PEDAL PUSHER

During the 40 years he’s been commuting to Western on his bicycle, the price of gas has risen from about 33 cents per gallon to more than $3 per gallon, but for the professor emeritus of health and human performance the unconventional ride to work isn’t about saving gas; it’s about preserving health. The 80-year-old campus fitness legend still pedals the four round-trip miles from his home to campus every chance he gets, providing there’s no snow or ice on the roads, and he does so on a heavy tandem bike that was given to him 25 years ago. And, in addition to the obvious fitness benefits, the ride gives Spilker, who still teaches part time, a chance to promote Western’s Loyalty Fund to those he passes on the road.
New leaders include, from left, Wendy S. Zabava Ford, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences; Linda Seestedt-Stanford, dean of the College of Health and Human Sciences; and Ronald A. Johnson, dean of the College of Business.

Pictured at right is H. Samuel Miller, vice chancellor for the Division of Student Affairs.
The grant will enable the continuation of a pilot project initiated in 2005 by Rob Young, director of PSDS and professor of geosciences, in which 25 young people from Washington’s Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe had the chance to see firsthand how the nation’s largest dam removal project will affect a river system with deep spiritual and cultural significance to the tribe. The new Elwha Science Education Project will attempt to increase the number of tribal high school–age students involved in the project, expand the program to reach students in grades six through eight, and determine if the teaching methods developed through the project will work with other tribes.

“The project is unique in that the kids will be taught science and culture side-by-side. We hope this makes the science more interesting and more relevant,” said Young, a coastal geology specialist. “We are combining stories that are important to the tribe with scientific activities at many sites along the river. We hope to convince tribal young people that they can be scientists, and that science has something relevant to offer them and their community.”

Many tribes across the United States, including the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe, are using environmental restoration projects to help reclaim their altered cultural heritage. The construction of the 108-foot-tall Elwha Dam and the 210-foot Glines Canyon Dam on the Elwha River more than 70 years ago choked off salmon runs for most of the past century and dramatically changed what was once a sandy coastal environment. The flooding of the Elwha River Valley altered many sites considered sacred by tribal members. Young has been involved in the Elwha Dam removal project since 2004, helping design a long-term plan to monitor the impact of the removal of the dams on the coastal environment at the river’s mouth. Dam removal will release several million cubic yards of sediment into the Elwha, all of which will find its way to the estuary on the Strait of Juan de Fuca. Scientists believe the sediment influx will have a positive impact on the coast, bolstering salt marshes and growing beaches. Young is using the precedent-setting coastal restoration project as a research, service and learning opportunity for his geoscience students at WCU, in addition to his work with the tribe.

“We believe that emphasizing the importance of the geosciences for environmental restoration and cultural revitalization, and that enabling Native American kids to carry out restoration-based geoscience research projects in an area of immense cultural importance to those kids will ultimately increase the overall representation of Native Americans in geoscience careers and will raise the profile of the geosciences within Native American communities,” said Young. “It is my belief that our initial project has successfully raised the awareness of the importance of the geosciences among an entire community. We need to continue the momentum and partnerships that we have established by expanding our activities. Now that we have their attention, let’s see if we can turn some of them into geoscientists.”

Students will be involved with hands-on geoscience education activities that are integrated into traditional, culturally based summer activities already sponsored by the tribe. To help ensure the participation of the tribe’s young people in the project, donating their time to the effort are many tribal leaders, including tribal elders, educators and employees, members of the tribal council and concerned citizens.

Frances Charles, chairperson of the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe, said the tribe is highly supportive of Young’s work. “The project is a perfect fit for the tribal efforts to encourage our high school students to consider a college education after high school,” Charles said. “The tribe has worked very hard to accomplish the restoration of the Elwha River, but we have very few members with college degrees. The program uses the restoration of the Elwha River, which is important to all tribal members, to emphasize the importance of the geosciences to the restoration effort. We cannot overstate our support of continuing this successful program and sharing with the Jamestown and Port Gamble Klallam tribes over the next five years.”

Partners in the project with the tribes and PSDS are Olympic National Park, Olympic Park Institute, National Park Service, and the Port Angeles and Crescent school districts in Washington.

The Program for the Study of Developed Shorelines, the internationally known center integrating coastal science and management that relocated from Duke University to Western last fall, has been awarded a $1.5 million grant designed to research the coastal impact of dam removal in Washington state while increasing the number of Native American youths interested in careers in geosciences and environmental restoration. The five-year award to PSDS is the largest National Science Foundation grant ever received by Western, said Michelle Hargis, associate dean of the Graduate School and Research.
For the past four summers, the Western campus has been transformed into a veritable artists’ colony as internationally acclaimed artists, scholars and critics descend upon Cullowhee to serve as visiting lecturers in the university’s graduate degree program in fine arts. Launched in 2004, the program leading to the master of fine arts degree—the terminal degree in the visual arts—is once again hiring an array of expertise to Western, from an India-born contemporary visual artist to a New York City gallery curator, and from a figurative sculptor who has taught at the acclaimed Penland School of Crafts to a small business consultant sharing the hard truths about the business side of a career in the arts. Richard Tichich, director of Western’s recently reorganized School of Art and Design, called exposure to a wide variety of diverse viewpoints “absolutely vital” to the success of the MFA program. “If we were located in downtown New York, we would want to bring in visiting artists from all over the world to give our students the opportunity to interact with as many different perspectives as possible. It’s no different for a program located in Western North Carolina,” said Tichich. “We think that when our students graduate from here, they should be equally expected to meet with national and international artists. In order to do that, it behooves us to bring in people of that caliber. And that is precisely what we do.”

After this summer, however, it won’t be just during the months of June, July and August when art students will find themselves interacting with visiting artists from across the nation, acclaimed scholars and critics, and successful gallery owners and curators—in addition to WCU faculty members from the School of Art and Design. Due to popular demand, the MFA program is evolving into a year-round activity. University officials originally envisioned the program as consisting of three intensive summer residencies of 10 weeks combined with out-of-residence independent studio work, research and writing, a structure designed to fit the needs of graduate students already working in the profession, many with established careers and families.

In a studio at the Fine and Performing Arts Center, Tai Lipan MFA ’06, explores painting that depicts new realities.

Susan Lucier MFA ’07 prepares her artwork “‘DO NOT’ Sign” for the Master of Fine Arts Thesis Exhibition in the Fine Art Museum at the Fine and Performing Arts Center.

“When the program first started, we had about 20 students come to campus for the first summer residency,” Tichich said. “When the summer was over, we found that about 10 of them wanted to stay for the whole year. It turned out that many of the students attracted to program wanted a more traditional approach, and they wanted to go ahead and complete their degrees as quickly as possible.” To meet the needs of those students, the School of Art and Design is now accepting MFA students into year-long residencies, while maintaining the summer residency option to those students currently in the program.

Expansion of the visiting artist schedule into the fall and spring semesters will have an additional benefit, Tichich said. “By shifting our guest faculty and artists in-residence throughout the entire year, our undergraduate students also will be able to take advantage of their experience, their expertise and their insights,” he said. “That will enrich the program for all involved, as undergraduates, graduate students, permanent faculty and visiting artists come together to share ideas and engage in the processes of creativity and artistic expression.”

CONTINUED on page 10
In addition to a 1,000-seat performance hall capable of hosting three-dimensional art (sculpture and ceramics) and professional art (including painting, drawing and printmaking), the $30 million, 122,000-square-foot showplace for the arts that opened in 2005. The university’s studios and classrooms in two-dimensional art (including painting, drawing and printmaking), three-dimensional art (sculpture and ceramics) and integrated multimedia (video, design, film, photography, book arts and experimental media) are located in the Fine and Performing Arts Center, the $30 million, 122,000-square-foot showcase for the arts that opened in 2005. In addition to a 1,000-seat performance hall capable of hosting Broadway-quality shows, the center features a wing dedicated to the visual arts, with 10,000-square-feet of exhibit space—including the Fine Art Museum.

"Think we have among the finest facilities in the country," said Tichich, who came to Western in 2006 from the University of Texas at San Antonio. "We want to integrate our undergraduate and graduate programs to be more in line with the quality of facilities where they are housed." Pennsylvania College of Art & Science, is among the program graduates putting their educations to use with careers in the artistic world. "Many of my exhibition experiences while at WCU laid the groundwork for exhibiting my own work, and planning, hanging and hosting exhibitions at PCASKD," Lettke said. She also finds herself working with a familiar figure from her graduate school days, as she will be hosting a solo exhibition this autumn with acclaimed painter Judy Glantzman, who was among the artists visiting Cullowhee during a previous summer intensive session. "Glantzman challenged me to delve deeper and become fully engaged in my studio," Lettke said. "The summer program was an intense experience with a great range of visiting artists, each with a unique creative vision. Working with practicing artists who drew from and taught from their wide range of experience was more beneficial than any textbook course ever could have been."

As a river guide and canoe instructor, Phyllis Jarvinen MA ’80 studied how water moved—so much that at times she ran rapid at night in her dreams. The more she stared at water, the more she thought about how she would paint it, and, now, a child therapist returning to WCU as a student in the master of fine arts degree program, she does. Jarvinen layers transparent colors on canvas to capture the movement and personality of rivers and creeks. She then journals about what the images suggest to her. In her painting "Kephart IV – Interpretation of Dreams," smooth rocks border a pool on Kephart Prong, where water pours over a rock into a new, unseen part of the creek. An excerpt from Jarvinen’s accompanying journal entry is about possibilities and dreams: “What someone else sees as my folly or failure I hope is my best lesson and the stepping stone to seeing my vision through to success.” For Jarvinen, that’s what her painting is about—seeing a new possibility in her life and making it reality. Though her degree prepared her for a career in psychology, she also loved—and loves—drawing and painting. “As a child, I remember looking at pictures of water in books and wondering how they made it look transparent,” said Jarvinen. She wove art classes into her class schedule in high school, in college, in Bryson City while she worked for Nantahala Outdoor Center, and at Western when she worked on campus. “While taking my first art class at WCU, I had a strong feeling that I had ‘come home’ to something I needed to do more of, and with WCU Professor Patricia Bailey’s encouragement, decided to pursue that interest by taking more art and art history classes,” said Jarvinen, who describes painting as the closest she has ever come to meditating. Jarvinen also uses painting to support causes she believes in. Notecards made from her depictions of pets have been donated to nonprofit organizations that reach out to animals who are rescued or need homes. She also supports land and river conservation efforts, as well as KIDS Place, the children’s advocacy center in Franklin where she works as a therapist. To further her art, Jarvinen recently spent a year taking undergraduate art classes at the University of Minnesota before her acceptance to WCU’s master’s degree program. “It is so much

fun to be a student again and study art,” said Jarvinen. Her primary subjects now are rivers and creeks. “Moving water seems chaotic but there is order and predictability in it. I have actually developed a reading water course for artists that I have presented to an artist’s organization,” said Jarvinen. “People always say the paintings look different close up than from far away. Up close, there is color, shape and transparency. Farther away, the forms come into focus,” she said. “I hope they will see in the paintings how wonderful it is to look at clean water. The transparency of the water and what lies beneath it is key to what I want to show—how it is both revealed and hidden or changed at the same time.” Her artwork has appeared in her solo shows “Stream” and in shows such as “Stream of Consciousness,” which was on display at Relia’s Garden restaurant at the Nantahala Outdoor Center in Western North Carolina. Notecards featuring her paintings are also for sale at Western North Carolina art and craft galleries. For more information, check out her Web site at www.phyllisjarvinen.com.
Art of Giving

Campus Ceramics Studio Named in Honor of Benefactors

By LELIA TVEDE and BILL STUDENC

Cherokee potter Joel Queen ‘95 presented one of his own works to Randall Ward (left) and his wife, artist Susan Parrott Ward ‘75, at the dedication of a WCU ceramics studio in the Wards’ honor.

When Susan Parrott Ward ‘75 and her husband returned to Western recently for the dedication of a ceramics studio in their name, it was not only the latest development in a long and rewarding association with John Byrd, professor in what is now the School of Art and Design. Byrd, who teaches ceramics, not only hired Ward as a work study student during her freshman year, she also inspired the talented younger artist from Kinston to “do her own thing.”

“She was Joan, as independent as she could be,” Ward said. “When students showed an interest, she ate ‘em up. She gave them all the attention they needed. She offered them wonderful opportunities, brought friends to class who were potters we had heard about, took us to a national pottery conference. She really made a difference in my life.”

During her second year when times were tough at home, Ward struggled to support herself. She said she was thrilled to receive a scholarship that allowed her to stay in school and earn her bachelor’s degree in art in 1975. After graduation, she went to work in stained glass design and production, taught as an artist-in-residence in Kinston, teaching students who were physically and developmentally disabled, and helped with the restoration of a beloved old carousel in Raleigh’s Pullen Park. None of that would have been possible without Byrd’s early encouragement and her own positive experiences at Western, she said.

Now married to successful retired businessman Randall Ward, she is saying “thank you” in a big way. The Wards have given $150,000 for an endowment to support Western’s art program and another $35,000 for a kiln big enough to fire large pieces. In response, the university named a ceramics studio in the Fine and Performing Arts Center in honor of Randall and Susan Parrott Ward.

During a campus celebration of the gift, Chancellor John Bardo reminded the crowd that when archaeologists discover remnants of an ancient society, the thing that people get most excited about are the artifacts related to art. “Art is a clear reflection of the core values of a society,” Bardo said. “But to create art requires some people in the community not to have to scrape in the dirt, or to fish or hunt. Art requires time for some members of that society to think and to reflect. It is through the artist that we see a community’s values. Through this generous gift from the Wards, we know that future societies will view Western and our community’s values.”

Steve Warren ‘80, chairman of WCU’s board of trustees, who called ceramics “a work of silent poetry,” said the contribution from the Wards is one of the latest examples of “an uncommon alchemy” that exists at WCU. “It’s an alchemy of talent and generosity,” Warren said. “The faculty, staff and students of Western supply the talent. People like Randall and Susan Ward supply the generosity.”

Susan Ward said she encourages other donors to support The Campaign for Western, the university’s ambitious effort to raise $40 million for scholarships, endowments and program support. “When I think of all the things I’ve gained from my education at Western, it’s more than a diploma. I cannot imagine not helping,” she said. “And gifts of all sizes are important. I’m really big on the ‘drop-in-the-hat theory’. Everyone can do something, and it all adds up.”

Clinical Approach

Communication Disorders Students Benefit from New Scholarship Fund

By BILL STUDENC

Thanks to the generosity of the founder of a Greensboro-based communication and rehabilitative therapy clinic who got her start at Western, graduate students studying communication sciences and disorders can apply for a new $1,300 scholarship to help with the costs of grad school.

Margie Gibbs Motsinger ‘75, a Western alumna and founder of the Cheshire Center Inc., recently presented the inaugural Cheshire Center Scholarship to Candler resident Susan Foringer-Burk, who is working toward a master’s degree in communication sciences and disorders.

Motsinger, who graduated from WCU with a degree in speech and hearing, founded the Cheshire Center in 1980. It is now the largest private clinic in the Greensboro area, with a staff of more than 50 professionals providing speech therapy and community-based rehabilitative services, primarily to children.

“I have always told everyone about what a great start I got at Western, where I experienced a lot of one-on-one interaction with my professors and where I served in many different internship-type experiences,” she said. “I remember being assigned a clinic caseload as a junior, which was frightening at the time but of tremendous value in the long run. It certainly taught me to ‘think on my feet’ and gave me an edge when I attended graduate school.”

Motsinger said it was personally important to be able to give back to the university where she got her start in her career. “I have certainly been mentored and helped along by the way leaders in the profession and in business. It is critical that we reach out to young Christians and foster their training and development,” she said. “I felt that setting up the scholarship program would be a way both to say ‘thank you’ to WCU and to mentor therapists early in their careers.”

SunTrust Gift Marks A First For Catamount Club

The check wasn’t in the mail. This time, the check was in the hands of Western Carolina University President Tobe Childers ’81 recently accepted a gift of $25,000 from E. Jerry Coleman III, executive vice president for private wealth management with SunTrust North Carolina in Charlotte.

The contribution represents the first installment on a pledge of continuing support for the next five years from SunTrust. The check also marks SunTrust’s first such gift to the Catamount Club, and it is the first time a financial institution has contributed to the club.

Childers said, “Sun Trust is interested in developing a relationship with Western Carolina University and helping it grow,” he said.

With the commitment, SunTrust will become the official sponsor of Western’s Annual Student-Athlete Awards Banquet. The gifts also will be used for general athletic scholarship support, professional development for staff and other programmatic support to benefit student-athletes, said Chip Smith, director of athletics.

“Through the contributions of individuals and corporations such as the major commitment made by our friends at Sun Trust North Carolina, we can continue to make improvements in our athletics program, and provide the support and facilities that our student-athletes deserve,” Smith said.

The pledge comes as the university is in the midst of The Campaign for Western, a three-year effort to raise $40 million in private support for scholarships, professorships and programmatic resources.

For information on THE CAMPAIGN FOR WESTERN, visit the Web site at campaign.wcu.edu or call (828) 227-7124.

Art of Giving

Margie Gibbs Motsinger ‘75

Clinical Approach

SunTrust Gift Marks A First For Catamount Club

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Theatre Professor Directing Cherokee Outdoor Drama
By JILL INGRAM

Stephen Michael Ayers, associate professor of theatre arts at WCU, is directing the current season of “Unto These Hills... a Retelling,” the story of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians.

A member of the WCU faculty since 1985, Ayers has extensive acting and directing experience in film, television and theatre. He has worked with notables such as George C. Scott, Tom Cruise, Robert Duvall, Nicole Kidman and Kevin Costner, and has acted in films and television productions including “Matlock,” “In the Heat of the Night,” “I’ll Fly Away” and “Dawson’s Creek.” He holds a doctorate in theatre from the University of Colorado at Boulder. “I’m thrilled to have this opportunity,” Ayers said. “My goal is to have audience members say, ‘That was incredible! There should be a buzz in the parking lot when people walk out of there.”

Ayers is not the only Western connection to the Cherokee outdoor drama. His daughter Maribeth, who had a part in “Unto These Hills” as a teenager, is the show’s choreographer. In addition, Melody Huddleston, costume shop supervisor at WCU, is costume designer. Jim Irvin ’93, technical director at WCU’s Ramsey Center, is the show’s master carpenter, and Brian Ahman ’91 is production manager. Current students Emily Bond is working on sound, while classmates Anna Latanyshyn is designing props and Samantha Vource is working on costumes. Cast members performing on stage include alumni Jennifer Walsh ’07 and Clark Howerton ’07, and current students Alexandra LaBelle, Anthony Giordano, Kate Gardner, Greg Kennedy, Daniel Rohreg, Chriity Waymouth and Sarah Lipham.

“Unto These Hills” has shown at the open-air Mountainside Theatre in Cherokee each summer since its debut in 1950. A new version that opened last year adopted a Cherokee perspective of the Eastern Band’s history and included re-creations of traditional dress, performances of traditional dance and music, and—for the first time ever—a majority of the actors were Cherokee. This year’s production includes additional changes, as Hollywood writers further tweaked the script and brought back some characters left out of last year’s version, including the Cherokee named Tsali, whom some consider a martyr who helped preserve the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, and Will Thomas, a white man who in the 1800s helped some Cherokee people avoid removal and secure a land base.

“What we’re trying to achieve is to make this a show by, for and about the Cherokee people. That’s exactly what it should be, and I am honored to be a part of that transition,” Ayers said. “We are working to identify a reservoir of talent in Cherokee so that Cherokee people can assume responsibility for as many aspects of the production as possible. My ultimate goal is to work myself out of a job.”

John Tissue, executive director of the Cherokee Historical Association, which produces the show, said he’s glad that Ayers agreed to take over the directorial duties for this year. “We are extremely excited to work with such a talented individual who has a close connection with the area,” said Tissue.

The 2007 season continues through August 18. For information, call the Cherokee Historical Association at (828) 497-2111 or toll-free at (866) 554-4557.
PRODUCT Placement

WCU’s Rapid Center Takes Ideas From Drawing Board to Reality
By BILL STUDENC

Energized by a resurgent spirit of innovation and entrepreneurship, faculty members in a variety of academic disciplines at Western are sharing their expertise with businesses and industries across the region—and beyond—to help create new economic opportunities while providing students with valuable, real-world learning experiences.

Since 2000, when North Carolina voters overwhelmingly approved a $3.1 billion higher education bond issue that injected $164 million in construction and renovation money into Cullowhee, WCU leaders have pledged to use the university’s intellectual resources—its faculty, students and facilities—to help solve the region’s economic problems by keeping existing jobs from leaving Western North Carolina and developing new high-paying jobs. Serving as an economic engine for the region and state is now a fundamental mission of the university.

A primary piston in the engine is the Center for Rapid Product Realization, formerly known as the Center for Rapid Product Development, housed in the Kimmel School of Construction Management and Technology. The Rapid Center is focused on education and applied research in core areas of product development, optoelectronics, rapid prototyping, laser machining and parametric modeling. During the past three years, the center has provided technical assistance to more than 100 companies, organizations and entrepreneurs. Working on projects that have helped keep companies in business or prevented WNC jobs from going overseas.

“What our electrical engineering, technology and construction management faculty bring to the table is a tremendous amount of industry experience, which is something rare in the world of academia,” said Dianne Dunlap, interim dean of the Kimmel School. “We couple that experience and know-how with an investment in an array of state-of-the-industry equipment and facilities that can take a product from initial concept to manufactured, finished product.”

That new equipment includes a $500,000 Oxford laser system so precise it could divide a strand of human hair lengthwise into 100 sections and slice a single red blood cell into three sections, precise measuring systems that utilize active scanning technology, 3-D modeling systems that enable the swift production of non-functioning prototypes; and fusion deposition modeling machines that can be used to create working prototypes. Much of it is housed in the $8 million, 28,000-square-foot Center for Applied Technology, which opened in November 2003.

“We use the intellectual resources of our faculty and students, and the technology resources now available on our campus to reach out to businesses and industries,” Dunlap said. “We work with people, both on and off campus, to help them bring their ideas to the marketplace. Many people have good ideas, but don’t know where to go from there. That’s what we do. We help incubate ideas. We know polymers. We know plastics. We know intellectual property issues, grants and patents. And many of us come from an industry background, so we know how to help people make a dollar.”

One of the center’s early successes came during the 2004 holiday season, when graduate students and engineering professors used Western’s rapid prototyping equipment to create a model of a thin plastic tray to hold glass ornaments for Watauga Opportunities Inc. of Boone. A nonprofit organization involved in plastic manufacturing that employs people with disabilities, WOI called upon Western for help in prototyping trays for Christmas ornaments. “Western’s engineering and technology department showed us we can quickly respond to changes in our clients’ needs, and that makes WOI more competitive in the marketplace,” said Michael Maybey, WOI president. “The more business we can bring in, the more work we can give our employees, and the more services we can provide for people with disabilities in Boone and five neighboring counties.”

Through its partnership with Clemson University and the University of North Carolina at Charlotte in the Carolinas MicroOptics Triangle, a research alliance designed to develop fiber-optic communication capacity, Western’s Rapid Center helped a Hickory-based company design prototypes for tiny connectors needed to link fibers less than the width of a hair. “With the university’s help, we can develop products faster. By getting the prototypes in our hands, we can discover errors, and we can show them to our customers and get immediate feedback,” said Bill Blubaugh, president of US Conec.

Inspecting prototypes of connectors that link small fibers are, at left, Monty Graham, electronic applications engineer for the Kimmel School of Construction Management and Technology, and Joe Markun, product manager of Hickory-based US Conec.

The center helped Elk Products of Muncie, Ind., which manufactures about 80 percent of the home security systems sold in the United States, by providing a prototype of a complex part that enabled the firm to test and fine-tune its design without the upfront costs and risks of the traditional tooling process. Western’s engineering faculty also teamed up with Caterpillar connection equipment company in Franklin to create an inexpensive gauge with a short operating life to replace an expensive electronic part that needed frequent replacement due to dirty job-site conditions. A prototype of an energy-efficient water heater had been developed by faculty member Aaron Ball, in collaboration with colleagues at Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College, through grant support from Oak Ridge National Laboratories is now being manufactured by Sci-Cool Inc. of Weaverville. During its formative phases, the device caught the attention of President George W. Bush, who called the project an example of the “creative technologies” the nation must utilize to decrease its dependence on foreign energy sources.

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New Technology Transfer Office Helps Faculty Market Their Ideas

Creative ideas and great projects often are the offspring of faculty working on a college campus, and those ideas frequently can result in intellectual property that is marketable. But it takes special resources to commercialize these ideas through the process of technology transfer.

That’s where Western’s Office of Technology Transfer comes into the picture. Formed in 2004 as part of the Office of Legal Counsel, the “tech transfer” office can help faculty members turn their ideas into an income stream—both for the university and for the faculty inventors. This office can do this by helping protect the intellectual property (also called IP) through the complicated processes of obtaining patents, copyrights or trademarks, and by helping license the IP to a commercial entity. “The technology transfer office is probably one of the few offices on campus that has as a major goal the generation of supplemental income for faculty,” said Rich Kucharski, Western’s general counsel and director of technology transfer.

Kucharski’s office, both before and after the technology transfer designation has worked with several faculty members on a variety of projects. For example, Jack Bunnell, associate professor of chemistry, has developed a unique testing protocol that may be of interest to large pharmaceutical companies and that has already attracted the attention of venture capital firms Peter Bates, associate professor of natural resources management, has provided forest management services to private landowners by supervising students, a concept that may spin off into a company. Jack Bunnell, director of WCU’s motion picture and television production program, is teaching students who are working with a motion picture production company this summer, giving the WCU students hands-on experience in the movie industry.

Rich Kucharski, Western’s general counsel and director of technology transfer.

While assisting WCU’s branch office of the Small Business and Technology Development Center, the tech transfer office helped create the Innovation Micro Angel Fund – West, an investment fund providing early capital to entrepreneurs—including WCU faculty in need of initial seed money to turn their ideas into businesses. The office also helped put together a partnership between WestCare Health System, the university’s athletics department and the athletics training academic department that provides improved services to Western’s athletes.

Clinical placements for its students and additional service opportunities for WestCare, a nonprofit health care provider, including two hospitals in Western North Carolina. Students learn, teach and businesses benefit from what, we can do,” said Kucharski. “The office is one more tool that can support economic development in the region.”

Scott Williams, a WCU student employee at Caterpillar Precision Seals in Franklin, and Joe Markun, at right, facilities manager at Caterpillar Precision Seals, examine a gauge Williams developed.
PRODUCT Placement

Continued from page 17

A major focus area for the center is adaptive technology designed to help improve the quality of life for residents of the region while simultaneously spurring economic growth. Kimmel School faculty are developing devices to help prolong independent living for persons with disabilities and for WNC’s growing population of senior citizens, bringing together faculty and students from engineering, technology, physical therapy, health sciences, gerontology and interior design to examine lifestyle issues faced by impaired and aging populations, and then create solutions to those problems.

Past efforts include creation of an arm-sling that helped a woman with disabilities continue to create works of art, a foot-powered pneumatic device that allowed a Haywood County potter to work despite a career-threatening shoulder injury, and a navigational system for a wheelchair for a Buncombe County teenager. For field trials, and Kucharski has filed a provisional patent for a device for patients who have had total knee replacement surgery. Faull conceptualized a device featuring a set of rope handles that control a “foot-glove,” moving the foot back and forth via a series of pulleys based upon individual physical therapy needs. WCU faculty and students helped fine-tune the concept by replacing the ropes with easier-to-manipulate bicycle-type handles. They are building three machines for field trials, and Kucharski has provisional patent application with the U.S. Patent Office. Eventually, Faull and the university hope to partner with a company to mass produce the devices.

“The university took my basic idea and just ran with it, totally redesigning the device and still keeping the same basic parameters to improve it significantly,” Faull said. “It is surprising to see how, by bringing in a lot of different minds, you wind up with so many different usable ideas. Western has helped a lot, especially in the areas where I have no expertise—the patent process, the legal issues, developing a commercialization strategy. I doubt I would have been able to get this concept to this point without the university’s assistance.”

Although the impact of Western’s economic engagement and innovation outreach activities is felt primarily in WNC, one project reaches to the eastern part of the state and all the way to Iraq and Afghanistan. Western is part of a $9.3 million effort funded by the Golden LEAF Foundation to help N.C. companies ramp up production of replacement parts for aging military aircraft through the recently formed N.C. Aerospace Alliance Initiative. The program is designed to help create new jobs and spawn business investment centered on facilities that overhaul military aircraft at Cherry Point.

A high school teacher showed New Jersey native Jonathan Snover how to look at the world through the lens of chemistry, and the lens put what he saw into sharper focus. “Chemistry explained the world in the most practical way to me,” said Snover, now a chemist with patents to his name and a teacher himself.

What lured him to academia from cutting-edge research in private industry was the opportunity to direct Western’s new master’s degree program in science and entrepreneurship.

The program, which launches this fall, prepares scientists for advanced research and for the business side of the science and technology industry. “I believe scientists should have more ownership of their inventions and ideas. If you look at the impact of scientific inventions and the resulting financial benefits, scientists often do not share in the wealth realized by their discoveries,” said Snover, an assistant professor of chemistry at WCU.

The science and entrepreneurship program’s curriculum includes graduate-level classes in biology, chemistry and other areas of science; courses from the university’s national-award-winning entrepreneurship program; and new classes that incorporate specialized skills such as researching new ideas, patents and competing technologies.

“The difference between this master’s degree program and an MBA or graduate entrepreneurship program is the ‘technical’ component that requires a strong understanding of science,” said Snover. “Students will analyze the technical as well as the business environment, and learn to communicate that information effectively to a variety of people, from scientists to investors to journalists.”

Snover knows how competitive—and exhilarating—the industry is. He jointly holds patents for innovations that range from a method of making chemical coating for paper used in ink jet printing to new substances that improve the efficiency of solar energy use. After earning his doctorate in chemistry at Princeton University and postdoctoral research at North Carolina State University, Snover took jobs as a research chemist with companies such as Westvaco Corp. and Millennium Cell, a start-up fuel cell company. “Working for a start-up company like Millennium Cell was wonderful because of the energy, the excitement of a new company and the feeling of being part of a technical family trying to accomplish great things,” said Snover.

Students in the master’s degree program will get hands-on, real-world experience as they work to further their own innovation in science, or partner with faculty or a business in the region. Some could work with Snover as the studies new opportunities in the biofuel area. Others could help regional inventors who have patentable ideas.

Already, under Snover’s guidance, a business student has begun conducting market research for Dr. Tom Mulford. The Asheville anesthesiologist by trade and inventor by nature tinkered for years with an idea for how to improve medical aspirators, devices used to suction fluids during surgery. Through Jon Lawrie, BioBusiness Center Manager at Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College, Mulford met Snover and was excited about the possibilities of a partnership with WCU that could help him take the idea from sketchpad to production. “Bringing together all of our different backgrounds—mine in medical expertise and others in business and technical research—is like grouping computers into a supercomputer,” said Mulford. “The chances of a better outcome are improved if we use everybody’s talents.”

Meanwhile, the WCU student working with him will get experience evaluating the advantages of the invention, analyzing the market, reviewing competitive products and identifying manufacturing issues. “There is no better way for students to learn by doing,” said Snover. “And there is nothing more motivating than seeing your work become something real—something that has the potential to positively impact lives.”
At left and right, Cindy Atterholt, head of Western’s chemistry department, and Paul Davis, a chemistry graduate student, apply a nontoxic pest control substance that Atterholt developed to the bark of an apple tree.

When Atterholt came to WCU in 1996, she brought her pheromone research project with her, fine-tuning her product at apple orchards in Hendersonville and Waynesville. She applied for and obtained a patent in 1999, and licensed the technology to ISCA Technologies, which is in the process of commercializing it and is considering North Carolina as a possible location for a new manufacturing operation.

Reg Coler, vice president of ISCA Technologies, said his company has formulated products for a variety of international pests—including the Oriental fruit moth, light brown apple moth, Mediterranean fruit fly, carambola fruit fly in Brazil, pine processionary moth in France, rhinoceros beetle in Indonesia and Thailand, and peach fruit moth in southeastern Asia. Three products are currently registered with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, with several others in various stages of the approval process, Coler said.

As these approvals are ongoing, additional field-testing is taking place this summer at the Mountain Horticultural Crops Research Station in Fletcher in an effort to prove the concept to future investors, Atterholt said. In addition, Frank Lockwood, assistant professor of entrepreneurship at WCU, is working with the WNC BioBusiness Center on a possible plan to use incubator space on the Enka campus of Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College to develop a small start-up company to assist in production of pheromone-based pest control.

Atterholt and Coler believe the market for their product and others like it is unlimited. “It is one of the most preferred methods of control by the EPA because, when used properly, it is as effective as or better than conventional pesticides without any of the detrimental effects. This strategy also prevents any damage to beneficial insects that are responsible for stabilizing erratic fluctuations in pest populations,” Coler said. And the agricultural community loves the product. Atterholt said, “Most farmers are interested in doing what they can with products like this because they know traditional pesticides aren’t good for them, their workers or the environment,” she said.

Just ask Benny Arrington, the Waynesville apple farmer who owns the orchard where Atterholt and her WCU students conduct research. “The potential for this new type of pest control is growing greater and greater,” said Arrington. “In a few years, the EPA will be phasing out an entire class of organic phosphate insecticides, including the primary insecticide used in apple orchards against the codling moth since the early 1960s. Those of us in agriculture are looking for new ways to control these pests. Pheromone products such as the one Dr. Atterholt has been testing in my orchard, while not a cure-all, are going to be an important part of keeping us in business.”
At the Country Music Association awards in New York City, a high-heeled Betsy Walker ’05 chased country star Keith Urban backstage calling “Keith! Mr. Urban! Come back!” Walker wasn’t after his autograph—just his award. Walker works for the CMA, and she needed to get the award back so Urban’s name could be etched on it. “He said, ‘I’m so sorry,’” said Walker. “That was my first awards ceremony, and I was so nervous and so excited. Part of my job was to hand out actual awards backstage.”

Nearly two years later, the Winston-Salem native has worked as assistant to the chief operating officer and now as coordinator of member and community relations. “I still handle some executive support, such as coordinating meetings and conference calls, but I handle more industry events, like parties when a songwriter has a No. 1 hit, artist visits and membership recruitment,” said Walker.

While a student at Western, her career interest shifted from music education to the music industry. Walker took classes such as musical instrument digital interface, also known as MIDI, and introduction to recording arts. And the more she talked with faculty members such as her adviser, Bruce Frazier, the Carol Grotnes Belk Endowed Distinguished Professor of Commercial and Electronic Music, the more attracted she was to working in the industry. “Betsy earned a bachelor of arts degree with a concentration in music industry, a degree patterned as a music major with a minor in business,” said Frazier. “Competition for top positions in the music business is as challenging as for jobs in the music performing, producing and composition arena. Personal contacts are important in getting your foot in the door of the music business, but it is preparation and personal- ity that help keep the door open, and Betsy has the experience and the charisma that it takes.”

A connection—her mother’s coworker’s son—helped her get her foot in the door at Capitol Records to get a shot at an internship. She landed the job and worked in publicity. “I had three months to really get out there and learn everything I could,” said Walker. Later, when she moved to Nashville, Tenn., she began working with a temp agency and took a job at a restaurant. On the first day of training, though, she got a call about an interview starting in one hour to be a receptionist at a booking agency. She made it in time and was hired. A month later, she began working full-time at the Country Music Association on Music Row in Nashville.

“We work hard, and we play hard,” said Walker, describing the fun but also the exhaustion and sunburn after events such as the organization’s four-day outdoor music festival. “This really is ‘Music City,’ and it’s not just country music. There’s a lot of blues and a metal scene and rock. When you walk down Broadway on a Sunday morning, there are live bands in every restaurant, and musicians—guitarists—on the corner.”
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 19

Noon Alumni Scholarship Golf Tournament, a Homecoming tradition, tees off at Laurel Ridge Country Club in Waynesville. Shotgun start. Cost: $80 per person, includes fees and cart. Four-person “captain’s choice” format. Refreshments available during play. Social following the tournament. RSVP is required by Friday, October 12. Call the Office of Alumni Affairs at (877) 440-9990 or (828) 227-7335, or email magill@email.wcu.edu.

6:15 p.m. Homecoming 2007 Main Street Parade in Sylva. Cheer as community and student floats, Western cheerleaders, football team, Homecoming Court, and Catamount Marching Band parade through downtown Sylva. Prizes awarded for best floats; winners announced during Saturday’s football game.

8 p.m. Spirit Night. Join students, faculty, staff and alumni for a pep rally, music and food. Location and additional details to be announced.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 20

8-10 a.m. WCU Alumni Breakfast. The University Center Multipurpose Room becomes Alumni Central! Come join fellow WCU alumni and friends for a continental breakfast. It’s a great time to make weekend plans with your old classmates, or simply reminisce about those good ol’ days in Cullowhee!

10 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Pre-game tailgating before the WCU vs the Citadel football game.

1 p.m. Football. The Catamounts do battle against The Citadel Bulldogs in the cozy confines of Whitmire Stadium and Bob Waters Field.

8 p.m. Stompfest 2007, a step-show competition featuring African-American fraternities and sororities. Ramsey Regional Activity Center. For tickets or information, call the Office of Multicultural Affairs at (828) 227-2276.

10 p.m.-1 a.m. Stompfest After Party. University Center Grandroom

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 21

3:30 p.m. The crowd-pleasing Inspirational Choir Concert will bring Homecoming Weekend to a close. University Center Grandroom.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, contact Marty Ramsey ’85, Director of Alumni Affairs, at (828) 227-7335, (877) 440-9990 or mramsey@wcu.edu.
2007 Homecoming celebrates the anniversary of these classes

10 year reunion!
CLASS of 1997

20 year reunion!
CLASS of 1977

30 year reunion!
CLASS of 1967

40 year reunion!
CLASS of 1957

10:30 a.m.–Noon Saturday, October 20
CLASS REUNION BRUNCH
Reunions for the classes of 1997, 1987, 1977, 1967 and 1957. Come visit with your classmates from years gone by. You and your class will be provided a complimentary brunch in Illusions on the third floor of the University Center (adjacent to the Grandroom).

For more information contact Marty Ramsey ’85, Director of Alumni Affairs, at (828) 227-7335, (877) 440-9990 or mramsey@wcu.edu

EXTRA! EXTRA!

Former WCU Quarterback Throws Passes in George Clooney’s Movie “Leatherheads”

By Cindy Herr

George Clooney (above) checks out the set of “Leatherheads” in place at Murphy High School, where he is an English teacher and assistant head football coach.

As one of the movie’s 50-plus young men serving as football extras, Campana got to know Clooney up close and personal, even taking orders from the actor/director/screenplay writer during the movie shoot. In addition, Campana’s movie coach asked him to throw two passes for the end of the movie. Terms of his contract prevent him from disclosing the filming location.

While Caesar Campana °01, Cherokee County’s “Teacher of the Year,” is used to being in front of crowds, he never dreamed he would appear on the silver screen. The Murphy High School English teacher and Bulldogs’ assistant head football coach has been cast as an extra in “Leatherheads,” a romantic comedy set in the 1920s professional football league. The film is scheduled for release Dec. 7.

George Clooney directs and stars as “Dodge” Connolly, an aging football hero determined to guide his team from bar brawls to packed stadiums. Clooney wrote much of the screenplay for the movie, which includes co-stars Renée Zellweger and John Krasinski.

“Guys, let’s go. Let’s shoot,” Clooney liked the effect of the snow on the field, and realizing he might not have the opportunity again, he had all of the extras dress out in their full 1920s-era uniforms: awkward tight wool jerseys, pants pulled up to the chest, leather helmets and shoes that Campana describes as “running on plywood with 2-inch spikes.”

When Clooney didn’t think the shot looked right, he said, “Hey boys, you know what’s wrong with this? We need to be dirty.” Campana said, “He was the first one to dive in. That’s George Clooney in a nutshell. He’s a guy’s guy, really down to earth. He’s just a regular guy. He loves jokes and plays pranks all the time. He throws footballs at people when they’re not watching.”

Campana said that the sets were incredible. About 30 carpenters and welders worked around the clock constructing time-period scenes, including a full-size wooden train. “The fascinating part is seeing how a film works,” he said. “I’ve always wondered what happens to make a movie authentic, and I can tell you, it’s a lot of elbow grease.”

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Rapidly Changing Technologies Offer More Entertainment Choices for Students

By JOHN KENYON

Major advancements in audio and video technologies in recent years mean that media choices for Western students are more abundant than ever before. From satellite and Internet radio and free music downloads (no, not the illegal kind) to Local Access Network video gaming events, options for students go well beyond traditional cable television viewing or surfing the Internet.

The popularity of satellite radio has skyrocketed, finding its way into WCU’s residence halls during the spring semester. “We have worked with XM radio to insert 16 channels that were determined in a survey as the most desirable for students,” said Tim Chapman ’02, assistant director for facilities and residential living.

The channels of XM radio are currently offered on the local cable TV system. This enables students to enjoy satellite radio in their residence halls and, because it’s broadcast via cable TV, no additional equipment is necessary. “We were looking for a way to improve the entertainment package that we were sending to the students’ rooms,” said Chapman. “Our objective is to enhance the quality of life in the residence halls.”

Western’s Student Media Center also is working on a new student-run radio station that will be offered through the campus television system. “We are developing WCAT, which will be a radio station broadcast through our closed-circuit cable network,” said Katherine Duff Smith, assistant director of student media and marketing. “We are in the process of our studio installation, and we are looking forward to having that up and running so we can provide this great experience for our students. The programming will be focused on new music, and we also hope to be able to provide online streaming so our programming will be useable off campus.”

Also on campus, the ever-growing popularity of video games has led to the formation of WCU’s first Gaming Club, which hosts a gaming computer server offering downloads, gaming news and discussion forums. The club regularly hosts Local Access Network gaming events, which have taken place in various campus locations such as computer labs in Forrester Building or the Grandroom of the A.K. Hinds University Center.

Of course, any individual with a computer or gaming console can play an online multiplayer video game anytime he or she wants. What makes a LAN gaming event unique, students say, is it allows gamers to sit side by side when playing multiplayer online video games. "A LAN game is essentially an online game you play against other people and you are in the same room with the people you’re playing with or against,” said Adrian Jelley ’04, WCU technology support analyst. “There is more of an interaction going on than when you are sitting at home by yourself playing a game online.”

If gamers are playing a war game, for example, they can all be members of the same tactical unit and play together at the same time on different computers in the same room, enabling them to communicate and discuss strategy. Gamers playing against each other online also can engage in banter with each other, similar to competitors in athletic events, Jelley said.

“All implications are that the gaming server is a positive influence for the students, and its impact on network bandwidth and staff time is still minimal,” said Scott Swartzentuber, WCU director of networking, operations and communications.

Participants say the WCU Gaming Club is more than just a bunch of people playing video games on the same servers. “We are a family and a community of more than 400 members worldwide,” said Shane Baker, president of WCU’s Gaming Club.

In fact, the availability of online gaming is even having an impact on student recruitment. “A high school student mentioned to me that he was a gamer, and I told him about our gaming club and that ended up being a deciding factor for his choosing Western,” said Jelley.

French for free.

There is a charge if they want to burn it to compact disc,” said LaVigne. “In the first three weeks, we had 1,400 people sign up for it and download 300,000 songs.”
After earning a share of the ‘07 regular season basketball crown, the Lady Catamounts went on to host—and win—an opening round game in the Women’s National Invitational Tournament, the first-ever NCAA post-season game played in Cullowhee. The Lady Cats then fell on the road at Virginia Tech, coached by former Lady Cats skipper Beth Dunkenberger.

The men’s track and field squad earned the ‘07 SoCon outdoor title, and the 4x100-meter relay team and sophomore speedster Manteo Mitchell advanced to compete in the 400-meter dash in the NCAA National Championships in Sacramento, Calif. On the women’s side, junior sprinter Racquel Ramseur qualified for the NCAA East Regional in the 400-meter dash. They were guided by coach Danny Williamson ’84 MAEd ’86, who was tabbed as conference co-Coach of the Year in men’s outdoor track and field, and was the 2007 men’s indoor track and field Coach of the Year.

The women’s golf team claimed the ‘07 conference tournament title, returning to the NCAA regional tournament for the second time in five years. Also on the links, junior Matt Cook was an NCAA men’s golf regional tournament qualifier for the second consecutive year.

The women’s golf team claimed the ‘07 conference tournament title, returning to the NCAA regional tournament for the second time in five years. Also on the links, junior Matt Cook was an NCAA men’s golf regional tournament qualifier for the second consecutive year.

The Bat Cats captured a share of the 2007 SoCon regular season championship and earned an at-large bid to the NCAA baseball tournament, losing in the regional final to eventual national runner-up, the University of North Carolina. The baseball team’s success proved bittersweet, however, as the Cats’ winning ways led the University of Tennessee to hire away Todd Raleigh ’91 MAEd ’94, the SoCon Coach of the Year, to be the Volunteers’ next head coach.
Tara Mull ’05, a member of the NFL’s Carolina Panthers TopCats cheerleading squad, and Monique Douglas ’02, a member of the NBA’s Charlotte Bobcats LadyCats dance team, share a laugh with fans at a special autograph signing event in the Ramsey Regional Activity Center during the spring semester. Mull and Douglas, who were on hand to participate in “Go Girls” Day as part of the National Girls and Women in Sports celebration, also posed for photographs and talked with young women about the hard work and dedication required for professional sports franchise dance and cheerleading squads.

Eight Western student-athletes, the most in school history, are recognized as 2007 Arthur Ashe Jr. Sports Scholars chosen by Diverse: Issues in Higher Education. Western’s eight selections are the most for any Southern Conference school, with Elon earning two selections, and Davidson, Georgia Southern and Wofford each tallying one.

Diverse: Issues in Higher Education, formerly Black Issues in Higher Education, established the Sports Scholars Award in 1992 to honor undergraduate students of color or minority background who have made achieving both academically and athletically a winning combination. The award was inspired by tennis legend Arthur Ashe’s commitment to education, as well as his love for the game of tennis. To be eligible, student-athletes must compete in an intercollegiate sport, maintain a cumulative grade-point average of at least 3.20, and be active on their campuses and in their communities.

Headlining the selections this year are two-time recipients Sharonda Bell ’07 from women’s track and field, Oglen Hansford from men’s track and field, and Raquel Ramseur from women’s track and field. Garnering honors for the first time are Buki Barowa from soccer, John Cooper ’07 from football, Kendra Eaton from women’s basketball, Kevin Johnson from men’s track and field, and Aneesha Lane from women’s track and field.

“While we are proud of the performances of these fine Catamount student-athletes on the field, on the court and on the track, we are even more proud of their accomplishments in the classrooms and as citizens of our community,” said Chip Smith, director of athletics. “Winning an award named for Arthur Ashe, a man who was an athlete, a scholar and a true civil rights pioneer, is a testament to the quality and character of the young men and women we are recruiting.”

At the annual Catamount Club Athletics Scholarship Auction, Carolina Panther Brad Hoover ’00 auctioned off autographed helmets he wore as a Catamount and a Panther (above); Matthew Lambreth, 4-year-old son of Clifton Lambreth ’82 MBA ’84 of Brentwood, Tenn., drew the winning ticket in a cash raffle (left); and Tobe Childers ’61, president of the Catamount Club, made a point (below). “We had a lot of fun at the auction, and moving the event from Charlotte to Hickory helped us raise a record profit of $61,000 for scholarships. The Catamount Auction may have found a home in Hickory,” said Bill Richter, director of athletic development and executive director of the Catamount Club. Make plans now to join the fun next year on Saturday, July 26, at the Hickory Metro Convention Center.

Call (828) 227-3047 for information about attending or donating an item.
ROaD TO RECOVERY

WCU Brothers Bond Deepened by Transplant

By LEILA TVDIT

When Josh D’Innocenzi ’04 went for his physical exam before coming to Western in 2000, he had no idea that doctors would find problems that might kill him—or that younger brother Aaron, 19, would be critical for the cure.

It turned out the older D’Innocenzi was born with only one kidney, and it wasn’t working too well. He completed his education at Western, graduating with a bachelors degree in communication, and took a job with a Clear Channel radio station in Asheville. Two years later, tests showed that his kidney was failing fast. Instead of facing a transplant at age 30 or 40, as originally predicted, he needed one right away.

“I think they all knew it would be me, because brothers are usually a great match for transplants, and we both have the same blood type,” Aaron said. “And I thought if it wasn’t me, where would the new kidney come from?” The test revealed Aaron’s tissue to be the best choice. “I was happy that I would be helping him,” he said. “My brother has always been one of my best friends, and I was scared we’d lose him.”

The four- to five-hour surgery at Carolinas Medical Center in Charlotte this spring was a great success, despite some initial pain and disorientation and a couple early mishaps. What got the brothers through the tough times? “Family was number one. And faith,” Josh said. “I did not ever go to a doctor’s appointment or lab test by myself, and there were a lot of those. When I got tired of being poked and prodded, my dad always brought me back with encouragement. ‘You have your own donor—you brother. We’re blessed. Be happy,’ he’d say. And I had friends and churches praying for us.”

Their prayers were answered. “The doctors say the kidney was a perfect match. The only way it could have been better is if we were identical twins. And Josh is on the lowest possible level of anti-rejection drugs,” Aaron said. “If it was the match.”

In April, Josh returned to work, full time, at his broadcasting job with Star 104.3. Aaron is back at Western following his brother as a communication major. He recently was hired to help with productions at WCU’s Power 90.5, and works with Josh on weekends at the station in Asheville.

Looking back on the experience, Aaron said, “It’s a great opportunity to be able to help save someone, but I’m glad it’s over. I’m grateful that Josh is living the life that he’s supposed to.” He has been quoted by the Black Mountain News as joking, “I already told Josh ‘You’re not getting any more organs from me. I’ll do anything for you, just don’t ask me to go through surgery like that again. This was it.”

Josh D’Innocenzi ’04 (left) and his brother, Western student Aaron D’Innocenzi, work together sometimes at radio station Star 104.3 in Asheville.

“You have your own donor, your brother. We’re blessed. Be happy.”

—Father of kidney recipient

Josh D’Innocenzi ’04

A surgeon preparing Kenneth Todd ’98 for the removal of his left lung because of cancer assured him that with one lung he could do just about anything except run a marathon.

A year later, Todd, who had not been a runner before the surgery, beat by 25 seconds his goal of 4 hours and 25 minutes to finish the 19th Annual KeyBank Vermont City Marathon in Burlington, Vt., in May. Running by his side were coworkers and friends from Food Lion, where he works as fresh logistics manager in corporate offices in Salisbury.

“It was awesome. We were telling his story to people all over the course, and they were blown away,” said David Preslar, who ran the marathon with Todd. An experienced marathon runner, Preslar knew how difficult it was to do with two lungs, let alone one.

Todd had been treated for two years for flu-like symptoms before he was diagnosed with carcinoid cancer of the lung. Carcinoid and related neuroendocrine tumors are usually slow-growing rare types of cancers originating from the intestine, lungs, pancreas and occasionally from other areas. Their rarity means more than 90 percent of patients are incorrectly diagnosed and treated for the wrong disease, according to information from The Carcinoid Cancer Foundation.

Keneth Todd ’98 finished the 19th Annual KeyBank Vermont City Marathon (left with help from friends and coworkers, who ran by his side (above). They are, back row from left, Gene Faller, Rob England and Steve Moody, and front row, Mike Ham, Todd and David Preslar.

After the surgery, Todd made completing a marathon his goal. “At first, it was difficult to run, but now I really enjoy it,” Todd said. His first attempt at a one-mile jog around the block found him walking. He progressed to a 5K in December 2006, a half-marathon in March and then steadily trained up to 20 miles—six shy of a full marathon.

At the marathon in Vermont, his wife, who was seven months pregnant, cheered him on, and his coworkers talked constantly along the way to have fun and help him stay motivated. “The miles just ticked by,” Todd said. “It was just a hill halfway in and about a half-mile long, spectators stood about five people deep cheering the runners to keep going. ‘I get goosebumps thinking about it,’ Todd said. The last four miles were particularly difficult. He started to get dizzy but had a lot of motivation to keep going. ‘You’re doggone right I finished,” said Todd. “Those guys running with me weren’t going to let me not finish.”

After the race, Preslar said Todd thanked them for helping him make it to the finish line. “I said, ‘No, thank you for letting us do it with you.’”

Todd’s future runs include a 24-hour relay on the Blue Ridge Parkway and a marathon in November. He runs to raise money for The Carcinoid Cancer Foundation. Donations in honor of Kenneth Todd can be directed to The Carcinoid Cancer Foundation. For information, call (888) 722-3132 or check out www.carcinoid.org.
Almost six decades have passed since a young biology professor from Western, J. Gerald Eller ’43, and his standout student, Robert M. Failing ’51, fought their way through dense undergrowth to the summit of Waterrock Knob, 6,292-foot sentinel of the Plott Balsam range in Jackson County.

These days, the Blue Ridge Parkway and a half-mile tourist-friendly trail provide easy access, but ascending the mountain was a different matter back then—before there was either a parkway or a trail. And while this climb in the spring of 1948 did not enter the annals of mountaineering history as a notable event, the ascent of Waterrock Knob by Eller and Failing did turn out to be a harbinger of the considerable accomplishments that lay ahead in the lives of each.

Eller, now retired and living in Arden, first met Failing when the Michigan native enrolled at Western in 1948. He was “one of the brightest students I ever had,” Eller said.

A Robbinsville native, Eller received his bachelor’s degree in science and mathematics at Western and, after serving in the military in World War II, returned to Cullowhee to teach in 1947. He was conducting research into mayfly distribution when he, Failing and another student headed to the north fork of Scotts Creek, at the base of Waterrock Knob, to have a campground. Eller and Failing decided to climb the mountain the next day.

The teacher and student followed the north fork into the mountains, and then one of its tributaries, Narrow Cove Branch, before they started bushwhacking their way toward Waterrock Knob. The slight trail they had been following quickly petered out, and the two were faced with a final steep pitch up the southern slope of the mountain, which rises about 1,200 feet in the last half-mile. Failing led the way.

“We just beat our way through the brush. I followed him all the way to the top of the mountain,” Eller said.

Three years later, Failing received his bachelor’s degree at Western and, after earning a medical degree at Duke University Medical School, began a 40-year career as a pathologist in Southern California. During the mid-1970s, he embarked on a serious mountaineering career that took him to the top of the highest peaks on six of the world’s seven continents, and to the highest points in all 50 U.S. states.

Eller went on to earn his doctoral degree at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and was named the first dean of Western’s School of Arts and Sciences in 1967. He taught continuously at the university from 1947 until his retirement in 1983, establishing his place among the legends in Western’s long and storied tradition of outstanding teaching.

In fact, it was Eller’s impact as a teacher that dominated Failing’s comments as he returned to Cullowhee in May to accept an honorary doctorate of science degree from the university, given in recognition of his accomplishments of mind and body, and his and wife Nancyann’s long-standing support for Western in the areas of academics, athletics, student recreation and the arts.

After receiving the honor at spring commencement, Failing told the audience that his first college experience, in California, did not go well. He was a young man lacking direction when he arrived at Western, but he met a "truly inspirational" teacher who would have a profound effect on his life—Gerald Eller.

"Over the 56 years since I graduated from Western, I have reflected many times on the impact this institution has had upon my life—what has made the difference between who I was, and who I became. It was, and is, the faculty—the dedicated teachers like Dr. Eller," he said. "To Dr. Eller and Western Carolina, I thank you very much."
A self-described “life-defining moment” that occurred 35 years ago in a Sylva-Webster High School classroom propelled Tony W. Johnson ’70 to success as a respected leader of university teacher education programs.

After earning his bachelor’s degree in history and graduating with honors at Western, Johnson says he spent a year trying to find himself before returning to Cullowhee to take courses leading to teacher certification. One of those courses included a clinical component, and, after he had made several visits to a ninth-grade classroom at Sylva-Webster (now Smoky Mountain) High, the teacher there asked him if he wanted to prepare a lesson and teach a class.

The Wilkes County native worked hard preparing that lesson, seeking the assistance of his roommate, fraternity brother and friend, Scott Griffin ’72 MA ’82, who would later become North Carolina’s 1996-97 Teacher of the Year. Teaching the roomful of ninth-graders proved to be a revelation, and Johnson said he pushed back to campus afterward and told Griffin, “I now know what I want to do with my life.”

Johnson started his career in education as a teacher and coach at schools in Bryson City and Charlotte, and then began graduate studies at George Peabody College for Teachers at Vanderbilt University in Tennessee. He was named Peabody’s outstanding graduate as he received his doctoral degree in educational policy in 1978.

After a year of teaching at Peabody College, Johnson joined the faculty at the University of Texas at San Antonio, where he emerged as the leader of UTSA’s innovative teacher education program. After 13 years in Texas, Johnson went on to direct the Teacher Academy at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, and then became dean of the College of Education at West Chester University (the other WCU), Pennsylvania’s largest teacher education program. Johnson returned to the Carolinas in 2005 when he became dean of the School of Education at The Citadel in Charleston, S.C.

Widely recognized for his ability to guide teacher education programs toward improvement, and for his scholarly books concerning the history and philosophy of education, Johnson returned to Western in May to accept the university Alumni Association’s Award for Academic and Professional Achievement. After receiving the honor during spring commencement, Johnson told the Ramsey Center audience that he was under the guidance of three Western faculty members—retired history professors Cliff Lovin and Max Williams, and his cousin, fellow Wilkes County native and former education professor and dean Gunny Chambers ’61—who “had my academic potential began to emerge.”

“Beginning in Dr. Chambers’ class in the fall of 1969, and continuing to this day, I became a serious student of education, and of what it means to be educated,” he said. “In Professor Chambers, I encountered a real scholar whose love of learning was contagious and whose teaching ability was second to none. I found the mentor who would significantly change my life.”

Johnson told Western’s graduating students that the successes he has enjoyed “are largely due to the intellectual and nurturing community that characterized Cullowhee in the late 1960s, and that continues to characterize Western Carolina University in 2007. WCU was, and remains, a special place that attracts and nurtures faculty who are both outstanding scholars and truly gifted teachers.”

During his first few years of teaching, Asheville resident Peter Freer ’86 MAEd ’93 met a young boy named John who became the inspiration behind a technology that would eventually lead Freer to speak to a United Nations agency.

John had attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder, then called “minimal brain dysfunction,” and was highly disruptive in class. Freer wasn’t sure how to handle John in the classroom because he had never before encountered a student with a disorder. After seeking the advice of his former college professors, Freer made several changes in the classroom for John, including moving him closer to the front and creating a behavioral plan. Although these adjustments helped somewhat, nothing truly improved John’s behavior.

John’s parents even tried medication, Freer said. “His parents couldn’t cope with him and had medicated him, but they couldn’t get it quite right,” he said. When John came into the classroom in a semi-unconscious state and put his head down on his desk, Freer could take no more. “Once I encountered John, I knew there were many other students like him,” he said. “I knew I had to do something educationally with students like this.”

Over the course of the next 10 years, Freer dedicated his time and energy to developing the Play Attention system, an educational enhancement of NASA-based technology called neurofeedback that monitors brain waves and alerts students of their concentration levels. Students put on a sensor-filled helmet, similar in appearance to a bike helmet, and use their concentration to control characters and situations on a screen. The system helps to increase students’ attention spans and short-term memory sequencing, as well as to develop their ability to filter distractions.

In 2005, executives from Ontario Power Generation in Toronto discovered Freer’s Play Attention system as they were searching for ways to improve attention and reduce anxiety levels of their nuclear power plant trainees. Although the industry spends more than $1 million per person in preparation for certification, trainees often fall because of uncontrollable stress and anxiety. Through his company Freer Logic, Freer modified the software specifically for the nuclear power industry by creating a three-dimensional nuclear simulator, which in turn attracted the interest of the International Atomic Energy Agency in Vienna, Austria. Freer was asked to share his knowledge at the IAEA’s headquarters at the United Nations this spring. He explained the fundamental basis and mechanics of the software and gave a demonstration of the system. Since then, he has been asked to work with other groups, including the U.S. Marine Corps and the U.S. women’s bobsled team. “It’s amazing how far we can stretch the applications for this into virtually any field at this point,” he said.

Freer said that his education at Western has been a valuable resource to him. “I don’t think I could have done any of this without my background in education, and Western is responsible for that,” he said. “Coping with that 10 years of extensive research in the field allowed me to create the software that is used internationally and will now become a heavy player in the field of nuclear power.”

Peter Freer ’86 MAEd ’93 presented to the International Atomic Energy Agency in Austria the Play Attention system he designed to help increase attention spans and filter distractions.

Tony W. Johnson ’70 is dean of the School of Education at The Citadel in Charleston, S.C.
The director of WCU’s Programs in Asheville received Western’s highest honor for administrative staff as the university recently handed out its top faculty and staff awards for teaching, research and service for the 2006-07 academic year. During the annual end-of-year General Faculty Meeting and Awards Convocation, Patsy Miller MAEd ’82 received the Paul A. Reid Distinguished Service Award for administrative staff.

Miller coordinates and provides instructional support and services to faculty and students involved in WCU undergraduate and graduate programs taught in Asheville. She also serves as the university’s chief liaison with the Asheville community, including the University of North Carolina at Asheville, Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College and the Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce, said WCU Chancellor John Bardo in presenting the award.

“Patsy is a loyal alumna and dedicated employee of WCU,” he said. “She was responsible for the planning and coordination of moving WCU’s nursing department from UNCA to A-B Tech’s Enka campus, and she serves the Asheville students in a timely, efficient and caring manner while avoiding the normal organizational bureaucracy. While she is seldom in the limelight, she works diligently and selflessly behind the scenes to make Western a better institution.”

Miller joined Western’s Asheville office in 1984 as programs coordinator, working with Harry E. Ramsey ’59, who served as assistant to the chancellor for WCU Programs in Asheville from 1974 through 1997. Upon Ramsey’s retirement, Miller assumed responsibility for directing the office, which oversees WCU classes offered at UNCA, the main campus of A-B Tech and A-B Tech’s campus in Enka.

Scott Higgins, dean of Western’s Graduate School and Research, called Miller the university’s “goodwill ambassador in Asheville,” with a pleasant demeanor and cheerful enthusiasm that make her one of the biggest selling points for Western’s classes in Asheville. “Patsy Miller is the most positive person I have ever met. She genuinely cares about people,” Higgins said. “She is thrilled if she can help make someone’s day a little better, and she seems to thrive on doing good for others. For the more than 25 years that I have known Patsy, she has been the ‘face of Western’ in Asheville—and that face has always been smiling.”

More than 800 students enroll in classes every year in Asheville, where Western offers a broad range of instruction at the advanced undergraduate and graduate levels, particularly in the areas of business, counseling, education, health sciences, human resources, nursing, public affairs and technology. These programs of instruction, intended primarily for the adult professional student, are taught late afternoons, evenings and weekends.

MENC’s highest award for music education in 2004, said he is both pleased and daunted by the challenge.

MENC, which has received thousands of applications, will narrow the list of All-American wannabes to 150 possibilities. Buckner, who has asked Matt Henley ’93 MA ’95, assistant director of bands at WCU, to join him, said the staff will have only three days to screen audition tapes and pick the final 50 students, based on their musical talent and marching style.

He also has to create a storyboard for the band’s six-minute performance, oversee the arrangement and refine the music, supervise the choreography, and write the drill so that every one of about 1,100 counts, or moves, forms a picture. That means putting every one of the 90 performers and their instruments in place to look good and sound good together on the field for each note they play. Finally, the staff and students will have just two- and-a-half days to rehearse before the big show, which is scheduled for January 2008. Buckner, who’s been doing this kind of thing for many years, is not letting the pressure get to him.

“Every time I worry about the work, I start thinking about what it means for these kids to perform in an All-American Marching Band,” Buckner said. “This will be a tremendous opportunity for students who tend to like the physical activity, the pageantry, the joy of performing in big arenas before huge crowds. They’ll receive national attention; they’ll get an all-expense-paid trip to the game and some extra incentives; and they’ll take home the satisfaction of having worked with the best. I don’t think there’s ever been anything quite like this.

Every fall, John Anderson ’67 ducks off his trumpet and his wife puts together her clarinet to join the WCU Alumni Band for a day at a football game. Every year, they move to and get moved by the music. Seeing the growth of WCU bands and increasing interest from bandmen led Anderson and others to establish a new “Partners for Pride” alumni band organization. “There is just a strong bond that develops when you join the band, and Partners for Pride will help band alumni stay connected while working to support the bands at Western,” said Anderson.

One goal of Partners for Pride will be to begin building a network of band alumni and supporters who could help discover young musicians, mentor current bandmen, and enjoy and help publicize music such as the university’s annual jazz festival. In addition, the organization will support scholarships for student musicians and WCU bands, including the Wind Ensemble, Symphony Band, Jazz Band, Pep Band and the Pride of the Mountains Marching Band.

Partners for Pride is led by Anderson, an alumnus of the jazz, concert and marching bands, and guided by committee members Marty Ramsey ’85, director of alumni affairs; John West, director of bands; and Bob Buckner ’67, director of athletic bands. “Our initial goal is to find 300 partners to ‘match’ the 300 members of the Pride of the Mountains,” said Buckner. “If we can achieve this goal along with fundraising already in place, we could make $30,000 available annually to our student musicians.”
Anyone interested in donating an artifact to the museum should call the Mountain Heritage Center at (828) 227-7129, or e-mail mcdowell@wcu.edu.

By RANDOL H MOCOLMIE

It’s true. At one point in its history, Western required all freshmen students to wear beanies, little round caps guaranteed to make even the coolest student look like a nerd.

Suzanne Hill McDowell ’72 MA ’91 says she hated wearing her beanie when she was a freshman at Western in the fall of 1968, but in an ironic twist of fate, now she’s willing to put her hands on more of them. McDowell, curator at Western’s Mountain Heritage Center, said the museum staff is hoping to add more beanies and other items to its collection of WCU-related artifacts.

“We’re always looking for more artifacts to represent the compelling history of the institution,” she said. “We have some good representative artifacts from the 1890s to the 1950s, but fewer from the 1960s through the 1980s. Items such as pennants, sports and school uniforms, commemorative cups, license plates and photographs all help to piece together the university’s story.”

According to “A Mountain Heritage,” the illustrated history of Western written by history professors Curtis W. Wood and H. Tyler Brethen, freshmen beanies were introduced in 1957 as a way to strengthen school spirit. Students were required to wear the beanies until Homecoming, if the Catamounts won the Homecoming football game, or until the end of the fall quarter, if the team lost the game.

The beanies were green until the early 1960s, when the color was changed to purple and gold. The beanie tradition officially ended with a vote of the student senate in fall of 1970.

The Mountain Heritage Center has three beanies in its collection—all purple and gold. “We’d like to have a green one, too,” McDowell said.
Education Association Honors Former WCU Dean

Gurney Chambers ’61, dean emeritus of the College of Education and Allied Professions at Western, is recipient of the Dr. James H. Stiltner Distinguished Service Award presented by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement.

Chambers, who retired in 1998 after serving as dean at WCU for 17 years, was selected for the honor in recognition of his impact on the field of education on the regional, national and international levels. Now director of the N.C. SACS Council on Accreditation and School Improvement, he received the award during the SACS-CASI Annual Conference in Atlanta.

During his tenure at WCU, Chambers delivered keynote addresses to more than 400 groups in the United States and other countries. He received the Paul A. Reid Distinguished Service Award, Western’s highest honor for administrators, the Alumni Award for Academic and Professional Achievement; and the Outstanding Teacher of the Year Award. The university bestowed an honorary doctorate on him in 2004.

Chambers has been active in SACS since 1969, the year he first served on an accreditation review team. Since then, he has served in a variety of positions, including president of SACS, member of the board of directors of the National Study of School Evaluation, member of the SACS board of trustees, member of the Committee on Latin American Schools, chair of the Standards and Policies Committee, and chair of the N.C. Secondary and Middle School Committee.

He has shared a number of quality assurance review teams for individual schools and districts in North Carolina, and schools in Mexico, Central America, South America and the Caribbean. Chambers earned his bachelor’s degree at WCU and his master’s and doctoral degrees at Peabody College of Vanderbilt University.

1990

After 11 years working within the Fortuna Regional Library System, Dottie Brunette (above) recently became Jackson County librarian. A Sylvia native, she comes to the county’s main library from the Albert Carlton/Cashiers Community Library.

1993

In September, Cecelia Crawford became director of the Small Business Center at Tri-County Community College in Western North Carolina; Employed at the center since its opening in 1994, Crawford is excited about its future. “I’m looking forward to continuing the great work we’ve been doing and expanding it to the next level,” she said.

Effective March 1, Laura Leatherwood MS ’96 EdD at right, became director of community and economic development at Haywood Community College. Laura has demonstrated strong leadership for college advancement,” said Rose Johnson, HCC president. “The college is lucky that she has agreed to apply her tremendous talents and energy to this important new leadership role.”

On the staff at HCC, in addition to Laura Leatherwood formerly served as executive director of Institutional Advancement, Foundation & Alumni Relations. Before going to the community college, Leatherwood was membership coordinator at Haywood Regional Medical Center.

1996

Looking for something new and exciting in her well-organized life, Lt. Col. Malcolm Earles, a student in the master’s Multinational Security Transition Command in Iraq include, ’83 Maj. Catamount students and alumni who joined forces in the

400 groups in the United States and other countries for the 1996 Annual Conference in Atlanta. Accreditation and School Improvement, the

Now director of the N.C. SACS Council on regional, national and international levels. His dissertation examined executive-board relationships in public authorities. Schneider and wife Amy, who teaches mathematics at Fulton High School in Knoxville, welcomed their second daughter, Elisia Daniels, last October. First daughter, Allison Nicole, was born in January 2004.

2000

The fusion of hip hop, nu jazz, broken beat and downtempo music

MUSICAL SALUTE

Plight of U.S. Soldiers

Inspires Songwriter

By THERESA CAMPBELL

A television image of an American flag draped over the casket of a deceased soldier inspired Bonnie Daniels ’51, a songwriter from Wilmington, N.C., “It hit me hard, and it still does,” said Daniels, the wife of a World War II veteran and a grandmother of six. “I looked at that box and thought, ‘That’s somebody’s son, somebody’s daddy or somebody’s daughter.’ I got to thinking about it and I wrote the song ‘American Hero,’ because I wanted them to know somebody cares. The song says, ‘You’re a hero to me.”

Recorded in Nashville, Tenn., the song touched the AdaptaPlatoon organization based in Texas, which felt “American Hero” was an uplifting song of gratitude that troops on deployment needed to hear. So Daniels and her friends donated 20,000 copies of the song to troops in Iraq and Afghanistan, via the AdaptaPlatoon organization.

Elden Sheldon, a Florida resident and one of Daniels’ good friends, read one of the letters Daniels received from an American serviceman. “He really praised her and told her how good the song made him feel,” said Sheldon. Daniels has received words of gratitude that the song’s lyrics also include the female American soldier. “Bonnie’s beautiful song will be a blessing to every soldier who has an opportunity to listen to it,” said Ida Haag, director of AdaptaPlatoon. “All of our troops need to hear this.” After seeing images of many severely wounded American troops, Daniels says she needs to use her songs to raise funds for the nonprofit Coalition to Salute America’s Heroes, a wounded veteran’s support organization that helps veterans restart their lives.

Daniels has a new CD titled “No Fear” — a 12-song album with “American Hero” as the lead song—and she plans to give $5 from the sale of every CD to the Coalition. The money will be used to help our troops as they return home and face life-altering challenges as a result of serious injuries received while serving our country. Daniels, who hopes to raise $1 million for the cause.

The album includes another patriotic song and 10 songs of Christian faith and courage, all written by Daniels. The songs were recorded and produced in Miami. Nashville or Orlando, Fl., and feature various studio artists. The musical styles range from country ballads and Christian contemporary to Southern gospel.

On the coffee table of her home, Daniels has pictures of wounded soldiers that the coalition is reaching out to serve. “I think if people knew to what degree some of our wounded servicemen and women need help, I think America would join in and really help,” she said. “I don’t think many people realize what some are going through.” For more information, visit the website www.americanherosong.com or call (352) 687-3033.

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the classroom at Western, and I was ready to try it in practice," said Tate, who earned a bachelor of science in business administration. "While a German company was mastering the CD, I set up my corporation, worked with a designer on the cover art, and planned for CD duplication and distribution. I’m now working on digital distribution so people can buy songs through services like iTunes and be able to buy and download songs on their cell phones." Tate said. More information and music samples are available at zanetate.com.

2002
Certified strength and conditioning specialist and member of both the National Strength and Conditioning Association, and USA Weightlifting, Brett Gerch MAEd recently was named assistant strength and conditioning coach at the University of Delaware. He has worked in strength and conditioning with collegiate, Olympic and professional athletes for the last 10 years. Gerch’s main responsibilities involve working with UD’s football, baseball, softball, tennis, rowing and track and field teams. “We are very fortunate to have hired Brett Gerch,” said Jason Beaulieu, UD’s head strength and conditioning coach. “He brings a great deal of experience and knowledge in regards to training collegiate and professional athletes.”

2004
Formerly, Gerch served as head assistant strength coach. In 1999, while working as an intern with the Colorado Buffaloes, Gerch earned his master’s degree in business administration. "While enjoying his work and the 2005
While working as an intern with the Arizona Cardinals training camp last summer, John Carpenter learned about a position at the University of Colorado at Boulder. He landed the job and has been a assistant coach at Gardner-Webb Baseball with the Cleveland Indians. He spent five years in Major League Baseball as the head equipment manager of the Colorado Rockies. Even while enjoying his work in Boulder he also is looking to the future. “I would like to be head equipment manager at a major college and then maybe get into athletic administration," he told Tom Haley of the (Boulder) Herald.

2007
Alien Deaths
Ben H. Battle ’47, WCU professor emeritus of education, June 20, Cullowhee.
Happy W. Boozer MAEd ’70, April 2, Batesville, S.C.
Michael James Frey ’90, December 30, Davidson.
Amelia Hollifield Glass ’39, May 6, Spruce Pine.
Linda Lenny ’69, May 1, Lexington.
Frank Landon Moore ’93, April 18, Greensboro.
Julie Christine Pace MBA ’07, June 4, Candler.
Janet Rogers Ross ’54, May 7, Asheville.
Rachel McClusker Salmin ’45, April 7, Byrd Valley, Ohio.

Alumni Deaths
Melba Fowler Simpson ’41, November 3, Sylva.
Gail A. Whisnant ’76, April 22, Morganton.
Genevieve Helen Whitmire MAEd ’69, June 14, Franklin.
Valerie A. Yurkovich MAEd ’87, April 6, Cullowhee.

University Deaths
Howard Jay Hicles, retired professor of special education, June 5, Sylva.
Edgar von Lehr, professor emeritus of music, June 3, Cullowhee.
Daniel R. Lorey, former staff member, April 7, Sylva.

Mark McGinley, assistant professor of German, Aug. 8, Sylva.

2007

Brianna Bridges (above) of Asheville and Leslie Elliott of Marion won both of Asheville’s Mission Health and Hospitals’ “Extern of the Year” awards for 2006-07. The program offers rising senior nursing students an opportunity to work as certified nursing assistants at the hospital. The award they received recognizes participants for outstanding performance; clinical and critical thinking skills; involvement in assignments evaluations; and the systems’ core values of mercy, excellence, respect, integrity, trust and teamwork. “This year selecting the two externs of the year was easy,” said Carol Jackson, director of staffing support services at Mission. Everyone who had input selected the same two Brianna Bridges and Leslie Elliott proved outstanding in every area. After graduating in May with their bachelor’s degrees in nursing, both joined Mission’s intern program. Elliott joined the medical surgical pool and Bridges joined the neonatal intensive care unit, where she received care as an infant. “It’s amazing to meet and get to work alongside the nurses who took care of me as a premature baby, who are still there and still love what they do,” said Bridges.

Brianna Bridges

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We want to know about it.

eventsCALENDAR

August 2007
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 1
Western Open—Golf tournament. Waynesville Country Club. (800) 492-8492

THURSDAY, AUGUST 2
Summer commencement—7 p.m. Ramsey Regional Activity Center. (828) 227-7455

SUNDAY, AUGUST 5
Performance—Participants in Broadway in the Mountains camp showcase the results of their intensive weekly musical theatre workshop. 2 p.m. Studio Theatre, Pine and Performing Arts Center. (828) 227-2479

SATURDAY, AUGUST 18
Soccer—Alumni scrimmage game. 2 p.m. Catamount Athletic Complex. (828) 227-2479

SUNDAY, AUGUST 19
Valley Ballyhoo—Annual back-to-school celebration. 5 p.m. University Center lawn. (828) 227-7206

FRIDAY, AUGUST 24

FRIDAYS, SEPTEMBER 7
Soccer—vs. Wofford. Home Opener. 7 p.m. Catamount Athletic Complex. (828) 227-7338

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 8
Galaxy of Stars / Something for Everyone—“Songs and Confessions of a One-Time Waitress,” Linda Lavin. 7:30 p.m. Pine and Performing Arts Center. (828) 227-2479

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 29
Festival—33rd annual Mountain Heritage Day, rated as one of the top 200 craft events in the U.S. 8 a.m.—5 p.m.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 29–30

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 11
Volleyball—vs. Gardner-Webb. Home Opener. 7 p.m. Ramsey Regional Activity Center. (828) 227-7338

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 14–SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 15
Volleyball—Carmen Clah VI, tournament. Ramsey Regional Activity Center. (828) 227-7338

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 15
Open House—for prospective students and their families. (828) 227-7317

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 21
Bob Waters Memorial Golf Outing—High Vista Country Club. Arden. (800) 492-8492

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 22
Football—vs. Presbyterian College. Home opener. 6 p.m. E.J. Whitmore Stadium/ Bob Waters Field. (828) 227-7338.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 26– SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 30
University Players perform Larry Shue’s comedy “The Need.” Hoey Auditorium. (828) 227-2479

SUMMER 2007  The  Magazine  of Wes Tern  Carolina  Universi Ty

46  SUMMER 2007  The  Magazine  of Wes Tern  Carolina  Universi Ty
47  SUMMER 2007  The  Magazine  of Wes Tern  Carolina  Universi Ty
Tammy DeCesare, head women’s soccer coach, sets two goals for summer campers—to become better players and to have fun. Each summer, WCU offers children from kindergarten through 12th grade the chance to learn from Catamount coaches and top athletes at summer sports camps. Check out catamountsports.cstv.com/camps or call (828) 227-7338.