

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.

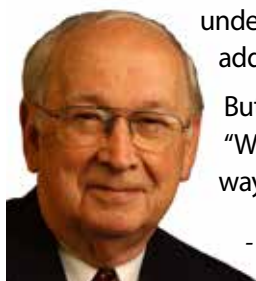
A Taste of Milk & Honey

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!

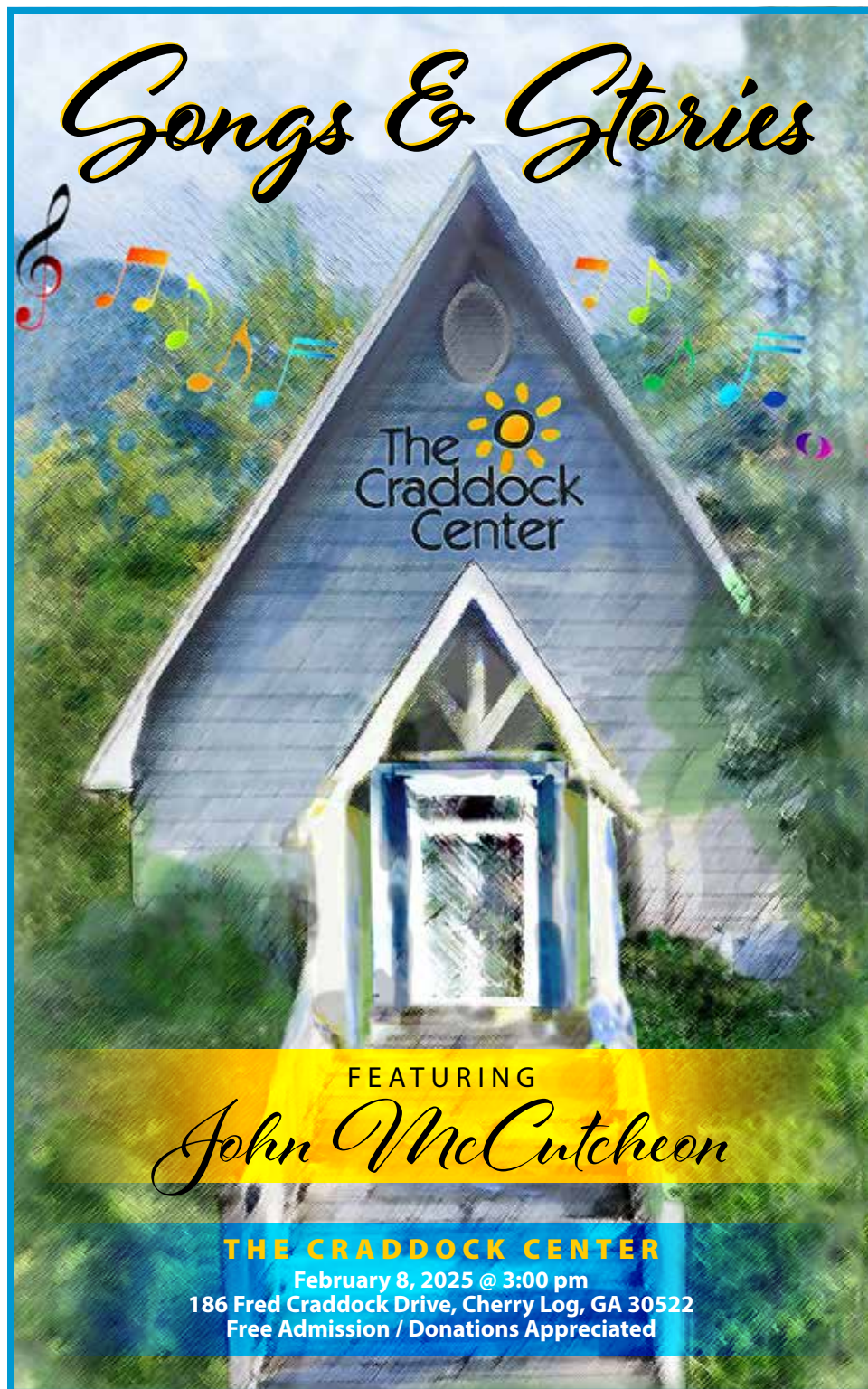
We were especially excited and honored that John McCutcheon, a world-traveled musician, songwriter, and folksinger, returned as the performer for this event. He thrilled our guests with beautiful folk music and storytelling.

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.



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
Make it Yours
Alterations & Formalwear

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 YOUS

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.

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

New Hope Christian Church
Milly Hastings and Steve Stevens

\$3,000+

Jerry and Faye Hardiman
Clipper Petroleum
Foundation
John and Dee Craddock

Sue and Mike Hriljac
Rolf Meinhold

John and Frances Tipton
AFC Home Club
Janice Glascock
Paige Peugh

\$2,000+

North Georgia Community
Foundation
Sally C. Anderson
Dr. Russ Atchley

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 Rosenberg
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 Zas
Glenda Bell
Gary Batchelor
Mark Stallings
Donna Helgeson
Ann Hixson
Ann Ploetz
Travis Bealmear
Art and Sheila Judy
Bob and Nancy Leitch
Anonymous