Million Dollars Campaign Impacts Students’ Lives
Catamount catcher Blake Murphy, a junior from Waynesville who passed up a chance to play professionally after being drafted by the New York Yankees, makes the tag at home in a game against Connecticut. Murphy helped lead Western's baseball team to impressive early season wins over three nationally ranked opponents—Clemson, Georgia Tech and N.C. State from the ACC—and a victory over SEC foe Georgia. The bat Cats continue their march toward the Southern Conference tournament, which gets under way May 22 in Charleston, S.C. For game and ticket information, visit catamountsports.com.
LEADING THE WAY

Campus Program Helps Students Gain Skills to Become Leaders

By TERESA KILLIAN

Students in Western’s increasingly comprehensive leadership program test theories from the classroom in one of the largest laboratories on campus—the campus itself. They take the opportunities as freshmen, assigned to observe “leadership” at university events including concerts, exhibits, Women’s Center activities, guest lectures, career services, club meetings and football games.

“I saw leadership was all around me—even within a team—no matter what I was doing,” said Bethany Hartshorn, a junior nursing major from Hendersonville. Hartshorn came away inspired to get involved with organizations such as Campus Leaders Advocating Wellness. The 17 presentations she gave for C.L.A.W. in one semester helped her gain confidence, and today she’s a resident assistant and leader in her sorority, continually and consciously applying to her life the leadership theories she learns in class.

“That’s exactly what Bart Andrus, associate director for leadership programs, wants the growing number of participants to experience. “You don’t get the whole picture of leadership by reading a book. You have to apply it, and participants in our program do that right here at Western. They gain confidence and sharpen skills that will help them as graduates to be leaders in their communities,” Andrus said.

The concept of WE LEAD, which stands for Western Encourages Leadership Education and Development, is to help students see leadership as a process of involving other people toward a common goal to change things for the betterment of everybody,” Andrus said. “That’s where we are starting from,” he said. The program is designed to help students see their goals as individuals, then work together for a common purpose, such as developing a community service activity, and ultimately apply their leadership skills to benefit society. “We might ask a student to consider, ‘What would it be like to be the greatest bio-environmental engineer that ever came out of Western?’”

In the classroom, students take interactive leadership classes offered through the College of Education and Allied Profession’s human resources department that teach leadership theory and ethics. The courses require so much time and commitment that students have asked university leaders to consider offering a minor in leadership, and Andrus expects a leadership minor to be in place as early as spring 2008.

Outside the classroom, WE LEAD offers workshops, journaling, coaching, a residential living-learning community for freshmen, and mentoring experiences that link incoming students with campus leaders. Members of the freshman community create their own governing structure, such as offices of president and vice president or committees with equal representation. They work together on group activities, including community service.

In addition, WE LEAD offers a leadership certificate and “co-curricular” transcripts to document students’ extra-curricular achievements and participation.

The program continues to expand as WE LEAD charters a new local chapter of Omicron Delta Kappa, a nationally recognized leadership honor society, this spring. “The chapter brings together individuals who, in all phases of collegiate life, help model the outcome of the institution,” Andrus said. “In the fall, WE LEAD will roll out new student-facilitated leadership workshops.

Granty, a senior from Maggie Valley, said she believes the fine-tuning in leadership classes and as president of the Student Government Association will help him pursue a career in city or county management. Granty practices building consensus in student government, which allocates funding for about 50 organizations on campus and helps keep students informed about issues such as tuition, parking, food services and financial aid. He’s excited about WE LEAD. “Student leadership on campus is growing exponentially,” said Granty, who is majoring in emergency management and criminal justice. “We see more and more freshmen come in eager to step up to a leadership role.”

Young alumni who quickly became community leaders after graduation, such as N.C. Sen. Andrew Brock ‘98, are excited to see Western expand a program designed to help more students realize early in their college career their leadership potential. Brock remembered wanting to get involved at WCU as a student but not feeling ready, at first, to be “out front.” That changed as he accepted larger and larger leadership roles in student government. He began advocating for issues such as new student parking regulations, boosting community service and expanding Internet access in residence hall rooms.”

“We disagreed on student government but had to work together, and that was a great education for me in leadership,” Brock said. “If it wasn’t for that, I wouldn’t be where I am today.”

Another legislator who honed his leadership skills as an undergraduate at WCU is N.C. Sen. Tom Apodaca ‘80 who is now deputy Republican leader. A former member of Western’s board of trustees, Apodaca says experiences at Western helped prepare him for the future. “Jobs as a resident assistant and head resident were very valuable in learning to work with others and deal with numerous situations,” said Apodaca. “Secondly, working as an orientation leader proved to be very beneficial in enhancing my people skills.”

“You don’t get the whole picture of leadership by reading a book. You have to apply it, and participants in our program do that right here at Western.”

—Bart Andrus

N.C. Sen. Andrew Brock ’98 speaks at a Restore America Rally that drew more than 12,000 people to the legislature.
Among those who have benefited from Western’s graduate education programs are, from left, school principal Sherri Arrington MAEd ’82 EdS ’04, community college administrator Van Wilson ’83 MPA ’91 and banker Catherine Sams MBA ’05.

Alumni Emphasize Value of Graduate Education
By Phil Cauley ‘83 MS ’90

Help wanted. Minimum education required: master’s degree.

Increasingly, phrases like this adorn job postings and career Web site listings throughout the nation. And increasingly, more students are turning to Western to earn those advanced degrees.

Fueled in part by the development of several new graduate programs such as physical therapy and construction management, enrollment in WCU’s Graduate School has increased by 58 percent since the fall of 2000. And the growth of online courses has sparked a dramatic spike in the number of place-bound working professionals pursuing graduate studies at Western from the comfort of their own homes. Part-time graduate student enrollment skyrocketed 425 percent from 2000 to 2006.

“Having an advanced degree allowed me to choose my career rather than having my career choose me,” said Sarah Chadwick ’04 MS ’06, a speech-language pathologist at Argis Therapies in Hickory. “My profession now requires a master’s degree, so I knew I would attend graduate school.”

Even among disciplines that do not require advanced study for entry-level employment, an undergraduate degree alone sometimes seems more like a hunting license than a ticket to a career-related position. “My adviser at Davis and Elkin College made it clear I would likely remain at the technician level in my field without an advanced degree,” said Mark Hall MS ’05, project manager/regional vegetation ecologist for Appalachian Trail NatureServe in Arlington, Va. “He also said it would be good exploration into the many aspects of biology. After finishing my graduate research, I actually felt like a biologist capable of acting independently and making informed decisions.”

Catherine Sams MBA ’05 echoes that sentiment. “When I was nearing graduation from Clemson, I was not certain of my career path,” Sams said. “Many classmates were applying for jobs and having difficult times being hired because of economic conditions. I decided that graduate school would give me time to decide on a career path and an advantage over applicants who only possessed undergraduate degrees.” Her strategy paid dividends—BB&T hired her as a business banker in Waynesville as she was finishing graduate school. “Without my master’s degree, I would not have started with the company in the position I did,” she said.

Scott Higgins, Graduate School dean at WCU, is encouraged by this type of alumni feedback. “We are building meaningful relationships with our students and faculty designed to expand education and research opportunities that enhance their lives and the lives of others,” Higgins said.

Many alumni are enhancing lives across North Carolina. “WCU has an excellent school administration program, and the training is very beneficial to the job,” said Sherri Arrington MAEd ’82 EdS ’04, principal at Hazenwood Elementary School in Haywood County. Arrington is not sure she would have begun without support. “Balancing between a full-time job, being a mom and wife, and going back to earn another degree was very challenging, but Keith Wyatt MAEd ’76 EdS ’83, my principal, and Sandy Caldwell MAEd ’78 EdS ’83, my elementary supervisor, both encouraged me to pursue my administration degree.”

Not all of the rewards of a graduate degree are tangible. “Self-confidence could be added to the list of benefits I’ve realized from gaining an advanced degree,” said Lucille Whitten ‘04 MEd ’06, coordinator of student leadership programs at the University of West Georgia. “There is an internal pride once you have set your mind to doing something and you have completed it with flying colors.”

Gibbs Knotts, the Graduate School’s associate dean, spearheads new initiatives to improve the graduate experience, and realizes an added benefit of graduating well prepared, well-pleased students. “Our alumni are our best recruiters,” Knotts said. “Word of mouth is critical, and helping us recruit students is a wonderful way to give back to the university. When we get great students, the value of everyone’s degree is enhanced.”

New graduate programs such as nurse anesthesia, social work, sport management, teaching English as a second language, and the educational doctorate position Western to prepare more graduates who can be responsive to the needs of the community, region and state. Online delivery of graduate programs such as construction management, entrepreneurship, human resources, nurse education, project management and school administration increases the likelihood that place-bound students can go the distance toward degree completion without having to go to Cullowhee or Asheville for classes.

Van Wilson ’83 MPA ’91 still recalls the challenge of his commute to class when he was balancing family priorities and a full-time career with the rigors of academic study. “This is my 24th year in higher education administration,” said Wilson, vice president of student development services at Forsyth Technical Community College. “The tools I learned while in the graduate program at WCU still support me in my professional growth today.” Wilson is quick to caution those who are considering graduate school: “Make sure the commitment is there.” Good advice from someone who is nearing completion of a doctoral program in higher education leadership.
PRINCIPAL FOCUS

School Administration Program Making the Grade

By RANDALL HOLCOMBE

Some one for Western’s principals-in-training! Graduates of WCU’s master’s degree program in school administration have again made high marks on a national test that indicates how well prepared they are to fill the top leadership positions in North Carolina public schools.

Test scores recently released indicate that MSA students who took the School Leaders Licensure Assessment between September 2005 and August 2006 scored above state and national averages in all five test categories—determining pupil and community needs, curriculum design and instructional improvement, development of staff and program evaluation, school management, and individual and group leadership skills.

And, as usual, all the students passed the test and became eligible for licensure as principals in North Carolina. Students in WCU’s program have recorded a 100 percent pass rate on the licensure assessment for the past five years, said Jacqueline Jacobs, professor and head of the department of educational leadership and foundations in WCU’s College of Education and Allied Professions.

Students who enroll in the MSA program, which is offered fully online, are mostly working teachers who aspire to become principals. Since WCU’s MSA program became completely Internet-based in the fall of 2005, the number of students in the program has blossomed from 28 to a total of 157 who are enrolled now. "Word is spreading across the state about the quality of our online program," Jacobs said.

Shawena Taylor ’91 doesn’t say any convincing. The Jackson County native is completing the program by serving as a principal intern at Waynesville Middle School in Haywood County. After earning her bachelor’s degree in education and graduating with honors from WCU, Taylor began her teaching career in the coastal county of Perquimans, but returned to the mountains the following year and has taught for 14 years in elementary schools in Haywood and Buncombe counties.

Taylor enrolled in WCU’s MSA program in 2005 prepared to take some face-to-face classes, but learned that the program was available online. "I tried it and absolutely loved it," she said. "I have two small boys and my husband travels often for work, so online classes afforded me great flexibility in my schedule."

Taylor found the MSA instructors to be "supportive, encouraging and available to students," and said the program destroys the common notion that online classes are less demanding than on-site classes. "I’ve enjoyed the learning experiences and the opportunity to become part of a larger community of students dedicated to the common goal of improving education," she said.

Jacobs said the graduates’ achievement on the licensure assessment and the growth in WCU’s program is good news for the state of North Carolina, which is facing a critical shortage of licensed principals, particularly in the secondary schools. Current students include those who are taking the full MSA program, and others who already have earned a master’s degree in a related educational field, but are taking additional courses so they can become licensed principals. While enrollment has soared, the students’ mean scores on the national assessment have risen each year, indicating that the quality of the instruction they receive has improved even as the program shifted to an online format, Jacobs said.

(above) Shawena Taylor ’91 is serving as a principal intern at Waynesville Middle School.

CLASS ACT

Lateral Entry Program Leads to Top Teaching Award

By ANDRE RODRIGUEZ

The staff and faculty of Asheville High School gathered after school one day recently for what they thought was going to be another meeting to go over procedures and policies. But the meeting turned out to be a celebration announcing that Jerome Hughes MAT ’06 has been selected as North Carolina’s 2007-08 Western Region Teacher of the Year.

Hughes, who teaches English and the Advancement Via Individual Determination curriculum, a program better known as AVID, previously had been selected as Asheville City Schools’ Teacher of the Year, qualifying him for the regional award.

Superintendent Robert Logan ’76 said it was difficult keeping news of the WNC honor a secret. “But when we get the call that Mr. Hughes had been selected as the Western Region Teacher of the Year, I told the individual who shared the information with me, ‘He certainly emulates everything that I would want in a teacher,’” Logan said.

Hughes, who earned a bachelor’s degree in English as a Morehead Scholar at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 1987, was working in the school system’s AVID program when he decided to begin work toward a graduate degree in education through WCU’s NC TEACH.

The program, which stands for Teachers of Excellence for All Children, is designed to help working professionals in the middle of non-teaching careers qualify as “lateral entry” teachers while they’re taking education courses leading to the master of arts degree in teaching, or to state licensure.

“This is such an honor to be honored among my colleagues,” said Hughes, who has eight years of experience at Asheville High School, the past three as a teacher. He has also served as AVID coordinator and as a peer helping/mentoring teacher. “I’m going to do my best to represent what we represent, which is valuing every student. It’s really all about the kids,” he said.

Hughes is the WNC Teacher of the Year.

Jerome Hughes MAT ’06 is the WNC Teacher of the Year.

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After bubbling quietly beneath the surface during a two-year “silent phase,” the first comprehensive fundraising campaign in the university’s 118-year history has gone public, with a goal of at least $40 million in private support for Western by 2010.

Chancellor John W. Bardo officially unveiled The Campaign for Western during his State of the University address, “Esse Quam Videri.” The title is borrowed from the North Carolina state motto, which means “to be rather than to seem.” In his address, only the second State of the University speech in his nearly 12 years as WCU chancellor, Bardo focused on excellence—and the steps necessary to continue raising the academic bar at Western.

One major step in enhancing the institution, Bardo said, is to supplement existing resources with additional private-sector support through the campaign, whose theme is “Creating Extraordinary Opportunities.” “The people of North Carolina have been very good to their universities, but excellence requires additional resources—especially focused resources that address specific quality questions,” he said.

“Throughout American higher education—in North Carolina and elsewhere—the level of private support tips the balance, turning good universities into great universities, good faculties and academic programs into great faculties and programs, and good graduates into great graduates,” said Jim Manning ’74 MBA ’76, campaign executive director. “That is the goal as we launch The Campaign for Western.”

With the campaign now in the “public phase,” it continues to focus on three top priorities: merit-based scholarships to help recruit the best students available; academic and athletic program support; and endowed professorships to enable the university to continue to attract accomplished scholars in a variety of disciplines.

“The additional resources the campaign will bring to Western will enable the university to take the next steps in improving its overall quality while maintaining its traditional emphasis on meeting the educational needs of the people of Western North Carolina and the rest of the state, Bardo said.

Citing “The People’s University,” a recent book by Bruce Henderson, professor of psychology, Bardo said that Western and institutions like it educate the majority of the nation’s public four-year university students—and those universities hold the key to future prosperity. “Western is, and always has been, the people’s university. We have always been focused on the needs of the people for education, for research and for support in the form of public service,” he said. “But quality has to be defined in regard to the needs of the people as they change. We need to preserve yesterday, but we can’t afford to live in the past. The people need us more today than they ever have, and they are asking for our help.”

Phillip D. Walker ’71, a senior vice president for BB&T and former chair of WCU’s board of trustees who is chairing the campaign, said it is important that alumni and supporters of Western step up financially to help the leaders of tomorrow be able to attend the university. “If it had not been for scholarship assistance I received years ago, this small-town North Carolina boy would never have been able to afford to go to college,” Walker said. “I know that many of my fellow Western alumni have similar stories to tell. That’s because Western has a long and proud tradition of providing a college education to the children of Western North Carolina—many of them the first generation of their families to go to college. Even as the university has vastly expanded its influence and dramatically improved its academic quality, that sense of loyalty to the people of the region remains constant.”

For information about The Campaign for Western, visit the Web site at campaign.wcu.edu or call (828) 227-7124.
A SOLID FOUNDATION
New Directors Ready to Help Meet Fundraising Goals
By JESS CLARK

The newest members of the Western Carolina University Foundation’s board of directors share a motivation in taking the leadership roles—to give back to their alma mater. Roland Johnson ’76, Duane Reid ’82 and Dave Steed ’73 came on the board in July for three-year terms. They join 24 other members of the board, which helps raise money from the private sector for WCU scholarships, endowments and other needs, and sets policy regarding fundraising activities.

As the university embarks upon an ambitious comprehensive fundraising campaign, the first in WCU’s history and boasting a goal of $40 million, the Foundation and its board of directors are more vital than ever before.

Foundation board members, elected by the WCU board of trustees, are ambassadors for Western, said Clifton Metcalf, vice chancellor for advancement and external affairs and the board’s executive secretary. “They are all strong financial supporters of the university, first of all. Second, by reason of their careers and their spheres of influence, they’re able to identify other people who can help the university from a financial perspective. Thirdly, by reason of their knowledge and interaction with the university, they are able to interpret the university’s needs to the community in which they interact and are able to reflect to the university the needs of their communities,” Metcalf said.

Johnson, president and chief executive officer of Piedmont Pharmaceuticals in Greensboro, earned a bachelor’s degree in social work from Western in 1976 and a master’s degree in business from Central Michigan University. Before he joined Piedmont Pharmaceuticals, Johnson was a founder and vice president of Ciba Animal Health (now Novartis Animal Health) and founder and president of Blue Ridge Pharmaceuticals. He has three children and lives in Lexington with his wife, Janie.

“I’d just like to contribute in some small way to Western’s continued future growth and opportunities for young men and women to get a better education and, as a result of that, greater success in life in whatever they choose,” Johnson said.

Reid recently sold his interests in Rome Ford Lincoln Mercury in Rome, Ga., and Parkway Ford in Athensville, Ga. He is now general manager of Daytona Lincoln Mercury in Daytona Beach, Fla., part of the Matthews Automotive Group with several stores in central Florida. He graduated from WCU cum laude (with honors) in 1982 with a bachelor’s degree in business administration. Reid, who was a city commissioner in Rome, has owned and managed auto dealerships in North Carolina and South Carolina. He and his wife, Wanda Reid ’83, have three children.

“Serving the Foundation board is my way of giving back to help others,” said Reid, a former president of the WCU Alumni Association. “I understand that there’s a financial need for a lot of students. I don’t want a student to be deprived of a quality education because they don’t have the means.”

Steed, senior vice president and general merchandising manager for building products with Lowe’s headquarters in Mooresville, earned a bachelor’s degree in business administration from WCU in 1973. Steed, who has two children and lives in Mooresville with his wife, Leticia, started with Lowe’s as soon as he graduated. He is now No. 32 in seniority among Lowe’s more than 200,000 employees.

While helping guide one of the nation’s largest home improvement retailers, Steed is determined to help Western improve.

“I felt the need to reconnect with the university, and I felt the obligation to start giving back in some way,” Steed said. “I’m so impressed with where the university has progressed since I left there, with Chancellor John Bardo’s commitment and all the good things he’s doing. I just want to be a contributing force to that in whatever way I can.”

In fact, as evidence of their commitment to the university and the capital campaign, Steed and his wife have pledged to help establish a new endowed professorship at Western.

CAMPAIGN KICKOFF
Gifts from Former Chancellor Will Support Faculty Excellence

By BILL STUDENC

Although Myron Coulter stepped down as chancellor at Western in 1994 after a 10-year stint as chief executive officer, the man known as Barney has never strayed far from a university he loves. As chancellor emeritus, Coulter maintains an office on campus, where he keeps close watch on one of his progeny—a center for faculty excellence.

During his tenure as chancellor, Coulter appointed a task force charged with improving the state of teaching and learning for students at WCU—and beyond. Dubbed by Coulter “the Devoted Dozen,” in tribute to “the Noble Nine” who in 1889 established the school that evolved into Western, the task force recommended the formation of a center to help faculty members strive toward excellence in teaching. That center is now known as the Coulter Faculty Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning.

Like loving grandparents wanting only the best for their family, Coulter and wife Barbara recently made a gift of $26,000 to the university as the first installment on a total pledge of $100,000. The gifts will create an endowed fund to provide resources for faculty members and graduate students researching ways to improve learning outcomes for WCU students.

Announced at a December campus ceremony, gifts establishing the Myron and Barbara Coulter Fellowship Fund for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning are helping kick off the Campaign for Western, a three-year effort to raise $40 million in private support for scholarships, professorships and programmatic resources.

The campaign, the first in university history, was officially launched in February after an initial “silent phase” that included the Coulters’ contributions.

“This gift is from both of us to all of you, and to the thousands of students who have already profited from your skills and your complete dedication to education, as well as to the thousands of students who have yet to come and who have yet to profit from all that you do,” Coulter told a crowd of faculty and staff gathered for the announcement. “We hope that we can continue to help in some small way to further the cause of the scholarship of teaching and learning.”

Through the Coulters’ gifts, the center will provide support to faculty members and graduate students conducting research on the study and enhancement of teaching in classroom, laboratory and field settings. The fund specifically supports projects that test or apply innovative strategies and enhance practices of teaching, with a focus on the personal interaction between the professor and the learner.

Center director Anna McFadden said such vital support will enable faculty and students to contribute important new insights into the teaching and learning process, like a study by Kathy Starr MS ’86 of the physical therapy department. Starr combined WCU physical therapy students with colleagues from physical therapy assistant programs at nearby community colleges in a service learning project designed to replicate real-world clinical relationships they will encounter in the healthcare industry. The findings are published in the Coulter Center’s electronic journal MountainRise.

“The Coulters’ gift allows the center to expand its work on the scholarship of teaching and learning. The gift offers incentives and support for faculty to try something new in the classroom, to conduct research on the innovation and to make those results public,” McFadden said. “The ultimate beneficiaries are the students. The Coulters believe in the faculty at WCU and their ability to affect student learning in a positive way. We are most grateful for their generosity.”

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The research instruments Jason Bryenton '03 maintains and monitors in Antarctica catch everything from shockwaves that originate from nuclear blasts to the sound of the tide changing. “You also can hear things like the wind—winds that can be in excess of 140 mph here—going across the mountains. It is analogous to a person blowing across a bottle,” said Bryenton, who was looking for an adventure and a job when he agreed to work for a year as a research assistant at McMurdo Station in Antarctica.

“This is probably the most extreme adventure I’ve done,” said Bryenton, a veteran runner, snowboarder, backpacker and hiker who recently sailed north of Seattle around the San Juan Islands, where the average water temperature is below 55 degrees. Summer in Antarctica warmed to only about 45. “I’ve heard it actually gets up to 50, but I didn’t see that this year though it’s amazingly warm—well, once you become accustomed to the temperature,” said Bryenton.

He’ll be “wintering over” with about 120 people, which means they will continue living and working at McMurdo Station for about six months punctuated by extreme darkness and no air traffic. “There will be no way of leaving, no fresh food, no mail and no correspondence other than e-mail and telephone,” said Bryenton. He’s not too concerned. The camaraderie is strong among the extended family-like community where everyone relies on one another for survival. “This is probably one of the most overeducated and underutilized group of people I’ve been involved with—a dishwasher with a master’s degree,” he said.

For fun, Bryenton works out in the gym, plays guitar and recently ordered a bass. In the 140 pounds of luggage he was allowed to bring, he included an iPod, a few books, drawing materials and a camera. He polishes stones collected from the area, including crystals grown in the magma beneath a volcano. On Christmas Eve, he hiked the 9-mile Castle Rock Trail to Mount Erebus, the world’s southernmost active volcano. “It was a beautiful day,” he said.

For work, Bryenton is an “all-around physics and IT person,” monitoring complex instruments including an extremely low frequency and very low frequency radiometer, fluxgate magnetometer, micropulsation magnetometer, Fabry-Perot interferometer, cosmic ray monitor and ultraviolet spectroradiometer. The information they yield reveals seismic activity, global thunderstorm activity, changes in the Earth’s magnetic field, signs of ozone-destroying atmospheric chemical reactions, wind speed and temperature in the upper atmosphere, galactic radio noise, neutron showers and radioactive debris from explosions. That may sound odd for a chemistry major, but Bill Kwochka, a WCU associate professor of chemistry who has kept in touch with Bryenton, points out that chemistry degrees prepare students for all kinds of jobs in medicine, dentistry, optometry, pharmacy, art restoration, forensics and, apparently, instrumentation specialization in Antarctica. “Jason is bright, interested in a lot of areas of science, an athlete and an adventurer,” Kwochka said. “His job in Antarctica seems perfect for him.”

Jason Bryenton ’03 conducts research (left) and hikes (insert) near Mount Erebus, the world’s southernmost active volcano.
Sarah Lowell ‘84 MAEd ’89 had finished a dozen 100-mile races—five in Alaska—but none as brutal as the Arrowhead 135-Mile Ultramarathon in February. A severe cold front had forced temperatures in the Minnesota “Ice-box of the Nation” down to 30 below. “On day two, it got a little bit warmer, like minus 10 and minus 12,” said Lowell, a physical education teacher at Cartoogechaye Elementary School in Franklin. “It really challenged everything I knew about cold weather racing and survival.”

Only 10 of 46 entrants completed the race, and all of the finishers were on bikes designed for snow—except Lowell, who was on foot. With a time of 55 hours and 4 minutes, Lowell made history as the first woman runner ever to complete the event. “I was the last one standing,” she said. “I had resigned myself that things had to be slow and methodical.”


Lowell towed a sled with 30 pounds of equipment including a sleeping bag rated for minus 40 degrees, a stove and fuel for melting snow, more than 5,000 calories of food in the form of chocolate Boost drinks, and a picture of 5-year-old Daniel Tomberlin, the brother of one of her students. A cancerous tumor in Daniel’s abdomen wrapped around his spine, and Lowell dedicated her race to him and named her sled “Daniel’s Polar Express.” “I thought about him constantly,” said Lowell.

High points for Lowell were seeing moose tracks, three wolves and a dog musher who stopped to chat as he reset his team-in-training, which, surprised to see a person on the trail, had jumbled into a 16-dog pile-up. Low points were crawling hand and foot up a hill to keep her sled from pulling her backward and struggling to stay awake the first night. “I would veer off course, kneel down in a snow bank and think ‘holy cow! It happened three times before I started catching myself and deciding to snap to it.”

On the second night, she got lost during a windy run across a lake. A light on in a house at 1 a.m. drew her there to ask for directions. “I had a ski mask on and scared the man to death. It was kind of a comedy,” she said. Several hours later, I got back on the trail, only to get lost again at about 4 in the morning. I could see light, so I walked a mile and half down to a mercantile store.”

The store owners arrived to find her outside in a sleeping bag, let her in to collect herself and pointed her back to the trail—17 miles to the finish. A reporter making a documentary joined her for the last segment, and cheers carried her to the end. “They couldn’t believe it,” Lowell said. “I called someone and then sat down and ate a cheeseburger, even though I am a vegetarian.”

She felt good about finishing and great about raising $3,000—and counting—to help Daniel’s family. Jody Tomberlin, Daniel’s father, said he and his wife, Cindy Peek Tomberlin ’95, followed Lowell’s progress online. “I was just deeply touched she dedicated the race to Daniel,” he said.

Contributions to the family can be directed to United Community Bank, Attention: Michelle Green, P.O. Box 1269, Franklin, N.C. 28744.
Sudden Explosion of Residential, Commercial Growth Means Opportunities, Challenges for Western, Jackson County
By JESS CLARKE

It has amenities many people want where they live—convenient access to performing arts, museums, an art gallery, a library, athletic events and facilities for professional development and lifelong learning. And it’s surrounded by scenic beauty and opportunities for outdoor recreation.

The description fits Western Carolina University, which, with the surrounding mountains, the nearby Tuckaseigee River and its enduring small-town appeal, is influencing a steady increase in residential development around Jackson County. And the university is making plans to integrate itself more with the growing population of second-home buyers and retirees and other permanent residents.

“You can’t escape your environment,” said Chancellor John W. Bardo. “The environment is such that people want to be here. They look around and see a university that is on the move. We are improving. We’re looking to create an academic community that really links business, education and community support.”

The people making those links need housing, and there’s more of that popping up all over the county, which has a population of about 37,000. More than 50 new subdivisions, including several upscale gated communities, have been planned in the county in the last five years—from Noah’s Landing with 11 lots in Webster, to Garnet Ridge Preserve with 300 home sites outside Dillsboro, and from the 4,440-acre Bald Mountain Preserve between Sylva and Waynesville, to RiverRocks with its Phil Mickelson-designed golf course south of campus.

In 2006 alone, the county issued about 700 residential building permits for single-family and multi-family homes, said Jackson County planning director Linda Cable. People are drawn partly to Jackson’s “great quality of life,” which includes WCU, Cable said. At least 25 percent of the marketing of Mountain River, a new development in Cullowhee about a mile from Western, includes information about the university, said Michael Wade ‘77, a partner in the development and in Rabbit Ridge, a student housing complex in Cullowhee.

“A lot of people want to be around an active place. Fifty-five is your new 55. The last thing they want to do is be around a retirement community. They want to be around energy. One way to be around energy is to be around a college campus,” Wade said.

Some retirees who move to Jackson use Western’s library and attend athletic events. “They love that campus atmosphere,” said Julie Spiero ’86, executive director of the Jackson County Chamber of Commerce. “They become fans of the Catamount athletics department, and this is their hometown college now.”

Second-home residents and other newcomers also enjoy WCU’s Fine and Performing Arts Center. “The center has fantastic performances that would rival any show that you could see in a large city. That’s a very attractive thing to someone who is moving here from a metropolitan area—that they can still have that cultural amenity but in a mountain setting. And they want to live in the mountains,” Spiero said.

The performing arts center offered four shows last summer, partly to meet the demand of tourists and seasonal residents, and university officials plan to have summer shows again this year, said center director Paul Lerman. The center and other amenities on campus engage people with Western, but the university benefits from retirees who move to Jackson in more ways than just ticket sales. Some newcomers volunteer at Western and others take continuing education classes. “There’s a trend nationally for baby boomers to return to their alma maters or to a place with a campus that they find attractive,” Bardo said. “We want to take advantage of that as a university.”

For retirees who consider buying lots at Sims Valley, a new development in Glenville that will have about 65 home sites,
a university isn’t the only reason to move to Jackson County, project manager Dennis Ford said. “But it’s part of the menu they’re putting together,” Ford said.

Among the new Jackson residents are younger retirees with expertise who want to be involved in higher education. A senior policy fellows group, composed partly of transplanted retirees, advises on economic development issues at WCU’s Institute for the Economy and the Future. “It’s increasing the intellectual capital of the campus in a way that’s really important,” Bardo said. “They’re coming to Western North Carolina because Western North Carolina is hot, and they’re discovering Western. A decade ago, these people wouldn’t have known who we were.”

The appeal of Jackson County and WNC as places to live and work also influences the searches to fill faculty and staff openings. “We’re simply seeing beauty and outdoor recreational opportunities that draw developers to Jackson,” said Bardo. “And there’s another reason the county is desirable—no zoning or subdivision regulations, except for state restrictions on developments in a watershed. And some people worry that the pace of development may be too fast.”

“You have this wonderful place to live,” said Cable, the county planning director. “And now instead of looking at trees, you’re looking at houses. It’s just taking away from what we are, what we were.” At the request of county commissioners, Jackson’s planning department is drafting proposed subdivision and slope ordinances, she said. And in March, commissioners adopted a five-month moratorium on new subdivisions until officials can adopt more stringent regulations designed to protect steep mountain slopes.

Some of these developers have come in with that vulture type of attitude, but most of them have done a good job with what they’ve done,” Baucom said. And some developers are paying increasing attention to land preservation.

Many Bear Lake residents are drawn to the outdoor recreation at the development and elsewhere in the area. Developers consider numerous factors when they research where to locate second-home communities. “We always look for a quality university nearby for cultural activities, for continuing education,” said Hinton, who cites Western’s performing arts center. Bear Lake includes WCU events in its monthly calendar for residents, some of whom are Western alumni who have bought lots or houses for second homes, Hinton said. University students work at the development, too.

New residential communities in Jackson draw interest from parents of WCU students who want to buy a house for their child to live in while in college. In some cases, rent from roommates helps pay the mortgage. Other people with college-age children ask about Western when they consider buying property, real estate agents and developers said.

Jackson also attracts retirees and second-home buyers who appreciate that the county is within a few hours drive of Atlanta, Charlotte, Knoxville and other cities, said Todd Baucom ‘94, a real estate agent and partner in Western Carolina Properties, with a main office in Dillsboro. Baucom’s firm uses WCU “as a marketing tool, especially if somebody’s looking at doing something here as opposed to doing something in Waynesville or Franklin or Murphy. If somebody’s looking here, lots of times they’re investigating those towns, also,” he said. The university, particularly its centers for performing arts and mountain heritage, is part of the marketing pitch at Mountain Heritage Preserve, a new gated community near Dillsboro, project manager Nicholas Berndt said. Most houses at the reserve are second homes and vacation homes. Amenities at Western “give people something to do in Jackson County that may not be in nearby Swain County or Macon County,” Berndt said.

It’s not just the university, scenic beauty and outdoor recreational opportunities that draw developers to Jackson. There’s another reason the county is desirable—no zoning or subdivision regulations, except for state restrictions on developments in a watershed. And some people worry that the pace of development may be too fast.

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Mount Wilderness, a gated community, will have 74 home sites on about 350 acres in Tuckasegee, nine miles south of WCU. The developer has set aside another 300 acres for a public park with an outdoor stage, sales associate Trey Watkins said.

Ultima Carolina Communities is creating three developments in Jackson County: Dills Cove outside Sylva, with 45 home sites; Black Bear Falls near Cherokee, with 80 home sites; and Black Rock near Cashiers, with 60 home sites. Some of the homes being built this year will use solar energy and other environmentally friendly methods and materials, Ultima office manager Samantha Burns said.

“With all the growth that’s going on in Western North Carolina, our goal is to make sure when you go through the gates of our communities, you remember you fell in love with the mountains. You’re going to see views. You’re not just going to see houses. We’re going to maintain the views and the natural environment,” Burns said. “If developers just keep coming in and ripping up the mountains, there’s not going to be any Western North Carolina left.”
TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS
Downtown Cullowhee Commercial District Has a New Owner
By BILL STUDENC

Downtown Cullowhee, that little strip of commercial property that’s home to a Subway franchise, Car Chow and Mad Batter cafes, Bob’s Mini Mart, Simply It’s clothing store and the Hair Station salon, now has a new landlord. It’s Western Carolina University.

The university purchased the 2.18 acres of property on Centennial Drive earlier this year from EFMB Properties Inc. for $1,585,000. University officials were interested in obtaining the property, which had been in the Frank H. and Elsie Brown Jr. family for generations, because of its location in the middle of campus, said Chuck Wooten ’73, WCU vice chancellor for administration and finance. “We truly appreciate the Brown family being willing to work with the university concerning this strategically located property,” Wooten said. “In fact, much of the campus is located on what was Brown family property, and this latest purchase is continuing evidence of the common values of the university and the Brown family.”

The change in ownership, however, does not reflect a change in the property’s status as a business district. Western’s short-term objectives for its latest addition to campus include painting exteriors of the buildings, cleaning up around the strip, relocating large trash containers at the rear of the complex, and improving parking for customers and employees. “Our long-term goal is to redevelop the entire area from the Wachovia Bank building to the Centennial Park,” Wooten said. “We want commercial businesses to have a presence in this area of campus, and new building plans all across campus will have space for commercial businesses.”

Cullowhee merchants already are seeing some improvements as a result of the change in ownership. Workers are sprucing up the area with new paint and outdoor trash cans, said California native Jeannette Evans, who opened the Mad Batter Bakery and Cafe nine years ago. Evans said she is glad WCU is reaching out to integrate the business strip into the larger campus. “I always wanted to open my own restaurant, and I wanted to be on a college campus,” said Evans, who went to Sonoma State University but was drawn east through working summers in Highlands. “Serving the Western community, we have a lot of regular customers. I like being part of the community and seeing familiar faces every day.”

The purchase of the property and the continued operation of the businesses are in keeping with university plans for development of 344 acres of property west of N.C. Highway 107 and part of the existing campus through the Millennial Initiative. Western intends to create multiple-use neighborhoods that will house a mix of academic buildings, research facilities, businesses, industry and housing. Plans include development of “town centers” where restaurants, retail stores and other businesses would provide services to keep students on campus and attract visitors; the recently purchased Cullowhee business district is not intended to become one of those town centers.

WCU May Build Retirement Community on Millennial Property

Baby boomers nearing retirement age are more likely to hit the books or sit in the audience at a cultural event than they are to hit the shuffleboard court or sit in a rocking chair, and they are growing in number. That’s why Western is considering the construction of an active-adult retirement community on its Millennial Initiative property, a 344-acre picturesque valley acquired in 2004 and located across N.C. Highway 107 from the main campus.

Plans call for the property to be developed as a mix of academic, residential and commercial facilities. The first Millennial Initiative project on the drawing boards is a $46 million health and gerontology building that would be part of a health- and aging-themed neighborhood. The university received planning money for the facility during a previous state funding cycle, and construction funding is part of the university’s request for the 2007-2008 fiscal year. The health and gerontology sciences neighborhood may include retirement condominiums ideal for WCU alumni, former professors and others age 55 and older, said Alan Thornburg, interim executive director of WCU’s Institute for the Economy and the Future, which is spearheading plans for the Millennial Initiative. Housing would be developed by a private sector firm and would be near the new health sciences building.

“More and more, we are seeing that retirees want to remain active, both mentally and physically,” Thornburg said. “College-affiliated retirement communities provide all the ingredients for lifelong learning, access to physical fitness resources, availability of arts and performance activities, and the opportunity for intergenerational connections.” The health and gerontology sciences building will also provide access to nursing and health-care faculty and students who specialize in medical issues for aging adults.

College-related retirement communities for active adults have been built in recent years at a number of universities, including Penn State, Notre Dame, Florida and Michigan. Western’s IEF is conducting a survey to gauge interest among alumni and supporters in a retirement community on the Cullowhee campus. A survey card is located in this issue of Western magazine. For more information, contact the Institute for the Economy and the Future at (828) 227-3462 or visit the Web site at http://planning.wcu.edu/IEF_Survey.htm.

(above) Nursing home resident Cliff Woffler enjoys a dance with student Laura Corriher during a “senior prom” organized by recreational therapy majors.
The old joke goes that the only way you can get to Carnegie Hall is to practice, practice, practice. Or, you could simply join the Smoky Mountain Brass Quintet at the famous music hall for the group’s debut in New York this summer. The quintet, composed of Western music professors and known affectionately by their fans as SMBQ, will perform at 8 p.m. in the Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall on Friday, June 8.

“We’ve been all over the world, but the one place everybody knows is Carnegie Hall,” said Brad Ulrich, trumpet professor at Western and member of SMBQ. “People who couldn’t go with us to Ireland, England and Wales in May 2006 or to St. Petersburg in Russia in 2005 are more likely to be able to travel to New York. We’re already seeing a lot of excitement building for this tour.”

The other members are David Ginn ’92, trumpet; Travis Bennett, horns, Daniel Cherry, trombone; and Michael Schallock, tuba. In addition to the Carnegie performance on Friday evening, WCU’s resident faculty brass quintet is hoping arts enthusiasts from Western North Carolina will stay for a visit to the Metropolitan Museum of Art on Saturday with Martin DeWitt, director of the Fine Art Museum at Western, and a Broadway show on Saturday evening. On Sunday, the group is planning to go to the Guggenheim Museum before returning home. While a package tour isn’t available, those interested can make their own arrangements for travel, accommodations and performances based on information on the group’s Web site, www.smbq.com. Tickets for the Carnegie show will be available after April 9 at www.carnegiehall.org. People who would like to help underwrite the SMBQ’s expenses should contact Terri McDermot, director of major gifts, at (828) 227-3052 or tmcdermot@wcu.edu.

The concert at Carnegie Hall will present music inspired by our region and our culture for the people of New York and the world. This is a very big deal for Western, the SMBQ, and our area of the Southern Appalachians,” said Ulrich.

Those who hope to follow the quintet after its Carnegie Hall debut might want to start saving up now—Ulrich already has his sights set on Italy in 2008 and China in 2009.

(a) SMBQ members are, from left, Michael Schallock, Daniel Cherry, Travis Bennett, David Ginn ’92 and Brad Ulrich.
SCOUTING REPORT
Task Force to Make Recommendations for Football Program
By DANIEL HOOKER ’01

A committee whose membership represents a wide cross-
section of university life is conducting an in-depth examination
of Western’s football program to develop recommendations to
help the program improve and move back among the leaders in
the Southern Conference.

Chip Smith, director of athletics, announced the formation
of the committee earlier this year to help define priorities and
set goals for a successful program, and to identify a course to
achieve that success. The committee will share its overall find-
ings later this year with Smith, who will in turn present the
results to Chancellor John Bardo.

“This is a very significant time for Catamount football,” said
Smith. “We appreciate the support that has been received
concerning this idea. The response has been very positive and
enthusiastic. I feel confident that this group will provide a road-
map for the success of Catamount football that Coach
enthusiastic. I feel confident that this group will provide a road-
map for the success of Catamount football that Coach
assistant vice chancellor for academic affairs; Gibbs Knotts, as-
sociate dean of the Graduate School and NCAA faculty athletics
representative; Justin Menicelli MAEd ’95, chairman of the
university athletics committee, and Bruce Henderson, professor
of psychology. Students are represented by Cody Grasty, WCU
student body president, and Sharonda Bell, president of the
student-athlete advisory committee. Two or three additional
members are expected to be named soon.

The committee will be assisted in its work by Buddy Sasser,
who has coached at Appalachian State University, East Tennessee
State University and Wofford College. Sasser also has served as the
director of athletics at Wof-
ford and Coastal Carolina
University, and

is a former commissioner of the Big South Conference. While
athletics director at Coastal Carolina, Sasser was a part of the
study that looked at the feasibility of starting a football pro-
gram, and he is currently involved with UNC Pembroke as a
consultant for the beginning of its program.

As an athletics department, Western has shown great
improvement in many of its programs in the past few years,
Smith said. The Catamounts have captured SoCon titles in
women’s basketball, men’s indoor and outdoor track and field,
women’s soccer and softball during the past three years, he
said, and WCU played for a share of the conference crown and
a NCAA playoff berth in football two seasons ago.

Western is scheduled to open its 2007 football season with
three consecutive road games, beginning on Saturday, Sept. 1,
at Alabama in Tuscaloosa.

DIG THIS
Volleyball’s Liz Rondone Named
National “Rising Star”
By DANIEL HOOKER ’01

Western Carolina’s Liz Rondone was recognized earlier
this year as one of the “Rising Stars” in women’s college
volleyball as chosen by the Collegiate Volleyball Update.
Rondone, a freshman from Bloomington, Ill., who set the
Southern Conference single-season digs record with 770 last
season, was among 16 NCAA rookies recognized for their
performances during the 2006 season, as well as for their
potential for the future.

“This is a tremendous honor for both Liz and our volleyball
program,” said WCU head coach Stephanie Dragan. “Liz had
an amazing freshman season and has committed herself this
off-season to improving for next year. Her being recognized and
listed among some outstanding volleyball players from across
the nation is a true testament to her work ethic.

In her position as a libero, Rondone had a stellar first season
as a Catamount, shutting Western’s single-season digs
record by more than 273 (previous mark was 497 by teammate
Kate Wiltzek in 2005). She also established a new benchmark
for digs per game at 5.97 (previous record was 4.25 by
Robin Langley ’98 in 1988), which ranked second in the SoCon
and 19th nationally. She was, however, the highest ranking
freshman in both categories.

In addition to leading Western defensively, Rondone
was tied for the team lead in service aces with classmate
Katie Hennessy, each with 34. She ranked second on the
team in aces per game (0.27) and ranked third on the team
with 97 assists.

Joining Rondone on CVU’s Rising Stars list are standout
freshman volleyball players from Nebraska, Penn State, Duke,
Texas, Ohio, Utah, Southern Cal, Missouri State, Florida
International, Louisville, Louisiana State, Florida and Stena.

It is an amazing honor for Western to be listed among
programs such as this year’s national champion, Nebraska.
I really have not needed any extra incentive or motivation to
strive to get better. But this recognition really has done that,”
Rondone said. “Coach Dragan has been working really hard
at rebuilding the program to return it to where it was just a few
years ago, at the top of the Southern Conference. Knowing
what we’ve been coming back, with the addition of very talented
incoming freshmen, I am looking forward to next season.”

Liz Rondone
The birth of his first son, a banana milkshake and a pizza sat inside Steve White ’67 and his streak of consecutive games attended for Western Carolina football. That was more than 20 years ago, but “Whitey” — a beloved figure to anyone associated with WCU athletics — found a way to make it to the football game that day at East Tennessee State University.

Since 1970, White, 63, has attended every football game the Catamounts have played. That’s 402 games over 37 years, through about 200 road trips, for the ex-sports information director who has worked as a radio analyst since his retirement in 1998. “That’s a lot of football,” White said. “Some of it’s been very good, some of it not so good, but I’ve loved it all.” Through five coaches and thousands of players, White has pulled for the Catamounts while doing his jobs and has made friends everywhere he’s gone.

His streak began in 1970 when the young WCU graduate was hired as the school’s SID. A young coach named Bob Waters was in his second season building a solid program in Cullowhee, and part of White’s job was attending games, catering to the media’s needs and taking care of statistics decades before computers or even fax machines made the job easier.

And there was one memorable day when the streak almost ended. “The closest call came in 1982, when my wife was pregnant,” said White. “It was about noon and I was getting ready to leave for the game at (ETSU) when my wife said, ‘I believe today is the day.’ I said, ‘Yep, it’s big day. It’s football day and I’m leaving for the game at (ETSU).’”

White delivered the goods to his wife and got the OK to leave. He got there right at the kickoff and (ETSU SID) John Cathey had already passed out cigars in the press box, and afterward the team gave me the game ball.”

Several dramatic games stand out—a playoff game at Holy Cross in 1983 when WCU was en route to playing for the I-AA national championship, a 1975 battle against the Appalachian State Mountaineers where the Catamounts were a touchdown away from the national title, and the 1989 win at East Tennessee State in which WCU’s 24-game losing streak was snapped.

“ать nearly 1,000 WCU basketball games has missed only about a dozen, usually when basketball conflicts with a football game.”

“ать nearly 1,000 WCU basketball games has missed only about a dozen, usually when basketball conflicts with a football game.”

Steve White ’67 has seen 402 football games—and counting.

The 19th annual Catamount Club Athletics Scholarship Auction is relocating to Hickory this year, a move designed to reduce the cost of staging the event so that more money goes directly to help WCU student-athletes. The 2007 auction, the highlight of a full weekend slate of activities for Catamount backers, is set for Saturday, June 2, at the Hickory Metro Convention Center.

Before the bidding begins, auction-goers can visit the Hickory Furniture Mart to take advantage of discount offers, play golf with fellow Western supporters, or relax in the spa at Rock Barn Country Club with special discounts for Catamount fans.

“ать Metro Center recently underwent a substantial renovation, and offers a very attractive site for our auction,” said Bill Richter, director of athletics development. “The layout for the silent and main auction, the banquet and the checkout area will be much more convenient for everyone. Also, this location can comfortably accommodate our growing auction family of nearly 600 participants and is within easy driving distance for most of our Catamount Club members and supporters.”

Relocating to the Hickory facility is expected to cut auction expenses in half, and will allow the club to save about $18,000—roughly the equivalent of two full, in-state scholarships, Richter said. “That fact alone made this decision a ‘no-brainer,’” he said.

Auction activities get under way with a Catamount coaches’ reception at 6:30 p.m. featuring updates from WCU head coaches.

The silent auction area opens at 5:30 p.m. and remains open for bidding until 7:15 p.m. Dinner and the main auction get under way at 7:45 p.m.

Reservations are now available for $70 per individual, $135 per couple, or $500 per table of eight. Reservations include admission to the coaches’ reception and to the silent and main auction, the banquet dinner, and two complimentary beverages at the cash bar. The Catamount Club also is currently soliciting donations of auction items and is offering sponsorship packages.

For more information about sponsorship opportunities or contributing items, or to make a reservation, contact the Catamount Club at (828) 227-3047 or toll-free at (800) 492-8496, e-mail brichter@wcu.edu or visit the Web site at www.wcu.edu/catamountclub. Information about accommodations and shopping, golf and spa outings also can be found online.

The Catamount football program lost one of its most loyal supporters March 23 when Raymond Stovall of Sylva passed away at age 86 after a period of declining health. Stovall had attended every home Western Carolina football game for more than 50 years before health problems halted the streak last fall. Upon noticing that one of their biggest fans wasn’t in the stadium, Head Football Coach Kent Briggs ’79 MAEd ’81 and three Catamount seniors visited Stovall last spring. From left to right are Bennett Sowrige, Briggs Stovall, Robb Bullard and Darius Pudge.

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In less than a year, former Catamount basketball player Corey Muirhead ’06 has gone from Western Carolina to Eastern Austria. And the change has been dramatic. “It was definitely a culture shock in every sense of the word,” said Muirhead, who turns 24 in June. “The people, the food; it was definitely an adjustment.”

Muirhead ended his basketball career at WCU during the 2005-06 season as he averaged 12 points, 5.1 rebounds and 2.4 assists in 30 games. With the help of an agent, he went to Oberwart, Austria, in August to begin this pro basketball career. “Out of college, I signed to play in Poland for Znicz of Jaroslav,” said Berghoeffer, who averaged 11.4 points per game for WCU in the 2005-06 season. “A couple weeks after training camp began, I broke my foot and had to come to the States and get it looked at. As the doctor gave me the clearance to play, I chose Austria because of the short season. I didn’t know how my foot was going to hold up, so I took the safe route.”

Berghoeffer, who needed an internship to finish up his degree in sport management, said he had to adjust to life both on and off the court. “The level of play has changed drastically for my position. In college, I was going up against people around my size or smaller. Out of eight teams here, I’ve been taller than two opponents that I’ve matched up with and that’s only by an inch. There are three players taller than 7-2 here,” he said. “Off the court, the hardest adjustment has to be maintaining a good diet. I haven’t mastered the art of cooking. At school, I had access to a cafeteria, which always had cooked food.”

King scored 26.5 points per game for WCU in 1994-95, and had the second-best mark in the nation in that category. He was drafted in the second round by the Los Angeles Lakers in 1995, and has played in the NBA for the Lakers and Philadelphia 76ers. Since the late 1990s, the Georgia native has played in Greece, France, Venezuela, Turkey, Israel and Cyprus. He began this season with Deltalcon APOEL Nicosia in Cyprus.

Brempong averaged 8.6 points and 6.0 rebounds per game in his last season at WCU in 2004-05. He then began his pro career with the Matrixx Magic Nijmegen in the Netherlands in 2005-06, and he averaged 9.9 points and 10.5 rebounds per game in his first season. He signed a two-year contract with the team prior to this season.

Catamounts to European hoops extend to the current coaching staff. Anquell McCollum ’00, assistant coach and former Catamount standout, played four seasons as a pro after his college career ended in 1996, with stints in France, Venezuela, Colombia, Hong Kong and the Dominican Republic, as well as in the United States Basketball League. “I met people from different cultures. It was a great experience. When I went to France, that was the first time I had been out of the States,” McCollum said.

Most teams in Europe allow at least two non-European players, and most of the time they are North Americans. Most North American imports are provided the free use of an apartment and a car, and their salaries are normally tax-free. The Catamounts playing overseas are adjusting to some of the rule differences in Europe—the ball can be touched inside the cylinder once it hits the rim, the game consists of quarters; the three-second lane is wider near the basket; and a player must clearly put the ball on the floor before he picks up his pivot foot, or walking will be called. Muirhead says his experience as a Catamount readied him to deal with those adjustments, whether in transitioning from man-to-man to zone defense, or to life in a foreign country. “I couldn’t have been prepared any better than I was at Western Carolina. We practice two times a day, six days a week in Austria. It is very demanding. But it is not as intense as the college level,” he said.
Twice in his lifetime, Dan Robinson ’50 has stepped forward to help “change the course of history.” The first time occurred on the famed “D-Day” of World War II, when he and thousands of other soldiers were called upon to help save the world from Nazi domination. The second instance came 56 years later, in Cullowhee, when Robinson played a major role in igniting the biggest construction campaign in Western Carolina history.

A McDowell County native, McDaniel Robinson was just 17 when he joined the U.S. Navy and was chosen to enter gunnery school. Robinson became a member of the Navy’s amphibious forces and a crew member on a 315-foot-long vessel. With huge hinged doors in its bow and a flat bottom, the LST (Landing Ship, Tank) was designed to deposit troops and tanks onto shore. In March 1944, Robinson and his fellow crew members sailed their LST across the Atlantic to England.

D-Day, the largest seaborne invasion in military history, began early on June 6, 1944, as Allied troops crossed the English Channel to invade German-occupied France at Normandy. About 4 a.m., gunner’s mate Robinson and crew were involved in the invasion’s second wave as they unloaded their cargo of Canadian troops into 4 feet of water at Juno Beach. Their LST was quickly converted into a floating hospital as injured Canadians began returning to the vessel. The battle for Normandy continued for more than two months and concluded with the liberation of Paris. Nazi control of Western Europe was broken, foreshadowing the end of Adolph Hitler’s dream of Nazi rule.

Robinson served on the Navy LST for 15 months in Europe, and when the war ended he left the military and enrolled at WCU in the fall of 1946. As a Catamount football player, starting on both offense and defense, Robinson was co-captain of the 1949 team that won the North State Conference Championship, WCU’s first football title.

After receiving his bachelor’s degree in education at Western and earning a master’s degree in educational administration and physical education at George Peabody College, Robinson worked as a teacher and football coach in high schools, but he returned to WCU as head football coach in 1956. He guided the Catamounts through 1968, recording several outstanding seasons while working with the Carolina Conference’s smallest budget. Robinson also taught health and physical education during those years, and continued as a faculty member until his retirement in 1986. He met his wife of 44 years, Jean, when she was attending WCU, and the couple has three children who attended Western.

Robinson was honored with an honorary doctorate of humane letters in December in recognition of his contributions to WCU and education in North Carolina, and in particular for his advocacy on behalf of Western when N.C. voters approved the historic bond issue for higher education in 2000. Robinson’s influence as a state senator directly led to Western’s share of the bond funds being increased from $38 million to $98.4 million, making possible the construction and renovation projects that have transformed the campus since then, Chancellor John W. Bardo said.

“The record really needs to show what this man did for this university,” Bardo said. “There are few people whose lives are able to change the course of history at an institution. One such person is Dan Robinson.”

Dan Robinson ’50, former player and coach for the Catamount football team, shows off some of his memorabilia, including old copies of The Western Carolinian, a football from the 1949 North State Conference Championship team, and letterman jackets.
THE WILD LIFE
Outdoors, Critters Benefit from Work of Former Athletics Director
By DANNY YOUNG ’79

Since his retirement from Western in 1992, Bobby N. Setzer ’57 MAEd ’60 has been much too busy to get bored. The former assistant football coach and athletics director, who also is professor emeritus of industrial education and technology, has devoted much of his energy during the last 15 years to ensuring that Western North Carolina’s natural resources are treated with the respect they deserve.

Appointed to the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission in 1993, Setzer, as chairman of the Coldwater Fisheries Committee, immediately set to work upgrading the commission’s four trout hatcheries. As a result of his efforts, the commission spent more than $2 million from 1992 until 2004 to renovate the hatcheries, increasing by 15 percent both the production of catchable-sized trout and the average size of hatchery-raised trout. Just before his retirement from the commission in 2005, the Pisgah Fish Hatchery, located near Brevard and the state’s largest hatchery, was renamed the Bobby N. Setzer State Fish Hatchery, honoring his innovations and accomplishments during two six-year terms as District 9 representative. One of those accomplishments was the introduction of the popular delayed-harvest trout-fishing program in Western North Carolina.

In renaming the hatchery, N.C. Wildlife Commission officials praised Setzer’s dedication and compared him to another state treasure, North Carolina’s only native trout species: “Like the brook trout, Bobby is a native son of the mountains.” A more appropriate comparison couldn’t be found—he has been an avid trout fishermen since his formative years in Haywood County.

“Since childhood, I had enjoyed fishing the streams and hunting the mountains of Western North Carolina, and I welcomed the opportunity to work toward making hunting and fishing opportunities available to present and future generations,” Setzer said. “My votes on new regulations and policies during my 12-year tenure on the commission were governed mainly by two principles. First, young people should be given opportunities to hunt and fish, and to practice ethical ways of harvesting game. Second, my vote should always be on the side of the environment and the critter.”

Another significant honor for Setzer was receiving the Order of the Long Leaf Pine, the highest civilian award in North Carolina, presented to individuals who have a proven record of service to the state through a long history of service to their community. Gov. Mike Easley recognized Setzer with the award in May 2005.

Other recognitions highlight Setzer’s conservation work: In 1999, the Southern Appalachian Multiple Use Council awarded him the Natural Resources Stewardship Award. The Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation recognized him in 2001 for his significant contribution to the experimental release of elk in Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Also in 2001, the Bowhunters Association of North Carolina named him Wildlife Commissioner of the Year.

In addition, Setzer, who was on the board of directors of the Cullowhee Volunteer Fire Department until 2006, served from 1995 to 2003 on the Pigeon River Board, a group whose purpose was to clean up the Pigeon River in Canton. Setzer and wife Anne ’59 MAEd ’67 celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary in December. They have four children and 10 grandchildren.

ACCOUNT ABILITY
Commitment to People, Innovation Drives CPA
By TERESA KULLI

Ken Hughes ’74 has been known to schedule an extra four hours driving or a midnight flight just to make it back in time for his daughter’s basketball game. That’s just who Hughes is —someone who goes the distance for people.

He does so for his clients and co-workers at Dixon Hughes, a certified public accounting firm he helped grow into one of the 20 largest in the nation. In the 1980s, Hughes made room for shared file cabinets and a refrigerator in his part of a three-room office in downtown Asheville. Today, the Asheville office fills a three-story, 26,000-square-foot building, and Hughes, co-chief executive officer, travels to offices across the Southeast where more than 1,000 Dixon Hughes employees serve individual, regional, national and international clients. The firm’s annual revenues exceed $160 million.

Hughes, who recently won Western’s Professional Achievement Award, says the grace of God, a commitment to people, hard work and, especially, great teammates helped him get where he is today. “In business, you surround yourself with good people who share your values and your vision. I’ve just been fortunate to associate with a lot of great people,” he said.

They say they are fortunate to associate with him, too. Ed Cody ’79 followed Hughes not just to one job, but two. A recruiting visit led Cody to an accounting firm in South Carolina where Hughes worked. “When I got there, Ken was packing his office to leave for a new job,” Cody said. Several years later, Hughes invited Cody to join him at a firm just getting off the ground. “I chose again to follow Ken because of his vision, his excitement and his dedication, and it has been a great journey,” said Cody, partner in charge of Dixon Hughes’ health care consulting group.

When a high school physics class turned Hughes away from engineering, an aptitude test and a course at Western steered him to accounting. “I don’t think I could have imagined the doors that opened as a result of going to Western," said Hughes. A freshman math professor helped him understand the difference between getting by and going all out. Another faculty member, Monty Lindsey, helped him and other students gain working experience in Sylva and at regional internships.

Hughes worked in South Carolina until partnering with Mitch Crisp ’75 at a new firm in Western North Carolina. “I’m in Asheville by choice,” Hughes said. “When I am waiting for a connecting flight, I think about how I only have to go through two traffic lights to get to work.”

His participation and leadership in state, national and international professional accounting organizations has taken him to the United Kingdom, Germany, Russia, Brazil, Italy, Mexico and Australia. In 2004, Accounting Today named Hughes one of the 100 Most Influential People in Accounting.

“I got to know Ken when we were business competitors. He’s honest, ethical and always trying to figure out how to do the right thing,” said Eddie Sams, former CEO of Dixon Odom and now co-CEO of Dixon Hughes. “Together we concluded that our two firms could work through a merger successfully that would majorly impact our profession. That has been the case.”

When a shoulder injury delayed Jennifer Gardner ’05 from playing basketball overseas, the former Lady Catamount known as “Baby Shaq” put her degree in criminal justice to work at the Norcross Police Department.

As a forward at Western, Gardner practically rewrote the Southern Conference tournament record book. She scored 45 points to help the Lady Cats outlast Georgia Southern 97-95 in double overtime and claim Western’s first Southern Conference championship. Along the way, she set new tournament records for points (106), rebounds (43), field goals (33), free throws attempted (44) and free throws made (37). “Individually, it was the highlight of my career,” said Gardner, who was named Most Outstanding Player.

A play-related injury, though, put her basketball career on hold. A tear to the labrum in her left shoulder required surgery. A play-related injury, though, put her basketball career on hold. A tear to the labrum in her left shoulder required surgery.

“The delay allowed her to pursue a different dream—one that she also prepared for as a student at Western. “I have always been interested in the law,” said Gardner, who finished a degree in criminal justice with a 3.34 grade-point average. “I know I can’t save the world, but I feel I can make a difference. I like being in a position where I can make an influence on young people, not just putting to a car at a traffic stop for something negative but getting to them before something negative can happen.”

Gardner seized the chance to return to her hometown in Georgia and join the Norcross Police Department. “I relate law enforcement to playing basketball because that’s what is easiest for me,” Gardner said. “The chief is your head coach and you have your assistant coaches. Just like in basketball, you have your steps and you have to practice. There’s so much to learn.”

Community members such as Gardner’s former high school head coach, Mike Lee, are excited about what she has achieved. “She’s a wonderful role model to have in the community and the school,” said Lee, who is still coaching at Norcross. “We loved her for her basketball skills, but we’re most proud of her for graduating with that degree.”

Story reprinted in edited form courtesy of the Quinnett Daily Post.

Basketball Star Courts Law Enforcement Career

By SCOTT SMITH

Jennifer Gardner ’05, former WCU basketball star, is now a member of the Norcross Police Department.
The Old Guard assumed the post of guarding the Tomb in 1948, and soldiers chosen for the honor must have spotless records and “impeccable military bearing,” according to information from The Old Guard. “With this assignment, too, I feel incredibly honored, humbled and blessed to have the opportunity to be part of it,” Tilley said. “At the Tomb, the standard is absolute perfection, but it is worth it to honor and remember the men who gave not only their lives but also their identities.”

Photos of military honors for former President Gerald R. Ford.

1968 Floretta C. Graham, one of the first African Americans to receive a bachelor’s degree in education from Western, retired in July after teaching 38 years in Pitt County Schools. In a letter of congratulations, Michael Houghton, dean of the College of Education and Allied Professions, said: “As you enter this new phase of your life, you will be taking on new activities and new challenges. But one thing will always remain.

You made a difference in the lives of countless students over the years. You can say with pride, I was a teacher; I touched the future. I made a difference, and that’s what matters.” Graham is pictured with Beverly Reep, superintendent of Pitt County Schools, and Michael Dixon, chairman of the board of education.

1975 In October, Elaine Brooks Harwood was appointed director of the adult nurse practitioner program at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill School of Nursing. As director, Harwood is responsible for training advanced practice nurses to provide diverse populations with compassionate, competent and culturally relevant care. One of her priorities is to increase access to the program through distance learning so nurses across the state and the nation can pursue their educational goals at UNC. Another priority for Harwood is expanding global health opportunities for students. “Many of our students come to us with the desire to serve the citizens of the world. A number already have experience in underdeveloped communities both here and abroad. I want our students to explore health issues that transcend national boundaries and take advantage of the opportunities to meet these challenges,” she said. The adult nurse practitioner program at UNC-Chapel Hill is consistently ranked in the top 10 graduate nursing schools programs, according to U.S. News and World Report. Harwood has two children, Camille Harwood Stephens and Gregory Brooks Harwood.

1978 Director of branch sales and product training for Le Blu Corporation, Gregory House was elected last May to the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County High School Sports Hall of Fame. At RJ Reynolds High School, he lettered in football, wrestling and baseball and made All Conference. He was All District and All City-County teams in both football and baseball. With a 471 batting average, he led the district his senior year. Should he receive a football scholarship to play for Coach Bob Walters in the early 1970s, he and wife Marla could have two sons—Taylor, 16, and Logan, 12. 1979 Last August, Bobby Justice MBA ’88 was appointed university controller at Western. He has served the university in various capacities for almost 25 years.

1982 A nationally recognized leader in the field of museum education, Ray Williams last August was appointed head of education at the Rhode Island School of Design Museum of Art. Named “Art Museum Educator of the Year” in 1997 by the National Art Education Association, Williams brings to RISD years of experience from various museums, including Peabody Essex Museum in Salem, Mass, Freer and Sackler Galleries at the Smithsonian Institution, and University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill’s Ackland Art Museum, where he was the first curator of education. He also brings a philosophy that underscores his devotion to his work: “Art museums have a responsibility to put their collections to work in the world—to heighten our appreciation of beauty, to raise questions about society, to teach us about our differences and commonalities…. They show us who we have been and suggest who we might become.”

1983 Benjamin A. Combs has been named senior vice president and regional manager in the leasing and management group at Washington, D.C., for Jones, Lang LaSalle, one of the largest full-service commercial real estate companies in the world. Combs heads the company’s operations in Northern Virginia and Maryland as well as in Washington, D.C. He and wife Page live in Ashburn, Va., with daughters Abby, 12, and Giselle and Erica, 11.

1984 Working for Old-Mart in sporting goods, Shawn Clark moved to a new “super center” in Winston-Salem at the end of 2006. A resident of Winston-Salem, Clark is working on a book about creative dreaming and psychic phenomena. Associate professor of emergency medical care for Eastern Kentucky University’s department of law enforcement and safety.

Sandy Hunter, who earned his doctorate in educational psychology in 2005, recently was appointed to the board of directors for the Committee of Accreditation for Education for the Emergency Medical Services Professions, the nationally recognized accrediting agency for EMS programs. He also will continue as a site reviewer.

Former assistant principal at West Lincoln High School in Lincoln County, Lt. Col. Robbie Robbins ’84 is currently serving a one-year tour in Iraq, helping train, equip and mentor Iraqi police and security forces. A 24-year veteran of the Army Reserves, Robbins lives on a compound with a group of Australians contracted by the U.S. government to train the National Police, which serves as a bridge between the Iraqi police and their military. “I’m the American making sure they do what the commander wants,” he said. “I’m the government’s eyes and ears,” he told the Lincoln Times-News.” Wife Phyllis, son Jarrett (17), and daughter Chaffi (16) are at home in Lincoln, but the rest of their family is with him in Iraq. As chief of staff for the 600-person unit, Robbins said he is missing his son’s greater football season at North Lincoln High School and watching his daughter, a junior, cheer each Friday night. Home on leave in September, he went to two games. For the others, he was thankful for a live Internet Web cast of the school system’s technicians set up for him to see all his school’s games on a private Web page. The streaming video provided audio and visual access to the home address, announced, focused on Jarrett during play, and included shots of Robbin’s wife and daughter. It was nice, he said, but it wasn’t the same as being there in person.

Scheduled to return home in June, Robbins looks forward to a change of scenery in the form of a new challenge. Selected for battalion command, he will spend one weekend a month for the next two or three years in Orlando, Fl. And he anticipates returning to the duties of assistant principal. Along with memories of being away this time in Iraq, he will come home with a greater sense of appreciation for the life we too often take for granted. “Being over there makes you appreciate America,” he said.
We are fortunate indeed to have her on campus and in our community,” said Michelle Pearce, director of the conservatory. Vassian’s tenure has helped bring many new opportunities for students, including the creation of a new major in music and the expansion of the conservatory’s offerings. She is also known for her commitment to community engagement, often collaborating with local organizations and businesses to promote the arts and cultural diversity. Her passion for teaching and her dedication to her students have inspired many, making her a beloved figure on campus.

In recognition of her contributions, Vassian has been honored with numerous awards and recognitions, including the Western Carolina University Alumni Association’s Alumni Award of Merit in 2018. She is a true exemplar of what it means to be a teacher, a mentor, and a leader, and Western Carolina University is grateful for her service and dedication. We wish her all the best in her future endeavors. Congratulations, Dr. Vassian!
May 2007

**Saturday, May 5**
Spring going commencement. 2 p.m. Ramsey Regional Activity Center. (828) 227-7495

Catamount baseball—vs. Appalachian State. Southern Conference game. 7 p.m. Hennon Stadium/Childress Field. (828) 227-7338

**Sunday, May 6**
Catamount baseball—vs. Appalachian State. Southern Conference game. 2 p.m. Hennon Stadium/Childress Field. (828) 227-7338

**Wednesday, May 9**
Catamount baseball—vs. Coastal Carolina. 7 p.m. Hennon Stadium/Childress Field. (828) 227-7338

**Thursday, May 10—Sunday, May 13**
Softball—Southern Conference Championship Tournament. Greensboro. (828) 227-7338

**Tuesday, May 15**
Catamount baseball—vs. High Point. 7 p.m. Hennon Stadium/Childress Field. (828) 227-7338

**Thursday, May 17—Saturday, May 19**

**Tuesday, May 22—Saturday, May 26**
Baseball—Southern Conference Championship Tournament. Riley Park, Charleston. (828) 227-7338

**Wednesday, May 23**
Stadin’s Summer Shorts Series—N.C. Symphony “Blue Skies and Red Earth Tour,” showcasing the state’s traditional music. 7:30 p.m., Fine and Performing Arts Center. (828) 227-2479

June 2007

**Saturday, June 2**
Auction—19th Annual Catamount Club Scholarship Auction. Metro Convention Center, Hickory. (828) 421-4786, jonathan.yates@wcu.edu

**Saturday, June 16**
Suzilin’s Summer Shorts Series—“The Johnny Counterfit Show,” featuring “the Rich Little of country music.” 7:30 p.m. Performance Hall, Fine and Performing Arts Center. (828) 227-2479

**Sunday, June 24—Friday, June 29**
Mountain Dulcimer Week—the country’s top performers and educators share their experience and skill. Evening concerts Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. (828) 227-7397 or (800) 928-4968

July 2007

**Saturday, July 7**
Suzilin’s Summer Shorts Series—“Anser the Eccentric,” Broadway clown, mime and master of the art of physical comedy. 7:30 p.m. Fine and Performing Arts Center. (828) 227-2479

**Sunday, July 15—Thursday, July 19**
Pride of the Mountains Marching Band Symposium—drum major, leadership and marching percussion tracks for high school students; tracks for adults who serve as judges for marching band activities; tracks for marching band directors; and staff currently active in band competition. (828) 227-7397 or (800) 928-4968

**Wednesday, July 18—Saturday, July 21**
The Cullowhee Conference—Native Plants in the Landscape, designed to increase knowledge of native Southeastern plant species. (828) 227-7397 or (800) 928-4968

**Tuesday, July 24**
Suzilin’s Summer Shorts Series—24th annual Folkmoot USA, North Carolina’s official international folk festival. Fine and Performing Arts Center. (828) 457-2997

August 2007

**Friday, August 3**
Summer commencement. 7 p.m. Ramsey Regional Activity Center. (227-7495)

Dynamic Downtown Duo

Helping lead the resurgence of Waynesville’s Main Street business district are Julie Chitea ’91, mortgage loan officer at United Community Bank in Waynesville, and Greg Boothroyd ’95, advertising director for the Smoky Mountain News. The two Western alums are members of the Downtown Waynesville Association, which guides the town’s award-winning Main Street revitalization efforts. Julie and husband Geoff Chitea, a construction industry executive, have two children—Caleb, 8, and Megan 4. Greg and wife Jennie Boothroyd ’94, a registered dietician at the VA Hospital in Asheville, welcomed daughter Regan to the family in February, joining sister Molly, 4.

2006

Anne Leadford, promotions director for WIZQ-FM (93.7 FM) in Greensboro, married Chris Sapp last October.

Deaths

Burley Champion ’71, March 13; Chattanooga, Tenn.

Peggy Jo Gibbs ’55, Feb. 21; Wilmington.

Wanda Hasell Forrest ’82 MAEd, Dec. 1; Cullowhee.

Sue Carlton Haigler ’39, Dec. 4; Cheraw, S.C.

Charles E. Milner ’47, Dec. 25; Waynesville.

Randall Courtsworht Mason ’74, Feb. 7, Charleston, S.C.

Terry Lee Smith ’85 June 10; Old Fort.


Shannon Glenn Trantham ’00, Nov. 24; Sylva.

Laura Vannoy ’90, Sept. 25; Maumee, Ohio.

Clara McGuire Wendt ’38, July 5, Brandenburg, Ky.

Mike Wix ’80, July 5; Brandenburg, Ky.

Irene Biles Wooten ’32 Dec. 4; Cheraw, S.C.

University Deaths

William Chester Buchanan, former professor of art, Dec, 23; Lerville, Ky.

Joseph H. Rogers, retired staff, Nov. 1, Waynesville.

2003

The Halifax County Sheriff Office’s Mark Macon, who had been with the department since 1991, was named police chief of Weldon in September. Mayor John Draper said Macon’s four-year degree in law enforcement was a huge factor in the decision. Earning that degree was a goal that took more than 10 years to attain. When Macon left Chowan College for the 1990 Gulf War, he didn’t lose more than 10 years to attain. When Macon left Chowan College for the 1990 Gulf War, he didn’t lose more than 10 years to attain. When Macon left Chowan College for the 1990 Gulf War, he didn’t lose more than 10 years to attain. When Macon left Chowan College for the 1990 Gulf War, he didn’t lose more than 10 years to attain. When Macon left Chowan College for the 1990 Gulf War, he didn’t lose

 clients and Bryan’s co-workers,” said Adam Carrow. a Wilson Miller vice president and manager of the GIS corporate business unit. Piersol credited Western for his success. “I certainly wouldn’t be where I am today if it weren’t for my outstanding academic background.”
New York stage star Jared Bradshaw and a cast of students and community members thrilled sell-out crowds in the spring semester production of “The Music Man.” The show marked the Cullowhee directorial debut of Terrence Mann, the new Phillips Distinguished Professor of Musical Theatre. For information about upcoming events, see page 24.