

T. R. Pearson to appear on campus for a reading, talk, and book signing at Friends presentation



T. R. Pearson, author of *A Short History of a Small Place*, *Off for the Sweet Hereafter*, *The Last of How It Was*, *Call and Response*, *Gospel Hour*, *Cry Me a River*, *Blue Ridge*, *Polar*, AND *True Cross* appears on campus September 23, 2004, at 7:00 p.m. for a reading, talk, and book signing.

Please join us for an evening with a writer whose novels set in the Appalachian Highlands have been compared to the great tradition of Southwestern Humorists:

"Twain honed Southwestern Humor to a fine satiric edge, then applied it to the South, American Democracy and human foolishness generally. Southern writers in the 20th century followed Twain's lead: Faulkner's tales of Flem Snopes' wheelings and dealings offer comically acid commentary on the New South's ruthlessness and greed; Flannery O'Connor's coolly grotesque mixtures of hijinks and violence emphasize the modern decline of religious belief.

"Pearson is a worthy follower in the tradition; like the works of Twain or O'Connor, *True Cross* is both hilarious and unsettling."

-- **BILL HUG, *THE ANNISTON STAR***
(REVIEWED MAY 16, 2004)

Accountant Paul Tatum, Pearson's first person narrator who can bring order to other people's tax records yet has many insecurities, has an uncanny ability to ramble in order to find his way to a larger point. In *Blue Ridge* (2000), happenstance takes him to New York to identify the body of a son he never really knew. In *True Cross* (2003), his handyman neighbor Stoney bears a striking resemblance to Carpaccio's St. George, and the weight of this icon as dragon slayer moves the plot from mundane plumbing problems to larger complications where passions are unpredictable. Like Pearson's first novel, *A Short History of a Small Place* (1985), in which a young boy passes on the gossip about inhabitants of the largest mansion in a small town, Pearson's most recent fiction possesses brilliant plotting and phrasing. Emily Ackerman, reviewing *True Cross* for

Virginia Quarterly Review, praises Pearson for his "ability to mix wry humor with social commentary."

11th Floor, 7:00 p.m. Thursday September 23
JSU Houston Cole Library, Jacksonville, Alabama
Books available for purchase and signing