

Fall  
2007

# Western

THE MAGAZINE OF WESTERN CAROLINA UNIVERSITY



## **BLUEPRINT FOR THE FUTURE**

Campus Building  
Boom Continues

## **BEST IN CLASS**

Education Program  
Wins National Honor

# EYE ON THE PRIZE

*Western Carolina sophomore sensation Liz Rondone, tabbed a "Rising Star" in women's college volleyball by a national publication last season, drops for the dig during intercollegiate action in the Ramsey Regional Activity Center. Rondone and the Catamounts are headed into the homestretch of Southern Conference play leading up to the conference tournament Nov. 16-18 in Chattanooga, Tenn.*



# Western

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## WESTERN CAROLINA UNIVERSITY

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# News From THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE

## Teacher Education Program Wins National Christa McAuliffe Award

By BILL STUDENC

The third time proved the charm for Western's College of Education and Allied Professions, 2007 co-winner of the Christa McAuliffe Excellence in Teacher Education Award presented annually by the American Association of State Colleges and Universities. For the past three years, Western has been among the national finalists for the award, named in honor of Christa McAuliffe, the astronaut/teacher who died when the space shuttle Challenger exploded shortly after liftoff in January 1986.

"Our philosophy of teacher preparation at Western is in alignment with Christa McAuliffe's often-quoted motto 'I touch the future. I teach,'" said Michael Dougherty, dean of the College of Education and Allied Professions. "Through our ongoing work with our many public school partners across Western North Carolina, we know we are living up to her legacy. By preparing and nurturing high-quality teachers who work in our schools and make a difference in pupil learning, we play a role in shaping the young people who represent the future of our region, our state and our nation."

The McAuliffe award is the second national recognition for Western's teacher education program in the past two years. The Association of Teacher Educators presented its 2006 Distinguished Program in Teacher Education award, given to teacher

education programs that exhibit outstanding collaboration with local school systems, to WCU in recognition of the success of its School-University Teacher Education Partnership, better known as SUTEP.

Western Chancellor John W. Bardo said the national honors provide important, independent validation of the strength of the university's teacher education program. "I can think of no stronger evidence of the efforts of our faculty, staff, students and school partners than for Western to win two national awards for its teacher education program within two years. That is unheard of," Bardo said. "We are facing serious shortages across the state and nationally in the number of qualified teachers needed to help ensure that our children are prepared for careers in an increasingly global economy. I hope these awards will increase the number of teacher education majors at Western. I am convinced that no institution prepares teachers better than Western – period."

SUTEP is part of WCU's effort to improve the academic achievement of

students in all grade levels by providing assistance to educators at each step in their development – as student teachers, as they first enter the teaching profession, and as they reach the middle of their careers and seek additional professional development. Established in 1997 as one of 14 such partnerships in North Carolina, SUTEP has formal agreements with 96 schools in 18 WNC school systems and informal partnerships with the remaining school systems and charter schools in the region, said Ruth McCreary, director of SUTEP since 2001.

Through the partnership, which also involves faculty from WCU's College of Arts and Sciences, educators from local systems help provide a "real-world classroom" perspective to students in the university's teacher education program. Teachers serve as clinical faculty, co-teaching selected courses with WCU instructors in an effort to blend theory and practice, and as cooperating teachers working with faculty members on education research projects. Local school systems also provide traditional pre-service field experience for WCU's student teachers.

*'I touch the future. I teach.'*

– Christa McAuliffe

Student teacher April Hicks works with a kindergarten class at Smokey Mountain Elementary School in Whittier as part of Western's award-winning teacher education program.



# BEST IN *Class*



## News From

# THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE

*Record enrollment makes for a bustling campus.*

## WEB CITE

### Two Online Programs Achieve National Ranking Recognition

By RANDALL HOLCOMBE

Two of WCU's online programs recently appeared in national rankings. The September issue of Fortune Small Business magazine listed Western's online master's degree program in entrepreneurship as one of the five best online entrepreneurship programs in the nation, while distance education information clearinghouse GetEducated.com gave WCU's online bachelor's degree program in criminal justice a No. 1 national ranking in affordability.

"Distance education is all about making education more accessible, especially for working adults in need of career-specific higher education," said Vicky Phillips, the founder

of GetEducated.com. "The cost of college is a huge inhibiting factor for most Americans. Western Carolina University is to be lauded for taking the initiative in making higher education more affordable, and therefore more accessible, for learners in North Carolina."

The listing of WCU's online Master of Entrepreneurship Program among the "56 top schools for would-be tycoons" was included in Fortune Small Business and online at CNNMoney.com, the Internet home of Fortune Small Business and three other business magazines.

Fortune Small Business compiled its lists of top schools for entrepreneurship after seven months of interviews with entrepreneurs, professors, students, alumni, university administrators and venture capitalists. WCU was the only university in North Carolina recognized for its online program.

The magazine notes that WCU's entrepreneurship faculty members address topics ranging from small-business finance to how best to protect a company from fraud, and that students are required to take part in an online business discussion with a professor and classmates at least twice a week.

"The objective of our program is to help our students take an idea for starting a business and be able to create a sustainable venture by the time they graduate," said Frank Lockwood, director of the master's degree program. "A big majority of our graduates either expand their existing companies or start a new company."

GetEducated.com listed Western's online bachelor's degree program in criminal justice first among a group of 10 "best buys" based on a survey of 35 regionally accredited universities that offer bachelor's degrees in criminal justice, law, legal studies and homeland security through distance education.

North Carolina students who enroll in WCU's program pay about \$9,000 for the program, while the average cost for a bachelor's degree in the justice area is above \$38,000, according to the GetEducated.com survey.



*Entrepreneurship graduate student Coburn Gardner attends class from his front porch.*

# HERE WE GROW AGAIN

## Student Enrollment Tops 9,000 To Set New Record

The 2007 fall semester registration rolls are closed and the numbers are in – overall student enrollment at Western has topped 9,000 for the first time in the institution’s history, with significant growth in the number of community college transfers and graduate students. **Keith Stiles ’91 ’97 MBA ’93 MA ’01**, senior research analyst in the Office of Institutional Research and Planning, reported that WCU’s total student headcount is 9,055 this fall.

“We are seeing significant trends that tell us a lot about the direction of the university,” Chancellor John W. Bardo said. “We have experienced an increase of about 27 percent in the number of community college transfers this fall, and the number of students taking courses through distance education programs is up about 20 percent.”

Overall graduate school enrollment, which includes both traditional and distance education classes, has increased to 1,945 students this

fall, up 230 from last year’s enrollment. Bardo attributed much of the increase in community college transfer enrollment to the Western 2-Step program, a cooperative agreement launched in May that aligns course requirements at WCU and all 58 community colleges across North Carolina so that students will know exactly what to expect when they transfer to Western.

Enrollment for first-time freshmen is down slightly, but the overall grade-point average for entering freshmen is 3.35, up from last year’s GPA of 3.26.

“We are making a decided effort to bring our admission standards up,” Bardo said. “When we enroll the right type of students – those who are better prepared academically and who are a better ‘fit’ with the university – they will be more likely to stay in school and remain on track to graduate.”

## PASSING THE GAVEL

### Trustees Elect Officers, Welcome Newest Member

By BILL STUDENC

**Steve Warren ’80**, after completing two consecutive one-year terms as chair of Western’s board of trustees, recently passed the gavel to Joan MacNeill of Webster. The board unanimously approved MacNeill, a community leader and entrepreneur, as its chair for the next year. Election of officers and administration of the oath of office for new board member Teresa H. Williams of Huntersville came earlier this year as part of the board’s first meeting of the 2007-08 academic year.

“This is a great honor and a great privilege,” MacNeill told the trustees. “I started on Western’s Foundation Board 10 years ago, and this university has become my passion. I appreciate your confidence and your trust, as I have some very big shoes to fill. It’s an exciting time to be at Western, and I look forward to working together as the university moves forward.”

Although board bylaws stipulate that Warren step down as chair, he won’t be going far. His fellow trustees tapped him to remain in a leadership role as vice chair of the board. Former Asheville Mayor Charles Worley was elected to serve as secretary.

MacNeill is co-founder and former president and chief operations officer for the Great Smoky Mountains Railroad. A former nurse, she previously served with the Garden Club of Sylva and is treasurer of the Downtown Sylva Association.

Prior to the election of officers, District Court Judge **Danny Davis ’75** administered the oath of office to the newest board member, Teresa Williams, and to five reappointed board members, including Warren and Worley.

A community leader in Mecklenburg County, Williams is a former member of the board of visitors for the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and former board member and



*Teresa Williams*

vice chair for the Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools Board of Education. She was appointed by then-Gov. Jim Martin to the Mecklenburg County School Building Solutions Committee, and has been active with the United Way. She was appointed to the WCU board by the University of North Carolina Board of Governors.

Re-appointed to the WCU board by Gov. Mike Easley are Worley, an Asheville attorney; and Rosemary Wyche of Raleigh, former vice president of North Carolina Citizens for Business and Industry. Re-appointed to the board by the University of North Carolina Board of Governors are Robert Burgin of Asheville, recently retired chief executive officer of Mission Hospitals; **Gerald Kiser ’69** of Columbia, S.C., president of Paladin Interiors and Design; and Warren, an Asheville attorney and outgoing chair of the board of trustees.

# Construction Junction

## What's Your Function



### Recreation, Dining Facilities to Open as Campus Makeover Continues

By TERESA KILLIAN

Watching Helder Residence Hall come down this summer to make way for a new dining hall was bittersweet for **Brenda Holcombe '94**, who lived in Helder for four years. The building held a lot of memories. Holcombe remembers getting cheese sticks from The Townhouse Restaurant to share with hallmates as they piled into one room to watch "Doogie Howser, M.D." and "Mad About You." She remembers children in day care taking short trips to see the characters that decorated Helder's "Disney Hall." Yet, Holcombe, now senior associate director in the Office of Undergraduate Admission, also gets excited describing to prospective students the more than \$65 million in construction and renovation projects under way: a new dining hall featuring a Starbucks and McAlister's Deli and outdoor café-style seating; a student recreation center with amenities including an indoor track and comprehensive rock climbing wall; and a science building with state-of-the-art labs.

"The plans for the new facilities are phenomenal," said Holcombe. "They will bring many of the resources and amenities to Western that students today are looking for in a college campus and will truly enhance the overall experience for our students."

By fall of next year, barring construction delays, two new brick buildings with high-pitched green roofs and tall windows will join the skyline surrounding the lawn of a new grassy quad at the center of campus. One of those buildings will be a 73,000-square-foot student recreation center adjacent to Reid Gym, and the other a two-story, 53,000-square-foot dining hall where Helder used to stand that will replace Dodson Cafeteria.

Hundreds of students were interviewed about their likes and dislikes as part of the design process for the new dining hall, said **Rick Nicholson '76**, director of auxiliary services. Upstairs will be an "all-you-care-to-eat" venue with salads, fruits and vegetables, pastas and pizza, home-style foods, grilled items, sandwiches and desserts. Some chairs in the seating areas will be cushioned, and booths will be scattered throughout. Windows will overlook campus and the mountains, said Nicholson.

Downstairs will host a convenience store and retail outlets including Panda Express, Starbucks, McAlister's Deli, Grill Works, Freshens and Zoca's, a Mexican-themed restaurant. Students will be able to dine at outdoor tables under umbrellas in the style of a sidewalk café. "The Starbucks and McAlister's Deli will have separate entrances

**New Student Recreation Center - \$16.8 million**

**New Dining Hall Replacement of Dodson - \$17.2 million**

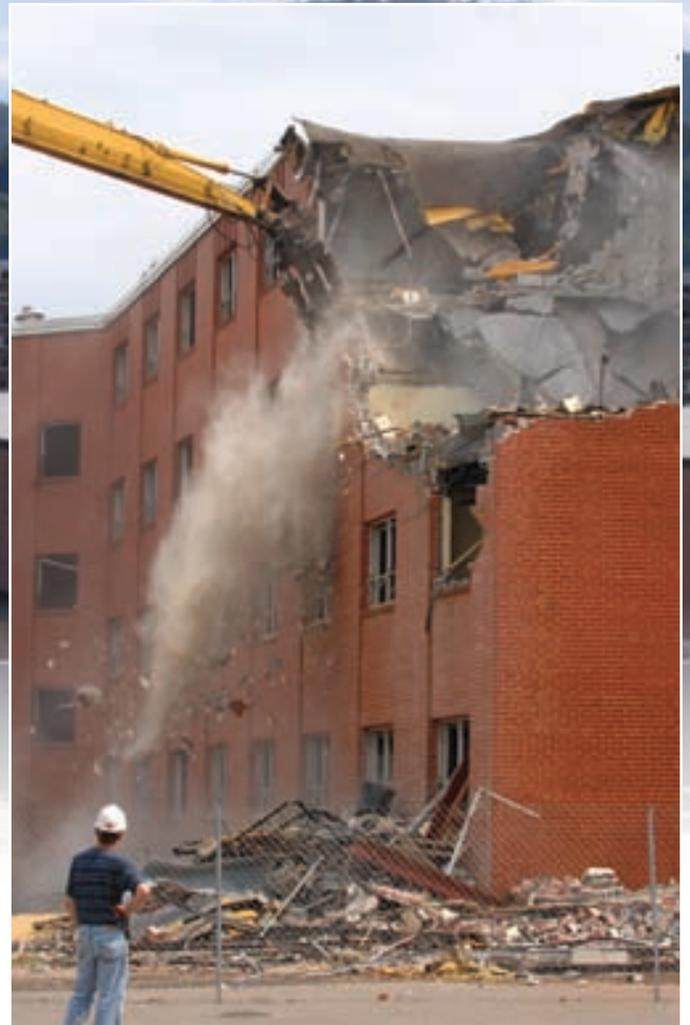


allowing them to remain open late in the evening, making these locations a great place for socializing as well as dining,” said Nicholson.

Earlier this year, the dining area at Brown Cafeteria was transformed into a sports-themed nightspot and opened this semester as The Cats Den. The menu features pizza, wings and hot subs; and entertainment includes arcade games, pool tables, darts, wireless access, and a 50-inch flat-screen high-definition television hooked up to a Nintendo Wii. “We needed somewhere on campus to relax and hang out that’s open a little later,” said Ryan Jaskot, a junior business major from Durham.

In response to student requests for expanded exercise facilities, construction began on the new student recreation center, which features two multipurpose courts, a 9,800-square-foot area for strength-training and cardiovascular equipment, a three-lane indoor track, a 2,500-square-foot group exercise studio, fitness assessment rooms, locker rooms and administrative offices. Kellie Angelo Monteith, director of the Fitness Center, said the opening of the new recreation center will enhance access to exercise equipment

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*A 60 foot excavator dismantled the majority of the walls of the four story, 400 bed Helder Residence Hall in a matter of days in July inset . The residence hall for women first opened in 1966, the same year as Dodson Cafeteria and Leatherwood Residence Hall. The building was dedicated in honor of the late Horatio A. and Adah Clark Helder. Horatio was a member of the board of trustees of what was then Western Carolina College, and an executive at Champion Papers Inc. of Canton. Nearby, a new student recreation center is rising on a former parking lot between A.K. Hinds University Center and Reid Gymnasium above left .*



*Sam Miller, vice chancellor for student affairs (left), and Chancellor John Bardo check out progress on the student recreation center.*

Continued from page 9

and allow more fitness programs to be offered throughout the day. Currently, the fitness center closes between 8 a.m. and noon during academic weight-training classes, and group exercise programs do not have dedicated space.

One of the new building's hallmarks, the indoor climbing wall, was designed with help from Josh Whitmore, director of outdoor programs. The wall features a 48-foot-tall section and molded archway, offering both challenges for experienced climbers and areas ideal for beginners. "This is an exciting addition to outdoor recreation amenities on campus," said Whitmore. "The university has the unique advantage of being fairly close to exceptional rock climbing. However, taking advantage of those resources requires skills that can be learned and perfected on an indoor wall. The indoor wall offers easy access any time and in any weather, making the sport more available to new participants. It's sure to be a hit with students."

Also next fall, Forsyth Building, which is home to the College of Business, is scheduled to reopen after interior renovations during the 2007-08 academic year; and finishing touches are being put on renovated space in Stillwell Science Building. Scheduled to open this spring are the facility's microbiology labs; teaching labs, including one designed for biotech projects; an herb library and research area; labs specifically for biology, chemical intensive and faculty research; and faculty offices.

"We are going to have some really beautiful state-of-the-art teaching labs that are bright and welcoming," said Cynthia Atterholt, head of the chemistry department. Mack Powell, head of the biology department, said he's particularly excited to see

the opening of a first-class herbarium. "We have an outstanding archive of plants native to the Southern Appalachians that rivals any in the Southeast, with some specimens more than 100 years old; but, until now, we haven't had a really good facility for processing and cataloging the specimens," said Powell.

Meanwhile, construction is expected to begin next fall on a \$46.2 million Health and Gerontological Sciences Building – the first building to be constructed on 344 acres of recently acquired property between the Jackson County Airport and the North Carolina Center for the Advancement of Teaching. The building will anchor what the university's master plan describes as a "neighborhood of interest," a mixed-use community designed to co-locate traditional campus activities, including classes and research, with related private and governmental enterprises interested in collaborating with students and faculty (see related story). A new residence hall is on the drawing board, too.

"Fall '08 will be an exciting time," said **Chuck Wooten '73**, vice chancellor for administration and finance.

Jessica Hobart, a senior parks and recreation management major from Asheville, says she regrets only that she will not be at WCU next year to enjoy the climbing wall and other new facilities on campus. She approves of the construction – as long as it preserves, too, what makes Cullowhee special. "It would be awful to no longer be able to enjoy the beautiful mountains as I read under the shade of an old tree on campus," she said. "But I also think some of the construction, such as the new student recreation center, is long overdue. We must continually enhance and update the campus so that Western will be a place where students want to go and want to stay."

**New Health & Gerontological Sciences Building - \$46.2 million    Total: \$111.2 million**



## State Investment in New Health Building Highlights Record Year in Revenues for WCU

By BILL STUDENC

You could almost hear the celebratory champagne corks popping in Moore Hall, home to many of Western's academic programs in the health sciences, when N.C. Gov. Mike Easley signed a \$20.7 billion budget bill on the last day of July. That's because the 2007-08 state budget includes \$43.8 million in funding for a new health and gerontological sciences building at WCU.

The 145,000-square-foot facility that will house educational programs in the College of Health and Human Sciences will be the first construction project on the university's Millennial Initiative property, 344 acres across N.C. Highway 107 from Western's main campus. But that major allocation for construction of the long-awaited building is just part of a total of nearly \$53 million in new investments in Western by the state this year, said Clifton Metcalf, vice chancellor for advancement and external affairs.

"This has been a very dramatic year for Western, financially speaking," Metcalf said. "Between \$52.8 million in new funds from the state, \$15.7 million in gifts contributed to the university through The Campaign for Western and \$3.4 million through the Foundation in contributions to annual operations funds, it is a record year for public and private giving to Western. I believe that level of financial support for the university speaks volumes about the direction of the institution. In both the public and the private sector, people tend to invest their money in people, programs and places where they feel confident those dollars will pay dividends. The \$71.9 million in public appropriations and private contributions that have come to Western this year will have a tremendous impact on the university's ability to educate its students and serve the needs of the people of the region."

The funding represents the second largest injection of financial resources into Western, although the \$98.4 million that represented the university's share of a \$3.1 billion state higher education bond issue approved by N.C. voters in November 2000 did not come in one fell swoop. "To me, to see these kinds of resources coming into this place is incredible," said Rosemary Wyche of Raleigh, former vice president of North Carolina Citizens for Business and Industry and a member of WCU's board of trustees. "It's absolutely incredible."

The biggest chunk of change coming Western's way is the \$43.8 million for the new health sciences building. The General Assembly allocated \$2.4 million in advance planning and design funding for the building in 2005, for a total pricetag of \$46.2 million.

The new building will house classrooms, offices and laboratory space to allow much-needed expansion of Western's accredited degree programs to meet an increasing demand for licensed health care professionals in a wide range of nursing and health sciences disciplines, said Linda Seestedt-Stanford, dean of the College of Health and Human Sciences. "This building will provide exceptional educational and research opportunities that will enrich and advance the quality of education at Western and will serve as a testament to our dedication to making a difference in the health of the people of North Carolina," said Seestedt-Stanford. "It will allow both the physical assimilation of our health programs, pulling together faculty and students currently housed in four different buildings, as well as interdisciplinary cross-fertilization, an essential element necessary in the education of health sciences students."

*Linda Seestedt-Stanford, dean of the College of Health and Human Sciences (center), is joined by (from left) Phillip Kneller, Judy Dillard, Vincent Hall and Karen Lunnen at the site where the health and gerontological sciences building (architect's concept pictured above) will be constructed.*





# UP-AND-COMING ATTRACTIONS

By LEILA TVEDT

Re-create conditions on an 18th-century sailing ship and in a Colonial community – that was the challenge for 12 motion picture majors from Western working as summer interns on an independent film set in the North Carolina village of Old Salem. Titled “Wesley,” the film is about John Wesley, founder of the Methodist Church in England, during his few years in America, said producer John Jackman of Foundry Pictures.

Jackman and his director of photography, Arledge Armenaki, associate professor of cinematography in WCU’s motion picture and television production program, hired the Western students to work as crew on the film.

The first couple of days were tough, said Ian Vigstedt, a senior from Asheville who worked as a script supervisor. “We really didn’t have a feel for it,” said Vigstedt. “We were required to do professional work with no experience. It was terrifying. I thought I’d mess up; let people down. We all had our foul-ups – professionals and students alike. But once I got over the initial terror and realized I could do this job and do it well, it turned out great.”

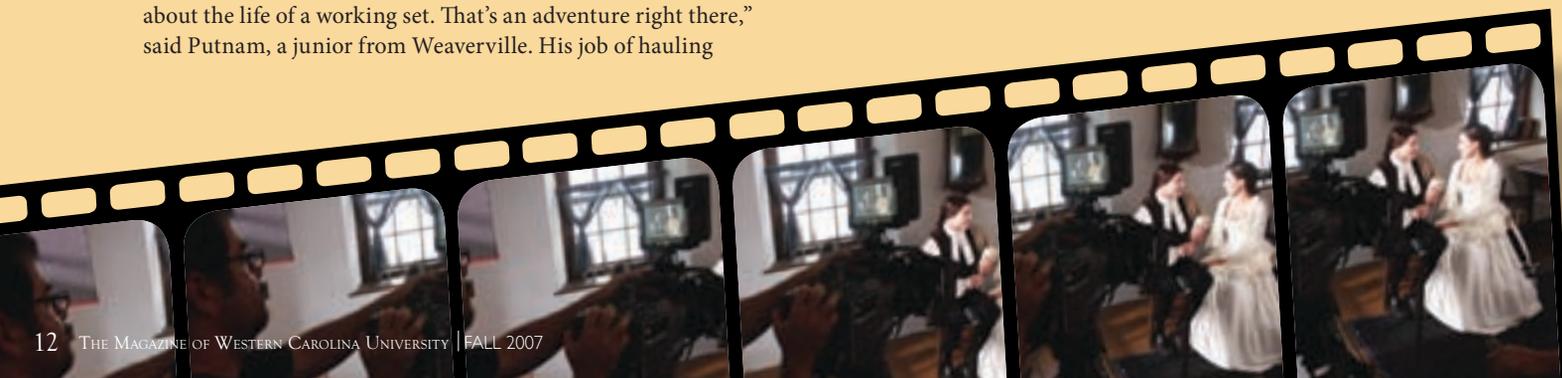
Aaron Putnam, who worked as a grip, agreed. “We learned about the life of a working set. That’s an adventure right there,” said Putnam, a junior from Weaverville. His job of hauling

around huge, heavy lights and stands was strenuous, but he’s not complaining. “We met a lot of really good professionals – not just the actors, but camera operators, grips, gaffers and other technical folks. It was spectacularly fun,” he said.

And it was a good experience, said Tommy Flaherty, also a grip. For the senior from Clyde, the hardest part was learning the names of the lighting equipment. “I didn’t know what half the stuff was at first,” he said – stuff like the high roller, high high, triple riser or mickey mole. “It took a while, but we finally got it,” Flaherty said.

Now back to that sailing ship – a 36-footer with two masts and full rigging. Corey Utke, a senior from Denver, was assigned to set construction. “From reading the script, we could see that a quarter of the story takes place on the Atlantic, so we had to build a boat somehow,” Utke said. And there were no blueprints. “We did lots of research in the library and on the Internet. We talked with people at shipyards and found a naval expert to help with the knots,” he said.

“When we were finished, Professor Armenaki said, ‘That boat looks great. That’s bad. It has to look like it’s been at sea



# NEXT STOP OSCAR?

By LEILA TVEDT

Aaron Putnam, who has been making amateur movies since he was in high school, is learning even more about video storytelling as a motion picture major at WCU, and he got some great experience as a summer intern working with the pros on the set of a motion picture production. Now Putnam has another star to add to his resume.

Make that nine stars.

Putnam and his production, titled “Cosmo of 1932,” won the Audience Award plus nearly half of the other 18 awards given by judges at the 48 Hour Film Festival in Asheville this summer. “Cosmo” took best film and top honors for special effects, song, sound design, cinematography, writing, acting and directing.

Think about it – 48 hours to make a complete movie. The genre is assigned, as are one of the props, one of the characters, and one line of dialogue. Only location scouting is allowed in advance. That’s it. Now go create a seven-minute film. That’s exactly what Putnam and his team did.

“It’s really a stress test. While I was writing the script, the others went out to find what we had or could adapt to support the story,” Putnam said. “I sat down at the computer and, three hours later, had the script and some idea of what to do about it. I had expected to do something serious, but the character of Cosmo came out as a spoof on the old film noir detective. He’s a modern-day cop who plays out his job as if he’s in the ’30s,” complete with tough talk and a trench coat. “Miles Rice, who won best actor, did a brilliant job with his interpretation,” Putnam said.

Then there was Putnam’s sister who wrote the award-winning theme song; and friends and classmates who helped operate cameras, record sound and create costumes. They found the required umbrella prop (which becomes surprisingly deadly) and played the parts of police chief, sidekick, cowboy, villain, flapper, criminal master mind and the required character – an environmentalist (who keeps in touch with nature by selling pot) – and his almost-twin brother. Together, they kept each other going through a plot that thickens right up to the final frame.

“Everyone in the movie did such a great job,” Putnam said. The judges obviously thought so. To see why they were so impressed, go to [www.putnamfilms.com](http://www.putnamfilms.com).

*Aaron Putnam, award-winning filmmaker.*



for months.’ So we beat on it with bicycle chains and threw gallons of mud on it,” Utke said. But he doesn’t mind. The ship from “Wesley” will be used in another film. “They won’t even have to take it apart, and we’ll get credits for both,” he said.

Kristen Philyaw, a senior who worked on props, also learned to make do. Because of the movie’s low budget, Philyaw, who hails from Pottstown, Pa., helped the set designer borrow period furniture, and they made pewter dinnerware from spray-painted paper plates. “I learned a lot about improvising,” she said. “It was a lot of work, more work than people realize, but I still really want to get into this after graduation.”

And that’s the point, said Jack Sholder, Hollywood veteran and program director at Western. “It was an extraordinary experience for our students,” Sholder said. “They learned how a movie works, how a set works, how the pieces fit together. And they did some great networking. I thought it was enormously successful. It did exactly what we want an internship to do,” he said.

*Students Alex Dillard (top) and Robbie Cassidy (bottom) work side by side with movie industry professionals including actor R. Keith Harris ’92 (above right), one of the stars of “Wesley.”*



# Academic ADVENTURE



WCU Educational Talent Search  
Director **Todd Murdock '85 MAEd '93** leads summer participants on trips that include (clockwise from top left) bicycling more than 1,000 miles along the path of Lewis and Clark to the Pacific Ocean; planting endemic species in Glacier National Park; bicycling on the Oregon side of Columbia River Gorge; hiking in Montana; and exploring Saint Mary Falls.



# WCU Pre-College Program Recognized for Creativity

By TERESA KILLIAN

Students in Western's Educational Talent Search program did more than read about Native American tribes in the Great Plains. They flew to Montana, slept in tipis, helped a 91-year-old hide tanner, joined tribal children in traditional games and meals, and planted endemic plant species in areas of Glacier National Park damaged by forest fire.

"There's a difference between reading or hearing about something, and going to the subject and struggling to really 'get it,'" said **Todd Murdock '85 MAEd '93**, director of Educational Talent Search at WCU. "That kind of experiential education really impacts someone – helps them understand the world a little more and discover something new in themselves. That's what we do here."

The U.S. Department of Education funds Talent Search programs across the country to help increasing numbers of young people from disadvantaged backgrounds complete high school and continue their education at postsecondary institutions. Services typically offered include tutoring, career exploration, aptitude assessments, counseling, mentoring programs, workshops, information on postsecondary institutions and assistance with applying for admission and financial aid.

*"This is the true story of twenty strangers, chosen to travel together, to experience a new place and a rich culture, to live among strangers soon to be friends, to work alongside one another, to experience the authentic learning environment that comes when people stop being comfortable, and start living 'on the road.'"*

*-Excerpt from blog, "On the Road Service Learning and Cultural Exchange" 2007 program, Educational Talent Search, Western Carolina University.*

At Western, Talent Search offers 900 middle and high school students those core services plus additional outdoor and cultural activities, including intensive summer enrichment experiences that have been commended on the national level for creativity, said Murdock. For three consecutive summers, participants from Western's Talent Search retraced the Lewis and Clark expedition – hiking, biking and paddling more than 1,000 miles from St. Louis, Mo., to the coast of Oregon. An environmental, cultural and historical "Girl Power" trip to the Carolina coast and barrier islands was an opportunity for many participants to see the ocean for the first time. This past summer's trip marked the first in what will be a series of cultural and service learning exchange trips.

"We don't have a lot of time with these students. To really rock their world in a positive way in the time we do have, we design programs that they will think are really cool while also being meaningful, powerful and intentional," said Murdock, who joined Talent Search two decades ago as an outreach counselor and became the director in 1987. Montana exchange program organizers wanted participants to really step outside of their own world and experience the rich culture at the Flathead Indian Reservation, home to the Confederated Salish and Kootenai tribes, and Browning, the largest community on the Blackfoot Indian Reservation. Murdock said he believes they did.

"One day on the trip we listened to a man talk about a dark time in his tribe's past. It was good for the kids to hear, but not necessarily easy to hear. In one story, the man recounted the kidnapping of the tribe's children in the name of God by people who were white," he said. "At our campfire debriefing that night, one student said, 'I felt sorry for him,' and another 'I felt bad for

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Continued from page 15

him. I think he was really just very frustrated with how things happened.' That was when I knew they got it. They really heard him and were walking a mile in his moccasins."

For Monica Gatti, a junior at Nantahala High School who wants to become a teacher, the Montana trip was her first venture west of Tennessee. Gatti said she was moved listening to Oshanee Kenmille, who started tanning hides at age 12 and was married at age 14 in a prearranged marriage, and inspired when they hiked trails more difficult and longer than she ever had before. "I know it sounds funny, but the sky was really big and open. Everything was. We were driving down the road, and to the left there were rolling hills and to the right Rocky Mountains," said Gatti. "Parts of the trip were challenging, but it was worth it."

In addition to coordinating summer enrichment experiences, Educational Talent Search outreach counselors meet with middle school students regularly during the school year for activities such as career exploration and invite students to participate in two full days of outdoor learning experiences. For high school students, Talent Search offers assistance preparing for the SAT, fee waivers for test or college applications, and trips to visit colleges. "Our main purpose is to help first-generation college-bound students," said Murdock, who himself was in the first generation from his family to earn a college degree.

"Many families want their children to go to college but may not necessarily know the process – when to take the SAT, visit colleges and apply."

Program participants such as **Amanda Buchanan '06** say Educational Talent Search helped give her the information and confidence she needed to keep pursuing her dream of becoming a veterinarian. Buchanan was new to Andrews Middle School when she joined Talent Search and participated in such activities as a "Girl Power" trip and ropes course challenges. "I was anxious. I remember being harnessed to a rope and trying to climb a rope ladder. It was something I had never done before and didn't think I could, but people on the ground were giving me a lot of encouragement," said Buchanan. Talent Search's career exploration activities confirmed to Buchanan that her skills and love of animals suited her for the veterinary field. Now, after completing the pre-vet program at Western, she has become the first student from Cherokee County to enter veterinary school at North Carolina State University. "I want to come back to work in this region after I graduate," said Buchanan. "I am pretty committed to serving the community here. I know I will have to work hard, but I know I can do it."

Read more about Educational Talent Search at Western Carolina University on the Web site [www.wcu.edu/talentsearch](http://www.wcu.edu/talentsearch).



*Educational Talent Search participants raft the Flathead River in Montana.*



# CYCLE OF HOPE

*A.J. Rowell '05 soaks in the scenery of Canada's Yukon countryside during his cross-continental charity ride.*

## Rowell Embarks on 10,000-mile Bicycle Ride to Benefit Charities

By RANDALL HOLCOMBE

A.J. Rowell '05 can't remember exactly when the thought of a long-distance benefit ride came to his mind, but it was sometime during his solo across-the-United States bicycle tour, several months after his graduation from Western.

The day after he participated in commencement ceremonies at the Ramsey Center, Rowell left Cullowhee with his degree in accounting and finance to start the first long-distance bicycle tour of his life – a ride along the entire length of the Blue Ridge Parkway, from Cherokee to Rockfish Gap, Va. Rowell was so enthralled with that adventure that he kept riding past the point where the parkway ended in Virginia, and pedaled on to visit relatives near Washington, D.C.

After that 680-mile adventure, he immediately left for Montana to begin a 320-mile tour that included Yellowstone National Park. "Somewhere in Yellowstone, I started talking about a cross-country bicycle tour," he said. Sure enough, next up was a four-month, 4,700-mile ride across the northern tier of the United States that took him from Anacortes, Wash., to Bar Harbor, Maine.

Rowell says it might have been while he was blazing down a Montana road with a 30-mph wind at his back, or it could have been while he was facing a brutal headwind and 100-degree temperatures in Iowa, but somewhere out in the wide open spaces during that cross-country ride the idea came to him. "I realized how much more fulfilling my trip would be if I had a cause," he said. "My journey had no cause other than personal achievement. I thought about what I could do to bring meaning to such a journey."

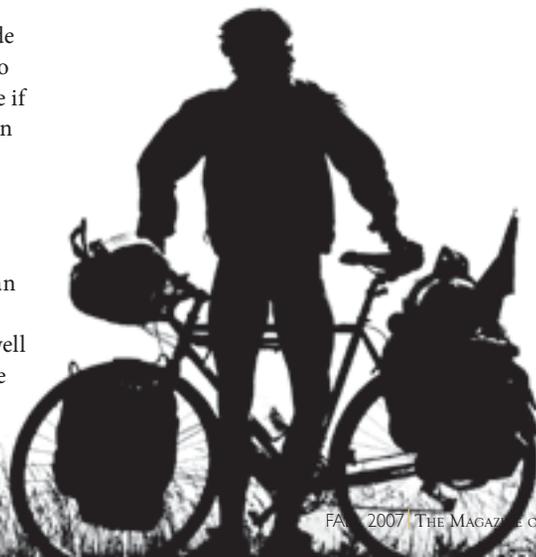
That meaning is finding form as Rowell continues his current trek – a 10,000-mile journey from Prudhoe Bay, Alaska, to Cullowhee that includes 13 states, three Canadian provinces and 22 national parks. Called "Why I Ride," the expedition serves one purpose – to help those in need, Rowell said. He hopes to raise \$25,000 to be distributed among five major charities.

Rowell began his "Why I Ride" tour in June, and he expects the entire journey to take six to eight months. By late August, he had reached northern British Columbia and was averaging 70 miles per day. He expected to reach the U.S. border in early September, and hoped to make it through the Rockies before winter weather arrives.

"This tour is the hardest thing I've ever done, physically and mentally," Rowell said, particularly because the ride has taken him across some of the most remote wildernesses of Alaska and Canada, where he has been completely reliant on the equipment and provisions he can carry on his bicycle. He has ridden for as long as a week without finding modern services of any kind.

Rowell said the challenges he faces are insignificant, though, compared to the difficulties faced by those who live out every day of their lives in the grip of poverty. "I remind myself of that a lot when I'm out here," he said.

Rowell's Web site, [WhyIRide.org](http://WhyIRide.org), includes a journal with trip details, information about charities that will benefit from the ride, photo galleries, and a chance for visitors to sign up for e-mail updates and make donations.



*Genevieve Burda (right) is among the family members who endowed a scholarship fund in memory of Genevieve Whitmire MAEd '69 and E.J. Whitmire, pictured at their farm in Cherokee County.*



## IT'S ALL IN THE FAMILY

By TERESA KILLIAN

The late **Genevieve Whitmire MAEd '69** and E.J. Whitmire started their careers teaching high school in Franklin and spent their lives educating others about the value and joy of learning. The Whitmires taught their children and grandchildren that hard work and getting an education were among the best ways to succeed, and that people with drive, determination and a love of learning deserved a hand along the way. Now, their children and grandchildren are extending that hand to students at Western through a scholarship fund they created in 2006 in honor of E.J. Whitmire, who died in 1998, and Genevieve Whitmire, who died on June 14.

"Our family believes there is no better way to carry forward their philosophy and contributions than to establish a scholarship fund to foster and advance other life-long learners who plan to touch the lives of young people through teaching," said their granddaughter **Kathleen Burda Wirth '97 MAEd '01**, on behalf of the family members who contributed more than \$60,000 to start the fund. "If there was a question of funding an educational opportunity and if there was a way to help, Genevieve and E.J. would try to aid – even if they didn't always know the recipient very well. They felt that need shouldn't stand in the way of learning."

This year, the Genevieve and E.J. Whitmire Scholarship Fund will generate about \$3,000 to help a student majoring in mathematics education or science education. The scholarship recognizes the Whitmires, who both at one time taught high school science, and the need for teachers in schools today, said Genevieve Burda, the Whitmires' daughter and a past member of Western's board of trustees. "We felt any incentive we can offer to encourage talented students interested in teaching in those disciplines would help address the critical need for teachers in math and science," said Burda.

Chancellor John W. Bardo said the new scholarship will improve the quality of education for generations to come. "The story of the tremendous growth at Western Carolina University would not be complete without the Whitmire family," said Bardo. "For more than 50 years, the Whitmires have given generously of their time, their services and their finances to enhance and expand opportunities for students at Western."

The scholarship marks the third endowed scholarship fund established by the Whitmire family. In 1974, the Whitmires and E.J. Whitmire's brother and sister-in-law, Blanton J. Whitmire and Margaret S. "Peg" Whitmire, created the Myrtle Olivia Whitmire Scholarship, which benefits students planning careers in early childhood education. In 1996, Genevieve and E.J. Whitmire developed another scholarship, the "Little E.J." Scholarship Fund, to help students preparing for careers in special education. In addition, Whitmire family members have financially supported university programs and professorships, programs and in-kind services.

For more than 20 years, E.J. Whitmire served on Western's board of trustees. In a 1974 publication printed when Western's stadium was dedicated as the E.J. Whitmire Stadium, a facility E.J. Whitmire donated site preparation work in order to construct, he talked about what led him, though an alumnus of North Carolina State University, to become one of Western's most active advocates. "When Gov. Kerr Scott was elected, he asked me to accept an appointment to the Western Carolina Board of Trustees," he said. "I had turned down some earlier appointments, but I accepted this one when he convinced me that I could help the development of the area and its people."



*Roger Plemens '77 presents Provost Kyle Carter with a gift of \$25,000 for the Michael Morgan Memorial Scholarship Fund in honor of the late **Michael Morgan '84**, (in the photograph at the far right) who was first vice president and chief lending officer of Macon Bank. Also taking part in the presentation (from left) are Morgan's wife, **Jane '81 MAEd '82**, and his two daughters, Kelly and Lori.*

## MACON A DIFFERENCE

By JESSICA CREGGER '07

Employees and family members of Macon Bank recently honored the memory of a beloved co-worker and Western alumnus by renaming a scholarship in his honor.

The Michael Morgan Memorial Scholarship, previously called the Macon Bank Scholarship, pays tribute to the late **Michael Morgan '84**, former first vice president and chief lending officer, who passed away in January. An 11-year employee of Macon Bank, Morgan was a member of the foundation board of Southwestern Community College and served on the Macon County Economic Development Commission.

"Mike was a big part of the bank. With the recent establishment of the new banking concentration at Western, it all seemed to fit," said **Roger Plemens '77**, president and chief executive officer of Macon Bank, who also was Morgan's longtime friend.

Using the fund's previous balance of \$19,000, in addition to a gift of \$25,000 from Macon Bank, the scholarship will provide a junior- or senior-level banking student from Western North Carolina with an annual award of \$5,000 beginning in the 2007-08 academic year. Annual earnings of the fund will contribute to half of the scholarship amount, and Macon Bank will donate \$2,500 annually to assure that the full \$5,000 is awarded every year.

"We appreciate Macon Bank's leadership in recognizing the importance of the corporate-educational partnership," said Kyle Carter, WCU provost. "Western Carolina University is honored to remember Mike Morgan through this important scholarship fund."

Founded in Franklin in 1922, Macon Bank has grown to 11 branches and more than 200 employees. Of the bank's employees, more than 30 are Western grads. In addition to Plemens, president and CEO since April 2004, they include **Holly McCall '92**, director of human resources; **Laura Clark '92**, vice president and compliance officer; **Will Madden '92**, vice president and Cashiers branch manager; and **Patrick Moore '01**, director of marketing. "We also have several loan officers, customer service representatives and tellers in our branches that are WCU alumni," said Moore.

CREATING extraordinary  
OPPORTUNITIES  
THE CAMPAIGN FOR WESTERN

For information on  
THE CAMPAIGN FOR WESTERN,

visit the Web site at

[campaign.wcu.edu](http://campaign.wcu.edu)

or call (828) 227-7124.

# CREATING *extraordinary* OPPORTUNITIES

THE CAMPAIGN FOR WESTERN

## A GIVING TRADITION

By RANDALL HOLCOMBE

A former Western administrator who served as chairman of Mountain Heritage Day for 18 years and his wife have established a \$10,000 endowed fund that will help the event continue to thrive as one of the premier folk festivals in the Southeast. Investment earnings from the fund created by **W. Douglas Davis '49** and **Angela Davis MA '68** of Cullowhee will be used to support a wide range of festival activities.

“Doug” Davis was a member of WCU’s staff from 1966 until his retirement in 1992 as assistant vice chancellor for student development. Angela Davis taught at WCU for eight years before entering a career in real estate.

In 1974, Doug Davis served on the committee that planned the inauguration of H.F. Robinson as chancellor at WCU. The committee planned the inauguration as, in part, a “Founder’s Day” celebration. That event evolved into Mountain Heritage Day, and in 1976 Davis was chosen to lead the new Mountain Heritage Day committee. He affixed Mountain Heritage Day to the last Saturday in September and led the festival to its position as a major folk festival that now draws 25,000 to 30,000 visitors to WCU’s campus each year. After his 1992 retirement, Davis continued to head Mountain Heritage Day for two more years.

Now in its 33rd year, Mountain Heritage Day is supported by the state of North Carolina through the work of WCU’s faculty and staff, but the only regular funding received by the festival comes through vendor booth rental fees and from receiving a percentage of receipts from vendors’ sales at the festival’s arts, crafts and food midway. There are no parking fees, and admission to the festival is free.

Vendor sales at Mountain Heritage Day are heavily dependent upon festival attendance, and attendance is dependent on the weather, so it follows that event revenues can fluctuate each year according to the weather in Cullowhee on festival day.

“Throughout its history, Mountain Heritage Day has been blessed with great weather in most years, but being at the mercy of Mother Nature puts the festival in a tenuous position,” said **Scott Philyaw '83**, current festival chairman and director of WCU’s Mountain Heritage Center.

“That’s why this gift from Doug and Angela Davis is one of the most pivotal developments in the festival’s history. This fund will provide a more reliable source of revenue that we can depend on from now on,” Philyaw said. “Through this donation, the Davises are helping to ensure that Mountain Heritage Day will continue to thrive for many years to come as a tribute to and celebration of the traditional culture of the Southern Appalachians. Doug Davis was an excellent steward throughout the early years of the festival. This gift continues that stewardship.”



*In addition to serving as festival chairman, W. Douglas Davis '49 was “town crier” for Mountain Heritage Day for numerous years.*



*Tom Henson '63 MAEd '69 and Carol Henson '66 (from left) visit the academic resource center with Jennifer Brown, assistant athletics director.*

## SPORTING CHANCE

By JESSICA CREGGER '07

Retired educators **Tom Henson '63 MAEd '69** and **Carol Henson '66** readily admit they were not exactly the most involved alumni in university history – at least, not for the first 40 years following their graduations from Western. All that changed after a return to their alma mater to watch a women's basketball game last year.

Carol Henson, who majored in history at WCU before enjoying a career as a teacher and administrator, wanted to see the Lady Catamounts take on Auburn University in the season-opener at the Ramsey Regional Activity Center. She convinced her husband, a long-time teacher and coach who majored in history and Spanish, to make the trip to Cullowhee from their Winston-Salem home.

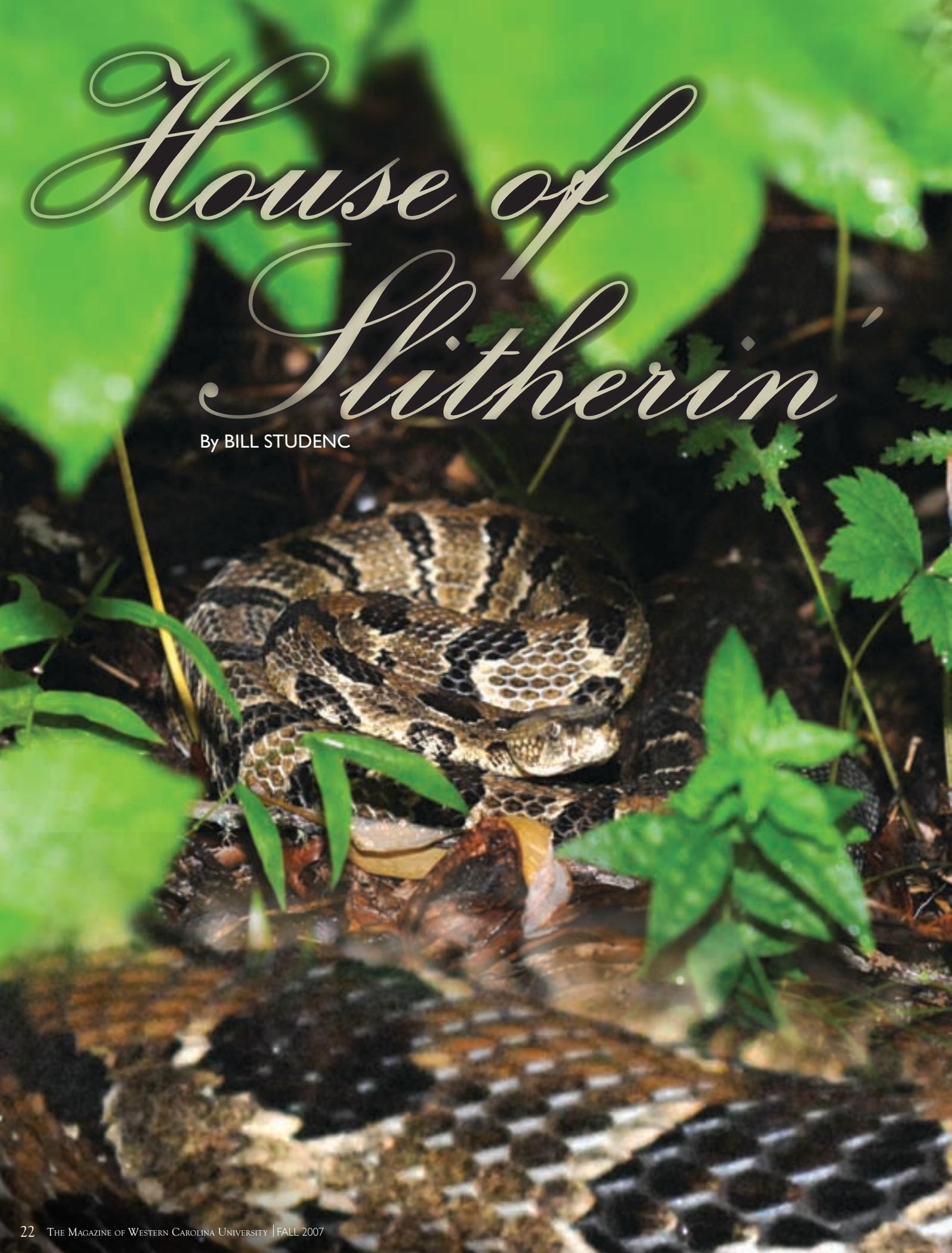
The couple was highly impressed with the players and the way Coach Kellie Harper and her staff managed the team. "We were both so impressed, and we were both really hooked," Tom Henson said – so hooked that they have attended 26 Western sporting events since then.

While getting reacquainted with Western athletics, the Hensons were struck by how the athletics staff – especially Jennifer Brown, assistant athletics director and senior women's administrator – was helping WCU athletes also perform their

best in the classroom. "Athletics has such a hard-working staff and a great bunch of players. The athletes are all extremely good students and rank up there in terms of grade-point averages," Tom Henson said.

In March, Western student-athletes landed a league-best 20 students on the Southern Conference's TIAA-CREF Winter Academic All-Conference team, including five Lady Catamount basketball players. That off-court performance helped guide the Hensons' decision to donate their estate to Catamount athletics. "My wife and I do not have children," Henson said. "We thought the student-athletes we might be able to help will make something of themselves."

Their estate gift is creating the Tom and Carol Henson Fund for the Academic Resource Center for Athletics, with money from their estate to be used to support the operation of programs that assist student-athletes in their academic endeavors. Rather than donate to one particular sport, the Hensons wanted their gift to benefit all athletes, male and female. "We are very fond of the university and education, and feel like Western is really moving along academically. We think our donation will help that progress," he said.



# House of Slitherin

By BILL STUDENC

## Research Project is Designed To Keep Timber Rattlers Off the Endangered Species List

To Ron Davis, assistant professor of natural resources management at Western, timber rattlesnakes are the North Carolina wildlife equivalent of Rodney Dangerfield – they just don't get any respect. Sure, timber rattlers inspire fear and loathing among most people. But increasing human encroachment upon their habitat is pushing the creatures, already considered a “species of special concern,” closer to the endangered list and, perhaps, to the verge of extinction.

That's why Davis, working with the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission, is leading a research effort in the mountains of Western North Carolina to determine the impact of new housing developments and road-building on the animal. In the pilot project, timber rattlers that have been captured in the wild are implanted with special radio transmitters by an Asheville veterinarian. Davis and his students then use geographic information systems technology and radio receivers to track the snakes after they have been returned to the spot where they were caught.



“The timber rattler is probably the most misunderstood animal in Western North Carolina,” said Davis. “Because people fear them, they want to kill them. Between the destruction of dens by development, wanton killing of the snakes, accidental road kills and illegal poaching, the population of these animals is declining dramatically.”

So what, some might argue about the thought of fewer venomous reptiles slithering through the WNC woodlands. Jenn Slagle, a senior from Shelby who is working with Davis on the project, said the timber rattlesnake is an important part of a larger ecosystem and helps control the rodent population. “This species was in the mountains long before we were living here,” said Slagle, who is majoring in natural resources management and political science. As part of the project, Slagle developed a computer model using GIS software to determine probable locations of timber rattlesnake dens. WCU researchers are using radio telemetry throughout the fall to track released snakes that were implanted with the radio transmitters, until the reptiles return to their dens for winter hibernation.

The goals of the project are conservation and education, said Davis. “When we build homes on the mountainsides, we are encroaching upon their territory. When people and rattlesnakes share the same space, the snakes usually lose,” he said. A major problem in snake-human interactions is that the snakes cannot simply be relocated, Davis said. “Moving a snake out of its home range is basically a death sentence for the snake,” he said. “Our work will allow us to examine the effects of development and hopefully develop some ways in which people and snakes can co-exist.”

The ultimate goal of the project is to help preserve the snakes, in part by educating people that they are not vicious, aggressive animals, said Davis. Although serious, rattlesnake bites are very rare, and usually occur when someone is trying to handle or kill a snake. “The snakes are defensive. The rattle is a defense mechanism, not an attack signal, and their survival depends upon not being seen. Given the chance, they will head for cover,” he said. “It can be frightening for some people when they see a rattlesnake, but this remarkable animal really deserves our respect rather than our fear. The best thing to do is to simply leave them alone.”



*Professor Ron Davis (left) releases a timber rattler implanted with a radio transmitter while student Jenn Slagle (above right) tracks the creatures with a radio receiver.*

# WCU Alumni Association Announces

## NORTH CAROLINA DISTRICT 1

(19,611 WCU alumni): *Alleghany, Alexander, Ashe, Avery, Buncombe, Burke, Caldwell, Cherokee, Clay, Graham, Haywood, Henderson, Jackson, Macon, Madison, McDowell, Mitchell, Rutherford, Polk, Swain, Transylvania, Watauga, Wilkes and Yancey counties.*  
(Vote for one. The top three vote recipients will serve three-year terms, 2007-10.)



### Tracy Keith Bridges

'98 BS '02 JD Appalachian School of Law  
Asheville, N.C.  
Associate, Moore Law Firm

**At WCU:** Golden Ambassador; chief justice, Student Supreme Court; senator, Student Council; Criminal Justice Club.

**Formerly:** Medal of Valor and heroism awards and honors in 2001 due to involvement in stopping a school shooter in Virginia while attending law school; American Bar Association representative; lieutenant governor for Fourth Circuit; Student Bar Association, senator; American Trial Lawyers Association, member; Wake County Young Lawyers Division, member.

**Currently:** Master Mason, French Broad Masonic Lodge No. 292; treasurer and executive board member, Helpmate of Madison County (domestic violence program); volunteer with Feeding the Homeless in Asheville; developed and coordinates the Santa Pal program for the children of Madison County.



### Ed Cody, CPA, CHFP

'79 BSBA  
Asheville, N.C.  
Partner in the accounting firm Dixon Hughes PLLC; partner-in-charge of the firm's health care consulting group.

**At WCU:** Treasurer, Alpha Kappa Psi business fraternity; charter student of WCU co-op program.

**Formerly:** Past president of WCU's Catamount Club.

**Currently:** Vice chair of the board of Plowpoint Inc., a ministry to equip churches for new services and resolve conflicts; created The Spiritual Entrepreneur Program, a program to encourage and empower people to use their passions and gifts in ministry; member of Covenant Community United Methodist Church.

Married to Andrea Rhodarmar Cody '81; two daughters, Camille and Tierney.



### Michael B. Jordan, CPA, CMA

'71 BSBA '89 MBA  
Wilkesboro, N.C.  
Self-employed as an accounting and small business consultant.

**At WCU:** Student.

**Formerly:** Former program chair, Wilkes District Roundtable, Old Hickory Council Boy Scouts of America.

**Currently:** Member of American Institute of CPAs, N.C. Association of CPAs, and the Institute of Management Accountants. Member, board of directors, Wilkes County Communities in Schools. Mentor in Friends of Youth Program.

Married to Rachel Hinchler Jordan '71.



### Frances Owl-Smith, MD

'83 BS '87 MD UNC-Chapel Hill  
School of Medicine  
Waynesville, N.C.  
Medical director of the laboratory at Haywood Regional Medical Center in Clyde, N.C.

**At WCU:** University Scholar.

**Formerly:** Following pathology residency practiced medicine in Arizona and New Mexico."

**Currently:** Secretary of the Haywood County Medical Society; serve on several hospital committees; active in the Haywood Medical Foundation efforts to expand hospital facilities; professional member of the American Society of Clinical Pathologists, College of American Pathologists, North Carolina Medical Society and the Association of American Indian Physicians; member of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians.

Married to Doyle Smith; three children.



### Sandra L. Tolley

'76 MA  
Marshall, N.C.  
Retired teacher.

**At WCU:** English teaching assistant; earned scholarship.

**Formerly:** President, Madison County Friends of the Library; chairman, Madison County Commissioners.

**Currently:** Chairman, Madison County Board of Education.

Married to Charles Tolley; two daughters.

## NORTH CAROLINA DISTRICT 2

(11,696 WCU alumni): *Alamance, Anson, Cabarrus, Caswell, Catawba, Cleveland, Davidson, Davie, Forsyth, Gaston, Guilford, Iredell, Lincoln, Mecklenburg, Montgomery, Randolph, Richmond, Rockingham, Rowan, Stanly, Stokes, Surry, Union and Yadkin counties.*  
(Vote for one. The top two vote recipients will serve three-year terms, 2007-10.)



### Julia Moody Britt

'57 BSEd '59 MEd UNC-CH  
Charlotte, N.C.  
Retired AP/IB English teacher and archivist. Author of "Charlotte County Day School: The First Fifty Years."

**At WCU:** President, Women's House Government; vice president, Student Senate; member, standards, student activities, appropriations and student-faculty judiciary committees; staff, Catamount and Western Carolinian; junior and senior counselor; dean's list, Alpha Phi Sigma; Marshals Club; May and Homecoming courts; Who's Who; Best College Citizen's Awards.

**Formerly:** President of NCTE, Alpha Sigma chapter of Delta Kappa Gamma, UNCC Women, PTA; NCTE Achievement Awards in Writing; reader for the AP English Exam; member of Cum Laude Honorary Society and the CCDS Honorary Alumni Association; recipient of a CCDS Faculty Recognition Award and the J.R. Williams Travel Fellowship to Ireland.

**Currently:** Member of Charlotte Symphony Women for 34 years; member of Mint Museum, First Presbyterian Church, Delta Kappa Gamma Society International, WCU and UNC-CH alumni associations.  
Married to William M. Britt '57 BS '59 MEd UNC-CH '67 Ed, UT.  
Three children; two grandchildren.



### Thomas J. "Tom" Henson

'63 BSEd '69 MAEd  
Winston-Salem, N.C.  
Retired teacher and coach (football, baseball) in Jackson, Wayne and Forsyth counties, N.C.

**At WCU:** Member, Student Senate; vice president, Day Students; member, International Relations Club, honor roll student.

**Formerly:** Member, Winston-Salem Chamber of Commerce and North Davidson Chamber of Commerce; ESL volunteer teacher, Davidson County Schools; Spanish instructor, Davidson County deputies.

**Currently:** Member, WCU Catamount Club (ICATS).  
Married to Carol Shaw Henson '66 UNC-G '72.



### Edwin R. Holland

'75 BSBA  
Charlotte, N.C.  
Church administrator, Friendship Missionary Baptist Church.

**At WCU:** President, Organization of Ebony Students; Student Government Association.

**Formerly:** Member, WFAE (University Radio Foundation); 100 Black Men of America - Charlotte chapter; board member, A Child's Place; board member, Friendship Trays.

**Currently:** Board member, McCrorey Family YMCA; chairman, Mecklenburg County Personnel Commission; member, National Association of Church Business Administrators.  
Married to Debbie Rembert Holland.  
two children.



### Clifton A. "Cliff" Pickett

'68 BS '76 MEd UNGC '81 EdS ASU  
Linwood, N.C.  
Retired teacher and school administrator in Davidson County.

**At WCU:** WCU Marching Band member 1964-67, trumpet; 1966, Pi Kappa Phi fraternity.

**Formerly:** Gamma Epsilon, WCU alumni adviser 2001-2003; member, Davidson County ARC 1991-2000; member, N.C. ARC 1996-98; board member, Catamount Club 2002-05.

**Currently:** Secretary and board member, Davidson County Day Reporting Center 2000-present; member, N.C. Credit Union board, Lexington branch 1996-99, 2005-present; vice chairperson, WCU Family Association 2005-present; participant, WCU Alumni Band, 2002-present.  
Married to Jan Parnell-Pickett; one son, Joseph Pickett '01 MHS '07.

# Board of Directors ELECTION 2007

## NORTH CAROLINA DISTRICT 3

(3,382 WCU alumni): *Bladen, Chatham, Columbus, Cumberland, Durham, Edgecombe, Franklin, Granville, Halifax, Harnett, Hoke, Johnston, Lee, Moore, Nash, Northampton, Orange, Person, Robeson, Sampson, Scotland, Vance, Wake, Warren and Wilson counties.*  
(Vote for one. The top vote recipient will serve a three-year term, 2007-10.)



### Jesse R. Lankford Jr.

'69 BA '73 MA '87 MPA NCSU  
Raleigh, N.C.

State archivist and records administrator, Department of Cultural Resources; adjunct associate professor, public history graduate program, N.C. State University.

**At WCU:** President, senior class; member, Pi Kappa Alpha Fraternity; graduate assistant, department of history.

**Formerly:** Charter member, Academy of Certified Archivists; charter member, Society of North Carolina Archivists; chair, scholarship committee, State Employees' Association of North Carolina, District 44, 2001-05; president, Eastern N.C. WCU Alumni Chapter, 1980-81; member, executive committee, WCU Alumni Board, 1993-97; recipient, WCU Alumni Board President's Certificate of Appreciation, 1996; established the Linda Reep Lankford Scholarship Fund for WCU education majors; recipient, Society of North Carolina Archivists' Thornton W. Mitchell Award 2006-07 for professional service; recipient, Governor's "Order of the Long Leaf Pine" award for service to the state of North Carolina.

**Currently:** Member, Historical Society of North Carolina; member, N.C. Literary and Historical Association; member, Society of N.C. Historians; member, Phi Kappa Phi honor society (N.C. State University chapter); member, Pi Alpha Alpha honor society for public affairs and public administration; archivist and historian for The Gardeners of Wake County, 2002-07; member, Council of State Archivists, 2003-07.



### J. Michael Naylor

'82 BSBA '88 MBA  
Raleigh, N.C.

Senior manager of human resources, Nortel.  
Acting division chair, Saint Augustine's College, manager-on-loan from Nortel; lead team of 16 faculty and staff members.

**At WCU:** President, Organization of Ebony Students; senator, Student Government Association; member, WCU Inspirational Choir; member, Western Gold; resident assistant; member, Phi Beta Lambda.

**Formerly:** Building chair and finance officer for a \$2 million building project; coordinated pledge fundraiser campaign, 2001-2003 (raised more than \$250,000); secretary, vice president and president, N.C. Cooperative Education Association board of directors; secretary, vice president and president, Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity, Raleigh alumni chapter.

**Currently:** Treasurer, A.B. Combs Elementary School PTA, 2006-present; member, steering committee, \$6.3 million building project for Life Community Church; executive director, Life Community Services, a non-profit community outreach initiative, 2006-present; elder, Life Community Church, Research Triangle Park, N.C.  
Married to Shaun Berry Naylor '86; one daughter, Kaileigh.

## OUT-OF-STATE DISTRICT 5

(15,300 WCU alumni). *All states except North Carolina.*  
(Vote for one. The top vote recipient will serve a three-year term, 2007-10.)



### John C. Anderson

'67 BA '72 MAEd  
Chapin, S.C.

Retired school and district administrator in South Carolina.

**At WCU:** Member, Marching Band; member, Concert Band; member, Jazz Band; member, Radio Club; member, Pi Kappa Alpha.

**Formerly:** President, S.C. School Administrators Association; president, S.C. High School League; president, S.C. Secondary Principals Association; president, S.C. Elementary Principals Association; president, Chapin Ruritan Club; chairman, Chapin/Irmo Relay for Life.

**Currently:** Deacon, Chapin Baptist Church, S.C.; vice president, Chapin Rotary Club; co-coordinator, Richland/Lexington Special Olympics.  
Married to Carol Stanislawski '70; two sons.



### Clifton P. Lambroth

'82 BSBA '84 MBA  
Brentwood, Tenn.

Manager, owners' relations, Ford Motor Co.; chief executive officer, Daniel Bradley Matthews Inc.; public speaker and author.

**At WCU:** Member, Theta Xi fraternity; member, Mortar Board Society; member, Western Gold; member, SAGLA; part of mock United Nations meetings (represented Western regionally and statewide); planned and helped organize School of Business Week; graduate assistant, School of Business; assisted on several PMI projects; active in intramural sports, winning all-campus in water polo, basketball and football; volunteer, Special Olympic events for four years.

**Formerly:** Received five Ford Inuksuk Drive for Leaders Awards and three Diversity Leadership Awards.

**Currently:** Member, board of directors, Family Foundation Fund; member, advisory board, Lead Like Jesus Foundation; member, advisory board, WCU College of Business.  
Married to Susan Lambroth; three sons.

## NORTH CAROLINA DISTRICT 4

(1,039 WCU alumni): *Beaufort, Bertie, Brunswick, Camden, Carteret, Chowan, Craven, Currituck, Dare, Duplin, Gates, Greene, Hertford, Hyde, Jones, Lenoir, Martin, New Hanover, Onslow, Pamlico, Pasquotank, Pender, Perquimans, Pitt, Tyrrell, Washington and Wayne counties.*  
(Vote for one. The top vote recipient will serve three-year terms, 2007-10.)



### Earl Crotts

'65 BSEd '70 MAEd '83 EdS  
Southport, N.C.

Retired teacher and school administrator in Guilford County.

**At WCU:** Lettered in baseball, 1961-1964.

**Formerly:** Member, WCU Alumni Board, 1970s and '90s; coach, American Legion Thoroughbred and Palomino baseball, 1966-88; president, Southport/Oak Island Kiwanis Club, 2002-03; Kiwanis lieutenant governor, Division 26, 2005-07; administrative board chair, Bessemer Methodist Church; member, NCHSAA realignment committee, 1987-92; member, North Carolina Assessment Committee, 1983-86; member, Town of St. James planning committee, 2004-05.

**Currently:** Member, Kiwanis Club, 1985-2007; administrative board chair, Trinity United Methodist Southport, 2004-07; mentor, South Brunswick Middle School, 2002-07; member, WCU Dugout Club; member, WCU Loyalty Fund, 1980s-present; member, WCU Catamount Club, 1970s-present.  
Married to Julia Hall Crotts; two sons, Chuck and David '99.



### Keith M. Ramsey, MD

'73 BS '77 MD UNC-Chapel Hill  
Greenville, N.C.

Professor of medicine, the Brody School of Medicine at East Carolina University.

**At WCU:** WCU Marching Band, 1969-72; dorm representative, 1970-71; Student Court, 1971-72; chief justice, Student Court System, 1972-73; president, WCU chapter of Lambda Chi Alpha fraternity.

**Formerly:** Director of infectious diseases, University of South Alabama, Mobile, Ala.; treasurer, Mobile Pops Band; co-founder of Dr. Donald M. Ramsey Family Scholarship Fund, WCU department of biology.

**Currently:** Fellow, American College of Physicians; medical director of infection control, Pitt County Memorial Hospital; member, N.C. Public Health and Institutional Task Force for Best Practices.  
Married to Ann-Marie Jung; three children.



## ENSHRINERS' CONVENTION

By STEVE WHITE '67

Western will induct its 1949 championship football team and a pair of 1950s graduates who had nationally recognized coaching careers as the university holds its 18th Annual WCU Athletics Hall of Fame ceremony Saturday, Nov. 17, prior to the Catamounts' football game with Southern Conference foe Furman University.

The 1949 football squad will be the fourth WCU team to be inducted into the Hall of Fame. The 1963 men's basketball team, the 1969 women's basketball squad and the 1983 football unit – all of which played in national championship games – were enshrined in 2003.

**Jim Garrison '55** and **Dave Bristol '59** will be the first recipients of the WCU Athletics Hall of Fame Career Achievement Award. The new honor recognizes WCU graduates who have distinguished themselves in athletics leadership positions.

The '49 Catamounts won the North State Conference championship, going unbeaten in league play and finishing regular season play with an 8-2 record. It was the first Western football team to play in a postseason game – the Smoky Mountain Bowl in Bristol, Va. Hall of Fame coach Tom Young led the Catamounts to a sweep of conference rivals Appalachian State, East Carolina and Lenoir-Rhyne and held them to a combined 12 points. The team featured All-America lineman **Arthur "Ott" Byrd '50** and three other players – **Dan Robinson '50**, **Tommy "Bromo" Selzer '52** and **Hugh "Pee Wee" Hamilton '50** – who have been inducted into the WCU Athletics Hall of Fame, and All-North Conference selections **Hugh**



*Jim Garrison '55*



*Dave Bristol '59*

**Constance '50**, **Ralph McConnell '51** and **Ralph "Buffalo" Humphries '49**.

Garrison transferred to Western from Gardner-Webb, then a junior college, and played the 1953 and '54 seasons for the Catamounts as a halfback. He was an All-North Conference selection and co-captain of the '54 team. The native of Weaverville became head football coach at Chowan College, located in Murfreesboro, in 1958. He built that junior college program into a national power and won 182 games in the process, third all-time among the nation's junior college coaches. He is a member of four halls of fame – the National Junior College Athletics Association, North Carolina Sports, Gardner-



# MORANDA RITES

## Bat Cats' New Skipper Has Omaha in His Sights

By DANIEL HOOKER '01

A few hours before he was introduced as Western's 10th baseball coach, Bobby Moranda felt the need to go for a run across campus to help calm his nerves on a morning the longtime Georgia Tech associate head coach compared to his wedding day.

"Man, there are some serious mountains around here," Moranda told a crowd of about 100 on hand for the announcement. "I'd like to climb some serious elevation with our players and our team at Western. That's why I came here. I want to go to the College World Series. The mountains around here symbolize what we want to do in college baseball, which is to climb to the top of the mountain. I would not have come here if I did not think we could go to Omaha."

Moranda takes over from **Todd Raleigh '91 MAEd '94**, who guided the Catamounts to a share of the 2007 Southern Conference regular championship and an at-large bid to the NCAA baseball tournament before being hired as head coach at the University of Tennessee. Moranda has nearly 21 years of coaching experience – 18 of them in the Atlantic Coast

Conference. He spent the past six seasons as associate head and pitching coach at Georgia Tech, where he served a vital role in recruiting.

"The search for a head baseball coach has been very difficult and very fulfilling," Chip Smith, WCU director of athletics, said. "There was a large and qualified pool of candidates, which is attributable to the respect in which Western Carolina's program is held throughout college baseball. The tradition of Catamount baseball is the product of countless baseball alumni, as well as the current team, who have built a program that is committed to winning with integrity."

Moranda said he is looking forward to building upon a tradition began by Jack Leggett (now at Clemson) and continued by Leggett protégés **Keith LeClair '89**, who coached at East Carolina University before succumbing to Lou Gehrig's disease last summer; **Rodney Hennon '93**, now leading SoCon rival Georgia Southern; and then Todd Raleigh. "I am excited about Bobby becoming the head coach at Western. I have always known him to be a hard worker and the teams where he has been – be it Virginia, Wake Forest or Georgia Tech – have always won. He understands the tradition of Western baseball, and Western made a great choice," Leggett said.

Catamount fans seeking additional confirmation Moranda is the right man for the job may consider it a sign that his first-ever NCAA Division I base hit came as a member of visiting Eastern Kentucky, playing at Childress Field in 1985. It was a home run. Western baseball backers are hoping Moranda hits a homer in his first head coaching job, too.



*Bobby Moranda fields questions from the crowd as he is announced as WCU's head baseball coach.*

# SANDY PAWS

## Hawaii Beckons for Lady Cats and Basketball Fans

By JESS CLARKE

If you're looking for a way to escape the chill of mid-December by visiting a tropical island paradise, the Catamount Club has just the ticket – and you'll get to see the Lady Catamount basketball team play in a high-profile tournament at the same time. Coach Kellie Harper and her defending Southern Conference champions are heading for Hawaii in December to play in the Paradise Classic, and fans can back the Lady Cats while enjoying a 10-day dream excursion.

Bill Richter, Catamount Club executive director, and SMS Tours have put together a nine-day, three-island excursion for Catamount supporters who want to experience the best Hawaii has to offer while they also cheer on the Lady Cats. "I spent several glorious years working for the athletics department at the University of Hawaii, and I look forward to serving as a tour guide for our folks who would like to have the vacation of a lifetime at an extremely affordable cost," said Richter.

*Kellie Harper displays the 2006-07 championship trophy earned by the Lady Catamounts basketball team.*

The total package, priced at \$2,000 per person, includes all airfares and hotel accommodations. The excursion departs from Charlotte on Sunday, Dec. 9, and returns on Tuesday, Dec. 18. It includes two days (Dec. 9-10) on the "Big Island" of Hawaii, where the group will tour Volcanoes National Park and its two active volcanoes (Kilauea and Mauna Loa) and stay in the resort village of Kona at the Royal Kona Hotel. The group then will fly to Maui on Dec. 11 and the port of Lahaina and stay two nights at the Royal Lahaina Hotel, before heading to Honolulu on Oahu for five nights at the Waikiki Beach Hotel.

The Lady Cats will play in the Paradise Classic, set for Dec. 14-17, at the University of Hawaii. In addition to host school Hawaii, also taking part will be Tennessee Tech and Oregon State. For more information, call Bill Richter at (828) 227-2530 or toll free at (800) 492-8496. Space is limited and seats will be sold on a first-come, first-served basis.

Plans are already under way to coordinate a visit next year to Alaska when the WCU men's basketball team will participate in the Great Alaska Shootout.



# Long Distance Dedication

By TERESA KILLIAN

**Brad DeWeese '97 MHS '03** used to run about 50 miles a week just to get to spend time with then-WCU track standout **Jenny Lind Warford '00 MAEd '06**. "Whenever she would run around campus, around Speedwell or along the river, I would run with her," DeWeese said.

Today, they still run together. Only now, Jenny Lind Warford is kindergarten teacher Jenny Lind DeWeese, and Brad is not only her husband but also her coach as she trains for her most daunting race yet – the 2008 U.S. Olympic Marathon Trials in Boston in April.

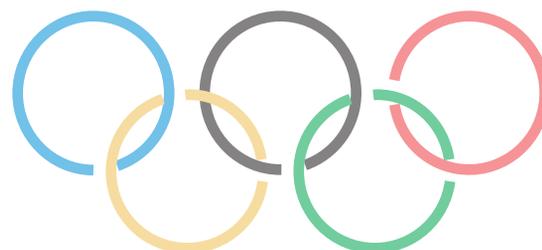
She runs the races, but they are a team. Brad, a health and wellness faculty member and strength conditioning coach at the University of North Carolina at Asheville, designs her workouts and, for a portion, runs or rides a bicycle to set the pace. "We use the time to just catch up because we've both been at work," he said before one of her daily afternoon runs at the North Carolina Arboretum.

"Sometimes we talk about racing and running," she said. "When does this trail end? 'I thought we'd be there by now.' 'There's another hill.' Other times we just talk about what we're going to do."





**Jenny Lind DeWeese '00 MAEd '06 and Brad DeWeese '97 MHS '03** run together at the N.C. Arboretum near Asheville (top photos) and in big-city marathons (below), keeping manufacturers of shoes and awards busy.



Coach **Danny Williamson '84 MAEd '86** recruited her to Western. “Out of high school, she wasn’t labeled as a superstar, but while she was at WCU, she worked herself to that status. Her commitment, discipline and desire to be the best was her daily driving force,” said Williamson. Her collegiate awards include Southern Conference Championship honors in the 10,000-meters.

When she set her sights on the marathon, Brad, who coached track and field at UNCA before moving into a faculty position, started developing her training schedules, which average 100 miles a week. He pulled from what he learned at Western pursuing his bachelor’s degree in athletic administration and exercise science and his master’s degree in nutrition.

“I grew up in a sports family and knew I wanted to be a coach,” said Brad. Although a high school football injury permanently affected his right arm – his throwing arm, Western’s then-baseball coach, **Keith LeClair '89**, saw Brad had a lot to offer and brought him on as a student coach. His coaching career has grown from there, though coaching his wife is different from working with other athletes.

“There’s less ‘telling’ and more listening. I can’t take the coach hat off and put the husband hat on,” he said. At each marathon, he updates her along the way about competition and her pace, and gets a read on how she’s feeling. “I’m a nervous wreck,” he said. “I’m focused on her, and I’m constantly thinking, ‘What is she going through?’”

Pain. Unbelievable pain, says Jenny Lind. “It starts to feel like you are going to fall over with each step.” At Jenny Lind’s first marathon in Memphis, Tenn., in 2005, she was the first female to cross the finish line. “It was a real shocker. I think Brad had a heart attack,” Jenny Lind said. Her second was the Boston Marathon in 2006, and third the LaSalle Bank Chicago Marathon in 2006, where her time qualified her for the Olympic trials. She ran a fourth in Nashville, Tenn., earlier this year and will run one more before Boston.

“Marathon takes a lot out of you. That’s why we wait between events,” she said. “I am still learning and consider myself a beginner at this event. I just want to give it my best shot.”

“It mostly involves food or running,” he said, and they laughed. As a couple, they consider how everything from the vegetarian meals they cook to the marathons they enter will best prepare Jenny Lind to vie for the privilege to represent the United States in Beijing in 2008.

“Going to the Olympics has been my goal since I started running,” said Jenny Lind, who grew up in Siler City. In seventh grade, she was a regular at the pizza parties thrown for students who could run the most laps. On a whim, she entered a track meet later that year. “I ran the mile. I walked part of it, and I still won. I just kind of got hooked on running” said Jenny Lind, who the next year started training with the high school track team.



# Life in the Fast Lane

## Internship Program Puts Race Fan in Driver's Seat

By JESSICA CREGGER '07

Jimmy White '92 has had an interest in motorsports ever since he was 7 years old. In fact, White would sometimes get caught by his mother when he was watching a race instead of studying for the occasional algebra test. Despite his mother's remarks that racing wouldn't get him anywhere, White was determined to prove otherwise.

That resolve is what he needed to become media relations director for Camp & Associates Inc., a Concord-based motorsports communication firm that works with several NASCAR teams. "This is what I wanted to do. I didn't have a desire to do anything else," he said.

On the job, White does "a little bit of everything," from talking with drivers after they slam into turn three to writing press releases detailing the races. Through working with the Raybestos Rookie of the Year program and hanging around the garage, he is on a first-name basis with many top drivers, such as Juan Pablo Montoya, a world-recognized driver whom White characterizes as an international celebrity. "To be able to have the opportunity to develop a professional working relationship with someone like Montoya, that's unbelievable to me," he said.

Just how did White get his foot in the door of the racing industry? While studying in the English program at Western, White was required to do an internship, and he could think of no better place than NASCAR's Motor Racing Network. He called and wrote to the radio network's president and general manager until he finally got a response. White, the first intern ever for the company, was invited to Daytona Beach, Fla., where he resided from Labor Day to mid-December. "A lot of people then were doing on-campus internships with the English department or sports information. But here I am, this poor college student, staying in an ocean-front hotel in Daytona," he said. "I thought it'd be good to get out of the area and learn that way."



*Jimmy White '92 (right) presents the Raybestos Rookie of the Race Award to Juan Pablo Montoya.*

Photo by David Griffin/NASCAR Scene magazine

After college, White worked on his family's farm and did odd jobs as he searched for employment. Determined to make a career in racing, he volunteered his free time for Motor Racing Network at various race tracks. He'd arrive at the tracks early on Sunday mornings and head to the press box. While receiving four to five press kits a week, White got the idea to use the kits as networking tools. "I'd get a contact name out of there and send them a resumé. First thing you know, I'm up to 100 to 110 resúmes. By the end of the year, I had my resumé in the right hands," he said.

White said he feels lucky to be working in racing. "There's a limited amount of people that are in a position to do it. It's something the 'ordinary Joe' doesn't get the opportunity to do, and I'm fortunate to do it," he said. "If it hadn't been for the internship, I wouldn't be doing what I am now. I know that for a fact."



Photos courtesy of American Le Mans Series

## Alumna Shifts into High Gear In American Le Mans Series

By BILL STUDENC

**Tyra Sitton '03 MPA '05** didn't know understeer from underwear when she started her public relations career with the American Le Mans Series, a road racing and endurance series based on the world-famous 24 Hours of Le Mans. Sitton admits she was "wide-eyed as a deer in the headlights during a baptism by fire" in March 2006, when she found herself surrounded by more than 100,000 fans and working with 400 members of the news media at the 12 Hours of Sebring, one of the three largest sports-car events on the planet.

"This was my first time at any race track, much less one of the biggest motorsports events in history. There were a lot of people with just the race teams testing on the track, but then the fans started coming, and they didn't stop," she said. "There were people everywhere, because the track opens to the public before the green flag at each race. We literally had tens of thousands of people on the actual race track, and I was in charge of making sure they got off in time for the race to start."

Among those people Sitton was in charge of shepherding to safety was actor Patrick Dempsey from "Grey's Anatomy," one of her favorite television programs. "Everything was happening so fast I even told Dr. McDreamy to go to the wrong place at the wrong time. The sad thing was, I didn't know half of the drivers, the cars they drove and the classes they raced in, and I was charged with telling the announcer everything to say."

Sitton and her co-workers now look back on her first week and laugh. That's because she quickly learned the ins and outs of the sport to become a valued staff member. "She used the skills and expertise accumulated as a student and put them to work in the world of motorsports," said **John Evenson**, vice president of communications and broadcasting, who studied at WCU before transferring. "What she starts she finishes, and in a very professional and first-class manner."

After less than a year on the job, Sitton was promoted to director of public relations/media services and promotions. Her job now entails not only day-to-day media relations and media-



**Tyra Sitton '03 MPA '05** races into action.

driven promotional activities, but also creating relationships with national and international news media.

"After graduating, I knew I wanted to find a job in public relations where heavy travel was required. I've found exactly what I wanted. Our schedule includes 12 races taking us from the beaches of St. Petersburg, Fla., to the snow-capped mountains of Salt Lake City, Utah, from bustling New York City to beautiful Monterey, Calif., and everywhere in between," she said. "Although I never banked on the long hours, the not-so-flattering track wear and the unpredictable weather, I love every aspect of my job. From writing for the Web site, to traveling and meeting new people in new places all the time, I have found my spot in the PR world."

# PROFESSIONAL TOURIST



**Larry Hawkins '96**, general manager of the Asheville Tourists Baseball Club, loves going to work at McCormick Field. (Photo courtesy of Southwestern Community College)

## Alumnus Serves as General Manager Of Asheville Tourists Baseball Club

**Larry Hawkins '96** works as general manager for the Asheville Tourists baseball club, a job he loves in spite of the fact that he once aspired to be a player rather than a businessman. When an injury and other considerations put an end to his plans to play in college, Hawkins put his plans for college on hold, too. "Once I realized I couldn't play sports in college, I took a landscaping job with my brother-in-law in Cashiers for a year," said Hawkins. "I didn't know what I wanted to do."

"At the time, all I knew was that I loved sports, and all I knew about sports was from the player's side," he said. "But **Cheryl Contino-Conner '88** at Southwestern Community College pointed out careers in which I could stay in sports in other ways." Hawkins completed his first year at SCC and then transferred to WCU. As part of the sports management program, he interned at McCormick Field with owner and then general manager Ron McKee. After graduation he accepted a full-time position as stadium operations manager with a club in Clearwater, Fla. Then in 1998, he got a phone call from his mentor.

"Ron called and asked if I wanted to come home," Hawkins said. "It was an easy decision." In his first job with the Tourists baseball club, he was in charge of stadium operations and sales, a position he held for two years. In 2000 he became assistant general manager, working primarily in sales; then he was named general manager in 2005.



**Michael Paulk** prepares to hit. (Photo by Tony Farlow)

According to Hawkins, life at the ballpark is varied, interesting and sometimes time-consuming. "On our home game dates, we'll work from 8 a.m. to as late as 1 a.m. the next day," he said. "I love my job; the fun and hard work go hand in hand. And how many people can say they go to a ballpark to work every day? Besides being a player, it doesn't get much better than this."

*Story reprinted in edited form courtesy of Southwestern Community College.*

# TURNER, BROADCASTING

By JEFF BRYSON

Chances are good that you have heard **Paul Turner's** voice on a television or radio station and never realized you were listening to a former WCU student who is one of the most sought-after voice-over professionals in the country. Although Turner didn't graduate from WCU, he spent two years in Cullowhee studying radio-television, and he gives tremendous credit to Western for jumpstarting his career.

Turner became interested in broadcasting as a junior-high student at Camp Laboratory School, when an assignment led him to write a paper about a Catamount basketball announcer. "I got to sit beside him on press row at Reid Gymnasium," he said. "It was like a dream come true. I had always been a huge sports fan, but watching him do the play-by-play that one night gave me that broadcasting bug immediately."

As an eighth-grader, Turner was hanging around WWCU-FM, Western's student radio station. It wasn't long before the college students realized that the kid had plenty of talent even at a young age, and allowed him to do live newscasts. By high school, he was on the air at WWCU and WRGC-AM in Sylva. Turner enrolled at Western in 1985 and began doing even more work with WWCU.

"You could call it a baptism by fire," Turner said. "Not every campus radio station gives students the opportunity to actually run the station. I did everything from newscasts to the morning show to weekend interview shows. I think that is where I definitely molded my radio skills, and I owe a lot to WCU for that experience."

By his junior year, Turner's skills had caught the attention of a Top 40 station in Asheville, and he was hired to do the afternoon air shift and be the station's main commercial voice. The daily commute

proved too difficult, so he moved to Asheville and transferred to UNC-Asheville. Two years later, he took a job in Tampa, Fla., first as the main imaging voice at an adult contemporary station, and later at a Top 40 station. His career took him next to Detroit, where he did voice work for other radio stations on the side. "Before long, I was the main voice on about 10 large market radio stations, including Kansas City and Cincinnati," he said.

The ultimate job opportunity came in 1991 when Turner was hired to be Infinity Broadcasting Group's

main voice-over talent. One of Infinity's stations was WXRK in New York, home to an up-and-coming morning show disc jockey named Howard Stern. Turner began doing voicework for Stern's show and the two become instant friends. Soon, Stern's immensely popular program was syndicated and Turner's voice was heard from coast to coast. Turner called working with Stern the best break of his career.

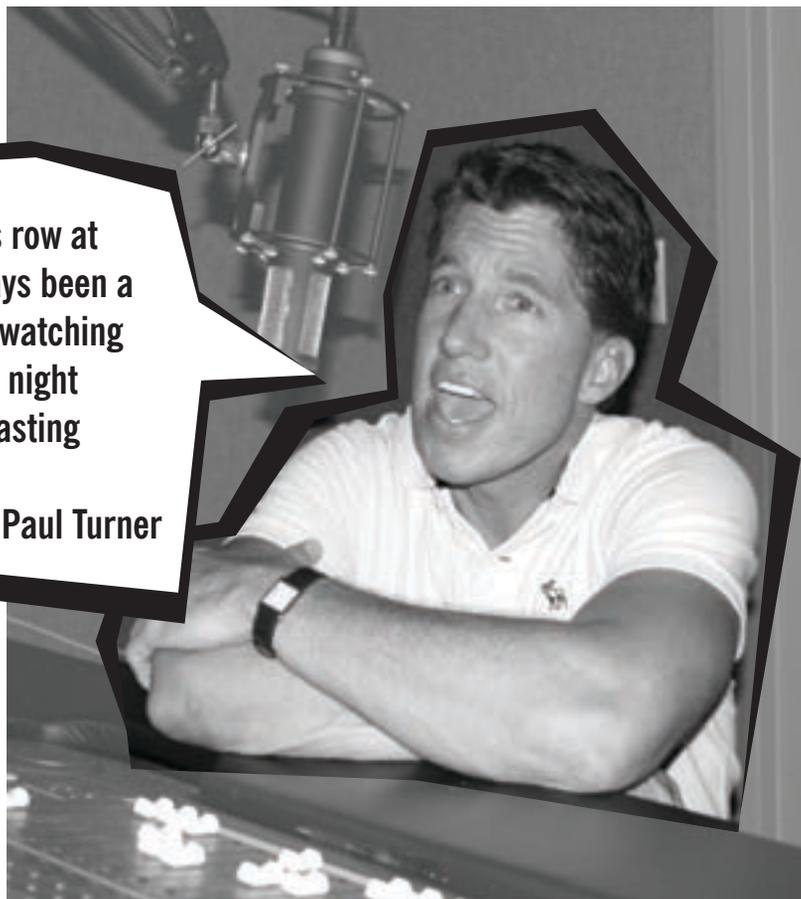
He left Infinity Broadcasting in 1997 to launch his own voice-over company, Paul Turner Productions, collecting an impressive client list that includes NFL Films, CNN, FOX, NBC, CBS, ABC, ESPN, Major League Baseball and Monday Night Football. Mark Chernoff, vice president of sports for CBS Radio and operations manager for New York's WFAN, a pioneer of sports radio, has been working with Turner for 15 years. "When I need a message delivered on the air, it's Paul's voice that breaks through the clutter," Chernoff said. "He's the best there is."

Turner is now giving something back to the place where he got his start, contributing vocal work for the introduction and for opening and closing sponsor announcements for the Catamount Sports Network, said **Daniel Hooker '01**, WCU assistant athletic director for media relations.

*Jeff Bryson is a familiar voice to Western sports fans, as he has worked as the public address announcer at the Catamount's home football games since 1998.*

**I got to sit on press row at Reid Gym. I had always been a huge sports fan, but watching the play-by-play that night gave me that broadcasting bug immediately.**

**— Paul Turner**



## MEDICAL BEST SELLER

By TERESA KILLIAN

After four interviews with Johnson & Johnson, **Errol Kilgore '99** didn't get the temporary "college overhire" position for which he and hundreds of applicants interviewed. Instead, a Johnson & Johnson company surprised Kilgore with an offer for a permanent, full-time job in Winston-Salem as a pharmaceutical representative.

"A week after I walked across the stage at graduation, they called to offer me the position. My mom and grandmother were sitting in the living room, and I was jumping up and down with excitement," said Kilgore. "I was the first person in my family to graduate from college, and I was going to work for a Fortune 500 company. I was elated."

Eight years later, Kilgore's career continues to be peppered with accolades, national awards including "Rookie of the Year" and "Sales Excellence," and promotions that recently landed him in the Chicago area as a district manager for Johnson & Johnson company PriCara.

His first job as a pharmaceutical representative gave him experience calling on health care professionals to talk about appropriate use and insurance coverage of medications. He saw his role as an educator about the difference that medical innovations can make and as a representative of those who worked to develop the innovations. "About a dozen times, people who I have never met have literally come up to me after seeing the name of a drug on my bag and thanked me," said Kilgore. "It made me feel good to know

# alumni ACHI

that the medications and devices that I represented helped people who had debilitating conditions be able to do common activities like cooking and walking again – activities that we often take for granted."

Kilgore then moved into a job as an account specialist for a medical device division of Johnson & Johnson. He introduced gastroenterologists to a new capsule camera that allowed patients to swallow a capsule, about the size of a large vitamin pill, that had a camera inside. His success led to another promotion as market development manager before Kilgore accepted a job at another Johnson & Johnson company as a Chicago-area based district manager supervising eight pharmaceutical representatives.

"I have an appreciation to WCU for equipping me with the skills to be successful," said Kilgore. At Western, Kilgore majored in industrial distribution and was active with Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity, student retention initiative Project C.A.R.E, the Black Educational Support Team and the Inspirational Choir. Kilgore received the 1999 Henry Lewis Suggs Award, the university's highest and most prestigious cultural diversity and humanitarian award.

"I used to hear the saying, 'If you love what you do then you'll never work a day in your life,'" he said. "Although it would be an exaggeration to say that I don't feel like I'm working, I can truly say that I enjoy my career."



*Errol Kilgore '99 takes in the Chicago skyline.*

# EVENEMENTS

## CHANGE AGENT

By BILL STUDENC

Although work and family responsibilities prevented **Kathy Lance** from completing her degree in business in 1977, that certainly hasn't stopped the Waynesville woman from finding success in the insurance industry. The owner of the L.N. Davis Co. and the third generation of her family to run the agency, Lance is winding up a term this fall as president of the Independent Insurance Agents of North Carolina.

Lance is the first woman in the history of the organization elected as its president. She is following in the footsteps of her father, Paul L. Davis, in more ways than one as he served as president of IIANC in 1958, when Lance was only 4 years old. For more than 40 years until his death in 1990, Davis managed the insurance agency founded in 1933 by Lance's grandfather, Lawson Newton Davis.

In addition to holding several offices and serving on numerous committees for IIANC, a professional trade association representing independent insurance agencies across the state, Lance also is active in her community and church, currently serving on the Haywood County Schools Foundation and Laurel Community Children Choir boards. She is a past president of the Haywood County Insurance Women, the Greater Haywood County Chamber of Commerce and REACH of Haywood County, former member of the Haywood Community College Foundation Board, and a former leader with the Pisgah Girl Scout Council.

As members of the IIANC, Lance and husband **Gary Lance '80** have been key figures in helping launch the Independent Insurance Agents of North Carolina Scholarship Fund in WCU's College of Business, said **Jim Manring '74 MBA '76**. "Kathy and Gary have been among the most active and loyal supporters of Western," Manring said. "Kathy is a former president of the Catamount Club, and together they have jointly and effectively served as formal and informal chairs of the Haywood County alumni chapter efforts for many years. Western is fortunate to have alumni, friends and supporters like Kathy and Gary Lance."

Initiated in 1997 with a gift of \$50,000 and supplemented by additional contributions over the years, the IIANC scholarship fund now tops \$100,000. "We are very appreciative for the



*Insurance executive **Kathy Lance** runs the family business.*

dedication of the independent agents to the educational process and the assistance this provides to our students," said Leroy Kauffman, former dean of the College of Business. "Since its inception, we have provided \$21,900 in scholarships to 21 students. We are very grateful to the Independent Insurance Agents of North Carolina for their support in providing an excellent education for our students."

## Campus Minister Shares Talents Statewide After Retirement

The Rev. **Wanda Kidd '77** sees a lot of optimism and eagerness to make a difference in the young adults she meets through campus ministry at WCU. Then, as Kidd gets to know the students, she notices their talents and strengths, and makes a point to tell them individually what she sees in them. “Young adults need to know they have value and purpose,” said Kidd. “Helping them know what they can do – empowering them – is a big part of what we are about.” That practice is one that Kidd, who retired this summer after 13 years with WCU’s Baptist Student Union, will share statewide as college ministry consultant for the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of North Carolina.

Only about a dozen Southern Baptist women were ordained ministers when Kidd was a home economics student at Western in the 1970s, and she credits professors at Western for helping her see that she, too, could be one of them. After learning of Kidd’s interest, one of her professors, Wilma Cosper, encouraged her to research the topic of women ministers for her senior seminar project. Kidd returned unable to find much information when, to her amazement, Cosper opened a file of brochures and articles she had collected on the subject. “Dr. Cosper was a big part in giving validity to my interest in becoming a woman minister,” said Kidd. Then-campus minister at the Baptist Student Union, Joe David Fore, also supported her. “Of course you can do this,” Kidd said he told her.

Kidd earned her master’s degree in divinity from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary and a doctorate of ministry from Drew Theological Seminary. She was ordained in 1983 and returned to Cullowhee, where she worked as an intern and staff member at area churches. Kidd launched what has grown into the Jackson County Christmas Store, a program that helps families that need financial assistance purchase gifts. Members of the WCU community support the program annually through the Angel Tree initiative.

In the Baptist Student Union’s small sanctuary decorated with framed messages such as “We all grow better in sunshine and love” and “Peace be with you,” Kidd says her relationships with students are what she will miss most. And, she will be missed, says Melissa Calhoun, a junior from Lexington and co-president of the BSU. “When she shakes your hand and says, ‘Hi! I’m Wanda Kidd! Where are you from?’ there’s something about the way she looks at you that makes you feel she’s sincerely glad to meet you and interested in getting to know you,” said Calhoun. “I love Wanda. She has a heart for students. She really cares about them. She knows them.”



### FAITHFUL COMPANION

By TERESA KILLIAN

*Retired Baptist Student Union minister  
**Wanda Kidd '77**  
isn't slowing down.*

# alumni ACHIEVEMENTS

## AUTO DETAILING

Ford Motor Company Executive  
Pens Fictional Look at Automaker

By RANDALL HOLCOMBE

Clifton Lambreth '82 MBA '84 realized he might be sending his 23-year career with Ford Motor Company into the proverbial ditch with the June release of his book, "Ford and the American Dream: Founded on Right Decisions," but instead of being ousted, Lambreth was invited to lunch by the automaker's chief executive officer.

A retail marketing manager for Ford, Lambreth set about writing his critique of the auto giant after news of a potential bankruptcy came out in December 2006. In his fictional account, the main character, who happens to be a Western graduate, is transported back in time to the early 20th century and dines with Henry Ford at the company founder's Michigan residence, Fairlane Manor. The two discuss the problems ailing the once-great automaker, and how to get it back on the right road.

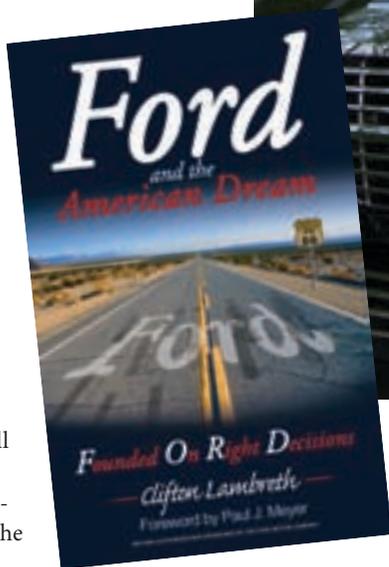
Lambreth sent the first copy of the book to come off the press to Ford's top officer, Alan Mulally.

"I firmly believe that Ford can and will return to the vision and principles the company was founded on," Lambreth said. "When I got a call from headquarters, I braced for what destiny had in store. The call was from Mulally himself. He said he loved the book and that it illustrated the best turn-around recovery plan he had ever read, and he invited me for lunch."

The two met for lunch at – where else? – Fairlane Manor. "Just for a second, I could imagine Henry Ford was there with us, smiling," Lambreth said. "Mulally was keenly receptive to openly discussing issues facing the company."

Lambreth has been consistently recognized as a top performer during his tenure with Ford. Armed with his two business administration degrees from WCU, he went to work for the automaker in 1984 as a customer service representative.

Now, in addition to his duties at Ford, Lambreth serves as chief executive officer of Daniel Bradley Matthews Inc.,



Clifton Lambreth '82 MBA '84 is author of a book about the Ford Motor Co.

a marketing consulting firm that serves country music artists and nonprofit fundraising organizations. He also serves on the advisory board of Western's College of Business and on the boards for the Family Foundation Fund and Lead Like Jesus Foundation. A competitive runner and veteran of several marathons, Lambreth lives with his wife and three sons in Brentwood, Tenn.

"Ford and the American Dream" was published by Executive Books of Mechanicsburg, Penn., with Mary Calia and Melissa Webb as co-authors, and art by Igor Babailov.

For more information about Lambreth's book, go to [www.TheFordBook.com](http://www.TheFordBook.com).



Courtesy of Brian Capsay

Members of the U.S. fly fishing team are (from right), **Josh Stephens '00**, Lance Egan, Brian Capsay, George Daniel, Anthony Naranja and Jim Hickey.

## CASTING CALL

### Grad Lands Spot on U.S. Fly Fishing Team

By JESSICA CREGGER '07



Nordic Pro Fly Fishing

**Josh Stephens '00**

The old saying “a bad day fishing is better than a good day at the office” doesn’t apply to Sylva native **Josh Stephens '00**. That’s because for the criminal justice major, the office IS the nearest fishing hole. A member of the United States Fly Fishing Team – yes, there is such a thing – Stephens fishes every chance he gets, and also competes in tournaments around the world.

Of the 15 members of the U.S. team, Stephens is one of the youngest.

He was offered a spot by Coach Jack Dennis, who in 2005 was a commentator for the “Best of the West” casting competition. Stephens won the tournament’s qualifying round with a cast of 102 feet, 9 inches, and was automatically eligible for the finals in Salt Lake City, Utah. While off-camera in Utah, Dennis invited Stephens to Redmond, Ore., to try out.

Stephens reeled in the big one – a place on the team. This past June, Stephens and seven other U.S. teammates traveled to Finland to compete in the 27th FIPS-Mouché World Fly Fishing Championships. “Each person has his own style of fishing he’s good at,” he said. “I was chosen for Finland because it’s big water, nymph fishing (under the surface). I’m better at that.”

After several practice days adjusting to conditions and preparing flies, the team was a strong competitor against squads

from 24 other countries, placing sixth overall and beating its personal record of 10th from the previous year in Portugal.

Stephens has participated in other competitions, including the televised 2001 ESPN2 Great Outdoor Games in Spruce Creek, Pa.; the 2002 Great Outdoor Games in Vail, Colo.; and the 2003 Teva Mountain Games in Vail, Colo. He hosted a regional tournament in Cherokee in August, and in October hopes to compete in a national championship in Boulder, Colo. Recently, Stephens has started focusing on dry-fly fishing, a different style than he’s used to, to prepare for next year’s world championships in New Zealand.

While he’s not practicing with the team or fishing the Tuckaseegee and Nantahala rivers, Stephens keeps busy with his erosion control and container business in Robbinsville. He began working at Highland Hikers in Cashiers, which proved to be helpful during his college days in a fly fishing class for a physical education elective. “It was a casting class, and most of it was in the physics part of casting,” Stephens said. “The whole instructing thing had already been introduced to me at Highland Hikers, so I ended up teaching half of the class.”

Stephens has worked with Wit’s End Ranch in Durango, Colo., for four years, guiding and taking high-country fly fishing trips. For more than a year, he trained people to instruct safety classes while at the North Carolina Wildlife Commission, but decided the job just wasn’t the right match for him. “There is no way I can wear a tie and a military-pressed shirt and the shiny shoes every day,” Stephens said. “It was great, but it was not me.”

# alumni ACHIEVEMENTS

## MAKING THE NEWS

By JOHN KENYON

Most people do not remember the exact date when they chose their career path, but **Leighton Grant '03** does – Sept 11, 2001. “Watching the coverage of 9/11 made me decide I wanted to go into news,” said Grant. “It made me realize how powerful news could be.”

Grant has proven to be a powerful news photographer in his short career. This year alone, he received two regional Emmy Awards and three Associated Press Awards for his work with WLOS News 13, the ABC affiliate in Asheville.



*Leighton Grant '03 accepts an Emmy Award.*

He won a “Best Feature” Emmy for the package “Magic Man,” a story about Ricky Boone, a magician in Weaverville who was born with a rare bone disease and has been in a wheelchair his whole life. Boone owns a magic store and is an inspiration to others through his shows and uplifting attitude, said Grant. The second Emmy was for his coverage of the funeral of Mitch Carver, a U.S. Army pilot killed when his reconnaissance helicopter crashed near Mosul, Iraq.

Collecting a pair of regional Emmy Awards in a single year would be a lifetime achievement for most news photographers, but Grant also claimed three Associated Press awards – “Best Photography in North Carolina,” “Best Feature” and “Honorable Mention Spot News.”

Although Grant didn’t decide to pursue a career in news until the Sept. 11 tragedies, he always knew he was going into the video business. “While still a student, Leighton purchased a professional-grade camera and video-editing software and was working freelance, shooting sports footage and selling it to television stations,” said Donald Connelly, acting head of the department of communication. “He had style and professionalism you don’t often find in a student.”

Grant remembers working in the field on a video project at Western as a pivotal experience toward his career. “You got to use the equipment and get out there with the burden of having a project with a deadline,” he said. “If you have the self-motivation and drive to tell a story, WCU has the resources to visually capture stories. Students are using the same equipment that is industry-standard for local news.”

His professors say they saw his talent early on. “I knew Leighton was going to be successful because he had an incredible thirst for knowledge and wanted to be involved in everything,” said Connelly. Pdraig Acheson, director of studio operations for WCU’s department of communication, agreed. “I clearly recall his desire to learn and excel, and was impressed with his self-taught ability to shoot and edit video,” Acheson said.

“Shortly after college, he landed a position with WBTV, the CBS affiliate in Charlotte, an incredibly good start for a beginner. In a very short time, he has become a principle photographer and satellite news-gathering truck operator for WLOS with numerous awards under his belt,” said Acheson.

That’s a wrap on a pretty good year for Leighton Grant.

# classNOTES

## 1964

In February, **Wesley Hill MAEd**, superintendent of the Demopolis (Ala.) City School System, received the Demopolis Chamber of Commerce lifetime award for his 27-year commitment to advancing the level of learning and success of the community. "Much of Hill's success can be based on the tenet he subscribes to in his career: 'Make a difference every day,'" said Alex Braswell, chairman of the chamber's board. "I never really expected or thought about winning the award," said Hill. "This is kind of like my Super Bowl."

## 1972



**Lynn Hotaling MAEd '79** (above right), editor of *The Sylva Herald*, won the 2007 N.C. Bar Association Media and the Law Award in the non-daily division. Judging for the awards is based on accurate, informative coverage of law-related issues that fosters greater public understanding of the legal system and the role of

lawyers in society. Hotaling won the award for her article "Judge Rules for Airport Authority in Suit Against County." "Lynn has worked hard to provide balanced news coverage for the past 11 years," said Herald Publisher Steve Gray. "I think this award is more evidence of her commitment and hard work."

## 1974

**Mickey Pettus** recently was promoted to vice president of supply chain custom services at VHA Inc. in Irving, Texas. VHA Inc. is a health care provider alliance of more than 2,400 not-for-profit health care organizations. With more than 32 years of experience in the health care industry, Pettus has held key leadership roles with Owens and Minor, Abbott Laboratories, Whittaker General Medical and Baxter Travenol Laboratories. He operated his own consulting business for supply chain services following his 2003 retirement from Abbott Laboratories.

Assistant professor of public relations at Lee University in Cleveland, Tenn., **Patty Silverman** received a Jean Ritchie Fellowship of more than \$20,000 from the Appalachian College Association, which funded research for her dissertation, "Persuasion Strategies, Motivational Factors and Obstacles: Influences in the Evolutional Transition from Public Relations Practitioner to Professor." Silverman's research included interviews with faculty who have transitioned from PR practitioners to PR faculty and included Western's own Debra Connolly,

a communication faculty member since 2000. A teacher at Lee since 2000, Silverman has 20 years of public relations experience. She received her doctorate in May from the University of Tennessee.

## 1976

**Don Leonard**, co-owner of Crown Sport Sales Inc., recently was elected president of the Sporting Goods Agents Association, an organization of independent sporting goods sales agents in the United States. He and his partner in Richmond, Va., started the business in 1988. Leonard and wife **Joanna Leonard MAEd** live in Mooresville and have two children and two grandchildren.

## 1982



In May, **Oliver P. Walker** (above) was appointed vice president of operations for Covenant Retirement Communities Inc. in Chicago, where he implements special program initiatives to assure the performance and quality improvement of CRC's

14 continuing-care retirement communities that serve 5,000 residents nationwide. With 20 years of experience in the health care industry, Walker has worked in both acute-care and aging services.

## 1984

**Col. Larry "Pepper" Jackson** recently assumed his first command as a full colonel in South Korea, his first assignment there. Most recently he attended the Naval War College in Newport, R.I. He began his career as an armor officer, serving in the first Gulf War as an armor company commander. He later served as commander of the 4th Infantry Division's 3rd Battalion, 66th Armor Regiment during Operation Iraqi Freedom. Jackson and his wife have a son and a daughter.

## 1985

In February, **Amanda J. Mesler** was appointed North American chief executive of LogicaCMG, an information technology and business process outsourcing, systems integration and business consulting company. Mesler is responsible for developing and executing the company's growth strategy in the North American market. In her 22-year career, she has held senior positions at EDS, where she headed the global energy industry group; Bearing Point, where she was partner and managing director of the oil and gas practice; and General Electric, where she was Asia Pacific market manager. Most recently she was vice president of strategy and organization design at SYSCO, a food service marketer and distributor. She lives in Houston with her husband and three children.



*Student musicians past and present take part in the annual WCU Alumni Band performance.*

## BAND ON THE RUN

### Alumni Group is Drumming Up Support for Student Musicians

By BILL STUDENC

When nearly 200 former members of the Western marching band and other musical ensembles gather on campus in November for the annual WCU Alumni Band weekend, they might as well plan on being greeted at the door by **Bob Buckner '67**, with membership applications for "Partners for Pride" in hand.

Buckner, WCU's director of athletics bands, is among the organizers of the new alumni band group that is designed to help support Western's bands and student musicians. The nascent organization, which is currently working on finalizing its bylaws and getting other housekeeping matters in order, is looking to the weekend of Nov. 16-17 to officially launch Partners for Pride.

The weekend will begin Friday, Nov. 16, with the annual Marching Band Concert held in the Ramsey Regional Activity Center. The 7 p.m. concert by the Pride of the Mountains Marching Band will include the band's 2007 pre-game and halftime shows, with special performances highlighting each of the band's musical sections. A reception for band members – past and present – along with family members, friends and fans will follow. All former members of any university band are

invited to take part in the annual WCU Alumni Band activities Saturday, Nov. 17, with morning rehearsals followed by a performance as part of Western's football game against Furman University.

"Partners for Pride is now open for the business of helping our bands and student musicians," said Buckner. "We want to reach band alumni and other supporters who have an interest in the various band activities at the university and who are interested in helping through financial contributions for scholarships and program support, through serving as mentors to current student musicians or through helping recruit new student musicians to come to Western."

Partners for Pride membership levels are set at \$50 for bandsman; \$100 for partner; \$250 for bronze director; \$500 for silver director; \$1,000 for gold director; \$2,500 for Purple Cat Corporate; and \$5,000 for Gold Cat Corporate. The organization's goal is to attract 300 members this fall – one for each member of the Pride of the Mountains Marching Band. For more information about Partners for Pride or about the WCU Alumni Band weekend, call (828) 227-2259.

# LOBBYIST LECTURING IN THE LOBBY

Political science and public affairs students at Western recently heard first-hand how a major corporation lobbies state and federal government officials when a graduate of the WCU program returned to his alma mater as keynote speaker at a departmental end-of-year banquet. **Doug Bailey '93**, who earned his bachelor's degree in political science at WCU before embarking on a career that currently finds him serving as regional director of government relations for the Anheuser-Busch Companies in Tallahassee, Fla., shared insights about the lobbying process with WCU students. In his position, Bailey directs the political and legislative operations in the four-state region of Alabama, Florida, Georgia

and Mississippi for Anheuser-Busch, the nation's largest brewery. After graduating from WCU, Bailey served as a submarine navigation electronics specialist with the U.S. Navy from 1993 to 1997, and worked as a police officer and housing officer for the city of Asheville from 1999 to 2000. He earned his master's degree in public administration in 2002 at Florida State University, where he now is working toward his doctoral degree. Bailey also has been director of legislative affairs and executive vice president for the Windsor Group, a Tallahassee-based lobbying firm, and senior political officer for Associated Industries of Florida, the state's largest business trade association.



*Doug Bailey '93 chats with political scientist Gibbs Knotts.*

## classNOTES



Instructor of English at Haywood Community College since 1999, **Margaret Arrington Studenc MA'90** (above) received the Master Teacher Award as part of the college's year-end academic honors celebration in May. The award is presented annually to a full-time faculty member in recognition of distinguished teaching. Studenc became coordinator of HCC's developmental education programs this fall. She taught previously at Southwestern Community College, where she also worked in the public information office, and held positions at WCU as continuing education marketing manager and coordinator of the Alliance of Business Leaders and Educators. She and husband Bill

live in Waynesville with daughter Geneva, 11, and son Will, 10.

### 1986

N.C. Gov. Mike Easley recently reappointed **Joy Staton MAEd** of Hendersonville to the Vagabond School of Drama board of directors, which oversees the operation of the school, including the Flat Rock Playhouse. A Hendersonville resident, Staton is an advisory system leader for the N.C. Cooperative Extension and a member of the Hendersonville Kiwanis Club.

In May, **Phillip Stewart** joined Kenexa, a talent acquisition and retention solutions firm headquartered in Wayne, Pa., as chief people officer. Stewart will oversee the company's human resources functions and support its continued global expansion. "Phil is a real business partner with a sense of humor and a very deft touch. He truly understands the importance of metrics and relationships in order to maximize the employer/employee relationship," said chief executive officer Rudy Karsan. Prior to joining Kenexa, Stewart was the area human resources director for DENTSPLY International, a professional dental products company. He also has held positions at Sara Lee Corp.

### 1988

**Michael "Mickey" Maennle** recently joined First Citizens Bank in Murphy as a financial consultant based in the branch on Hiwassee Street.

### 1992

Truman Loyd was born in June to Lincolnton residents **Phil Ayers** and wife Dana. He joins siblings Josh, 14, and Emily Alexander, 9. Ayers teaches physical education at Kiser Intermediate School in Lincoln County and coaches tennis at Lincolnton High School. The family soon will gain another Catamount—Dana is working on her master's degree in school administration through WCU's online program.

### 1993

Veteran journalist and Lincolnton resident **Jon Mayhew** is the new editor of the Lincoln Tribune. As editor, Mayhew is looking forward to focusing exclusively on Lincoln County. "In the newspaper business, reporters and editors can't wait for the story to come to them," said Mayhew. "They have to go to the story. That's what I like to do—chase stories." When he's not chasing stories, he's the host of "Groovy Tunes Sunday Night" on WLON-AM radio, which features music from the 1950s to the 1980s.

### 1994

**R. Parrish Ezell** and wife Aimee celebrated the birth of their second child, Eason Cole, in May. He joins sister McKenna Rae, 2. Ezell is senior financial adviser and assistant vice president at Merrill Lynch in Asheville. The family lives in Waynesville.

This spring, **Karen Lewis** joined Medical Associates of Transylvania as a family nurse practitioner. She previously worked with Dr. Steven M. Stranges at the Mountain Neurological Center in Asheville and with the Henderson County Department of Public Health.

### 1995



Answering the call of the mountains, **Kelly Donaldson** (above) returned to Jackson County in May

# BETTER LATE THAN NEVER

By LEILA TVEDT



**Herbert Kluttz '57**

Imagine you earned your degree from Western but never got to graduation. Something kept you away from the traditional ceremony when your classmates donned cap and gown to march behind the university mace, hear their names called, shake hands with the chancellor, and receive their leather-bound diplomas. You didn't take that walk; didn't get your diploma. Years later, you look back, wishing you had not missed

all that pomp and circumstance. There's a blank space on the wall or in your files where your diploma could be, and you really want that missing piece of paper.

That's what happened to **Herbert "Ray" Kluttz '57** of Mooresville. Kluttz graduated with a degree in business administration from what was Western Carolina College and left immediately for a career, first in industry and then in insurance. His wife, the former **Ruby Mattox '58** of Black Mountain, left with him but returned to campus a year later to finish her degree in English and collect her diploma. It's been hanging on the wall of their home ever since. Kluttz's has not.

Now, 75 years old and more than 10 years into retirement, Kluttz, who returns often to Western for class reunions and football games, wondered what had become of his diploma. "I told my wife, 'I'm going to call and find out,'" he said.

WCU Registrar **Larry Hammer '82 MS '96** had the answer. "We've got a box full of 151 diplomas, ranging from 1938 to 2006," Hammer said. A few of them have notes attached, showing various fees and minor fines still owing. Hammer said the university will forgive those debts and send diplomas out to their rightful Catamount owners upon request. (The list can be found on the Alumni Affairs Web site under the "alumni news" link in the "news and publications" box.)

It may be a little too late for a cap and gown ceremony, but Kluttz plans to celebrate when his diploma gets home to Mooresville, just 50 years late. "I will put a frame on it and hang it on the wall," he said. Right beside Ruby's.

## 2003

**J. Kyle Brown** recently joined the accounting firm of Moore, Ellrich & Neal in Palm Beach Gardens, Fla., as a staff accountant in the tax and accounting services department.

## 2004

**Brett Norton**, the first student to graduate from Western's emergency management program with a bachelor's degree, has been accepted as a N.C. Highway Patrol cadet and began training at the N.C. Highway Patrol Academy in May.

to begin his new role as editor of the Crossroads Chronicle newspaper in Cashiers. A native of Atlanta, Donaldson was raised in Haywood County and graduated from Pisgah High School before earning his bachelor's degree in English, with a concentration in journalism, at WCU. Donaldson wrote for the Western Carolinian during his days on campus, and his journalism career has included stints as sports editor at the biweekly Transylvania Times in Brevard, and at two daily papers, the News Herald in Morganton and The Times in Gainesville, Ga. "I am immensely excited about the opportunity to return to the mountains of Western North Carolina, which I love so much and have always considered home," Donaldson said.

During an annual honors luncheon in May, **Mark A. Huddle MA** was recognized as one of four outstanding faculty members at St. Bonaventure University in St. Bonaventure, N.Y. A faculty member since 2003, Huddle is in the final stages of his first book, "The Paradox of Color." He is working on a second book, "Roi Ottley's War," and has signed a contract with a publishing company to write a biography of Marcus Garvey.

## 1997

After being with Scripps Networks research department for two years, **Robin Parton Pate** was promoted in December to vice president of HGTV program scheduling. "Robin's level of programming research expertise has been an integral part of our strategic program planning process," said Sarah Cronan, senior vice president of brand management and scheduling. "She has been instrumental in providing research information that has helped HGTV make scheduling decisions that have grown our viewer base." Pate served in various research roles at Turner Broadcasting before joining Scripps. She lives in Knoxville, Tenn., with husband Trace and daughter Sydney Marie, born in June.

## 2000

**Benson Hoyle**, former police chief in Mount Holly, in January became police chief for the town of Cornelius. Hoyle's law enforcement career spans more than 15 years and includes a post in the

Huntersville Police Department. In February, **Dee Mittman**, former director of game management and public relations for the Greensboro Revolution indoor football team, joined Kelly MarCom, an integrated marketing communications firm, as account executive for the sports and event marketing division. Mittman's responsibilities include working to acquire corporate sponsorships. She also served as the internal relations director for athletics marketing at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. When **Adrienne Kirby Overbay** saw the article about **Tony White '69** in the winter 2007 issue of Western Magazine, one image caught her eye: her photo, taken when she was a student, holding a Forbes magazine with White, president and chief executive officer of Applera Corporation, on the cover. The original photo of Overbay was used for recruitment purposes in an article about White's success in scientific explorations of the human genome and the fact that Overbay was striving for similar success. Overbay now is senior marketing executive for Laboratory Corporation of America, a firm that often works with Applera companies.

## 2001

At a ceremony held by the Associated Press in March, **Joe Cowan**, news broadcast producer for WSPA-TV, was awarded the South Carolina Associated Press Award for Best Newscast in 2006.

Married in September 2005 and residents of North Raleigh, **Cami Harwood Stephens** and Travis Stephens celebrated the birth of their first child, Grace Mattie, in February. Cami is communications and investor relations specialist for Highwoods Properties Inc. and Travis is a security technician for CPI Securities.

## 2002

Previously Asheville City Schools' executive director for elementary education (Title I and Title III), **Vicki Holcomb EdD** in January became director of elementary education for Buncombe County Schools. Holcomb will work with principals and central office administrators to enhance instructional services for the district's 24 kindergarten-through-sixth-grade schools. Formerly assistant principal at Asheville

Middle School, she also has served as a kindergarten, first- and second-grade teacher for exceptional children for almost 19 years.

In January, **Andy Rodden** and wife **Keitha Kiser Rodden** celebrated the birth of their first child, Hanna Grace. The family recently moved from Shelby to Monroe, where Andy is an operations manager for Carolina Steel Source and Keitha is a special education teacher at Wingate Elementary School.

*Celebrating diversity at  
Western Carolina University.*



FOR MORE INFORMATION  
**1-877-440-9990**

*Come Home to Cullowhee*  
**WCU AFRICAN-AMERICAN ALUMNI REUNION**

{ APRIL 24-27, 2008 }

**classNOTES**

**2005**

Clinsys Clinical Research Inc. in April appointed **John Hogan MPM** project director for the central nervous system therapeutic area franchise. Formerly, Hogan was clinical project manager with Sepracor Inc. and senior clinical trial manager with INC Research. Based in Berkeley Heights, N.J., Clinsys Clinical Research is a therapeutically focused clinical research organization, with offices in the United States, India and Europe.

**2006**



Previously operations manager for the N.C. Division of Prisons' Piedmont Division, **Benita Witherspoon MAEd** (above) recently was named superintendent at North Piedmont Correctional Center for Women in Lexington. Witherspoon began her corrections career as an intern in the South Piedmont Area Office. Since then, she has held various positions at Cabarrus Correctional Center,

Charlotte Correctional Center, South Piedmont Diagnostic Center, Albemarle Correctional Institution, Lanesboro Correctional Institution, and Forsyth Correctional Center.

**Alumni Deaths**

**Mary G. Dix '65**, June 23; Yorktown, Va.

**Julia Lynn Higginbotham Evans '71**, July 30; Hawkinsville, Ga.

**Janet Wallace Farmer '83**, July 3; Sylva.

**Karen Lynn Gerber '96**, June 27; Weaverville.

**Mabel Orr Hooper '42 MAEd '59**, Aug. 7; Robbinsville.

**Edward Leon Ice '95**, July 25; Atlanta, Ga.

**James E. Pardue '57**, July 22; Hendersonville.

**Ruth Susan Morgan Stroup '60**, Aug. 3; Brevard.

**Franz Whitmire '66**, July 11; Glensville.

**University Deaths**

Priscilla Proctor, Hunter Library staff, July 11; Sylva.

Helen Patton, friend and benefactor, July 5; Franklin.

# Share Your **NEWS!**

Do you enjoy reading about **friends** and **classmates** in Class Notes?

Why not return the favor and **share news** about your recent happenings?

Are you **newly married?**

Did you just land a new **job** or receive an **award?**

**We want to know about it.**

## Drop us a line at:

The Magazine of Western Carolina University  
Suite 440, H.F. Robinson Building  
Cullowhee, NC 28723  
or visit the Alumni Association Web site  
<http://alumni.wcu.edu/>

Please send story ideas and suggestions to  
The Magazine of Western Carolina University  
Suite 420, H.F. Robinson Building  
Western Carolina University  
Cullowhee, NC 28723  
or via e-mail: [bstudenc@wcu.edu](mailto:bstudenc@wcu.edu)

Go to the Western Carolina University Alumni Association Web site ([alumni.wcu.edu](http://alumni.wcu.edu)) to add a class note, update your information, or catch up on campus events.

Postmaster: Send address changes to  
Office of Alumni Affairs, Suite 440, H.F. Robinson Building  
Western Carolina University, Cullowhee, NC 28723



## October 2007

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 19-SUNDAY, OCTOBER 21

Homecoming weekend. (828) 227-7335 or www.wcu.edu/4408.asp

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 19

Open House—for prospective students and their families. (828) 227-7317

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 20

Lectures, Concerts and Exhibitions Series—Bread and Puppet Theater; "The Divine Reality Comedy Circus." Following the Homecoming football game. Intramurals field, Cordelia Camp Building. (828) 227-7206

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 21

Lady Catamount soccer—vs. Davidson. Southern Conference game. Senior Day. 4 p.m. Catamount Athletic Complex. (828) 227-7338

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 25

Catamount football—vs. Wofford. Southern Conference game. 7:30 p.m. E.J. Whitmire Stadium/Bob Waters Field. (828) 227-7338

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 27

Catamount cross country—Southern Conference Cross Country Championship. All day. Catamount Athletic Complex. (828) 227-7338

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 28

Lady Catamount volleyball—vs. Georgia Southern. Southern Conference match. 2 p.m. Ramsey Regional Activity Center. (828) 227-7338

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 30

Lady Catamount volleyball—vs. Chattanooga. Southern Conference match. 7 p.m. Ramsey Regional Activity Center. (828) 227-7338

## November 2007

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 6

Lady Catamount volleyball—vs. Furman. Southern Conference match. Senior Day. 7 p.m. Ramsey Regional Activity Center. (828) 227-7338

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 8-SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 11

Theater—The University Players present "Lucky Stiff" by Lynn Ahrens and Stephen Flaherty. Thursday-Saturday 7:30 p.m.; Sunday 3 p.m. Hoey Auditorium. (828) 227-2479

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 9

Fine and Performing Arts Center Special Event—Southern Fried Chicks, featuring Etta May, Trish Suhr, Beth Donahue and Sonya White, comedy. 7:30 p.m. Fine and Performing Arts Center. (828) 227-2479



SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 17

Open House—for prospective students and their families. (828) 227-7317

Catamount football—vs. Furman. Southern Conference game. Hall of Fame Day. 6 p.m. E.J. Whitmire Stadium/Bob Waters Field. (828) 227-7338

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 29

Galaxy of Stars / Something for Everyone Series—"Jungle All the Way Christmas Show," the Animal Band. 7:30 p.m. Fine and Performing Arts Center. (828) 227-2479

## December 2007

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 1

Catamount basketball—vs. College of Charleston. Southern Conference game. Time TBA. Ramsey Regional Activity Center. (828) 227-7338

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 15

Fall commencement. 2 p.m. Ramsey Regional Activity Center. (828) 227-7495

Galaxy of Stars / Something for Everyone Series—"A Holiday Spectacular," the Asheville Symphony. 7:30 p.m. Fine and Performing Arts Center. (828) 227-2479

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 20

Lady Catamount basketball—vs. Chattanooga. Southern Conference game. 7 p.m. Ramsey Regional Activity Center. (828) 227-7338

## January 2008

FRIDAY, JANUARY 18

Fine and Performing Arts Center Special Event—James Gregory: "The Funniest Man in America," comedic storytelling. 7:30 p.m. Fine and Performing Arts Center. (828) 227-2479

*Chief photographer Mark Haskett '87 captured this image of the Catamount sculpture against the backdrop of fiery fall foliage.*



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