COMING ATTRACTION

Members of Western’s board of trustees don hard hats and brave dust and dirt for an up-close update on several major campus construction projects, including a $16.8 million student recreation center expected to be ready for use in fall semester. The 73,000-square-foot facility adjacent to Reid Gymnasium features a three-lane, eighth-of-a-mile indoor track and a dramatic 45-foot-tall climbing wall that ascends inside a glass dome that provides natural light throughout the interior of the building.
CSI CULLOWHEE
Forget TV. The Real Forensics Experts Are Teaching and Learning at WCU
On the cover, forensic anthropology students (from left) Jerel Jackson, Brandin Dawson and Mindy Pickens.

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Season-Opening Celebration of Baseball Proves a Big Hit
Dana M. Sally, former dean of university libraries at the University of West Florida in Pensacola, joined the campus community during spring semester as Western’s first dean of library services, a role that finds him overseeing a transforming facility in which browsers and bytes are becoming as important as binderies and books.

“Hunter Library must provide the WCU community with a comprehensive information system that acts as a one-stop-shopping gateway for the discovery and delivery of information of all types and formats,” said Sally. “The system will need both strong physical and virtual components capable of reaching those we support, no matter where they are. This is especially important as technology continues to offer new modes of instructional and content delivery, and as faculty and students find new ways to interact and conduct research and learning activities.”

Sally comes to WCU with more than 30 years of experience in managing and leading academic libraries, including 10 years as associate director of the library at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. He is filling a position previously held by Bil Stahl, who had been serving as Western’s head librarian and chief information officer since March 2005. Through a reorganization announced by Provost Kyle Carter, Stahl is now the university’s full-time CIO, and the head librarian position has been elevated to dean status.

During his career, Sally has worked at libraries at Virginia Tech, West Virginia University, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, California University of Pennsylvania and Juniata College in Huntingdon, Pa. He also has taught philosophy classes at N.C. State University, served as a Russian translator for the U.S. Army Security Agency, and taught high school science in Pennsylvania. As chief administrative and academic officer for Hunter Library, Sally supervises 19 tenure-track faculty members and 30 staff and oversees an annual budget of $4 million and a collection of approximately 750,000 print and electronic volumes.
Western-Based Forest Initiative Is Growing in Its Role of Promoting Sustainability

By RANDALL HOLCOMBE

For many years, Western North Carolina has been a center of debate over management of the region’s public forestland, with advocates of preservation often pushing for a hands-off, “let nature takes its course” policy, while those with interests in timber extraction lobby for less preservation and more logging. But now, from out of the dense mountain forests, comes another viewpoint – one that stresses sustainable forest practices above all other goals while at the same time challenging the viewpoint that the healthiest forest is one untouched by humankind.

A Western-based effort now known as the Western Carolina Forest Sustainability Initiative began in 2001 to provide forest stewardship services, said Peter Bates, the WCU associate professor and registered forester who oversees the initiative. From its beginning, the WCFSI did not engage in the debate over the management of the more than 1 million acres of national forestland in WNC, but instead it focused on providing “objective information” to private landowners who needed it, with sustainability as the primary goal.

From 2002 through 2006, the WCFSI assisted in the management of more than 15,000 acres of forested land under diverse ownership in WNC, and that work included providing biophysical assessments of watersheds owned by the towns of Sylva, Waynesville and Bryson City. Those watersheds eventually were placed under conservation easements after Bates and his students conducted timber inventories.

The services provided to the three towns did not go unnoticed. In late 2007, Bates was honored by the Southwestern Commission regional council of governments and the board of the Land Trust for the Little Tennessee for the assistance he and his students provided to those towns’ leaders as they deliberated the long-term management of the watersheds.

The professional staff of the WCFSI now includes Bates, who earned his doctoral degree in forestry at the University of Minnesota, and Rob Lamb, a forestry technician and registered forester who earned a master’s degree in forestry at Yale University. Most of the fieldwork is done by student interns from WCU’s natural resource management and conservation program, Bates said.

This spring, a move is under way to transform the WCFSI into a nonprofit corporation, the Forest Stewardship Institute, which will allow WCU to provide WNC landowners with an even greater range of services, Bates said. The goal will continue to be to provide reliable information for landowners to use in deciding how they want to manage their lands.

One issue landowners must face is whether restoring forestland to its “natural” condition is advisable, Bates said. “The introduction of exotic pests and global climate change are two issues by themselves that raise questions regarding both the possibility and desirability of re-creating past forest conditions,” he said. “Many components of historic forests are gone forever, and natural processes alone may not prepare our forests for the myriad of unknown stresses that may affect them in the future.”
Former U.S. Air Force engineer Patrick Gardner has joined Western’s Center for Rapid Product Realization as principal scientist. Gardner, the first person to hold this new position, is responsible for identifying outside funding and developing new technology, then matching technologies with businesses best able to capitalize on any related commercial potential.

Housed in the Kimmel School of Construction Management and Technology, the Rapid Center is focused on education and applied research. The center’s mission is to serve Western North Carolina by forming effective partnerships to grow the region’s economy, assisting in generating value-creating jobs and improving quality of life for the region’s residents.

Gardner’s background made him a natural for the position, said Phillip Sanger, center director. “His knowledge of technology, as well as his ability to deal with the business end of a new product, make him the perfect fit for this job,” Sanger said. “He brings to the job a wealth of experience.”

One of Gardner’s first projects is refining a process that uses three-dimensional technology to scan feet and create models to make orthopedic inserts for people with podiatric trouble, such as individuals who have diabetes or foot and ankle problems. While orthotics are not new, the method is. Gardner is conducting the project with a $10,000 grant from the Carolina Photonics Consortium, and will attempt to transition the process to podiatry and orthopedic clinics. “It’s not a huge project but I think it has some huge potential for the region,” he said.

Gardner holds doctoral and master’s degrees in electrical engineering from the Air Force Institute of Technology, with an emphasis on physics. He retired from the Air Force as a lieutenant colonel after 25 years of active-duty service, where his responsibilities included research, development, acquisition and testing of aircraft control systems, munitions guidance, electro-optical sensors, and chemical, biological, radiological and explosives detectors.

Prior to coming to WCU, he was chief scientist for detection and countermeasures for General Dynamics Corp. There he directed a team of chemists, biologists and engineers in the development of chemical, biological and explosive systems, as well as infrared threat detection and counterexplosives.

Gardner has past school affiliations including teaching and advising at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, as well as serving on the Optoelectronics Center board of advisers; serving on the Central Piedmont Community College advisory board for engineering technology; teaching at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, Saint Leo University and the Air Force Institute of Technology; and advising the University of Dayton’s graduate program in laser radar technology. Widely published, he founded the Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and Explosives Sensing Conference, part of the annual International Society of Optical Engineering Defense and Security Symposium, which draws more than 6,000 attendees.
FROM COSMOLOGY TO CULLOWHEE

Scientist, Entrepreneur and Educator Arrives on Campus to Focus on His “First Love”

By RANDALL HOLCOMBE

As an astrophysicist, Robert K. “Bob” McMahan Jr. has explored the foundations of the universe, but Cullowhee became the center of his world in late March when he began his duties as dean of Western’s Kimmel School of Construction Management and Technology.

In coming to Western from his previous position as the North Carolina governor’s senior adviser for science and technology, McMahan is returning to his “first love” – education. During his career, he has worked in science, entrepreneurship, government and education, but he says, “My heart always has been in the university.”

Raised in Winter Park, Fla., McMahan (he pronounces it “McMan”) earned bachelor’s degrees in physics and art history from Duke University and a doctoral degree in physics from Dartmouth University, and completed postdoctoral studies at the Harvard University/Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory Center for Astrophysics in 1989. There, he participated in cosmological research that led to the discovery of the “bubble” structure of the universe and the “Great Wall,” the largest known structure in the universe, both of which are now foundational elements of modern dark matter theory. While still in postdoctoral studies, he started his own advanced technologies company, McMahan Research Laboratories, with a computer and printer on his kitchen table.

McMahan moved his business and family from Boston to North Carolina’s Research Triangle in 1989. His business was acquired by GretagMacbeth in 2000, and he became that company’s vice president of worldwide engineering and research and development. After working with a private venture capital organization funded by the CIA, where he was responsible for developing a technology investment strategy for the intelligence community, McMahan began work as adviser to the governor and head of the state Board of Science and Technology in 2003. He also has served as research professor of physics and astronomy at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and as an adjunct professor at N.C. State University.

McMahan says that over the years he became aware of “really special” things going on at Western during visits to campus and through his association with Chancellor John W. Bardo, a member of the state Board of Science and Technology.

McMahan said he is “honored and excited” about leading the Kimmel School, and hopes he can leverage his varied career experiences to have a positive impact. “What is happening at Western today embodies some of the best thinking in the nation on how to focus a university on both academic excellence and meaningful and effective regional economic engagement,” he said.
Now in Its 25th Year, Western’s Annual Landscaping Conference Finds the Use of Native Plants Spreading like Kudzu

By JONI KENYON

The year was 1984, and although the environmental movement in America had been under way for around a quarter of a century, not many people knew much about the benefits of using native plants. That year, Joseph Collins, senior botanist with the Tennessee Valley Authority, developed the idea for a one-time “plant utilization” meeting and secured a small $7,000 TVA grant for that purpose. When Collins pitched his idea to WCU biology professors Jim Horton and Dan Pittillo (both now retired), the university’s “Native Plants in the Landscape” conference was born.

Since then, the conference has fostered an army of backyard naturalists, landscape professionals and plant scientists dedicated to protecting this country’s botanical heritage. As the university holds its 25th annual conference this July, almost 10,000 individuals have participated, many returning year after year. “We wanted to reach everyone possible who might be interested in landscaping with Southeastern native plants,” Collins said. “I specifically did not want to restrict the conference to nurserymen, landscape designers, highway departments, garden clubs, or any other segment of the population.”

Now known simply as “The Cullowhee Conference,” the event promotes the growth and propagation of plants endemic to their environment, as opposed to exotic plants, which tend to invade into natural areas to disrupt and displace native plants. Native plants are better for the environment in that they provide food and shelter for wildlife, control soil erosion and “do not require the chemicals, such as fertilizers and insecticides or fungicides, that many exotic plants require,” said Ed McDowell, a retired aerospace executive who serves as conference director.
Using native plants also decreases the amount of water needed for landscape maintenance, “an important quality during the drought conditions that the Southeast has been experiencing,” McDowell said. As a result of the conference, the use of exotic plants has declined in the region, he said.

Conference founders originally chose WCU because of the biodiversity of its mountain location and the university’s ability to keep costs down for participants, most of whom choose to make use of the residence halls and cafeterias. “WCU is an ideal location, being near the Blue Ridge Mountains and other excellent fieldtrip sites,” McDowell said. “The campus also has great facilities and an ideal climate for July in the Southeast.”

Conference-goers love coming to Western, Collins said. “Back in 1985, we proposed to hold the second conference elsewhere so some of the people from the Deep South would not need to travel as far,” he said. “There was much discussion against our doing this until finally a man from Cleveland, Miss., said, ‘Well, ya’ll can hold the meeting where you want, but we are coming to Cullowhee.’ That was the last time we mentioned holding the Cullowhee Conference somewhere else.”

The conference has since become a model for growth throughout the country, having sprouted three satellite conferences: the Native Plants in the Landscape Conference at Millersville University in Millersville, Pa.; the Central South Native Plant Conference at the Birmingham Botanical Garden in Alabama; and the Lone Star Native Plant Conference at Austin State University in Texas. The Cullowhee Conference supplied seed money and steering committee assistance for the satellite conferences, which follow “the Cullowhee format” of field trips, workshops and general sessions.

“The impact has been much greater than I anticipated,” Collins said. “I stated numerous times, even as early as the first conference, that we would be successful when we could go into a local nursery and buy native plants; not because they are native, but because they are excellent choices for the intended use. That was not possible 25 years ago. It is easy now.”

The 25th annual Cullowhee Conference will be held July 23-26. For more information, visit http://nativeplantconference.wcu.edu or contact the Division of Educational Outreach at (828) 227-7397 or toll-free at (800) 928-4968.
CSI
CRIME SCENE INVESTIGATION
CULLOWHEE
It’s a rather unassuming patch of mountain property, this roughly 3,600-square-foot slab of rocky terrain located somewhere in the 344-acre Millennial Initiative tract across N.C. Highway 107 from Western’s main campus. The research to take place here, however, will be anything but ordinary, and is expected to prove vitally important to law enforcement agencies. Behind a chain-link fence topped with sharp coils of barbed wire, with a 10-foot-tall wooden privacy fence to obscure activities inside from the view of any passers-by who happen to stumble across the site, one of the university’s newest learning laboratories is nearly ready for business.

It is Western’s forensic research station, designed to help scientists determine how the unique geography and climate of the Western North Carolina mountains influence postmortem decay. It will provide significant learning opportunities for students and give scientists a better understanding of the complex process of how bodies deteriorate into skeletons, said John Williams, a board-certified forensic anthropologist hired by Western in 2003 to develop the new academic program. “Through the study of skeletal remains, forensic anthropologists can help law enforcement officials determine the time of a person’s death, which is a vital step in determining the cause of death,” said Williams. “The ultimate goal is to help law enforcement officers in the region work toward the speedy solution of homicides or accidental death investigations.”

Many people refer to this research facility as Western’s “body farm.” Williams and Cheryl Johnston, assistant professor of forensic anthropology, are not among them, as they find the term disrespectful to those who have left their bodies to science. That’s why Johnston came up with the
“Dr. Williams and his laboratory have been extremely helpful to us – not just in this case, but any time we have needed assistance in identifying possible remains. They’ve always dropped whatever they were doing to help us in our investigations. Dr. Williams and his team greatly speed up the process, and they help eliminate a lot of false leads. It is a valuable asset to the law enforcement community to have this facility and this expertise here in Western North Carolina.”

–Lt. Brian Leopard, Macon County Sheriff’s Office.
Forensic anthropologist Kathy Reichs, the best-selling author whose mystery novels inspired the hit Fox television series “Bones,” will visit Western in the fall as part of the 2008-09 Chancellor Speaker Series. A faculty member in the anthropology and sociology department at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, Reichs is scheduled to be on campus Tuesday, Nov. 18, for an informal discussion open only to WCU students, followed by an evening public presentation. Both events are set for the main performance hall of WCU’s Fine and Performing Arts Center.

The Chancellor’s Speaker Series is designed to bring significant national and international leaders to campus to discuss major issues of the day, and to provide Western students with an opportunity to interact with some of the people who shape and influence the world. Past speakers have included former U.S. Sen. Bob Dole; presidential candidate John Edwards; former U.S. Surgeon General M. Joycelyn Elders; Nobel Peace Prize-winning Polish leader Lech Walesa; actor Danny Glover; Gen. Richard B. Myers, former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; and Cynthia Cooper, the whistleblower who exposed corporate fraud at WorldCom. For information, call (828) 227-2479.

Continued from page 11

less-sensationalistic moniker FOREST – which stands for Forensic Osteology Research Station. And in this case, it is difficult to see the FOREST for the trees. University officials purposely selected an unobtrusive site off the beaten path, out of sight of curious onlookers, and away from neighbors who might object to the thought of human bodies decomposing in woods out back.

Although the research station is out of sight, it is definitely not out of mind. As only the second facility of its type in the entire nation, and patterned after the University of Tennessee center forever labeled “the body farm” by novelist Patricia Cornwell in a 1994 book, Western’s forensic research station has received substantial national attention since plans to locate it on university property west of campus were announced in 2006. Law enforcement groups and cadaver-dog trainers have come calling from as far away as New Zealand.

North Carolina’s chief medical examiner says Western’s facility will add to the forensic data gained from the work of Dr. Bill Bass in Knoxville. “Dr. Bass’ Tennessee facility has contributed to our understanding of this important process and aided death investigators around the country in more accurately estimating postmortem interval in human remains,” said Dr. John D. Butts. “Studies out of a Western Carolina facility could help to determine whether there are any substantial differences in these processes in other geographic areas, which could prove helpful in the training of death investigators in this important area.”

Western received in April its first donation of a body for study at the facility, and, at press time, final site preparations – including installation of a weather station and security system with video camera – were under way. No more than six bodies will be on the site at any one time.

Continued on page 14

Professor Cheryl Johnston (left, center) and WCU students (above) comb the forest looking for clues in a high-profile murder case.

Inspiration for TV’s “Bones” to Visit Campus in November

Forensic anthropologist Kathy Reichs, the best-selling author whose mystery novels inspired the hit Fox television series “Bones,” will visit Western in the fall as part of the 2008-09 Chancellor Speaker Series. A faculty member in the anthropology and sociology department at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, Reichs is scheduled to be on campus Tuesday, Nov. 18, for an informal discussion open only to WCU students, followed by an evening public presentation. Both events are set for the main performance hall of WCU’s Fine and Performing Arts Center.

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Students have been poring over every inch of the interior of the facility, collecting baseline environmental data about soil composition and vegetation types. “A decomposing body will alter the environment and the environment will alter the body,” said Johnston. “Understanding what happens to the surrounding environment as a body decomposes can be important to solving a crime. This environmental aspect is what will make our research unique.” Johnston recently presented some of WCU’s advance work on the facility to the American Academy of Forensic Sciences, and several researchers are now interested in opening similar facilities and sharing data about their findings so that scientists have better knowledge about regional environmental variables that affect the pace of decomposition.

Research at the new station will be conducted in conjunction with the university’s existing Western Carolina Human Identification Laboratory, a fully equipped, 1,100-square-foot facility dedicated to the recovery, storage and analysis of human remains. The laboratory has provided assistance to law enforcement officers in several cases. The most recent – and most high-profile – example came in February when faculty and students worked alongside authorities in the search for clues in a remote area of national forestland where the body of a hiker missing since October was discovered. Under the guidance of Williams and Johnston, the squad combed through a rugged section of Nantahala National Forest in Macon County to help investigators properly identify skeletal remains.

Officials said they are happy to have such expertise so close at hand. Western’s campus in Cullowhee is located about 40 miles from the scene of the investigation. “Dr. Williams and his laboratory have been extremely helpful to us – not just in this case, but any time we have needed assistance in identifying possible remains,” said Lt. Brian Leopard of the Macon County Sheriff’s Office. “They’ve always dropped whatever they were doing to help us in our investigations. Dr. Williams and his team greatly speed up the process, and they help eliminate a lot of false leads. It is a valuable asset to the law enforcement community to have this facility and this expertise here in Western North Carolina.”

Western’s forensic anthropology program also has provided hands-on training for law enforcement officers from across the state in the discovery and recovery of buried bodies. For the training, Williams and Johnston hide plastic replicas of human bones on university property, then guide officers in the proper way to unearth skeletal remains without damaging them – and potentially harming evidence.
Although popular TV shows and books have increased overall awareness about forensic science, it is important to realize that they are fictional entertainment, Wilson said. “The real world of a forensic scientist is no more like ‘CSI’ or ‘Bones’ than the real world of a doctor is like ‘Grey’s Anatomy’ or the real world of an attorney is like ‘Boston Legal.’ Forensic scientists do our most important work in the laboratory and in the courtroom,” he said. “Fully understanding the analytical results obtained in the laboratory and how to properly interpret them in a particular context is the foundation of forensic science.”
Municipal Bonds

Western Alumni are Helping Lead the Charge in Sylva’s Downtown Renaissance

By JILL INGRAM

Photo of downtown Sylva at night by Matthew Turlington '98, owner of Penumbra gallery. www.PenumbraGallery.com
With a miles-wide gap between downtown and Western’s campus, Sylva isn’t a college town in the traditional sense. For many years, the town held little attraction for most WCU students. Livingston Kelley ’73, owner of Livingston’s Photo on Main Street, recalls driving through downtown Sylva back in his student days – without stopping. “At night, there wasn’t much open,” Kelley recalled. “There wasn’t any nightlife.”

What a difference 40 years makes. These days, downtown Sylva hops with shops, restaurants, music and art. “Downtown is definitely on the upswing,” said Lauren Calvert ’92, who opened In Your Ear Music Emporium on Main Street in 1994. “There are more pedestrians downtown on Fridays and Saturdays than I have ever seen.”

Kelley and Calvert are two of a growing number of former Western students who have decided to remain in the area post-graduation, establishing businesses and dedicating themselves to developing a vibrant downtown the whole community can enjoy.

Sylva’s transformation was not accidental. In the mid-1990s, town officials used federal grants to give downtown Sylva a makeover that included brick sidewalks, wooden benches, planters, buried electric cables and decorative light poles and trashcans. “The intent was to make downtown more pleasing to local people, but also to bring the university students downtown,” said Julie Spiro ’98, executive director of the Jackson County Chamber of Commerce, with its offices in downtown’s historic Hooper House. “We knew they needed a place to call home.”

But in order to attract students, downtown needed merchants with an entrepreneurial spirit and the savvy to offer goods and services that students wanted. “In Your Ear Music was key,” Spiro said. “Lauren has a great, funky music store and Western students like that.”

Stores such as Blackrock Outdoor Company, City Lights Bookstore and Motion Makers Bicycles followed, and so did the students. “Downtown’s nice because you can get out of the car, walk around to four or five stores and just spend an afternoon,” said Drew Cook ’07 of Winston-Salem, who said that he and his friends especially enjoyed downtown’s restaurants when he was a student. Since graduating, Cook has remained in Sylva, continuing to work at Blackrock Outdoor Company, his employer while in school.

Western grads are investing in things in downtown Sylva that appeal to more than just students. Greg McPherson MFA ’06, an adjunct art instructor with Western’s School of Art and Design, recently purchased the four-floor, historic Carolina Hotel on Main Street with his wife, Jenny. The couple, who live in nearby Webster, plan to renovate the hotel.
for mixed residential and commercial use. "I'm interested in people moving back into urban settings," McPherson said. "I find the downtown charming, and the building is an architectural jewel."

Both Matthew Turlington '98 and Sheryl Rudd '81 worked their way back to Sylva years after graduating from Western. Turlington, a fine art photographer, is a native North Carolinian who lived in the Piedmont and on the coast before arriving in Jackson County. After earning a master's degree at the University of Colorado, Turlington set up his gallery, Penumbra, in a Main Street storefront. The Western North Carolina landscape and Sylva itself appear throughout Turlington's dreamy images. The artist is helping nurture the local art scene by taking a lead role in Sylva's Art After Dark events, held the first Friday of each month from May through December. "In all actuality, this was a difficult place for me to do what I do," Turlington said. "But it was the place I most wanted to be."

Rudd spent more than a decade after graduation living in Raleigh and Florida, attending graduate school and working as a massage therapist. She always wanted to return to the area, and in 1994 she finally did. Now a full-time "beer wench," Rudd and husband Dieter Kuhn opened Heinzelmännchen Brewery on Mill Street in April 2004. Heinzelmännchen (it rhymes with "attention") brews six beers, seasonal ales and alcohol-free birch beer and root beer. With Sylva's on-premise sale of beer and wine approved in the 1990s, Heinzelmännchen is available in a number of local and regional establishments. However, the brewery does not advertise in any format directed at educational institutions, and Rudd has participated in university efforts to promote responsible alcohol consumption among students.

Ties between the university and downtown establishments are both formal and informal. In 1995, in an effort to strengthen relations, Chancellor John Bardo moved the school's Homecoming parade from campus back to downtown Sylva, its site in the 1950s and 1960s. The Jackson County Chamber of Commerce has contributed $20,000 to WCU for student scholarships. The chamber also organizes its annual Stonewall Challenge Golf Tournament with the WCU athletics department, and the route of the chamber's annual Tour de Tuck bicycle ride includes downtown Sylva and Western's campus.

Other downtown connections with the school grow organically. In Your Ear sometimes works with students looking for class materials, and Calvert has been a guest speaker in Western classes. Kelley, who like Calvert owns...
his building, often sells supplies to university art students, and over the years has done considerable photography and framing work for the athletics department. “They’ve been very supportive of what I have to offer,” said Kelley, originally from Buncombe County, who started his business in 1971.

Several years ago, for an Oktoberfest event aboard the Great Smoky Mountains Railroad, Rudd contacted her friend Bradley Ulrich, a professor of music at Western, to ask if he might put together an “oompah” band. Ulrich complied, and since then Cats on Tap, comprising mostly Western faculty and graduate students playing traditional German music, has grown to 20 members. “It’s been a lot of fun,” Ulrich said. “It’s become a social thing.”

For the second year, Heinzelmännchen will host an Oktoberfest with Five Fifty Three Restaurant on Main Street. This year’s event, Oct. 23-25, will serve as a fundraiser for the music department’s scholarship fund. The fundraising effort is vital because it helps Western’s music department “remain competitive with other schools in the state,” Ulrich said.

Chris Cooper, assistant professor of political science and public affairs, says Sylva’s character even helps the school land top job applicants. “When we bring prospective faculty to campus, they uniformly comment that they like downtown Sylva,” said Cooper, who lives with his family two blocks from downtown. Quaint and cute, the town “helps us attract high-quality faculty.”

Sarah Graham, executive director of the Downtown Sylva Association, said there’s no question that all of Sylva, and especially its downtown, feels Western’s presence. “Obviously, Cullowhee, Jackson County and these mountains hold a magnetism for some,” Graham said. “The trick is to learn how to make a living so you can stay.”

Mary Kelley ’01, Livingston Kelley’s daughter and a native of Jackson County, spent years after graduation living and working in other small towns such as Crested Butte, Colo., and Jackson, Wyo. In 2007, she accepted a position with the Jackson County Chamber of Commerce and now lives downtown, a livelier place than she remembers as a child. “Growing up, you don’t think there’s anything to do here,” Mary Kelley said. “Now, a lot of people are moving back. They realize there’s something for them here.”
Heather Kasey ’04 didn’t set out to launch an annual event at WCU that would raise thousands of dollars for the American Cancer Society and unite students, faculty and staff from all organizations. It just happened after Kasey organized a pizza fundraiser in the parking lot of Rose’s discount store in Sylva in honor of her mother, who died of cancer when Kasey was 5 years old. “Every pizza place in Sylva and Cullowhee donated to the event, and it showed me what a caring community this is,” said Kasey, who was a sophomore at WCU at the time. She sent the American Cancer Society a check for about $500 and, in return, received gratitude and an invitation: Would she be interested in launching a Relay For Life at Western? Sure, said Kasey, who soon realized the job entailed much more than passing out brochures (as she originally thought). The ACS’s Relay For Life is an overnight celebration of life and cancer survivorship held in communities around the world. Teams raise money and then come together at their community’s Relay For Life event to take turns walking, jogging or running laps all night as a reminder that cancer never sleeps. The first lap is for cancer survivors – a victory lap. When night falls, a luminaria ceremony to honor friends and loved ones who have cancer is held. Dollars raised support cancer research, early detection and prevention education, advocacy and patient services.

To test interest in a student-run Relay For Life at WCU, Kasey organized a six-hour mini-event, which attracted hundreds of participants and raised about $3,000. “The rain stopped just long enough for our luminaria ceremony,” said Kasey. Then, on April 11, 2003, under her leadership, the inaugural Relay For Life at WCU was held on campus, and the event is now in its fifth year. “Knowing that Relay For Life is still going at Western just shows how something takes on a life of its own when it is not about one person or one group, but about a community coming together,” said Kasey, who is starting a life-coaching service.

Last year, the campus event raised a record $21,000, and participation keeps growing. Lisa Duff ’91, senior community manager with ACS, meets with and assists WCU student organizers throughout the year. Featured cancer survivors include students such as Stephanie Harwood, a freshman from Franklin who shared her story at the 2008 campus kickoff. Past honorary event chairs from the staff and faculty include cancer survivors Kent Briggs ’79 MAEd ’81, former football
coach, and Bob Buckner ’67, director of athletic bands. The honorary chair for 2008 is Newton Smith, associate chief information officer.

When Smith was undergoing radiation treatments several years ago in Atlanta for prostate cancer, the ACS’s Hope Lodge gave him a temporary home and place to continue teaching WCU classes online. “I’m deeply indebted to the American Cancer Society, which gave me the feeling that I wasn’t alone and that there was hope. Like everyone who hears those words, ‘You have cancer,’ I panicked at first,” said Smith.

Attracting more participation and financial support from faculty, staff and alumni has been one of the goals set by WCU student Kathleen Cummins, the event chair for the second consecutive year. The time and leadership Cummins has given to Relay For Life at WCU and her other volunteer efforts were honored in 2007 when she won the North Carolina Campus Compact Community Impact Student Award. A senior from Clemmons majoring in nursing, Cummins said what inspired her to chair the Relay For Life committee was thinking about what the event represents – a community committed to the greater good. “I find proof of that when strangers come together and participate in this cause,” she said.

Plus, the hundreds of students who do participate have fun along the way. When the campus event fell on Friday the 13th in 2007, the planning committee selected the theme “Freaky Friday” and encouraged teams to incorporate the theme in their signage and décor. This year’s theme was “Lights! Camera! Cure!” One team arranged to incorporate a dunking booth into the design of a campsite inspired by the movie “Jaws.” There have been entertainment contests and live music, thanks to assistance from the student-run entertainment and activity planning organization Last Minute Productions. The event truly connects the campus community, said Duff. “It’s one of the only times every group and organization on campus is invited to come together for one night, all night, for the same cause,” she said. To support Relay For Life at WCU, check out www.events.cancer.org/rflwcu.

“The American Cancer Society gave me the feeling that I wasn’t alone and that there was hope.”
– Newton Smith
NEW WAVE

Western’s Educational Doctoral Program Is Preparing the Next Generation of Community College Leaders

By LEILA TVEDT

The resignation last fall of K. Ray Bailey MAEd ’70 from Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College after 41 years, including 17 years as its president, is evidence of a trend within the N.C. Community College System – nearly half of its senior leadership is nearing retirement. Even as the seasoned veterans are getting ready to leave, students in Western’s new doctoral program in educational leadership are preparing to move up and fill the gap.

“This level of preparation for community college leadership is unique in the nation. There are only five other programs like ours,” said Kevin Pennington, associate professor of community college and higher education.

“There’s a huge need for these folks. What we find is that, nationwide, community college administrators are aging out at the same time. We’re helping to place people in the pipeline to fill the need that’s coming.”

Waynesville resident Laura Leatherwood ’93 MS ’96 EdD ’07, among Western’s first EdD graduating class last spring, said earning her doctoral degree was a major factor in her promotion to her current position as director of community and economic development at Haywood Community College.

There, Leatherwood is responsible for outreach to business and industry throughout Haywood County, continuing education and workforce development. Leatherwood, who wrote her dissertation on “Gender and Career Paths to the North Carolina Community College Presidency,” also serves on a systemwide task force for leadership development. “If we don’t grow our own leaders, there won’t be enough out there to fill positions when people retire,” she said.

Leatherwood’s classmate Joseph Fox MBA ’88 EdD ’07 of Asheville wrote his dissertation on “The Effect of Economic Development of Entrepreneurship at Haywood Community College,” and found that more than 90 percent of the people who had taken entrepreneurship courses at HCC either had started or planned to start a business within one to three years. He also found that people with training as entrepreneurs established businesses that succeeded for at least three years, compared with a much higher failure rate among people without that specialized training. Fox says his research helped to prepare him for his current position as teacher of business and entrepreneurship at A-B Tech and for his promotion to department chair in less than a year. His findings prompted A-B Tech to start its own two-year entrepreneurship program with close ties to Western.

Also with Leatherwood and Fox in WCU’s educational leadership class were Debbie Beck ’91 MPA ’97 EdD ’07, director of student health services at the University of South Carolina; Laura Byrd MAEd ’03 EdD ’07, director of youth development programming at N.C. State University; and Monica Shuford Boyd MAEd ’03 EdD ’07, who worked in student services at Western Piedmont Community College in Morganton.

Joseph Fox MBA ’88 EdD ’07 (above) and Laura Leatherwood ’93 MS ’96 EdD ’07 are among the new crop of community college leaders.
ROADS SCHOLAR

A Photograph from the Kosovo Countryside Leads to a Study of Human Rights Training

By BESSIE DIETRICH GOGGI N '06

Research conducted by Kevin Dowling EdS ’02 EdD ’07 for his doctoral dissertation at Western may help train future human rights investigators and already is drawing the attention of international organizations. Dowling decided to write his dissertation, “A Suggested Curriculum for the Training of Human Rights Investigators,” after viewing a photograph in a major news magazine. The image was of a road near Kosovo just after the forcible removal of a group of traveling war refugees.

“The scene was of an empty road with a multitude of personal possessions strewn everywhere,” Dowling said. “To see these items, which were precious enough to be carried by those fleeing for their lives, now abandoned in heaps, led me to consider how my work in education could be used to reduce crimes against humanity. It was then that the idea of training individuals as human rights investigators, and giving a voice to those silenced by these types of crimes, began to emerge.”

Dowling has presented his research to the United States Institute of Peace and the Helsinki Commission, and has met with agents of the FBI in Quantico, Va., to discuss the bureau’s early efforts to form evidence response teams and implications related to his research.

“Kevin's study seeks to answer the question of which areas human rights activists consider important for the successful training of human rights investigators, enabling him to develop a suggested curriculum for training,” said Anna McFadden, WCU professor of educational leadership and foundations. McFadden, director of the Coulter Faculty Center, advised Dowling during the development of his dissertation.

Dowling was a master police officer in Wilmington for five years, and he went on to become a full-time instructor and course coordinator for the North Carolina Justice Academy. He then served as an instructional systems specialist for the United States Secret Service before becoming a special agent for the Environmental Protection Agency’s Office of Inspector General in the Washington field office. He joined the Federal Reserve System as a senior protection analyst in July 2007, where he exercises oversight responsibility for the training of the system’s federal law enforcement officers.

“While I am glad that others in the field are interested in the results of my dissertation, I will not be fully satisfied until I am able to find an agency to adopt my training program and make it operational,” said Dowling. “When the first class graduates, I will be truly happy with the results of my research.”

Kevin Dowling EdS ’02 EdD ’07 looks over a federal law enforcement training site.
Kristi Roswech of Asheville always dreamed of being a nurse, but she changed her major and graduated from Clemson University in 1988 with a degree in activity therapy. Then Roswech went to work in a state psychiatric hospital and in drug and alcohol rehabilitation in Atlanta. Now she is back in Asheville and back in school, pursuing her dream of a career in nursing.

Roswech is among the first class of students in Western’s accelerated nursing program, which started last May. Designed for adults who already have earned degrees in other fields, the high-speed program covers in just 15 months what traditional nursing classes cover in 24.

“The program is the same as the traditional curriculum, with the same quality outcomes in a compressed time frame,” said Shelia Chapman, director of WCU’s pre-licensure program track. “It’s doable because the class size is so small and students are highly qualified and motivated to succeed. Students don’t have part-time jobs, so they can focus on their studies.”

Roswech called the program intense, but worth it. Studying for her graduate degree as a family nurse practitioner, she said the hardest part is balancing classroom studies, clinicals at Mission Hospitals, four or five hours of homework, and family responsibilities.

Classmate Clint Owens agreed, saying, “It is not for the faint of heart.” Owens, who grew up in Florida, said his undergraduate degree in psychology and studies in Boston put him on track for a graduate degree in history, but the death of his grandparents brought him to Sylva. “I had time to reflect on what I want to do that I could be proud of, and I had some exposure to nursing through my grandmother’s experience with Hospice. That’s how I connected the dots to find accelerated studies in nursing,” he said. “I would not have come back for a traditional program. Getting done sooner is an advantage.” Owen plans to keep going for a doctorate in nursing with a focus on research, global health and health disparities.

Jed Godfrey, of Asheville, earned his bachelor’s degree in cell and molecular biology from UNC-Asheville one day and entered Western’s new accelerated nursing program the next. Godfrey will finish in August and plans to work in a cardiovascular intensive care unit before returning to Western for training as a certified nurse anesthetist. He said working with older, non-traditional students is inspiring. “I’m amazed at the cohort I’m working with,” he said. “Everyone has a phenomenal background and incredible work habits. There’s a level of maturity that has helped us bond and avoid issues we might have had in a younger class.”

The program selected the best students among a field of 50 highly qualified applicants for the first cohort, said director Chapman. “We are very proud of this class. They will bring life skills, business savvy and street smarts to their new careers. I believe students like these will change the face of nursing.”
As a registered nurse and volunteer with the Red Cross, Mary Lehmann, 68, of Hendersonville had her bags packed and was ready to leave home and help out during the disaster of raging wildfires in California last fall. Then Lehman got a call to stand down. She would have gone gladly, she said, in spite of friends’ concern about the effects of poor air quality from wind-blown ashes and debris. “If it was intended, I would have been watched over and protected,” she said.

That same sense of purpose and protection from a higher power has gotten Lehmann through many of the challenges of her life. She led a long search for quality care for a stepdaughter with special needs that brought her family to Hendersonville, cared for her husband who died more than three years ago, and gave two weeks of service at a call center for storm victims when Hurricane Rita hit Texas after Katrina devastated New Orleans. Now Lehmann directs her efforts toward letting people know about a medical service called palliative care.

Lehmann, who is originally from Massachusetts and has worked as a nurse in North Carolina and several other states, recently earned a certificate in gerontology from Western. For her final project in her online class on “Dying and Palliative Care,” Lehmann designed a survey to find out if people know about palliative care, what it covers, where it is offered and who can get it.

The short answer to all of those questions is no. Fifty-three percent of respondents said they had never heard of palliative care, and 78 percent said they don’t know what it covers. And that’s too bad, Lehmann said, because so many people could be helped if they knew more about it. “I think it’s a wonderful program. Palliative care is considered to be a medical specialty to reduce disease symptoms of any person at any age with a serious, chronic illness, at any stage of their treatment,” she said.

It is different from hospice care, which is designed to help patients at the end of life. In palliative care, the goal is to prevent and relieve suffering, and to improve the quality of life. That focus has gained ground over the past 20 years. Today in the United States, 55 percent of the hospitals with more than 100 beds offer a palliative care program, as do nearly one-fifth of the community hospitals, according to the Center for Advanced Palliative Care. In North Carolina, those services are offered in several cities, including Asheville, Charlotte, Durham, Hendersonville, Raleigh and Winston-Salem.

Lehmann’s initial goal was to collect 30 responses for her survey. She received 100, and now is presenting her results to various groups in the community as she continues to promote awareness of palliative care.
GIVING NOTICE

Faculty and Staff Support for the University’s Fundraising Campaign Tops the Half-Million-Dollar Mark

By TERESA KILLIAN

When Chancellor John W. Bardo announced Western’s comprehensive $40 million fundraising campaign last year, he talked about the need for additional funding to enhance programs and scholarships. That message resonated with faculty and staff who see those needs firsthand, and it has inspired them to give or pledge more than a half-million dollars to 81 initiatives as part of The Campaign for Western.

Many employees are supporting scholarships or programs related to the areas where they work. Hollye Moss, assistant professor of management, was thinking about students such as Dante Hill, a senior paying his own way through school, when she increased her contribution to scholarships for business students. Every member of the University Police Department, from veterans with years of experience to new hires, contributed to the campaign, fueling a fund that could help the department purchase safety equipment beyond what the budget allows. Peg Connolly, director of the recreational therapy degree program, supported the campus Recreational Therapy Association, which hosts workshops and carries out service-learning projects, such as “senior proms” for area nursing centers.

Other staff and faculty members see the campaign as an opportunity to honor someone who touched their lives. Jacque Jacobs, head of the educational leadership and foundations department, made a gift in honor of her husband, the late John Franklyn Jacobs, a pioneer in special education. Her gift will support students studying learning disabilities and special education. Pat Brown, dean of educational outreach, made a gift to a scholarship fund in memory of Malcolm J. Loughlin ’79, associate dean of distance and continuing education. Brown remembers telling Loughlin about the scholarship fund a few weeks before he lost his battle with cancer. “He was quite taken,” Brown said. “He cried and said, ‘You know, you don’t have to name it after me.’” She told him the scholarship was a way to remember his contributions to the university and everything he stood for, and she said it has – the first recipient was Cindy Lovelace, a distance education student who wants to be a teacher and had battled a brain tumor.

For other WCU employees, the campaign is creating opportunities to give to areas where they see needs. Scott Higgins, dean of the Graduate School and Research, and Jim Costa, director of Highlands Biological Station, wanted to help more WCU students afford to conduct research at the station, and laid the groundwork for a Highlands Biodiversity Scholarship. The first recipient, Anna Vandenbergh, a senior majoring in environmental science, joined 10 other students from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill at the station last fall. “It was a great field-oriented experience, where we went outside nearly every day, rain or shine,” said Vandenbergh. “I got to thoroughly study different aspects of this area’s natural history as well as learn to identify native flora and fauna.” Provost Kyle R. Carter and wife Sarah said they learned so much from international travel that they directed their campaign gift to study abroad scholarships. “Through study abroad, our students discover there are common values and beliefs that bind humanity regardless of culture,” said Kyle Carter.

An area that has attracted broad support is the Staff Forum Scholarship Fund, an effort to help family of staff members afford to attend WCU. “We have worked together to make so many improvements to WCU, and I didn’t want the opportunity to be a Western student to be out of reach financially for our sons and daughters,” said Tom Frazier ’79, University Print Shop manager. That’s one reason grounds crew worker Cale Wilson contributed. “Attending college is something I wasn’t able to do, and to be able to support a scholarship that could help my daughter or someone like her go to college feels good,” said Wilson. The first scholarship was awarded last fall to sophomore Jer-Mayne White, daughter of Angela Smith, WCU technology support analyst. “I have wanted to work as a forensic anthropologist since seventh grade when I saw a National Geographic special about the body farm in Tennessee,” said White. “I am excited to get to pursue that dream in Cullowhee, which has always been my home away from home.”

Marty Ramsey ’85, alumni affairs director, supported several areas through his gifts, including the Alumni Association Scholarship, which benefits Western students who have financial need and close family ties to Catamount alumni. The first recipient was Amanda Roach ’07, the daughter of Judy Davis Roach ’73 and Leon Roach ’73 MAEd ’77. The scholarship helped her continue her studies after a family medical emergency caused financial strain.

Helping Western employees set up their gifts has been particularly rewarding and inspiring for Brett Woods, campus campaign director. “The faculty and staff in our community here at Western are giving to the areas that mean the most to them, but all of our gifts reflect how much we care about Western and how committed we are to creating extraordinary opportunities for students inside and outside the classroom,” said Woods, who not only increased his personal contribution to the Loyalty Fund but also established an estate gift to support Western’s Speech and Hearing Center and scholarships for communication disorders students. “I invite others to join us through gifts to The Campaign for Western. If there is not a scholarship or a fund to support a specific area of interest, we’ll start one. Every gift counts.”

Clockwise from top: Gifts from Provost Kyle Carter and wife Sarah will help students study abroad, which Liz Goettee ’06 (pictured) did in New Zealand; Jer-Mayne White, daughter of WCU employee Angela Smith, is the first recipient of the Staff Forum Scholarship; print shop manager Tom Frazier ’79, pictured with his son Patrick Frazier ’07, gives to the Staff Forum Scholarship to help children of employees afford to attend WCU; as does grounds crew worker Cale Wilson.
The game of golf can feature an albatross, a birdie, a condor, an eagle and an ostrich. At Western, the golf program now also has a pair of angels. They are two very private people who have promised to give $500,000 from their estate to the golf program to help student-athletes of the future, said Catamount Golf Coach Gorham Bradley ’04. The couple gave their gift with only one string attached – they want to remain anonymous.

“They are excited about their involvement with our program and with the opportunity to help in the development of young people,” said Bradley. “Their gift recognizes the hard work that has gone into developing the golf program at Western and the strides we have made in preparing our players for life after college. It gives me a great sense of pride to know that our program will be funded into the future.”

The estate gift grew out of a longtime relationship between Bradley and the people of the Sapphire Valley community in Jackson County. “My relationship with the country club began when I started working there as a golf service attendant during my freshman year at Western. Gradually, I worked my way up the ladder to an assistant golf professional,” Bradley said. Now he encourages his students to take the same path, polishing their game while they learn the work habits and social skills they will need in order to be successful after graduation.

As a result, Western golfers are visible in the Sapphire Valley community. “Club members see our students taking the initiative to work on weekends while in school, as well as being college athletes,” Bradley said “They respect the drive and dedication our players have. Many of the club members have become genuine friends to us.”

Friends who are interested in giving to Western, publicly or privately, can begin a new endowment with as little as $10,000 or give to an existing fund, said Steve White ’67, director of the Cats “W” Club. Pooled with funds from other University of North Carolina system campuses and managed by a professional investment firm, Western’s endowment returns an average of 8 to 10 percent annually, and generates enough interest to support a number of scholarships. People who plan to give through their estates enjoy the satisfaction of knowing their generosity will help students of the future, and their heirs will face reduced estate taxes, White said.

TEE PARTY
Estate Gift from an Anonymous Couple Will Benefit the Men’s Golf Program
By LEILA TVEDT

A 2007 championship produces grins for golf team members (from left, front) Caleb Marsh, Ricky Stout, Benjy Davey, (from left, back) Coach Gorham Bradley ’04, Dustin Furnari, Matt Cook and Andres Cuenca.
A former executive at one of the nation’s largest investor-owned energy companies is now using his expertise to help energize new ideas for business ventures in Western North Carolina, thanks to gifts to Western from retired Greensboro businessman Wesley R. Elingburg ’78. The university has combined contributions from Elingburg totaling $250,000 with a dollar-for-dollar match through a program initiated by the General Assembly to encourage private support of public institutions of higher education. The combination created the $500,000 Wesley R. Elingburg Distinguished Professorship in Business Innovation.

Appointed to the professorship is Louis E. Buck Jr., who arrives in Cullowhee from Consolidated Edison in New York. In addition to teaching in the College of Business, Buck directs WCU’s Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation, which focuses on issues of innovation, new venture creation and growth, commercialization and technology transfer. He brings to the job more than 25 years of experience in significant leadership positions in corporate finance, accounting and strategic planning. Former vice president of the N.C. Electric Membership Corporation, he has taught at the University of Texas, University of Dallas and Texas A&M University, and is a retired U.S. Navy captain.

Much of Buck’s work will focus on helping stem the tide of jobs lost when large manufacturing companies relocate overseas. The Small Business Administration reports that small businesses are responsible for between 60 and 80 percent of all new jobs created during the past decade—a percentage Buck says is even higher in WNC. “Entrepreneurs in new and existing businesses have the nimbleness to respond very rapidly to emerging markets and changes in existing market conditions, which is why they are so critical to continued economic growth in this region,” he said. “The entrepreneurship program provides creative individuals who have good ideas for a new business or innovative products with the skills to have a far better probability of success.”

That can-do spirit is just what Elingburg had in mind when he provided funds to establish the professorship in the fall of 2006. “I can tell Louis is extremely enthused about the opportunity to be at Western,” said Elingburg, who retired after 25 years with Laboratory Corporation of America and is now co-owner of the Greensboro Grasshoppers baseball team. “With his background and expertise, he will be an invaluable resource for the region. In Louis, here’s somebody who has been through a lot in his professional life. It’s not just textbook or theory, it’s real life. That will open up a lot of students’ minds and lots of opportunities for the region.”

Buck said the continued ability of Western to serve the region depends upon contributions like those from Elingburg. “Without their commitment and generosity, it would be very difficult to carry out the activities required to enable the university to reach out and become engaged with communities and businesses,” he said. “People like Wesley Elingburg make a far greater difference than they will ever know when they give something back to the university.”
WCU athletics
Players from six decades were among the 250 people who gathered for the inaugural Celebration of Catamount Baseball to honor players and coaches who laid the foundation and helped build WCU baseball into the Southern Conference’s premier program over the past 30 years. The sold-out preseason event, which served as the “first pitch” for the 2008 WCU baseball season, was held at the Crest Center in Asheville.

Among those attending the banquet were 30 or more who played for coaches Jim Gudger and Ron Blackburn in the 1950s and ‘60s, when Western competed in the North State Conference, Carolinas Conference and NAIA. That many or more in attendance were part of the Bill Haywood era that encompassed the 1969 through 1981 seasons, which saw WCU enter the Southern Conference in 1977 and win the school’s first-ever conference championship in ‘81.

Haywood and his successor, Jack Leggett, were honored special guests and were presented jerseys with the numbers they wore as WCU coaches. Leggett led the Catamounts to five conference championships and NCAA regional tournaments in his nine seasons before leaving in 1991 for Clemson.

The three former WCU players following Leggett at the head of Catamount baseball – Keith LeClair ’89, Rodney Hennon ’93 and Todd Raleigh ’91 MAEd ’94 – also were recognized for their roles in adding to the school’s rich tradition as they combined to win 325 games, claim five more conference tournament championships and make six additional NCAA appearances. WCU has won 11 regular season SoCon titles and nine tournament championships – the most by any current Southern Conference member – and made 11 trips to NCAA regional tournaments.

Numerous WCU greats were in attendance, including Wayne Tolleson ’78, Jerry Reed ’77, Phillip Grundy, Ken Morgan ’64 MAEd ’70, Alex Tolbert ’97, Martin Barrow ’99
Although former Catamount baseball standout Matt Raleigh ’92 is the 16th person to serve as skipper of the Carolina Mudcats, he is the first in franchise history to play for, coach and manage the minor league squad.

Raleigh, who spent the past two seasons out of the pro game, is now in his 15th season in baseball. He was signed as a mid-season free agent in 1999, joining the Mudcats as a third baseman. Four years later, Raleigh was the hitting coach serving on the Mudcats’ championship squad highlighted by future Major Leaguers Miguel Cabrera and Adrian Gonzalez. A 2004 WCU Athletics Hall of Fame inductee, Raleigh is one of the Catamounts’ top hitters, and also ranks as one of the best players ever to play in the Southern Conference. He was a four-time All-SoCon selection from 1989 through 1992, earning his first three awards at third base and final honor as a shortstop. He helped the Jack Leggett-led 1989 squad win both the regular season and conference tournament championships, while also powering first-year head coach Keith LeClair ’89 to the 1992 regular season and tournament crowns.

Raleigh continues to rank inside the top 10 on 19 of Western Carolina’s single-season records and 13 of the school’s career records, including placing atop the charts for games played (242), runs scored (251), home runs (68), total bases (580) and walks drawn (182). In the SoCon record book, Raleigh is on the top 10 lists in five categories while also ranking among the top five in seven records, including first in career home runs, runs scored and games played. He also is one of only six SoCon players ever to amass 300 or more career hits.

The Mudcats, part of the Florida Marlins’ organization, play at Five County Stadium in Zebulon, just outside of Raleigh (not named after Matt, by the way), and are a member of the 123-year old Southern League. Ironically, Raleigh finds himself coaching some away-games just a few miles from his brother – and former Catamount teammate – Todd Raleigh ’91 MAEd ’94, who took the head coaching job at the University of Tennessee last summer. The Mudcats play in the same league as the Tennessee Smokies of Kodak, Tenn., approximately 20 minutes from Knoxville.
Western Carolina’s men’s and women’s track and field squads captured overall titles at the 2008 Southern Conference Indoor Track and Field Championships at Clemson University Indoor Track Facility in March, and coach Danny Williamson ’84 MAEd ’86 added to his growing collection of honors as he was tabbed “coach of the year” in both the men’s and women’s competitions.

The men’s team title came down to the final event – the 4x400 relay – to decide the winner, with WCU edging The Citadel to win the relay and the championship, scoring a total of 263 points for the meet. The Catamounts slipped past Appalachian State by 7.5 points as the Mountaineers scored 256.50 to finish second. On the women’s side, Western outlasted Appalachian State in the relay to claim the SoCon crown by a tally of 172 to 167.

All told, Western had 14 combined victories in events during the meet, and 34 athletes who earned All-Southern Conference honors. The men had six winners and 21 All-SoCon selections, while the women added eight victories to go along with 13 on the All-SoCon team. Senior Kerrie Savery was named outstanding track performer and most outstanding performer in the women’s events, while Manteo Mitchell collected outstanding track performer and most outstanding performer honors in the men’s events. Drew Tucker was tapped as male freshman of the year.

Track and field athletes (above, from left) Chris Gaillard, a sophomore from Horse Shoe, and Nicole Lopez, a senior from Orlando, Fla., and (below) Kerrie Savery of Orlando, Fla., celebrate their SoCon championships.
Three Catamount tennis players teamed up off the court recently to compete together as young entrepreneurs taking part in the university’s WISE Challenge. Trish Hanson, Susanna Sjokvist and Mariona Trilla Jane tapped their own interests to create a new service that combines athletics and international travel.

Calling their service Athlete’s Exchange, they developed the idea of facilitating European travel for young people by tailoring their sporting interests with stops at premier facilities. The service also would match foreign athletes, specifically tennis players, to U.S. scholarships. “Focus on the customer, that’s the most important thing,” said Jane, a senior majoring in international business.

The WISE Challenge, or Western’s Innovative Student Enterprise Challenge, began in early September by inviting teams of undergraduate students to develop original ideas – along with business plans – for new products, technologies or services. Western faculty and staff served as mentors to the participants.

“The contest is meant to be really fun and to get students excited about their ideas,” said Jonathan Snover, a chemistry professor and director of the science and entrepreneurship master’s degree program. “At the same time, having a good idea is not enough,” said Snover, also a competition mentor. “It has to translate into business.”

Athlete’s Exchange, one of nine teams to advance to the competition’s final round, earned third prize of $1,000. Students participating in the contest, which boasted $5,000 in prize money, came from across disciplines, with many studying entrepreneurship, business, engineering or the sciences. Each team received $400 to help pay for expenses such as producing a prototype, travel or hiring outside counsel. The final judging used criteria including innovation or uniqueness, relevance to the intended market and the team’s depth of knowledge. Competition rules required teamwork because that is a reality in the business world, Snover said.

The tennis team members are especially suited to international pursuits, with three of the team’s seven players from other countries. Jane, who speaks Spanish, English, Catalan, and some Italian and French, arrived at Western two years ago from her native Barcelona, Spain. Sjokvist, of Gustafs, Sweden, and Hanson, an American from Alpharetta, Ga., have known each other four years, since they both arrived at Western as freshmen.

Head coach Jan Stubbs, who like many coaches recruits internationally, said her U.S. players make a special effort to help their foreign team members adjust to life at Western. “They try to make them feel welcome, take them around and show them the ropes,” Stubbs said.

Jane, Sjokvist and Hanson are so excited about their idea that they’ve taken it on the road. In early March, when the team spent several days on the coast playing matches, “they worked on the project while we were in Hilton Head,” Stubbs said.
With the arrival of spring, the daydreams of children turn to long summer days filled with bright sunshine and warmer weather. Freedom from homework, science projects and book reports is within sight, and parents are beginning to plan how to fill those upcoming school-free days with wholesome activities. The friendly folks of Catamount athletics are offering an excellent activity to add to the summer agenda – a Western sports camp.

Whether the game is baseball, basketball, football, soccer or volleyball, WCU has a summer sports camp for nearly all young athletes. The camps are designed to provide an opportunity for participants to develop independence and self-confidence in a safe college environment while developing skills in a favorite sport. Western’s summer sports camps are open to youth of various ages and skills who want to be active, have fun, meet new friends, and take their game to the next level.

Campers learn from the WCU sports camp staff – a collection of NCAA Division I Catamount coaches and players. Under their direction, participants work to improve athletically while developing good sportsmanship and having fun. “My daughter Megan really enjoyed going to softball camp earlier this year,” said Stan Arrington of Waynesville, who coaches the Smokey Mountain Sting softball team. “Being able to learn from players at the college level will help her immensely. Just being in that kind of atmosphere has given her a taste of what it might be like at the next level.” Another parent agreed. “My daughter Rachel took part in Western’s summer soccer camp not long after we moved back to Western North Carolina,” said Audrey Sanders ’88, who lives near Lake Junaluska. “The camp helped her make the transformation from her previous team in Georgia because she got to hang out with her cousins and make new friends while sharpening her skills. She’s now a starter on her middle school team.”

Participants may choose from a selection of residential and daily commuter camps. Commuter campers travel to and from campus each day. Resident campers live at WCU during camp week, staying in residence halls and eating meals in the all-you-can-eat cafeteria. All participants receive instruction at the same facilities where the Catamounts train. As schedules permit, participants also have access to recreational areas on campus. Training facilities, residence and dining halls, and recreation areas are located within walking distance of each other.

WCU sports camps have proven to be a popular summer pastime, and many camps fill up fast. Interested campers are encouraged to register as soon as possible. For a complete listing of the 2008 camps, individual camp details, and registration instructions, visit our Web site.

www.catamountsports.com/camps/wcar-camps.html
Six hours on the Sangha River in what was essentially a motorized dugout canoe carried David Morgan ‘92 past a few fishing boats and huts to a research station deep in a Central African tropical forest for the first time in 1997. It was part of a journey that began when Morgan was a 5-year-old dreaming of studying chimpanzees in the wild. “I really got the feeling I was heading into a forest in one of the most remote places in the world, and it was exactly where I wanted to be – as far away from people as possible in order to get to see the natural, real behavior of chimpanzees,” said Morgan.

A decade later, the Florida native and his fiancee, Crickette Sanz, co-direct the Goualougo Triangle Chimpanzee Project and live in the Republic of Congo, where their study of more than 400 chimpanzees has attracted worldwide attention. Discover magazine ranked findings from their research among the top 100 scientific breakthroughs of 2003. They have made observations such as how chimpanzees use “tools” – transforming large sticks into “fishing wands” to use at termite mounds.

On typical workdays, Morgan and Sanz navigate through the forest along elephant trails to study chimpanzees including Teresa, a rare mother of three males who they named for Mother Teresa, and Maya, a tolerant female who is a talented termite fisher named for Maya Angelou. They carry binoculars, books in which to record what they see, video cameras and a GPS device that automatically records their longitude and latitude. “We know where we’ve been every 30 seconds for the past eight years,” said Morgan. They get back to their camp about 5:30 p.m., bathe in a stream, and eat a dinner that includes almost no fresh food – typically sardines, smoked fish or beans. They recently found a way to add bread to the menu. Then, they enter data or check e-mail, now that they have Internet access.

What really gets Morgan and Sanz up at 4:15 a.m. every day, though, is their determination to help protect the diminishing population of apes from poaching, logging and development. Morgan and Sanz began a two-year study this fall to examine the specific effects of logging on known chimp communities. They will monitor such changes as the size of the population or how chimps nest. The information could guide their logging recommendations, which they continue to develop and present. Morgan and Sanz serve on the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources’ Primate Specialist Group and were founding members of the A.P.E.S. database initiative.

Morgan, a researcher with the Wildlife Conservation Society and Lincoln Park Zoo, also was part of the successful effort to annex the pristine forests of the Goualougo Triangle to the Nouabale-Ndoki National Park, which will help conserve habitat for chimpanzees. “You hear about all the problems in the environment, but there are a lot of people working with the problems trying to make a difference. The annexation of Goualougo Triangle is one of those success stories, and I believe there will be many more,” said Morgan.

He recently returned to Cullowhee to receive the WCU Alumni Association’s Academic and Professional Achievement Award and catch up with Hal Herzog, professor of psychology. When Morgan was a student at WCU, he helped Herzog with animal behavior research studies. Morgan said that was how he mastered the scientific process he still uses today. They stayed in touch after Morgan graduated, worked with Busch Gardens in Tampa Bay, Fla., and wrote letter after letter to researchers worldwide seeking a chance to study chimpanzees in the wild. Herzog said he is proud that Western had some part in helping Morgan, who now holds a doctorate from Cambridge University, prepare for the fieldwork and advocacy that he is involved in today.

“Dave has carved out a life in one of the most remote places in the world, and his work has had and continues to have an international impact,” said Herzog. “He has a quality that I think is more important than any other in a student – the dream and determination to make a difference in whatever he is committed to.”
An innovative traveling class offered by Western three years ago, "On the Road to Civil Rights," is still reverberating in the life of Burke County teacher Don Hurley MAEd '06. Hurley used his experiences from that nine-day immersion in the history of the civil rights movement to create a workshop in which he helps other educators learn how to better teach the era to their students.

Hurley, who teaches American history and civics at East Burke High School, was working on his master's degree in social science education when he signed up for the May 2005 "mini-mester" course. His son, Joe Hurley MA '06, also was working on a master's degree at Western, and father and son decided to take the course together.

The course fit well into both their academic programs, but Don Hurley had other motivations. "I was in high school during the high-intensity era of the civil rights movement, and the opportunity to study and visit the related sites was an opportunity too compelling to ignore," he said.

The course was led by Elizabeth McRae MA '96 and Robert Ferguson '01 MA '04 of the history department faculty and Tanisha Jenkins, director of multicultural affairs. They and 19 students visited civil rights landmarks across the South, including the Martin Luther King Jr. Center and Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta; the 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Ala.; and the National Civil Rights Museum in Memphis.

The senior Hurley said he remembers standing across from Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery, Ala., where King was the minister when Rosa Parks defied Southern conventions by refusing to give up her seat on a city bus, launching a decade of nonviolent demonstrations to achieve civil rights for African-Americans.

“As I looked at the church, I commented to a few fellow students about how small the church was, physically, and how oddly and also uniquely situated it was,” he said. “One block up the street to our left sat the sprawling Alabama state capital building, and a half-block down the street to our right stood the Alabama Supreme Court building. Yet, this small church and ordinary citizens, dwarfed by both the size and power of these other institutions, successfully challenged and changed not only Montgomery, but Alabama and all of America forever.”

Overall, the course/tour was “emotional, overwhelming and an unforgettable high point of my academic endeavors,” Hurley said.

After Hurley returned to his Burke County classroom, he found that his experiences had an immediate positive impact on his ability to teach the civil rights movement to students. He realized that other teachers could benefit from the information, images and experiences he collected on the trip, and the result was a civil rights teaching workshop, which he now has presented to two groups – Burke County elementary and middle school teachers and a gathering of teachers at a meeting of the Northwest Regional Educational Service Alliance.
You will never know what a humbling experience it is to receive this award, and through it to become a part of the story of this magnificent and extraordinary university.

The story of this university is in many ways as old as the scriptures. It is a story of faith. It is a story of promise. It is a story of confidence – faith in the people of this region, and in their untapped potential to excel; a promise that the ideas imparted here will be ideas of quality; and the confidence that this region, composed of the wonderful people of North Carolina, will take that faith and promise to build lives of consequence.

More than 10 years ago, a new man walked on this campus, with a vision of the promise of this university. And even though he is Greek, he did something that would make you think he was Irish. You see, the Irish have a saying that if you want to climb over a wall, throw your hat over it – at least you’ll be committed. Well, more than 10 years ago, under the leadership of Chancellor John Bardo, this university threw its hat over the wall of excellence.

Many have followed – which makes this award so meaningful. The board of trustees followed. The faculty followed. The staff followed. And I have had the honor of serving at their side.

My predecessor, Phillip Walker ’71, in receiving this award, spoke about, as he termed it, “life in the Cullowhee Valley.” And I have thought about that, and pondered this place that has made such a difference in my life, and the lives of many – lives that have been a part of the Cullowhee Valley, and thought about just where that place is.

I will tell you. The Cullowhee Valley is a place that gives lift to our ambitions and provides the gravity for our ethics. The Cullowhee Valley is a place that gives new definition to the possible, and changes the chances of the probable. The Cullowhee Valley is a place where dreams are encouraged and lives of consequence are born. The Cullowhee Valley is a place where memories are left, and hopes are taken.

More than 75 years ago, Albert Einstein wrote, “At least once a day allow yourself the freedom to think and dream for yourself.” You can find that here in the Cullowhee Valley.

There was an author from ages past, from not so far away, who wrote that “You can’t go home again.” He was wrong.

He was wrong because, you see, the Cullowhee Valley, in a real sense is not a place. It’s here. It’s a place you can always come home to.

Let me tell you where it is. It lies at the intersection of faith, knowledge and ambition, and it is lighted by hope. It is good to be home again.

An attorney with the firm Long, Parker, Warren & Jones, Warren has been a member of the board of trustees since 2003, including two terms as its chair. He currently serves as vice chair to the board.
For Van Wilson ’83 MPA ’91, education is a calling more than a career. “I thought I was going to medical school,” said Wilson, who graduated from Western with a bachelor’s degree in chemistry. After a summer evaluation program between his junior and senior years, he realized medicine wasn’t his path.

“I decided I could serve a greater good by being in higher education,” Wilson said. In January, he began a new position as associate vice president of academic and student services for the North Carolina Community College System. Wilson’s work in this role includes meeting with political representatives involved with education policy, developing initiatives for student success and attainment, and supporting the vice president of academic and student services.

Wilson has worked in higher education for more than two decades, beginning in 1984 as Western’s director of academic services. He spent eight years at Western, advancing to the position of director of retention services and earning his master’s degree in public affairs.

From 1992 until 2002, Wilson served as director of admissions at Winston-Salem State University. Until January 2008, he was vice president for student services at Forsyth Technical Community College. He also is three years into a doctoral program in educational leadership at Appalachian State University.

For his dissertation project, Wilson plans to analyze the effectiveness of Project CARE, a WCU program designed to increase the retention rate of African-American students that Wilson helped launch while an employee at Western. “There might be pieces of that project that would benefit other schools looking for tools for student success,” he said.

More than 100 students participate in Project CARE, and the program has helped the university improve the retention rate of its African-American students, said Tanisha L. Jenkins, director of WCU’s multicultural affairs. Wilson’s analysis will “aid in recommendations for new initiatives to help support campus retention efforts for students of color and the student body as a whole,” Jenkins said.

In his career, Wilson said he has discovered that lifelong learning and professional development serve more than one purpose. They help educators stay on top of their quick-changing field, and they fulfill the educator’s obligation to lead by example. “I have to teach my daughters and my two young nephews that they have to take advantage of educational opportunities,” said Wilson, who is married with two teenage daughters.

Wilson said he believes in a new, barrier-free model of education that allows students to have seamless transitions between degrees. For instance, the Earn and Learn Online program allows high school students to earn community college credits at no cost. “You can graduate from high school with an associate degree almost simultaneously,” Wilson said. “It’s a brilliant concept.”
What began as an ordinary assignment for an English composition course more than five years ago has now blossomed into a full-fledged book for Ed Gonzalez ’03. As a student at Western in the summer of 2002, Gonzalez thought he was just completing the final course requirement, a paper focusing on a “contemporary” subject, when he wrote about the United States’ longtime embargo of Cuba. A first-generation Cuban-American who grew up in a Spanish-speaking household in southern Florida, Gonzalez says he always has been vitally interested in the trade embargo imposed on Cuba in 1962.

In his research, Gonzalez found that most of the existing literature about the economic sanctions was limited to the political, sociological and financial effects of the embargo, and he decided to find out what other Cuban-Americans and Cuban exiles living in the U.S. thought about it. He sent an e-mail to about 15 people, who forwarded his survey on to others. Several hundred responses came back, and Gonzalez conducted in-depth interviews with five individuals. His instructor in the course, Elisabeth Aiken MA ’00, then a visiting instructor in Western’s English department, recommended he consider developing the project further – into articles or a book.

Gonzalez completed four chapters and shipped them to McFarland & Company Inc., publishers located in Jefferson. The publishers liked what they saw, and Gonzalez signed a contract to produce a book.

Gonzalez, who already held a nursing degree from a Florida college, graduated from WCU with a bachelor’s degree in biology in May 2003. He continued to refine his “labor of love” on a periodic basis while working at nursing jobs in Alaska, visiting his family back home in Cullowhee, and making progress toward his third degree – a master’s in chemistry at WCU.

Last October, Gonzalez began a new job as a flight nurse with a company that provides air ambulance service for 30 Alaskan villages spread over an area the size of Texas. He became operations manager for the company’s air ambulance division in January.

Gonzalez’s 182-page book, “Cuban Exiles on the Trade Embargo,” was released in December and includes a foreword by Aiken, who now teaches in Florida. The book is dedicated to Gonzalez’s maternal grandfather, who “lost a lot” as he fled Cuba when Castro came to power.

Gonzalez began his writing project in 2002 with the opinion that the American embargo had been a failure and had served only to punish innocent Cubans while entrenching Fidel Castro, the longtime Cuban dictator. Castro resigned his presidency in February and turned over political power to his brother, Raul, but Gonzalez said he sees no hope for changes in the relationship between the two countries.

“I think it would be very naïve for anyone to think that Fidel is not going to continue his iron-fisted grip on Cuba after 49 years,” he said. “The embargo will not change on the U.S. side as long as Fidel is alive.”
1957
George H. Stevens has retired after 38 years of working and consulting with Novartis Pharmaceuticals. Stevens spent many years working in the company's neuropsychiatry division. He lives with his wife, Jane Beddingfield, in Hendersonville.

1958
Gary Carden MA '65 played the part of Manard Potts – “a slightly insane and profoundly drunk fellow” – in a recent Highlands Community Players production of “The Raindrop Waltz,” a play Carden also wrote. The play is about an Appalachian family struggling with the complications of caring for its aging matriarch. Carden, a native of Sylva, has written numerous plays and works of fiction about the folklore of the region.

1960
Glenda Colleen Gambill recently wrote a children's book, “Ringo the Amazing Cat,” about a special cat with different colored eyes. Gambill, secretary of her class, also is a poet.

1963
Mel Gibson MAEd '67, a Hall of Famer from his basketball days at Western, participated in the N.C. Senior Olympics in Raleigh in October and won three medals in the 65-69 age bracket, including a gold in the standing long jump and silver in basketball and the running long jump.

1975
A national nursing association has named Brenda Stepp its 2007 educator of the year. Stepp is a nursing instructor at Catawba Valley Community College. The National Organization for Associate Degree Nursing gave her the award at a gathering in Las Vegas. A full-time instructor since 1989, Stepp has worked in the nursing profession for 30 years. She promotes hands-on study and developed a class that sends students to work for two weeks in Africa.

POINT OF EXPOSURE
Alums in the U.S. Public Health Service Guide
Student Interns toward Possible Careers
By BESSIE DIETRICH GOGGINS ’06

Two high-ranking officers in the United States Public Health Service who got their starts at Western recently returned to their alma mater to honor a group of environmental health students who may one day follow in their footsteps. Commanders Donald Williams ’89, Robert Knowles ’90 and Alan Parham ’91, who are among the 21 environmental health professionals making up an advisory council for the program, presented citations to WCU students for successfully completing internships with the agency. The students interned as active duty officers in the Commissioned Officer Student Training Extern Program, and upon graduation, can apply for a full-time, active-duty career with the Public Health Service.

Williams, currently stationed in Tucson, Ariz., works for the Indian Health Service, which is one of the 12 agencies within the USPHS. He provides traditional environmental health services to two tribes in the area and focuses on injury prevention. Parham and Knowles both are assigned to the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Control Registry at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta.

Reminiscing about Western’s influence in his career preparations, Williams said former professor Joe Beck was and remains a mentor and good friend. “The single best thing, among many, that Joe did for me was to introduce me to the Indian Health Service through the Commissioned Officer Student Training Extern Program, which enabled me to complete two internships and introduced me to the people and agency that I hope to remain with the rest of my career,” he said. Through their recent internships, current seniors Carla Catalan, Amy Jackson and Emylee Prevette now have a similar opportunity to step right into a USPHS career.

Williams also said he was surprised by how much the university had changed since his days as a student. “It was pretty amazing to come back to campus,” he said. “I especially liked the new art building and the pedestrian portion on lower campus. I lived in Cullowhee from 1973 to 1990 and saw much change in that time, but in the 17 years that I have been gone it seems to have kicked into a higher gear.”
The Rev. John Reid, a family counselor with the Baptist Children’s Homes in Franklin, recently received his license from the N.C. Board of Licensed Professional Counselors.

Doug Story, a member of the board of trustees from 1999 to 2003, has written and published a book, "The Blood of Soldiers Makes the General Great!: Preparing for the Business Wars to Come." According to Story, "The company that combines human contact and relationships with technology of today and tomorrow will be the company that becomes the next GM or Microsoft of the world." Story has had a 30-year career in business and in February graduated with a master’s of business administration from Loyola University in Chicago. He lives in Wisconsin with his wife, Joette.

Gus Gustafson recently published a book of short stories and tall tales called "Fish Tales and Other Stories." Characters include Rawhide, an old fisherman obsessed with catching trophy fish and winning tournaments. Gustafson is a fishing guide on Lake Norman who specializes in stripers fishing.

Jackson County educator Vangie Stephens won the school social worker of the year award for 2007-08 from the N.C. School Social Workers’ Association. Stephens is a social worker at Smokey Mountain Elementary School.

1982
Don Fisher, chief of police of Laurel Park for 14 years, recently completed a term as president of the North Carolina Association of Chiefs of Police. Fisher’s wife is Candy Fisher ’94, executive director of the Spring Arbors of Hendersonville assisted-living community.

Sharon Morrissey MAEd became president of Richmond Community College in Hamlet on Feb. 1. She is the second woman to hold the position. Morrissey grew up in rural Western North Carolina. While neither of her parents completed high school, Morrissey went on to earn a doctorate. “In many respects, I’ve come a long way from my upbringing, but that upbringing will always be a part of who I am,” Morrissey told the Laurinburg Exchange. “It’s one reason I’m in community college education. Community colleges provide such wonderful opportunities for people like me.”

Kelly Schwenk was named honor teacher for 2006-07 at Dolvin Elementary School in Alpharetta, Ga. Schwenk, who serves as the school’s department head for special education, lives in Norcross, Ga., with her husband, Brian.

Christopher Chesson has joined the accounting firm Rives & Associates LLP in Lexington. Chesson’s primary focus is in the fields of taxation, accounting, auditing and advisory services.

Maureen Campbell recently joined the New Hampshire Veterans Home in Tilton, N.H., as a certified therapeutic recreation specialist in the Life Enhancement Dementia Unit. Campbell works with residents with neurological conditions, chronic pain, head injuries, dementia and spinal cord injuries, and also provides general rehabilitation. “The LEDU is a state-of-the-art facility that promotes dignity and quality of life,” Campbell said. “Our interdisciplinary team shows love, humor and respect while caring for our veterans as if they were family.”

1990
Maureen Campbell recently joined the New Hampshire Veterans Home in Tilton, N.H., as a certified therapeutic recreation specialist in the Life Enhancement Dementia Unit. Campbell works with residents with neurological conditions, chronic pain, head injuries, dementia and spinal cord injuries, and also provides general rehabilitation. “The LEDU is a state-of-the-art facility that promotes dignity and quality of life,” Campbell said. “Our interdisciplinary team shows love, humor and respect while caring for our veterans as if they were family.”

1991
The McDowell Arts Council Association recently named Elizabeth R. Johnson MA its new executive director. Johnson, a weaver, was director of Western’s former Chelsea Gallery for 12 years. Her goal for MACA is to provide more classes and performances and establish a retail space offering local crafts for purchase.

Come Home to Cullowhee Purple & Gold Reunion

For Western alumni spanning the decades from the 1930s through the 1960s looking for an excuse for a mountain getaway this summer, the WCU Alumni Association has just the ticket. Back, by popular demand, it’s the third annual Purple and Gold Reunion weekends.

"Last year’s Purple and Gold Reunions brought approximately 400 alumni back to campus, back home to Cullowhee," said Marty Ramsey ’85, director of alumni affairs. "We expect this year’s reunions to be bigger and better than ever."

This year’s schedule:
June 6-7 – Alumni from the 1930s and 1940s
Honored Classes: 1938 and 1948
June 20-22 – Alumni from the 1950s
Honored Class: 1958
July 11-13 – Alumni from the 1960s
Honored Class: 1968

For more information or early-bird overnight accommodations ($60 per night) at the Madison Conference Center on campus, contact Ramsey toll-free at (877) 440-9990 or via e-mail at mramsey@wcu.edu.
WWII Exhibit Leads to Gifts for the Mountain Heritage Center

by JENNY JARAMILLO

Western’s Mountain Heritage Center has a new traveling exhibit, and it’s all thanks to Nancy Goodson ’48 of Charlotte, who gave her late husband’s World War II naval uniforms, other artifacts and a generous monetary donation to the museum this past summer after visiting campus for the Purple and Gold Reunion.

William Wilson “Pop” Goodson ’48 enrolled at WCU, then called Western Carolina Teachers College, in the early 1940s, but left after enlisting to serve his country in WWII. When he came home, he returned to Western and finished his degree, graduating on May 31, 1948, with a bachelor’s degree in mathematics and a minor in physical education. Nancy Goodson graduated that same day with a bachelor’s degree in physical education and a minor in community leadership.

Fast forward to the summer of 2007, when Nancy Goodson visited campus during the annual Purple and Gold Reunion, which is sponsored by the Alumni Association. She was in the MHC during her tour of campus when she passed a display titled “After the War,” showing the impact of WWII on Western North Carolina. After viewing it, she asked if the center would be interested in her husband’s naval uniforms. Pop passed away in 2002.

Museum staff members were happy to have a donation that was not only from Western North Carolina, but also from someone who graduated from Western and who provided a personal history of WCU during a time of war, said Scott Philyaw ’83, director of the MHC. Goodson donated not only several naval uniforms, but also medals, flight logs and photos. She then went one step further and provided $4,000 to the museum to set up the display as a traveling exhibit. “Mrs. Goodson’s generous donation not only allows us to preserve the history of WCU during WWII, but also lets us share this story throughout the region,” said Philyaw.

The Goodsons, who both were educators in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg schools, also have started an endowed scholarship fund for full-time undergraduate students majoring in education at WCU.

Jenny Jaramillo is a senior majoring in communication.
Monica Collier Henson has released her first novel, “Unwritten,” an action-adventure story about a female Navy flight instructor with a complicated life.

Ryan Fisher is the new technical director of the Halton Arena and James H. Barnhardt Student Activity Center on the campus of the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. Fisher lives in Kannapolis with his wife, Katrina Fisher ’95, and their daughter, Abigail.

Steve Heathery MBA is the new executive vice president of finance and operations for WestCare Health System of Sylva. From 2001-05, Heathery served as WestCare’s chief financial officer.

Kristin Marek is currently serving aboard the floating hospital Africa Mercy, which houses a crew of nearly 500 unpaid volunteers. Marek is serving a six-month term with Mercy Ships in Liberia. West Africa. Marek helps the floating hospital’s medical crew through its initial application and arrival process.

2000
Franci B, a children’s boutique in Gastonia, is the brainchild of Brooke Queen Martin, a marketing graduate who opened the store in 2006. Franci B offers name-brand clothing for boys and girls, and recently expanded into a Web-based store. “With thanks to numerous professors and the many wonderful things I learned, I was able to apply my education to the opening of my boutique,” Martin said.

2003
Army Spc. Joshua Ginn recently returned from a 15-month deployment in Samarra, Iraq. He serves with the Army’s 82nd Airborne Division, third brigade, 505th parachute infantry regiment.

Jenny Lytton, an English teacher at Pisgah High School, was named Haywood County Schools’ 2007-08 teacher of the year. “I always felt teaching was a calling, and I love my job,” Lytton said. “I enjoy it, even when it is most frustrating. It’s what I am supposed to do.”

2003
Katie Spear ’03 (above, right, with Martha Stewart and supervisor Christine Cook) recently was selected as one of seven finalists in the Big Idea Bake-Off, an opportunity for employees of Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia to share creative and original ideas for the company’s future. Spear and the other finalists appeared on “The Martha Stewart Show” on Jan. 31. Viewers’ votes helped Stewart and CEO Susan Lyne choose the winners. Spear is executive assistant to Christine Cook, a vice president of digital advertising with MSLO. Spear said her favorite parts of the job include “amazing food from the test kitchens” and e-mails from Martha Stewart announcing when apples from her orchard or eggs from her chickens are available for the taking.

2005
David Evans hopes to offer local residents more options in his new position as director of the Alleghany County Recreation Department. “My big goal is to expand recreational opportunities for the entire county, from young to old, from horseshoe tournaments to point-specific camps—football, baseball, basketball, golf and so on,” said Evans, who graduated with a degree in natural resources management.

Nancy Schwebke, who earned a degree in emergency management, entered a new position in February as administrative assistant on the staff of the Atlanta-Fulton County Emergency Management Agency and the Urban Area Security Initiative in Atlanta.

2006
Amy Kittle Lunsford is currently pursuing her master’s degree in library science at North Carolina State University. She and Elliot B. Lunsford ’06 MS ’07 married in 2007 and live in Arden.

Alumni Association to Set Sail with a New Travel Series this Fall
By JENNY JARAMILLO

Call it the Cat-a-maran Cruise. Western’s Alumni Association is ready to steam out of port for a new travel series, beginning with a whale-watching cruise scheduled to set sail Sept. 17-24 for Glacier Bay, Alaska.

“We are launching this travel series in response to repeated requests from WCU alumni and friends who have said they would like to be able to visit interesting places while visiting with classmates from their college days or friends they’ve made while attending sporting events,” said Marty Ramsey ’85, director of alumni affairs. “The travel series provides an opportunity to take a trip down memory lane while also taking a trip to places of historical and cultural significance with people who share a common affection for Western.”

Glacier Bay is in southeastern Alaska and is a protected national park that is home to several active glaciers. It’s where enormous walls of ice can be seen crashing into the sea as the weather changes and where, if the time is just right, tourists can see the aurora borealis, the “northern lights,” in the sky.

The cruise will depart from Vancouver, British Columbia, on the Carnival ship Spirit for a seven-night trip that will follow the Glacier Bay route, which is sailed only two times a year during the whale migration. The ship travels into the bay area, which is a sanctuary for whales and seals. Other excursions can be planned as the ship docks on different days, including shopping in the cities, trips to various wildlife and natural parks, and outdoor fun with kayaking, fishing and cycling.

Room accommodations (based on double occupancy) include inside cabins with no window at $630 per person, picture window cabins at $930 per person, and private balcony cabins at $1,030 per person. Port taxes and government fees are $374.10 and roundtrip flights from Atlanta to Vancouver are $863.26, including all taxes and transfers. All passengers will be required to have a passport. For more information or to book a room, call SMS Tours Inc. at (828) 631-4399.

Jenny Jaramillo is a senior majoring in communication.
Alumni Deaths

Evelyn June Rogers Aiken MAEd ’61, Jan. 6; Asheville.

Columbus Hermon Ashe ’54, Jan. 9; Sylva.

Billy Joe Barnette MAEd ’70, Feb. 12; Walhalla, S.C.

Milburn Joel Birchfield Jr. ’88, Jan. 27; Bryson City.

Peggy Rathbone Buchanan ’70 MAEd ’81, Jan. 28; Waynesville.

Mary Lozelle Campbell ’30, Oct. 9; Florence, S.C.

Elsie Coggins ’89, Jan. 12; Whittier.

Hugh W. Cole ’62, Feb. 19; Candler.

Evelyn Yarbrough Colgan ’70, Jan. 13; Lake Junaluska.

Mabel Clark Corpening ’42, Dec. 22; Winston-Salem.

John E. Crutchfield Jr. ’39, Nov. 17; Wilmington.

Joe B. Davis ’60, Jan. 30; Fort Lawn, S.C.

Betty Amanda Hipps Delozier MAEd ’76, Jan. 18; Asheville.

William Hudson Jr. ’69, Oct. 7; Spruce Pine.

William W. Fortescue ’58, Feb. 2; Advance.

Vicki Cathcart Frank ’82 MS ’03, Feb. 17; Marion.

Maxine Bateman Gunter ’84, Jan. 8; Seattle, Wash.

Jane Moonghan Rogerson Hatcher ’99, Jan. 16; Asheville.

Richard E. Heaven ’88, Jan. 2; Shelby.

Annie Potts Barnett Higdon ’35, Feb. 23; Evans, Ga.

Laura Davis Inabnit MAEd ’71, Jan. 26; Florence, S.C.

James Bruce Jaynes ’51 MAEd ’53, Feb. 7; Charlotte.

Beaman W. Kelley ’38, Oct. 17; Dunn.

Cecil Roy Kinsland ’55, Jan. 9; Franklin.

Billy B. Lewis ’69, Jan. 16; New Smyrna Beach, Fla.

James H. Mitchell Sr. ’66, Jan. 30; Stanley.

Reba McLawhorn McClees ’36, Jan. 11; Oriental.

Elizabeth Claire Mortimer ’73, Nov. 9; Port St. Joe, Fla.

Jeanne Sluder Mulvaney ’57, Dec. 29; Spartanburg, S.C.

Audette Richey Salmon ’46, Feb. 9; Pinnacle.

Thomas Andrew Scotchie ’83, Jan. 16; Asheville.

Robert K. Scruggs ’50, Sept. 11; Murphy.

George Benjamin Silvers ’65, Jan. 16; Elmina, Ore.

William Edward Singleton MAEd ’79, March 3; Asheville.

James Stewart ’84, Oct. 8; Lake Wylie, S.C.

Elizabeth Gregg Taylor MAEd ’80 EDS ’83, Feb. 15; Asheville.

James Edward Turner Jr. ’57, Jan. 18; Lake Placid, Fla.


William C. Wesley MAEd ’69, Dec. 31; Marion.

Jane Erwin Whitmire ’60 MAEd ’66, Feb. 3; Greenville.

Earl Jacob Williams ’59, Dec. 14; Anchorage, Alaska.


University Deaths

Roy Bradley, Dodson Cafeteria and housekeeping, Jan. 25; Waynesville.

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Please send story ideas and suggestions to
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Western Carolina University
Cullowhee, NC 28723
or via e-mail: bstudenc@wcu.edu

Postmaster: Send address changes to
Office of Alumni Affairs, Suite 242, H.F. Robinson Building
Western Carolina University, Cullowhee, NC 28723

Cat Tales

Whether it’s tubing down the Tuckaseegie or catching a live show featuring the band called Cullowhee, we know you have some great memories of the Cullowhee community next to campus. Send us a few sentences about your recollections along with your name, city and class year, and we’ll share what “Cat Tales” we can in our next issue. Write Teresa Killian, associate editor, at killian@wcu.edu or Teresa Killian/Suite 420, H.F. Robinson Building/ Cullowhee, N.C. 28723.
MAY 2008
THURSDAY, MAY 1
Concert – Country music star Billy Currington. 7:30 p.m. Ramsey Regional Activity Center. (828) 227-7722
Concert – WCU ensemble and symphony bands. 8 p.m. Fine and Performing Arts Center. (828) 227-7242
SATURDAY, MAY 3
Galaxy of Stars/Something for Everyone Series – Footworks percussive dance ensemble. 7:30 p.m. Fine and Performing Arts Center. (828) 227-2479
WEDNESDAY, MAY 7-SATURDAY, MAY 10
SATURDAY, MAY 10
Inaugural Triangle-Area Catamount Golf Tournament – Proceeds donated to WCU athletics. 1 p.m. Neuse Golf Club, Clayton. (919) 602-6863
Spring commencement – 10 a.m. for graduate students; 4 p.m. for undergraduate students. Ramsey Regional Activity Center. (828) 227-7216
WEDNESDAY, MAY 21-SUNDAY, MAY 25
JUNE 2008
FRIDAY, JUNE 6
Meeting – WCU board of trustees. 9:30 a.m. Room 510, H.F. Robinson Administration Building. (828) 227-7100
SATURDAY, JUNE 21
Concert – The Raleigh Ringers, handbell choir playing sacred, secular and popular music. 7:30 p.m. Fine and Performing Arts Center. (828) 227-2479
SUNDAY, JUNE 22-FRIDAY, JUNE 27
Mountain Dulcimer Week – Skill development classes for beginners through experts. All ages. (828) 227-7397
JULY 2008
SUNDAY, JULY 20-SUNDAY, AUG. 3
Broadway Triple Arts Series – Workshop on the art and craft of musical theater performance with Broadway stars Terrence Mann and Charlotte d’Amboise. Ages 16-22 invited to audition. (828) 227-7397
TUESDAY, JULY 22
Folkmoot USA – A celebration of the world’s cultural heritage through folk music and dance. 7:30 p.m. Fine and Performing Arts Center. (828) 452-2997
WEDNESDAY, JULY 23-SATURDAY, JULY 26
25th annual Cullowhee Conference – “Native Plants in the Landscape.” (828) 227-7397
SATURDAY, JULY 26
Catamount Club Auction – 5:30 p.m. coaches’ reception; 6:30 p.m. silent auction; 7:30 p.m. dinner. Hickory Metro Convention Center. (828) 227-3047
AUGUST 2008
FRIDAY, AUG. 1
Summer commencement – 7 p.m. Ramsey Regional Activity Center. (828) 227-7216

EXHIBITS
THROUGH THURSDAY, MAY 1
“Erwin Eisch: Kristallnacht – Night of the Crystal Death!,” an artist’s response to the Holocaust. Fine Art Museum at the Fine and Performing Arts Center. (828) 227-3591
THROUGH THURSDAY, MAY 1
School of Art and Design’s annual juried student exhibition. Art Museum at the Fine and Performing Arts Center. (828) 227-3591
THROUGH FRIDAY, MAY 23
“A Quilter’s Garden,” a selection of whimsical handmade textile pieces based on the traditional craft of quilting by fabric artist Laura Nelle Goebel. Mountain Heritage Center. (828) 227-7129
SATURDAY, MAY 24-THURSDAY, JULY 24
“A Craftsman’s Legacy: The Furniture of Jesse Bryson Stalcup.” Mountain Heritage Center. (828) 227-7129
FRIDAY, MAY 30-WEDNESDAY, DEC. 31
“Plain and Simple: Plain-Style Furniture of Western North Carolina.” Mountain Heritage Center. (828) 227-7129
ONGOING
“Worldviews: Selections from Western’s permanent collection.” Fine Art Museum at the Fine and Performing Arts Center. (828) 227-3591

Upcoming events at WCU include (from top) performances by the Raleigh Ringers, the dancers of Folkmoot USA, country music’s Billy Currington, and the Footworks dance ensemble.
Chief photographer Mark Haskett ’87 captured this spring image of the Alumni Tower framed by the white blooms of Yoshino cherry trees on the lawn of A.K. Hinds University Center.