**

Most of us reach a point in our lives where we need a new challenge. What better way to introduce a new challenge than to inspire change by serving on a nonprofit Board such as with The Craddock Center. As a Board Member, you will witness first-hand the impact of our programs for the children and families in our community while offering advice, oversight, and support.

Nonprofits such as The Craddock Center lead by fulfilling our mission and working to make an impact on the children and families of southern Appalachia. We are looking for members of our community who want to lead with us and bring your skills and expertise to make a difference in our community!

If you have an interest in serving on the Board of The Craddock Center, please contact Kirk Cameron at [kirk-craddock@tds.net](mailto:kirk-craddock@tds.net).

**DONATE NOW**

You can support

**The Craddock Center**

1. Open camera
2. Scan code
3. Give now

**Thank You for  
your generosity!**



# SMART BABIES!

## KUDOS TO OUR SMART BABIES FACILITATORS



*Smart Babies* has provided workshops at four agencies this year, serving parents of children aged 0-3. Next year, we will expand our workshops to include ages 3-5. After discovering that less than 30% of children in our surrounding counties have access to preschool, it seemed only right that we extend our services to address this need. We are excited to do so!

We currently have eleven very dedicated volunteer facilitators. What do they do in these workshops? They facilitate learning in several different areas with the goal of helping the parents be their child's "best first teacher." They make these workshops fun by providing hands-on activities, demonstrations and plenty of time for the parents to share and discuss ideas. They love conducting the workshops and the participants love what *Smart Babies* offers. Comments from just a few recent participants include:

*"I love learning more everyday tips for me to do that helps his learning."*

*"I absolutely love these classes!"*

*"I love how the teachers teach us to be better teachers for our children."*

*"Thank you. You guys are a blessing!"*



*Smart Babies* has adopted the curriculum, **Ready for Kindergarten**. This is a program based on current research. Each facilitator spends two to three hours studying the material before each workshop. Most of our facilitators have a background in education and all have a background in parenting. Each agency has a lead facilitator who is in charge of working with the agency director in creating schedules, arranging location of workshops, and setting up technology. Facilitators also go to the *Smart Babies* workroom at The Craddock Center to pick up kits for each participant, special books selected by Smart Baby facilitators and other books that the parents freely select.

Three of our volunteers are currently working with possible locations to expand our program next school year. We are hoping to work with some of the local school systems. Our *Smart Babies* program could not exist without these dedicated volunteers!

**Bev Cook, Smart Babies Coordinator**

## THANK YOU ANONYMOUS!

During the year we receive many monetary donations, books, and hats from many anonymous donors. Thank you for your generous gifts! We wish we knew who you are so that we could thank you. Please know that your anonymous gifts are valued and appreciated, and they help us bring joy to the many children that we serve. Thank you!



# Friends of The Craddock Center

The Craddock Center cannot do what we do for the children and families of Southern Appalachia without the financial support of our donors. **Thank you and recognition to those individuals, organizations, and foundations for their generosity in supporting The Craddock Center, from January 1, 2024, through March 21, 2025.**

## \$100,000+ ANONYMOUS FOUNDATION

**\$50,000+**  
Regina Mitchell Diaz

**\$30,000+**  
The Warren & Augusta Hume Foundation

**\$15,000+**  
William B. Orkin Foundation, Inc.  
Susan Elliott-Bryan  
James and Carla Self

**\$10,000+**  
Earline Crooke  
Karen and Eugene Boring  
Gary and Nancy Fayard

**\$9,000+**  
Elizabeth Roberts King Endowment

**\$8,000+**  
Heidi and Todd Ferraro

**\$7,000+**  
Linda Kliros

**\$6,000+**  
Ellijay Lions Club  
Faith, Hope, and Charity

**\$5,000+**  
Hammill Family Foundation  
Ray and Muriel Larson  
Piedmont Charitable Foundation

**\$4,000+**  
Christian Church Foundation  
Marcia Lehman  
Patti O'Dell

**\$4,000+**  
New Hope Christian Church  
Milly Hastings and Steve Stevens

**\$3,000+**  
Jerry and Faye Hardiman  
Clipper Petroleum  
Foundation  
John and Dee Craddock

**\$3,000+**  
Sue and Mike Hriljac  
Rolf Meinhold

**\$3,000+**  
John and Frances Tipton  
AFC Home Club  
Janice Glascock  
Paige Peugh

**\$2,000+**  
North Georgia Community  
Foundation  
Sally C. Anderson  
Dr. Russ Atchley

**\$2,000+**  
Sarah Allred  
Big Canoe Women's Fellowship  
Amicalola EMC Trust  
Diane W. Bales & James Gibson

## \$1,000+

Gilmer County Family Connection  
August Fifth Foundation, Inc.  
Ronald and Bette Jensen  
Betty Scott Noble  
Blue Ridge Kiwanis  
Bill and Patty Crowl  
Bev Cook

Alight Solutions  
National Christian Foundation  
Michael and Amelia Ellison  
Senior Medicare Patrol  
Ann H. Cook  
Robin Massaro  
Due West UMC

Jack and Trisha Senterfitt  
Richard and Cathy Cavagnaro  
Marvin and Eileen McRoberts  
Susan and Hartwell Dew  
John Hastings  
Gerald and Joan Lord  
Clay and Ethel Hock

Jerald and Aundre Rookstool  
Robin Hering  
Christian Women's Fellowship  
Kirk Cameron and Michael Kilpatrick

## \$500+

AA Thursday Nights  
Southern Comfort Cabin Rentals  
Loahna Brenner  
John McMullan  
America's RV Warranty  
Clay to Custom Construction  
Clay and Ethel Hock  
Rebecca and Daniel Doster

First Christian Church Decatur  
Overall Pest Solutions  
Larry King  
Clarence and Gwendolyn Seeliger  
Rebecca Bunton  
Cathy and Thomas Archibald  
Zoo Groovy Art  
Leona and Willis Duvall

Arlyn and Susan Moulder  
Barbara and Bill Johnson  
William and Connie English  
Celine Melton  
Paul H. Anderson  
Ann White Morton  
Pinelake Foundation  
Steven and Annette McBrayer

Vivian Hays Guthrie  
Gordon Hellman  
Beth Roberts  
Blue Ridge Methodist Church  
Ken Cissna  
Carol McGinnis  
Nancy Sargent McGrath  
William Prather

Dianne Watson  
Cindy West  
Steven Dennison  
Daniel and Maureen Hicks

## Up to \$499

Jewish Congregation of Blue Ridge  
Ted and Cindy Minick  
Sherry and Bill Echelberger  
Anne Williamson  
James Shelton  
Wayne Everbach  
Blue Jeans Pizza & Pasta  
June Krise  
Tom and Beverly Ottinger  
David Akers  
Albert Toth  
John and Deborah Wray  
Kenneth Irby  
Layne Smith  
Ace Hardware Blue Ridge  
Kevin Panter Insurance  
Nordstrom  
Betty Lamb  
Judy Weiland  
Jeanie and Tim May  
Ben and Claire Shelley  
Bill and Sharon Golden  
Robert Gleadall  
Beth Jones  
Wendell and Jennifer Fox  
Becky Callihan

James and Betty Willis  
Carol Moulder  
Richard Coombs  
Carol Hanson  
District 15B  
Michael McWilliams  
Richard and Patricia Kassal  
Marla Johnson  
Alan Kolodkin  
Russell Pittman  
Christopher Caltrider  
Jane Simpson  
Lillie Mae Lumpkin  
Lisa Weir  
Judith Long  
Chris Martinez  
Bascomb UMC United Women in Faith  
Milton and Janis Hill  
Jeremy King  
Louise Reaves  
Catherine Spruill  
Group of Rachel  
Bonnie and Franklin Bowman  
Blue Ridge Community Theater  
Carol and Carlos Martel  
Verint, Inc.

Cassie and Lennon Stover  
Karen Dorgan  
Vera Roberts  
Sarah Lightner  
Tracy Goodbar  
Michael and Andrea Bales  
James and Betty Jo Holt  
Emily Smith  
Robert and Emily Cowdrick  
Jackie Lumpkin  
Carolyn Lakes  
Michael Oliphant and Martha Dysart  
Ann Brayley  
Frances Shumake  
Laura Litman  
Kyle and Debra Ermoian  
Thomas and Jane Keene  
Andy Meeks  
Jeff Boring  
C. Dawn Johnson  
Karen Stockwell  
Jennifer Rider  
Peter Harvey  
Carol Jorgenson  
Lisa Ogle  
Sammie Maxwell and W. Russell

Pregeant  
Anne Haltiwanger  
Debbie and Marc Liskin  
Susan Spencer  
AA Tuesday Nights  
Amy Grosklags  
Lisa Helbling  
Laura Jensen  
Katie Tomlin  
Liese and Philip Connell  
Kenneth Carlo  
Benton MacKaye Trail Assoc.  
Beverly Cook  
Carole Hahn  
Dr. and Mrs. Roger Beck  
Jacqueline Mann  
Diane Payne  
Church of the Good Samaritan  
Log Cabin Community Church  
Byron and Judy Wyndham  
Mr. and Mrs. Mark Musick  
Richard Cavagnaro  
David Jones  
Jeffrey Ray  
Mary Marage  
Charles Krick

Sheila Clayton  
Louanne Watkins  
Debbie Peterson  
Phil and Karen Rosenber  
Lydia Weathersby  
Pat and Joe Webb  
Howard Rees and Julie Weisberg  
Kimberly Anna-Soission  
Mary Elisabeth Jones  
Kenneth and Frances Strickland  
Edward Murrey IV  
Robert Lauth  
Kurt Greenwall and Maria Zax  
Glenda Bell  
Gary Batchelor  
Mark Stallings  
Donna Helgeson  
Ann Hixson  
Ann Ploetz  
Travis Bealmear  
Art and Sheila Judy  
Bob and Nancy Leitch  
Anonymous