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Communal Pen Workshop: A Writing Workshop Celebrating Memories, Stories, and Traditions of Place

The Blue Ridge Mountains Arts Association and the University of North Georgia have developed a special partnership to present a unique writing workshop as Blue Ridge prepares to host the *Crossroads: Change in Rural America* exhibition.

What are the memories, stories, and traditions that make our community *home*? What landmarks, customs, sights and sounds connect us with family, friends, and neighbors, while highlighting our unique experience and identity? Sometimes you've just got to write it down.

In the *Communal Pen* workshop, Dr. Phillip Mitchell, UNG Assistant Professor of English, will help participants write to celebrate and explore their connections to place and community. Often, it is in our written words that memories live. The writing process can itself help us to awaken and preserve thoughts and traditions, offering insight, understanding and respect to present and future generations. This workshop draws inspiration from the Smithsonian exhibit *Crossroads: Change in Rural America* as a springboard for igniting our own stories, giving voice to our shared and individual experiences of place. NO previous experience necessary!

The Communal Pen workshop will take place at **The Art Center**, located at 420 West Main Street, Blue Ridge, GA on **Saturday, July 11, 2020 from 10am – 1:30pm.**

FREE and open to the public, but registration is encouraged due to limited seating. Register online is also available. No previous experience is necessary! Participants are invited to view the exhibit before the workshop, and to pay special attention to those images and ideas that are most relatable to them. On the day of the workshop, please bring a photo and/or object that has special meaning for you. This item will be used during a writing exercise.

The Communal Pen writing workshop is offered by the Blue Ridge Mountains Arts Association, in partnership with Georgia Humanities, in conjunction with the traveling Smithsonian exhibition, *Crossroads: Change in Rural America*. *Crossroads* is presented through the Museum on Main Street (MoMS) program as part of the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service. MoMS provides access to the Smithsonian for small-town America through museum exhibitions, research, educational resources, and programming.