Appalachia comes to Dutchess County in NEA Big Read October 12-November 16

Five Weeks of (Mostly) Free Live Readings, Music, Dance, Films, Photography, Lectures and Workshops

BY SANDI SONNENFELD

Ever since I received my first library card, public libraries have been magical spaces where I could instantly be transported to another time and place just by turning the page of a book. It wasn't until I took my first creative writing class in college that I truly understood that books were authored by ordinary people like me rather than by (Nov. 6), or a Bluegrass concert (Nomystical geniuses like Brontë, Flaubert, Tolstoy, Melville, or Fitzgerald, who floated above us mere mortals in a fixed pantheon.

Western literary canon is actually an organic, evolving concept growing out of a community of readers and schol- Fest at the Hyde Park Library comars is why I'm proud to be a part of the Poughkeepsie Public Library District's 2019 NEA Big Read. Each year the National Endowment for the Arts encourages communities across America to develop programming around a single and seniors can also "go back to book and theme. In 2019, our local Big school" with Big Read lectures on the Read program spotlights the culture role of place, sounds, history and litand people of Appalachia, focusing erary naturalism in "Burning Bright" on the short story collection, "Burning (October 23); learn about the complex-Bright," by North Carolina native Ron ity of Appalachian identity with Siena Rash and the companion book for mid- College Professor Todd D. Snyder (Ocdle school readers, "Saving Wonder," by Mary Knight.

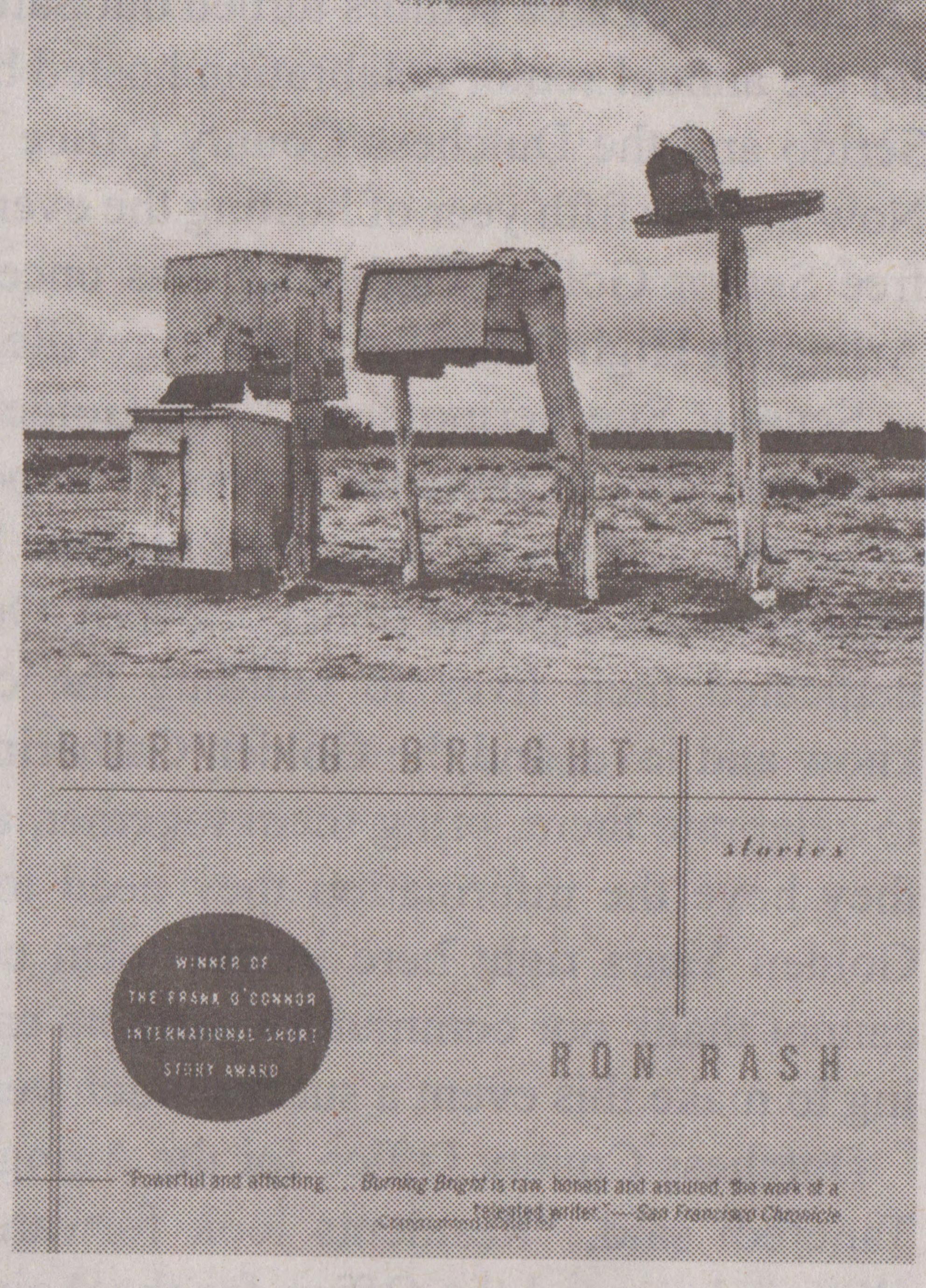
local organizations collaborate to pres-

ent 55 Big Read events at 25 Dutchess
County locations over five weeks. In addition to live readings and book discussions with Rash (October 12) and Knight (October 30), residents can enjoy readings on stage (October. 27) and free music and dance performances such as Appalachian Fusion at Bardavon (October 19), Appalachian Fiddle Music (October 23), a folk trio vember 9).

Love the visual arts? Try "Appalachia through the Lens of Cecil Sharp" at Adriance (exhibit runs October 1-That the creative process and the November 13) or "Photographing Appalachia" at Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center (November 7). A Big Read Film mences weekly screenings with "October Sky" staring Jake Gyllenhaal and Chris Cooper (October 18).

While children and teens study this year's books in the classroom, adults tober 26); or register for a short story writing workshop (November 2). Oth-Beginning October 12, thirty-five er workshops include collage making, Appalachian crafts for kids, and cook-





ing for teens.

Thanks to the efforts of the Poughkeepsie Public Library District, local partner organizations, and the National Endowment for the Arts, this is the 13th our region.

colleges and universities, most recently as adjunct faculty at Marist College.

Arts Mid-Hudson has served up fresh arts and culture across the region for over 55 years. This biweekly series community-wide Big Read program in of columns showcases arts, artists' work and arts events across the region presented with the support of Arts Poughkeepsie resident Sandi Sonnen- Mid-Hudson. For information about feld is a published author of fiction and its services and programs, visit www. creative nonfiction. She's taught college artsmidhudson.org. AMH is locatwriting, creative writing, American lit- ed at 696 Dutchess Turnpike (Rt. 44), erature and business writing at various Poughkeepsie; 845-454-3222.