

# the Reporter



News for the Faculty and Staff of Western Carolina University

## Make Your Dollars Count Annual Campaign Helps Charities

Employees of Western Carolina University will have the opportunity to join their fellow state employees in Jackson County and across North Carolina in charitable giving through the annual State Employees' Combined Campaign.

Western's campaign will kick off Wednesday, October 1, and run through Friday, November 14. It provides an opportunity to assist nearly 1,000 charitable organizations that provide valuable community services. Donations can be designated to one or several charities in the campaign.

"There is always someone in need. It could be family, friends, or a neighbor. We need to make sure they have resources available when needed," said Bob Orr, Web manager in Western's Public Relations Office and Western's SECC chairman.

Permanent employees can make their contributions through payroll deduction, and all employees, retirees, and students may contribute by check or cash. Another option for giving is a one-time donation. All donations are tax deductible.

"I especially want to thank the volunteers who are helping collect contributions in the departments for their hard work to make this campaign successful. With large work loads already, these volunteers took on another task. I just want them to know how much their efforts are appreciated," said Orr.

## 29th Mountain Heritage Day

# Volunteer Efforts Make Annual Festival Successful

Once each year, on the last Saturday in September, the sun rises over Cullowhee Valley and it seems that a new village has popped up overnight on Western's campus.

Tents, stages, and craft booths have appeared; the smell of barbecue and Cherokee frybread fills the autumn air; and old-time melodies played on banjo and fiddle echo around the hills. Visitors drive in from local communities and from other states, and this once-a-year village, with a population of about 30,000, becomes one of the largest cities in the Western North Carolina mountains for a single, fun-filled day.

It's Mountain Heritage Day, Western's old-fashioned celebration of mountain life and the biggest event held on campus each year. The 29th edition of the festival is coming up Saturday, September 27.

Although it may appear that Mountain Heritage Day arises magically once a year, the truth is that the process of planning and carrying out the festival entails a lengthy list of details and a lot of hard work by a committee consisting of about 30 people, said festival chairman Don Wood.

Committee members oversee areas such as stage operations, festival contests, publicity, the arts and crafts midway, the budget, and security and parking, Wood said. The staff of the Mountain Heritage Center makes sure authentic Appalachian folk arts and skills are well represented, organizing performances for the Traditional Music Stage and at the Circle Tent and also demonstrations of folk skills such as weaving, pottery-making and blacksmithing. Those artists and demonstrators represent the "heart and soul" of Mountain Heritage Day and are the reason a writer for *Southern Living* magazine once referred to the festival as "an open textbook of Appalachian folk life," Wood said.

Wood said he begins meeting with subcommittees during the spring and summer to plan for Mountain Heritage Day. The full committee, which typically consists of Western faculty, staff, and students and some local citizens, usually meets once each week starting in September.

"As a rule, committee members take on the work they do for the festival with great dedication and energy," said Wood, who has been event chairman for eight years. "I don't have to worry about a lot of details because I know the work will get done and be done well." Festival planning also has benefited greatly the last two years from the work of Edna Lamberson as part-time Mountain Heritage Day assistant, he said.

In particular, two offices on campus contribute a huge amount of effort to Mountain



Max Woody, right, demonstrates woodworking at a recent Mountain Heritage Day.

# Pulitzer Nominee Ron Rash Named Parris Professor

Ron Rash, a Pulitzer Prize-nominated writer and educator, is the first John A. Parris Jr. and Dorothy Luxton Parris Distinguished Professor in Appalachian Cultural Studies at Western Carolina University.

Rash, who comes to Western from the University of South Carolina where he served as visiting writer in the graduate creative writing program, has received numerous awards for his poetry and fiction, including the recently announced Appalachian Writers Association's Book of the Year Award for his novel *One Foot in Eden*.

Rash should make an immediate impact on the work already under way at Western in the area of Appalachian cultural studies by faculty, students, and staff in a variety of academic disciplines, said Curtis Wood, professor of history at Western, who chaired the professorship search committee.

The \$500,000 professorship was established in the summer of 2002 as the seventh endowed professorship at Western. It was made possible by a gift from the estate of the late John and Dorothy Parris of Sylva, who were longtime supporters of the university, and with gifts from a trust fund established by the state of North Carolina and the C.D. Spangler Foundation's Challenge Grant for Endowed Distinguished Professorships.

The professorship in the interdisciplinary area of Appalachian studies was specifically designed so that it could be anchored within the anthropology, art, communication and theatre arts, English, or history departments. As a poet

## Battle of Shallowford Opens Theatre Season

The theatre season at Western will open Friday, September 26, with *The Battle of Shallowford* by North Carolina playwright Ed Simpson.

The comedy, presented in Hoey Auditorium by the University Players, is the tale of what happens when residents of the small North Carolina town of Shallowford fall for one of the greatest hoaxes in history—Orson Welles' classic radio broadcast of the "War of the Worlds."

Stephen Michael Ayers, associate professor of theatre arts, will direct the play and also will play the role of Newsome Jarvis. The cast features Jim Irvin as Burton Mock, Izzy Burger as Ruthie Mock, Justin Davis as Clunette, Whit Blanchard as Fred, Michael Wannagot as Lonnie, Tom Wilson as Mr. Roy, Parker Millar as Doodad Jarvis, and Jan Riddle as Dewey.

The play will stage at 7:30 p.m. September 26–27 and October 2–4, and at 2 p.m. September 28 and October 4–5. Tickets are \$12.50 for adults, \$10 for senior citizens, and \$6 for students. Season tickets and Theatre Patrons Club memberships are still available.

For reservations or information, call 227-7491.

and fiction-writer, Rash will be working out of the Department of English.

Rash said he is looking forward to helping uphold the legacy of one of Western North Carolina's most beloved writers. "I am a great admirer of John Parris' writing and, when I was growing up, read his column 'Roaming the Mountains,'" he said. "His deep love and immense understanding of his native region are an inspiration for me. Since both my father's and my mother's families have deep roots in the North Carolina mountains, this new position is a homecoming of sorts."

Rash is working with Western's Mountain Heritage Center on setting up a new series of performances, readings, and lectures that will highlight Appalachian culture.

Rash holds the bachelor's degree in English from Gardner-Webb College and the master's degree in English from Clemson University. In 1994, he was awarded a National Endowment for the Arts Poetry Fellowship, and in 1996 his fiction won the Sherwood Anderson Prize. His poetry and fiction have been published in more than 80 journals and magazines, and, in addition to the novel *One Foot in Eden*, he is author of two collections of short stories and three collections of poetry. His second novel, *Saints at the River*, is slated for publication by Henry Holt Publishers in spring 2004.



Ron Rash, Western's newly appointed Parris Distinguished Professor in Appalachian Cultural Studies, examines some artifacts from the John Parris estate now in the collection of the Mountain Heritage Center.

## Lunchtime Programs Scheduled

Western's Mountain Heritage Center is joining Ron Rash in sponsoring several cultural programs to be held at 12:15 p.m. on Wednesdays.

The programs will be held in the auditorium of the Mountain Heritage Center. Attendees may bring their lunch.

The first event will feature musician and author Betty Smith on September 24. A singer and teacher of traditional ballads, Smith first learned songs from her father, a ballad and shape-note singer. She accompanies herself on the dulcimer, guitar, and autoharp.

The series is designed to include a 30-minute talk or performance, followed by a discussion with the audience. Other events will feature Western faculty member and archaeologist Jane Eastman on October 22 and poet Kathryn Stripling Byer on November 5.

## Tuesday, September 23

Training Tuesday—"Leading Successful Meetings" (Part 2), 9–11:30 a.m., Hospitality Room, RRAC. ([www.wcu.edu/hr/training](http://www.wcu.edu/hr/training) or 227-2388)

*Catamount Concert Series*—Chamber Music with Strings, featuring music faculty and strings of the Asheville Symphony, 8 p.m., RH. (227-7242)

## Thursday, September 25

Workshop—Americans with Disabilities Act training. Required for all EPA and SPA employees. Offered throughout semester. 6:30–7:30 a.m. and 9–10 a.m., Room 239, Forsyth Building. (227-7116, course content; 227-2388, registration)

Lady Catamount soccer—vs. Chattanooga, Southern Conference match, 4 p.m., SSF. (227-7338)

Lady Catamount volleyball—vs. Chattanooga, Southern Conference match, 7 p.m., RRAC. (227-7338)

"Meet the Author"—Clyde Edgerton, Western's Freshman Reading Program selection, 7:30 p.m., Auditorium, MHC. (227-7264)

Concert—Modern Jazz Quintet, 8 p.m., RH. (227-7242)

# WCU Calendar

September 22—October 5, 2003

Look for regular updates on the university's Web site at [www.wcu.edu/cal.html](http://www.wcu.edu/cal.html)

## Friday, September 26

Workshop—Americans with Disabilities Act training. Required for all EPA and SPA employees. Offered throughout semester. 2–3 p.m., Room 332, Forsyth Building. (227-2388)

Recital—music students, 2 p.m., RH. (227-7242)

## Friday, September 26–

**Sunday, September 28**  
Theatre—The University Players present *The Battle of Shallowford* by Ed Simpson, 7:30 p.m., Friday and Saturday; 2 p.m., Sunday matinee, Hoey Auditorium. \$ (227-7491)

## Saturday, September 27–

**Sunday, September 28**  
Overnight trip—to Charleston, including tour of Historic Charleston. Sign up in advance at UC. \$ (227-7206)

## Saturday, September 27

Festival—29th annual Mountain Heritage Day. (227-3193 or [www.mountainheritageday.com](http://www.mountainheritageday.com))

## Monday, September 29

Recital—voice students of Mary Kay Bauer, 8 p.m., RH. (227-7242)

## Tuesday, September 30

Training Tuesday—"Grants: Finding the Funder." Participants will review basic Internet-based resources for funding opportunities, 3–4 p.m. Room 186, Hunter Library. Optional date, October 1. (227-2388 or [www.wcu.edu/hr/training](http://www.wcu.edu/hr/training))

Lady Catamount volleyball—vs. East Tennessee State, Southern Conference match, 7 p.m., RRAC. (227-7338)

*Catamount Concert Series*—Western's Wind Ensemble, 8 p.m., RH. (227-7242)

## October

### Wednesday, October 1

Training Tuesday—"Grants: Finding the Funder." (227-2388 or [www.wcu.edu/hr/training](http://www.wcu.edu/hr/training))

## Thursday, October 2

Lady Catamount volleyball—vs. UNC Greensboro, Southern Conference match, 7 p.m., RRAC. (227-7338)

Concert—Mystic Vibrations: "Eastern Reggae Sensations," authentic Reggae band, 9 p.m., Club Illusions, UC. \$ (227-7206)

## Thursday, October 2– Sunday, October 5

Theatre—The University Players present *The Battle of Shallowford* by Ed Simpson, 7:30 p.m., Thursday through Saturday; 2 p.m., weekend matinees, Hoey Auditorium. \$ (227-7491)

## Friday, October 3

Orientation—new faculty, 3:15–5 p.m., Hospitality Suite, RRAC. (227-7495)

Lady Catamount volleyball—vs. Elon, Southern Conference match, 7 p.m., RRAC. (227-7338)

## Saturday, October 4

Lady Catamount soccer—vs. Coastal Carolina, noon, SSF. (227-7338)

Catamount football—vs. Furman, Southern Conference game, Hall of Fame Weekend, 6 p.m., WS/BW. (227-7338)

## ★★★ Now Showing ★★★

### Exhibitions:

#### Mountain Heritage Center

*Migration of the Scotch-Irish People* (permanent exhibition).  
*North Carolina Women Making History*, traveling exhibit that presents the trials, triumphs, and changing roles of women in the colony and the state during the past 400 years. Through December 1.  
*The Face of Appalachia: Portraits from the Mountain Farm*. Through December 2.  
*The People of the Land*. Through May 2004.

#### Belk Gallery

*Rosemary Beck, Paintings 1965–2001*. Through October 17.

#### Chelsea Gallery

*News*. Through September 30.

**Key:** \$ - Admission fee; HA - Hoey Auditorium; HFR - H.F. Robinson Administration Building; HS/CF - Hennon Stadium/Childress Field; MHC - Mountain Heritage Center; NSA - Natural Sciences Auditorium; RRAC - Ramsey Regional Activity Center; RH - Recital Hall, Coulter Building; BB - Belk Building; UC - A.K. Hinds University Center; UOC - University Outreach Center; WS/BW - Whitmire Stadium/Bob Waters Field; SSF - Schrader Soccer Field.

### Submissions:

Send news items and calendar notices to *WCU Calendar*, 1601 Ramsey Center, Western Carolina University, Cullowhee, North Carolina 28723 or e-mail to [Reporter@email.wcu.edu](mailto:Reporter@email.wcu.edu).

Submit items for the university's online calendar at least one week prior to the event.

## Mountain Heritage, from page 1

Heritage Day—the Department of Facilities Management and the University Police, Wood said. Both those offices have been named winners of the Eva Adcock Award, an honor given each year to recognize an individual or group of individuals who have given longtime and significant service to Mountain Heritage Day.

Over the years, many committee members have come and gone, and the

list of people who have contributed to Mountain Heritage Day numbers in the hundreds Wood said. The committee is one that “most people are glad to serve on.”

Although involvement with the festival requires a big commitment for committee members, most of whom add those tasks to their regular work duties, the big payoff for them comes on festival day—when they get to walk across the grounds and realize that they helped make it happen, Wood said.

“It’s easy to describe Mountain Heritage Day in a few words. It’s an old-fashioned festival with traditional music, dance, food and contests, handmade crafts, and demonstrations of Appalachian folks arts, but the essence of Mountain Heritage Day is not so easy to define,” Wood said.

“There’s a special feeling to Mountain Heritage Day, and you can find out what it’s like when you walk around and see all those people smiling,” he said. “The spirit of the festival makes it feel like a big family reunion—and everyone is invited. We feel like Mountain Heritage Day is one of the best things the university does for the region.”

Wood is in phased retirement from the faculty of Western’s Department of Engineering Technology, and this is his last

year as festival chairman. Tyler Blethen, professor of history and director of the Mountain Heritage Center, and Zeta Smith, assistant to the vice chancellor and special events coordinator in the Office of Advancement and External Affairs, will take over festival leadership next year as co-chairs.

Blethen said Mountain Heritage Day has been “extraordinarily fortunate” to have had Wood’s leadership for eight years, and before him, 18 years of wise guidance by former Western staff member Doug Davis.

“It’s a cliché, but it’s the truth—Don and Doug have created some extremely big shoes to fill,” Blethen said. “We want the festival to continue to be a showcase for traditional Appalachian culture and a day of fun that families will look forward to—and look back on—with fondness. We owe that to all the people who have helped Mountain Heritage Day thrive over the years and to the people of Western North Carolina.”

This year’s festival will be held near the University Outreach Center.

Visit [www.mountainheritageday.com](http://www.mountainheritageday.com).

### MHD Committee Members

Don Wood, chairman	Dianne Lynch
Deloise Anderson	Gene McAbee
Tyler Blethen	Suzanne McDowell
Clara Bryson	John Newman
Lila Buchanan	Mike Nichols
Ronnie Bumgardner	Cindy Nicholson
Lou Anne Carden	Norman Parris
Bill Clarke	Anne Rogers
Andy DeGrove	Jim Rowell
Bill Dillard	Zeta Smith
Debbie Higdon	Julie Spiro
Randall Holcombe	Judy Tallent
Jim Irvin	Roger Turk
Peter Koch	Leila Tvedt
Edna Lamberson	Danny Williamson

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